A HISTORY OF LON MORRIS COLLEGE

DISSERTATION

Presented to the Graduate Council of the
North Texas State University in Partial
Fulfillment of the Requirements

For the Degree of

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

By

Glendell A. Jones, B.A., M.Ed., M.Th.
Denton, Texas

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The problem with which this study is concerned is that of analyzing the implementation of the stated purposes of Lon Morris College of Jacksonville, Texas from 1847 to 1973. Histories and journals of the period, records and publications of the school and other institutions, and oral interviews of persons involved in its development provide data for the study. As a historical analysis, the study is divided according to successive periods in the school's development.

The purposes of the study are to determine the (1) stated purposes of the school from 1847 to 1973, (2) constant and modified philosophies which guided those responsible for the development of the school, (3) inter-relationships between those philosophies and the implementation of the school's purposes, (4) problems and variables which affected such implementation, and (5) prospects for implementation of the school's purposes after 1973.

The study determines that the stated purposes of the school since 1847 have been to offer its students quality education and religious instruction. It analyzes the im-

plementation of these purposes from the school's origin as a Masonic institution offering a primary curriculum and non-sectarian religious instruction in New Danville, Texas. The school became a female academy in 1854, qualifying for state tuition subsidies, and offered sectarian religious instruction after 1860. Moving to Kilgore, Texas in the Panic of 1873, it became a Methodist, coeducational institute, receiving high school accreditation in 1884. It moved to Jacksonville, Texas in the Panic of 1893, where it received collegiate accreditation from the University of Texas in 1895. Without state subsidy after 1894, the school erected a new plant in 1909.

Adding a junior college curriculum in 1909, the school received accreditation as a college in 1916. It offered non-sectarian religious instruction from 1911 to 1923, when it restored sectarian instruction and received its first large endowment. Upgrading its curriculum and academic standards in 1924, the college received Southern Association accreditation and its first regular church tuition subsidy in 1927. Overcoming financial difficulties encountered during the Depression and the Second World War by increased cultivation of both public and private sources, the college erected a new plant to house record student enrollments between 1953 and 1973. From 1935 to 1973, the college expanded its

curriculum and relaxed its academic standards, although the quality of its education remained acceptable to its accreditors. After 1944, the college again offered nonsectarian religious instruction, receiving continued church support and approval despite its lack of sectarianism.

Following this analysis of the purposes, philosophies, and problems of the school since 1847, the study concludes that Lon Morris College persistently sought to offer its students quality education and religious instruction to 1973, but that its implementation of those purposes varied according to the different educational and religious philosophies which guided those responsible for its development. During most of its history, the school offered a quality of education closely correlated with established accreditation standards but on several occasions offered its students education of more or less than average quality. Unable to settle upon one interpretation of its religious purpose, the school alternatively offered sectarian and nonsectarian instruction to its students during its different administrations. During its last half century, through the unique variable of persuasive leadership, the school developed effective techniques to solve its financial problems by securing additional support from private and public sources, thus achieving financial stability to enhance implementation of its purposes after 1973. This study concludes that Lon Morris College implemented its stated purposes from 1847 to 1973.

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INTRODUCTION

American education in general, and Southern education in particular, began with the private school. During the nineteenth century, most Southern primary schools were private in ownership and support, offering the public the "common" education of the period, consisting of the basic three "R's" - reading, writing, and arithmetic. Most Southern states provided private primary schools with tuition subsidies for the training of needy students in these fundamental literate and computational skills. Before the Reconstruction of the South in the late nineteenth century, private schools were that section's only source of formal education.

Of all nineteenth century schools, the private academy was the preferred educational institution for those families desiring a more advanced education for their children. Offering either a terminal ("finished") or college preparatory high school course of study, almost every Southern community boasted a private academy before the Civil War. Like the private primary schools, the private academies benefitted from the state subsidy for needy students and thus were able to offer their education to the public as a whole. Both levels of private schools sought to offer the public an education designed to meet the needs of the nineteenth century South. Some of these

institutions eventually became junior colleges.

In the late nineteenth century, the private junior college was developed primarily in the Southern United States. Often beginning as a private academy, the private junior college offered the first two years of university-level work as either terminal or preparatory to further university or college study. Like the private academy, the private junior college became a popular institution in the South by the early twentieth century. Probably the most originally American of all institutions of higher education, the private junior college established a valuable transition between high school and university education. Even with the advent of public junior colleges, private junior colleges are still an integral and significant part of Southern education today, comprising one-third of all junior colleges in the state of Texas alone. With the provision of state tuition subsidies to private junior colleges for the education of needy students, these institutions have become as open to the public as were the nineteenth century private primary schools and academies. Prominent educators still see a bright future ahead for the private junior college as it carries on the traditions of private education in the twentieth century South.

Although numerous studies have dealt with nineteenth and twentieth century education in the South, few studies have dealt specifically with the long-term development of a par-

ticular institution; this is especially true of private junior colleges. A study of the development of a private Southern junior college through an analysis of the implementation of its purposes might be useful in providing suggestive guides or leads for research into the developmental practices and patterns of Southern private education in general. Certainly, no history of Southern education during the past two centuries would be complete without reference to roles played by the private school.

Such a study could also have general relevance to the overall subject of the development of American higher education to the present. If the purposes of an educational institution are to be reflected in its educational program, then an analysis of the implementation of purposes in the educational program of an institution should bearelevant subject for research in higher education.

The need for such an institutional study exists. As Leland Medsker has written in The Junior College: Progress and Prospect: "Specific information has been lacking on how and to what extent the two-year college has implemented certain of its commonly expressed objectives." Assuming that an historical analysis might be useful in obtaining such information on junior college development, perhaps a study of a private Southern junior college from its origins to the present could

provide insights that might illuminate problems and solutions common to such institutions. Especially might this be true if the school had a long and varied history, such as that of Lon Morris College in Jacksonville, Texas.

For the past 125 years, Lon Morris College has had experiences typical of numerous private Southern schools of the past two centuries. It has been a private primary school, a private academy, and a private junior college. A pioneer institution on each level, it has met most of the problems that have faced private and public institutions since 1847 and has found some way to meet each of them. Its purposes have been similar to those expressed by most private and church-related schools during the past century. The implementation of its purposes has often followed patterns familiar to such institutions. A study of Lon Morris College, one of the oldest existing institutions of education in Texas, could contribute a significant chapter to the history of private education in the Southern United States. A historical study of this school could also reveal certain factors that might lend themselves to the solution of current problems facing private higher education.

The purpose of this study is to analyze the implementation of the stated objectives of Lon Morris College from its origins to the present. The study will be primarily chronological, analyzing the implementation of purpose during each period of the school's development. Myron F. Wicke, Director

of the Division of Higher Education of the United Methodist Church, has suggested that "the stated objectives of an institution should be appraised in terms of what takes place on the campus." Likewise, most accreditation of schools and colleges is based upon a determination of how their stated purposes are implemented in their educational programs; therefore, this study is an attempt to analyze the implementation of the stated objectives of the specific problems and unique variables which have confronted the institution since 1847, consistent with the principles of educational research.

Information for this study has been collected from various written sources, including publications of the school, its parent institutions, and the State and Federal governments, as well as numerous histories and journals of the periods under consideration. The records and files of Lon Morris College have been thoroughly examined, and persons involved in the development of the school have been interviewed, including its officials, faculty, students, trustees, and patrons of the past and present. The data has been organized into an historical account of the development of the school since 1847, prefaced by a brief analysis of the school's origins. The chapters are divided according to the successive stages of the school's development, and they follow in chronological order.

CHAPTER I

THE NEW DANVILLE MASONIC FEMALE ACADEMY

Private education in Texas began with the arrival of American settlers from the Southern United States in the early nineteenth century. One of the private schools established by such settlers was the parent institution of Lon Morris College, founded at New Danville in 1847. Today, one of the few surviving educational institutions from that early period of settlement, this school still seeks to fulfill the educational needs of the people it serves. Typical of schools in its day, the New Danville school at first offered only a basic education to the children of the pioneers and operated on a very rudimentary level for a few months each year. Later, when the State of Texas offered financial support to such schools, it improved its curriculum and became a private academy for girls. The purpose of this chapter is to examine the background of the New Danville school and its early period of development in order to discover how and to what extent it was able to implement the purposes for which it was established. Its success in achieving its purposes from 1847 to 1873 laid the foundations for the school's later growth and development.

When Stephen F. Austin brought his "Old Three Hundred" families of Southern settlers to Texas in 1822, the Southern

tradition of private education expanded westward with them. During the 1820's hundreds of private schools were established across the South, following a pattern that had begun before the American Revolution. Almost every Southern community had a private school that was open to virtually all its children, and the new settlement of San Felipe de Austin was no exception. In 1823, school teacher Isaac Pennington established the first private school in Texas at Austin's colony. Following the pattern already set in the older South, Pennington's school offered children of the early settlers the "common" primary education consisting of reading, writing, and arithmetic, charging a modest tuition of about one dollar per month for each student. As was the habit of most private teachers in his day, Pennington allowed needy students to attend his school for little or no tuition, for which he received supplementary funds from his wealthier patrons, such as Stephen F. Austin (12).

The Mexican government, which supported Catholic public schools in the larger settlements of San Antonio and Goliad during this period, exempted Austin's settlers from compulsory public school attendance and tolerated the private school at San Felipe de Austin until 1829, when the American settlers began to using it for Protestant Sunday school and church services. The Mexican authorities strictly forbade the use of schools for the teaching of non-Catholic doctrine but permitted the private school to continue instruction in the three "R's"

until the outbreak of the Texas Revolution. The Protestant faith could not be taught legally in Texas schools until 1836 (12).

Of greater concern to the Mexican authorities than religious education in Austin's colony was the illegal settlement of Americans around Nacogdoches in East Texas. By 1825, 7,000 settlers were in East Texas, 90 per cent of them from the South, and a common school was established in Nacogdoches. The settlers supported their school by charging tuition of $1.50 per month for each student and permitted needy children to attend free (12). These independent frontiersmen openly defied the Mexican ban against Protestant teaching in their school in 1825 and illegally settled land about sixty miles north of Nacogdoches in 1826, where they erected another common school. On December 20, 1826 they proclaimed the area the "Republic of Fredonia" and declared their independence of Mexico. The following month, a combined force of Mexicans and Americans from Austin's colony drove the rebels from "Fredonia" and permitted Cherokee Indians to take their land and buildings. One-half white Cherokee, W. P. Martin, converted the Fredonian school into the Mount Moriah Methodist Church. Forty-six years later, he donated the site to the New Danville Masonic Female Academy (13).

The Mexican government forbade further American immigration into Texas after 1830, but this action did not stop the

flow of settlers coming into the province. The Mexican dictatorship also insisted on collecting taxes from those Americans who were legal residents of Texas for the support of Catholic public schools in the predominantly Mexican settlements of San Antonio and Goliad (12). On March 2, 1836, the American settlers once again declared their independence of Mexico, complaining that none of their school taxes had been available for their own private schools (12). After they achieved their independence, the people of Texas ended taxation for the support of education altogether, insisting that they were too poor to provide public funds for their private schools after all (12).

Despite the lack of tax revenue for the support of education during the years of the Republic of Texas, private education continued to grow nevertheless. By 1845, Texas had fifty-one primary schools, forty-one academies, thirty institutes, and ten colleges, all privately owned. Although the Republic did not subsidize private education with public funds, it did offer large land grants to those institutions which applied for a state charter and which made themselves equally accessible to students of all religious denominations (12). One such school to qualify for a free land grant was the first Methodist college established in Texas, which began at Rutersville in 1840 (23). In a dispute with the government of Texas which lasted from 1841 to 1856, the Methodists

finally abandoned denominational ownership of the school to locally elected trustees in Rutersville, who promptly closed the college rather than continue the acrimony (31). The Methodists, who tried and failed to re-establish the college during the Civil War, finally admitted:

> Had we a solid ground to stand on, we would have resisted. But so far as we can asertain, since the ground which the college rests upon was a grant by the Republic of Texas to the local board of trustees, the church has had no vested right in the property of the institution. If we attempt to claim it as a Methodist institution, we are met the charge of fraud against the state (25).

The Masonic Lodge of Texas did not apply for public land grants for its schools and thus avoided the problems encountered by the Methodists. Since long before the American Revolution, the Masons were dedicated to the establishment of schools open to all in every community. At their own expense, Masons founded schools wherever they lived and stipulated that their institutions must always be free of instruction in any sectarian religious dogma (6). Their purposes in education were clear: (1) to lead mankind through education into a more equitable and just society, and (2) to make education available to all without regard for ability to pay (6). In the absence of tax revenue to provide financial support for education in the Republic of Texas, the Grand Lodge of Texas established its own funds, the first comprehensive educational system in Texas since independence (11).

The first Masonic school established in Texas originated in the Orphan's Friend Lodge No. 17 of Anderson in 1843. This school set the pattern for those which followed by meeting in the private homes of local Masons until a building campaign raised $37.31 for the construction of a log schoolhouse. Charging a modest tuition and permitting needy students to attend free, the Orphan's Friend school taught only the primary common school course of study and lasted only a short while, but it inaugurated Masonic education in Texas (6).

In 1845, the Grand Lodge of Texas instructed each local Masonic Lodge to organize a school as soon as it established itself in a community (27). A lodge meeting hall had to be built large enough to house the Masonic school, which received at least 30 per cent of the funds of the local lodge and a special supplementary allowance for needy students provided by the Grand Lodge. Although the State of Texas promised "suitable provision for the support and maintenance of public schools" in its first constitution in 1845, it continued to offer only land grants to its chartered schools. Of all 111 schools chartered by the State of Texas from 1845 to 1861, the Grand Lodge of Texas established 69, more than all religious denominations combined. The Methodists founded the second largest number of schools during this period, and their eighteen institutions outnumbered those of other religious denominations, but the Masonic schools became the

dominant force in Texas education after statehood was achieved (11, 27).

Early in 1846, a group of Masons from Danville, Virginia, migrated to Texas and settled only a few miles from the site of the Fredonian rebellion twenty years before. Strategically located on a heavily travelled route between Marshall and Tyler, the small community of New Danville quickly grew into a prosperous settlement. Some of its Masons were familiar with the educational traditions of their lodge, since the Grand Lodge of Virginia instituted the nation's first state-wide system of Masonic schools in 1812 (6). In the pattern of the Masons of Anderson, they organized a common school for New Danville in their private homes in 1847, with each Masonic family taking its turn to host the little school. Itinerant schoolteachers from the surrounding area lived there each year to teach all the children in the community, and the Masons charged a modest tuition to those families who could afford to pay in cash or kind, while needy children always attended the school free. Classes usually lasted only a few months of the year and the teachers boarded free in the homes where they taught. The first teachers of the New Danville school in its formative years were a Professor Gray and two ministers named Spencer and Kennedy (16). Students attending the school were of all ages and levels of ability, with some as old as twenty learning to read, write, and compute. As soon as a student had

mastered the basic skills, he went to work or enrolled for higher education in the local academy at Henderson, twenty miles to the south. New Danville and Henderson were the centers of Rusk County, which boasted a growing population of over a thousand settlers in 1847 (3).

The Masonic school of New Danville was open to all religious denominations upon its establishment in 1847, but other East Texas schools were not. For instance, religious rivalry among the small population of San Augustine led to the establishment of separate Methodist and Presbyterian colleges there before 1847, when a quarrel over religious instruction resulted in the murder of one of the college officials. Sobered by this experience, San Augustine turned its schools over to the Masons in 1847, since no sect could prescribe the teaching of its dogmas in schools of the nondenominational lodge, where students of all religious beliefs were welcome. By contrast, the Methodists and Presbyterians of New Danville established a Masonic school for their community from the beginning and did not allow religion to interfere with the education of their children (25).

In 1848, the Grand Lodge of Texas appointed a state superintendent of education to supervise the establishment, development, and support of its schools throughout Texas. Reminding the members of the New Danville Lodge No. 101 that "the subject of education is of peculiar interest to the

fraternity," and that each Mason should be a teacher throughout his life, the state superintendent urged them to erect a building for their lodge and school as soon as possible and promised "to assist said lodge in paying the debt incurred in the construction of its lodge building" by rebate of its annual dues to the Grand Lodge of Texas (27). In 1849, the Grand Lodge gave the New Danville lodge $55.50 in tuition subsidies for needy students and rebated $11.40 in annual dues from its nineteen members to be applied toward the construction of a log schoolhouse and lodge meeting hall. On October 7, 1849, the Masons of New Danville erected a substantial community building to house the school during the week, the lodge in the evenings, and the Methodists and Presbyterians on Sundays (19).

After completing the new building, the Masons installed sufficient benches for all the students and divided the school down the middle to separate the girls and boys in the same manner by which their parents separated themselves at the Sunday worship services (19). By 1850, the Masons hired the school's first regular teacher, Hamilton McNutt, who established residence in the community for several years and taught a basic primary course of study (16). Also in 1850, the Methodists of New Danville contributed to the establishment of a new academy in nearby Henderson so that their children might obtain a high school education close to home.

Even with their support, Fowler Institute opened its first session a thousand dollars in debt and without a teacher in 1851 (22).

During the early 1850's, Henderson was described as "a place of much size and note, having many schoolhouses and churches" (30). The largest congregation in East Texas belonged to the Methodist Church in Henderson, whose pastor recruited his younger brother to teach in the new Fowler Institute in 1851. Licensed a Methodist minister in his brother's church that fall, nineteen-year-old Isaac Alexander had just arrived in Texas after earning an M.A. degree from Methodist Emory and Henry College in Abington, Virginia, and was recovering from a breakdown suffered from excessive study. The 1851 East Texas Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church, appointed Alexander principal of Fowler Institute, and he began sixty-eight years of service in the Methodist ministry (9, 22).

Concerned with enrolling sufficient students to pay off the institute's building debt in 1851, Isaac Alexander persuaded the East Texas Conference to appoint its local presiding elder to assist him in recruiting students from among the 8,000 residents of Rusk County. During his years in Henderson, Alexander visited New Danville regularly and recruited numerous graduates of the New Danville school to attend Fowler Institute. Offering a high school education that was

sufficient for the mid-nineteenth century South, Alexander's institute also prepared its students for further study in colleges of the day. Alexander himself soon became one of the most popular teachers in Rusk County (22, 32).

Both the Methodist and the Masonic schools of Rusk County survived with minimal help from the East Texas Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, or the Grand Lodge of Texas until the State of Texas instituted financial aid for the schools in 1854. Using $2,000,000 in funds received from the federal government in exchange for the state's huge western territories in the Compromise of 1850, Governor E. M. Pease and the Fifth Legislature created the largest education endowment fund of any state in the nation to produce an annual subsidy for the schools of Texas without tax revenue. Emulating the Grand Lodge of Texas, the Legislature appointed a state superintendent of education in 1854 to offer any educational institution with a "good, substantial schoolhouse" sixty-two cents for each student between the ages of six and sixteen enrolled for the 1854-1855 school session. The Rusk County court declared the New Danville school and Fowler Institute eligible to receive the subsidy in1854 and instructed their respective owners to set aside a short "free" term each year, to be financed solely by state funds, with the approval of a majority of their paying patrons (7, 14). Both schools reported a full enrollment for 1854-1855 and, upon

receiving their state subsidy, set aside a "free" term of about two months during which all students attended without tuition charge. During the remainder of the session, or "regular" term, the Masonic or Methodist trustees paid the tuition of those students who could not afford the cost of education. The new state subsidy simply allowed the schools of New Danville and Henderson to extend the length of each school session (16).

Since Texas had only private schools in 1854, it adopted the Southern tradition of providing public funds for private education and saw no need to establish a separate system of public schools. Once a school received a state charter empowering its supporters to elect its trustees, it could hire its teachers, adopt its curriculum, and spend its state funds as the trustees saw fit. On January 25, 1854, six days before the new school bill became law, the Masons of New Danville submitted articles of incorporation to the Fifth Legislature reorganizing their school to take advantage of the forthcoming subsidy. The Legislature approved the charter, which legally recognized the New Danville Masonic Lodge. No. 101 as the owner of the New Danville Masonic Female Academy, and allowed the school to receive public funds for the first time (14).

The Masons of New Danville decided to make their school a female academy in 1854 mainly because there was no school

exclusively for the girls in the area. Fowler Institute and other East Texas academies catered to the education of boys and discouraged girls from enrolling for their high school course of study. All of this was in keeping with the Southern tradition of separating the sexes from close association in school or church. The New Danville Masonic Female Academy met a real need by offering a high school course for East Texas girls without the distractions of a co-educational institution and by adopting a curriculum typical of Southern girls' schools of the period. Offering a "full and finished course" of primary and secondary studies for cultured and refined young ladies, the new academy taught the basic three "R's" in the lower grades, plus English literature and composition, mathematics, history, and ancient languages for students seeking a literary education on the high school level. All students received instruction in etiquette, the fine arts (music, drawing, sculpture), and home economics (housekeeping, sewing, cooking) as well in the finishing school. Tuition was two dollars a month, and the Masons offered to pay the tuition of any girl who could not afford to attend. The New Danville academy promised that every graduate of its finishing school would be a true lady of the old South, trained in the best Southern tradition of culture and refinement to take her place in East Texas society. Soon after the

Masons hired Miss Lydia Bridges, an experienced female educator, to be the teacher of the new academy, over forty East Texas girls enrolled in the New Danville school for 1854-1855 (16).

The New Danville Masonic Female Academy prospered so well during its first year of operation that it attracted competition from the principal of the Fowler Institute. Isaac Alexander became a full member of the East Texas Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South in 1855 and persuaded the conference to let him organize a new Methodist female academy in Tyler to offer East Texans a course of study similar to that of Miss Bridges in New Danville. Assisted by a raise in the state subsidy to $1.50 per student for 1855-1856, East Texas students filled both schools to capacity during the session; competition from the Tyler academy did not diminish the New Danville enrollment (22). In 1856, the Masons of New Danville purchased two acres of land to erect a larger building to house their school's growing student body. After only two years as a subsidized academy, the New Danville school launched its second building campaign (19).

The State of Texas imposed restrictions on schools receiving the state subsidy in 1856-1857. The Rusk County court apportioned the $1.50 state tuition subsidy to its private schools on the basis of how many students between the

ages of six and eighteen each school teacher reported in his daily attendance report. Before the state funds could be used to pay the tuition of needy students during the "free" term, the county court had to certify the teacher as "qualified" to instruct on the primary or secondary level (14). Neither Lydia Bridges or Isaac Alexander had any problem being certified in 1856, and both continued to receive supplementary tuition for needy students, during the "regular" term, from the Masons or Methodists as well. In 1857, Alexander left the East Texas Conference to teach in the Methodist Chappell Hill Female College in central Texas, and following his departure, the Tyler academy closed, leaving the New Danville school with no competition in East Texas (22).

Just prior to the planned construction of the new building for the New Danville academy, the log schoolhouse caught fire and burned to the ground on December 31, 1857. The Masons lost no time in eretting a substantial new structure to replace the old building in January, 1858, reserving the lower floor "for the purposes of the church and the school" and the upper floorfor the meetings of Lodge No. 101. Once again, the Grand Lodge of Texas was helpful by donating funds to the New Danville lodge for use in constructing a new building for its school, which it paid for completely within the year, enabling the academy almost to double its enrollment capacity

for 1858-1859* (19).

When the State of Texas raised its school subsidy to ten cents a day per student in 1858, more students enrolled in Texas schools than ever before, and the number of schools multiplied (12). The New Danville Masonic Female Academy was one of elevent such institutions in the state; of the forty academies in Texas in 1858, the Grand Lodge owned thirteen. After marrying a girl from Jamestown, which was located between Tyler and New Danville, Isaac Alexander resigned his post at Chappell Hill and founded another new academy, in his wife's home, for 1858-1859, attracting numerous students from the East Texas area, some of whose families "moved in from miles around" so that their children could benefit from the instruction of the popular teacher. When Alexander moved north to Gilmer and established the famous Looney school in 1859, many East Texas students and their families again followed him, including a few from the New Danville area (17, 28).

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*In cotinual use from 1858 to the present, the village restored the building to its original condition in 1933 and dedicated it in 1970 for the Texas State Historical Association with the citation:

". . . Present structure built in 1858, housed Danville Masonic Lodge No. 101 and (1858-1873) Danville Masonic Female Academy, the parent institution of Lon Morris College . . ." (29).

In 1859-1860, the State of Texas required schools like those of New Danville and Gilmer to submit the signatures of at least two paying patrons who certified thus that each student whose tuition was paid by state funds was truly needy, and it instructed the county courts to cut off state funds to any school providing aid to students whose families could afford to pay tuition. Enrollment declined at New Danville in 1859 as the Masonic trustees found it difficult to offer supplementary funds to all families who had received the state subsidy prior to the requirement for proof of need. A number of families who could not be classified as needy nevertheless withdrew their daughters from the academy because they felt they could not afford to pay the tuition. Alexander's popularity kept enrollment high in the Gilmer school in 1859-1860 (14).

In 1860, the New Danville Masons decided that the best way to compete with other East Texas schools was to obtain the services of an outstanding teacher for their academy. When Lydia Bridges resigned her post at the end of the 1859-1860 session, several of the Masons travelled to Gilmer and asked Isaac Alexander to become her replacement. Since Alexander had known many families in the New Danville area for the past nine years and he was well aware of the good reputation of the female academy and the generous support it received from

the Masons, the prominent East Texas educator accepted their offer on condition that they allow him to organize the school as he saw fit. The trustees agreed, and Alexander purchased a farm near the New Danville academy with a house large enough to board some of the girls attending the school. Three of his own daughters subsequently became students of the academy, and he appointed his wife to serve as matron of the boarding students. Enrollment at the New Danville Masonic Female Academy increased for the 1860-1861 session as news of its new teacher spread across East Texas (16).

During the decade from 1850 to 1860, the population of Rusk County doubled to 16,000 residents, making it the second largest county in the state. Although New Danville was one of its largest communities, Rusk County was overwhelmingly rural, like the rest of Texas. Nevertheless, virtually every community had its own school, and Texas was able to boast a 95 per cent rate of literacy among its white population in 1860, higher than that of any European nation and some parts of the Eastern United States. Education was esteemed highly in antebellum Texas, and the school teacher commanded respect wherever he went (13). When a community was fortunate enough to obtain a graduate of an Eastern college or university to instruct its children or preach to its congregation, it counted itself doubly blessed (11).

New Danville welcomed twenty-eight-year-old Isaac Alexander and his family into every home in the community in 1860 and offered him the pulpit of the church as well as the lectern of the school (16). In return, Alexander served the community as its teacher and preacher for thirty years.

Organizing the New Danville Masonic Female Academy as he saw fit in 1860, Alexander declared that his purpose was to educate "both the head and the heart." In addition, to fulfill the Masonic purposes of making education available to all without regard for ability to pay in order to develop a more equitable and just society, the young Methodist minister pledged to give the students under his care "correct views of the philosopy of life, the elements of success, and the principles of honor." In violation of the Masonic stipulation that their schools must always remain free of instruction in sectarian religious dogma, Alexander insisted that each class day begin with a chapter read from the Bible, followed by a discussion between the teacher and students of what was read. Inasmuch as all of the Masonic trustees of the academy were members of Alexander's combined Methodist-Presbyterian congregation in New Danville, they raised no objection to the community pastor teaching religion in the Masonic school. The Masonic principle of nondenominational education became dormant and the school began a tradition of Methodist religious

instruction that continued well into the next century (5, 28).

While popular, Isaac Alexander was a demanding teacher and a strict disciplinarian. A firm believer in the rigorous teaching of fundamentals, he taught classes by the recitation method eight hours a day, ten months of the year. In 1860, he expanded the finishing school curriculum to include college preparatory classes in Latin, Greek, history, algebra, geometry, and trigonometry, which he had taught previously at Chappell Hill Female College (22). At the end of each session, he required his girls to give a speech or recitation, as a final examination of what they learned, before an assembly of the school's patrons. Such annual performances became a popular event for the residents of New Danville and the surrounding area. In addition, Alexander did not allow boys near students of his school and made sure that they were well chaperoned while under his care so that they might grow up to become refined and virtuous young ladies of antebellum society. One of his students later recalled: "Isaac Alexander was always firm with his students. He came to class with a cane and, if a student made a mistake, he would tap her gently on the head with the cane and say: 'That is wrong.' He was a good teacher who promoted high ideals and the Christian attitude." Alexander gave his students a stern moral lecture each week and punished disobedience by spanking their hands

with a ruler, although he rarely found it necessary to impose such discipline (2).

After Texas seceded from the United States and joined the Confederacy on February 23, 1861 and most New Danville men jointed the forces of the South, the families of girls in the academy found it increasingly difficult to pay their tuition. Before the end of the year, most of his patrons paid Alexander their tuition in kind rather than cash. When the East Texas Conference appointed a number of its ministers to the Confederate chaplaincy in 1861, Alexander volunteered to ride their Texas Texas circuits of Methodist churches during his spare time until the end of the war. Most schools in Texas closed during the Civil War, including Fowler Institute in Henderson, due to the loss of students and income. Only those Southern schools which specialized in the education of young women and girls, like the New Danville Masonic Female Academy, survived the war without serious loss. In 1861-1862, Alexander still met his expenses, even when Texas reduced the state school subsidy back to sixty-two cents for each student. When the state finally dropped the state subsidy altogether, after spending the school endowment fund on the war in 1863, he simply eliminated the "free" term at New Danville and continued to teach the "regular" term as before (7, 12, 22).

The New Danville academy faced its most serious trouble

during the Civil War in 1864. When a federal invasion of East Texas approached in the spring of the year, Confederate troops soon moved into the New Danville area and established several nearby camps. Although the federal invasion of East Texas failed, a terrible yellow fever epidemic broke out among the Southern troops and spread across East Texas, causing considerable death and suffering. The fever infected almost all the students of the New Danville academy and killed several persons in the community, including Mrs. Isaac Alexander. Despite the loss of his wife, who was also the matron of his boarding students, Alexander continued to teach and preach in New Danville to the end of the war (13, 28).

A widower with three small daughters, Alexander nevertheless became a leader in the reconstruction of education in Texas after the Civil War. When President Andrew Johnson assured Southerners that they would be able to resume their antebellum life despite the loss of slavery, the enrollment of the New Danville academy regained its former level as East Texas families returned to their farms and other pursuits. Confident that the state would soon resume its school subsidy, Isaac Alexander helped organize the Texas State Teachers Association in 1866, which recommended tax revenue for Texas schools for the first time since independence. His hopes for more state aid to his school declined, however, when the Congress

suspended the government of Texas in December, 1866 (28).

Federal troops occupied the New Danville area in 1867, disenfranchising local citizens who had supported the Confederacy and awarding ex-slaves both the vote and positions of power in the county government. The Masons allowed members of the Ku Klux Klan to meet secretly in their lodge hall for several years, but Alexander avoided any involvement in their acts of violence against military rule. He continued to operate his girls' school as best he could despite the social turmoil going on about him and did nothing to antagonize the military or civilian authorities (24, 30).

Like all schools in Texas during the Reconstruction era, the New Danville Masonic Female Academy received no funds from the government. Although the new state constitution of 1869 promised state tax revenue for the schools, and although Texas taxed its citizens for this purpose after being readmitted to the United States in 1870, corrupt officials of the State Department of Education diverted the funds for the support of education to other purposes, and the citizens received no benefit from their school taxes. This trend continued in 1871 when the state imposed a 1 per cent property tax on the population to raise over half a million dollars for the schools, only to have the $1.87 allocated for each student disappear into the same hole of corruption. By 1871,

the average farm family in the New Danville area paid about 20 per cent of its income in state taxes, and many who could not afford to pay lost their property in sheriff's auctions. The enrollment of the academy declined as its patrons' income went to the government, but none of their money found its way back to the school to pay the tuition of their needy children. In the summer of 1871, East Texans joined others from across the state in storming the state capital to force an end to excessive taxation (24, 30).

Isaac Alexander did not allow the turmoil over taxation to interfere in the operation of his school. Receiving no state subsidy, he ignored the requirements of the State Department of Education that the academy compel the attendance of all local female students, black as well as white, and did not submit a list of his trustees, faculty, curricula, textbooks, or tuition income to the department for approval. Taking advantage of the sheriff's auctions, he bought more land around New Danville in 1871 to supplement the income he received from the school during the low enrollment of the period. At every opportunity, Alexander invited his fellow teachers or preachers to hold their meetings in his school, thus enhancing its reputation and attracting a larger enrollment. By 1871, New Danville became "quite a place of importance for church and school assemblies," and its academy

developed into "one of the best and most noted" schools in East Texas (11, 18, 32).

The ultimate destiny of New Danville was determined in the fall of 1871, when Jay Gould proposed to built his new International and Great Northern Railway through the small town. Although the State of Texas gave nothing to its schools during this period, it gave Gould twenty-five years of tax exemption and $10,000, plus twenty acres of public land, for each mile of track he laid across the state. New Danville welcomed his surveyors to the community and anticipated rapid growth for the area until a local farm family refused to grant Gould the right-of-way into the town. The railway then bypassed New Danville and erected a depot four miles southwest on property donated for a new town by the Kilgore family. Gould began to offer city lots for sale near the depot on June 27, 1872, and most of the residents of New Danville, including most of the patrons of the New Danville Masonic Female Academy, migrated to the small town of Kilgore by the end of the year (8, 24, 30).

Alexander's school received its first state subsidy in nine years in 1872-1873, when the State Department of Education finally allocated $1.81 for each student, but the subsidy was discontinued prior to the 1873-1874 session. When Gould's financial manipulations caused the Panic of 1873 and

almost bankrupted the International and Great Northern Railway, the economy of East Texas suffered very hard and threatened to cause a serious decline in enrollment and tuition income for the academy. The community school faced a crucial decision in 1873: remain in New Danville and possibly close because of lack of enrollment and income, or move the academy somewhere else more likely to provide patronage. Most of the New Danville Masons had already moved their families to Kilgore by 1873, but they preferred to keep their lodge meeting hall in New Danville. Only when Alexander explained to them that he could no longer afford to teach in New Danville did the trustees agree that their school should be relocated (7, 24, 28, 30).

Since the Masons were not prepared to erect a new building for the academy elsewhere, Isaac Alexander persuaded his Methodist congregation to provide facilities for the school instead. One of them, old W. P. Martin, the half-Cherokee who had settled the area around Kilgore forty-six years before, offered the Methodists the site of the defunct Mount Moriah Methodist Church, which had been a school prior to the Fredonian Rebellion. The Methodists formed the Kilgore Society of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South and assumed ownership of the property, electing Martin as chairman of their first board of trustees. With the assistance of other

residents of Kilgore, the Methodists raised $10,000 in a local building campaign for the academy during the depression days of 1873, an amount which some observers considered "quite a large sum for a hamlet school in those days " (3, 28).

The Methodists of Kilgore completed the new building in time for the 1873-1874 session, and Alexander moved his school from the Masonic building in New Danville to its new location. Upon his departure, the New Danville Masonic Lodge No. 101 ceased providing facilities for the New Danville Female Academy, although several of the Masons were members of the new Kilgore Society of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, which continued the role played by the lodge before 1873. The change in ownership of the academy's facilities was significant not only in terms of location, but in purpose as well. Unlike the Masons, the Methodists were dedicated to the principle of sectarian religious instruction in addition to the principle of quality education (25). When the school changed from nondenominational to denominational, it could promote the teachings of the Methodist church with the blessings of its Methodist trustees, rather than with the quiet acquiescence of its Masonic trustees.

The New Danville Masonic Female Academy was truly a pioneer educational institution in the early history of Texas. Beginning as a common frontier school, it was part of the

effort by the Grand Lodge of Texas to provide a quality education for all children in the state, regardless of their ability to pay. Erected and supported by lodge funds seven years before the State of Texas emulated the Grand Lodge by providing subsidies to schools, the New Danville school fulfilled the purposes of the Masons well by offering a basic primary education to the residents of its area and by paying the tuition of needy students from Masonic funds. When state funds became available to expand the school session and increase its income, the New Danville Masons availed themselves of the opportunity to convert the institution into a female academy offering a quality finishing school course of study for young ladies in East Texas. Like most schools of the antebellum South, the New Danville Masonic Female Academy was a private institution providing education to the needy with public funds, but the state did not interfere with the implementation of its purposes. Since there were no public schools in Texas during the academy's twenty-six years in New Danville, the state was content to pay private schools to educate those who could not afford a private education and did not bother with the expense of creating public, tax-supported schools.

Under Isaac Alexander, the New Danville school enhanced the quality of its education and survived without state aid during most of his tenure. Alexander introduced sectarian in-

struction in the school in 1860 despite the nonsectarian purpose of the Masonic institution, but his trustees did not object, probably because he was their pastor as well. When the academy became a Methodist institution in 1873, its new trustees officially approved Alexander's sectarian religious purposes. The dislocations of the Civil War and Reconstruction did not interfere with the implementation of the purposes of the academy, but the latter finally faced the possibility of extinction by the events in 1873 - - the transfer of the New Danville community to Kilgore, the Panic of 1873, and the lack of state funds to offset the effects of low enrollment and low income threatened by the loss of patronage and the depression. In order to survive, the New Danville Masonic Female Academy followed its community to Kilgore in 1873, where the Methodists generously offered it new facilities and their enthusiastic support. In surviving, the school continued to implement for another century the purposes which had inspired its first quarter century in New Danville.

During its first twenty-six years, the New Danville Masonic school proved the ability of a private school in nineteenth century Texas to offer quality education to its patrons with little or no state aid. As long as it had the backing of the Masons, the academy could have survived indefinitely. With state aid, the school offered a longer session and per-

haps a broader course of study than was possible with private funds alone. Obviously, the school probably would not have survived at all without some form of private or public aid, since some of its students could not afford to pay tuition for their education. It is to the lasting credit of the Masons and the State of Texas, which emulated them, that such a system of support began with schools like the New Danville Masonic Female Academy.

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CHAPTER II

ALEXANDER INSTITUTE

In the fall of 1873, the New Danville Masonic Female Academy became a different kind of educational institution, when the members of the Kilgore Methodist Church assumed control of the school which had begun under Masonic auspices. But the change was more than from nondenominational to denominational; the school also changed academically in 1873. Having begun as a small primary school for both sexes in 1847, it had become an academy for females only in 1854, offering both primary and high school courses of study. In 1873, the school once again opened its doors to both sexes and offered its high school course for the first time to males as well as females. In becoming coeducational, the academy offered a broader curriculum to its students and quickly became one of the elite boarding schools of East Texas (5, 7).

The purposes of the New Danville academy underwent a significant change in 1873. Although Isaac Alexander continued to offer an education of high quality to his students, he also insisted upon providing them with sectarian religious instruction, a purpose not advocated by the schools' original owner, the Grand Lodge of Texas. Such a purpose met with the

approval of Alexander's Methodist congregation, however, which became the new owner of the school in 1873. The purpose of this chapter is to examine how and to what extent the school implemented its original purposes of providing high quality education and religious instruction for its students from 1873 to 1894. The success of the school after becoming a Methodist institution was a significant factor in its survival as a private institute in the late nineteenth century (15).

Just prior to the beginning of the fall term in 1873, Alexander moved his academy from the building of Masonic Lodge No. 101 at New Danville into the new building of the Kilgore Methodist Church. Like its predecessor, the Methodist building had an aisle down the middle to separate the sexes in the one-room structure plus a partition down the aisle to prevent males and females from viewing one another during study or worship. As both pastor and teacher of the local community, Alexander placed his pulpit-lectern on a stage at the front end of the partition so that he could see and speak to both sexes simultaneously without their being able to see each other. With such arrangements in 1873, Alexander proposed that the school become coeducational for the first time in nineteen years (18).

The Methodists of Kilgore preferred that their new school

serve the entire community, so they were enthusiastic in their endorsement of Alexander's proposal. To make the school truly coeducational, he expanded the curriculum to offer more than the finishing school course of study, which was serving primarily as terminal education for girls. In 1873, Alexander broadened his curriculum further by adding a college preparatory course for boys, especially designed for the education of young ministers. The female academy became a coeducational institute similar to Fowler Institute of the antebellum period, and its upgraded and expanded literary curriculum met the standards required for college entrance in the late nineteenth century South. Alexander persuaded his Methodist trustees to approve the academic changes in the institution with the argument that the East Texas Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, no longer had a school to serve as its center for ministerial training and that their school should succeed Fowler Institute in providing that service (18).

Because of the school's recent change of location and purpose, the Methodist trustees decided that it should no longer be the New Danville Masonic Female Academy and voted to honor their pastor-teacher by renaming the school after him. They hoped that the name "Alexander Institute" would attract a more substantial enrollment from the East Texas

area than some less familiar title, and it soon became synonymous with quality education (5, 18).

Alexander Institute offered basically the same curriculum taught by the New Danville academy since 1854 but enriched the primary course of study by adding courses in the Bible, literature, and American history. In addition to the standard Latin, Greek, English composition and literature, European history, and mathematics of the high school course of study, Alexander required his male students to take courses in Bible, philosophy, and public speaking. The institute still offered the traditional finishing school course for girls, but Alexander emphasized the greater importance of the literary course, which prepared all his students for college study or professional life. True to his purposes, he trained many young persons who later earned degrees from colleges and universities and eventually became prominent ministers, lawyers, businessmen, and politicians. By 1900, the small Methodist school had educated over half the ministers serving in the East Texas Conference (20). So thorough was their training under Isaac Alexander that they were eligible for ordination and conference membership immediately upon graduation from his institute (1, 13).

