THE ADMINISTRATION OF DON HEATH MORRIS
AT ABILENE CHRISTIAN 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

Owen Cosgrove, B.A., M.S., M.A.,
Denton, Texas
August, 1976

This study is concerned with the administrative and educational contributions of Don Heath Morris to Abilene Christian College.

The aim of this investigation is to ascertain the purposes of those who founded Abilene Christian College and to study the effects of the philosophy and work of Don H. Morris on the school. Attention is also given to the changes that occurred in Morris' philosophy as he adjusted to the vicissitudes of a growing college during a period when American higher education was making dramatic changes.

Data for this study was gathered by extensive searches of college records and publications along with other literary resources, and by conducting interviews with nineteen people who were closely related to Morris' life and work. Literary searches included the Board of Trustees of Abilene Christian College "Minutes" (1906-1975); "Abilene Christian College Faculty Meeting Notes" (1940-1968); registrar's records; yearbooks; catalogues; bulletins; Development Office publications; Department of Information files; The Optimist, the student newspaper;
library files of Morris' speech texts; The Abilene Reporter-News; family records and memorabilia; books; and Church of Christ brotherhood publications. Interviewees included Morris' widow, his daughter, his first grade teacher, and several administrators and college trustees who had worked with Morris. The interviews were transcribed and indexed.

The first chapter traces the ancestry of Don H. Morris to the time when all of his great grandparents settled in north Texas soon after statehood. It discusses his childhood, his education, and his marriage. Chapter Two gives a background survey of Abilene Christian College with special emphasis on its original purposes and the various problems that the school endured during the early years of its existence. The chapter also concerns Morris' early work with the institution during the Great Depression of the 1930's. After Morris became vice president in 1932, he became very active in fund-raising efforts in order to save the college from bankruptcy.

Morris became president of Abilene Christian College in 1940. In his last report to the trustees as vice president, his first two president's reports to the trustees, his first address to the faculty as president, and his Inaugural Address, Morris made several statements regarding his moral and educational philosophy. Chapter
Three discusses Morris' stated philosophy about the school as he became president, and it deals with other aspects of his philosophy that developed as he led the school for almost three decades. The chapter concerns Morris' philosophy of the purposes of the school, his plans for the school's development, the delegation of authority, faculty improvement, fiscal policies, the expansion of facilities, and relationships with the school's constituency. Morris also discussed extensively the school's plans to gain accreditation in the Southern Association of Colleges and Secondary Schools, academic freedom, and Americanism. During Morris' presidency at Abilene Christian College from 1940 until 1968, several aspects of his philosophy matured. Under Morris' leadership, racial integration was effected at the college by 1963. Morris' insistence on maintaining the college's original purposes was steadfast throughout his administration, and his frequent discussions of academic freedom were always respectful of the founders and patrons of the school. The educator's frequent denouncements of governmental encroachment on private education were mellowed in later years as laws relating to federal funding in education became less offensive to the school's administrators and constituents.
Don H. Morris was a moral leader at the school, in the community of Abilene, and in the state of Texas. Chapter Three discusses his frequent pronouncements and continual efforts to discourage various forms of vice and crime.

Chapter Four is a survey of the presidency of Don H. Morris at Abilene Christian College. During the twenty-nine years that he served as the school's chief administrator, the number of permanent campus buildings increased from eight to twenty-eight. Enrollment increased from 661 to 3,110; the faculty grew from 40 full-time teachers to 142. College assets increased from $873,681.00 to $27,185,940.00. Physical plant value grew from $588,374.00 to $15,575,405.00. The annual college budget expanded from $172,525.00 to $6,834,049.00.