But it was not as a Methodist seminary that Alexander Institute attracted the majority of its students to Kilgore in

1873. Alexander promoted his institute as the elite boarding school for all of East Texas, located conveniently on the International and Great Northern Railway. Although most of its students came from the local area while the school remained in Kilgore, Alexander's reputation attracted a significant number of boarding students from communities all over East Texas (21). To house a larger number of boarding students than before, Alexander moved from his New Danville farm to a large, two-story home which he built only a few blocks from the institute in Kilgore. Isaac's second wife, as had his first, served as matron of the female boarding students and taught the finishing school course of study. Male boarding students usually lived in approved private homes around the community of Kilgore, most of them residing with a retired minister near the school.

Isaac Alexander always showed intense concern for the welfare of his students and the community environment in which they lived. From its beginning, he was Kilgore's leading citizen - its pastor, teacher, and unofficial mayor. He provided the community with intellectual and spiritual leadership as well as moral guidance. The townspeople felt his presence everywhere. Even at night, he walked the streets of the village to see if each of his male boarding students had gone to bed. Everyone in the community, student or citizen

alike, felt protected by Alexander's meticulous care. His institute was the center of community life for Kilgore and was busy with church or school activity throughout each week of the year (11).

Alexander charged four dollars tuition and twelve dollars room and board monthly but allowed needy students, minister's children, and ministerial students to attend the school without charge. As he had in New Danville under the Masons, the teacher received all tuition directly as his personal income and left provision of physical facilities and equipment to his Methodist trustees. Most of the female students of the New Danville academy remained enrolled in the institute in 1873, and their numbers complemented the admission of new male and boarding students in the fall term, increasing the enrollment to over fifty for 1873-1874. Although there was a change in name, location, and ownership for the former New Danville Masonic Female Academy in 1873, it enjoyed a clear continuity of personnel, curriculum, and purpose in the transition.

Although Alexander Institute began in Kilgore in 1873, it clearly inherited its teacher, students, courses, and goals from the New Danville Masonic Female Academy. If educational continuity is the continuity of names, places, and property, then perhaps the academy and the institute were two different

institutions; but if educational continuity is the continuity of persons, activities, and purposes, then the schools of New Danville and Kilgore were actually the same institution in continuous existence from 1847 through 1873. After all, Alexander continued to teach in Kilgore as he had in New Danville. He instructed his students by the recitation method eight hours a day, ten months of the year. Behind their partition, male and female students recited their lessons alternatively under the watchful eye of their stern teacher. Even with the addition of boys to his school, Alexander still rarely resorted to physical punishment to maintain discipline; if he had to punish a boy, he usually wielded a large jackknife to "tap" the student's head. Combining strict discipline with high academic standards and thorough teaching, Alexander always insisted upon a high degree of scholarship from his students. Just as concerned with their hearts as with their minds, he sought to develop character in his students through daily Bible reading, weekly moral lectures, and his own personal example (11).

The first official statement of purpose in the school's history appeared in the 1873 Bulletin of Alexander Institute: "Our purpose is to educate both the head and the heart; to give correct views of the philosophy of life, the elements of success, and the principles of honor; to offer young gentle-

men the means of a thorough preparatory and business education, and to give to young ladies a full and finished course " (6). Thus Alexander published the purposes which had motivated his teaching at New Danville and set forth the purposes which he sought to serve in Kilgore. Following the pattern he had set in 1860, he invited the school's patrons and other interested citizens to witness his students' annual final recitations at graduation ceremonies in June, 1874. Girls who had begun the "full and finished course" in New Danville received high school diplomas from their new Methodist trustees after submitting written compositions for consideration by Alexander, and the institute's first male high school graduates received "certificates of graduation" listing their academic records at the institute in order to facilitate their admission to a college or university after delivering a speech before the graduation assembly. There is no evidence that any graduate of Alexander Institute had difficulty gaining admission to an institution of higher education in the United States (10, 18).

Alexander Institute received a regular state tuition subsidy continuously for twenty years from 1874 to 1894, making it easier for Alexander and his Methodist trustees to offer a free education to needy students. The State of Texas allocated $1.95 from tax revenues for each student enrolled

in the Kilgore community school during 1874-1875, thus continuing the system initiated two years before under Reconstruction. Alexander began the session with a four-month "free" term, during which the tuition of all primary and high school students came entirely from state funds; although the state law specified that the school might charge tuition of high school students who could afford to pay during the "free" term, Alexander Institute never did so (6). As in New Danville, private tuition and the contributions of the supporters of the school totally financed Alexander's expenses during the final six months of each session (4, 5). Church contributions to the institute increased for 1874-1875, when the New Danville Presbyterians decided to leave the Masonic building and reunited with the Methodist congregation in worship services under Isaac Alexander in the facilities of the Kilgore church and school. With increased financial support from the church and state, Alexander had no problem receiving tuition for every student enrolled in Alexander Institute by 1875 (4).

Seeking to enlarge his enrollment and income at the institute, Alexander persuaded his trustees that the school could obtain increased patronage from across the East Texas area by making it the property of the East Texas Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South in 1875. Convinced that the institute would be little more than the community school of Kilgore as long as it remained exclusively in local

hands, the Kilgore Society of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South voted to transfer its ownership of the institute to the conference in the hope of expanding its constituency and increasing its enrollment (13).

The 1875 East Texas Conference gratefully accepted the gift of the school, which had already been training its ministers for the previous two years, and duly acknowledged the investment and support the people of Kilgore had given the school through the years. The conference elected the Methodist trustees of Kilgore to act as its representatives in all matters pertaining to its new property and promised that its new conference school would receive as much support as any of the eighteen Methodist schools and colleges in Texas. After 1875, the East Texas Conference assumed ultimate responsibility for the survival and destiny of the small school, and Alexander Institute continued to exert increasing influence upon the conference through the education of its ministers (1, 13).

Although locally tax-supported public high schools were established in Texas for the first time in 1875, most Texans continued to patronize private schools like Alexander Institute for the remainder of the nineteenth century, preferring to finance their children's education privately rather than through an increase in school taxes. The State

Department of Education reduced its tuition subsidy to community schools to $1.47 per student for 1876-1877 because of low tax revenue and allowed the school trustees to certify their teachers as qualified without the necessity of securing county court approval. Unlike during Reconstruction, the state did not seek to control the schools which received its subsidy after 1874, a policy most acceptable to the majority of Texans of the period, who obviously believed that the government which governs least, governs best (8, 9, 19).

Like the state government, the East Texas Conference sought to help Alexander Institute more than to control it. In 1877, the conference declared: "Alexander Institute, now under the control of this body, is worthy of all support." As it had in the case of Fowler Institute before the Civil War, the East Texas Conference appointed the local presiding elder to serve as financial agent of the institute to assist Alexander in recruiting paying patronage for the school from across the conference area in 1877-1878. Alexander advertised the high quality of education available at his school and the "moral atmosphere" of saloonless Kilgore in the 1878 Bulletin of Alexander Institute, and the State of Texas also helped improve his enrollment with a 300 per cent increase in its tuition subsidy to $4.50 per student for 1878-1879. Almost one hundred students entered Alexander Institute in

the fall of 1878, and the enrollment filled the Methodist building to absolute capacity with 150 students by 1883, increasing the school's income considerably (6, 13).

Alexander extended his teaching to twelve months a year in 1883 to take advantage of a new state law requiring all teachers receiving income from the state subsidy to pass a state certification examination to establish their professional qualifications. Establishing the school's first summer session, Alexander enrolled dozens of East Texas teachers, including some of his own graduates of the past thirty-two years, in a "normal institute" to prepare them for the state examination in 1883. Teaching his colleagues the principles and techniques of education, he trained hundreds of certified teachers from the East Texas area during the next six summers, rivalling the numbers of ordained Methodist ministers his institute produced. This first course offering beyond the high school level enhanced the reputation of the institution and attracted the enrollment of regular students interested in becoming teachers. Graduates of the normal institute often encouraged students from East Texas common schools to enroll in Alexander Institute for their high school education under the respected Isaac Alexander (5, 21).

Having tripled his enrollment in five years, Alexander had to subdivide his crowded classroom with another partition,

creating another pair of male-female classes in 1883. For the first time in the school's history, he hired another faculty member, known only as J. B. Ramsey, B.A., who taught the lower grades and supervised male boarders (18). Alexander assumed the rank of principal of the institute in 1883 and made no complaint about Ramsey during the latter's two years as his colleague; enrollment remained high under both teachers (13).

By 1883, the large enrollment of Alexander Institute necessitated boarding students in private homes all over Kilgore, and the crowded condition of the classes interferred with the quality of education at the school. The Kilgore trustees appealed to the East Texas Conference for $5,000 to enlarge the classroom facilities of the conference school, the first such request for financial support made of the institute's new owners (13). Declaring that "the Alexander Institute is the property of this conference and has supported itself for eleven years without any financial aid . . . . the citizens of Kilgore have petitioned us to cooperate with them in enlarging the institution, and we feel the need," the East Texas Conference agreed to raise the funds requested for the purpose of adding a second floor of classrooms to the institute. Two conference ministers became trustees of Alexander Institute for the first time to assist in the con-

ference building fund campaign, and the conference insisted that the trustees procure a new state charter for the school recognizing its ownership of the school property in order to protect its investment. The trustees agreed to replace the institute's old Masonic charter as soon as the conference improved the school property (13).

Unlike the Grand Lodge of Texas in 1849 and 1858, the East Texas Conference failed to support the trustees of the school in their building campaign of 1883. Despite the efforts of the Methodist trustees and ministers, the churches of the conference showed no interest in contributing funds to support the Kilgore community school, which many considered the responsibility of Kilgore alone. About half of the needed funds came from around Kilgore by 1884, when the East Texas Conference again appealed to its membership: "Up to this time, Alexander Institute has never cost us one dollar, but has done us considerable service in educating young men for the ministry, free of charge. To enable this institution to do the full work of a conference school, additional rooms are now necessary, and more funds are needed" (13). By 1885, however, the conference churches contributed only $500, or about 10 per cent, of the promised building funds; the balance came from Kilgore (13).

Advertising Isaac Alexander's "moral as well as mental

training and low tuition" of $4.00 a month for each student, the institute completed expansion of its physical facilities in time to attract another large enrollment in 1885. In addition to erecting a second floor of classrooms above the original building, the Kilgore Methodists built another wing as a chapel for school and community worship services. Above the chapel, Masonic Lodge No. 101 built an assembly hall for its own meetings and other community and school affairs, completing the cycle which had begun thirty-eight years before - the Masons had first housed the school, and then the school housed the Masons. The old Masonic building in New Danville remained the community center for the tiny village despite the loss of its lodge, school, and original congregation (3, 4, 18).

Noting that its school had been "greatly improved" despite the "great financial pressure" borne by Kilgore during the recent building campaign, the 1885 East Texas Conference observed: "Alexander Institute is steadily gaining the confidence of the entire conference, which looks to it principally for the education of our daughters and the academic course for our sons" (13). Doubling the number of its ministerial trustees, the conference raised $1,200 from its churches by 1886 to pay off the remaining building debt at Alexander Institue (13).

Just as the thirty-six-year-old institute began its build-

ing expansion campaign in 1883, the State of Texas established the University of Texas at Austin, which affected the course of study at Alexander Institute in the years that followed by the influence of its high academic standards and admission requirements. Following guidelines set by the new university, the State Department of Education established minimum high school curriculum standards for all such schools receiving the 1884 state tuition subsidy. To meet the new standards, Alexander expanded his high school curriculum to include courses in geography and orthography in 1884. The following year, the University of Texas announced even higher standards for high school graduates seeking admission to its college course and began to send out accreditation teams of its professors to visit selected high schools across the state, accrediting fourteen institutions in the first year. Graduates of accredited high schools after 1884 entered the university without examination. Although the university was unable to examine the institute during the latter's prosperous years from 1884 to 1888, graduates of the Methodist school had no trouble securing admission to the university from the time that it opened (6).

Following completion of the building expansion in 1885, Alexander raised his tuition to $42 for 1885-1886 and replaced J. B. Ramsey with S. T. Smith, M. A., who assisted

him in further expansion of the high school course of study to meet the new admission standards of the University of Texas. Courses in German, Spanish, chemistry, biology, and business (shorthand, typing, bookkeeping) became part of the institute's curriculum, and the teachers contributed 300 volumes from their own personal book collections to form the school's first library. Advertising the institute's "new and commodious" facilities, Alexander also justified in its 1886 Bulletin the increase in student charges by pointing to the school's academic improvements:

> We are doing the work of a first-class school at little more than half the usual cost of such institutions. There are no extra charges for anything. A complete collegiate course is now offered at Alexander Institute. Students may select their course of study, but are honestly advised as to which course to pursue. Instruction is given in almost every branch of science . . . .
>
> Quite a number of young ladies have been given a course equally as extensive as that of the first grade female schools in any part of the country, and young gentlement have been given the means of a thorough preparatory and business education (6).

For those patrons concerned about the moral and religious standards of the school as well as its high level of quality education, Alexander reiterated the twin purposes which had guided him as its teacher for the past quarter century, insisting that moral values were as important as mathematical values and pointing out what he considered to be a prime

reason for patronizing Alexander Institute: "Kilgore is a small town which offers excellent advantages for Christian culture, a healthful location, and all the conveniences of a large place, without its incentives to evil and dissipation. WE ENJOY THE BENEFITS OF local option, and are hence free from saloons and their attendant evils." In response to such arguments and the improvements that had been made in the school, the enrollment at Alexander Institute reached a record 166 students in the fall of 1886 (6).

Complimenting Alexander on the progress of its school, the 1886 East Texas Conference informed its members that the institute's "work in the religious point of view has been most satisfying. . . . Here our young men must be educated" (13). After urging its members to continue their patronage of the school, the conference added two laymen from Jacksonville to its trustees and reminded them to obtain a new charter for the institute. On January 15, 1887, the State of Texas officially chartered Alexander Institute as the property of the East Texas Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South. Finally, the conference praised Alexander's efforts to broaden his high school curriculum to meet the new state standards and instructed him to represent it at a state meeting of Methodist educators in early 1887. One of some twenty heads of Texas Methodist schools present at Southwestern University in Georgetown, Alexander proposed that all the

church's secondary schools in the state adopt the new state standards and that all its colleges and universities admit their graduates without examination. The Methodist educators of Texas adopted his proposal "to bring about a proper uniformity of work among the church's schools in the state" and complimented Alexander Institute for its pioneering efforts in meeting the new standards, declaring it to be "one of the permanent and useful institutions of the land" (13, 14).

Following acceptance of the school's academic improvements in 1887, S. T. Smith resigned after two years' service to assume another position, and Alexander appointed his own daughter to be the new assistant teacher. As a graduate of her father's finishing school in 1887, Fannie Alexander was the first student to receive a Bachelor of Arts degree from Alexander Institute, although she had earned no college credit. Trained as a teacher in her father's normal institution, she was but one of several dozen female graduates awarded the new honorary degree over the next nine years, as authorized by the 1887 Charter of Alexander Institute and conferred by its board of trustees (6, 18).

After his enrollment remained high with 160 students in the fall of 1887, Alexander reported to the East Texas Conference: "The moral and religious deportment of the students is generally good. By far the largest number take advantage

of Kilgore's good Sunday school and church. Discipline has never been more easily enforced" (13). To culminate the prosperous decade ending in 1887, the conference elected Alexander president of his institute, as authorized by the new charter (13).

Alexander's joy was short-lived. In 1888, a riding accident took the life of his only son, and then his fine Kilgore home burned to the ground. Not only did the latter tragedy deprive the Alexander family of a place to live, but it forced the institute to board all of its female students elsewhere in the town. Although the loss did not cause a significant decline in the school's total enrollment in 1888, Alexander requested that the East Texas Conference immediately launch a new building campaign to provide a dormitory for the faculty and female students of the institute. The 1888 East Texas Conference instructed its presiding elders to raise $2,500 for the new dormitory out of sympathy for the plight of the Alexanders, but again the churches of the conference declined to support the school's building program, in the belief that it remained a local Kilgore matter (13). By 1889, only $500 had been raised for the new facility, and all that the conference gave its school was a new fire insurance policy (13).

The number of boarding students at Alexander Institute

declined slightly in 1889, and most of the 150 students who enrolled for the fall term were from the local area around Kilgore. Isaac Alexander and his family moved in to live with his former father-in-law, a retired Methodist minister in Kilgore, hoping for approval of the construction of the new dormitory (13). When the state reduced his tuition subsidy to $4.00 per student in 1889, the loss of boarding income from his home hit Alexander even harder. When no dormitory was forthcoming in 1890, the discouraged Alexander resigned as president of his institute, retired from the East Texas Conference, and moved to the home of his second wife in Henderson, where he had gone following his nervous breakdown in 1851. After thirty years of service to the school which bore his name, Isaac Alexander bade farewell to Kilgore (13, 18).

Although somewhat disturbed by Alexander's sudden departure, the trustees of Alexander Institute were determined that the school should continue to serve the purposes which had inspired it since its beginning forty-three years before. Seeking a worthy scholar to succeed the eminent Alexander, they elected G. J. Nunn, M. A., president and founder of Mary Allen College in Crockett, Texas, established as the state's first junior college five years before. A scholar and a well-known East Texas educator in his own right,

Nunn accepted the post vacated by Alexander because of the recognized academic standing and reputation of the institute, stipulating only that the trustees complete the campaign to erect a new dormitory for the school. The trustees agreed, and raised sufficient funds locally to initiate construction prior to the beginning of the fall term in 1890. The Nunns moved into the first dormitory rooms available (6, 13, 18).

Following the departure of Isaac Alexander, the enrollment at Alexander Institute fell 25 per cent to only 115 students in 1890-1891. Nunn reported to the 1890 East Texas Conference: "While the patronage for Alexander Institute is by no means as large as it deserves, nearly all students belong to some church, and the spiritual state of the students is unusually good" (13). A devout layman, Nunn continued Alexander's religious emphasis at the school, supplementing the institute's daily Bible study and weekly lectures on "moral science" with weekly prayer meetings (6). The conference commended him as a "safe and wise educator" preserving the school's "moral and religious atmosphere" and renewed its instructions to the presiding elders to collect the money pledged for the new dormitory two years before. The balance of the building campaign funds came from the conference churches, and the new dormitory stood complete by the 1891-1892 session (13).

As Nunn's reputation attracted more students, Alexander Institute easily filled its new dormitory to capacity from the enrollment of 160 students in the fall of 1891. Nunn hired two new teachers for the primary and intermediate grades while he taught the high school course of study, and reported to the 1891 East Texas Conference that its school was in a "flourishing condition," adding that "several families have recently moved to Kilgore to secure the advantages of Alexander Institute" (13). Enthusiastic with the new president's success, the conference instructed his financial agent, the local presiding elder, to intensify student recruiting efforts for 1892-1893. He succeeded in raising the enrollment to a new record of 173 students for the fall term of 1892, causing Nunn to hire two more teachers and a librarian; thus creating a staff three times as large as when the institute enrolled 166 students. Realizing that his tuition income was insufficient to meet the new faculty salaries and operating expenses of the school, Nunn asked the 1892 East Texas Conference to create an endowment fund for the institute to supplement its regular income. Although Nunn insisted that the conference school was seriously in need of a permanent endowment, the conference was unwilling to launch another financial campaign for the institute among its churches so soon after completion of the new dormitory

and chose instead to give him $325 cash for his teachers' salaries, the first operating subsidy awarded the school by its owners since it received annual subsidies from the Grand Lodge of Texas (6, 13).

Forced to plead with the conference to meet the expense of his larger faculty, Nunn intensified his efforts to recruit more paying students for the institute in 1893. He succeeded in enrolling a new record of 203 students for the "free" term in the fall of 1893, and the state raised its tuition subsidy for that term to $5.00 per student. But with the onset of the Panic of 1893, economic depression struck East Texas, causing the families of 125 students to withdraw them from the institute at the end of the "free" term due to lack of funds to pay the private tuition. Only seventy-eight students paid full tuition for 1893-1894, forcing Nunn to dismiss two of his teachers at mid-term for lack of funds (13).

Nunn pleaded with the East Texas Conference again in 1893. He noted that the paying patronage from across the conference had declined as boarding students withdrew because of the depression. Very few students remained for the "regular" term, so he received more tuition income from non-Methodists and the state than he did from his own church. Declaring that "Alexander Institute is in an anomalous con-

dition for a church school," Nunn pointed out that it was more the public free school of Kilgore than the private institution of the East Texas Conference. He requested that the conference replace its paying patronage with a permanent endowment income or an annual cash contribution for its school in order to meet its increased operational expenses, at least until the depression had run its course. The conference gave him another $250 to pay his teachers' salaries to the end of the year and debated whether to continue subsidizing the school's operating budget indefinitely (13).

Most members of the 1893 East Texas Conference argued that they should not be expected to bail out Alexander Institute every time its president hired too many teachers or could not enroll enough paying students to balance his budget, depression or no depression. Realizing the impossibility of increasing paying patronage for the school in the midst of an economic panic, some members proposed that the conference simply abandon the institute altogether, as it had abandoned other Methodist schools, including Fowler Institute. If the conference had renounced its responsibility for the school, ownership of the institute would have reverted to the trustees of the Kilgore Society of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, who had built the school almost entirely with their own funds and often had pledged to support

the institute come what may. Thus, conference debate turned to a discussion over whether to give the school back to the Kilgore Methodists after eighteen years of joint ownership by all Methodists of East Texas (13).

Whereas the Methodists of Kilgore were prepared to assume total responsibility for the school for the first time since 1875, the trustees from other parts of the East Texas Conference insisted that it remain a conference school. Led by trustee W. R. Miller of Jacksonville, they proposed that the institute be moved "to a more suitable place, closer to the center of the East Texas Conference." After much debate, and over the opposition of the Kilgore Methodists, the conference adopted the following resolution:

> Alexander Institute, largely on account of its location at the extreme north end of our conference, has failed to meet the wants of our church as a conference school. At its present site, it can never accomplish the needs of our church, or enter upon an existence of any marked prosperity. This institution of learning should be moved to a more central point, where a better patronage may be obtained, by not later than September 1, 1894 (13).

To fulfill the intent of its resolution, the conference appointed a special relocation committee of three Alexander Institute trustees, none from either Kilgore or Jacksonville, to select a new site for the school. Following this decision, the Kilgore trustees observed that the conference was renouncing ownership of the institute property in Kilgore

and insisted that it be returned forthwith to its original owners, the Kilgore Society of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South. As soon as it finally selected a new site for its school, the conference officially returned the property to the Kilgore Methodists, who supported it with the state subsidy as Alexander Institute until 1902, when they gave it to the city and it became the Kilgore Public High School (3). Although the conference had predicted that the school could never "enter upon an existence of marked prosperity," it obtained one of the highest incomes of any school in the state following the discovery of oil in Kilgore less than thirty years later. The effects of the Panic of 1893 wore off quickly, and Alexander Institute continued to prosper in Kilgore after the departure of most of its faculty in 1894 (3, 4).

Despite the fact that the economic problems facing Alexander Institute in Kilgore were only temporary, the conference committee to relocate the school immediately sought a new site closer to the center of the East Texas Conference. The committee rejected Marshall because it was on the extreme eastern edge of the conference, and then turned down Lufkin, which had the best location but no facilities for the school. The committee then travelled north to Cherokee County, where Rusk offered the conference its old penitentiary,

which later became a mental hospital; finally the committee chose Jacksonville, only forty miles southwest of Kilgore and also situated in the extreme north end of the conference. On January 10, 1894, Jacksonville offered the conference school property equal in value to that of Kilgore, and the committee promptly voted to relocate the school there (10).

Education began in Jacksonville only a short while after it originated in New Danville. Originally founded as Gum Creek in 1847, Jacksonville helped establish the Presbyterian Larissa College a few miles to the north in Cherokee County in 1848, which provided high school and college studies for local students until 1869, when it was relocated to become part of Trinity University. Methodists organized the first primary school for the community in 1849, and offered the traditional study course in a log community building almost identical to that erected by New Danville at the same time. Renamed Jacksonville in 1850, the community obtained the state subsidy for its Methodist school after 1854, and survived the lean years of the Civil War and Reconstruction by paying its itinerant teachers whatever it could from private tuition and Methodist contributions (16).

Jay Gould's International and Great Northern Railway by-passed Jacksonville because of surveying problems in 1872, forcing the latter community to relocate several miles away to be near its depot (17). After the people of Jacksonville

began to move, the Methodists, like those of New Danville at the same time, decided to erect a new building near the railroad for their church and community school. The Jacksonville Society of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South followed the pattern of the Kilgore Society by renaming their school the Jacksonville Collegiate Institute in 1873 and offered a coeducational primary and high school curriculum, featuring a finishing school for girls and college preparatory studies for boys. Isaac Alexander's counterpart in Jacksonville was J. J. A. Patton, a former teacher in Larissa College, who attracted over a hundred students to the first session of his institute for 1873-1874. Charging a high tuition, Patton raised sufficient funds to erect a separate building for his institute in 1874 and declared it a nondenominational school. Whereas Methodist Alexander made his school denominational after a quarter century of Masonic control following its relocation in 1873, Presbyterian Patton made his school nondenominational after a quarter century of Methodist control following its relocation in 1873, but no other sponsor replaced the Methodists (12).

Jacksonville Collegiate Institute operated as a community school on the state subsidy and private tuition from 1874 to 1878, when J. J. A. Patton resigned to take a better position elsewhere. Renamed the Jacksonville Institute in

1878, it survived under teachers R. E. Hendry (to 1880) and A. D. Davies to 1881, both of whom also resigned because of low private tuition income. Changing its name to the Jacksonville Academy in 1881, teacher J. M. Hubbard, then offered the common primary course and a high school course consisting only of Latin, Greek, and geometry for the same tuition charged at that time by Alexander Institute. Paying patronage declined until the academy finally became the Jacksonville Public School in 1887, offering the common primary course of study only in the "free" term of state subsidy and charging no private tuition. The building erected by Patton in 1874 became the public school after removal across town in 1887, but it collapsed after a violent windstorm in July, 1890. From 1874 to 1890, the level and quality of education had steadily declined until there was no school whatsoever for Jacksonville (12).

A quarrel between the advocates of public and private education prevented the children of Jacksonville from receiving any education at all in 1890-1891. Those who wished to rebuild the public school were able to raise only $400 for the project, while other citizens, led by trustees W. R. Miller and W. C. Bolton of Alexander Institute, insisted that Jacksonville deserved another first-rate private school and withheld their contributions. The Jacksonville <u>Banner</u>

warned: "It is evident that some kind of compromise must be effected, or else Jacksonville will have no school at all for some time to come," and indignant citizens condemned the town, which was five times the size of Kilgore, for its lack of education in letters to the newspaper's editor:

> It is a shame indeed that a growing town like Jacksonville has no school . . .People say, "Where is your school." But the people of Jacksonville are born Solons; they need no education! . . .I am ashamed of our town. Bad effects are beginning to appear daily, and if something's not done in the matter of educational facilities - Jacksonville, erect a schoolhouse! . . .When next I visit Jacksonville, I trust my eyes may rest upon a temple of education, and not upon the wreck of what we once had (10).

In early 1891, graduates of Jacksonville Collegiate Institute and Larissa College, led by W. R. Miller and W. C. Bolton, formed the Jacksonville Educational Association to establish a new private school for the community. As the association's chairman, Miller gave it several acres of land in the Sunset section of Jacksonville and launched a local campaign to raise $10,000 for a new school building to be erected on the property in time for the 1891-1892 session. The funds were soon forthcoming, and a substantial, two-story brick structure opened as the Sunset Institute of Jacksonville in 1891. The association hired an experienced Cherokee County educator, J.F. Sigler, to offer a full

primary and high school course of study to the community of Jacksonville, securing the state subsidy for the "free" term and offering a reasonable rate of private tuition for the "regular" term. The new school proved very popular in the local area (12, 18).

Sigler opened Sunset Institute with a summer normal institute for Cherokee County teachers preparing for the 1891 state teachers' certification examination. Like Isaac Alexander, who had taught such institutes as early as 1883, Sigler lectured his students on such subjects as "The Responsibilities of School Trustees," a subject of vital interest to Jacksonville during this period. Over one hundred students enrolled for the 1891-1892 session at the institute, increasing to about 150 students for 1892-1893. Although Sigler was a popular teacher, some local citizens still preferred to have a separate public school for students who could afford to attend the "free" term only and raised sufficient funds to rebuild the Jacksonville Public School in 1893-1894. The Sunset Institute opened its final "free" term in the fall of 1893, enrolling a record 160 for the increased state subsidy of $5.00 per student. Like Alexander Institute in Kilgore, however, Sunset Institute lost most of its students to the Panic of 1893 during its "regular" term, as numerous Jacksonville families found that they could no longer afford to pay the

school's private tuition. Both institutes were in serious financial trouble and needed more paying patronage. With the local public school collecting the state subsidy and enrolling most local students in its 1894 "free" term, Sunset Institute would be worse off than its Kilgore counterpart, because it would have to rely upon its private tuition income alone after 1893-1894 (18). Aware of the plight of both institutions, trustee W. R. Miller devised a plan to combine their paying patronage in 1894.

W. R. Miller was in a unique position to effect his plan as chairman of the Jacksonville Educational Association and a trustee of Alexander Institute; he was also chairman of the board of the Jacksonville Methodist Church, where he proposed in 1893 that local Methodists petition the East Texas Conference to move Alexander Institute to Jacksonville for merger with Sunset Institute. Convinced that the Methodist school could attract additional paying patronage for the Jacksonville school from across the conference, the local Methodists urged the community to join them in inviting Alexander Institute to Jacksonville in a headlined newspaper article:

> THE ALEXANDER INSTITUTE: SHALL IT BE MOVED TO JACKSONVILLE? We believe no step could be taken by the people of this community that would result in more good to our town than one looking to the location of the Institute at this place. The influence of a school such as

> Alexander Institute can only be good - - intellectually, socially, morally. The location of the Institute here would not in the least interfere with our public free school, as they would necessarily be conducted entirely separate and independent of each other (10).

Since the majority of Jacksonville's citizens supported the re-establishment of the local public school, "only a few" non-Methodists, mostly members of the Jacksonville Educational Association, signed the petition to the East Texas Conference supporting the Miller proposal in 1893 (10).

In order to make the relocation of Alexander Institute in Jacksonville attractive to the East Texas Conference, the local Educational Association advertised for more paying patronage during the "regular" term of 1893-1894:

> While waiting for Alexander Institute, why not help in building up the Institute we already have? A good patronage for a school of high grade would be a better inducement for the Alexander Institute to come here than a large bonus. Money is necessary to run a school, but students are indispensable (10).

Having enrolled few boarding students from outside Jacksonville since it was established, Sunset Institute launched a local building campaign to raise $4,000 for a new girls' dormitory to replace the one Alexander Institute was to leave behind in Kilgore. As soon as the funds came from supporters of the Jacksonville Educational Association, the new dormitory rose a short distance from the Sunset Institute in time for

the spring term of 1894. On the eve of the visit of the East Texas Conference relocation committee to Jacksonville, the Sunset Institute property and dormitory were worth $12,000 or equal in value to the Alexander Institute property in Kilgore (10).

The Jacksonville Educational Association confidently predicted that the conference committee would accept ownership of the Sunset Institute on behalf of East Texas Methodists:

> We have strong hopes towards securing Alexander Institute. In all probability, the decision to relocate the Institute will be in Jacksonville's favor. This is by far the best location that can be possibly selected for the school. Jacksonville's chances are good, and we expect to see Alexander Institute open here full blast September 18, 1894. The wisdom of selecting this place will be apparent (10).

On January 11, 1894, the East Texas Conference announced its decision to move Alexander Institute to Jacksonville. The school would relocate for the second time in its history (13).

Reaction to the conference announcement was mixed. The Palestine <u>Advocate</u> reported that the people of Jacksonville were "jubilant at securing the location of the Kilgore Methodist College." Although the conference committee members insisted that "money cut no figure in the location," the Garrison <u>Signal</u> reported that "Jacksonville captured the Methodist college by offering a $12,000 bonus," and the Jacksonville <u>Banner</u> agreed: "Money made them choose

Jacksonville." The Rusk Cherokee Blade criticized the rejection of its proposed school site, insisting that "ninety per cent of the conference members favored Rusk." The Kilgore News simply reported that ownership of Alexander Institute would revert to the local Methodist society on January 26 (10).

G. J. Nunn and his faculty of three quietly completed the spring term of 1894 before leaving the Kilgore school in June (18). One of his teachers, J. S. Abbott, chose to remain behind out of loyalty to the Kilgore trustees and community; the trustees promptly elected him president to succeed Nunn for 1894-1895 (18). The only open dispute between the trustees and Nunn involved the library of the institute - - they refused to let Nunn take it with him to Jacksonville. Upon his departure, they informed the East Texas Conference that they no longer desired to serve as his trustees and refused to become trustees of the school in Jacksonville (13). At the end of the 1893-1894 session in Kilgore, only the Nunns and two other teachers, the J. C. Hennons, plus a few boarding students, left Alexander Institute for Sunset Institute in Jacksonville, while J. S. Abbott remained behind to teach the majority of students who returned to school in Kilgore for 1894-1895 (6, 18).

Whereas there was no clear continuity of student per-

sonnel from Alexander Institute in Kilgore to Sunset Institute in Jacksonville in 1894, there was continuity in faculty, curriculum, institutional purpose and ownership in the merger of the two institutions. Nevertheless, continuation of Alexander Institute in Kilgore made its continuation in Jacksonville a matter of some confusion during the first year of merger. Some members of the East Texas Conference suggested that the school in Jacksonville remain the Sunset Institute in order to differentiate from the school in Kilgore, while others proposed that its official name become the "East Texas Conference College, formerly known as the Alexander Institute." W. R. Miller and his trustees in Jacksonville insisted that the purpose of the transfer was to give the name of Isaac Alexander to the Sunset Institute so as to attract more paying patronage for the school, and they renamed their institution the Alexander Institute without conference permission in 1894. The East Texas Conference finally dropped the official name of Alexander Institute for its school in Jacksonville in 1895, and renamed it the Alexander Collegiate Institute to end the confusion (13).

The period from 1873 to 1894 was one of great change for the small school which had begun in New Danville in 1847. The change in ownership from Masonic to Methodist, nondenominational to denominational, was fundamental to an

official change in purpose from nonsectarian to sectarian. Although the Masons had permitted Isaac Alexander to teach religion in the school since 1860, it was not until 1873 that his new Methodist trustees allowed him to make it the official policy of the institution and to expand its curriculum to include studies for the Methodist ministry. For the next century, the basic twin purposes of the school were, in Alexander's words,"to educate both the head and the heart," offering its students high quality education and basic religious instruction (6). The change to Methodist ownership also gave the school the financial support and patronage of the East Texas Conference, which assumed responsibility for the school in 1875 in the spirit of the school's original owner, the Grand Lodge of Texas. Although the conference was somewhat reluctant in its financial support of the school's building program and operating budget during this period, it nevertheless gave the school what was needed in the final analysis, including a new location in 1894.

The change from New Danville to Kilgore was also an academic transition for the school. Having already become a female academy from a common primary school in 1854, the school became a college preparatory institute in 1873, offering professional studies for boys in addition to the finishing school for girls. Its curriculum further was

upgraded with the addition of teacher training courses in 1883 and courses required by the State of Texas and its new university for high school graduates seeking college admission in 1884 and 1885. The curriculum changes made at Alexander Institute became standard for all Methodist schools in Texas in 1887, when, with its new charter, the institute began conferring the first honorary degrees upon graduates of its finishing school. By 1894, Alexander Institute was recognized as one of the elite educational institutions of East Texas, offering a high quality course of study to students from all parts of the East Texas Conference.

A decline in paying patronage in 1893 caused Alexander Institute to move from Kilgore to Jacksonville. Although the institute received the state tuition subsidy as the community school of Kilgore from 1874 through the Panic of 1893, it could not support its expanded faculty with the meager private tuition which it received in 1893-1894. When the Sunset Institute in Jacksonville experienced similar difficulties during the economic panic, the East Texas Conference decided to merge the two schools in order to increase the paying patronage of each.

Alexander Institute successfully implemented its academic and religious purposes from 1873 to 1894, surviving as one of the most respected schools in nineteenth century

Texas. The efforts of Isaac Alexander and G. J. Nunn would not have been possible without the active support and sacrifices of the school's local Methodist trustees and the people of Kilgore. They provided Alexander Institute with a plant and paying patronage for more than two decades, laying the foundation for the school's survival and service in the twentieth century.

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CHAPTER III

ALEXANDER COLLEGIATE INSTITUTE

In the summer of 1894, the school known as Alexander Institute moved for the second time in its history. As with its first move from New Danville to Kilgore, the move from Kilgore to Jacksonville was the occasion for academic change in the institution. After 1894, the school concentrated more upon its college preparatory course, further broadening its high school curriculum to prepare its students for college admission. These academic improvements were a continuation of the upgrading of the school's course of study which had begun in 1854, when it originally became a high school, and had continued with the curriculum changes of 1873, 1884, and 1885. Following the example of Isaac Alexander, G. J. Nunn finally upgraded the high school to the level of a fully collegiate institute after moving it to Jacksonville in 1894.

The purpose of this chapter is to examine how and to what extent Alexander Collegiate Institute implemented its basic purposes of providing a high quality of academic education and religious instruction to its students from 1894 to 1909. Each of the school's three presidents during this period approached the implementation of its purposes in his

own unique manner, but the problems they faced were similar to those which had confronted the school before 1894. Their attempts to solve these problems were not always successful, but they provided interesting and valuable lessons for the school in dealing with similar troubles in the years that followed.

Upon his arrival in Jacksonville in the summer of 1894, G. J. Nunn met with the Jacksonville Educational Association, whose members had become the new trustees of the East Texas Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South when it chose the Sunset Institute as the new campus for its school earlier in the year. Since, like the Kilgore Society of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South before it, the Jacksonville Educational Association had spent its own funds to erect a plant for the Alexander Institute, the conference directed that the association continue to control the institute in trust for its new owners, the Methodists of East Texas. At Nunn's request, the Jacksonville trustees made several improvements in the plant before the 1894-1895 session, adding facilities for "musical, commercial, normal, and elocutionary training," science laboratories, and a 150-volume library to replace the one left behind in Kilgore (3).

While the physical improvements proceeded in the institute, Nunn advertised the school widely across the East Texas

area, supplementing the considerable publicity it had received when the decision to relocate it in Jacksonville had been made earlier in the year. He advised prospective patrons that the school was still located along the same International and Great Northern Railway which had served it in Kilgore and that it was also close to the new Cotton Belt line which passed through Jacksonville: "Railroads will bring the student to Jacksonville from any point in our territory in a few hours" (3).

G. J. Nunn also changed the school academically in 1894. Whereas he had continued the same program initiated by Isaac Alexander in Kilgore before the move to Jacksonville, Nunn developed his own statement of academic purpose for the institute in his Bulletin for 1894-1895:

> The present management will endeavor to keep up its past standard of excellence, and, if possible, elevate the standard. Teachers and trustees have entered upon the discharge of their duties determined to make this institution second to none of similar grade in the State. No pains will be spared in making its pupils thorough and capable of filling any post to which they may be called. With this object in view, we shall use our best efforts to build up the school by earnest, faithful, painstaking work, drawing out all the powers of the pupil --mental, moral, and aesthetic.
>
> Our constant aim is to make Alexander Institute, in all its departments, a fountain of solid learning and finished culture, and to give each pupil a favorable environment to become a real student. We offer no short

> route excellencies, no royal road proficiencies, but will use every earnest, honest effort to draw out harmoniously every faculty of the student's mind, according to the most approved methods of mind development. We do not attempt impossibilities; we do not propose to turn out only intellectual giants, or promise every one of our students a lucrative position upon leaving school.
>
> We do not claim to have the best institution extant, but believe that our work and equipment will compare favorably with any institution of like nature. We are not of the build-up kind by the tear-down process. We have no fight with any other institutions, but bid them all God-speed in battling for the right. We expect this institution to stand on its own merits (3).

As reflected by his comprehensive statement of academic purpose, Nunn intended to offer the rebuilt Jacksonville Public School considerable competition in the fall of 1894 and after. To attract a large enrollment of paying students, he expanded the curriculum to include art and "physical culture" (athletic exercise and personal hygiene, later known as"physical training") for all his students, plus philosophy, civics, and teacher training courses in the philosophy of education, the principles and methods of instruction, classroom administration, and psychology for high school students. Offering such "professional training in the science and art of instruction" during the regular session for the first time in the school's history, Nunn emphasized that he intended to impart "the drawing out, not the filling in or merely furnishing, of knowledge" in his

education courses (3).

After expanding his curriculum, Nunn invited a visiting team of professors from the University of Texas to examine his high school course of study for accreditation purposes. Noting that the institute's high school curriculum had correlated with the admission standards of the university since 1885, the visiting scholars accredited Alexander Institute as a secondary school of "high grade," the fifty-sixth such accreditation awarded in the state to that time. Graduates of the institute's collegiate course were eligible to enter the University of Texas without entrance examination beginning in the fall of 1895. Nunn continued Alexander's policy of awarding honorary baccalaurate degrees to his female finishing school graduates in 1895, conferring the Bachelor of Arts degree upon those who completed the three-year course in English literature and the Bachelor of Science degree upon those who completed the two-year course in fine arts or home economics. Male and female graduates of the collegiate course of study continued to receive high school diplomas or certificates of graduation (3).

Maintaining that "good manners spring from good morals," Nunn did not erect a partition to divide the sexes in his school in Jacksonville, but still tried to keep them apart as much as possible, declaring: "No communication, further than true politeness requires, is allowed. All unnecessary

gallantry is prohibited among the young gentlemen." Nunn did promote, however, minimal association between the sexes, observing:

> The coeducational system, to which we have committed ourselves, has been shown to be the only true and normal condition for the highest development and training of both sexes. They are a mutual stimulus to excellence in their classes, and a wholesome restraint to each other in their personal appearance and habits (3).