Other highlights of Morris' administration included accreditation by the Southern Association of Colleges and Secondary Schools in 1951; institution of a graduate school in 1953, which was offering masters degrees in nine departments of study by 1969; the addition of seven of the college's eighteen departments of undergraduate study; the creation of the Abilene Christian College Development Office in 1948; the beginning of the $25.7 million Design for Development in 1962; and the formation of the Abilene Christian College National Development Council in 1963.
A prominent part of Morris' work was his leadership in establishing and expanding the Development Office at Abilene Christian College. Particular attention is given to his philosophy in seeking financial support for the college and his methods in raising funds. Morris' dogged persistence with officials in Washington led to the college's securing the "Ellis Home" property at Big Spring, Texas, from the federal government in 1950, which property added substantially to the college's endowment at a critical time when the school was seeking regional accreditation. In 1952, Morris received $644,065.64 from the Mabee Foundation in Tulsa, Oklahoma, to build a new dormitory. The ease with which the gift was obtained spurred Morris onward in seeking large gifts for the school.

Chapter Four also discusses Morris' relationship with the American Founders Life Insurance Company which made several large gifts of stocks to Abilene Christian College. Perhaps the most dramatic effort of Morris in fund-raising was the gift of a 41,000 acre ranch near Fort Stockton, Texas, by William B. Edwards which added substantially to the financial stability of the college. The long, arduous trials required so that the school could gain legal possession of the ranch added appreciably to Morris' burdens as an administrator.
The fourth chapter also discusses problems that arose with the constituency of the college and problems that developed among the faculty and students of the institution and Morris' methods in dealing with those problems. Ever evident is Morris' driving determination to allow no problems to divert the school from pursuing its original purposes.

Failing health caused Morris to ask college trustees to arrange for selecting a new president at Abilene Christian College. On September 1, 1969, Morris became the first chancellor in the school's history. With the day-to-day burdens of the presidency removed from him, Morris concentrated on research, public relations work, and fund-raising. He did extensive research on the history of colleges operated by members of the Church of Christ, especially those in Texas, and he probed intensively into the early history of the Church of Christ in Abilene, Texas. College Department of Information files reveal a heavy schedule of speaking engagements to schools, civic organizations, and churches.

Morris' chief efforts as chancellor, however, were in fund-raising. He made many long trips seeking additional support for the college. Chapter Five discusses Morris' work as chancellor, particularly his efforts with the Development Office.
Morris died on January 9, 1974, after serving as an administrator at Abilene Christian College for forty-two years of its sixty-eight year history. He was personally acquainted with every president and every trustee who had ever served the school.

Morris' life centered around the development of Abilene Christian College. Despite his love for the classroom, he perceived that his greatest potential contribution to the institution lay in the areas of administration and development.

As an administrator Morris was firm and sometimes strict, especially in matters pertaining to the original purposes of the college, and yet there is ample evidence that he was gentle, tender-hearted, and compassionate. He disdained slander, and he often appealed to the spirit of Christian unity and the practice of the Golden Rule. He was very concerned with maintaining the goodwill of the college's constituency, and he felt that that could best be accomplished by maintaining high educational standards and by being forthright and truthful. He was an ardent exponent of freedom, industry, integrity, and democracy.

Morris' ability to lead people was one of his greatest assets. He was a quiet person in private life but he was articulate in pressing for the goals of Abilene Christian
College. He was meticulous in his preparation for trustees meetings, conferences with teachers, meetings with potential donors to the school, and public speeches. He gained the confidence of people by being scrupulously honest and fair.

Perhaps the outstanding quality of Don H. Morris as a college administrator was his persistence and single-mindedness in pressing for the achieving of the school's goals. He had the ability to see a goal clearly and to work toward it tirelessly. He never allowed the burdens of office that might have deterred a less committed and determined person to come between him and his devotion to the purposes of the school. Morris' basic philosophy of Christianity and Christian education was matured and intensified during his years at Abilene Christian College. His life was fulfilled in his work at Abilene Christian College, and Abilene Christian College bears the lasting impression of his personality and philosophy.

Appendices include a chronology of Morris' life and work, and the text of a speech to the college faculty near the end of his presidency in which he strongly defends the original purposes of Abilene Christian College.
The text of this dissertation was completed in early February of 1976. On February 22, the Board of Trustees at Abilene Christian College officially changed the name of the school to Abilene Christian University.
The writer expresses appreciation to Dr. John C. Stevens, President of Abilene Christian College, for his cooperation in the research for this dissertation by allowing access to important and confidential school records.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Chapter</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I. EARLY PREPARATION FOR SERVICE</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ancestry</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Infancy and Boyhood</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High School and College Days</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>First Teaching Experience</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Morris Returns to College</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marriage</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chapter Bibliography</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>II. THE EARLY WORK OF DON H. MORRIS AT ABILENE CHRISTIAN COLLEGE</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Background of Abilene Christian College</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Morris Comes to Abilene Christian College</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Morris Becomes Vice President</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Hardin Gift</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other Duties</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A New Administration</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chapter Bibliography</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>III. THE PHILOSOPHY OF THE NEW PRESIDENT</td>
<td>52</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Early Statements</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Purposes of Abilene Christian College</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A Complete College</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Delegation of Authority</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Faculty Improvement</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fiscal Policies</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Buildings and Equipment</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Student Body</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Goodwill of the Constituency</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Accreditation</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The College and The Church</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unity</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Academic Freedom</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Americanism, Socialism, Communism</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Government Aid to Private Education</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Racial Integration</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moral Philosophy</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chapter Bibliography</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
IV. THE PRESIDENCY OF DON H. MORRIS AT
ABELENE CHRISTIAN COLLEGE . . . . . . . . . 114

The Beginning
The Premillennial Problem
World War II
The Post-war Boom
The College in the Church Budget Controversy
The Drive for Accreditation
New Planning Commission
The Social Club Question
Renewed Effort for Accreditation
The Mabee Dormitory Gift
The Graduate School
A New Development Program
The Edwards Ranch Gift
The Golden Jubilee
The American Studies Program
The Master Planning Council
1960, A Busy Year
The American Founders Life Insurance Company
The Design for Development
Other Events of 1962-1963
The National Development Council
Don H. Morris Day in Abilene, Texas
Design for Development, Phase I
Maintaining the Original Purposes
Don H. Morris Suffers Stroke
Morris Returns to Work
Morris' Presidency Draws to a Close
Chapter Bibliography

V. DON H. MORRIS COMPLETES HIS WORK . . . . . . . . . 207

The Chancellorship
Advisory Work
Research
Fund-Raising
His Last Years
Morris' Death
Summary
Chapter Bibliography
APPENDICES .................................................. 227

Chronology of the Administration of Don Heath Morris at Abilene Christian College

Text of Don H. Morris' Last Speech as President To The Faculty of Abilene Christian College

BIBLIOGRAPHY .................................................. 251
CHAPTER 1

EARLY PREPARATION FOR SERVICE

Ancestry

Thousands of new families settled in Texas in the mid-nineteenth century. In 1854, nine years after statehood, the Texas Legislature passed a pre-emption act which gave 160 acres to homesteaders on the public domain if settlers would pay for the expense of surveying and filing a claim. A large migration of new settlers was the result. During the decade of 1850-1860 the population of Texas rose from 212,592 to 604,215 (1). It was during this time of great development and growth that the great-grandparents of Don Heath Morris settled in the North Texas area.

Hamilton Rowan Morris, great-grandfather of Don H. Morris, fought in the war with Mexico after which he returned to his home in Illinois. In the autumn of 1852, he moved his family to Texas, locating fourteen miles south of Dallas, a settlement which had been founded eleven years earlier by John Neely Bryan. Morris resided on Ten Mile Creek until 1854, when he moved to Parker County, Texas, and pre-empted (homesteaded) 160 acres of land fourteen miles north of Weatherford. Continual
Indian depredations caused him to return to Dallas County in 1866 (2, pp. 585-586).

Thomas Asbury Morris, son of Hamilton Rowan Morris and grandfather of Don H. Morris, enlisted in the Confederate army in 1861. He served illustriously in Confederate armies at Chickamauga, Missionary Ridge, Chancellorsville, and Richmond before being captured in the Battle of Atlanta on July 22, 1864. He was taken to Columbus, Ohio, and then he was incarcerated with several hundred other southern prisoners of war on an island in the Great Lakes area where many died of disease, malnutrition, and exposure. He claimed that the only thing he ever stole was a coat off of a fellow prisoner who had frozen to death. He frequently said that no one should complain if he were not cold or hungry, a statement which his grandson Don H. Morris would often quote in later years (3).