Requiring his female students to wear the uniforms which girls of the school had worn since 1854, "to avoid extravagance of dress," Nunn placed them under the careful supervision of his wife (described by the Bulletin as a "mother in the matters of health and bodily comfort") in the school dormitory, where boarding students still received "the advantages of study and association with members of the faculty." Although the boys continued to board in private homes after the move to Jacksonville, Nunn promised all his patrons that "due attention will be given to the cultivation of polite manners and sound morals . . . the entering wedge that opens the way to success." No student was permitted to use tobacco or engage in "profane, obscene, or quarrelsome language," and Nunn continued the policy of requiring all students to attend daily Bible study, weekly chapel, and regular Sunday school and worship services in local churches, going so far as to march all his Methodist students to and from the local Methodist church

each Sabbath (1, 3).

Isaac Alexander became pastor of the Jacksonville Methodist Church and rejoined the faculty of Alexander Institute as its chaplain in 1894. After his departure from the institute in Kilgore four years before, Alexander had established another Methodist school in Henderson thirty-nine years after opening Fowler Institute there before the Civil War. He and his daughter, Fannie, continued to offer the same course of study which they had taught in Kilgore at the new Alexander School in Henderson, which enrolled thirty students in the local Methodist church for $3.00 a month in 1890-1891. Alexander made less income in Henderson than he had in Kilgore, but he persuaded the local Methodists to erect a new building for his school in 1891 at the same time the Jacksonville Educational Association erected Sunset Institute. When Henderson decided to erect a public school in addition to its private school in 1892, Alexander lost his state subsidy and most of his paying patronage. The Panic of 1893 forced him to close his school in Henderson and follow his old institute to Jacksonville, where the East Texas Conference readmitted him to its active ministry in 1894 (2, 8).

Upon his arrival, the Jacksonville Banner enthusiastically announced that the eminent East Texas educator was the "founder of Alexander Institute, and his presence here

will no doubt aid the school very materially." G. J. Nunn lost no time in appointing Alexander the school's chaplain and chief recruiter of students, in charge of all campus religious activity. The old minister was as effective in those roles as he had been during his previous three decades with the school. The Banner reported high attendance of townspeople at the Methodist pastor's campus devotionals: "These meetings could not fail to impress the most careless and unconcerned." After recruiting some students across the conference, Alexander observed: "I think prospects for a good school here in Jacksonville are very good; indeed, much better than I had anticipated" (6).

Maintaining that "we do not offer the broadest culture for the least money. Thoroughness in what we attempt, at a reasonable rate, is our aim;" Nunn announced student charges for 1894-1895 "as low as any first-rate institution can afford," raising tuition for the regular session to $45 for 1894-1895 and $50 for 1895-1896 and charging ministers' children and ministerial students $10 tuition, the first such charge since the school became Methodist in 1873. Enrollment at the institute fell to 147 students in the fall of 1894, a decline of almost 10 per cent for Sunset Institute and almost 30 per cent for Alexander Institute, but a rise in the number of paying students for both schools. Nunn was

able to pay his faculty salaries and operating expense for the first time in three years, and the Jacksonville Educational Association invited the 1894 East Texas Conference to the campus to see how well the merger of the two institutes had benefitted both schools. The conference commended Nunn and his trustees for the improvements which they had made in its school (3, 8).

Alexander Institute offered its students more extra-curricular activities in Jacksonville in 1894-1895. Continuing the religious activities under the leadership of Isaac Alexander, Nunn persuaded J. F. Sigler, who had retired as principal of Sunset Institute earlier in the year, to sponsor the school's first literary societies - - the Philathian for girls and the Platonian for boys. The clubs promoted scholastic, elocutionary, and music competition between their members throughout the school session and gave awards to outstanding students at the annual graduation exercises. Social clubs remained forbidden on the campus, although some local students formed "a secret order known at the G of K" as the school's first off-campus fraternity in 1894. Recognizing the need for more than religious or scholastic activity for students at his institute, Nunn formed a military cadet corps for the boys in the spring of 1895, allowing them to purchase their own uniforms and elect their own officers.

Nearly all male students enthusiastically joined the corps and drilled daily, giving the institute the appearance of a military school (3, 6).

Alexander Institute of Jacksonville became quite popular in the local community in 1894-1895. Noting its extra-curricular activities and academic quality, the Jacksonville _Banner_ reported that its chemistry and biology classes appeared to contain "several embryonic Edisons" and advertised the institute as a "High-Grade English and Classical School for Both Sexes" (6). About one-third of the local public school students transferred to Alexander Institute in the fall of 1895, increasing its enrollment to a record 210 students. Any who could afford the private tuition preferred the private school and the _Banner_ predicted: "In a short while, the school will grow to immense proportions, if it gets adequate support." Alexander Institute continued to enroll the best students of the local area until the Jacksonville High School became accredited eighteen years later, and most of Jacksonville's leading citizens received their education at the institute into the twentieth century. As the largest corporation in the community, the institute attracted a larger population as it enhanced Jacksonville's cultural and economic growth. In turn, Jacksonville tripled the paying patronage of the school over that of Kilgore (1, 6).

Seeking to eliminate the confusion of having two Alexander Institutes in existence in Kilgore and Jacksonville at the same time, the East Texas Conference instructed its new Jacksonville trustees to change the name of its school in the fall of 1895. In order to reflect its new accreditation with the University of Texas, the local trustees suggested that the school's name become the "Miller Collegiate Institute" in honor of their chairman, who was chiefly responsible for its plant and relocation. However, friends and former students of Isaac Alexander in the conference insisted that the school keep its original name, so the conference compromised the two proposals and named it the "Alexander Collegiate Institute" (8).

Shortly after the name of the school changed, Mrs. G. J. Nunn died, and the school's first newspaper, the Sunset Star, reported that president Nunn was deeply grieved over his own personal loss. Nunn resigned his post during the spring term of 1896 and accepted the presidency of Polytechnic College, later Texas Wesleyan College, in Fort Worth. During his six years as president of the institute, he had seen it change its location, increase its enrollment, and obtain the best high school accreditation in the state. Nunn played an important role in the final development of the high school as a collegiate institution (6).

Upon Nunn's sudden departure in the spring of 1896, the institute trustees chose a prominent Methodist minister and educator, principal E. R. Williams of the Southwestern University finishing school, to be the school's third president. Appointed on the recommendation of bishop E. R. Hendrix of the East Texas Conference, Williams held the M. A. degree and had first visited the institute in 1887, when it became accredited with Southwestern University. He accepted the appointment on the condition that the trustees allow him to make "a most thorough reorganization" of the institute, beginning with its finishing school. The trustees gave Williams permission to run the school as he saw fit (4).

Williams began his "most thorough reorganization" immediately. Declaring that the institute was "a school, not a college," he refused to confer honorary baccalaurate degrees upon graduates of its finishing school in 1896. As a result of his action, the school did not grant another honorary degree until it removed provision for such degrees from its charter altogether seventy-four years later. The trustees did not challenge Williams on this change in academic policy and gave their blessings to his first official statement of academic purpose for the school:

> We shall endeavor to inculcate the idea that quality rather than quantity is the goal to be sought. Thoroughness is a matter of

> the first importance. We do not promise that the student shall complete the course in the time prescribed. We simply say that he can by diligent work. It is neither our desire nor our purpose to make study easy. Any scholarship worth the name is never so achieved. Strong, vigorous, scholarly minds are developed by healthful, arduous study, and in no other way. We shall try to keep constantly in mind this fact: That no pupil is interested in what he does not understand, and that interest means healthful progress (4).

To implement his purpose of stressing academic quality over enrollment quantity by requiring "arduous study" and "diligent work" of his students, Williams added an eleventh grade to the institute's high school course of study and imposed a system of rigorous scholastic standards. His program may have frightened some students from enrolling in the institute in the fall of 1896, because 123 students suddenly transferred to the public high school, where academic standards were less demanding, and where they could graduate upon completion of the tenth grade. Whereas the public high school had to expand its plant to accomodate its larger enrollment in 1896, Alexander Collegiate Institute, with only 87 students, experienced its lowest enrollment in twenty years (6).

Williams' emphasis on academic quality at the expense of enrollment quantity caused a serious decline in tuition income for the school during his first session, forcing him

to dismiss most of his small faculty because he could not afford to pay salaries and to reduce some course offerings of the school. Despite his financial plight, Williams never offered his students lower academic standards to attract those who wanted an easy education. He accepted the consequences of his actions in the belief that he was implementing one of the two basic purposes of the institution - - to provide an education of highest quality. Due to the low enrollment, most extracurricular activities vanished from the campus in 1896 (4, 8).

When Isaac Alexander was appointed pastor of the Methodist church in Palestine in 1896, E. R. Williams became the school chaplain and sought to implement the other basic purpose of the school --to provide religious instruction for its students. An outstanding preacher, Williams instituted daily chapel services in addition to Bible study and delivered such powerful sermons that the townspeople soon outnumbered the students in attendance. When bishop Hendrix visited the campus in the spring of 1897, he praised Williams' fulfillment of the conference school's religious purpose and declared: "I favor the establishment of such institutions as Alexander Collegiate Institute among our secondary schools" (4). As a token of his esteem, the bishop gave the institute an authentic relic of American Methodism, installing on the

campus the large bell which had rung at the founding conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church in 1784. The bell had moved westward with the frontier church, ringing in such places as Louisville, Kentucky and San Augustine, Texas, where the first Protestant church began in the state. Alexander Collegiate Institute became the bell's final resting place, and its peal served as a daily testimony to the school's religious purpose (6, 8).

Refusing to compromise his academic standards, Williams enrolled less than 100 students each year from 1896 to 1901. Only the best scholars were able to complete the course of study he offered, and he intentionally kept his academic standards as high as possible. After the Baptists established a four-year college in Jacksonville in 1899, offering "academic and cultural training under religious influence" to an equal number of students only a few blocks from his institute, Williams emphasized the collegiate nature of his school by advertising the accreditation granted it by the University of Texas in 1895 and publishing the testimony of several members of the university's visiting team, who had declared that "it would be very well for the cause of education in Texas if we had more schools like Alexander Collegiate Institute, one of the best preparatory schools in the state." Insisting that "more and more of our scholars are endorsing A.C.I.'s

work," Williams also published the endorsement of his former president, Robert S. Hyer of Southwestern University: "There is no better work being done anywhere." Nevertheless, with his small enrollment, Williams was not able to send more than a few high school graduates on to college or university each year (4).

Despite his small student body, Williams reported progress "in moral tone, scholarship, and discipline" each year. Believing that it was his responsibility to impose discipline upon his students before they were subjected to the temptations of college or university morality, he attempted to make Alexander Collegiate Institute a "classical training school for youth" and increased the restrictions on their freedom, declaring: "Pupils will get much more discipline than those who attend our university, and discipline of a different character. THIS IS VERY IMPORTANT!" He restricted all boarding students to the campus, allowing them to leave only with his expressed approval. No student could drink intoxicants, gamble, or visit a public hotel or boarding house. He expelled any student who disobeyed his rules, declaring: "Students are forbidden to promote disaffections. Ours is not a school for viscious characters, and we do not want such. We pity them, but do not feel justified in exposing the moral character of our student body to the influence of such

persons" (4). Such discipline helped keep the enrollment of Alexander Collegiate Institute the smallest of Texas' eleven Methodist schools (8).

Williams maintained a high degree of religious activity on the campus throughout his administration, observing: "The school is expected to be religious in character. Religion should be a part of us. We desire to make the atmosphere of the Institute pervasively religious, and we wish this influence to be pervasively felt" (4). In 1900, he led his students and faculty in a battle to ban the sale of intoxicants in Jacksonville and Cherokee County in order to improve the moral environment for his school. When the prohibitionists won the local election, Williams echoed the praise of Isaac Alexander for the school's former home in Kilgore, calling Jacksonville "a refined and moral community. There are no saloons in our precinct" (4, 10).

Discipline and religion were basic to Williams' philosophy of education. He summed it up in the institute's Bulletin in 1900:

> The purpose of life is the development of strong, symmetrical manhood. Religion, social customs, laws, environment, every healthy influence which touches a child, contributes to his good or evil development. This is education.
>
> You cannot educate the child mentally today, morally tomorrow, physically day after tomorrow. The three must go together, if we are to

> have a normal manhood. We educate the boy primarily because he is a human being; secondarily to make a lawyer, a doctor, or a merchant. The reversal of this process makes the merchant larger than the man. The man should always be larger than his profession. To accomplish this is our aim.
>
> Thoroughness and honesty are almost, if not altogether, synonymous terms in educational life. The youth who is allowed to master imperfectly his lessons is developing fundamentally defective character. Inaccurate knowledge is a minor result of such training. Power comes through mastery; poise, through symmetrical growth (4).

Williams' rigorous implementation of the school's academic and religious purposes accompanied continued low enrollment and "unusually severe financial stringency" at the institute in the late 1890's. Continuing the subsidies which had begun with Nunn, the East Texas Conference gave Williams about $300 each year to supplement his teachers' meager salaries, but could spare no more for his operating expenses. Williams blamed the conference for his low paying patronage, pointing out that the number of Methodist students enrolled was "not in keeping with the work being done" (8). The conference raised its first ministerial scholarship of $30 for the school in 1897 and appointed its first ministerial member to attend the institute in 1898, but insisted that Williams drop the $10 a year tuition for ministers' children and ministerial students in 1900. It was not until 1901 that

he received any substantial aid, when the will of the late B. F. Thompson of Kilgore, one of the school's earliest trustees, gave the institute its first permanent endowment, a $1,000 loan fund for male students (8). This student aid enabled Williams to double his enrollment to 152 students by the fall of 1902 (4).

Alexander Collegiate Institute could spare no money to maintain its Sunset Institute facilities to 1902, and the campus soon fell into a state of disrepair. Williams complained to his trustees that he could not attract a larger enrollment without an improved plant and persuaded them to purchase additional acreage next to the school for $1,500 in 1898 for the purpose of plant expansion (8). As long as enrollment remained low, however, the East Texas Conference was not interested in launching a new building campaign. Refusing Williams' request for funds to expand the school library in 1899, the conference, which shortened its name to the Texas Conference in 1901, continued its annual subsidies without additional contributions for operating or building expense until 1902 (9).

In 1902, the Texas and New Orleans Railway built its line through Jacksonville so close to the Alexander Collegiate Institute that trains shook the Sunset Institute building and disturbed classes almost every day. Reminding his trustees

that the building was already "in a state of dilapidation," Williams raised tuition at the school to $55 for 1902-1903 to cover his operating expenses. When students filled the plant to capacity for the fall term, he demanded that the conference "enlarge our plant or curtail our patronage" (9). Recognizing that almost all the institute's boarding students were East Texas Methodists, the conference increased its subsidy for the school to $400 in 1902 and demanded in turn that Williams account for his expenditures to determine what funds, if any, he was using to maintain the school plant. Believing that more paying patronage would increase Williams' income and relieve the trustees of the necessity of erecting a new plant, the 1902 East Texas Conference instructed the local presiding elder to recruit more students for the following year. Williams insisted that his enrollment was already full; he desired a new plant, not more students (9).

The doubling of the school's enrollment following the establishment of the loan fund for male students in 1901 encouraged Williams to believe that his policy of academic and disciplinary rigor was popular after all. He interpreted the low enrollment of his early years as evidence of the lack of student aid rather than a reaction to his policies. He pointed out that "higher discipline has been developed more and more each year, and is now more effective and salutary

than before. Student _esprit de corps_ is excellent!" and noted that, despite the high academic standards, students "come for longer terms; especially is this true of the girls," who had no loan fund of their own (9). When his enrollment fell 20 per cent in 1903, he blamed the lack of adequate facilities, suggesting that the patronage had declined because the conference had failed to enlarge his plant (9).

Accepting Williams' arguments that the school needed to expand, the 1903 Texas Conference voted to raise $10,000 among its churches for new buildings at Alexander Collegiate Institute. The third conference building campaign for the school followed the same pattern as those of 1883 and 1888, however, because the churches contributed no funds at all during the 1903-1904 session, once again leaving responsibility for the school plant in the hands of the local trustees alone. Hurt by their seeming unconcern, Williams resigned as President of Alexander Collegiate Institute in 1904, declaring that he could no longer fulfill his purposes in the deteriorating institution because of the lack of conference support, and bade farewell to the school which he had served for eight years. His high standards of scholarship and discipline set a pattern of excellence which few of his successors were able to emulate, but his ideal of emphasizing quality over quantity remained a goal of the school long after Williams' depar-

ture (9).

Faced with a stalled building program, the trustees of Alexander Collegiate Institute, whose leaders had been Isaac Alexander and future bishop S. R. Hay since 1901, selected another conference minister to be the school's fourth president in 1904. President W. K. Strother, M. A., of Chappell Hill Female College had duplicated Williams' efforts during the previous two years by doubling his Methodist school's enrollment and promoting a building campaign to replace its forty-five-year-old plant, which also met with no success during the 1903 session. Reluctant to face similar problems at the institute, Strother insisted that the trustees agree to raise the full $10,000 pledged for the school if he accepted election as its president. They agreed to his condition and raised several thousand dollars from the community of Jacksonville prior to the 1904-1905 session (11).

Seeking to promote both quality and quantity at the institute in the wake of Williams' resignation, Strother employed a faculty with four graduate degrees, including the school's first Ph.D., principal E. L. Johnson, who had left the institute two years before to complete his graduate study. At the same time, Strother reduced the number of grades at the school back to the standard ten and relaxed the rigid scholastic requirements for membership in the student literary

societies in order to compete with the public high schools of the area and to attract students with an increase in campus activity. He introduced the school's first organized athletic program in 1904, including such sports as baseball, basketball, tennis, and track for students with good grades and class attendance. As extracurricular activities separate from the basic physical exercises required of all students for the previous decade, the new sports proved quite popular with the community of Jacksonville and helped the local building campaign (4, 6).

Continuing the rules imposed by his predecessor, Strother declared to prospective patrons:

> If you want your boys and girls to have a thorough training under religious environments, send them to A.C.I. . . . There is no more valuable lesson to be learned than that of conformity to authority. This school recognizes this, and counts discipline as its most important feature. We never enforce discipline at all costs. But the wayward student is a discredit to his school, a reflection upon his parents, and an unworthy subject for citizenship (4).

Student behavior remained restricted under Strother, who also required that the girls continue to wear uniforms, "to check extravagance in dress, and to promote harmony among the pupils" (4). In response to his policies, enrollment at the institute increased by 40 per cent to 175 students in the fall of 1904 (4).

Declaring that "the capacity of this institution is crowded to the utmost," Strother utilized the money raised for the building program in 1904 to plumb and refurnish the dormitory for the students and faculty, and then he constructed two frame classroom buildings to house the fine arts department on the acreage purchased for plant expansion six years before. Not satisfied with these physical improvements, Strother declared that the location of the Sunset Institute building was "becoming undesirable" due to disturbance by the new railroad and urged the 1904 Texas Conference to expand its building campaign to include sufficient funds to erect a new main building next to the dormitory a few blocks away. Although the local trustees already had raised $7,000 in the building campaign, the conference approved Strother's proposal and appointed trustee T. J. Milam to devote full time to raising $13,000 more for the purpose of constructing another main building for its school. By the fall of 1905, when a new record of 212 students enrolled in the old Sunset Institute building, Milam had raised $8,000 from churches across the conference, and his fellow trustees purchased additional acreage for the school next to the dormitory. The building campaign was completed in April, 1906; in less than two years, the trustees had raised $20,000 for expansion of the institute plant. Strother immediately announced plans to construct a

large and imposing structure for the school, featuring class-rooms, practice rooms, laboratories, library, auditorium, and chapel on five levels, including a basement and twin towers. Construction of the "Twin Towers," designed to be the largest building in Jacksonville, began late in 1906 (9, 11).

Before the erection of its new main building, Alexander Collegiate Institute once again became involved in pro-hibitionist politics. Like Isaac Alexander and E. R. Williams, W. K. Strother was determined to wipe out the sale of intoxi-cants wherever possible. Following successful efforts to "dry up" Kilgore and Jacksonville, he and his school parti-cipated in the 1906 gubernatorial campaign of prohibitionist Thomas M. Campbell, a graduate of Alexander Institute who promised to "dry up" the entire state (10). The faculty, students, and trustees of the institute turned out a heavy Cherokee County vote for Campbell in the state's first party primary election in 1906, and following his election, they and other East Texans cast sufficient votes to adopt state-wide prohibition by referendum in 1908. To Alexander Collegiate Institute, a victory for prohibition helped fulfill its purpose of providing a good environment for high quality education and religious instruction of students from all over East Texas (10, 11).

Prior to the 1906-1907 session, the General Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South instructed all of its high schools to meet common minimum academic standards "fitting pupils for a college course or the pursuits of practical life" so as "to bring about a proper uniformity of work among the church's schools throughout the nation" (5). Following guidelines set by the church's General Board of Education, Strother established the institute's first common definition of grades based upon percentages (A= 90-100%, B= 80-90%, C= 70-80%, D= 60-70%, F= below 60%), and his faculty agreed to excuse "A" students from their final examinations. Commending Alexander Collegiate Institute for "a strong, capable faculty and an excellent course of study," the General Board of Education declared in the fall of 1906 that the school was "in exact accordance with the position marked out for such schools by the General Conference" and suggested that Strother consider raising its course of study to the level of a junior college (4). Busy with his building program, Strother was content with achieving the institute's first national recognition in 1906 and was not interested in making it more than a first-class high school. Following the action of the General Board of Education, Tulane and Washington and Lee Universities agreed to admit graduates of the institute without entrance examination (4).

Enrollment at Alexander Collegiate Institute rose to a new record of 215 in the fall of 1906 as more students transferred to it from local unaccredited high schools. One student who changed schools during this period later recalled: "The Jacksonville High School was not as good as the Alexander Collegiate Institute. Anyone who could afford to pay the tuition preferred to attend the Methodist school" (1). Seeking to improve their own "poorly housed" institution in 1906, the public school trustees, including the local Methodist presiding elder, launched a $25,000 building campaign in Jacksonville to erect a new high school to match the institute's "Twin Towers." Thus, the local community, which had just completed the campaign for its private school, had to duplicate the effort for its public school beginning in 1906 (7).

Construction of the Twin Towers was in full progress under the personal supervision of W. K. Strother in 1906-1907. Grossly underestimating the expense of such a large building, Strother spent the entire $20,000 in building funds by March, 1907 after completing only its foundations and skeletal structure. Just as his trustees were about to ask the Texas Conference for additional funds to complete the project, the Panic of 1907 plunged East Texas into economic depression, and the conference would spare no funds to complete the building until it was over. In order to protect the invest-

ment already made in the new Jacksonville property, the trustees secured another charter for the school to replace the one issued for the Kilgore property thirty years before. Issued on March 13, 1907, the new charter officially recognized the Texas Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South and its elected trustees as the legal owners of the institute's plant in Jacksonville for the next fifty years (9).

Despite the effects of the Panic, the enrollment of the institute remained high, with 175 students in 1907-1908. With construction halted temporarily on the Twin Towers, Strother concentrated his efforts on expanding the school's boarding facilities, undaunted by the lack of funds. He persuaded the local Methodist church to donate its building to the institute as a dining hall in the fall of 1907, moving it at his own expense "with the aid of school boys, mules, and pulleys" (12). The new dining hall, which had originally housed the Jacksonville Collegiate Institute thirty-four years before, became part of the school dormitory, permitting Strother to board thirty more students at the institute. The Methodists soon erected a new brick church to replace their old building (12).

In 1908-1909, Strother persuaded his trustees to borrow $30,000 in short-term loans to facilitate completion of the Twin Towers building in the hope that the Texas Conference would eventually raise sufficient funds to pay off

the building debt. Attempting to reduce his construction costs as much as possible, Strother economized by purchasing building stone of unequal size and by eliminating both front porches and an elevator for the Twin Towers, but he purchased everything else he desired, including a $1,300 piano. By the spring of 1909, he had spent the entire $30,000 borrowed by his trustees and had to sell the old Sunset Institute property to raise the final $10,000 needed to complete the Twin Towers. At the end of the 1908-1909 session, he tore down the eighteen-year-old institute building and sold its building materials, land, and two frame classroom buildings, which became the local Episcopal church and parsonage. With the proceeds of the old property, Strother completed the Twin Towers for a final cost of $60,000, three times his original estimate, in time for the 1909-1910 session, declaring that it "would meet the needs of the school for many years to come" (9, 11).

At the same time that Strother was completing the Twin Towers, the local trustees responded to his request that the school erect its first boys' dormitory. Recognizing that the boys deserved boarding facilities on campus as much as the girls, several local trustees, led by presiding elder J. T. Smith, spent $5,000 of their own money to build Smith Hall (named after their leader) next to the Twin Towers in the

summer of 1909. They deeded the new dormitory, which could house fifty-four students, to the Texas Conference seven years later. For the first time in the school's history, all of its boarding students could be housed and supervised on its campus in 1909-1910 (11).

W. K. Strother announced his resignation as president of Alexander Collegiate Institute immediately after the completion of the building program in 1909. Pleading the ill health of one of his children, Strother explained that his brother, the campus physician, had advised him to move to a drier climate, so he had secured the presidency of Western College in Artesia, New Mexico (12). Although his trustees tried to persuade him to remain at his post in order to help them raise funds to pay off the new building debt, Strother insisted that he must leave. During his five years at the institute, he had done his best to implement the purposes of the school by raising its academic standards and enforcing its rules of religion and discipline. Strother obtained wider accreditation for the institute, introduced sports as new extracurricular activities, and raised its enrollment to new record levels. Under his supervision, the school obtained a completely new plant capable of housing increasing enrollments in the years ahead, plus a sizeable building debt. His first administration was full of activity and accomplish-

ment, encouraging the trustees to invite him back to the presidency of the school for another term six years later.

In the fifteen years from 1894 to 1909, Alexander Institute became an accredited and widely recognized collegiate institution. Each of its presidents during this period did his best to offer high school students a college preparatory education of highest quality. Nunn expanded the curriculum and obtained accreditation from the University of Texas while building the institute's enrollment higher than ever before through the introduction of its first campus extracurricular activities. Williams raised the academic standards of the school by adding an extra grade to the high school course of study and demanding "arduous study" and "diligent work" of his students, but suffered a serious decline in enrollment and had to drop extracurricular activities early in his administration. When the school's first student loan fund enabled him to return the school to full enrollment during his later years in office, Williams sought to enlarge the school plant, only to resign when it appeared that his proposal would not succeed. Strother employed a qualified faculty, dropped the eleventh grade from the high school course of study, and adopted the minimum academic standards set for Methodist schools while introducing the institute's first organized sports as a permanent feature of campus

extracurricular activity. Despite his difficulties with economic depression and his own excessive expenditures, Strother completed the building program originally proposed by Williams. Through these efforts, each of the three presidents successfully implemented the school's original purpose of providing a high quality education for its students.

Alexander Collegiate Institute also was faithful to its second purpose during this period. Nunn maintained strict moral and religious control over his students, utilizing the invaluable assistance of his predecessor and chaplain, Isaac Alexander. After the latter's departure, Williams expanded the campus religious activities, imposed rigid rules of discipline upon his students, and campaigned successfully to ban the sale of intoxicants in Jacksonville. Strother maintained the religious and disciplinary policies of his predecessors and participated in the successful prohibition campaign of alumnus Thomas M. Campbell, while attracting new record enrollments to the institute. Under these three presidents, the institute implemented its purpose of providing a program of religious and moral instruction for each of its students.

By 1909, Alexander Collegiate Institute was a highly accredited collegiate institution with a new plant, seeking new ways to improve its course of study and to serve its constituency. In 1906, the General Board of Education of the

Methodist Episcopal Church, South made the first suggestion that the elite boarding school consider becoming a junior college, but consideration of this proposal awaited final completion of the school's building program. After Strother's departure, the school continued the upgrading of its curriculum which had begun with the primary grades in New Danville sixty-two years before in 1847.

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CHAPTER IV

ALEXANDER COLLEGE

During the fifteen years from 1909 to 1924, the school known as Alexander Collegiate Institute became a junior college. Following the pattern of earlier years, the school continued to upgrade its course of study by adding to its curriculum further years of more advanced education. Thus, what began as a common primary school in 1847 expanded to become a female finishing school and academy in 1854, a co-educational collegiate institute in 1873, and finally a junior college in 1909. The pilgrimage of the school through the primary and secondary levels provided the impetus and experience necessary to promote its entry into higher education, although the college later eliminated its primary and high school courses of study. After 1909, the school continued to try to implement the dual traditional purposes for which the institution had existed through the years, seeking to provide its junior college students the same quality of education and religious instruction that had characterized its first sixty-two years.

The objective of this chapter is to examine the implementation of purpose at Alexander College from 1909 to 1924.

Dependent in part upon the influence of events beyond their control, the school's presidents during this period adopted policies which repeated some of the successes and some of the mistakes of their predecessors, often with results common throughout the history of the institution. Nonetheless, each of the seven presidents attempted to implement the purposes of the school within the limits of his own ability and circumstances.

When W. K. Strother resigned the presidency of Alexander Collegiate Institute just prior to the fall term of 1909, the school trustees lost no time in selecting his successor. Strother himself recommended his successor at Chappell Hill Female College, J. E. Willis, for the post, but Joseph Key, presiding bishop of the Texas Conference, persuaded the trustees to elect a more prominent East Texas educator, former president of Grayson College in Whitewright, F. E. Butler. In the tradition of three earlier presidents of the institute, both Willis and Butler were Methodist ministers with M. A. degrees with ample experience in higher education. On the recommendation of the bishop, the trustees elected Butler as president and Willis as vice-president, a new office created under Article VIII of the 1907 charter of Alexander Collegiate Institute. Due to a personality conflict with the more dominant Butler, however, Willis resigned his post at the in-

stitute in 1910 (4, 13).

F. E. Butler was as hesitant to accept the presidency of the school in 1909 as Strother had been five years before. Faced with a short-term building debt of $30,000, Butler insisted that his trustees shoulder total responsibility for the debt "as soon as they are able" and excuse him from any building campaign to pay it off. He also suggested that the trustees pay him a set salary drawn from the school's operating funds rather than force him to be dependent upon the fluctuations of enrollment and operating expense. Butler preferred to abdicate all responsibility for financial matters to his superiors, insisting that he did not want the presidency "to make money." The trustees agreed to accept responsibility for paying off the building debt which they had incurred before 1909, but refused to guarantee him a set salary, even though the school might realize a profit thereby in years of high enrollment. They insisted that Butler operate the school out of his own pocket like his predecessors, accepting as his own whatever profit or loss in operating income resulted from his enrollment and management efforts. Butler agreed only after persuading the trustees to guarantee him five years as president of the institute. Confident that they would not have to make up any operating loss sustained by Butler, the trustees obtained permission from the 1909

Texas Conference to refinance the building debt in long-term motgage bonds, which were not finally paid off until thirty-five years later (4, 13).

A teacher of many years' experience on all levels of education in East Texas, Butler had taught a large number of students, including future Vice-President of the United States, John Nance Garner, in a variety of schools in the area. Familiar with the development of the institute since its earliest days, Butler determined that it had reached the highest level attainable for a first-class high school and that it should raise itself further to a junior college level. Utilizing his own experience in higher education, Butler fulfilled the recommendation made by the Methodist General Board of Education three years before and secured permission of his trustees to add two more years of education above the high school level to the institute's curriculum in 1909. Just prior to the opening of the 1909-1910 session, he broadened the prime objective of the school by declaring: "The purpose of the Institute is to take the work above the grammar school and finish the requirements of the sophomore classes of the universities" (4).

Although G. J. Nunn had established the state's first junior college in Crockett twenty-four years before and Methodist junior colleges had existed in Texas since the

first one opened in Clarendon nine years before, there were no established church or state standards for junior college accreditation in 1909. Alexander Collegiate Institute began as a junior college much as it had begun as a high school; without official guidelines, Butler simply correlated his college curriculum with the first two years of course offerings at the universities which had originally accredited the institute's high school curriculum - Southwestern University, the University of Texas, Tulane University, and Washington and Lee University. Permitting only high school graduates to take his college course of study, Butler promised his patrons that he offered a quality curriculum "modelled in accordance with the demands of our universities for 1909-1911 to fit students for the Junior University year" (4). The first student to enroll for junior college studies at Alexander Collegiate Institute, Fairy Stevens, successfully transferred the equivalent of forty-eight semester hours in college credit earned at the institute from 1909 to 1911 to her Bachelor of Arts degree at the University of Texas (16).

The 1909-1910 junior college curriculum at Alexander Collegiate Institute included courses in English composition and literature, Latin, German, French, European history, algebra, trigonometry, and physics. College stu-

dents attended three hours of lecture in each class per week and enrolled in physical training or fine arts with the high school students. Butler replaced Greek with Texas history and continued to offer teacher training on the high school level in 1909, observing:

> This Institute is not a normal school, although it does what a normal school should do. Good work is pledged in the Special Departments (education, fine arts, physical culture), and every effort will be made to make them thorough. But this Institute exists primarily for the Literary Department, and will be so conducted; for this is the foundation of all education in every department of human knowledge (4).

Butler offered his college students the school's first academic scholarships in 1909, when he first enrolled all past and future valedictorians of Jacksonville high schools without tuition, a policy continued by each of his successors. He also enlarged the school library, expanded the number of campus literary societies, and published the school's first yearbook in 1909-1910. Perhaps his most popular academic improvement was the introduction of regular Lyceum courses on the campus each spring, beginning a tradition of bringing outstanding speakers and artists to college assemblies for the edification of students and local citizens alike (4).

Alexander Collegiate Institute, boasting a new plant and a new college curriculum, enrolled twenty-five college students and 175 high school and primary students in the fall

of 1909 (13). Butler intensified the rigid disciplinary policies of his predecessors by imposing a rigorous fifteen-hour school day schedule, ranging from six o'clock in the morning to nine o'clock at night, on all his students. He required every student to wear a uniform and, after an hour's physical exercises "conducted scientifically by a member of the faculty" each afternoon, a veteran of the Spanish-American War drilled all the male students in the insitute's reconstituted military cadet corps. Butler explained his new policy of regimentation:

> To overcome the brutalizing tendency of baseball and football (which we do not allow), we have instituted a military drill. This is not to make soldiers, but simply to supply a vigorous, manly system of physical exercise. Some excellent results come from this drill. The pupil learns to receive and obey commands, and to command others. Absolutely no evil results from this drill (4).

Butler also required all students to maintain a "B" grade average in all of their courses, thus raising the academic standards set by his predecessors (4). If any student's average grade fell below that level, he had to attend two and one-half hours' study hall each evening under the supervision of a retired minister and could not participate in any extracurricular activity for up to eight weeks at a time, or until his grades improved (4).

In the tradition of the school since the days of Isaac Alexander, Butler lived with and closely supervised his

boarding students. He allowed no boarding student to leave the campus without his permission and absolutely forbade any association between the sexes on campus. In order to prevent clandestine communications between boys and girls, the president regularly eavesdropped on all telephone conversations and insisted that "all letters will be left unsealed" to facilitate censorship. He specifically prohibited student possession of playing cards, weapons (except pocket knives), tobacco and intoxicants, preaching at daily chapel services that the latter had "a ruinous effect upon mind and body" and that his students should "Cease this pernicious practice at once! We shall insist that this be done. The President of this Institute once made a talk on these things, and seventy young men and boys came up and signed the pledge to cease" (4). Butler expelled all students who refused to sign the pledge.

Like his predecessors, Butler sought to implement the school's religious purpose by delivering a lengthy sermon in chapel each day "in order to teach the Word of God and foster the devotional spirit." He excused only Jews from his services (4). He required his faculty members to be present at every campus or community religious activity. Insisting that each student purchase a special hymnal and sing aloud from it at every service, Butler made religion fore-

most in campus life and boasted that "nearly every pupil above the primary level was converted" in 1909-1910 (13). That session was one long revival meeting (1).

Butler continued the disciplinary policy of his two immediate predecessors, reserving for himself "the right of removal, without specific charge, of those students who promote disaffection" and echoing the sentiments of W. K. Strother:

> Good discipline must be maintained. There is no better lesson to be learned than that of conformity to authority. This institution counts discipline as a very important feature. Patrons are urgently requested to cooperate with us in this; but, if they will not, we _must_ enforce good discipline (4).

Butler's restrictive policies disturbed a large number of his patrons, especially after he expelled a number of students during his first session. Responding to their complaints, the trustees asked Isaac Alexander to head an investigation of Butler's policies in the spring of 1910. Alexander approved of his successor's policies and reported to his colleagues:

> We have closely observed the work being done by the Alexander Collegiate Institute under the administration of F. E. Butler and his associates, and have found it to be of the highest order, and free from sham. Good discipline is maintained, and the moral atmosphere in and about the institution is wholesome. F. E. Butler is a strong man, who grows upon us as we know him better (4).

As a gesture of confidence in Butler and his policies, the trustees approved his request that they purchase two frame houses adjacent to the campus to house an overflow of twenty male students who had been crowded into Smith Hall in 1909-1910 (13). Although local patronage declined by sixty students in protest against Butler's policies in 1910, sufficient students filled the school's boarding facilities, and the new houses were made cooperative dormitories for needy students, permitting them to prepare their own meals at reduced charges (16).

Faced with a 30 per cent decline in his operating income for 1910-1911, Butler appealed to the Texas Conference to renew the annual income subsidy which it had given Nunn and Williams under similar circumstances. Instead, the conference expanded the number of institute trustees to seventeen, creating a ministerial majority for the first time in the school's history, and instructed them to assume total financial responsibility for the conference college. A year after he had first requested it, Butler became a salaried employee of Alexander Collegiate Institute. In 1909-1910, he was the last president of the institution to operate the school out of his own pocketbook, assuming personal financial responsibility for all operating deficits and receiving the benefit of all profits. Although his trustees assumed such

responsibilities in 1910-1911, they continued to hold the president accountable for the school's enrollment and operating income. Pressured by disgruntled patrons and an operating deficit in their first year of total financial responsibility, the trustees informed Butler that, since the school had made "no marked progress" in his second year, his five-year term of office would be terminated at the end of two years. Faced with the prospect of imminent dismissal, Butler chose to resign quietly, claiming "ill health," on April 18, 1911 (1, 13). He retired to a farm near Jacksonville, where he wrote poetry and raised tomatoes in his old age, and occasionally visited the campus of the school which he had transformed into a junior college. He willed a book of his poetry to the college library (8, 16).

In order to fill the vacancy created by Butler's resignation prior to the end of the 1911 spring term, the trustees elected the pastor of the Jacksonville Methodist Church to be the sixth president of Alexander Collegiate Institute. John M. Barcus, M.A., D.D., accepted the presidency without hesitation, although he remained at his pastoral post until another minister relieved him late in 1911, and voiced his approval of trustee responsibility for the school's finances: "There is no longer any fear that the school ultimately will fail; the church now has absolute ownership and control of

everything" (4).

Completing the 1910-1911 session, Barcus disbanded the military cadet corps at the institute and relaxed the regimentation imposed by Butler. He replaced the military drill with a return to the organized athletics popular during the Strother administration and built a gymnasium on the first floor of the Twin Towers building. He also sponsored the establishment of a new student newspaper, the Alexandrian, which often ran as many as twelve pages in length each week during the next twenty years. His new policies proved popular among his patrons (2).

Barcus continued implementation of the school's religious purpose without denominational zeal, promising in words reminiscent of the institute's Masonic founders that "no sectarian creed will be taught, but strong efforts will be put forth to develop robust Christian character." The Methodist pastor conducted virtually nondenominational daily chapel services, explaining his interpretation of the institute's religious responsibility:

> Our aim, first of all, is the development of good Christian character--the making of men and women capable of filling any position to which they may be called....One of the greatest evils that threatens the large colleges and universities is the large number of immature youth who enter their freshman departments. In many cases, this means for these youth moral suicide. We offer wholesome restraints, largely free

> from the temptations incident to association
> with more mature students in a less whole-
> some atmosphere (4).

Barcus' nonsectarian emphasis introduced an element into the implementation of the school's religious purposes missing since Isaac Alexander began religious instruction of its students over a half century earlier. His trustees, including Alexander himself, supported his return to the school's original religious purpose.

Prior to the beginning of the 1911-1912 session, Barcus also reaffirmed the school's committtment to its high academic purpose. In response to the new high school accreditation standards set by the State Department of Education in 1911, he restored the institute's eleventh grade and began certification of graduates of his teacher training course without the previously required state teachers' examination. He expanded the junior college course of study to include courses in Bible, Greek, Speech, music, physiology, chemistry, solid and analytic geometry, all of which, along with the courses introduced previously by Butler, totalled the equivalent of sixty semester hours of college work, the requirement for graduation with the Associate of Arts degree. Barcus declared to his patrons: "The courses of study are so arranged and will be so thoroughly taught that any student completing the course will be prepared for the Junior Year

of any first-rate College or University" (4).

A new record enrollment of 223 students entered Alexander Collegiate Institute in the fall of 1911. When the number of ministerial students exceeded his expectations, Barcus introduced the school's first policy of requiring work of students permitted to attend the school without tuition. After 1911, all ministerial students had to earn their free tuition by work in the library or elsewhere on campus, providing the school a method by which it could get something in return for the *gratis* education given needy students ever since 1847 (2).