Thomas Asbury Morris was released on January 13, 1865. He lived in Illinois until December of that year, and then he returned to Texas. On December 24, 1867, he married Amanda Heath, a daughter of Christopher and Patsey Tucker Heath, natives of North Carolina who came to Texas in 1848 and settled the farm which would become the old Morris homeplace, two miles west of De Soto, Dallas County, Texas (4). Morris became a respected and prosperous
farmer. He built a cotton gin in 1880 and expanded it in 1890. The third of his seven children was Byrom Palmer Morris, father of Don H. Morris (2, p. 586).

Allen Q. Nance, a maternal great-grandfather of Don H. Morris, was born in Kentucky in 1813, but he moved to Cass County, Illinois in 1832. In 1852, he settled on a farm a mile and a half northwest of De Soto, Texas. He and his wife Elizabeth had eleven children, the oldest of whom was David Carey Nance, grandfather of Don H. Morris. Allen Q. Nance's paternal great-grandparents, Zacchariah and Susanna Duke Sherman Nance, were early settlers near Jamestown, Virginia. His paternal grandfather served in the Revolutionary War and was present at the surrender of Cornwallis in Yorktown (2, p. 807).

David Carey Nance was nine years old when he settled in Texas with his parents. He later wrote of that time:

Dallas County Texas was then a wild waste. Indians and buffalos were plentiful at that time about Fort Worth, while Bear, Panther, Wildcats, Foxes and so on, were numerous here on the old home in Texas which till now has been my home ever since (5).

In September of 1861, at the age of eighteen years, Nance enlisted in the military service of the state of Texas and subsequently of the Confederate States. He was a member of Company E, Twelfth Texas Dragoons under the command of Colonel W. H. Parsons (3). Nance was injured several times in battle. Once he was captured, but he escaped
the same day. In the spring of 1863, he was employed in a
confederate powder mill at Waxahachie, Texas, when it was
destroyed by an explosion. Nance was the only survivor
among several workers. That incident and several narrow
escapes from disaster during his military service convinced
Nance that he was being miraculously spared for some divine
purpose (3).

David Carey Nance espoused several unusual beliefs.
He believed in God and Jesus Christ and that their
intentions are revealed in the Bible, but he did not
believe in Heaven or Hell. He believed that an everlasting
kingdom will be established on earth and that all people
will live again in that kingdom without pain or suffering
(2, p. 808). Don H. Morris fondly remembered his grand-
father Nance as a "very plain man." He usually wore over-
sized shoes and clothes "for comfort" and decried formal-
ties as "bunkum." Nance shunned liquor, but he opposed
Prohibition because he felt it infringed on individual
freedom. He hated war, but he seemed to be proud of his
service in the Confederate Army. Nance had his own
private safe in the family home. He always kept some gold
money because he remembered the times when Confederate
money had become worthless. Morris recalled that as a
little child he had been allowed to play on the floor with
his grandfather's twenty dollar gold pieces.
Don H. Morris disagreed with his grandfather Nance on several matters of religious doctrine, but he admired him for his integrity, his gentleness, and his piety (6).

In earlier years, Nance had made cedar buckets in order to earn money so that he could hire itinerant teachers to educate him. At the close of the Civil War, he sold all of his personal effects in order to enroll in Carlton College at Bonham, Texas, where he was a classmate of Addison and Randolph Clark, young men who with their father, Joe Clark, would in 1873 found Add-Ran Male and Female College, precursor of Thorp Spring Christian College and Texas Christian University (7). At Carlton College Nance enrolled in elementary courses with the small children, although he was twenty-two years old (6). Nance was a student all of his life. After he was sixty years old, he taught himself to read Greek. In his later years he strongly encouraged his little grandson Don H. Morris to study and to obtain all of the formal education that he could (3).

On November 12, 1870, David Carey Nance married Salley M. Hackley who had settled with her mother near Bonham in 1857. The fourth child of David Carey and Salley Nance was Annie Laura (later family records show this name to be spelled L-a-u-r-i-e) Nance, mother of Don H. Morris (2, p. 808). Nance taught school and
farmed around Bonham for several years before returning to De Soto in 1889 to purchase the old homestead (3). There he farmed and operated a general mercantile store. David Carey Nance was the postmaster for several years at De Soto (8). He identified with the Church of Christ. He and Thomas Asbury Morris donated the site upon which the building for the second congregation of the Church of Christ in Dallas County was constructed. That original building also served as a schoolhouse; it was named Old Salem. It served as a combination church building and school building until a new six-room school building was constructed in the 1890's (9). Byrom Palmer Morris, son of Thomas Asbury Morris, and Annie Laura Nance, daughter of David Carey Nance, were married on July 3, 1898 at De Soto (10).

Don H. Morris was distantly related to a former vice president of the United States. David Carey Nance was a cousin of the mother of John Nance Garner who served during the first two terms of President Franklin Delano Roosevelt. In later years, Morris visited Garner several times, maintaining a cordial relationship. Morris fondly recalled a visit to the Garner home in Uvalde, Texas, in 1965, about two years before the old statesman's death. Morris ebulliently told Garner that he had read one of his recent treatises concerning the importance of individual
freedom and democratic principles and that he completely agreed with him, to which the crusty old solon replied, "I don't care if you agree with me or not!" Morris was unruffled by the tart reply. He enjoyed recounting the story and laughing about it (3).

Byrom Palmer Morris at various times farmed, managed a cotton gin, operated a small grocery store, and maintained a dairy at De Soto. He and his wife were of comfortable but modest means and, like their parents before them, they were faithful members of the Church of Christ. They were strong advocates of personal integrity and diligent work (11).

Infancy and Boyhood

Don Heath Morris was born on August 13, 1902, at the Morris homeplace two miles west of De Soto. He was the second of three children born to the Byrom Palmer Morrises. The first son, Dwight, died in infancy in 1901 (12). The third son, David Fletcher Morris, was born in 1907. Little Don H. Morris nicknamed his baby brother "Jack," a name which became commonly used. After he had reached adulthood, David Fletcher Morris legally changed his name to Jack Morris. Don H. Morris' oldest daughter, Jacquelyn, was named for her Uncle Jack (3). Jack Morris operated a grocery store in the Oak Cliff section of Dallas, Texas, for several years before his death in 1957 (13).
Don H. Morris was the smallest of the three sons born to the Byrom Palmer Morrises. He weighed eleven pounds at birth. He was a sickly baby requiring frequent care by the family physician during his infancy, but he outgrew his early health problems and developed into a sturdy, hard-working young man (11).

Morris entered De Soto Elementary School in September of 1908. His first grade teacher, Della Love, now lives in Denton, Texas. She recalls that Don Morris was a healthy, happy, bright and slightly mischievous boy. He was neat and diligent. He relished the monthly scholastic contests or "literary societies" as they were called. She also reminisces about the time that first-grader Morris put water in an empty inkwell, dipped the tips of the pigtails of the little girl in front of him in the water, and then flipped them over her head, spoiling her written work and making her cry. Morris was seated at the front of the room for several days as punishment (14). Della Love also recalls having to spank Morris once, but she cannot recall the reason for the spanking (15). His first grade teacher remembers most clearly his poise and his clear "carrying" voice in recitation (14).

When Morris was seven years old, he rode "Old Bill," the family horse, under a tree and suffered a severe cut on his lip which left a scar that he would carry through life. Several people held him while a country doctor
sewed his lip. In later years when any of his own children or grandchildren was crying in pain, Morris would tell with his deep, mellow voice the story of "Old Bill" in an effort to distract the child from his agony (3).

Morris became the batboy for the De Soto community baseball team. He wore baggy, comical type clothing and bantered with spectators who cat-called his team, becoming quite a crowd pleaser with his antics (16).