At the end of the 1911-1912 session, John M. Barcus became president of Southwestern University. Before accepting the position, he reflected upon the academic development of Alexander Collegiate Institute. He pointed out that the local Jacksonville public high school had just completed a new $45,000 building to match the Twin Towers, that its enrollment was already triple that of the institute, and that it was about to add an eleventh grade to its course of study to obtain state accreditation in 1912-1913. He warned his trustees and patrons:

> The development of the public high school makes it imperative that the curriculum of a school like ours must be enlarged and extended, else there will be no place for us to stand. A school like ours must either come into sharp competition with the high schools of our state, or grow into a college (4).

Advocating further development of the school into an accredited junior college, Barcus observed:

> We are not a College and do not claim to be. At the same time, we are more than a High School. We offer the first two years of college work. This sort of school is somewhat of an experiment in the educational world, but the present administration has so enlarged and arranged the courses of study that A.C.I. will be rated a Junior College as soon as the General Board of Education of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South defines that grade of institution (4).

Soon after Barcus left his post at the institute, the General Board of Education fulfilled his prediction. The Methodists were the first American religious denomination to recognize officially the junior college as a distinctive educational institution and to set minimum standards for such schools, causing the federal Commissioner of Education to publish their guidelines for all junior colleges in the nation in 1912. Alexander Collegiate Institute produced no junior college graduates in the spring of 1912 because of Barcus' high graduation requirements, but it was in "complete harmony" with the new Methodist junior college standards in such categories as "faculty training, departments, libraries, laboratories, physical equipment, and necessary financial support" from 1912 to 1916, when a visitation team from the General Board of Education conferred its first official junior college accreditation (2, 4, 7).

The trustees elected an experienced Texas Methodist junior college educator, M. L. Lefler, B.S., to replace the popular Barcus as the seventh president of Alexander Collegiate Institute in 1912. The school's second lay president, Lefler had taught in the Methodist colleges at Granbury and Stamford (16). As concerned as his predecessor to complete the institute's transition from a high school to a junior college, Lefler declared himself in full harmony with the traditional purposes of the school:

> Our aim, first of all, is to see that the students committed to us increase in wisdom and stature and in favor with God and man. To this end, we do our utmost to care for the body, the mind, and the heart. Those who finish our course will be well prepared to begin the battle of life and capable of occupying creditably any position of usefulness to which they may be called (4).

Seeking to improve the quality of education in the junior college, Lefler added philosophy and government to its course of study and reduced Barcus' graduation requirements by specifying a minimum of three years' foreign language, two years' English, and one year each of science, history or government, Bible or philosophy, and mathematics, the equivalent of fifty-four semester-hours of study. He assured prospective patrons:

> The two years of college work we give are not only given by teachers thoroughly competent, but on account of the comparative smallness of the classes, the students get the incalcuable benefit of the personal touch and help of the teachers, which they cannot get where the classes are so much larger. For the same reason, the students are less exposed to the temptations that confront young people at this very impressionable age, and have opportunity for more personal help in resisting them (4).

Echoing Barcus' arguments against sending immature freshmen and sophomores to senior colleges or universities, Lefler also promised that the small school would protect them from the "moral suicide" and temptations of association with older youth (4). He was the first president to emphasize the school's small enrollment, although it reached record levels in 1911 and 1912. His argument concerning the "comparative smallness of the classes" at the institute depended upon his definition of "smallness;" the student-teacher ratio at the school rose from 22:1 to 29:1 in his first session (4, 13).

Enrolling 264 students on the campus in 1912, Lefler expanded extracurricular activites correspondingly during the session. Interscholastic athletic competion became a regular feature of campus life under the president-coach, who organized an Athletic Association to coordinate the various teams of athletes, who named themselves the "Bearcats" in 1912. Lefler took the entire student body on regular out-of-town trips for college baseball and football competition

during his administration, promising his supporters each year that "games will be matched with other good schools" (4). He was the first president to permit social clubs to organize on the campus, and soon sororities like the "Blue Belles" and the "Brown-Eyed Club" or fraternities like the "Lady-killers" and the "Preachers' Club" supplanted the more scholarly literary clubs in popularity among the students. Lefler also permitted the school's first open dating between the sexes and allowed the students to elect their first representative campus government, the Honor Council, which planned most of the school's social activities and published its newspaper and yearbook. Only students with high grade averages could serve on the council. Finally, he organized the institute's first choral group, a Glee Club of forty-three girls which took the school's traditional female uniform as its costume, and a college orchestra which accompanied the Bearcat teams everywhere (2, 4). So popular were his extracurricular innovations that Lefler felt compelled to warn his students that he adhered to the institute's traditionally strict discipline: "A boy or girl must learn obedience to authority. To fail to enforce the rules would allow our school to be immoralized by irregularities" (4). Few students violated Lefler's campus rules, respecting his clear call to discipline.

Noting that its college had become "unusually prosperous"

due to the record enrollments and high operating income achieved by Lefler in 1912 and 1913, the Texas Conference commended the president on the "marked growth in the good character and reputation made by the school" under his leadership and declared that it had become "among the best of our Junior Colleges" (13). The prosperity of Alexander Collegiate Institute continued until March 6, 1914, when a fire destroyed the girls' dormitory. While most of his female students and faculty boarded in Jacksonville for the remainder of the 1913-1914 session, Lefler emphasized to his trustees the importance of building a new dormitory for the school prior to the following term. Having had to borrow half the cost of their last building campaign, the trustees of Alexander Collegiate Institute were reluctant to launch another conference financial drive for the college in the summer of 1914 and consequently raised very little money for the new dormitory (13).

M. L. Lefler tried to operate his school without the girls' dormitory in the summer of 1914. He altered his junior college graduation requirements by substituting education for Bible, plus a second year of mathematics for the third year of foreign language, and offered a full summer session of high school and college courses at the institute for the first time in its history. The lack of female dormitory facilities and the need for greater publicity about

the summer session both contributed to a small enrollment and an operating deficit prior to the fall term. When the college lost half its regular enrollment in 1914-1915, its most serious decline since the early days of E. R. Williams, the trustees dismissed several faculty members and lowered the salaries of the rest, including that of M. L. Lefler. Like Williams in 1904, Lefler held his trustees responsible for the school's financial plight, since they had failed to replace the old dormitory and thus had caused the decline in boarding student enrollment. When it became apparent that his pleas for new facilities met with no response, Lefler resigned his post and enrolled in the University of Texas Law School for the 1914-1915 session. The sudden departure of the popular president, who had upgraded the junior college and had devised the broadest variety of student activity available in the school's history, shocked the local trustees into seeking a way to erect a new dormitory as soon as possible (4, 13).

The trustees of Alexander Collegiate Institute elected its eighth president strictly for his money-raising ability (13). Presiding elder J. B. Turrentine, an experienced conference campaigner but admittedly no scholar, accepted the posts of president and financial manager of the institute in early 1914 and immediately launched a Texas Conference campaign to raise $30,000 for a new dormitory at the school.

At the same time, chairman of the institute trustees, S. R. Hay, accepted election as a Methodist bishop, and the trustees replaced him with I. F. Betts, the first of four local Jacksonville businessmen to serve as board chairman of the college during the next fifty-eight years (13). Unlike the trustees' ministerial majority, the local lay trustees were deeply concerned about the sudden decline in their Methodist school and assisted Turrentine in raising $14,000 for the new dormitory in the fall of 1914, completing its first wing in time for the spring term. The ministerial trustees were unsuccessful in matching Jacksonville's contribution with gifts from the churches of the Texas Conference, which were as reluctant as ever to invest their money in the conference school. Failing to complete his building campaign, in December, 1914 Turrentine stopped construction on the half-finished dormitory, leaving several thousand dollars in unpaid bills from the project which treasurer of the institute trustees, F. L. Devereaux, paid out of his own pocket soon after the spring term. The new dormitory increased the boarding capacity of the school by 25 per cent, enabling the school to regain a full enrollment and an adequate operating income by 1915-1916, thanks once again to Jacksonville (2, 13, 14).

Having completed his task of providing the school with

a new dormitory, J. B. Turrentine remained in the presidency of Alexander Collegiate Institute until the end of the 1914-1915 session, dropping most of the campus extracurricular activities and teaching the only two subjects which he understood, Bible and agriculture, a high school course which terminated as soon as he left. His was the briefest tenure of any of the school's presidents, and he was relieved to return to the regular conference ministry in 1915 (4, 13).

Upon the departure of Turrentine, W. K. Strother applied for the post which he had resigned following his own building campaign of six years before. Since leaving the institute, Strother had returned from New Mexico to become president of Stamford College after Lefler left that Methodist school in 1912. By 1915, that junior college was in dire financial straits, and its trustees fired Strother because "he couldn't handle the responsibility" (1). When he sought a return to the scene of his greatest triumph, the erection of the Twin Towers, the trustees of Alexander Collegiate Institute recalled the $30,000 debt which he had left behind but reelected him president of the institute for life, hoping he might stay long enough to help restore the financial health of their institution. He stayed for three more years (4, 13).

In the fall of 1915, Strother revived the campus extracurricular activities which he had begun eleven years before, offering "fine arts, splendid literary societies, and strong

athletics, including the very popular game of football" (4, 14). After he raised tuition to $60 per student in 1915-1916, he continued Lefler's advertisements, stressing "some reasons why the high school graduate should attend Alexander Collegiate Institute:"

> 1. A Junior College gives close personal supervision to the individual student. The average freshman needs this.
>
> 2. The freshman and sophomore years in a Junior College are the upper classes, and there is a high distinction and value to being in the high classes.
>
> 3. Only Professors of Departments teach the high classes, while usually assistants and tutors teach these classes in the larger colleges (4).

Announcing a full schedule of student outings, including the choral club's first conference-wide tour during the session, Strother had no trouble attracting a full enrollment and a satisfactory operating income for the institute in 1915-1916 (13).

Having secured the institute's first national accreditation as a high school from the Methodist Episcopal Church, South nine years before, Strother achieved its full accreditation as a junior college in 1915-1916. Familiar with Methodist junior college standards after three years in Stamford, he added another year's course in foreign language and dropped a year's course each in English, mathe-

matics, education, and philosophy from the institute's junior college graduation requirements before petitioning the Methodist General Board of Education for its official accreditation. In the spring of 1916, Alexander Collegiate Institute was the second Methodist junior college accredited by the denomination in the state, having fulfilled the standards set by the church in 1912. In order further to correlate his college curriculum with that of the church's new Southern Methodist University in Dallas, Strother dropped physics, government, and physiology from the 1916-1917 course of study. The State Department of Education also established its first junior college standards in 1916, duly accrediting the institute as a class "A" junior college and declared, along with the Texas State Teachers Association, the new college's teacher training course accredited "to qualify students for teacher's certificates on an equal basis with state normal schools" (5). After seven years as a junior college, in 1916 Alexander Collegiate Institute became the tenth junior college member of the Texas College Association. To reflect its official accreditation by the church and the state, the 1916 Texas Conference legally changed the name of the conference school to Alexander College (13).

Advertising the school's new accreditation widely, Strother raised his tuition to $63 per student in 1916-1917

and enrolled 162 students, filling both dormitories and doubling the local patronage of the college. Declaring that "the school is again on a paying basis," he challenged the 1916 Texas Conference to launch a campaign to pay off the college indebtedness, which had risen to $40,000 due to the lack of payments by the school on its long-term mortgage since 1909. The conference agreed to raise half the amount needed to pay off the indebtedness on condition that the local trustees deed the boys' dormitory to the conference school. The trustees promptly transferred Smith Hall, which they had built at their own personal expense seven years before, to conference control in 1916, and the conference appointed another of its presiding elders to lead the new financial campaign for its college (13).

Just as the Texas Conference began to raise money to pay off the college debt, the United States entered the First World War in the spring of 1917. Soon high taxes, inflation, and wartime rationing absorbed valuable East Texas resources that might have gone to the conference campaign or the tuition of paying patrons of the school. Whereas the Civil War and the Spanish-American War did not take its high school students, the First World War took a large number of college students and faculty as recruits or draftees from Alexander College in 1917-1918. Patrons also withdrew increasing number of primary, high school, and college students

from the institution as the cost of living rose during the war. Investing any available cash in war bonds, the people of East Texas could ill afford the luxury of private education. So great was the support for the war among the students who remained on campus that they donated the funds for the 1917 Peach yearbook to the war effort, and never published it (15). Strother dropped German from the curriculum as an act of patriotism and advertised his teacher certification course to increase his female enrollment, declaring: "This is a matter of great importance for those teachers living in all East Texas who wish first-grade state certificates. Give us your patronage, ye teachers!" (5). By the fall term of 1917, however, enrollment fell by almost half to less than one hundred students, creating a serious operating deficit for the college (13).

As they had after the dormitory burned in 1914, the trustees of Alexander College cut operating expenses in 1917 by dismissing several faculty members and [illegible] the salaries of Strother and his remaining teachers, describing their finances to the 1917 Texas Conference as "materially affected by the war conditions. This is a time of severe trial, made unavoidable by war" (13). The trustees paid Strother no salary whatsoever in 1917-1918, and, although they had awarded him a life term as president of the school two years before, he resigned his post at the end of the

session, retiring to a farm near Jacksonville. Strother's second term as president of the school had been similar to his first, in that he achieved higher accreditation for the institution and, thus, continued implementation of its purpose by providing an education of high quality (16). It differed from his earlier experience, inthat he concentrated more upon providing student activities in the pattern of Barcus and Lefler than upon imposing religious indoctrination and moral discipline, and he tried to pay off the building debt accumulated during his first administration instead of adding more buildings. He came to Alexander Collegiate Institute and left it Alexander College.

As they had two years earlier, the school trustees changed chairmen at the same time they changed college presidents in 1918 (13). Under the new chairmanship of local trustee W. C. Bolton, the trustees elected as the school's ninth president Bolton's son-in-law, R. G. Boger, M. A., who had served as the college coach until his dismissal the year before. The youngest man ever to lead the institution, at twenty-six years of age, Boger was the first member of the faculty to be promoted to head of the school and its last lay president. From the beginning, he employed innovation in his implementation of the school's traditional purposes (5).

Recognizing the need to reduce operating expenditures

during the final phase of the war in 1918, Boger dismissed his primary teachers and eliminated the lower grades from his course of study due to a decline in primary school enrollment (5). One student who attended the last session of the seventy-year-old primary school later recalled: "I came to love this school as a primary student, and many other Jacksonville citizens similarly began their education here. The primary grades created much local good feeling toward the college" (8). Beginning in the fall of 1918, students wishing to attend Alexander College had to obtain their primary education elsewhere; the common school curriculum of 1847 was no more. In his college studies, Boger persuaded the local Methodist pastor to teach the Bible course free of charge throughout his administration (5, 11).

Aware of the need to increase operating income as he reduced expenditures, Boger secured the school's first aid from the federal government in the fall of 1918 in the form of a high school and college military cadet corps. Alexander College enrolled a record 236 students for the fall term, including 110 military cadets, and the United States Army paid the latter's total expenses. Divided into high school Reserve Army Training Corps and college Student Army Training Corps units, the cadets drilled, exercised, and took an hour's course in military tactics each day under the guid-

ance of two Army lieutenants in preparation for transfer to Camp MacArthur Central Officers' Training School near Waco after six weeks' training on the college campus. The cadets, uniformed and barracked in Smith Hall, "were a real part of military affairs," and the college once again took on a martial appearance reminiscent of the days of Nunn and Butler. Just before the end of the war in November, a national influenza epidemic struck the campus, forcing Boger to move the corps into the Twin Towers library and to convert Smith Hall into a hospital for his students (1). The Army paid the expense of a local physician to serve full time on the campus until the epidemic was over and finally disbanded its Alexander College cadet corps on December 20, 1918. During the last months of the war, the federal government had given the Methodist school sufficient aid to meet all of its operating expense, enabling it to supplement its small paying patronage (3, 15).

As soon as the war was over, Boger sought to return his college to more normal operations. He restored campus extracurricular activities and expanded the number of social and literary student organizations, such as the English, French, Spanish, Sewing, Cooking, and Tennis Clubs, and utilized some of the federal funds received during the fall to expand the library to 2,500 volumes. Boasting that his operating

budget was finally "healthful and satisfactory," Boger's main complaint in 1918-1919 was that the war had "disarranged" his college course of study (11).

Boger established academic standards as high as those of E. R. Williams for Alexander College in 1919-1920, declaring:

> We offer no short cuts to those who are not willing to prepare themselves, nor any 'lightweight' courses for the frivolous. Alexander College has demonstrated that it stands for the highest ideals in scholarship, as well as social and religious culture (5).

Concerned that Jacksonville College, the unaccredited Baptist school established during Williams' administration, had just begun to offer a high school and junior college course of study in competition with its accredited neighbor (10), Boger added a year of English to his junior college graduation requirements, while dropping Greek and philosophy from his college curriculum, and secured a rating of "Class A Plus, the highest possible ranking any junior college may obtain," from the State Department of Education in 1919. Seeking to restore his school's paying patronage by enhancing its established reputation, he boasted of its "teachers of experience, men and women whose religious experience and personal character enable them by example as well as precept to inculcate the highest ideals of manhood and womanhood," and outlined the academic program offered by Alexander College:

> Four years of thorough academic work, preparatory to college entrance, and two years of college work, preparing those who complete it for the practical affairs of life, or for entrance into the junior year of standard colleges, constitute our work in the literary department, every unit and every hour of which if affiliated with every college in the South, and Columbia University, New York (5).

Even as Boger initiated his academic program to improve and to upgrade the standards of Alexander College in 1919, the man who had originally established its standards passed away at the age of eighty-seven on June 5 in Henderson. Isaac Alexander had been its teacher, principal, president, chaplain, and trustee over the previous fifty-nine years, and hundreds of his patrons, teachers, students, trustees, and friends gathered at his grave, over which Boger read an appropriate tribute, written of Alexander in 1886: "Long after he has been hushed into breathless sleep he will still live . . . . his name will be affectionately enshrined in the hearts of that host of noble women and brave men who have been his pupils" (9). Despite the affection expressed by his admirers in 1919, however, the college traded the name of Alexander for a larger endowment less than five years after his death.

With the postwar economic depression, enrollment at Alexander College did not regain its prewar level in the fall of 1919, Boger's attempts to enhance the academic standards notwithstanding. Like E. R. Williams two decades be-

fore, Boger imposed rigorous scholastic and disciplinary rules upon his 118 students, introducing a demerit system whereby he restricted them from extracurricular activity for infractions of campus order, including absences from class and study hall. During the session, he revived inter-scholastic athletic competition on the campus, which he had suspended for the duration of the war, and encouraged the formation of two new student organizations--the Life Service Band, composed of members of the Preachers Club and girls interested in becoming missionaries, and the Curtain Club, which initiated a half-century of quality dramatic productions at the school in 1920. The highlight of the session was a visit to Alexander College by former President of the United States William Howard Taft, who was touring the nation on behalf of President Woodrow Wilson. He delivered the school's annual Lyceum lecture, which he entitled "The League of Nations," and Boger hosted a large banquet in his honor, attracting many prominent East Texans to the campus (3). The college trustees utilized the occasion to revive the Texas Conference campaign to reduce the college indebtedness, which had risen to a total of $54,000 since the beginning of the war. They succeeded in raising $6,000 during the spring of 1920, mainly from the local Jacksonville area, but utilized most of the funds to raise faculty salaries and

to purchase an expensive pipe organ for the school's musical and religious programs (5, 11).

Prior to the opening of the 1920-1921 session, Boger appointed C. C. Norton, M.A., a Texas Conference minister, as the first dean of Alexander College and continued to upgrade the academic quality of the school. Restoring Bible as a junior college graduation requirement for the first time in six years, he also added American history and restored government to the college curriculum. Although the college continued to advertise its quality education and strategic location at the intersection of three railways, served by sixteen passenger trains a day, its enrollment did not increase in 1920 or 1921. Unwilling to turn any prospective student away for lack of funds, Boger initiated a policy in 1920 of allowing some of his students to enroll on credit, most of whom never repaid the school for their education, despite the fact that they signed notes to do so. Although the school had enrolled needy students free of charge for seventy-three years, Boger's new credit policy created a large operating deficit for the college by 1921. When he failed to collect 25 per cent of the charges due from his 120 students in the fall of 1921, his trustees instructed Boger to allow no more credit for students with "accounts due," which they soon "turned over to an attorney for

collection," and stipulated that all other students must "pay tuition in advance, or make notes." As they had during the operating deficits of 1914 and 1917, the trustees dismissed several teachers and reduced the salaries of all who remained at the college during 1921-1922 (5, 11).

Echoing his predecessors, Boger made a virtue of his predicament by "guaranteeing close individual attention" to each of the 117 students who enrolled at Alexander College in the fall of 1922. Permitting most of his students to attend on credit despite his trustees' concern, Boger created a larger operating deficit and increased the school's total indebtedness to $60,000. Urging the 1922 Texas Conference to revive its campaign to pay off the college debt, he observed: "It would be a calamity to let Alexander College suffer more" (13). His trustees agreed; at the end of the 1923 spring term, they thanked Boger for his "splendid services" and asked for his resignation. Securing the presidency of the Methodist junior college in Weatherford, Texas, for the following session, Boger expressed his good will to the college by giving it his new private home next to the campus. Following his resignation, dean C. C. Norton and chairman of the trustees W. C. Bolton, Boger's father-in-law, both resigned their posts with the college. Despite his high academic standards, strict discipline, and religious

concern, the young president left the college financial problems in 1923 (11).

Following the departure of Boger, Norton, and Bolton, the trustees of Alexander College elected former president, M. L. Lefler, judge of Cherokee County, as their chairman. Like Isaac Alexander before him, Lefler took his new position seriously and launched a search for a president capable of increasing the school's paying patronage and assisting the trustees in reducing its sizeable debt. After two ministerial trustees declined the post at twice Boger's salary, Lefler persuaded an old friend and fellow pioneer in Methodist junior college education to accept the presidency of Alexander College in 1923 (11).

George F. Winfield, M.A., a Methodist minister like six of his nine predecessors at Alexander College, had become president of a dying Methodist junior college in Meridian, Texas, in 1911. Within three years, he had made it the first accredited Methodist junior college in Texas and had established himself as a specialist in revitalizing failing schools. Author of the nation's first master's thesis on the junior college in 1916, Winfield wrote the constitution and by-laws of the American Association of Junior Colleges and became its first president in 1920. He composed the first national junior college standards for the federal Commissioner of Education in 1921 and was the nation's recog-

nized authority on the junior college. After rebuilding Wesley College in Greenville, Texas from 1919 to 1923, he became vice-president of the Methodist Educational Association just before accepting Lefler's call to save Alexander College. Dedicated to his cause, Winfield rebuilt the school's enrollment and saved it financially from 1923 to 1928 (16, 17).

George F. Winfield was faithful to the purposes of Alexander College, seeking during his presidency:

(1) To democratize the spirit and ideals of the old liberal arts college, and to put those ideals within reach of the rank and file of the middle adolescent boys and girls of our nation.

(2) To liberalize the college curriculum beyond the old classical standards, and yet at the same time to check the tendency to offer too wide a field of electives in courses below the junior year of college or university.

(3) To enrich, not to shorten, the curriculum of the college by offering orientation courses in all fundamental subjects.

(4) To arrange both curricular and extracurricular activities to meet the needs of the middle adolescent.

(5) To introduce the boys and girls to their religious inheritance, and to bring each into a vital touch with the great Spiritual Leader of Christianity, plus developing the self into a personality who knows and desires to discharge his duty to his fellowman, and one who obeys the laws of God as

> they are written in the nature
> of the individual and revealed
> in the Person of the Man of Galilee (12).

After promoting Methodist minister E. M. Stanton from the faculty to the post of college dean, Winfield added courses in accounting and organic chemistry to the college curriculum and reduced the junior college graduation requirement in foreign language back to two years. In addition to the organizations already established on the campus for religious vocation students, he introduced two new associations for all students, the high school Epworth League and the college Methodist Student Federation, instructing them to protect "the youthful army of students from the heresies incident to ignorance and distrust" (5).

Determined to rebuild the enrollment of Alexander College, Winfield travelled widely across the Texas Conference prior to the fall term of 1923 and succeeded in raising it by 40 per cent, to 160 students. Although he raised tuition at the school from $65 to $90 per student in 1923-1924, the capacity enrollment did not increase the college operating income; Winfield continued Boger's policy of allowing liberal credit to his students, increasing the total indebtedness to $67,000 during his first year in office. When he asked his trustees for additional dormitory space after the session began, they instructed him to raise his operating income first (11).

Winfield promoted an increase in campus activity during the 1923-1924 session. Entering the Texas Junior College Athletic Association in 1923, the college regularly scheduled sports contests which attracted athletes and sports fans to the campus and earned the school numerous championships in the years that followed. Winfield also permitted the establishment on the campus of the "College Hot Shop," later known as "Pop's Shack" or the "Bearcat's Den," a private business catering to student refreshment and relaxation during the next two decades. As vital to some students as daily chapel, the little gathering place served as a center of social life for the campus during the "roaring" twenties (1).

On Columbus Day, 1923, Alexander College celebrated the golden anniversary of its becoming a Methodist institution in Kilgore. Attended by 7,000 ex-students and supporters of the school, including several Congressmen and federal judges, plus an ex-governor, the celebration featured picnics, banquets, assemblies, and a pageant highlighting the school's history. Winfield used the occasion to form a college alumni association to secure further financial support for the school (3, 15).

The trustees of Alexander College held a crucial meeting at the Jacksonville Methodist Church on December 23, 1923,

to determine the future of their school. Reminiscent of the 1893 East Texas Conference three decades before, the trustees divided between a minority of ministers who wished to close the college, declaring that there was no prospect of paying off its debt or increasing its operating income, and a majority of laymen, insisting that they intended to save the school somehow. After considerable debate lasting into the next day, the majority declared itself in favor of moving the college "to a more suitable place" in the Texas Conference at the end of the 1924 spring term (11). Fearing the same fate that Kilgore had experienced thirty years before, the Jacksonville trustees insisted that they would "stand by the school no matter what," pointing out that they had built its plant and provided most of its support in the past, and immediately launched a local financial campaign to pay off the debt before the end of the session (11, 16).

The local trustees raised $7,000 for the school by the following March, causing Winfield to announce: "A new day had dawned for the old college! The $25,000 remaining of our operating indebtedness will be wiped out by May. Relief is in sight!" His joy was short-lived; Jacksonville raised no more money for the college during the remainder of the spring term, and the trustees set a meeting for June 2 to seal its fate. Through the good offices of Texas

Conference bishop J. A. Moore, Winfield "cultivated" two wealthy East Texas Methodists - Jennis Tapp of New Boston, who promised to leave the college something in her will, and R. A. Morris of Pittsburg, a wealthy banker and lay preacher who had already given away most of his fortune, over $200,000, to various Methodist causes. An old friend of Isaac Alexander, Morris had run his Camp County bank alone for over forty years, charging his customers as high as 20 per cent interest on loans. Judging the remainder of his estate at between $50,000 and $100,000, Winfield persuaded Morris that he could save Alexander College from removal or extinction in 1924(6).

Accompanied by Winfield and his bishop, Reuben Alonzo Morris attended the meeting of the college trustees on June 2, 1924 and offered his fortune to the school on two conditions: (1) if the trustees would raise the final $25,000 needed to pay off the college operating debt, and (2) if they would honor him by changing the name of the school to "Lon Morris College, or some similar name to be decided upon when ready to make the change" (11). The trustees accepted his first condition without question, and bishop Moore announced that his educational secretary, future trustee, Glenn Flinn, would lead a Texas Conference financial campaign to assist them in their task. By July, the Jacksonville Chamber of Commerce and the Texas Conference to-

gether raised $26,000 and paid off the operating debt. Some trustees and other supporters of the school were opposed to Morris' second condition, insisting that the college should keep the name which it had borne for over half a century in honor of its first president, but Morris made it clear that he would give no money until they changed its name (8, 11). Realizing that they might lose the school by keeping its name, the trustees renamed the institution Lon Morris College in "deep and grateful appreciation" to their new benefactor and voted to leave it in Jacksonville after all. With the Morris endowment, the college had a new lease on life (11).

From 1909-1924, Alexander Collegiate Institute became Alexander College, a recognized and accredited junior college of the highest standing, completing its transition from a common primary school founded over seventy-five years before. Remaining faithful to the basic academic and religious purposes which had guided it through the years, each of the school's seven administrations faced a variety of problems, some of which they solved, during this period.

F. E. Butler successfully introduced the junior college course of study to Alexander Collegiate Institute by correlating it with the first two years of study at major universities in the South. John M. Barcus expanded the high school and junior college curricular and established high

graduation requirements for his college students, issuing the school's first teachers' certificates in 1911. He was also the first person to recommend that the school become exclusively a junior college, meeting all Methodist standards set for such schools in 1912. M. L. Lefler utilized his junior college experience to upgrade the school further to 1914, but non-scholar J. B. Turrentine made no academic contribution to the institution. Upon his return to the school in 1915, W. K. Strother successfully secured further church, state, university, plus state teacher and college association accreditation for the college. After the First World War, R. G. Boger raised the academic standards of the school to a level comparable to those of E. R. Williams, securing even further accreditation for its college course of study. Finally, George F. Winfield brought his junior college expertise to the school in 1923, reorganizing its curriculum to fit the standards which he had established for all such colleges in the nation three years before. With the single exception of Turrentine, the presidents of the school attempted to implement its purpose of providing a high quality education for its students between 1909 and 1924.

The presidents differed more dramatically in their implementation of the school's religious purpose during this period. F. E. Butler was determined to impose moral and religious regimentation upon his students, instituting rigid

discipline and a military atmosphere. Over-zealous, he spied upon his students, harangued them in emotionally-charged religious services, and expelled them at the slightest provocation. Although he converted nearly every student who remained, he drove away needed enrollment and caused enough hostility among his patrons that the institute trustees dismissed him in 1911. His successor, John M. Barcus, took a more relaxed attitude toward religion, even though he was also the local Methodist pastor. He returned the school to its original religious purpose, stipulating that "no sectarian creed will be taught" and concentrating upon the general moral development of "Christian character" in his students. His nondenominational approach to religious training at the college set the pattern for his Methodist successors, lay and clergy alike, most of whom continued his emphasis upon general Protestant teachings. Layman M. L. Lefler made religious activity an integral part of his extra-curricular program, but without sectarian emphasis. Relaxing the rules of his predecessors, he permitted social clubs and dating on campus for the first time in 1912. Whereas J. B. Turrentine concentrated upon teaching Bible only in 1914-1915, W. K. Strother proved that he could adapt to modern trends by offering the same mild religious instruction initiated under Barcus. R. G. Boger and George F. Winfield

established the Life Service Band, the Epworth League, and the Methodist Student Federation in order to encourage their students to choose religious vocations and to combat "heresy," but they also permitted increased freedom of behavior on the college campus. After F. E. Butler, the implementation of the religious purpose of the school was innocuous and inoffensive to Methodist and non-Methodist alike.

Those presidents with unpopular programs, such as Butler and Boger, suffered declines in paying patronage and operating income during this period and resigned under threat of dismissal. Lefler and Stróther suffered similar declines due to the loss of the girls' dormitory and the beginning of the First World War, despite their popular programs, and resigned because of the lack of pay. Only Barcus and Winfield instituted popular programs and successfully solved the school's financial problems. Turrentine had no program, but he managed to conduct a building campaign for the school. When the school combined popular programs with financial prosperity, it successfully implemented its traditional purposes from 1909 to 1924.

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CHAPTER V

LON MORRIS COLLEGE

1924-1935

For the first time since it originated seventy-seven years before, Lon Morris College was the beneficiary of a large financial endowment in 1924. The estate of Reuben Alonzo Morris, for whom the college had been renamed, promised the school economic security after years of financial hardship brought on by war, depression, misfortune, and institutional mismanagement. In spite of its good fortune in 1924, Lon Morris College quickly spent its inheritance and soon faced the problems of operating deficits and heavy indebtedness once more, which multiplied greatly after the onset of the Great Depression.

During the eleven years from 1924 to 1935, Lon Morris College sought to implement its traditional academic and religious purposes in the prosperity of the twenties and the depression of the thirties. The objective of this chapter is to examine how three different administrations of the school met the problems confronting them as they attempted to implement the purposes of the school. Insofar as overwhelming economic difficulty did not thwart their efforts,

the administrators of Lon Morris College were able to implement its purposes between 1924 and 1935 to a degree consistent with their competence.

During his first year as president of the college, George F. Winfield had pledged himself to fulfill its traditional purposes of providing high quality education and religious instruction for its students, upgraded its curriculum, expanded its campus activities, increased its enrollment, and, above all, found a way to solve its financial difficulties. In the summer of 1924, thanks to Winfield's "cultivation" of R. A. Morris, the school paid off its operating debt in exchange for the Morris estate, which was worth between $50,000 and $100,000. As soon as the deal was complete, the seventy-eight-year-old Morris closed his Pittsburg bank and gave the last of his personal fortune to Lon Morris College, asking only that the school support him with an annuity from the estate for the rest of his life. The trustees agreed to his final condition so that the old man could live out his remaining years in comfortable retirement, not anticipating that he would spend most of the next seven years under expensive medical care in a local hospital (12). Much of the school's benefit from the Morris estate went to keeping Morris alive between 1924 and 1931. Attorneys for the estate did not determine its true value until early 1925; until that time, Winfield confidently proclaimed: "We

have more than $200,000 in endowment." His claim proved excessively optimistic (3).

Anticipating dramatic development of the school as soon as it received the full Morris estate, Winfield sought to expand implementation of its traditional purposes in 1924-1925. In June, he re-established the college summer session which Lefler had attempted a decade before, advertising a complete high school and junior college course of study. Expanding his college curriculum to include new courses in biology, economics, engineering, agriculture, business law, business mathematics, shorthand, penmanship, correspondence, typewriting, education, secondary education, plus music history, theory, and harmony, Winfield offered his students courses of study for ordination as Methodist ministers, certification as Methodist Sunday school teachers, and certification as elementary or unaccredited high school teachers at the end of the freshman year, or certification as accredited high school teachers after junior college graduation. Most of the seventy students admitted to the 1924 summer session enrolled for teacher training. At the end of the session, Winfield offered a ten-day review school for graduates of unaccredited high schools to prepare them for the college's first entrance examination in the fall of 1924, which he did not require for graduates of accredited

high schools or for any certified teacher (5). Like his predecessors, he permitted his own high school students to enroll in some college studies while completing their senior year in the Lon Morris Academy or while making up some deficiency in their previous high school work, such as the two years of high school foreign language required of each student admitted to the college. Describing the four-year academy as the preparatory department of Lon Morris College, Winfield encouraged students to enroll for the complete six years of study available at the school (5).

Maintaining that "any institution which seeks to make money off its patrons is untrue to the purpose and ideals of true education," Winfield nevertheless imposed a total of $158 in tuition and fees for each college student enrolled in 1924-1925, more than double the charges of his predecessor. Insisting that the increase was necessary to cover operating expenses, he demanded at least half the tuition in advance and insisted that his patrons deposit the balance with the school in monthly installments credited to their accounts. Despite the tuition increase, the college enrolled 212 students in the fall of 1924, 30 per cent more than in the previous session. In addition, Winfield enrolled about fifty teachers from the local area in the college's first Saturday morning education classes in 1924-1925, enabling them to

keep up with rising state teacher certification standards. Noting that the school had produced certified teachers for over a half century, he sponsored the formation of the Lon Morris Teachers Association during the year, which helped graduates of his teacher training course find jobs in East Texas schools and published the Teachers Quarterly, the only literary journal ever published by the college and the first such publication in East Texas. The Quarterly included essays and articles by the faculty, students, and graduates of the school until the alumni association took it over for propaganda and money-raising purposes three years later (5, 15).

Winfield instituted the college's first published academic standards in 1924, requiring his students to pass at least half their courses in the fall term in order to be eligible for re-enrollment in the spring term of 1925. In addition, he still required each student to join a literary club and attend study hall if his grades were low. Enforcing discipline, he forbade "hazing" by the campus fraternities and sororities, warned his students against "unbecoming conduct off campus," and continued the use of Boger's demerit system:

> Promiscuous visiting in the dorms is discouraged, and neither should excessive correspondence be indulged. Girls must be accompanied by a chaperone upon leaving campus, and cannot leave without written permission from a parent or guardian. Demerits will appear upon the

> reports of those who violate the rules of this institution. One hundred fifty demerits will dismiss a boarding student; one hundred, a town student (5).

Forced to board some male students off campus for the first time since the addition of cooperative dormitories in 1910, Winfield repeated his plea for a new boys' dormitory at the college in the fall of 1924. Although he boasted to his patrons that "the church provides our buildings and equipment free," the college trustees preferred to use the Morris endowment for that purpose in 1924-1925. In the spring of 1925, the attorneys for the Morris estate reported that it had only $62,000 worth of cash, secured notes and real estate, with an uncertain amount of value in poorly secured or uncollectable notes, which the attorneys offered to purchase from the college at half their face value. In February, 1925, the trustees utilized the Morris endowment to purchase six additional acres of land adjacent to the campus for the construction of a $45,000 three-story fireproofed brick dormitory large enough to house seventy-three students and a $22,000 heating plant for the campus buildings. The expenditure depleted the Morris endowment, except for some real estate and unsecured notes, but the college doubled its boarding capacity for 1925-1926 by the completion of the new Lula Morris Hall, naming it after Morris' deceased wife. In the fall, Smith Hall became a girls' dormitory, and Winfield

converted one of the boys' cooperative dormitories into the school's first teachers' cottage. Only the heating plant proved a disappointment; the contractor laid its pipes upside-down, causing the dormitories to be without heat during the day and the Twin Towers to be without heat at night for over a dozen winters to come (8, 12).

Despite the success of the campaign to pay off the school's operating debt the previous summer, Winfield's credit policy created a new $3,000 operating deficit for the college during 1924-1925. After persuading the 1924 Texas Conference to give the college $2,300 to cover his deficit, Winfield confidently advised his patrons that "any operating deficit is met by the Texas Conference." After warning him to collect all student charges on a "cash basis" in 1925-1926, Winfield's trustees raised his salary and made up the balance on his deficit. Despite their warning, he charged outstanding musicians only half tuition and reduced required advanced payments to only one-third of each student's charges for 1925-1926 (5, 8, 9).

Determined to increase his enrollment further, Winfield replaced his college courses in agriculture and engineering with new teacher training courses in the history of education, physical education, practice teaching, and child psychology, expanding his summer session enrollment to 168

students and his regular session enrollment to full capacity at 252, including 62 religious vocation students. With three other Methodist ministers on his faculty to assist him, Winfield established the Religious Council to coordinate all campus religious group activities in 1925-1926, including early morning watch services, daily chapel, weekly prayer meetings, Sunday school, church services, Epworth League and Methodist Student Federation meetings. Led by ministerial and missionary students under faculty guidance, the Religious Council replaced the Lyceum programs each spring with an annual revival or "Religious Emphasis Week," a concept soon copied by other Methodist schools in Texas, and hosted a week-long Epworth League assembly of 300 or more Methodist high school graduates from across the Texas Conference at the end of each session (2, 5, 11). Winfield recruited numerous students for the college at these assemblies each year and boasted: "We have more than twice as many young men and women from the Texas Conference preparing for the ministry and mission fields at Lon Morris College as there are in all our other institutions combined" (2, 5).

The Religious Council dominated campus life at Lon Morris College for well over a quarter century. Composed of representatives of all campus religious organizations, including even the Young Men's Christian Association and Young Women's Christian Association, the council took charge

of campus discipline, restricting students to the campus for violation of college rules, dominating the revived student government, and putting great pressure on the student body to adhere to its standards of religious piety and enthusiasm. A reversal of the trend toward more relaxed implementation of the school's religious purpose which had begun under John M. Barcus in 1911, the council aroused little resentment among the college students, most of whom considered it a natural expression of the school's church-related status (6).

By the end of the 1925-1926 session, Winfield's credit policy and the school's lack of payments on its mortgage had driven the total college indebtedness up to $60,000, almost the level which it had reached at the time of Boger's dismissal three years before. Unable to draw upon the remaining Morris endowment for relief because relatives of R. A. Morris were contesting his will, the college trustees petitioned the Texas Conference to continue its subsidy of Winfield's operating deficit by instituting an annual collection of $10,000 from its churches for support of the college operating expense (8, 9). The conference declined to subsidize the school further in 1926, insisting that Winfield should solve his own financial problems (9). After the trustees awarded him free housing in the president's

home, Winfield hired an old colleague from Wesley College, C. D. Molloy, to be his business manager. Molloy persuaded Winfield to economize by dismissing some of his faculty, a method used previously at the school during hard financial times. Dropping the seventy-two-year-old finishing school for girls, Winfield reduced the first two years of high school study in the academy to "special classes," although the college continued to graduate twice as many high school students as junior college students (5). Faced with increasing competition from the local public high school, which erected a new $125,000 plant in 1925-1926, Winfield thus began a trend which ended with the complete abandonment of its high school course of study by the college twenty-two years later. At the same time that he reduced his high school faculty, Winfield increased the teaching load of his college faculty, dropping college courses in business law and business mathematics, but replacing them with courses in business psychology, journalism, mechanical drawing, Greek, and homiletics. He also met increasing competition from local junior colleges during this period when Tyler Junior College began offering the same curriculum at lower cost only thirty miles away in 1926. In response, Winfield lowered his charges per student by $20 for 1926-1927 (4, 5).

Noting that ministerial students had attended the college free in return for work performed on campus since

1911, Winfield and Molloy permitted thirty-six other students to earn free tuition by working on the campus or playing on the Bearcat athletic teams during 1926-1927. With the president collecting only one-third of the reduced student charges in advance and permitting one-third of the student body to attend the college with no charges at all, the trustees of Lon Morris College expressed their concern about the school's rising operating deficit, accused Winfield of practicing "false economy," and declared: "Too many students are employed in and about the school; we regard this as a form of pension. All athletic contracts with students in the employ of the athletic department are hereby cancelled." The trustees further forbade Winfield to offer free tuition to attract more students and cut off all his advertising and travel funds for the rest of the session (4, 8).

Realizing that his trustees would no longer allow him to subsidize the education of needy students from the college operating funds, in early 1927 Winfield persuaded members of the Jacksonville Methodist Church to contribute the school's first $1,500 in work scholarship funds to pay the charges of needy students in exchange for their work on campus during the spring term. Such work scholarship donations from Methodist churches across the Texas Conference after 1927 allowed needy students to earn their college education,

perpetuating the school's eighty-year tradition of providing an education available to all, and saved the college needed operating funds which it otherwise would have spent on free education or the pay of non-student campus personnel (2). In order to raise the needed scholarships, Winfield took his choral and drama clubs on regular tours of Texas Conference churches in 1927 and 1928, attracting large numbers of Methodists to their Sunday evening performances of religious music and plays (3). The college tours also helped advertise the school and recruited numerous students from Methodist congregations near and far. So successful was Winfield's work scholarship plan that his trustees raised his and the college faculty's salaries and constructed a new athletic field for the school at his request in 1927. In return, he raised his charges back to $158 for day students and to $410 for boarding students in 1927-1928. Impressed with Winfield's initiative and zeal in raising work scholarships from its churches to cover the expense of educating needy students, the 1927 Texas Conference approved his trustees' proposal that it set aside a "Lon Morris Day" each year to raise supplemental operating funds for the school from its congregations. Beginning with a collection of $7,000 in 1927-1928, the "Lon Morris Day" offerings became a vital part of the college operating budget over the next

twenty years and gave the school its first regular conference subsidy (4, 8).

Having corrected his financial problems, Winfield turned his attention to the implementation of the college's academic purpose again prior to the 1927-1928 session. Always the pioneer in junior college education, Winfield determined to make Lon Morris College the first Texas junior college in the Southern Association of Schools and Colleges in 1927. He reorganized his academic program by adding college courses in adolescent and applied psychology, replacing college Greek with German, introducing the Dewey Decimal System to an expanded college library, making student membership in campus literary societies voluntary, and expelling all students who dropped a college course without permission. Seeking to justify the school's claim to accredited junior college status, Winfield made the first follow-up study of its junior college graduates in 1927 to determine whether any graduate from 1922 to 1925 had failed to pass any university course after transfer from Lon Morris College. Citing transcripts from six Texas universities, he reported to the Southern Association that "not a single boarding student" had failed any university course after transfer. Interpreting his findings as evidence that Lon Morris College prepared its students for senior college and university study, the

Southern Association approved Winfield's faculty, curriculum, and financial policies and accredited the school as its first junior college member in Texas in 1927 (2, 5, 8).

Having secured the highest accreditation available for any junior college in the state, Lon Morris College maintained a capacity enrollment of 240 students in the fall of 1927, enhancing its operating income from additional work scholarships. With all its major problems under control, Winfield resigned his post as president of Lon Morris College in April, 1928 and accepted the presidency of Whitworth College in Brookhaven, Mississippi, another Methodist junior college with problems similar to those faced by Alexander College five years before. Desirous to continue his work of saving such failing schools, Winfield left Lon Morris College with its first major endowment, its highest accreditation, regular subsidies from the churches of the Texas Conference, a large enrollment, new buildings, an upgraded curriculum, expanded sessions, and more campus activities, including those sponsored by the new Religious Council. Faithful to the traditions of the school in the midst of his innovations, Winfield thoroughly implemented its academic and religious purposes from 1923 to 1928 (2, 3).

Despite Winfield's achievements, Lon Morris College still had a $60,000 total indebtedness to pay off in 1928, and its trustees could not persuade several Texas Conference

ministers to accept the college presidency, including trustee Glenn Flinn, who had successfully led the campaign to wipe out its $25,000 operating debt four years before. To serve as acting president until they selected a permanent head of the school, the trustees elected dean E. M. Stanton, B. A., a member of the faculty since 1922. After C. D. Molloy resigned, they made coach D. E. Hawk business manager of the college. "A good advertiser for the school" (14). Stanton toured the Texas Conference in the spring and summer of 1928 in search of students and scholarship funds, offering all high school valedictorians and salutorians half-tuition discounts or full tuition "Faculty Scholarships" in several major fields and promising needy students work scholarships or loans from the permanent endowment gifts of wealthy conference supporters of the school like B. F. Thompson of Kilgore, who had established the college loan fund back in 1901. Anticipating a large enrollment for the fall term of 1928, Stanton expanded his faculty and college curriculum, replacing courses in journalism and mechanical drawing with courses in advanced algebra, drama, and art history. Dropping Bible from his junior college graduation requirements, Methodist minister Stanton established the school's first religious education department in 1928 to concentrate his religious instruction only upon students

interested in religious vocations. Like Barcus and Lefler before him, Stanton saw no reason to impose sectarian religious teaching upon his students in his course of study; instead, he encouraged the Religious Council to expand its domination of campus life, requiring twice as much religious activity of his students as Winfield. Faithful to the school's academic and religious purposes, he observed:

> A distinctive type of training is offered at Lon Morris College. It is collegiate and Christian. The development of real character is the prime object of such training. The all-round student physically, mentally, and spiritually is the aim of college activities. That this purpose has been largely realized is attested by the high standards maintained by our graduates. Judge us by our work (5).

Enrolling 276 students in the fall of 1928, Stanton boasted: "All previous enrollment records have been broken, and Lon Morris College is now possibly the largest denominational college in Texas" (3). For the first time in its history, the school enrolled more college students than high school students, prompting Stanton to drop the "special classes" for the first two years of high school study from the regular session. Describing his high school students as "freshmen" or "sophomores" and his college students as "juniors" or "seniors," he insisted that "academy students and college students are treated all alike, and the discipline and advantages are all the same in each of the four years

years at Lon Morris College" (2). A high school student who enrolled in 1928 recalled considerable discrimination among the students themselves, however, especially with regard to religious and moral attitudes:

> The religious atmosphere dominating the campus was exceedingly pious, and students were frequently summoned to private conferences with leaders of the Religious Council, where they were accused of various sins. Even playing bridge could get you into trouble, and once you were on the blacklist, you stayed on it. 'Sinners' were often punished with low grades in their academic courses. Most students didn't resist all this, however--they obeyed. I transferred to Jacksonville College for the spring term in 1929, where I enjoyed freedom to study without distraction and a very pleasant campus atmosphere (6).

Another reason for low grades at Lon Morris College in the fall of 1928 was Stanton's decision to join the new national junior college scholastic honorary society, Phi Theta Kappa. Seeking to impress the society with his school's high academic standards, Stanton urged "an observance of the scholarship requirements by all teachers in grading for the fall term," warning that "a very small percentage of failures will mar the record of the fall term" (3). After his faculty correspondingly failed a larger number of students at the end of the term, he excused the increase as "due to the lack of proper training before students enter Lon Morris College--this is the chief cause of failures here" (3). Phi Theta

Kappa established its seventh chapter, the first in Texas, on the Lon Morris campus in early 1929 in recognition of its high academic standards (2). At the end of the spring term, the college conferred upon its outstanding junior college graduate its highest academic honor, the newly-created Founder's Award, established in memory of the school's original man of letters, Isaac Alexander. Members of Phi Theta Kappa won the award annually beginning in 1929. Following his accomplishments of 1928-1929, the college trustees raised Stanton's salary and elected him to a full term as president of the school. Business manager D. E. Hawk replaced Stanton as dean of the college (8).

In anticipation of another large enrollment in the fall of 1929, Stanton added a practice hall for the fine arts department on the campus and offered college credit for the first time for student participation in chorus, band, orchestra, or drama club activities, the last of which won the school's first non-athletic intercollegiate state championship in 1929; elementary teaching replaced the college course in German for 1929-1930. Perhaps due to the increase in student failures during the previous session, the enrollment at Lon Morris College declined by 25 per cent to 213 students in the fall of 1929. Following the policy of his predecessors, Stanton permitted most of his students to enroll on

credit, confident that they would pay most of what they owed the school or have their expenses paid by scholarship or loans (4, 5).

The collapse of the stock market and the onset of the Great Depression in the fall of 1929 seriously reduced the operating income of Lon Morris College. Both its paying patronage and the churches of the Texas Conference found it difficult to finance the educational expenses of its students, and the college operating income was insufficient to meet its expenses. Unable to offset the loss of the school's "Lon Morris Day" collection from the Texas Conference in 1929-1930, by the end of the spring term, the college owed its faculty $3,000 in unpaid salaries, although the trustees awarded Stanton and Hawk raises in income. Stanton explained the lack of faculty pay as "common with all our institutions, and attributable to the general financial and economic conditions which have prevailed since last fall" (8). Fearful of dismissal from their positions, the faculty did not protest their lack of income in 1930. Stanton curtailed all but religious activities at the college in 1929-1930, enrolling 95 per cent of his students in such organizations as the Baptist Student Union and Christian Endeavor. He gave his Religious Council authority to supervise the private lives of his hard-

pressed faculty as well as his students in the Depression, allowing no one on campus to possess intoxicants, play cards, or dance (2, 14, 15).

Even as the college faculty taught without pay, the trustees of Lon Morris College added more members, gave themselves four-year terms, and authorized their officers to act as a local executive committee on college matters. The committee's first decision came in June, 1930, when it agreed to join the local Kiwanis Club in erecting a new gymnasium for the college. Although unwilling to pay their teachers' back salaries, the trustees gave the Kiwanians $5,000 from the dwindling Morris estate as the college's share in the new $14,000 gymnasium. Completed on Kiwanis property next to the campus in November, 1930, the 1,400-seat sports arena provided entertainment for the community and facilities for college athletic contests during the next quarter century (3). Despite the lack of college operating funds, the trustees authorized the business manager, Hawk, to award free athletic scholarships from his budget for the second time in 1930-1931. Forty years later, athletic scholarships still represented the largest single uncompensated expense for Lon Morris College, justified because of the popularity of intercollegiate sports on the campus and among local supporters of the college (4 , 8).

Seeking to maintain a capacity enrollment in 1930-1931,

Stanton replaced advanced algebra and elementary teaching with courses in classroom administration and religious education in his college curriculum and publicized the terminal education offered at Lon Morris College, citing "business courses more thorough than similar work so highly advertised by many business colleges and additional training in the fine arts and vocational subjects" (5). Under a new state law in 1930, he offered teacher certification only to those sophomores who completed college introductory courses in American history and government (5). Although his enrollment declined only slightly to 205 students at the beginning of the 1930-1931 session and the school still won further state championships in drama and football, Stanton later reported to his trustees that "because of economic depression, a large number of students had to withdraw from school during this session" (8). Faced with further decline in paying patronage and operating income, the trustees reduced more faculty salaries, and more than one teacher taught without pay again. In lieu of salaries, one teacher later recalled: "We were given free housing and meals in the dining hall; although we didn't like it much, it was the only thing we could do during the Depression" (10). Rather than dismiss more faculty members for the 1931-1932 session, Stanton recommended a "considerable reduction" of $5,000, or one-third, of his

faculty budget, arguing that "such a budget is in line with the general economic conditions, and in no way neglects the general welfare of the college" (8). Commending the president on his thrift, the trustees adopted his new budget.

Reuben Alonzo Morris died after lengthy hospitalization in Jacksonville on January 6, 1931 and the college held his funeral in the Twin Towers library a short while later. As the Alexandrian proclaimed: "The whole college mourns the death of Lon Morris; his benefactions saved Lon Morris College to the church and state," the Morris family sued the school for the remainder of his estate (3). After "almost continuous meetings" with the relatives of their benefactor, the college trustees settled the inheritance suit by compromise, giving up the last of the Morris real estate in exchange for some unsecured notes, most of which finally proved worthless thirty years later. The Morris endowment was of no real value to the college after the 1931 settlement (1).

Although he echoed the old Lefler thesis about the virtue of his small enrollment at the end of the 1930-1931 session, declaring that "Lon Morris College is large enough to have the attractions that go with numbers, but small enough to give personal attention to everyone, offering intimate campus life that is not exactly duplicated elsewhere," Stanton hired E. S. Erwin, the Cherokee County school superinten-

dent, to recruit a larger enrollment for the school in 1931-1932. His efforts attracted over 400 students to the college in the fall of 1931, the largest number to seek admission to the school for another thirty-four years, mainly on the promise of scholarships and loans to pay their educational expense. Having exhausted his scholarship and loan funds, plus $2,000 of his operating funds, Stanton charged ministers' children and licensed ministerial students half tuition in 1931, promising to reimburse the latter upon graduation and ordination into the Methodist ministry, to raise extra funds for more needy students. But he was able to enroll only 250 students, reporting to his trustees: "More than 150 students were turned away from the college in September because of our inability to help them" (4, 5, 8).

Although the college enrolled only eighteen licensed ministerial students in 1931, Stanton expanded his religious education department to include courses in theology and Methodism and boasted:

> Lon Morris College is doing a great work for its young preachers....The present line-up of courses and work in the Religious Education Department were inaugarated three years ago as an experiment in the junior college field. The latest features added this year complete the experiment. The General Board of Education of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South has become interested in our work, and is seeking to standardize such departments in the junior colleges of our church, following along the plan inaugarated here. The Religious Education

> Department of Lon Morris College is attracting church-wide attention among the school men of Southern Methodism (5).

By 1932, the General Board of Education fulfilled Stanton's prediction, once again recognizing the pioneering efforts of its oldest Texas school. Declaring that "Lon Morris College's traditions reveal moral stamina, and History records its service to the Church . . .the religious life of the college has been gratifying - -students have been converted and reclaimed by our religious services," Stanton reduced his daily chapel services to three per week without relaxing the control of the Religious Council on campus life. Although he encouraged his students to participate in extracurricular activities "to put life and earnestness into class preparation and library study," and they won further state championships in football, tennis, and track during the year, Stanton and his Religious Council continued to forbid any student activity involving smoking, drinking, card-playing, or dancing (5).

Despite the one-third reduction in salaries promised the Lon Morris faculty in 1931-1932, the trustees owed their teachers $7,700 in back pay by the end of the session. Stanton and dean Hawk insisted that five teachers take oversized teaching loads for the year, earning a reprimand from the State Department of Education (13). One overloaded

teacher later recalled:

> Our teaching loads were quite heavy then. I was assigned to teach a full load of college classes, plus two high school classes in 1931-1932. In addition, Stanton required each faculty member to recruit more students for the college throughout the year. There were no rewards or bonuses for doing it in the regular session; I did a lot of recruiting, but I never did like it (14).

Another teacher with a heavy teaching load observed that Lon Morris College "wasn't as strong academically as it should have been" by 1932 (10). Stanton insisted to the State Department of Education that his college's "academic requirements and standards" remained as high as ever:

> Four generations of students have provided sufficient test of the Lon Morris product. In scholarship, the graduates of Lon Morris College have been numbered among honor graduates of leading universities and senior colleges. Letters from the leading universities, commending the scholarship standards of the institution, are on file in the college offices. Schools and business firms seek our graduates. . . .Lon Morris College is the only denominational junior college in Texas in the Southern Association. Lon Morris ranks with the best (13).

While faculty pay declined with the Depression, the income of Stanton and dean-business manager Hawk seemed less affected by the school's economic adversity (4). A popular coach, teacher, and administrator, as well as an excellent businessman, Hawk earned the praise of his trustees in 1931 "in appreciation for his efficient management of the affairs of the college," and Stanton observed in 1932: "Mr. Hawk's

supervision of the business office of the college warrants the confidence of the supporters and patrons of the school" (8). Such compliments seemed out of place, however, when Hawk's bookkeeper accused him of misappropriating college funds in the late spring of 1932 (14).

Hawk's assistant and two members of the college faculty submitted his evidence, a "little black book" listing private financial transactions of the business manager, to Stanton, who kept the book, insisted that Hawk was innocent of any wrong, and refused to investigate the matter further. After the trustees decided not to overrule Stanton's decision, the accusers took their case to the faculty and student body of the college. No other teachers joined their cause, but several dozen students submitted written petitions to the president and trustees asking for a formal investigation of the case. Before long, the controversy "was going all over the Texas Conference," whose members demanded a formal hearing on the matter. Although the faculty and student protest on the Lon Morris campus was not as serious as the Bonus March on the federal capitol during the same period, it forced the trustees to investigate the Hawk case on April 25, 1932 (8, 10, 14).

Testifying first, Stanton insisted that Hawk had done no wrong: "The persecution of the business manager in

trivial matters pertaining to his office cannot be countenanced. There are enough difficulties without adding others" (8). In testimony lasting into the early hours of the next morning, most of the faculty agreed with Stanton; one teacher observed: "There never has been anything worth stealing at Lon Morris College anyway" (10). After Hawk's accusers submitted only verbal testimony concerning the circumstantial evidence in the case and Stanton refused to produce Hawk's book, a majority of the trustees found the business manager innocent of the charges brought against him for lack of convincing evidence, prompting Stanton to declare:

> Personally, I wish to thank the Board of Trustees for their thorough investigation of the recent movement for a change in the administration, and for the complete exoneration of any and all the charges brought against the business manager. I do not see how the Board could conscientiously consider the applications of those teachers who have been identified with the recent movement in the college. They have violated every principle of the ethics of their profession in the attempts to influence the students, and in the methods they used in the same.
>
> It is my desire that the trustees secure someone else for the presidency. The burdens of office have been heavy and under the present situation, they appear too great for continuance. In the last ten years, the college has had three presidents. By the time one officer is fairly well acquainted with conditions, it appears that a change is necessary, or is made. I could not say that it is with regrets that I am leaving the college (8).

Thanking Stanton for his four years as president, the college

trustees accepted his resignation, dismissed Hawk's accusers, added more ministerial trustees to their board, and sought a twelfth president for the school in 1932 (8).

Burdened with a large debt and continuous operating deficits in the depth of the Great Depression, Lon Morris College once again had difficulty in recruiting someone to fill its presidency in 1932. The trustees finally persuaded another conference minister, H. T. Morgan of the Methodist church in Richmond, to accept the post which Stanton had just vacated under pressure (8). Described by one of his faculty as "a kind man, but an indecisive administrator, a poor money raiser, and inexperienced in school work," Morgan was unable to raise work scholarship funds from the poverty-stricken Texas Conference, but accepted a $1,260 federal subsidy for his operating budget in 1932-1933. Deciding that "it would be easier simply to let needy students come to Lon Morris College free, without scholarship aid," Morgan reduced his faculty salaries another 15 per cent for the session and deducted 25 per cent of the private fees charged by his fine arts and business instructors. Lon Morris teachers taught more and received less pay than public school teachers in 1932-1933, but few felt that it would do them any good to complain (4, 10, 14).

Although the junior college set higher admission stan-

dards in 1932, requiring three years of English, two years each of algebra and geometry-trigonometry or foreign language, and one year each of history and civics of all high school graduates admitted, Morgan regularly violated his own rules and admitted all who applied, continuing the policy of enrolling high school students for college credit. He also published a list of "General Regulations" to control student behavior on the campus but actually relaxed the strict discipline imposed by his predecessors, seeking to avoid confrontations and controversies like those of the previous spring. Permitting most of his 215 students to enroll on liberal credit in 1932, Morgan soon caused business manager Hawk to predict that "by November, there will be a financial emergency" (5, 8).

Just when it appeared that the college faced a serious deficit in 1932, the efforts of George Winfield eight years before again paid off. The college inherited half the estate of the late Jennie Tapp of New Boston, who had promised to help the school when it faced similar financial problems in 1924. Leaving $100,000 "to the university in Georgetown" (Southwestern University) and $100,000 "to the Jacksonville college," the devout Methodist had written her will during the controversy over changing the name of Alexander College and did not specify Lon Morris College as her beneficiary. When the Baptist trustees of Jacksonville

College claimed that her "true will" referred to their own school, the trustees of Lon Morris College insisted that she could have meant her money only for the Methodist school, although she may have been unsure about its ultimate name. Hoping to avoid a lawsuit over the inheritance, the Methodists suggested to the Baptists:

> There is no necessity to go to court. As friends and neighbors, and representatives of two Christian institutions, we should be able to settle a matter of this kind without any trouble. We are working on the assumption that you would not want this bequest if it was not intended for you. It would be so with us (8).

The Baptists suggested that the two Jacksonville colleges share the inheritance equally, but the Lon Morris trustees insisted that such a settlement would be "unfair" and offered Jacksonville College only $10,000, the estimated cost of a trial. After the Baptists refused and a jury formed to try the case, the Lon Morris College attorney advised the Methodists to accept the Baptist offer by arguing that "you can't read the motives of a dead woman" (8). Settling for $50,000, one of the Lon Morris trustees later observed: "We were lucky to get half. They could have claimed it all" (1).

Following the settlement out of court, Jacksonville College invested most of its new endowment in expanding its plant. Having spent its original Morris endowment for such a purpose, Lon Morris College established its new Tapp en-

dowment as a permanent fund to provide income for ministerial work scholarships in the future (4). Producing over $3,700 in stock investment income during its first year, the Tapp endowment grew in value to $91,000 after the Depression and helped provide needed operating income for Lon Morris College after 1932. Although Jacksonville's Methodists and Baptists remained sensitive about the settlement for a number of years, both sides were convinced that they had won "the fullest support of the citizenship of Jacksonville" by sharing the Tapp inheritance (8).

When Lon Morris College applied for admission to the Southwestern System of Colleges in May, 1933, the intercollegiate association required that it reduce its total debt to $55,000 for accreditation. Calling upon the community of Jacksonville once again for its financial support, despite the continuing Depression, the local trustees of Lon Morris College successfully raised $5,000 to reduce the debt in 1933 (8). At the same time, the Jacksonville public schools reported that the community owed $45,000 in unpaid school taxes and warned that the "city schools may succuumb" from lack of local support. Forty years before, the citizens of Jacksonville had similarly supported the Methodist school instead of the public one (7).

Despite the new scholarship aid provided by the Tapp

endowment, the college still faced serious financial problems in 1933. Forced to dismiss a music teacher for lack of funds, Morgan dropped all but piano and organ from his music curriculum for 1933-1934. Although the State Department of Education criticized the school for dropping elementary teaching from its curriculum at the beginning of the Depression, noting that since 1930 "little attention has been given to the training of elementary teachers, yet it is realized that a vast majority of junior college students teach in elementary and rural school," Morgan felt that he could not afford to expand his college curriculum, and the school did not teach the course again until 1936. He did add a year each of high school natural science and foreign language to his unenforced college admission requirements in 1933, however, and continued his open admissions policy (4, 5, 13).

Morgan reduced his charges by $18 per student in 1933-1934 and enrolled most of his 240 students on credit. Campus activities continued in spite of the Depression as the college won further state championships in basketball and drama, the latter an activity which involved nearly the entire student body. The college faculty continued to suffer from lack of pay and excessive teaching loads, and the State Department of Education urged the college, without

success, to drop its high school course of study. When only high school seniors enrolled in the Lon Morris Academy in 1934, the college correspondingly reduced its high school classes for the session. Prior to the 1934-1935 session, Morgan replaced Latin and business psychology with college courses in educational psychology, advanced homiletics, and Christian service, adopted the semester-hour system for measuring college credit, expanded the library to 5,000 volumes, and promised prospective students "sufficient elasticity in each subject for adaptation to individual student needs" (2, 4, 5, 13).

Lon Morris College experienced a severe financial crisis by 1934-1935. Enrolling almost all of its 249 students on credit, the school had only a $2,500 income from the Tapp endowment and $200 in work scholarships raised by Morgan from the conference churches to supplement its slim operating income, accumulating a $10,000 operating debt by the end of the year. After the death of business manager Hawk in November, 1934, Morgan discovered that "the college had no cash" and could not pay its faculty. By the end of the session, the school owed its teachers $11,000 in back pay; some of them had not received a regular income since 1930 (4). One later observed: "If we had not been given free meals and housing in 1934-1935, we would have starved to death" (11).

Hoping to relieve the situation, the trustees hired W. P. Moody as college business manager at a modest salary in January, 1935. Upon checking the college books, Moody reported to the trustees that only four students had paid in full for the year, that the school's total indebtedness stood at $70,000, and that several thousand dollars was missing from the college endowment fund. Ordering "all endowment funds frozen in the bank," the trustees discovered that former business manager Hawk had paid himself back salary in oil royalties from the endowment without their knowledge and concluded that "investigation shows numerous personal loans made by the Board Treasurer from Endowment, one being to himself" (8). In "a grief _(sic)_ report as to the status of the endowment situation," the trustees' treasurer reminded his colleagues that he personally had paid the debt on the girls' dormitory twenty years before and resigned his control over college funds, remaining a trustee for three more years. After bonding new business manager Moody for $2,500 and awarding him a raise in salary, the trustees decided to keep the endowment matter confidential. Rumors concerning the financial irregularities reached the college faculty in 1935, however, and they petitioned Morgan for all their back pay at the end of the session. Unable to meet their demand, the president ignored their petition, which they took to the trustees on May 20, 1935. Faced with

unanimous faculty criticism that he had not done enough about the school's financial plight since 1932, Morgan resigned as president of the college in 1935 (8).

After thanking Morgan "for his fine contribution to the school during his tenure," the trustees accepted his resignation and set about looking for the college's thirteenth president. Considering the faculty's lack of pay sufficient punishment for their insubordination, the college trustees did not follow Morgan's recommendation that the entire faculty be dismissed like Hawk's accusers of three years before. Once again, several prominent Texas Conference ministers declined the college presidency in the knowledge that the school seemed hopelessly in debt in a Depression which had already closed many private institutions (8). Finally, however, the trustees persuaded young Cecil E. Peeples, M.A., a conference minister and experienced educator who had spoken at a chapel service at the college earlier in the year, to accept the post. After listening to Peeples speak to his students the previous fall, Morgan predicted: "Someday you are going to be pastor of our church here in Jacksonville." A short while later, Peeples noted: "I had <u>his</u> job!" (12).

The problems which had haunted Lon Morris College prior to 1924 returned to the small school by 1935. Confronted

with continuous operating deficits and a heavy indebtedness, the college suffered from the Depresssion despite the improvements made by George F. Winfield during his administration. As a result of Winfield's efforts from 1924 to 1928, the Morris endowment enabled the college to enlarge its plant, and work scholarships plus "Lon Morris Day" offerings from the Texas Conference, as well as the Tapp endowment, provided vital operating funds for the school. However, Winfield, Stanton, and Morgan all permitted increasing numbers of students to enroll at Lon Morris College on credit during this period, continuing the school's original policy of providing free education to needy students at the expense of the operating budget. When the Great Depression deprived the college of almost all its paying patronage and subsidies from the Texas Conference, forcing the school to dismiss faculty and reduce the salaries of those teachers who remained, Stanton and Morgan resigned under pressure to correct the college's financial condition. Solutions to the school's economic problems awaited new policies under its next president and the end of the Depression.

Throughout its long history, Lon Morris College had implemented its purposes despite almost perennial financial difficulties, and this period was no exception. Academically, Winfield expanded the college curriculum, added

annual summer sessions and special adult extension classes, introduced entrance examinations and raised admission standards, published a literary journal, established higher scholastic standards, improved the library, made the first follow-up study of the school's graduates, and secured membership for the institution in the Southern Association of Schools and Colleges. Stanton established the first religious education department among Methodist junior colleges, reduced the regular high school course of study to two years, raised scholastic standards further, and secured membership for the college in Phi Theta Kappa, the national junior college honorary society. Morgan tried to raise admission standards further, improved the college curriculum and library, and introduced the semester-hour system of college credit to the institution. Like everything else at the college during the Depression, academic improvement depended upon the initiative and ability of the school's president to deal with extraordinary circumstances.

Lon Morris College also implemented its religious purpose between 1924 and 1935. Winfield introduced a course of study for Sunday school teachers, maintained strict moral discipline, established the Religious Council to direct campus religious activities, recruited more religious vocation students, initiated the first regular student religious per-

formance tours of the Texas Conference, and expanded the college ministerial course of study. Stanton dropped the Bible course as a graduation requirement, reduced chapel to three times weekly, imposed half-tuition upon ministers' children and ministerial students, and required all recipients of ministerial scholarships to be licensed by the church. Despite these steps, Stanton expanded the religious curriculum and responsibilities of the Religious Council on the campus, seeking to convert as many students as possible to his brand of nonsectarian Christianity and morality. Morgan, fearing controversy, did not enforce the discipline of his predecessors and left religious activity in the hands of the Religious Council. As with the college's academic purpose, implementation of its religious purpose diminished with the adversities of the Depression. With the passing of economic difficulties, Lon Morris College might again concentrate its full attention upon the implementation of its purposes.

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CHAPTER VI

LON MORRIS COLLEGE

1935-1945

In the summer of 1935, Lon Morris College faced the culmination of years of financial distress made more difficult by the trauma of the Great Depression. The task facing its thirteenth president was formidible: in a time of severe scarcity, he had to earn sufficient operating income to keep the school alive and, while not allowing the college to fall financially further behind than it already was, to pay off the large indebtedness which the school had accumulated since 1909. If he could accomplish this task, which had proven impossible for nine of his predecessors, he then would have the opportunity to build the school into a well-financed, well-equipped institution for his faculty and student body. If he could not accomplish this goal, he would have little opportunity to implement the purposes of the college, and it could sink deeper into a morass of mediocrity. There was even the possibility that, having weathered so many crises in almost ninety years of existence, the little school might finally close if its problems persisted. Once again, the

fate of the college rested upon the ability of one of its presidents to succeed where his predecessors had failed. The purpose of this chapter is to examine how Lon Morris College met its problems and implemented its purposes of providing a high quality of education and religious instruction for its students during the critical years of the late Depression and the Second World War. During this period, its thirteenth president initiated new policies and techniques that secured the school's economic survival and recovery, enabling the college to concentrate upon its traditional purposes again. Through a unique combination of determination and innovation, he broke the school out of its syndrome of financial decline and laid the foundations for further improvements in the college in the years ahead.

In 1935, thirty-two-year-old Cecil Peeples had been a licensed Methodist minister for eighteen years and had been associated with Methodist high education since 1918, when he enrolled for his last year of high school study under George F. Winfield at Meridian College, the first accredited Methodist junior college in Texas. Transferring to the state's oldest Methodist junior college in Clarendon the following year, Peeples participated in football, cheerleading, debate, drama, and choral activities. While on a choral tour of Methodist churches in 1920, he recruited high

school senior Gladys Labenski for Clarendon College. The future Mrs. Peeples later recalled:

> Our interest in Methodist junior colleges stemmed from our days at Clarendon College. We felt that Clarendon College offered its students opportunities for leadership that they couldn't get elsewhere. When the opportunity came for us to go to Lon Morris, I think our experience at Clarendon College was in the back of our minds, and perhaps influenced us in choosing to come. We felt that there still was a place in the church for a junior college that no other type of school could fill. Lon Morris could also be that kind of school (14).

After playing on an undefeated football team and making an outstanding academic record at Clarendon College, Peeples graduated with a teacher's certificate in 1922 and served as a high school coach and history teacher in Tahoka, Texas, until 1924, when he enrolled for his junior year of college at Southern Methodist University in Dallas. Assisted by football and ministerial work scholarships as a junior and an academic scholarship in government as a senior, Peeples was active again in campus choral, drama, and journalistic activities at the university, where he earned the B.A. degree in 1926. After earning his M.A. degree as a teaching fellow in government there in 1927, he finished his studies for a theological degree at S.M.U. in 1929. He and Mrs. Peeples taught high school in Texline, Texas during the first two years of the Depression, where he served as coach, principal, and superintendent of the public school (13, 14).

Deciding to try the active pastoral ministry, he served East Texas Methodist churches in Garrison, Wiergate, and Livingston from 1931 to 1935 and visited the Lon Morris campus frequently to attend Epworth League and other church meetings, since it was "the recognized center of the Texas Conference" during that time (14). Acquainted with Stanton and Morgan, Peeples was aware of the problems facing the conference college in 1935 and desired that they be corrected. That responsibility became his in 1935 (13).

Cecil Peeples became president of Lon Morris College on June 21, 1935 by trading appointments with H. T. Morgan, who became pastor of the Methodist church in Livingston on the same day (13). The youngest college president in Texas in 1935, Peeples began what became his life's work filled with zeal, optimism, and a dream of making the old school the pride of its church again (14). Viewing his election as its president as a God-given opportunity to use his Methodist heritage and educational background to the fullest, Peeples later observed: "I had experience in the ministry and in school work, and I had always enjoyed preaching and teaching. When I came here, I could work in the school all week and preach on Sunday. This was my cup of tea!" (13).

His task was by no means easy. One of his trustees later exclaimed: "No man ever walked into a tougher situation

than Cecil Peeples, and no man ever dug his way out in better style!" (5). As realistic as he was optimistic, Peeples understood that he had inherited a seriously troubled institution in danger of succumbing to the pressures of the Depression:

> When I came, we had these mountains of debts to pay before we could do anything else. The school owed almost everybody and had no credit anywhere. There was no cash on hand, and few records had been kept of the school's business transactions. Like too many private colleges during those years, Lon Morris had been run in such a slip-shod manner that it didn't have the support of the business community. But I had faith that its problems could be solved. From the beginning, my aims for Lon Morris College have been:
>
> 1. To put the school on a sound business basis, so that it could command the respect of businessmen. I have always wanted two people to go along with me - - my preacher and, above all, my banker.
>
> 2. To train continually the church's leadership (13).

Whereas most of his predecessors had attempted to achieve his second goal by providing high quality education and religious instruction for students of the college, few had recognized the significance of the goal which Peeples set first for his administration. Rarely had the school ever been truly on a sound business basis, and many of its troubles derived from that fact (1). The long story of the school's struggle against financial woe to 1935 amply illustrated the

need for a reversal of emphasis at Lon Morris College. The secret of Peeples' success lay in placing quantity before quality early in his administration - choosing to build a strong financial base by paying off the college debt and enlarging its plant, enrollment, operating income, and endowment as his first priority. Once he had established a solid economic foundation under the school, Peeples was confident that he could give it quality that would meet the test of time. By placing the financial stability of the college first in his administration, he made a more lasting achievement of his second aim possible. Mrs. Peeples later recalled how he came to this decision:

> Soon after we came here, Peeples sat in his office in the Twin Towers all one night, thinking about the school's enormous debts. He did that sort of thing often at first. When Peeples' mother first saw the campus, she said she couldn't possibly see why we decided to come here - - it was so old and desolate. But we saw something here that wasn't in the buildings. If we could save it, Lon Morris could fill the role which Clarendon College had filled for the church and for us as students. We knew that this was a dream, but it was a dream which Peeples never lost. He always felt that there was some way into the future, and he always knew what he wanted to do. His method of working has remained the same through the years (14).

To put the school on a sound business basis, Peeples began by restoring the credit of Lon Morris College in the business community. Recognizing the need for reviving the

support of East Texas Methodists for their school, Peeples toured the Texas Conference in 1935-1935 in search of work scholarship donations and paying patronage, raising $3,100 in church offerings on "Lon Morris Day" during his first year. Taking $2,600 of that collection to St. Louis as a late payment on the school's long overdue building debt, Peeples and trustee T. E. Acker, a local Jacksonville banker, surprised the college's mortgagers by offering to pay back the entire principal and interest owed on the debt since 1909. Since most schools were defaulting on such debts during the Depression, the mortgagers reduced the interest and extended the terms of the mortgage for Lon Morris College; by 1944, their confidence in the school proved true when the college paid its debt in full. Peeples later noted that the creditors would not have received much if they had chosen to foreclose on the college in the Depression, since "all but one of the Lon Morris buildings leaked" (1, 13).

Peeples also concentrated upon paying off the school's smaller debts after he became president in 1935. Utilizing the $500 left over from the conference collection for his operating expense, he nevertheless managed to pay each of the school's twenty-five local creditors something on the thousands of dollars owed them since the beginning of the

Depression. Continuously touring the Texas Conference in search of additional funds, he persuaded some Methodists to contribute as little as five dollars a month to the conference school, which he then passed on to his creditors. Gradually restoring the college credit piecemeal, he later recalled: "If I didn't have but one or two hundred dollars on hand, I would send our creditors four or five dollars apiece. Not a single businessman protested, and I got many 'thank-you' notes in reply for those little checks" (13). After her husband earned the respect of the business community with his new policy, Mrs. Peeples commented: "We weren't just existing during the Depression; we were paying off debts made before we came to Lon Morris College" (14).

In his tours of the Texas Conference in 1935-1936, Peeples utilized the performances of student choral and drama groups begun by George F. Winfield eight years before. Attracting large congegations to their Sunday evening performances in conference churches, the students helped their president in his appeal for increased support and patronage of the conference school, although one student later recalled: "Dr. Peeples did all the recruiting and talking for Lon Morris College then" (15). Later securing a balky old school bus for the tours, Peeples took his students to a different church every weekend. One of those accompanying

him later recalled:

> We made regular tours under Dr. Peeple's supervision. All that he needed was a hint that some church would receive us, and off we would go. The students always loved it, and we helped other students to attend Lon Morris by raising money for their scholarships. We knew that no student would ever be turned away from the school because of financial difficulties, and the churches helped make it possible. Lon Morris received more publicity through Dr. Peeples and his tours than it ever had before (12).

Slowly increasing his operating income and paying patronage through his conference tours, Peeples did not neglect one of the school's most important debts in 1935-1936 - - the $11,000 in back pay owed his faculty. In his first report to the Southern Association after becoming president, he noted that the faculty had suffered since the onset of the Depression from lack of pay, although his predecessors had failed to mention that fact; they had paid the faculty scrip instead of cash in order to report all salaries paid in full. In response to Peeple's honest report, the Southern Association placed Lon Morris College on financial probation due to "inadequate financial support" of its faculty since 1930. Before the probation could be lifted, Peeples had to

1. Pay all his teachers in full.
2. Reduce several faculty teaching loads.
3. Increase the school's enrollment and income.
4. Improve the physical plant.
5. Improve the science laboratories.
6. Improve the library (13, 17).

For the first year of the school's financial probation, Peeples kept a list of the six requirements on his desk to remind him of what he had to do to restore the school's full accreditation. Determined to meet the first requirement as soon as possible, he returned almost all of his own meager salary to the college to pay his faculty salaries, and his own family shared in the deprivation suffered by the faculty. Faced with a lack of cash, he further paid his teachers by giving them the opportunity to collect on the credit awarded college patrons by his predecessors. One teacher later recalled how he reclaimed his back salary:

> Dr. Peeples offered the faculty several thousand dollars worth of uncollected notes which had been held by the school for years. If we could collect on the notes, then we could get the money the school owed us in back pay. I took two notes and was able to collect $25 a month each from two patrons who previously had not been able to pay for their children's college expenses. A lot of our back salaries were recovered in that way (17).

Peeples successfully paid all the back salaries owed his faculty by the end of the Depression, but no significant salary increase was forthcoming until after the Second World War. The median faculty salary at Lon Morris College to 1945 was about one hundred dollars a month, and it did not surpass the 1927 level until 1950. One teacher later observed: "We were offered jobs by other Texas colleges

during the Depression, but none could offer us more salary. We weren't any worse off here than we would have been elsewhere. We stayed here simply because there was no better opportunity" (3, 12).

Seeking to meet his second requirement, Peeples tried to redistribute the teaching load more evenly among his faculty in 1935-1936, but some loads still remained excessive, primarily because a few teachers had to teach both high school and college courses. Enlarging his college curriculum to include courses in general science, psychology, and curriculum development, Peeples himself taught all classes in government, religious education and Bible, which he required of all junior college graduates, enrolling over forty students in each class. The State Department of Education later complimented him for his high quality of teaching but criticized his excessive teaching load (4, 16).

Peeples himself judged teaching effectiveness only in light of how it affected student enrollment and did not consider the effect of excessive enrollment upon teaching effectiveness. He never heard another member of his faculty teach at Lon Morris College during the almost four decades of his presidency, preferring instead to rely upon student opinion as his measure of teaching effectiveness. He usually discussed teaching techniques with his faculty mem-

bers only following some student complaint:

> It usually starts with students coming to the dean or myself and reporting something like 'nothing going on in that class.' I usually don't know what's going on at the academic end of the college unless it breaks down somewhere. We have occasionally 'let out' ineffective teachers. Each investigation of teaching always begins with student evaluation of the teacher (13).

"Leaving the teaching up to the teachers," Peeples never concerned himself with the quality of teaching until it threatened enrollment by breeding student dissatisfaction (13). Soon after he came to the college, he lowered the high academic standards imposed by E. M. Stanton when the college applied for membership in Phi Theta Kappa nine years before. Seeking to minimize rather than maximize student failures at the college, Peeples added the grade of "E" to his faculty's grading system in 1935-1936, entitling any student who failed a final examination to another chance at passing. No student received an "F" unless he failed a final examination twice, so must failures did not choose to remove the grade of "E" from their college records and skipped their second final examination. There were few "F's" earned at Lon Morris College during the first half of Peeple's administration, enabling the school to attract weak students who risked failure at other schools, and thus increasing its enrollment. As failures became rare, so did student com-

plaints about teachers' grading habits. Relieved of the danger of student criticism from that quarter, most of the faculty looked on the grade of "E" as a benevolent substitute for the grade of "F" and did not consider it a lowering of the school's academic standards (4, 6).