High School and College Days

In De Soto High School, Morris was an outstanding speech student. He worked diligently in athletics but never excelled. He was strong, but he lacked the speed and coordination of most of the other boys, and he often thought that his deficiency was caused in part by his father's insistence that he work around the farm rather than spending much time in organized play (11). In later years, Morris encouraged his own son Tommy in athletics, and the son became one of the better athletes in the history of Abilene Christian College (17).

Don H. Morris was a member of the De Soto High School football squad, but he seldom played in contests with other schools. One of his favorite stories concerned a time when the football team from nearby Wheatland, Texas, came to De Soto for a game. One of Wheatland's eleven players was sick, but rather than forfeit the game, the
Wheatland coach asked to use one of De Soto's thirteen squadmen. The De Soto coach rather smugly allowed him to borrow Morris. Late in the game Morris recovered a De Soto fumble that led to a Wheatland victory. The event was one of Morris' most enjoyable experiences (3).

In De Soto High School, Don H. Morris was editor of the school's first yearbook, president of the John H. Reagan literary society, and author of the "History of the Senior Class of 1917-1918" (18). Don H. Morris graduated from De Soto High School in 1917, finishing the tenth grade in a graduating class of three. The school added the eleventh grade the following year, and Morris finished another year, graduating the second time in 1918 (11).

The Byrom Palmer Morris family had attended services regularly at the De Soto Church of Christ since its beginning. In the summer of 1918, Horace Busby, a leading evangelist for the Churches of Christ, conducted a revival meeting at De Soto. Austin Taylor, a song writer and song-leader for many of Busby's meetings worked with the evangelist during that effort. Seventy-five people were baptized during the meeting including approximately fifty men and boys between the ages of fifteen and thirty years. Don H. Morris was one of the converts during what came to be known as the "Big Meeting" (19). Morris maintained a
lifelong friendship with evangelist Horace Busby. When Horace Busby, Junior, became a special assistant to President Lyndon B. Johnson, he was able to assist Morris in working with federal agencies in Washington, D. C. (20).

At the age of sixteen years, Don H. Morris enrolled in Thorp Spring Christian College at Thorp Spring, Texas. He later spoke of the buggy ride from Dallas County to Hood County and back home as he made preparations to enter college. His father told him, "Remember, there is no one as interested in you as we are. When things are good, we want to know about it. And when you make mistakes, we still are interested--even more so--and we want you to come to us for help" (21).

Morris was a busy student at the two-year college; he graduated in 1920. He was editor-in-chief of the college yearbook, vice president of the senior class, president of the Perrin Hall Club (made up of the students in the men's dormitory), yell leader, member of the glee club, and member of the Atheneum Literary Society. He engaged in athletics but without distinction. The following tribute appeared in the college yearbook at the end of his second year:

Don is distinguished by his intellectuality and close application to work. This makes him a favorite among students and faculty. He is jovial in disposition. His heart is as big as his smile that goes with it. Don is in place wherever he is put, from yell leader to glee club. Be his duty great or small it is always cheerfully done (22).
Along with his extra-curricular work, Morris managed to be a good student (16).

An interesting prank which was done frequently at Thorp Spring Christian College was called "shooting the well." The college boys would throw trash into an old dry well on campus and saturate the trash with gasoline. When fire was dropped into the well, the resulting explosion would be heard around the campus. One night, Don H. Morris and some other boys put more than the usual amount of rubbish and gasoline into the well. The explosion broke several windows in the college buildings, and the young men were required to pay for them. The incident drew some stern lectures from college officials and caused the well to be filled in and covered. Years later, an Abilene Christian College nightwatchman brought a young man to President Morris' home late one Saturday evening and reported that he had found him raising the freshman flag on the college flagpole. Morris deferred action, solemnly instructing the young man to be in his office early Monday morning. When the student departed, Mrs. Morris chided her husband for keeping the young man in suspense over the weekend and reminded him of the time he "shot the well" at Thorp Spring Christian College (11).
First Teaching Experience

Morris had desired for several years to become a lawyer. At Thorp Spring Christian College he began to turn his attention toward the teaching profession. When he graduated from Thorp Spring, he wished to go immediately to Abilene Christian College, but his parents told him that they would not be able to pay his expenses (11). Although he had just become eighteen years old, Morris was hired to teach Latin and mathematics at the Red Oak, Texas, High School (23). Morris spent his summer months working with a Dallas County road crew spreading gravel on dirt roads in order to make them passable during wet weather (11).