Peeples fulfilled the third requirement of the Southern Association by enrolling 267 students in the fall of 1935, second only to the enrollment of 1928. With a corresponding increase in his operating income, he quickly moved to fulfill the remaining three requirements by adding more faculty living facilities in the college plant, more equipment in the science laboratories, and 1,500 volumes in the college library, most of which the State Department of Education labelled "old and of no value to the school" (16). Nonetheless, the new president had corrected the basic problems causing the school's financial probation; only further improvements in the faculty pay and teaching loads remained to restore full accreditation to Lon Morris College.

Having put his school on a "sound business basis," Peeples also sought to fulfill his second aim - - "to train continually the church's leadership" (13). Considering his academic course of sufficient quality, he concentrated his efforts upon training his students to be leaders of the ten campus religious groups which comprised the Religious Council. One student whom he trained for church service later

recalled:

> We came here for religion as well as for academic study. We had to attend each religious function, but no one complained; it was the accepted thing. Many of us like it that way - - we expected to be told what guidelines to follow. Our seats were always checked to see if we were present at every religious function (15).

Like nine of his predecessors, Peeples was a Methodist minister who believed that the school's prime service as a Methodist institution was to produce more Methodist ministers for the Texas Conference. During the early part of his administration, most Lon Morris ministerial students continued to receive conference membership upon graduation from the school, as they had since 1873. Averaging about fifteen such graduates each year, the college provided at least one-third of the members of the Texas Conference during the twentieth century (1). Some young men began preaching in Methodist churches of the local area while still pursuing their studies at the college, and few sought further study after graduation, especially during the Depression (13).

At the end of his first year as president, Peeples published a list of goals which he sought for Lon Morris College:

1. To give each student a Christian motive and aim in life.

2. To maintain a standard of work that will assist our students in facing intelligently the opportunities and problems our modern life presents.

3. To provide and supervise a constructive health program.

4. To provide a social and cultural environment for the student body.

5. To help each student, through personal contact, to discover and develop his or her individual talent or ability (4).

Seeking to achieve each of these goals, from the beginning Peeples took special interest in the first and last, serving as his students' chaplain and personal counselor and making himself regularly available to the student body. Mrs. Peeples noted:

> The strong point in his work has been in his personal counseling with students. During the early period, he did it all because no one else on the faculty had the training or the responsibility. Later, in 1939, Peeples took graduate study in counseling at Union Theological Seminary in New York. Sometimes he has been too easy on other people, but in the long run he is usually right (14).

Peeples never accepted written petitions from his faculty or students as had his two predecessors. When he received some petitions during his first year in office, he insisted that anyone dissatisfied with his policies must come to see him face to face, declaring that "if they want something from me, they can come to me and talk about it." He received no more petitions during the remainder of his administration (13). Encouraged by their new president's policies and noting that the college had "held its own

financially" since 1935, the trustees awarded Peeples a three-year term of office in 1936 and praised his dedication to the school's financial recovery (8).

Following the recommendation of the State Department of Education and the Southern Association, Peeples replaced his college courses in homiletics, Christian service, and education with calculus, school art, and nature study, plus a remedial course in English for weaker students, in 1936-1937. He then reduced his student charges by more than 20 per cent and offered an additional 10 per cent discount to families who enrolled two or more children in the college. One of the 227 students who enrolled in the fall of 1936 later recalled: "Nearly all the students attended school on work scholarships then; everybody seemed to have some work responsibility" (15). Peeples put numerous students to work planting trees and shrubs or laying sidewalks on the barren campus and, like his predecessors, permitted athletes to attend the school without charge or work, a practice which he forthrightly reported to the Texas Junior College Athletic Association (3). Although free athletic scholarships were a technical violation of association rules for twenty more years, the other members laughed when Peeples brought the subject up and did nothing (13).

Students at Lon Morris College continued a full schedule of activity in 1936-1937, winning further state championships

in drama and golf. Peeples did not restrict their freedom as much as had some of his predecessors, although he enforced dormitory hours, permitted them only one weekend per month away from campus, and penalized all absence and tardiness by deducting grade points from students' final or overall grade averages. To provide extra income for the college, he required his students to purchase all their books from a new college bookstore established in the library (4).

Always on the lookout for new ways to earn money for the college, Peeples persuaded his trustees to purchase forty acres of farm land on the south side of the campus for $3,200 in 1937 (11, 13). When the value of the purchase reached $100,000 thirty-five years later, Peeples observed: "I knew something about unearned increment, and I wanted some land before we started any more campus buildings" (13). Determined to use the farm for college profit, he placed it under the supervision of instructor A. B. Pearson and several student workers, who produced food for the college dining hall from it for a quarter century. The <u>Houston Chronicle</u> noted:

> Lon Morris College operates its own truck farm and dairy. Four male students regularly work their way through college there, providing most of the food and all of the milk for the college dining hall. In return, the college dining hall garbage is fed to the college hogs, which supply pork for college meals (7).

Peeples also secured college title to the Kiwanis gymnasium in 1937 by purchasing the Kiwanis Club's share of the building for only $2,000, about 20 per cent of its original investment. Whereas the college had been using the gymnasium without charge since 1930 anyway, those who had invested in the building were happy to realize that much from it in 1937. Finally, when the State Banking Commission sued Lon Morris College for the $3,773.83 borrowed before 1935 without authorization by the trustees' treasurer against the college endowment funds in a local bank, Peeples settled the lawsuit out of court for only $500. New chairman of the trustees, T. E. Acker, elected in 1937, assited Peeples in achieving these financial successes and continually praised the new president's businesslike policies (1, 8, 13).

Raising student charges by 10 per cent in 1937-1938, Peeples gave his faculty the first written contracts in the history of the school, thus guaranteeing their pay prior to the opening of the session. When only nine of his 261 students enrolled for high school studies in the fall of 1937, Peeples dropped all but remedial high school English and algebra from his regular session curriculum and restricted his high school course of study to summer sessions only for another decade. The reduction in high school courses enabled him to reduce the faculty's teaching load, while the

increase in overall enrollment and operating income allowed Peeples to promise his teachers a 10 per cent raise in salary for the following year, their first since the onset of the Depression (3). Although the increased salaries were below those of other Southern Association faculties during this period, these steps finally satisfied the association that Lon Morris College had fulfilled all the requirements necessary for removal of its financial probation. It restored full accreditation to the college in 1937 and made no special demands of the school for another quarter century, convincing Peeples that the accreditation of Lon Morris College remained safe "so long as our teachers receive their pay" (13).

Not satisfied with his already large enrollment, Peeples expanded his college curriculum and student activities in 1937-1938, inviting such notables as the poet Carl Sandburg to the college and publicizing its new state championships in music and drama. The enrollment reached full capacity with 274 students in the fall of 1938, almost exhausting the school's work scholarship funds and enabling Peeples to obtain an increase in the college student loan fund from the 1938 Texas Conference. Reporting to the conference that he had reduced the total indebtedness of the school by $18,000 since he became its president, Peeples quoted the

State Department of Education that $52,000 was still "a rather heavy indebtedness for an institution to carry" and urged the Texas Conference to launch a campaign to pay off the remaining building debt in 1939. The conference pledged a campaign to raise $25,000 for its college in 1939, but, involved in the merger of Methodism across the nation, raised only $5,400 in "Lon Morris Day" collections during the year. Like so many other conference campaigns for the school since 1883, the effort to pay off the Twin Towers indebtedness hardly began in 1939; three years later, the Methodists of East Texas had raised only $12,000 for the school. Despite conference apathy, the college trustees raised Peeples' salary, awarded him another three-year term of office, and hired a new faculty minister to assist him in his many duties in 1939 (8, 9, 13).

Lon Morris College enrolled a new record of 279 students in the fall of 1939, forcing Peeples to purchase yet another house adjacent to the campus to serve as an additional boys' cooperative dormitory. He also requested that his trustees construct another girls' dormitory for the school, but they postponed consideration of that proposal for another fifteen years due to the scarcity of building funds. The State Department of Education criticized the Methodist college for being too much of a boarding school and not enough of a commuter college in 1939-1940, pointing out what it considered

to be "a rather serious problem - - a junior college should serve its local area" (16). Although the college invited the local community to campus events like its Children's Theatre or ball games, it did not plan its activities for the convenience of commuter students and did not specifically design its courses to meet the special educational needs of Jacksonville. The following year, Lon Morris College added a flying school to its course of study in a search for new ways by which it could serve its local area (13). Even the local Methodist church contributed its share of criticism in 1940 by complaining about poor support and attendance at its services from the college faculty, a trend that continued during the decades that followed; Peeples never pressured his faculty to participate in religious activities against their will (1).

Although the college won another state choral championship in 1939-1940, the Bearcat football team had not won a championship in eight years, and declining attendance at college football games cost the school $10,000 in valuable operating funds during the year, creating an operating deficit of $6,000. Upon Peeples' recommendation, the college trustees discontinued football at the school in 1941, and led by local trustee, S. A. Kerr, completed a Jacksonville campaign to pay off the deficit prior to the fall term. In

appreciation of the community's generosity, the college drama club produced a large pageant for the 1941 Jacksonville Tomato Festival. Peeples later observed: "This has been one of the most difficult parts of my work - - hitting the home town for operating money. We got in this rut in 1941, but Jacksonville has contributed generously to every campaign of the college since" (13). Mrs. Peeples agreed: "Jacksonville has served us well" (14). Following the campaign, the trustees again increased faculty salaries 10 per cent for 1941-1942 (8).

Lon Morris College received $10,000 worth of real estate and partial mineral rights on eighty acres of land in 1941 from the will of the late J. J. Faulk, a state senator from Athens and a long-time friend of the school. Peeples offered to sell the mineral rights for $800 in 1941, but found no buyer; a decade later, geologists discovered oil on the Faulk land, which produced royalties worth over $100,000 for the college in the years that followed, exceeding the Morris and Tapp inheritances in ultimate value (3). Although it eventually produced an annual income of $12,000 for the operating budget, the Faulk endowment only slightly improved the income of the college during the lean years of the Depression and the Second World War (3).

Determined to avoid further operating deficits, Peeples

took his choral group on an exhaustive tour of seventy-three Texas Conference churches in 1941 and added a flying school to the college course of study for 1941-1942. As suggested by college coach W. A. Phillips, who quickly earned a flying instructor's license, the flying school utilized college facilities for ground training and the Jacksonville airport for flight training. The college paid Phillips and his ground instructors, including Mrs. Peeples and several other local teachers whom he supervised, 50 per cent of the income from the flying school (3, 13). Secured through the help of new Texas Conference bishop A. Frank Smith and one of his former parishioners, Commerce Secretary, Jesse Jones of Houston, and licensed by the Civil Aeronautics Administration, the flying school offered students and local residents credit in a college course entitled "Elementary Flight" and training for pilot licenses in 1941-1942 (3, 14).

Enrollment at Lon Morris College remained at capacity level until the United States entered the Second World War in late 1941. Like the First World War almost a quarter century before, the new war took a large number of college students and faculty from the campus as recruits and draftees in the spring of 1942, and patrons withdrew other students from the school as high taxes, inflation, and wartime rationing absorbed funds previously available for education; girls

also took wartime jobs. College enrollment fell in 1942 to its lowest level in almost seventy years - eighty-two students, including twelve boys studying for the ministry. Like W. K. Strother in 1917, Peeples dismissed several teachers due to lack of operating funds in 1942, including his dean-business manager W. P. Moody and cancelled the 10 per cent raise awarded the remaining teachers earlier in the session. New dean H. V. Robinson dropped art from the college course of study, and new business manager, Howard Martin, restricted the operating budgets of all college departments, declaring that the school faced a serious operating deficit for 1942, (3, 8, 13, 16).

Bishop A. Frank Smith saved the conference college in 1942, when he persuaded Commerce Secretary, Jesse Jones to designate the Lon Morris flying school as one of four Naval Aviation Schools in Texas during the war. Made part of the War Service Training Program of the United States Navy, the school enrolled about eighty naval air cadets for its two-month course of instruction continuously from 1942 to 1945 for $20,000 in federal funds each year of the war. When the navy replaced Phillips and his staff with regular naval flying instructors in 1943, the college applied the instructional funds thus saved to renovation of Lula Morris Hall, which housed the naval cadets. Much more than the army cadet

program of 1918, the naval cadet program of 1942-1945 subsidized the college budget with federal funds throughout the war. Peeples later observed: "It turned out to be a very profitable thing. The $60,000 which the college received from the flying school carried it through the war years and into the postwar period. Without it, the college wouldn't have survived the war" (3, 4, 13).

Including its new cadets, Lon Morris College enrolled only 149 students in 1942-1943, forcing it to drop out of intercollegiate competition for the duration of the war. The cadets participated in campus intermural athletics and competed with the surviving campus fraternity for the affections of six sororities, thus maintaining an active social life at the college. To show their appreciation for his help in securing the flying school, the trustees added the bishop of the Texas Conference to their membership in 1942 (8). Upon his election, Bishop Smith promised to complete the 1939 conference campaign to pay off the college indebtedness by the end of the war, so that the school might initiate a new building program in the postwar years. The trustees enthusiastically endorsed his proposal and, confident of the school's future, awarded Peeples another three-year term as president in 1942. By the end of the session, he and trustee chairman Acker, who was mayor of Jacksonville, purchased seven acres of city

land adjacent to the campus for future plant expansion, paying the city council only one dollar from college funds (8, 13).

Bishop Smith and the Texas Conference raised $25,000 for the college debt campaign prior to the 1943-1944 session, thus fulfilling the pledge made four years before. At Peeples' suggestion, the bishop then proposed that the conference completely pay off the debt by raising $15,000 more by 1944, to be matched by a similar amount by Peeples from individual supporters of the school. Although his presiding elders protested that they considered the time "most unlikely to raise funds" from the conference churches, they raised the necessary amount by 1944, with several churches contributing more than they were asked to give, despite the wartime austerity. Raising another $15,000 from private sources to match the conference donations, Peeples discovered the usefulness of the "challenge" or "contest" technique for college financial campaigns and used it numerous times over the next three decades. On the other hand, alone he raised only $375 from the conference during 1943-1944 in a separate drive to supplement his teachers' salaries. After many miles of travel in the latter campaign, he nevertheless happily observed: "Some little bit of money always comes through at the crucial moment!" (6). Governor Coke Stevenson of Texas participated

in the burning of the school's thirty-five-year-old mortgage at the end of the 1943-1944 session (2).

Jubilant that the college had finally paid off its debt, Peeples raised his boarding student charges by almost 20 per cent to $549 for 1944-1945 and consequently suffered a 30 per cent enrollment decline to only 115 students for the fall term (3). Forced to drop physics and general science from his college curriculum due to the lack of faculty and students, he also reversed his earlier decision to require Bible of all his college graduates, deciding that they received sufficient religious instruction from participation in Religious Council activities (4). He compensated for such omissions by requiring "C" grade average of his graduates and deducting two final grade points for student absences in any course for 1944-1945. He made no attempt to expand student activity on the campus until the end of the war (2, 4).

Although the 1944 Texas Conference voted down a proposal by one of the college trustees that it move its headquarters to the Lon Morris campus at the end of the war, Bishop Smith persuaded the conference lay leader to become a trustee of the school and to lead its building campaign after the war. A prominent Port Arthur businessman, H. F. Banker, had conducted numerous conference campaigns and was ideally suited to initiate a building program at Lon Morris College. His

was the school's longest campaign, ending thirty years later. In March, 1945, Banker proposed that the college launch a campaign to raise $200,000 for improvement of the campus plant. His fellow trustees approved his proposal and helped raise $21,000 from the conference to renovate the old girls' dormitory before the end of the session, naming it London Hall after the Methodists of New London, who gave $5,000 to the campaign. Peeples suggested to his trustees that they should concentrate the remainder of the campaign upon the construction of new buildings for the college, beginning with a much-needed fine arts building. Justifying his request by arguing that the college needed to improve its training of ministers and musicians for the Texas Conference, Peeples primarily was interested in simply expanding the instructional facilities of the school by whatever method possible, explaining later:

> Everything was in the old Twin Towers building, and it was difficult to house the fine arts department in the same building with the college offices and the other departments. We decided to build the fine arts building to get the noise out of the main building. Of course, Lon Morris always had a strong music, drama, and speech program, so we needed a new building for that anyway (13).

Securing the trustees' approval for the project, Peeples and Banker had no trouble convincing the churches of the

Texas Conference that a new fine arts building would help the school train future church leaders. By July, 1945, the conference contributed $48,000 for the construction of a new fine arts building on the campus, and the trustees anticipated collecting the balance of the campaign goal soon after the war was over. One Methodist inspired by the building campaign was O. P. Hairgrove, treasurer of St. Paul's Methodist Church in Houston, who willed the school $30,000 worth of real estate in 1945. Like the Faulk endowment, the Hairgrove inheritance proved of great value to the college in later years; by 1957, the property increased in value 1,000 per cent to $297,000, making the Hairgrove endowment the largest thus far in the school's history (3). Peeples spent so much time away from the campus in 1945 that he asked his trustees to endow a separate chaplaincy for the college; although the trustees spent all available funds on the building program for the next twelve years and could not afford to hire a new chaplain, they did restore the raise due the faculty four years before and awarded Peeples a five-year term as president in 1945 (8, 10).

By the end of the Second World War, Lon Morris College had overcome the financial distress which had plagued it since the beginning of the Great Depression. In a time of severe economic scarcity, Peeples had instituted new policies

which paid off the school's heavy indebtedness and restored its credit with the business community. During his first decade as president of Lon Morris College, he proved his ability to earn sufficient operating income and to cut expenses in order to avoid further indebtedness, breaking the school out of its syndrome of financial decline during the worst economic times in the school's history. An indefatigable conference campaigner, he raised sufficient funds to operate the school, pay its debt, and begin a building program under conditions that had defeated his predecessors. Paying his faculty's back salaries and easing their teaching loads, he removed the financial probation imposed on the college by the Southern Association and won the loyalty of his teachers. Listening to the opinions of his students, he gave them ample student aid and reduced the number of scholastic failures. Placing quantity before quality during his first decade, Peeples restored the school's financial health and laid the foundations for building a well-equipped institution after the war.

Although he sought to provide his students with a high quality of education and religious instruction in seeking to implement his purpose "to train continually the church's leadership," Peeples succeeded essentially in preventing the college from declining further in such quality.

During his first decade as president, he had little time or oppoertunity to make the college like his alma mater at Clarendon. He taught a heavy load of classes with ability but paid little attention to the quality of teaching elsewhere in the school; he personally counseled his students but continued campus religious activities much as they had been before. He responded to criticism from the school's accreditors as best he could but introduced few academic innovations of lasting quality. Like W. K. Strother, Peeples was primarily a builder, not a scholar. Throughout his administration, he built a strong financial and physical foundation to facilitate the implementation of the traditional purposes of the college. With that concern foremost in his thinking, he naturally placed quantity above quality during his early years as president of Lon Morris College. He did not neglect quality; he simply made it secondary among his goals.

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CHAPTER VII

LON MORRIS COLLEGE

1945-1955

By the end of the Second World War, Lon Morris College had survived two of the worst crises in its insitutional history. The Great Depression and the war might have destroyed the almost century-old school had it not been for the efforts of its president and supporters in the Texas Conference. Led by Cecil Peeples, bishop A. Frank Smith, and the conference trustees, the college met its debts and launched a building program for the postwar era, encouraged by an increase in its conference financial support. The purpose of this chapter is to examine how Lon Morris College met its problems and implemented its traditional purposes during the years following the Second World War. During his first decade as president of the college, Peeples had emphasized achieving quantity in enrollment, physical plant, and revenue for the school as the necessary prerequisites for high quality education and religious instruction. During his second decade, he continued to run the school "on a sound business basis" as he sought to erect a new plant on the campus, and he tried

to devote sufficient time and effort to "train continually the church's leadership" in the college educational and religious programs. Utilizing innovative techniques for the achievement of his purposes, Peeples improved the college materially, academically, and religiously with determined dedication from 1945 to 1955.

With the close of the Second World War, Lon Morris College enrolled over 300 students in the fall of 1945, most of them demobilized veterans of the armed forces attending college under the new G.I. Bill, which paid the cost of their education with federal funds. In the place of the Naval Aviation School, which it closed on the campus at the end of the war, the federal government gave the college two large Army barracks, plus a science laboratory, worth a total of $35,000, to subsidize the education of veterans on the campus in 1945-1946. Even with the new facilites provided by the government, Lon Morris College was overcrowded with its record enrollment in 1945; utilizing $1,250 from the Methodist Board of Education, and $30,000 in Texas Conference building campaign funds raised earlier in the year, Peeples renovated the old Twin Towers building and expanded its classroom space. Even as Lon Morris College enlarged its student capacity, the large influx of veterans stimulated the establishment of a second public junior college in the local area at Athens,

which offered the private school competition from only forty miles away (3, 16).

Matured by their wartime service, the veterans usually proved excellent students and encouraged the school to upgrade its quality of education. One teacher whom they voted the school's first outstanding teacher award at the end of the session later evaluated their academic effect: "It was one of the most literate times we have ever had. The veterans were usually mature individuals who really wanted to learn and study. They were very adult and independent" (8). So many enrolled for fine arts studies that the college expanded its drama curriculum, won the state drama championship, and organized an annual carnival tent show melodrama to raise funds for drama performances prior to the beginning of each session. A record fifty-seven religious vocation students enrolled in 1945, reviving campus religious activities through their control of the Religious Council and sponsoring such social affairs as Saturday evening "Play Night" in the gymnasium, which featured various parlor games. Considering themselves adults following their military service, most veterans did not comply with the religious requirements of the school, however. Living off campus in many cases because of the overcrowded conditions in 1945-1946, veterans skipped chapel so often that Peeples felt compelled to reduce required chapel

attendance to once a week and to emphasize that all other campus religious activity was strictly voluntary. Although the school still forbade smoking, drinking, card playing, and dancing on campus, the veterans formed their own off-campus fraternity for such social activities with the college girls:

> The veterans drank freely off campus and had the first large number of automobiles seen at the college. Each Saturday night, they usually reserved a table for Lon Morris students at some Tyler night club for dining and dancing, but they caused no trouble on campus. They caused the administration to allow smoking in all dormitory rooms by 1946 (18).

Thanks to the veterans, campus restrictions on student behavior began to disappear during the postwar era (2).

Determined to expand the college plant further to accomodate its larger enrollment, Peeples and trustee H. F. Banker continued to promote the Texas Conference building campaign through 1946 and 1947, raising another $22,000, including $5,000 from Banker himself. In 1946, Peeples proposed that all five surviving Methodist schools in Texas unite to coordinate their financial campaigns across the state and share the proceeds therefrom (1). The other schools agreed and formed the Texas Methodist College Association in 1946, composed of Southern Methodist University, Southwestern University, Lon Morris College, McMurry College, and Texas Wesleyan College, which rewarded Peeples with an honorary degree for his effort. The new association began raising funds for the

five schools from all Methodist churches in Texas two years later, replacing "Lon Morris Day" collections in the Texas Conference. Guaranteed 15 per cent of the total funds collected, Lon Morris College received much more annual church support through the new association than it had alone in its seventy-five years as a Methodist institution. At a time when the state was increasing its support of public education, the new Texas Methodist College Association was of great benefit to Lon Morris College, raising funds pledged to the school by Methodist churches and freeing Peeples to concentrate his efforts on obtaining new pledges for funds from individuals, corporations, and foundations (3, 4, 11, 15, 16).

Peeples intensified his building campaign efforts in 1947-1948, when the college celebrated its diamond anniversary as a denominational institution. Promising the Texas Conference a fine arts building to train its future ministers, teachers, musicians, and students in other religious vocations, persons without whom "no church can exist," He optimistically expanded his college course of study to include theatre, stage production, radio broadcasting, sociology, social science, American literature, and physical training, which he offered for college credit for the first time in 1947. Expressing his hope that the college might erect its new building soon, Peeples promised that new facilities

would not increase faculty expense, since the fine arts faculty could support itself from fees charged for private lessons: "In church colleges with limited budgets, this is a significant factor" (16). Once the fine arts building was complete, he promised, the college would build a private home for each faculty family, replacing the faculty dormitory apartments used since 1890: "The only way that Lon Morris College can hold an outstanding faculty for the future is to provide them teacherages. This represents one of our greatest needs" (16). The trustees endorsed his promise, raised his salary, and voted to secure a new home for the college president as soon as possible. The following year, they purchased the old Jacksonville district parsonage adjacent to the campus for the Peeples' and converted the old Boger residence into a faculty "teacherage" (11).

During its centennial year in 1947-1948, Peeples took his drama and choral clubs on almost continual conference tours to advertise the college and its building campaign. The college expected the touring students to pay for their own meals, and, until a new school bus and college automobile could be purchased in 1948, gasoline on the frequent weekend trips. The choral club traveled all the way to New York to publicize the college before the Lions International convention, and the drama club performed its popular diamond

anniversary pageant before the 1948 Texas Conference, prompting a conference pledge to raise the balance of its $200,000 building fund campaign for the school by 1952 (12). One student who made most of Peeples' tours during that year later exclaimed: "I feel like that fine arts building is part of me!" (18)

Prior to the 1948-1949 session, Peeples reduced several faculty teaching loads and finally eliminated the school's ninety-four-year-old academy after only a handful of high school students enrolled for the 1948 summer session. Faced with summer competition from the local public high school, the academy finally fulfilled the prophecy of John M. Barcus almost half a century before: "A school like ours must be enlarged and extended, else there will be no place for us to stand. . .in sharp competition with the high schools of our state" (5). As before, the college remained open to non-high school graduates who passed its entrance examination, but its academy was no more. Among students who entered the college in 1948 were a squad of Puerto Rican high school basketball players recruited by coach O. P. Adams, who used them to build his team into the dominant power of Texas junior college basketball, leading the Bearcats to numerous state and regional basketball championships over the next decade (7).

As the college awaited more funds from its conference

building campaign in 1948-1949, Peeples proposed to his trustees that they raise the needed money early by collecting on the $271,000 in old notes and student debts past due during the previous thirty years. Declaring $21,000 of the debts uncollectable, the trustees turned the remainder over to a professional collection agency, which returned a very small amount of the money owed the college by the spring of 1949. Still eager to raise enough funds to begin construction of the fine arts building before 1952, the trustees then borrowed $125,000 against the Texas Conference campaign pledge and voted in the summer of 1949 to erect the new building "as soon as $100,000 is raised and $60,000 more is pledged" by the conference (11). To assist Peeples in securing the new conference campaign pledges, the trustees elected an experienced conference minister, Clyde Woodward, as the school's second vice-president. Whereas Peeples and his faculty received 10 per cent salary raises in 1949-1950, the vice-president's salary came from the building campaign. Unable to raise much money in the campaign, Woodward resigned his post during the spring term. His successor, Gordon Alexander, was another conference minister who spent most of his time on campus, explaining that he was "responsible for student contact and recruitment" without mentioning the conference campaign, which he left to Peeples (9). When the trustees borrowed another $20,000 in

building funds the following year in anticipation of the additional conference pledges assigned to the new vice-president, they discovered that he had spent less than half his time on the campaign, with negligible results, and dismissed him. Peeples later observed: "Alexander was popular with the students, but he couldn't get in the front door to raise money for the college. After all, the vice-president of a small school has no real standing or prestige" (15). The college trustees hired no more vice-presidents, holding Peeples solely responsible for fund raising after 1951 (11).

Prior to the beginning of the 1949-1950 session, Peeples expanded his published list of goals for Lon Morris College to include a sixth goal similar to those which he had previously emphasized earlier in his administration:

> 6. To develop in the soul its God-given sense of responsibility; respect for intellectual honesty, for stability of conviction, and for strength of character (6).

A decline in the number of veterans admitted in the fall of 1949 reduced the college enrollment to 265 students, whose age and maturity resembled that of prewar students, but Peeples did not take this opportunity to reverse the trend toward less restriction and more freedom for student behavior on and off the campus (2). Voluntary attendance at college religious functions continued its slow decline, and campus social clubs

expanded their activities (2). Determined to impose minimal religious instruction upon his students, Peeples spent less time as campus chaplain and student counselor during the conference building campaign (15).

Following renovation of Smith Hall the previous year, Peeples raised boarding charges at the college to $600 for 1950-1951, but the enrollment declined further to 236 students as young men entered the armed forces to fight the Korean War. During the spring term, the Houston Chronicle observed:

> There are but a few over 200 students at Lon Morris College in Jacksonville, which can just about pick its students. Still, that's a mighty small enrollment at a college which has gained the title 'College of Champions,' Over half the students enroll in the speech and drama classes and over half of them work their way through school at any kind of job. The half who work their way through school labor on the college farm, the campus, and in the dining hall. There are a good many work scholarships (10).

Anticipating further decline in the school's enrollment as the Korean War continued in 1951, Peeples proposed to attract more local students to the college by expanding its vocational education program to meet local needs. Seeking to make itself a community college for the first time since the State Department of Education had criticized it for being too much of a boarding school a dozen years before, Lon Morris College decided to offer local citizens vocational

training much closer to home than that of commuter public junior colleges over thirty miles away. Rejecting a vocational nurse training program in cooperation with local hospitals as too expensive in terms of necessary equipment and extra instructional personnel, the college trustees approved Peeples' proposal that the college offer the local community vocational training in business skills with existing campus facilities and faculty. The college established its first evening school prior to the fall term in 1951, offering regular business courses in accounting, business mathematics, shorthand, and typing for college credit for three hours each on separate nights of the week for the convenience of working citizens. The vocational classes increased the college enrollment by thirty or forty students each session, paying the instructor 25 per cent of the income, who later observed: "It was a service to the town of Jacksonville. Many secretaries who worked in town during the next two decades received their business training in the Lon Morris night school" (7). To supplement its evening business curriculum, the college added day classes in business administration, business speech, business English, business psychology, and introduction to business for the 1951-1952 regular session. Satisfied with the new college program, the trustees raised faculty salaries for the session and permitted the foreign

language instructor to make the first of two teacher exchanges with instructors from Germany, thus establishing a precedent of allowing the faculty one-year leaves of absence for professional advancement, provided that teachers arranged for substitutes in advance (11).

Following a decline in enrollment to 224 students in the fall of 1951, Peeples increased his conference tours in search of more paying patronage for the school. One member of his faculty who accompanied him on these tours later recalled:

> Lon Morris College was not really well known in the East Texas area during the postwar period apart from the Methodist congregations, despite its long history of service to the region. After the war, Dr. Peeples and several of the faculty members still recruited students solely by personal contacts. Each year, he reminded his faculty that if they wanted another raise in salary, they had to help him recruit more students. There was hardly any official advertisement or publicity for the college at that time (14).

To assist him in prompting the college in the area, Peeples made one of his drama instructors the school's first public relations director in 1951, with responsibilities for college publications and news releases. As he spent more time touring the Texas Conference in search of students and funds, Peeples gradually turned his teaching responsibilities over to his wife, who substituted for him through the postwar period. His absences from the campus disturbed the State

Department of Education, which criticized the church school for having "no full-time counselor" or chaplain on hand to counsel its students, but he did not feel the need for more help in religious instruction or personal counseling justified more salary expense in 1951-1952 (15, 17).

Seeking to expand student activities on the campus in order to make it more attractive to prospective patrons, Peeples imposed an open membership policy upon the college fraternities and sororities in 1951-1952, requiring them to accept all aspirants to membership and guaranteeing each student membership in the club of his choice, in order to preserve "the comradeship for which the college is known" (6). But more dramatic was his decision to allow dancing on the campus for the first time in its history in 1951; although he had tolerated smoking in the dormitories for several years, the faculty sponsor of the Religious Council denounced him for violating the strict moral traditions of the school, warned that dancing on the campus would lead to drinking, card-playing, and worse immoralities, and resigned at the end of the session, declaring: "Should Lon Morris lose its religious spirit, it could no longer exist" (2). Freed from piety after thirty years, the campus Religious Council soon lost its traditional spirit, dropping the school's early morning watch services, weekly prayer meetings, and spring

revivals because of low voluntary student attendance. Even the compulsory weekly chapel service lost their sectarian zeal as the college ceased trying to convert its students to its brand of Christianity, often exchanging chapel programs with the Baptists of Jacksonville College or simply scheduling programs of a non-religious nature (1). No longer denominational in its religious instruction nor puritanical in its discipline or rules of behavior, Lon Morris College further relaxed the implementation of its religious purpose in the postwar period without fanfare or furor. Although some pious Methodists noticed the subtle change in emphasis on the campus, few criticized Peeples' policies and most supporters of the school accepted them as a reflection of modern trends (1, 13).

Newspapers called the school the "College of Champions" in the early fifties because of its continual success in drama and basketball. The college drama club, which paid its own expenses each year, presented an outstanding series of religious performances before the national Methodist Youth Convocation at Purdue University in 1951 and won two more state drama championships in the two years that followed. The basketball team failed to repeat its state championship again in the spring of 1952, however, and business manager Lottie Williamson warned that the sport had become as ex-

pensive for the college operating budget as football had been before she was promoted from bookkeeper a decade earlier. She recommended that the college drop the expense of intercollegiate athletics altogether as long as its enrollment remained low, but trustee and former coach W. A. Phillips persuaded his colleagues to preserve the school's last spectator sport because of the good will it generated among local citizens. Some trustees recommended, without success, that the college remove its business manager instead, but dropped the whole matter when the Bearcats won another state basketball championship the following year. Peeples added a college credit course in physical education for the next session, but later admitted: "Giving up the expense of intercollegiate sports might have been a good idea" (11, 15).

By the end of the 1951-1952 session, the Texas Conference had raised only $40,000 of the $100,000 in college building funds which it had pledged the conference school four years before (3, 12). Despite the fact that they were still $60,000 short of the $200,000 goal proposed by campaign leader H. F. Banker in 1945 and that Peeples and his vice-president had had little success in promoting the building program among the conference churches, the college trustees announced plans for the erection of a new $350,000 fine arts building for the college as soon as they obtained sufficient

funds. As talk of the new building entered its eighth year, several Lon Morris students unloaded some brick on the proposed building site and spread a false rumor that construction was about to begin, later expressing their opinion that "it was all a big joke" (9). It seemed a big joke to many members of the Texas Conference as well (4, 12).

By 1952, the college trustees expanded their membership to thirty, including trusteeships for the local Methodist presiding elder and pastor; however, some of them shared the weariness of the conference with the long building campaign of the school. A few questioned the wisdom of erecting a new plant for the old college in view of the increasing competition from public junior colleges in the area, pointing out that public college enrollment exceeded private college enrollment in the state and nation for the first time in 1952, as the recent decline in Lon Morris enrollment amply illustrated. Some trustees argued that the school could not afford to offer the same basic course of study as the public colleges in competition with the greater financial resources of the state and questioned whether the church might revise its money more wisely in concerns other than the religious instruction and training offered by Lon Morris College. At every meeting in 1952, the trustees discussed "whether the college could continue to survive against growing public

junior college competition, or whether we could afford to keep Lon Morris College open any longer," but chairman T. E. Acker refused to permit a vote on any motion to abandon the conference building campaign or ultimately close the school, the last surviving Methodist junior college west of the Mississippi and the oldest Methodist school in the state (1, 4, 15).

Aware that the destiny of the school hung on the debate among his trustees in 1952, Peeples intensified his conference tours in search of funds and students prior to the fall term and successfully raised the college enrollment by almost 20 per cent to 261 students, despite a rise in boarding charges to $650 and a 25 per cent reduction in the discount for ministers' children (13). As Peeples promoted the building fund campaign throughout the conference, he characteristically went after the small money, described by one of his trustees as "peanuts," visiting each church numerous times during the year, too often for some of his critics. The president left the raising of large amounts for the building fund to his campaign leader, H. F. Banker, because "he had the confidence of businessmen everywhere" (4, 15). Banker and trustee A. D. Lemons together raised over $33,000 for the campaign across the conference in 1952, and the local trustees, with the Jacksonville Chamber of Commerce, led a

community drive to raise $50,000 more for the Methodist school. Although he refused to contibute to the building fund because he felt that "the future of the school was insecure" during the debate over its fate, L. R. Cade of Chester gave it $40,000 to endow the government department, thus releasing operating funds for the campaign (3). Peeples persuaded other supporters to the school to follow Cade's example; for instance, donations to the college library expanded it to 11,000 volumes in 1952, saving the school extra expense (3).

On January 14, 1953, the trustees of Lon Morris College voted to borrow the balance needed to increase the college building fund to $350,000 and finally begin construction of the long-awaited fine arts building. A local contractor who agreed to work for only $25 a week received the contract, and Banker persuaded his fellow trustees to save more money by financing some of the construction from their own pockets; he set the example by personally paying for the plumbing. Just after completing excavation for the new building in April, 1953, however, the trustees halted construction at the insistence of most of their ministerial members, who viewed it as but the first step in a long-term conference building campaign to erect a completely new plant for the college. Unwilling to support large expenditures for the

school from their church donations in the decades ahead, the ministerial trustees argued that the school should be closed if it could not survive without a new plant. Madison Farnsworth, a prominent oilman, answered the ministers for the trustees' lay majority: "Don't ever mention closing this school again until the front door is nailed" (15). A deadlock resulted among the trustees for six weeks as the ministers organized conference support for ending the building program at Lon Morris College (1).

Fearing that the new fine arts building would never be more than "a hole in the ground" if the debate continued, chairman of the trustees, T. E. Acker, called a meeting for May 14, 1953, "to stop adverse rumors concerning the college" (11). The college president addressed the trustees before the meeting began. Like Isaac Alexander, E. R. Williams, and M. L. Lefler under similar circumstances in earlier generations, Peeples was prepared to resign if the conference did not fulfill its pledge to complete his building program. Citing his eighteen years of struggle to pay off the college debt and to raise its building funds, Peeples declared that the school could not survive without a new plant and that he would not preside over its demise. The trustees understood that a vote against the building program was a vote against Peeples - - if they wanted him to stay, they had to

support the building campaign. As one trustee noted:

> The issue was whether to close the college. If the trustees were going to close the college, then obviously Dr. Peeples was not the man to preside over its extinction. However, I felt that it was regrettable that Dr. Peeples took the meeting so personally. I didn't interpret the purpose of the meeting to be directed against him at all (4).

With the trustees still split and the issue still in doubt, another benefactor in the mold of W. R. Miller sixty years before and R. A. Morris thirty years before stepped forward to save the school in 1953. Having become a trustee in the midst of the debate over the college building program only a few months before, oilman E. C. Scurlock ended the controversy once and for all by pleding his considerable wealth and that of his friends to the ultimate completion of a new plant for Lon Morris College, a promise which he fulfilled entirely over the next twenty years. With the future of the school thus assured, the trustees' debate over the building campaign became a moot question; although several ministers voted to end it anyway, Bishop Smith persuaded them to change their vote to make the decision unanimous (1). Peeples later observed:

> We usually don't think of ourselves as ministers and laymen at our board meetings. But when we talk money, the preachers usually sit back and listen to the laymen, who can give so much more. There has rarely been polarization between ministers and laymen on our board,

> but if the clergy members of our board ever tried to run the school, we would probably lose our Southern Association affiliation (15).

Following his fellow trustees' endorsement of his generous offer to lead the college building program in the future, E. C. Scurlock then persuaded them to name the new fine arts building after Bishop A. Frank Smith, who had done so much for the school during the previous decade. Scurlock remained the acknowledged leader of the college trustees during the next two decades and finally succeeded T. E. Acker as their chairman (11).

Having decided to continue the college building program, the trustees then considered whether Peeples was the right man to preside over its completion. He later admitted: "Many ministers were sincere in their thinking that I wasn't ever going to get anything done" (15). Insisting that Peeples had failed to raise sufficient funds for the fine arts building during the past eight years, the ministerial trustees successfully postponed his re-election as president until a committee, headed by A. D. Lemons, weighed the alternatives. A month later, Lemons recommended that Peeples remain in the presidency for another year under the guidance of his committee to determine whether he was qualified to lead the building program further. Although chairman Acker insisted that "respect for Dr. Peeples was renewed"

among the lay trustees during this critical period, Peeples took his experience seriously, declaring later: "It was about a month before I could get my head up off the ground" (15).

Having survived possible extinction in 1873, 1893, 1923, and 1953, Lon Morris College began construction of its new plant in the summer prior to the 1953-1954 session. As erection of the new A. Frank Smith Fine Arts Building continued apace, Peeples converted the old Army barracks given the college at the end of the Second World War into teacherages for his faculty and toured the Texas Conference in search of more students and operating funds. Praising his "work and accomplishments" at the beginning of his trial year as president, the trustees raised the salaries of Peeples and his faculty to meet the minimum standards of the Southern Association for 1953-1954. Despite the end of the Korean War, enrollment at Lon Morris College dropped to only 214 students in the fall of 1953, perhaps due to some remaining uncertainty in the Texas Conference about the school's ultimate survival. Utilizing results from student intelligence tests required by the college for the first time in 1953, Peeples and his faculty sought to help weak students during the session in order to retain as many at the school as possible. With one-third participating in dramatic productions during the session, the college presented open-

air Shakespearean performances in Jacksonville, choral singing in Chicago, and religious drama before the national Methodist Student Movement convention in Cleveland, Ohio in 1953-1954, even as the Bearcat basketball team won its second regional championship (2). Thanking Peeples for "the fine work being done now and in the past," the trustees noted the progress in the school's activities and building program at the end of his trial year, re-elected him to the presidency without further delay, and raised all college salaries for 1954-1955 (11).

Construction costs for the new fine arts building exceeded Peeples' expectations by 1954, exhausting the college building fund and reviving criticism of the president among some ministerial trustees. In order to quiet such criticism, the trustees' lay majority added several wealthy businessmen to their membership and voted to require ministerial trustees to quit the board for a year before being eligible for re-election. Having firmly established their control of college policy, E. C. Scurlock and his fellow lay trustees raised additional funds for the $400,000 Smith Fine Arts Building just prior to the opening of the 1954-1955 session (11). Recalling Scurlock's typical response to any need of the college building program, Peeples later observed: "In about two minutes, we got the money to finish the building" (15).

Determined to fill the new fine arts building with students in 1954-1955, Peeples persuaded his trustees to let him use over $7,000 in endowment income to increase his work scholarship funds and pay several faculty members to help him recruit students full-time prior to the opening of the fall term. Attracted by the addition of music theory, music history, music education, voice production, religious drama, religious counseling, German, education, and certification courses for church secretaries and other church workers, to the college curriculum and the imminent completion of the new fine arts building, 250 students enrolled at Lon Morris College in the fall of 1954. By October, half the college classes moved into the large, three-story building, complete with an auditorium plus ample classroom and practice room space. After almost a decade of effort, Lon Morris College had finally completed the first step in its building program (6, 11).

On October 8, 1954, Peeples thanked his trustees for their sacrifices in support of his building program and expressed his hope that they would continue their support in the future. Determined that the college should begin another building project as soon as it had completed the fine arts building, Peeples revived his fifteen-year-old proposal that the trustees erect a new girls' dormitory for the school as

soon as possible. Recognizing the need to match the extra classroom space provided by the new building with additional dormitory space to facilitate growth of the college enrollment, E. C. Scurlock persuaded his fellow trustees to launch a new $100,000 conference building fund campaign to construct a large girls' dormitory for the school in 1954. After the Texas Conference agreed to raise the full amount for the new dormitory, the college trustees borrowed sufficient funds to begin construction of the second step in the building program in 1955, thus assuring the school sufficient space for a larger enrollment of students in the years to come (11, 12).

The period from 1945 to 1955 was a decisive test of the support of the Texas Conference for its old college. Although the school had survived almost a century of crises, culminating with the Great Depression and the Second World War, with a high enrollment and no indebtedness, the task of building a new plant for the campus during the second decade of the Peeples administration proved more difficult than any problem encountered during his first ten years as president. Convinced that his school needed a modern plant in order to compete with the facilities of new state junior colleges and to enlarge its enrollment, income, and course of study, Peeples continued his emphasis on quantity before quality during the decade, most notably in his campaign to erect

the fine arts building.

From 1945 to 1953, Peeples and his trustees gradually raised sufficient funds for the college building program by accepting federal aid for the education of veterans, helping to organize the Texas Methodist College Association, collecting on old debts for the college, borrowing against conference pledges, hiring extra college personnel to assist in the campaign, and increasing college tours over the Texas Conference and beyond. Yet, after they had collected sufficient funds to launch the building program, members of the conference balked at the long-range prospect of supporting the campaign indefinitely by such methods. Only when E. C. Scurlock personally guaranteed the success of the building program did the conference members drop their opposition of its continuance. His timely intervention and subsequent financial leadership saved the college from eventual decline and possible extinction, completed the fine arts building, began the new girls' dormitory, and prevented the resignation or dismissal of Peeples from the college presidency. Following this last major crisis of his administration, the Jacksonville Chamber of Commerce voted Peeples the community's outstanding citizen, in appreciation of his dedication and achievement.

The college continued to implement its traditional pur-

poses of providing high quality education and religious instruction for its students between 1945 and 1955. While the president continued to run his school efficiently,he also sought to educate the church's future leaders by upgrading the college curriculum and reorienting the campus religious program. Offering his faculty better pay, housing, and even leaves of absence, Peeples reduced their teaching loads by dropping the high school course of study and provided them better teaching facilities in the new fine arts building. In addition to training more religious vocation students in the new building, he also offered the local community vocational education in the college evening school. Relaxing campus discipling and allowing smoking and dancing among the students for the first time in the school's history, Peeples drastically reduced compulsory attendance at college religious functions and his own service as the campus chaplain and counselor during the postwar years. As he sought to develop "responsibility, honesty, conviction, and character" by encouraging his students to participate fully in all campus activities, Lon Morris became the "College of Champions" in sports and drama, and social clubs replaced the Religious Council as the dominant factor in campus life. Despite some criticism that he was neglecting the school's religious purpose, Peeples did not consider his relaxation of discip-

line, his reduction of counseling, or his emphasis upon voluntary, nonsectarian religion on the campus as violations of the college traditions. On the contrary, he was convinced that more freedom on the campus built student self-reliance and better leaders for the Methodist Church. Such innovations contrasted with his implementation of the college purposes during his first decade as president, but he considered them appropriate for the postwar years.

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CHAPTER VIII

LON MORRIS COLLEGE

1955-1965

A century after receiving its original charter from the State of Texas, Lon Morris College continued to grow in quantity through further expansion of its enrollment, facilities, and financial support during the third decade of the Peeples administration. While continuing to stress quantity above quality between 1955 and 1965, the college nevertheless developed improved academic, social, and religious programs for its students as it sought to implement its traditional purposes of high quality education and religious instruction. The purpose of this chapter is to examine how Lon Morris College met its problems and implemented its purposes during the late fifties and early sixties, laying the foundations for yet another decade of progress at the old school.

By the fall of 1955, Lon Morris College offered its students more than a new fine arts building and the beginnings of a new dormitory, although its physical growth doubtlessly impressed some patrons as evidence of its enduring nature. One of the 266 students who enrolled for the 1955-1956

session later recalled:

> I came to Lon Morris for the summer of 1955, but I stayed here for two years. Coming from a small East Texas high school, I found that this college allowed me close individual help from my instructors, and I got to know everyone personally. Students were given a lot of responsibility then, and we developed strong student leadership and an active student government (3).

Determined to offer his students a campus environment, capable of developing their talents and self-reliance through high quality education and religious instruction, Peeples rephrased his original statement of goals for the school in 1955-1956 to better reflect the purposes of his administration in its third decade, declaring:

> Our aims are:
>
> 1. Religious- - to maintain an atmosphere in which the student will grow toward Christian maturity.
> 2. Academic- - to instill a primary concern for the development of intellectual competence and judgment.
> 3. Ethical- - to foster the growth of the student's God-given sense of responsibility and respect for intellectual honesty.
> 4. Social- - to develop the ability of living and working with people.
> 5. Emotional- - to encourage the development of emotional maturity through a program of counseling.
> 6. Physical- - to help students develop habits that will maintain good health (4)

Whereas the college attracted fifty-six religious vocation students to its expanded program of campus activities in 1955-1956, its number of student teachers declined as the State Department of Education ended teacher certification on the junior college level at the beginning of the session. For the first time in over a century, no graduate of the school was eligible to teach upon completion of its course of study. Forced to limit its education courses to introductory studies, Lon Morris College also dropped business administration, business psychology, business speech, and business English from its college curriculum following the failure of its evening school in 1955-1956. For five years, adult evening school students had paid nothing in advance and less than $7 a month tuition, with over half dropping out prior to the end of each term, thus reducing the meager 25 per cent of the income which the college paid their instructor. Although the college kept 75 per cent of the evening school income, while keeping only 25 per cent of the private tuition charged by the fine arts faculty, dean, H. V. Robinson, later maintained: "We didn't expect to make any money from the night school and we didn't. We simply wanted to perform a service to the community" (16). A few years after Lon Morris College decided to drop this service, Jacksonville College also closed its evening school because of inadequate

local paying patronage (16).

True to its pledge, the Texas Conference raised $122,000 for the new girls' dormitory at its conference school in 1955-1956, and the college trustees raised the additional funds necessary to erect the $272,000 building in time for the beginning of the 1956-1957 session, naming it after trustee R. W. Fair, who had contributed most generously to the building campaign. Upon completion of Fair Hall, the second step in the college building program, trustee E. C. Scurlock sustained the momentum which he had begun three years before by persuading his colleagues to approve a series of future projects to build a modern plant for the school, including (1) a new student center with dining hall and chapel, (2) a new library, (3) a new science hall, (4) a new gymnasium, (5) two new boys' dormitories, (6) a new classroom building with teacher offices, and (7) new homes for the entire college faculty. All of the goals of Scurlock's 1956 building program became reality little more than a decade later. The trustees also established an endowment goal of $1,500,000 for the college at the same time, although its endowment was worth less than 12 per cent of that amount in 1956 (11).

Prior to the fall term in 1956, Peeples made several significant academic changes at Lon Morris College. Eliminating

all specific high school course requirements for students admitted to the college, he relied upon the results of entrance examinations, including a new mathematics placement test, to single out students with specific learning problems, whom he assigned to special classes in subjects such as college algebra. Thus, Peeples made official the open admissions policy practiced since the Morgan administration; virtually any student could enroll for college studies at the school, regardless of background or ability. He also dropped all course work, except two years of college English, from his junior college graduation requirements in 1956-1957, permitting his students to enroll for courses of their choice (4). At faculty suggestion, he revised the college grading system to change the grade of "E" to "F" if a student did not pass his second final examination. Despite the revision, a few Lon Morris students made the grade of "F" whil attending the school to 1958, when the new grade penalty went into effect (4, 16). Until then, student grade averages at Lon Morris College remained rather high, enabling the Peeples administration to continue attracting students who feared scholastic failure elsewhere (15).

Enrollment at the school rose to 285 students in 1956, including 104 girls who moved into Fair Hall. Peeples further relaxed restrictions on his students by extending dor-

mitory visiting and closing hours and by permitting his students an unlimited number of weekend absences from the campus. His policies remained quite popular with most students, as one who enrolled in 1956 recalled: "I like Lon Morris better than the public commuter junior college which I attended earlier. The Lon Morris boarding school atmosphere was something different from high school or public junior college; its attitude seemed much more mature" (9). A $30,000 fire in the old Lula Morris boys' dormitory between terms in 1956-1957 soon interrupted the boarding school atmosphere, however, forcing the college to overcrowd male students into Smith and London Halls for the remainder of the session until it repaired the damaged living quarters. For the first time in the half-century since it originally accredited the school, the Methodist Board of Education visited the Lon Morris campus in the spring of 1957 and immediately recommended that the college make the construction of a new boys' dormitory the first project of its new building program, declaring:

> Only with these facilities can Lon Morris attract the enrollment necessary for an economical operation. We recommend that Lon Morris College develop facilities for an enrollment of not less than 400-500 students by 1960. A smaller enrollment is uneconomical and inefficient. Five hundred students can be attracted to the college if conditions are made right. One hundred fifty should be day students, with the other 340 housed in comfortable dormitories (13, 15).

Busy renewing the school's fifty-year-old charter and renovating Lula Morris Hall, the college trustees thanked the Methodist visiting committee for its recommendation but kept to their original building program, not erecting a new boys' dormitory on the campus until eight years later (11).

The committee noted with satisfaction that the college had continually upgraded its curriculum, expanded its range of campus activities, and improved its finances during the Peeples administration, and particularly complimented the college for conducting its first in-service training course for the faculty during the fall term. Taught for graduate course by a professor from the University of Texas, the extension course familiarized the entire Lon Morris faculty with current junior college trends and techniques, stimulating their desire for higher academic and professional standards at the school. Finally, the Methodist visiting committee declared:

> Lon Morris College is one of three outstanding strategically located Methodist junior colleges in the nation. It is a distinct advantage to the Methodist Church and an important link in the program of Methodist higher education in Texas. The school is now more strongly supported by the church than at any other time in its history; it will be badly needed in the years ahead (13, 15).

Following the Board of Education visit, the college trustees decided to begin the last project in their 1956 building

program first, approving a proposal by E. C. Scurlock that they construct three new faculty teacherages on the campus in 1957-1958. Endowed by supporters of the college and awarded free to faculty families on the basis of seniority, twelve teacherages appeared on the Lon Morris campus over the next six years, significant assets for the college in its competition with other schools for qualified teaching personnel. Gratified that his trustees intended to fulfill his recommendation of a decade earlier, Peeples declared that "housing for every faculty family in a modern dwelling enables the school to attract and keep superior faculty members" (11, 13).

By 1957, most colleges and universities in Texas had full-time Methodist chaplains to counsel students and to direct religious activities on or off campus. Peeples had been the chaplain of Lon Morris College in the tradition of his ministerial predecessors since 1935, declaring in the summer of 1957 that he still preferred to "preach and work with young people at the same time," five years after the State Department of Education had criticized him for spending more time away from the campus than he did in counseling students as the college chaplain. Not wanting "to pay another salary" for a full-time chaplain at the church school, Peeples waited until a faculty retirement removed his wife from teaching his religious education courses before he

hired another conference minister to succeed him as chaplain in 1957. Virgil Matthews taught the religious education courses, counseled students, directed campus religious activities, preached in conference pulpits on behalf of the school, and assisted the local presiding elder in supervising student pastors of local Methodist churches in 1957-1958. Later admitting that "Dr. Peeples guided me closely during my first year here," Matthews required only weekly chapel of his students, leaving all other religious activities open to voluntary student attendance. He recognized that "pietistic religion had been dying on the campus since before 1957 and an agnostic attitude had begun to set in," so he soon "cut down on the number of religious meetings" (10). Encouraging his religious vocation students to seek summer youth work in conference churches instead of trying to serve as part-time pastors during the school years, Matthews stopped supervising local student pastors at the end of the session. By 1958-1959, the majority of his religious vocation students declared that they did not intend to enter the pastoral ministry. At the same time, he and Peeples proclaimed:

> Our program is planned to train church leaders in any field of church leadership. Lon Morris College is equipped in a unique way to minister to the ministerial student. To attend here for two years is a near ideal route for a young minister. Lon Morris has work scholarships of any size for its ministerial students (4, 13).

With an annual enrollment of over fifty religious vocation students, Lon Morris College increased its work scholarships in 1957 from the will of the late O. P. Hairgrove of Houston. Over the previous dozen years, the property which Hairgrove left the college had increased in value to almost $300,000 so that it more than doubled the existing college endowment fund. Ironically, however, the inheritance came to the college in the form of a loan fund for ministerial students, who preferred their work scholarships from the Tapp endowment, which they did not have to repay later. Realizing that the new gift was "money the college couldn't use," Peeples persuaded a Houston judge that Hairgrove's will was to aid student ministers with his money in the best way possible,and received permission to use it for work scholarships. The judicial decision also permitted Southwestern University and Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary to convert their Hairgrove loan funds to work scholarships. Thanks to the Hairgrove inheritance, the Lon Morris College endowment fund became the third largest among all Methodist junior colleges within a few years, enabling the school to award over $17,000 in work scholarships to over thirty ministerial students annually (2, 12, 13).

Raising his boarding student charges to $675 for 1957-1958, Peeples added a special English placement test to the

college entrance examinations and assigned students with learning problems to remedial English classes at the beginning of the session. However, because Lon Morris College did not offer a course in college physics required by local industry, seventeen Jacksonville students had to commute to Tyler Junior College rather than attend the church school in 1957-1958. Although Jacksonville was "the fourth largest Methodist junior college town in the nation," Peeples insisted that its 8,607 people were not enough to justify the addition of a physics course to his college curriculum: "Lon Morris College needs a town of from 15,000 to 25,000 people if it is going to be able to offer the type of courses that will enable the youth of this community to receive a good education at home" (11, 13). But during the 1957-1958 session, with the assistance of a local industry owned by a college trustee, Peeples added a $10,000 physics laboratory and a course in college physics in the old Twin Towers, and three years later he helped establish the Jacksonville Industrial Foundation to attract more industry and population to the small college town. Recognizing the partnership of the college and community in building the personnel and income of each, he later recalled:

> One factor in attracting new industries to Jacksonville has been Lon Morris College. We have been right in the middle of the campaign to bring in new industries all the way through. One

> of my selling points has been the offer of a free scholarship to each new industry for its first employee's child to attend Lon Morris College (12).

After the college enrolled a record 315 students in the fall of 1957, Peeples appealed to his trustees to continue the college building program, declaring: "Lon Morris College's ability to help develop character in its student body through the proper care of its leisure hours has not been possible because the present recreational facilities are no longer adequate to meet the needs of the student body. We need a new student center!" (13). E. C. Scurlock promptly responded to this appeal in October by persuading his fellow trustees to begin the first project of their 1956 building program - a new student center with a dining hall and chapel. Successfully challenging trustees Paul Pewitt and Madison Farnsworth as well as the Jacksonville Chamber of Commerce to match his pledge of $25,000 for the new building, Scurlock collected $10,000 more from trustee Jimmie Owen to launch the school's new building fund campaign with $110,000 in the fall of 1957. At the banquet to raise its pledge during the following spring, the Chamber of Commerce featured Governor Price Daniel of Texas, who praised the role of private education in the state and said that he would rather dispense with the state-supported schools than to see such colleges

as Lon Morris perish from lack of support (13). Borrowing $250,000 more for the new project, the trustees began construction of the new student center the following summer, completing it in time for the 1959-1960 session. The $326,000 complex, named after E. C. Scurlock, boasted a large cafeteria-dining hall, chapel, bookstore, post office, ballroom, and student lounge, the last furnished at the expense of Lon Morris students (1).

As the college took steps to improve its recreational facilities prior to the fall of 1958, it also sought to implement its religious purpose by organizing a new Methodist church for Jacksonville on the college campus. Offering its fine arts building auditorium to students and local Methodists who desired a second church in the growing community, the college sponsored the establishment of the St. John's Methodist Church in its facilities by October. Composed of local residents and boarding students assigned "associate" membership during their stay at the college, the campus church attracted a growing congregation for the next six years, despite overall student apathy toward religious functions. Six years later, with several hundred members, the church built a new sanctuary off campus and gradually separated itself from the college community, although numerous students continued to attend its services in later years (1, 13).

Even as Lon Morris College provided more social and religious facilities for its students in 1957 and 1958, it benefitted from new federal student aid under the Higher Education Act of 1958 (4). Reacting to the scientific lead established by the Soviet Union in space the previous October, the federal government awarded Lon Morris College $12,000 in new low-interest, long-term National Defense Student Loans to pay up to $500 of the school's $740 maximum student charge for 1958-1959. Loan recipients could not work part-time, had to maintain a "C" grade average in their studies, and had to repay the loan completely after graduation, or half the loan if they became teachers. Because of these requirements, most of the record 340 students who enrolled at Lon Morris College in the fall of 1958 preferred to attend on work scholarships, and primarily superior students took advantage of the new source of aid (2, 8).

Facing an overcrowded campus as it crammed 290 students into its dormitories in the fall of 1958, Lon Morris College reconsidered the academic policies which it had followed on the campus during the leaner years of the previous quarter century (12). While its enrollment was low, the college had allowed open admission of all students seeking enrollment, regardless of their educational background or scholastic ability, sparing them the humiliation of failure by the con-

venience of the grade "E". Having already considered the ideal of higher academic standards in its in-service training course two years earlier, the college faculty questioned the necessity of allowing weak students indefinite enrollment at the school. Peeples agreed that higher academic standards might eliminate inferior students and some "troublemakers" from the overcrowded campus, so he allowed his faculty to impose the school's toughest academic standards since E. M. Stanton had ordered his faculty to maximize student failures thirty years before. Under its new academic standards for the 1958-1959 session, the college required all its students to earn a "C" grade average in at least two courses each semester to remain eligible for re-enrollment at the school, allowing no academic probation whatsoever. Unlike other junior colleges, most of which had no academic standards and still maintained an open admissions policy each semester, Lon Morris College alone refused to readmit students who failed to meet its standards in the fall semester of 1958, losing a normal 6 per cent of its student body to its nonprobationary policy at its spring registration in 1959 (4, 12, 16).

Determined that "all our students should be expected to perform well academically," the college faculty recommended an extension of all college classes into late afternoons

during the fall term to facilitate student and teacher preparation, scheduling, and counseling and guidance services of the campus chaplain (8). Teachers waxed enthusiastic about the advantages of the college's new academic standards:

> After 1958, the new academic policy was marvelous. It was a delightful time to teach at Lon Morris College and pleasing to maintain such high standards. The type of student that we lost at the end of the first semester we probably would have lost at the end of the second semester anyway, if he had been allowed to remain on probation. The academic standards were a motivating factor for the lazy student. He had to pass his grades from the beginning of his college career and could not procrastinate. It made better students and, consequently, better teachers (7).

Expressing their satisfaction with the faculty's performance in 1958-1959, the college trustees awarded it a retirement plan comparable to that of public school teachers; with this new benefit, its salaries, as well as $200 a month in free meals and housing, the Lon Morris faculty earned an income in excess of the average for Southern Association junior college faculties in 1959-1960 (11, 13).

Prior to the opening of the 1959-1960 session, Lon Morris College added courses in general mathematics, geography, choir, introduction to theatre, scene design, and theatre history to its curriculum and restricted the availability of work scholarships for its students in the fields of drama

and religion, long the school's most popular academic attractions. Beginning in 1959, the college allowed only drama majors to earn their way through college by participation in dramatic productions and enforced its old 1931 rule that only licensed Methodist preachers could receive ministerial work scholarships. Subsequently, the college suffered a decline in the number of students seeking such work scholarships in 1959-1960 and afterward, as those only casually interested in the two fields moved to other majors altogether (2, 4). The new college academic standards also may have helped to reduce the campus enrollment by almost 10 per cent to 300 students in 1959, thus relieving the overcrowded conditions of the previous year (16). Not satisfied entirely with this unforeseen result of his first training course, Peeples arranged another University of Texas extension course on junior college problems for his teachers in the fall of 1959 (12, 13).

As he taught the faculty in 1959, Professor C. C. Colvert of the University of Texas recommended two changes for Lon Morris College. First, noting that Peeples was spending a large portion of his time away from the college in his capacity as president of the Texas Methodist College Association, Colvert suggested that he delegate more of his personal authority and responsibility to his faculty and staff.

Later declaring, "I carried the whole load then and it was comfortable; I did everything and enjoyed it," Peeples ignored Colvert's first recommendation but heeded his second point (12). In November, 1959, Peeples introduced Colvert to his trustees, whereupon the junior college expert described the fifty-year-old Twin Towers as "a fire trap which should be razed" and recommended that the college replace it with a new administration building as soon as possible (11).

Having just completed the new Scurlock Student Center, the trustees accepted Colvert's recommendation and voted to replace the Twin Towers completely with a library and science hall, the next two projects in their 1956 building program. Following his successful precedent of two years earlier, E. C. Scurlock persuaded trustees Paul Pewitt and Latimer Murfee to match his pledge of $25,000 for the new building campaign, and trustees Madison Farnsworth and Shepherd Fleming responded to his challenge with $10,000 each. Having raised $95,000 in the first few minutes of their new campaign, the trustees ordered the old Twin Towers building demolished at the end of the 1959-1960 session. Only a few supporters of the school cherished its ivy-colored walls enough to oppose demolition of the college landmark. One of the college fraternities removed the old college bell, which had pealed for Methodists since 1784, from the Twin Towers

to bury it on the college farm for safekeeping and soon forgot where it lay buried (9). The college classes, offices, and library formerly housed in the Twin Towers crowded into the fine arts building, so the college finally extended its class schedule into late afternoons for 1960-1961.

Anticipating a decline in enrollment due to its crowded conditions in the fall of 1960, Lon Morris College introduced its first organized program of faculty counseling during the preceeding spring semester in order to maximize the number of students meeting the new academic standards and to encourage freshmen to return to the school as sophomores the following year. Later, business manager Walter Harris awarded the school's first work scholarship contracts for a total of $71,360 to 187 of the 284 students enrolled in the fall of 1960, assigning some of them to work as faculty assistants for the first time in the school's history. The college music department added a music placement test to the School and College Ability Test as a new part of the school's entrance examinations to facilitate additional student ability grouping in 1960-1961 (2, 4, 8).

Pointing to a decline in the school's enrollment of more than 16 per cent since the adoption of its new academic standards in 1958, Peeples asked his faculty to permit failing students to enroll for a probationary semester

in 1960-1961. Nothing that Lon Morris College was the only school in Texas without academic probation, Peeples argued that he faced "by far the heaviest public relations program" in the college's history as he tried to raise funds for the building campaign and that he could not afford to lose operating income from any paying student, regardless of his scholastic ability. When his faculty refused to permit academic standards, Peeples over-ruled them in December, 1960 with the argument that failing students needed another chance to receive faculty counseling and to prove themselves academically. He permitted students who did not make a "C" grade average in at least three courses during the fall semester to enroll for the spring semester in 1961, and, if they failed similarly in the spring, to enroll for the summer session. If they failed the summer session as well, they could enroll again in the spring of 1962, after skipping the fall semester of 1961. By raising the minimum academic standard to three "C's" per semester and by making virtually indefinite enrollment possible for any student, Peeples gave lip service to scholastic quality while encouraging his faculty to pass as many students as possible. After 70 per cent of all grades awarded by Lon Morris teachers were "C" or better at the end of the 1960 fall semester, the college dropped student counseling in the spring because so few of its students had

failed and so few of its teachers were trained counselors. A number of students enrolled for courses inappropriate for their majors in the spring of 1961 and had transfer difficulties to other colleges afterward, convincing some disgruntled patrons that the school was not fulfillings its proper role as a junior college (7). Learning its lesson, Lon Morris College restored faculty counseling of its students in the spring of 1962 (4, 12, 15).

A more important factor affecting enrollment at Lon Morris College in 1961 and 1962 was the progress of its building program. After securing a $15,000 endowment for the school's annual spring lectureship in 1961 from Methodist, J. M. Willson of Floydada, Texas, Peeples secured a pledge of $400,000 for the college building campaign to 1964 from the Texas Methodist College Association (13). With over $200,000 in hand from their earlier efforts in the campaign, the Lon Morris trustees began construction of the next three projects in their building program of 1961, completing the $144,000 Paul Pewitt Science Hall in June, the $118,000 Simon Henderson Library in October, and the $84,000 Jimmie Owen Administration Building in December. Replacing the old Twin Towers, the new buildings enabled the college to move classes, offices, and the library out of the fine arts building in the summer and fall terms of 1961 (11, 13).

Seeking to attract as many students as possible to its new facilities in 1961-1962, Lon Morris College created a new social committee composed of returning sophomore leaders to plan a social and recreational program involving the entire student body in such activities as dances, movies, and outings of various sorts during the session. In addition, the sophomore leaders assumed responsibility for welcoming new students to the campus and for supervising the school's first hazing of initiates by the college fraternities and sororities shortly after fall enrollment (1, 6).

Among the record 359 students enrolling at Lon Morris College in the fall of 1961 were the first blacks ever to enter its student body. Although it had, like most schools in Texas, ignored the state school law requiring racial integration ninety years before, Lon Morris College had no official policy of racial segregation when two blacks girls came to the campus seeking private music lessons in 1961. Dean H. V. Robinson later recalled:

> When they first came to register, I went to talk to Dr. Peeples about it and he said: 'Let's go ahead.' Then I asked him: 'Dr. Peeples, have you checked with your board?' He replied that he thought that his trustees would leave it up to him to decide whether or not to take the black students (16).

Lon Morris College quietly enrolled a small number of black students for private classes and special tutoring without

publicity for the next three years. There was no objection from the college trustees, alumni, or faculty who were aware of the policy change, and few students in the regular enrollment ever saw the blacks. Director of public relations, Wyman Fisher, persuaded the local news media to ignore the first integration of any school in the area in order to avoid the problems encountered on other campuses trying to integrate during this period; he later recalled: "We were integrated before anyone knew what was heppening" (6).

Whereas a few entering freshmen qualified for new academic scholarships which the college awarded to all high school valedictorians and salutorians in the fall of 1961, most students continued to attend Lon Morris College on work scholarships, providing the school with an inefficient but cheap work force to perform all but heavy maintenance and intricate office responsibilities on campus (8). Although the school's first student handbook required students receiving work scholarships to maintain a "C" grade average in 1961-1962, the Peeples administration never denied such aid to any student for scholastic reasons. On the other hand, it required all student officers to maintain a "C" grade average and established a minimum "B" grade average for members of the Phi Theta Kappa scholastic honorary society in 1961-1962. The new handbook also introduced a new dress

code for students, forbidding shorts and loose shirttails from most of the campus and requiring dress clothing on Sundays, plus "neatly combed" hair at all times (17).

Rather than overcrowd its dormitories with its 1961 record enrollment as it had done three years before, Lon Morris College approved off-campus housing for male students for the first time in over a decade. Warning his trustees that the old college dormitories had become definite fire traps by 1961, Peeples maintained:

> Students coming out of high school with adequate plants will not enroll in a college with a second rate plant. American colleges expect an even greater increase in student applications in the next few years. Without additional dormitory space, Lon Morris will not be able to meet this challenge adequately (13).

After the Bearcat team reached the national junior college basketball championship finals in early 1962, however, the trustees decided to abide by their 1956 building program schedule by replacing the old fire trap gymnasium prior to the addition of a new boys' dormitory on the campus. Having just completed three new buildings the year before and confident of continued financial support for their building program from the Texas Methodist College Association, the local trustees responded favorably to a challenge by E. C. Scurlock, matching his pledge of $100,000 for the new gymnasium by raising $80,000 for the project from among Jacksonville supporters of the Bearcat team. Construction of

the new athletic facility began soon after the end of the 1961-1962 session (11).

Lon Morris College sought to increase the quality of education offered its students as well in 1961-1962. Dropping elementary curriculum, secondary education, child psychology, adolescent psychology, social science, and school art from its teacher training course when the State Department of Education made them upper-level courses in 1961, the college added more teachers in drama and social science and reduced its average faculty teaching load from five to four classes for the fall term, although the student-contact hours of some teachers remained high nevertheless. Following the addition of academic probation for failing students the previous spring, the Peeples administration permitted the faculty to replace the grade of "E" with the grade of "F" for students failing their final examinations or absent from class without excuse while on academic probation, thus ending the school's popular policy of "grace" for failures for the first time in a quarter century. Despite the possibility of more "F's" on student records, the number of student failures at Lon Morris College did not increase in 1961-1962 as the overall grading habits of the faculty continued to reveal a definite bias toward awarding grades of "C" or better. Encouraged by Peeples to pass as many students as possible

in order to maintain maximum enrollment and income for the college, most Lon Morris teachers failed few students during the session, and the majority of all grades, as well as the majority of individual class grade averages for the year, were above the "C" level. A minority of instructors' and individual class grade averages were below the "C" level, indicating some faculty disagreement with the Peeples grading philosophy and a considerable variation in the standards of excellence applied by Lon Morris instructors from course to course in 1961-1962: (15)

PERCENTAGE OF "A" & "B" GRADES	
Physical Education	100%
Religious Drama	89%
Shorthand	83%
Analytic Geometry	80%
Psychology	76%
American History	72%
Advanced Spanish	71%
Typing	70%
English Composition I	62%
Bible	54%
Advanced French	50%
Education	49%
English Literature I	48%
General Mathematics	43%

PERCENTAGE OF "D" & "F" GRADES	
Theatre History	57%
Piano	55%
Government	54%
Music Theory	50%
Theatre	45%
Public Speaking	41%
Introductory French	41%
English Composition II	40%
English Literature II	40%
Algebra	40%
Scene Design	40%

Only eight courses taught at Lon Morris College in 1961-1962 revealed little or no bias toward high or low grades. Obviously a student enrolling at Lon Morris College during this period stood a good chance of maintaining better than average grades, which was true of most colleges in the late fifties

and early sixties. The records of a random sample of ninety-six Lon Morris graduates transferring to nineteen other colleges and universities between 1958 and 1962 revealed that their average grades dropped only .16 of a grade point after leaving Lon Morris College. Like a similar follow-up study made by George F. Winfield thirty-five years before, the rate of academic success among its graduates after 1962 indicated that the standards of excellence of Lon Morris College remained close to those of the University of Texas, Southwestern University, Southern Methodist University, and other area institutions. Over a half century after its original accreditation by such institutions, the junior college course of study at Lon Morris College remained of sufficiently high quality to be foundational for transfer to senior college or university studies (15).

Not all students experienced the same quality of education before or after their graduation from Lon Morris College during these years. One student majoring in history commented: "Most of my low grades were made at Lon Morris College. It was academically very challenging" (3). A student majoring in science declared: "I felt that the college was academically weak, and I feared problems when I transferred to a senior college. I soon discovered that I had to study much harder elsewhere than I had at Lon Morris College"(9). Stu-

dents complained in 1961-1962 about the school's lack of technical or advanced sophomore-level courses and its lack of uniformity in faculty grading habits from course to course (15). To deal with this problem, the college "planned with great care" a return to faculty counseling of students in 1961-1962, assuring prospective counselees that their teachers were "available for consultation at any time," despite the general lack of faculty offices on the campus during this period and the faculty's lack of professional training in the field of counseling. The Peeples administration also introduced its first quantitative means of measuring teaching effectiveness through student opinion by use of the Purdue Rating Scale in 1961-1962, still maintaining that "students are the best ones to evaluate teachers" (10). Examining the rating scales to detect any widespread student objections to faculty teaching habits, dean H. V. Robinson later admitted: "Some of the faculty didn't want me to see the results before they did. I would examine them and then consult with the teachers afterward; naturally, the questionnaires had a profound effect upon a number of teachers." Due to faculty resentment that it no longer left "the teaching up to the teachers," the Peeples administration abandoned this policy the following year, encouraging the faculty to use the student ratings for their own private self-evaluation without review

by the dean (16). Similarly, although the college required each teacher to submit teaching syllabi for all his courses to the academic dean in 1961-1962, the administration decided not to use them to judge the quality of instruction in the years that followed (10).

Insisting that "no instructor has the right to say or do as he pleases," however, the Peeples administration published its first guidelines for teacher behavior in a new faculty handbook during 1961-1962. Tracing authority for the hiring and firing of all faculty members from the Texas Conference and its trustees through the college president and his dean, the handbook listed forbidden faculty behavior without elaboration: (5)

1. Conduct detrimental to the college.
2. Expressions detrimental to the welfare of the college.
3. Public criticism of the college.
4. Breach of professional ethics.
5. Partial presentation of controversial issues.
6. Failure to identify personal opinions.
7. Lack of obligation to Christian principles.
8. Inefficiency or incompetence.
9. Neglect of duty.
10. Failure to cooperate.
11. Deliberate infraction of the college rules
12. Immorality.

Insofar as the faculty presented its criticisms privately to the dean or president and did nothing to attract unfavorable attention to itself from others, the college assured its academic freedom and employment security (5).

The Peeples administration further revised its statement of aims and purposes for Lon Morris College in the fall of 1961:

> Lon Morris College is a small, liberal arts, church-related junior college. As a junior college, Lon Morris offers two years of higher education, foundational for those going on to more extended general education or to specialized and professional study.
>
> As a church-related college, Lon Morris is a community in which Christian ideas and values give meaning and enrichment to every aspect of college life. Affiliated with and supported by the Texas Conference of the Methodist Church, Lon Morris seeks to provide lay and clerical leadership for the Conference, while welcoming students of diverse background and allowing genuine religious freedom.
>
> As a liberal arts college, Lon Morris emphasizes studies and skills which help the student to understand his heritage and the world about him, to face issues intelligently, and to communicate his thoughts effectively.
>
> As a small college, Lon Morris brings the student into an atmosphere of warmth and friendliness, offers him personalized guidance, and stimulates creative academic and character progress through close relationships with students and teachers (15).

Before publishing its new statement in 1962, the Peeples administration accepted from the college trustees two revisions (underlined) to the paragraph on the school's religious purpose:

> As a church-related college, Lon Morris is a community in which Christian ideas and values give meaning and enrichment to every aspect of college life. Affiliated with and supported by

> the Texas Conference of the Methodist Church, Lon Morris Seeks to provide lay and clerical leadership for the Conference with a deeper appreciation of Methodism's mission and message. While welcoming students of diverse backgrounds and allowing genuine religious freedom, Lon Morris seeks to uphold our Methodist heritage, policy, and doctrine (4).

The 1962 statement of purpose reflected a continuing allegiance to the school's traditional purposes of providing a high quality education and religious instruction. The trustees' revisions illustrated a continuing concern on the part of the school's Methodist owners that Lon Morris College emphasize sectarian religious instruction rather than follow the Masonic tradition of nondenominational instruction as practiced by its presidents from Barcus through Peeples. There is no evidence that religious instruction at Lon Morris College became more sectarian after 1962, but the trustees contended themselves nevertheless with their gesture of support for that policy (11).

Following another capacity enrollment at Lon Morris College in the fall of 1962, the Southern Association of Schools and Colleges sent a visiting team to the campus to examine the school for the first time since restoring its accreditation a quarter century earlier. Following a thorough investigation of the college, the team recommended continued accreditation for the school in November, 1962,

pending fulfillment of a number of changes proposed by its own members or personnel of the college during the institutional examination. Lon Morris College pledged itself to fulfill every recommendation as soon as possible (12).

Although its faculty salaries were 25 per cent higher than those of other Methodist junior college members of the Southern Association, Lon Morris College promised to

1. Give all faculty who desired salary twelve months a year teaching or non-teaching summer employment.

2. Pay all expenses of faculty members attending professional meetings.

3. Assume the cost of group medical insurance for faculty families.

4. Adopt a fixed plan for annual faculty salary increases.

5. Restore written faculty contracts, specifying conditions of employment, amount of salary, and other considerations offered as compensation (14, 15).

Fulfillment of the last promise required the college to list free faculty housing and meals in contracts, thus making such considerations subject to federal income tax, since it no longer provided them at its convenience. Beginning in 1963, the college simply paid its teachers their total compensation in cash, with which they purchased their formerly free housing and meals. Only ministers Peeples and Matthews continued to receive their free housing as Methodist

parsonages. The college fulfilled all its other above promises by 1963-1964 (8).

Recognizing the inconsistency of its having two teachers with insufficient graduate study in their teaching fields at the same time that it had a teacher with a Ph.D. in another field, Lon Morris College further promised to

1. Expand the faculty to include new instructors in English, social science, business, science, and women's physical education.

2. Give each faculty member an orientation session prior to assigning his teaching duties.

3. More precisely define the duties and responsibilities of the faculty in teaching and other services.

4. Schedule more in-service training courses for the faculty, especially in the field of counseling.

5. Encourage more faculty access to the president.

6. Provide all faculty members with private offices.

7. Give each department a separate annual budget to purchase its supplies, textbooks, and library books.

8. Make adjustments to better equalize faculty teaching loads and student contact-hours with regard for the number of different class preparations involved (14, 15).

Feeling that an extra salary for a female physical education instructor could not be justified, the Peeples administration

fulfilled all of its above promises except the very last (12).

Admitting that it had no uniform standard of excellence for the interpretation and application of student grades and did not particularly desire its faculty to devise one, Lon Morris College also promised in 1962 to

1. Allow the faculty a voice in determining college academic policy beyond the levels of such procedural matters as curriculum or scheduling.
2. Raise and enforce its minimum entrance requirements as student enrollment at the school increased.
3. Increase the number of academic scholarships based solely upon grades, with no work obligations.
4. Permit advanced standing credit in courses for students who made exceptionally high scores on their entrance examinations.
5. Expand the number of classes based upon ability.
6. Add more technical and advanced sophomore-level courses to the college curriculum.
7. Enforce study hours and limits social activities for slow students.
8. Extend the class schedule in order to better utilize existing college facilities.
9. Publish the college catalog annually to facilitate more rapid curriculum change.
10. Provide faculty counselors with complete background and ability records on the students whom they are to counsel (14, 15).

After 1962, Lon Morris College made slow progress in fulfilling all but the last of its promises listed above. Considering the expense and problems involved in differentiating between levels of student ability, its slow rate of academic progress reflected a continuing tendency to place quantity above quality. Convinced that counseling affected enrollment and income, the Peeples administration did fulfill its last promise to the letter (10, 12).

Recognizing the importance of attracting more students to its campus, Lon Morris College promised to

1. Promote a wider variety of student activities on the campus, including more intermural sports, special interest groups, and cultural occasions.

2. Recruit a larger proportion of its student body from the local area.

3. Allow the student government a voice in matters pertaining to student regulation and discipline (14, 15).

The school faithfully fulfilled each of the above promises after 1962, seeking to serve these needs of its students. Admitting that "the extent of expenditures on spectator athletic appears to be out of proportion to other equally important needs of the college, possibly at the expense of a sound educational program," Lon Morris College nevertheless promised to (14)

1. Construct two new boys' dormitories and a new classroom building on the

campus after completion of its new gymnasium.

2. Add a snack bar, a larger bookstore, and a first aid station in the student center.

3. Add a new microfilm file and projector in the library.

4. Invest more of its endowment in common stocks to increase operating income and offset inflation.

5. Increase tuition and fees as its student enrollment expanded (14, 15).

Although he increased his maximum student charges to $800 for the following year, Peeples fulfilled the last promise slowly, insisting that "our location in a geographical area containing numerous public junior colleges places severe limits on possible tuition charges if we are to attract students from our own area" (11, 13). The college fulfilled all other promises except for the first aid station, because the school was only a few blocks from two excellent hospitals (12).

Finally acknowledging the wisdom of C. C. Colvert's 1959 suggestion, Peeples began to dismantle his "monarchy" in 1962, promising to

1. Relinquish a substantial amount of authority over college administrative policy to his dean, business manager, dean of students, and chaplain.

2. More precisely define the duties and responsibilities of his administrative staff with regard to academic matters, financial concerns, student

discipline, and counseling.

3. Hire more full-time administrative personnel to replace inefficient part-time student help (14, 15).

Fulfilling all three promises within a few years, Peeples discovered that he could delegate decision-making to his subordinates regularly and campaign more away from the college campus:

> I didn't delegate administrative responsibility until I got these boys and trained them. Delegation of authority to them was gradual and I still finally decide all the important questions. Anything crucial hits my desk; the buck stops here. But I no longer decide the minor matters, including even the hiring of some personnel (12).

During the spring term of 1963, Lon Morris College hired new full-time adult supervisors for its dormitories, completed the last of its dozen new faculty homes, and fulfilled the promises to award new contracts and group medical insurance to its faculty after Peeples informed his trustees of an 11 per cent salary increase for public junior college faculties in 1963-1964. Prior to the fall term, the college library added a vertical file, introduced a new "monitoring" system to prevent theft, and expanded to 18,000 volumes. Replacing American literature with engineering graphics for the fall term, the college required each new student to take the American College Test prior to admission in 1963-1964.

Seeking to increase its enrollment, Lon Morris College recited the advantages which it offered students seeking religious instruction on its campus in 1963:

1. Twelve semester-hours of religious education.
2. Required weekly chapel attendance for all students.
3. Voluntary student attendance at local church services and other campus religious activities.
4. Fellowship with other students in campus religious organizations, drama, and choir.
5. Religious counseling by a full-time chaplain.
6. Influence from Christian teachers in class and in 'the more personal and private situations which present themselves' (4, 13).

The college enrolled fifty-one religious vocation students among the 355 who entered the fall term of 1963 and expanded its chapel services "to pass on Christian traditions" through "speakers drawn from various faiths" but dropped its weekly communion services because of low voluntary attendance from among most of its student body during the year (13).

Proceeding apace with the constuction of the new college gymnasium as the next project in their building program during 1963-1964, the trustees financed an increase in the median faculty salary to almost $7,500 for 1964-1965 by selling

a motel owned by the school for $10,000 and raising maximum student charges to $1,000 for the next session. Adding eight new trustees for a total of forty-three, they increased the college endowment fund to almost $700,000 with two $50,000 gifts from D. N. Pope of Oklahoma City and C. N. Williford of Fairfield, who endowed the college history department. Completing the new gymnasium and demolishing the old one at the end of the 1963-1964 session, the trustees approved E. C. Scurlock's proposal that they immediately launch a new $200,000 building campaign to construct a new boys' dormitory on the campus during 1964-1965 (11).

Shortly after his trustees purchased a $25,000 "Key Man" insurance policy on his life, Peeples advised them that the 1964 Civil Rights Act required the college to broaden its token racial integration to include black students in its regular fall enrollment. Faced with the necessity of obeying federal law, the few trustees who opposed full integration at the school quietly dropped their opposition two years before the Jacksonville school board complied with the Civil Rights Act:

> It appeared to be the consensus of opinion that the president of the college should be permitted to admit selected Negroes on a day student basis in as orderly a manner as possible. No official action was taken by the trustees with regard to the integration of the college (11).

Integration at Lon Morris College continued without incident in 1964-1965, accepted by the student body and community as legally required of the institution, and within a few years it became the most racially integrated Methodist school in Texas, boasting a student body 9 per cent black. Offering new Methodist academic scholarships for superior sophomore students and restoring Christian thought and school art to its course of study, Lon Morris College achieved its fourth straight year of capacity enrollment with 335 students in the fall of 1964 (4, 10). By the end of the session, the trustees had demolished old London Hall and replaced it with Clark Hall, the new boys' dormitory named after a relative of E. C. Scurlock, E. T. Clark of Lufkin, enabling the college to enroll a new record 429 students in the following session. Thus, the college finally achieved the boarding facilities and optimum enrollment which the Methodist Board of Education had originally recommended for the school eight years earlier (15).

By the end of its third decade in 1965, the Peeples administration had expanded the physical plant, financial support, curriculum, faculty, and student enrollment of Lon Morris College. Between 1955 and 1965, the college added new dormitories, faculty homes, classrooms, laboratories, offices, plus library, gymnasium, and student center

facilities to its campus, enabling it to implement its traditional purposes more effectively. The school enhanced the quality of its education by offering new and expanded courses of study, adding special classes for students with learning problems, conducting two faculty in-service training courses, establishing higher academic standards and lighter teaching loads, providing more academic scholarships and counseling for students, expanding its library, and introducing procedures to evaluate teaching effectiveness. Whereas the college dropped its evening business school as a service to the local community, it attempted to provide a regular course of study relevant to the needs of the area. Although the school maintained an open admissions policy, established almost indefinite academic probation, and had a considerable variation in faculty grading patterns, nevertheless, its graduates tended to do well after transfer to senior institutions during this period. Offered an effective junior college course of study, a wider scope of campus activity, and more financial aid, the student body of Lon Morris College increased significantly in size and racial integration. Both the Methodist Board of Education and the Southern Association of Schools and Colleges confirmed the quality of education at the college in their campus visits.

Despite its official statements of purpose pledging to

maintain a religious atmosphere on campus "in which Christian ideas and values give meaning and enrichment to every aspect of college life," Lon Morris College failed to expand its program of religious instruction even after obtaining a full-time chaplain in 1957 and soon "cut down on the number of religious meetings" due to poor voluntary student attendance. It continued its traditional role of training students for religious vocations in the Methodist Church and even established a new congregation for its denomination on the campus, earning the commendation of the Methodist Board of Education as "a distinct advantage to the Methodist Church." Texas Methodists continued their generous support of the college during these years, but the college trustees expressed their desire to see the school affirm and implement more sectarian religious instruction in "Methodism's mission and message. . . .heritage, policy, and doctrine" for the student body as a whole. In its original Masonic tradition, however, the college continued to offer a generally nondenomination form of religious instruction to its students.

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CHAPTER IX

LON MORRIS COLLEGE

1965-1973

As it began the fourth decade of the Peeples administration in 1965, Lon Morris College anticipated final completion of its modern plant, enrollment of sufficient students to sustain its operation at full capacity, increased endowment to meet future financial demands, and an opportunity to place quality above quantity in the education and religious instruction offered its students. Having surpassed the tenure of Isaac Alexander as president of the small school, Cecil Peeples completed his administration by laying the foundations for a new era of institutional maturity at Lon Morris College, culminating over a century of continuous development. By 1965, Lon Morris College had offered 118 years of high quality education and religious instruction to East Texas. It was the oldest of Texas' junior colleges, representing the 40 per cent still under private control. Although one-third of all church colleges in Texas were junior colleges and the Methodist Church had more junior colleges in the South than any other religious denomination, Lon Morris was the last surviving Methodist junior college west of the Mississippi.

True to its heritage, it continued implementation of its purposes of providing high quality education and religious instruction for its students well into its second century (13).

The purpose of this chapter is to examine how Lon Morris College met the challenges and problems involved in the implementation of its purposes from 1965 to 1973. During this period, the Peeples administration continued the emphasis of quantity over quality that had characterized its first thirty years, seeking to leave the college financially secure and on a "sound business basis" so that it might continue training the church's leadership after its Methodist centennial.

By 1965, the trustees of Lon Morris College had erected eight major new buildings on the campus in a dozen years and had raised the college endowment to over $800,000. Determined to complete their 1956 building program, the trustees adopted a plan in 1965 to construct a $300,000 classroom building and a $500,000 boys' dormitory as well as to air-condition the fine arts building and the girls' dormitory. Praising their decision, Peeples persuaded them to add a $300,000 girls' dormitory to the building program and recommended that the school more than double its endowment to $1,750,000 by 1973. Approving his proposals, the college trustees instructed Peeples in December, 1965,"to apply for and participate in any program of federal aid to education,

whether in the form of loans, grants, or by any other means" to provide funds for the new classroom building (11). Peeples secured $92,000 in federal matching funds for private college classroom building construction under the 1963 Higher Education Facilities Act by February, 1966, through the good offices of the Coordinating Board, Texas College and University System (1). At the same time, ministerial trustee Kenneth Shamblin persuaded a key official in the wealthy Moody Foundation to match the federal grant with $100,000 in foundation funds for the new classroom building, which the college duly named Moody Hall (15). Viewing a federal prohibition of sectarian indoctrination and religious worship in the new building as no undue restriction upon the implementation of its religious purpose, Lon Morris officially purged its religious education curriculum of denominational instruction prior to completion of Moody Hall the following year, although the college continued to proclaim its religious purpose to instill a deeper appreciation of Methodism's message and doctrine among its religious vocation students (10). As soon as construction began on the new classroom building, E. C. Scurlock again challenged his fellow trustees to match his pledge of $100,000, this time to launch a building campaign to erect another boys' dormitory for the school. Within a year, trustee R. E. Smith responded with $116,000 for

the new campaign, prompting the college to name its new gymnasium in his honor (1, 11).

Raising maximum student charges to $1,100 for 1966-1967 in order to finance an increase in faculty salaries and retirement benefits for its faculty ministers, who had been dropped from the conference retirement system, Lon Morris College gave its ministerial students on work scholarships an option to work thirty hours a week during the summer session instead of twelve hours a week during the regular session to pay for their education. Most of them chose to work and study during the summer in order to have more time for study in the regular session, increasing the summer session enrollment to a record 200 students in 1966 (3, 17).

Adding two new mathematics courses to its curriculum in 1966, Lon Morris College enrolled a capacity 426 students for the fall term. In order to improve student counseling by his teachers during the session, Peeples enrolled his faculty for its third in-service training courses in a decade, an extension class in counseling taught by a professor from East Texas State University. Financed by the Methodist Board of Education in fulfillment of the promise made by the college to the Southern Association four years before, the course gave most Lon Morris teachers their first professional training as counselors, although they had been counseling

students at the school for almost seven years. The college also improved dining hall service for its students in 1966-1967 by permitting the student government to advise a professional catering service in the operation of the cafeteria and snack bar in the student center (17, 20).

Soon after the college raised faculty salaries again for the 1967-1968 session, the federal government increased its aid to needy students through Educational Opportunity work-study grants, paying up to 100 per cent of the total charges of Lon Morris students, according to their financial need. Like recipients of the school's work scholarship program, who usually had to pay part of their charges from their own resources, grant recipients did not have to maintain a minimum grade average while in school (4). The program benefited the college by providing it a larger paying patronage and more campus workers. Like its nineteenth century state tuition subsidy, the new federal subsidy enabled the school to maintain its 120-year-old tradition of providing education to all students seeking admission, regardless of their economic circumstances. Attracted to the campus by the new federal aid, large numbers of needy students swelled the college enrollment to the highest level ever recorded in the fall of 1967, filling the new classrooms and overcrowding the dormitories. Although the college once

again permitted boys to live in approved off-campus housing in 1967, it forced the girls to double or triple up in their dormitory rooms, limited the use of showers and telephones in the girls' dormitory, forbade weeknight dates, and expelled any girl leaving the dormitory at night without permission. Dean of students Fisher later commented: "If the overcrowding had continued, student morale would have undoubtedly suffered" (4). Boarding student enrollment declined in the spring.

Almost half the 442 students enrolled in Lon Morris College in 1967-1968 were from the local area, including the largest proportion from Jacksonville since the Great Depression. For over thirty years, the Peeples administration had concentrated its attention upon the Texas Conference as its prime source of financial support and students, prompting programs and policies primarily designed for a conference boarding school, not a community or commuter college. Like their predecessors in earlier years, the local students enrolling in Lon Morris College in 1967 discovered that the campus schedule of classes and activities met the convenience of the boarding student and that the college had little to offer them ebyond aid and education (10). Chaplain Matthews observed that, despite their increased numbers, "Jacksonville students didn't get involved on campus" (10).

Moving into new private offices in Moody Hall following professional training as counselors, the Lon Morris faculty received complete information on its student counselees for the first time in the fall of 1967. American College Test scores revealed that the school had enrolled a larger percentage of students in the upper half of those tested than the average percentages of other Texas junior colleges: (7)

ACT	LMC	PRIVATE JR. COLLEGES	PUBLIC JR. COLLEGES
Mathematics	29%	20%	20%
Natural Science	35%	32%	31%
English	39%	24%	21%
Social Science	43%	35%	31%

When compared with students entering senior colleges and universities in Texas in 1967, Lon Morris students rated lower scholastically. Whereas the average Lon Morris student ranked in the third quartile of ACT scores, his counterpart at nearby Stephen F. Austin State University ranked in the second quartile and the average Baylor University student ranked in the first quartile. Most Lon Morris students revealed less than average scholastic ability when compared with all college students tested (4). Dean of students Fisher admitted: "The average Lon Morris freshman student probably would not survive scholastically in a Texas senior college or university" (4).

The average Lon Morris freshman survived quite well in 1967-1968 as the college faculty continued its effort to minimize failures by awarding above average grades. For instance, whereas only 39% of entering Lon Morris freshmen rated above average in English on the American College Test, 42% made above English grades in the fall term; only 29% rated above average in mathematics on the ACT, but 43% made above average mathematics grades at Lon Morris College in the fall of 1967. Nevertheless, the teachers showed less bias toward both above average and below average grades after 1967 than they had earlier in the decade: (7)

YEARS	PERCENTAGE OF GRADES ABOVE "C"	BELOW "C"
1960-1962	53%	30%
1969-1971	44%	23%

Despite the decline in positive grading bias at Lon Morris College during the sixties, it was not as extensive as a similar decline among senior colleges and universities during the same period. Whereas an earlier study had revealed that the average grades of Lon Morris graduates declined only .16 of a grade point after transfer to other institutions between 1958 and 1962, indicating a close correlation in grading standards between the junior college and senior colleges, a study of the average grades made by Lon Morris graduates after transfer to other institutions between 1967 and 1971

indicated a decline of 1.13 grade points, or a whole grade letter. While rising slightly, the grading standards of Lon Morris had not kept pace with those of senior institutions and thus lagged far behind by the early seventies. The author of the 1958 academic standards observed: "If we are preparing most of our students to transfer to larger schools, we must give them the quality of work demanded of university freshmen and sophomores" (6, 7).

Graduates of the private college remained superior scholastically to public junior college graduates after transfer during this period, although their decline in grade average exceeded that of public junior college transfer students, revealing that public junior college grading standards more closely resembled those of senior colleges than the grading standards preferred by Lon Morris College. Receiving the largest number of Lon Morris graduates of any college in Texas, Stephen F. Austin State University confirmed in 1970 that they did "better scholastically at our university than graduates of public junior colleges" (8). Despite the relatively low grading standards of the faculty, the average scholastic ability of Lon Morris students remained superior to that of their public junior college counterparts and inferior to that of their senior college counterparts after 1967.

When some teachers deliberately increased the rigor of their grading habits to more closely approximate those of senior college faculties in the early seventies, the Peeples administration insisted that they find alternative means to enhance the quality of work demanded of their students. Determined to fail as few students as possible, Peeples insisted that he did not want Lon Morris to adopt the grading habits of senior institutions: "A lot of good talent is buried in the freshman and sophomore classes of the larger colleges, but we have an opportunity to develop further the student talent which we have here" (15). The teachers tried, with some success, to enhance the quality of work among the students through counseling, but the college compelled few to upgrade the quality of their teaching, advocating further graduate study for the faculty only in cases of widespread student complaint. One teacher later observed:

> Our academic strength could be improved, but through the years we have remained static scholatically and professionally. Our faculty doesn't go back to school enough, and their teaching reflects it. Every teacher should be required to go back to school every three years. The in-service training courses brought about some faculty improvement, but we need much more (14).

Seeking to facilitate the transfer of its students to other colleges throughout the state, Lon Morris College adhered to the new core curriculum for the first two years of

public higher education established by the Coordinating Board of the Texas College and University System in 1968. Replacing courses in music history, introduction to education, and religious drama with courses in theatre practice, forensics, and ethics, the college rewrote its catalog to establish as much common content as possible between its curriculum and that required of freshmen and sophomores in state colleges (3).

Faced with the competition of four public junior colleges and a public university within commuting distance of the campus offering the same basic curriculum at lower cost in 1968, Lon Morris College raised its median faculty salary to $8,000 and its maximum student charges to $1,200 for 1968-1969 and declared: "With the State of Texas increasing its support of tax-supported schools to a degree unparalleled in the history of our state, church colleges face their greatest challenge. . .the low tuition of state colleges is putting a great strain on church and private colleges" (17). Despite an increase in the discount for ministers' children and ministerial students, the college lost more than half its religious vocation students as the overall enrollment declined 14 per cent to 382 students in the fall of 1968. Only twenty-two religious vocation students remained to assume leadership of the University Student Movement on the

campus during the session, prompting Peeples to appeal for more Texas Conference patronage: "The future of the church is at stake, since it receives most of its clerical and much of its lay leadership from the church colleges. To disregard the future of these institutions is to disregard the future of the church" (17). More significant than the loss of conference patronage, however, was the loss of local patronage in the fall of 1968. Finally, recognizing that it must do more to attract local students to the campus, the Peeples administration launched its first campaign to recruit students from Jacksonville by writing letters to, and personally contacting, the families of local high school seniors, persuading some parents to patronize the school by offering the economy and convenience of their children living at home while attending the nearby school. Cultivating the staff of Jacksonville High School for the first time in the school's history, Lon Morris College offered academic scholarships to the top 10 per cent of its graduates (4).

Recognizing that it had existed in a "town with limited cultural and recreational opportunities" for seventy-five years, Lon Morris College increased the number of social and cultural activities on the campus in 1968-1969, rearranging its schedule for the convenience of commuting students and inviting local high school students to attend all college

activities free. After 1968, the college dropped its "suitcase" image and de-emphasized its traditional role as a conference boarding school, finally trying to become a community college for Jacksonville (4).

But Jacksonville once again helped the college to be a conference boarding school in the spring of 1969. Although supporters had increased the endowment to $1,000,000, none had supplemented the gifts of trustees E. C. Scurlock and R. E. Smith in the school's dormitory campaign since 1967 despite the overcrowded conditions on the campus during the previous year. In early 1969, the college finally secured a pledge from the wealthy Brown Foundation of Houston to contribute $50,000 to the dormitory campaign if local citizens matched its pledge with a similar amount. Reminding local businessmen that the Methodist school had probably spent "twice as much money in Jacksonville as Jacksonville ever invested in Lon Morris College," the local trustees raised $46,000 locally to expand its boarding facilities by March, 1969, and authorized the construction of Brown Hall, which they named after the foundation's Herman Brown. The local recruiting campaign and new dormitory increased both local and boarding student enrollment at the college more than 10 per cent to 421 students for the 1969-1970 session (4, 11, 17).

Upon the retirement of dean Robinson in 1969, Peeples promoted Virgil Matthews to dean and Wyman Fisher to registrar

of the college. The school then made its open admissions policy finally official during the fall term and promised to admit students with less than a "C" high school grade average or with a score in the lowest 15 per cent of students taking the American College Test or College Board Examination; if the ACT predicted that such students had less than a 29 per cent chance of making average grades at Lon Morris College, based upon the grading standards of the college faculty, then the school required them to make a "C" grade average in at least three summer session courses or enter the school on academic probation in the fall (4). Fisher admitted: "We reject few applications for academic reasons" (4). Recognizing the problem of mixing weak and strong students in the same classes, the college permitted the faculty "a limited amount of advanced placement" in English and mathematics for 196-1970 while retaining the traditional classes for students with learning problems, but did not promote ability grouping in other subjects. One teacher later commented: "Students of low mental caliber pull down the class standards by mixing failures with good students, and we have to downgrade our teaching standards to pass a sufficient number of our students to be acceptable to the administration" (5).

Despite some opposition to the school's official open

admissions policy, another teacher spoke for the faculty majority in 1969: "I prefer the teaching situation here to any place else. Our faculty is well treated and most of us stay because of the academic freedom" (19). Declaring that "Lon Morris College has the finest faculty in its history, and constributions help us hold such an outstanding faculty," Peeples persuaded his trustees to raise the median faculty salary to $9,000 for 1969-1970, giving his teachers a twelve-month income comparable to the nine-month income earned by public junior college teachers in the same period. One faculty member later observed: "I have overlooked low salaries here through the years because the advantages here are more important than the money" (5).

Lon Morris College granted its students more freedom on campus than ever before in 1969-1970, encouraging the student government to hold open meetings at least once a month and permitting discussion of any subject of concern to the student body (20). The open meetings gave the Peeples administration an opportunity to listen regularly to the students' suggestions and were instrumental in bringing about such changes as longer dormitory and library hours, as well as better sidewalks and lighting for the campus. One teacher observed: "There was a time when the student was told what to do, but we take him more seriously now. The student's voice is heard now more than ever before" (5). Wyman Fisher agreed:

> We have always been able to work out solutions to college problems acceptable to all. These open meetings have taught our students that positive change is achievable without disruption. Some students have said that they chose to return to Lon Morris for a second year because we have the kind of student government that really works, that can get things done (4).

Mrs. Peeples declared: "We give young people a place where they can be important" (16). Another teacher agreed: "The students seem to be able to get more changed on the campus than we can" (19).

As Lon Morris students became more individualistic and outspoken in their freedom during 1969-1970, campus fraternities and sororities declined in membership and college social activities involved more of the student body, frequently going off campus in search of entertainment and recreation. The community of Jacksonville reacted negatively to the college students' relaxed grooming standards and manners and blamed the college for not enforcing its old rules of discipline; acknowledging the school's permissive attitude toward youthful defiance of tradition and authority, Fisher commented: "Our students are no longer little ladies and gentlemen, so our relationship with Jacksonville is not as good as it has been" (4). Another faculty member agreed: "The college has become a stranger to Jacksonville- - our citizens don't understand it anymore. When I moved off campus to my new home, one of my neighbors comments: 'I'm glad

to see that you are mixing with <u>us</u> now!'" (2).

When the decline in religious vocation students at the college began the year before, the school had complained to the Texas Conference that "the future of the church is at stake" (17). The decline continued in 1969 as the college enrolled only twenty religious vocation students, less than 5 per cent of its student body. Chaplain Matthews noted less enthusiasm for the church among his students during this period:

> There was less identification with the established church in 1969-1970 because social issues were emphasized more by students coming to Lon Morris College. Church attendance declined to an all-time low, reflecting current social trends in this country. Since 1969, many students entering the college have been more emotional about their religion than our religious vocation students, who seem disillusioned with the lack of intellectual content in the 'coffee house' approach to faith (10).

At the end of the 1969-1970 session, the Texas Conference made a "thorough study" of Lon Morris College to determine whether it was still implementing its religious purpose. Although the study revealed that the college had dropped its church assistant certification course and that most of its less than fifteen ministerial graduates each year did not intend to enter its pastoral ministry, the conference looked "very favorably" upon the school's efforts to provide religious instruction for the few students still interested in

serving the church (12). Peeples responded:

> I have stressed training church leaders all along, and I think that the record of Lon Morris College will indicate that we have fulfilled this purpose. There are churches all over the Texas Conference full of Lon Morris graduates and we must continue to produce more. I think Lon Morris College should continue stressing this function. If we do a good job, the church's money is not wasted; but if our primary purpose is not to train church leadership, then we don't give the church a full return on its investment (15).

In order to promote its image in the conference, the college renamed its thirty-five-year-old _Quarterly Bulletin_ and expanded its mailing list to over 2,000 alumni and supporters in 1970, advertising such campus activities as its children's theatre and high school drama workshop (9). Expressing their confidence in the institution, the college trustees approved a proposal by E. C. Scurlock that they launch a campaign to erect the last project in their quarter-century-old building program, a new girls' dormitory, pledged to give another $100,000 to the college endowment fund in honor of the Peeples, and revised the college charter and by-laws to affirm the school's perpetual duration. After the trustees raised their salaries by $750 to match an $1,100 raise awarded public junior college teachers for 1970-1971, Lon Morris teachers expressed their support for the school by giving $100 each to the endowment fund. In order to finance the raise, the college increased student charges to $1,300 for the session (1, 11).

Seeking to maintain its high enrollment in 1970, the school adopted the state college calendar to facilitate student transfers, offered to enroll any student on academic probation or any person over twenty-one years of age without entrance examination, expanded its curriculum to include courses in coordinate geometry, electricity, magnetism, heat, wave motion, mechanics, optics, engineering, art crafts, art, stage movement, and English history, and hired its first full-time recruiter to enroll students from the Houston metropolitan area. Despite these efforts, the college enrollment declined by 10 per cent to 381 students in the fall of 1970. Dismissing its Houston representative, the college returned to part-time recruiting efforts by its faculty and staff in 1970-1971 and increased its program of student counseling to retain more students in the future. As its faculty counselors sought to "help the student find himself as an individual" through personal attention to academic and other problems, the college banned all non-prescription drugs from the campus and deputized a dormitory supervisor to arrest students engaged in any sort of criminal activity. New student organizations for 1970-1971 included the Alexander Historical Society, which collected a large number of documents and relics of the school's history by the end of the session, thus facilitating academic research into the

development of the college (3, 9, 20).

As the college continued its building campaign into 1970-1971, the trustees also raised funds to pay off the school's indebtedness and to increase its endowment. Four trustees matched a $10,000 pledge by E. C. Scurlock to reduce the building debt by $50,000 (11). After a Scurlock relative, Lulu Clark Farrell of Houston, willed $20,000 to the college endowment fund, trustee H. E. Dishman of Beaumont endowed the college English department with $50,000 and Willard Russell of the St. Paul's Methodist Church in Houston contributed $250,000 more to endow the college music department. At the end of the session, the college named its girls' chorus the Stella Russell Singers in memory of his wife, who had accompanied them in their conference tours for many years (15). In recognition of the man who had recruited Scurlock as a trustee and had raised well over $60,000 in work scholarships for the school through the years, the trustees voted Madison Farnsworth their first life membership in 1971. Finally, the trustees conferred the Founder's Award upon a black student for the first time in the history of the school and raised the median faculty salary to over $10,000 at the end of the 1970-1971 session (1, 9).

As Lon Morris College intensified its recruiting efforts throughout East Texas in 1971, Peeples became president of the

Texas Junior College Association and successfully lobbied for new state tuition subsidies for all junior colleges, including his own private school, in 1971-1972. The State of Texas gave the Methodist institution $16,000 in Tuition Equalization Grants to provide needy sophomore students up to $280 in financial aid upon their enrollment for a second year of study at Lon Morris College. Receiving state aid again for the first time in seventy-seven years, the school retained sufficient students to boost its enrollment to 409 in the fall of 1971. Paying only basketball athletic scholarships out of its 1971-1972 athletic budget, Lon Morris College provided one-half of its students with partial or full financial aid from its own work scholarships, endowment income, and loans as well as government loans and grants, again implementing its original purpose of providing an education for needy students as well as for those able to pay (1, 6).

Determined to keep its enrollment high while improving the quality of its education, the college established an orientation course to acquaint new students with the techniques of study, reading skills, and use of the college library, permitted students as many as eight unexcused absences from each class, and expanded advanced placement for superior students from English and mathematics to biology, government, American history, and English history during the fall term of

1971. The school also expanded student activities to include its first girls' drill team in over half a century and increased its religious vocation enrollment to over thirty students in the fall of 1971 (1, 9).

Following a full year of deliberation, Lon Morris College dropped compulsory chapel attendance for its students for the first time in 111 years in 1971-1972. Eliminating the last vestige of required religious activity from the church campus, chaplain Matthews declared: "We can no longer force the Lon Morris student to face the religious dimension of life. We shall not make chapel attendance compulsory again"(10). As the college encouraged purely voluntary religious participation on the campus for the first time since its early Masonic days, Peeples observed: "Although we now have less religious influence on the average Lon Morris student, we can still greatly influence those who choose to voluntarily participate in our religious activities. Unfortunately, much of our student body is no longer fully aware of our school's Methodist nature" (15). Concentrating his efforts upon students interested in religion, Matthews admitted: "The major weakness of Lon Morris College lies in not permeating campus life with religious values. We don't do a very good job of that" (10). Observing a sharp decline in voluntary chapel attendance occurring coincidentally with

an increase in racial tension and the use of drugs among the college students during 1971-1972 session, former dean H. V. Robinson commented: "The religious atmosphere is gone from the Lon Morris campus" (18).

Having been in office longer than any other college president in Texas after thirty-seven years on the job, Peeples informed his trustees in December, 1971 that he intended to retire at the end of the 1972-1973 session, declaring:

> In my remaining months in office, I want our trustees to put this school on a sound business basis, just like their own businesses. This is the same goal which I have had all along. Once again, we must pay off our building debt, increase the endowment, and raise a lot of operating money. By 1973, Lon Morris College must be debt-free, highly endowed, and budget-balanced--three pretty big things! (15)

A few months after Peeples' announcement, trustee chairman T. E. Acker passed away after record terms of fifty-three years as a trustee, thirty-five years as chairman, thirty-four years as mayor of Jacksonville, and thirty-two years as a member of the General Conference of the Methodist Church, during which he secured vital financial support for the college from the local community and the Texas Conference. To succeed Acker, the trustees elected the prime mover of their building program over the past two decades, oilman E. C. Scurlock, as their new chairman in 1972. Recognized

by the American Religious Heritage Foundation a short while earlier as the nation's outstanding churchman in the petroleum industry, for his benevolence, including gifts to Lon Morris College in excess of half a million dollars, Scurlock once again guaranteed the financial security of the little school, promising to pay off the college debt and to raise its endowment, already the second highest of all private junior colleges in Texas, to well over $1,200,000 during the 1972-1973 session. Gratified that he was leaving the 125-year-old school in the capable hands of "the man most responsible for the modern Lon Morris plant and the top giver of them all," Peeples looked forward to his final session after almost four decades as president of the college. The school was on a sound business basis at last (9, 11, 15).

Following a raise in faculty salaries and an increase in student charges to $1,400 for the 1972-1973 session, enrollment at Lon Morris College declined 11 per cent to only 356 students, mainly due to a loss of local patronage for the fall term. Instead of hiring another full-time recruiter or reviving its evening school to attract more local students, however, the Peeples administration urged the college faculty to pass as many students as possible during the fall term even as dean Matthews observed:

> Lon Morris must continue upgrading its courses, making itself distinctive by a high quality of academic standards and instruction.

> We are in better shape than most private colleges, so we can afford to be innovative. We should try to unify our campus learning experience (10).

Even during its last session, however, the Peeples administration continued to value enrollment quantity over academic quality. The college actually made little effort to enhance the quality of its education during the 1972-1973 session.

The college finally completed its twenty-seven-year-old building campaign in the fall of 1972, when trustee A. R. Wilson of Houston, who had given generously to the school's various funds over the years, gave it $30,000 to pay off the college debt and $400,000, the largest single gift in the school's history, to erect a new girls' dormitory on the campus. Construction of the new Craven-Wilson Dormitory, named after the trustee and his wife, began during the 1972-1973 session; when completed, the modern plant would make an enrollment of 500 at Lon Morris College a distinct possibility. The Peeples administration thus achieved the final project in its building program and laid the foundation for sufficient enrollment to enable the college to concentrate its efforts upon quality education and religious instruction in the future (1, 9).

Recognized as the oldest junior college in the state by the Texas State Historical Society in 1972, 125-year-old Lon Morris College celebrated its Methodist centennial during

the 1972-1973 session (21). Since 1965, the school had completed its building campaign and expanded its campus plant, raised its enrollment to the highest level in its history, increased its endowment to provide a steady annual income, and laid the foundations for future implementation of its purposes to provide high quality education and religious instruction to its students. In thirty-eight years of emphasizing quantity over quality at the college, the Peeples administration and its trustees saved Lon Morris financially and made it one of the most prosperous junior colleges in the United Methodist Church and the State of Texas. Peeples achieved his primary goal: to put the college on a "sound business basis." He accomplished what none of his predecessors had been able to do, providing the school with financial security.

For more than third of its century as a Methodist school, Peeples had also tried "to train continually the church's leadership" by providing high quality education and religious instruction at Lon Morris College. After 1965, he permitted his ministerial students to earn their scholarships by summer work on campus to give them more time for study during the regular session, enrolled his faculty in a professional counseling course to provide better academic and personal guidance for his students, upgraded his course

of study in correlation with the new state core curriculum for freshman and sophomore studies, expanded advanced placement of superior students in his college course of study, raised the standards for membership in the Phi Theta Kappa scholastic honorary, expanded the college library, and established a new orientation course to train his students in the techniques of college study. Despite these academic improvements, however, the college lowered its admission requirements and maintained its positive grading bias in order to keep its enrollment as high as possible during the last years of the Peeples administration, discouraging faculty members from increasing the rigor of their grading habits to the level of senior college and university scholastic standards. Dean Matthews promised "high quality academic standards and instruction" for the college after 1972-1973. Perhaps the school again would value quality over quantity some time in the future.

As the last surviving Methodist junior college west of the Mississippi, Lon Morris College found difficulty in implementing its religious purpose after 1965. The Peeples administration abandoned sectarian instruction in its religious education courses to obtain federal aid in the construction of Moody Hall, suffered a decline in the enrollment of religious vocation students from 1968 to 1971, dropped

its church assistant certification course, and eliminated its last required religious activity just as its religious vocation enrollment began to rise again in 1971. Although the Texas Conference blessed its efforts to train the few students still interested in church work, the college appeared to have little religious effect upon the majority of its students by the early seventies. As the school became increasingly permissive in its control of student behavior on the campus, the old religious and moral atmosphere of the church college seemed to disappear. Voluntary student participation in religious activities declined and religion on the campus became increasingly oriented toward social concerns. In many ways, Lon Morris College returned to its original Masonic tradition of voluntary, non-sectarian religion as it attempted "to train continually the church's leadership" from 1965 to 1973.

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CHAPTER X

CONCLUSIONS

The objective of this study has been to analyze the implementation of the stated purposes of Lon Morris College from 1847 to 1973. During these years, Lon Morris College sought to implement two basic purposes: to offer its students (1) a high quality education, and (2) religious instruction. Typical of the purposes of most private, church-related schools in Texas during the past 125 years, these two purposes served as the foundation of the school's development on the primary, secondary, and junior college levels.

Whereas the stated purposes of Lon Morris College remained essentially the same after 1847, specific interpretation of those purposes varied with the different philosophies of education and religion which guided those responsible for the development of the school from generation to generation. Most administrations of the school interpreted the purpose of offering a high quality education to require academic standards and courses of study neither excessive nor deficient in meeting the educational needs of their students. Constant among almost all of the administrations of the school was an effort to maintain the quality of its education in

correlation with the highest academic standards promoted by church, state, regional, and national associations during this period. However, several administrations interpreted the purpose of offering high quality education to require highly rigorous academic standards and/or extensive required courses of study, and one administration even interpreted it to require minimal academic rigor and courses of study in meeting the needs of students. Insofar as these administrations modified the school's traditional interpretation of quality education, they did not correlate its education exactly with the standards of its accrediting institutions.

Likewise, interpretations of the school's purpose of offering religious instruction to its students differed from administration to administration. From 1847 to 1860, from 1911 to 1923, and from 1944 to 1973, those responsible for the development of the school interpreted its religious purpose to require nonsectarian or nondenominational religious instruction. The Grand Lodge of Texas specified nonsectarian instruction in its original statement of purpose for the school; Methodist ministers John M. Barcus and Cecil E. Peeples agreed that "no sectarian creed will be taught," although the latter's Methodist trustees, in their 1962 statement of purpose, specified sectarian instruction to promote "a deeper appreciation of Methodism's mission and

message. . . to uphold our Methodist heritage, polity, and doctrine." From 1860 to 1911 and from 1923 to 1944, those responsible for the development of the school interpreted its religious purpose to require sectarian or denominational religious instruction. Isaac Alexander and George F. Winfield specified sectarian instruction in "correct views of the philosophy of life" in order to combat "the heresies incident to ignorance and distrust." Although the school constantly adhered to the basic purpose of religious instruction through its history, various administrations modified its interpretation of that purpose to mean either sectarianism or non-sectarianism. Thus, both of the stated purposes of Lon Morris College remained constant from 1847 to 1873, but its interpretation of those purposes varied with the different philosophies of education and religion which guided its leaders through the years.

The inter-relationships of the purposes of Lon Morris College and the philosophies of those responsible for its development were most evident in their implementation of these purposes. Whereas most administrations during its history simply correlated the school's quality of education with that of other schools, the administrations of E. R. Williams, F. E. Butler, R. G. Boger, and E. M. Stanton required highly rigorous academic standards and/or extensive required courses

of study for their students in zealous attempts to maximize academic quality at the school. By demanding more of their students, these administrations made themselves unpopular and reduced enrollment at the school. On the other hand, the administration of C. E. Peeples required minimal academic standards and courses of study for its students, making itself popular and maximizing enrollment at the school. Only during its last years in office did the minimal demands of the Peeples administration prove uncorrelated to those of other schools, which expected more academically from their students. Nevertheless, despite their higher grades at Lon Morris College, graduates of the school performed at their original levels of ability after transfer to other schools. Even as it demanded the maximum or the minimum academically from its students, Lon Morris College maintained some quality of "higher education foundational for those going on to more extended general education or to specialized and professional study." The extent to which the college implemented its purpose of quality education depended upon the philosophies of its leaders; most of its leaders avoided the extremes of maximal and minimal academic standards, maintaining a constant standard of moderate implementation through the years.

The same sort of inter-relationship developed between the religious purpose of Lon Morris College and the philoso-

phies of those responsible for the development of the school, except that implementation of that purpose tended to be of one sort or another, with little compromise between two extremes. Those administrations which valued nonsectarian or nondenominational religious instruction tended to reduce campus activity religiously, and to relax disciplinary rules for student behavior, promoting voluntary religious participation among the students and limiting regular religious instruction to religious vocation students. Such nonsectarian policies did not disturb the Texas Conference or its trustees as long as the school continued to produce at least some leaders for the Methodist Church from year to year, although even the school's chaplain finally admitted: "The major weakness of Lon Morris College lies in not permeating campus life with religious values. We don't do a very good job of that." Those administrations which valued sectarian or denominational religious instruction tended to rules for student behavior, insisting upon compulsory religious participation among the students and requiring regular religious instruction for all students. Such sectarian policies won the praise of the Texas Conference and its trustees as the school produced large numbers of leaders for the Methodist Church each year, causing one president of the college to boast that he had converted "nearly every pupil" through sectarian in-

struction. The intensity of religious instruction on the campus varied in direct proportion to the sectarian zeal of its administrators; the extent to which the college implemented its religious purpose depended upon the religious philosophies of its leaders. As the school shifted back and forth from sectarianism to nonsectarianism, no constant standard of moderate implementation of its religious purpose was evident through the years.

Survival of Lon Morris College has been essential to the implementation of its purposes since 1847. Financial self-preservation has been a common problem among private, church-related schools in Texas for the past 125 years, and Lon Morris College is unique among such schools because of its record of survival. Except for Baylor University, it is the oldest school in Texas, having outlived virtually every one of its early contemporaries, surviving economic crises which destroyed most other schools. In the Panics of 1873 and 1893, economic circumstances beyond the school's control almost closed it, but those responsible for its development moved it to new locations for continued survival. When lack of financial support from those responsible for the development of the college almost closed it in 1923 and 1953, the school's leaders found ways to secure the necessary financial support in time to save Lon Morris College. Through the

years, the school tried to enroll a paying patronage sufficient to meet its operational expense but usually enrolled a large number of needy students as well. To supplement its inadequate tuition income as its debts increased and its physical facilities deteriorated due to the lack of funds, the school sought additional financial support from private and public sources.

From 1847 to 1873, the school received supplementary financial support from the Grand Lodge of Texas and the New Danville Masons for its physical facilities and operational expense. From 1854 to 1894, the school received additional tuition subsidies from the State of Texas. From 1873 to 1924, the school received supplementary financial support from the Methodists of East Texas in general and of Kilgore and Jacksonville in particular. Such sources proved inadequate in the twentieth century, however, until those responsible for the development of the school devised new techniques for their cultivation. Most of the school's administrators were not good money-raisers; eight of its thirteen presidents resigned because they could not meet its financial needs. Only George F. Winfield and Cecil E. Peeples put the college on a "sound business basis" by recruiting wealthy patrons to assist the Texas Conference in support of the college endowment, building and debt-reduction campaigns, by establish-

ing annual operational subsidies from the conference and the Texas Methodist College Association, and by securing federal and state funds to supplement its tuition income and to support its building program. Such techniques solved the serious financial problems facing Lon Morris College in the twentieth century, replacing its low income, high debt, and poor facilities with a high income, a low debt, and excellent facilities for maximum implementation of its basic purposes. The unique variable of capable leadership provided an answer to the school's long history of financial woe, making it possible for Lon Morris College to concentrate its energies more fully upon offering high quality education and religious instruction to its students in the last quarter of the twentieth century.

Lon Morris College has persistently sought to implement its purposes by offering high quality education and religious instruction to its students for 125 years. Its interpretation and implementation of these two purposes have been inconsistent, following the variations in philosophy espoused by its different administrations and the changes in economic circumstances confronting the school from period to period in its development. The quality of education offered by Lon Morris College has met the standards set by its accrediting agencies during most periods of its history, although it has raised

or lowered its academic standards on occasion. The extent and intensity of its religious instruction has varied with the sectarian zeal of its leaders, rising and falling from generation to generation, although some religious instruction always has existed at the school. The college has known financial instability through most of its history because of inadequate cultivation of private sources of income, but capable leadership has enabled it to discover the necessary techniques for securing ample private financial support in the twentieth century. Although financial instability has been an obvious factor in the college's inconsistent implementation of its purposes through the years, financial stability is no guarantee of consistency in such implementation. The school must adopt consistent interpretations of its educational and religious purposes before it can achieve consistent implementation of those purposes. Perhaps financial stability will give Lon Morris College an opportunity to concentrate upon further development of its educational and religious philosophies during the remainder of the twentieth century.

Lon Morris College has served as a good example for other private, church-related junior colleges concerned about the implementation of their traditional purposes, the perservation of their heritage, and the prospect of their long-term survival. It has remained faithful to the institutions

which created it and sustained it through the years and has become one of the outstanding junior colleges of the nation. Other schools can learn from its mistakes and its successes during Lon Morris College's one and a quarter centuries of rich experience. Perhaps some day another study of the school will be in order; if the past indicates the pattern of the future, then the prognosis for Lon Morris College suggests further implementation of its traditional purposes in the years that lie ahead.

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