Morris Returns to College

In the fall of 1922, Don H. Morris enrolled at Abilene Christian College as a junior. In a Spanish class he met Miss Alberta Allen, a freshman student from Waxahachie, Texas. Waxahachie, Texas is only a few miles from De Soto, Don H. Morris' hometown, but the two young people had never met. On their first date on January 8, 1923, the young couple attended a lecture by Frank Buck in which he described his adventures hunting big game animals in Africa. The young people never dated anyone else after that first date, and January 8 became a special day which they celebrated every year afterward (11).
Miss Allen was informed by her parents after her first year in college that they would not be able to send her another year and that she would need to find employment. On the strong recommendation of Don H. Morris, Miss Allen was hired to teach school at De Soto, Texas. Morris' cousin, who was a member of the school board, later jokingly told Miss Allen that if he had known about their relationship, he would not have been so impressed with Don's recommendation. Morris and Miss Allen wrote to each other every day. The young man frequently went "home" to De Soto that year (11).

In the summer of 1923, Don H. Morris went to Waxahachie, Texas, to visit his fiancée, Alberta Allen. The local Church of Christ did not have a preacher at the time; so Miss Allen's father, who was a leader in the church, asked Morris to deliver a sermon. Morris was a debater and an accomplished speaker, but he had never preached. His first sermon was on the words of the Apostle Paul in Second Corinthians 5:14, "the love of God constraineth us . . . ." In that sermon, he spoke of the love of God, of its positive power to excite and to motivate people, and of the need for people to comprehend and respond to that motivation. Constraining by love became a conscious and deliberate principle of Morris in exercising leadership as a school administrator. He believed
that coercion should be used only as a last resort. He thought of leadership as helping people to do what is right and good (11).

Morris excelled as a student at Abilene Christian College. During his senior year he was editor of the school yearbook, The Prickly Pear; president of the class of 1924; president of the Zellners, his dormitory group; assistant yell leader; skipper (president) of the Sub T-16 men's social club; member of the press club; member of the dramatic club; and member of the football squad (24). He never missed a football practice session, but he played only two minutes in one intercollegiate game. Morris was on the college debate team. During all of his collegiate competition, he never lost a debate. One of his debate colleagues was Walter H. Adams, who would serve for many years as the Dean of Abilene Christian College. Despite his interest in forensics, Don H. Morris' ambitions to be a lawyer were completely forsaken for his interest in teaching, and in the spring of 1924 he received a bachelor's degree in education (11).

Marriage

After his first year at Abilene Christian College, Don H. Morris had spent the summer selling Bibles for the Southwestern Bible Company of Nashville, Tennessee. In the summer of 1924, after graduation from Abilene Christian
College, Morris and another college student made an outstanding record as Bible salesmen in the cotton belt of the southern United States. Morris' daily letters to Miss Allen told of great success in their work. He planned to begin teaching in Abilene High School in the fall of 1924 and to marry his fiancee soon after school started. The southerners ordered their Bibles in the summer with the promise to pay upon delivery in the fall after cotton harvest. When Morris went to Abilene to teach, he bought a car with which his friend could make the Bible deliveries and collect the money for them. The friend's sweetheart jilted him and he went berserk and failed to deliver a single Bible. Morris' teaching obligations in Abilene would not allow him to make the deliveries. Morris, therefore, could not show one penny's profit for the summer, and he finally had to pay for the car without having any use of it. Despite this economic reversal, Don H. Morris was married to Miss Alberta Allen on Saturday, November 1, 1924, at Waxahachie, Texas. The newlyweds rode the train back to Abilene on Sunday so that Morris could resume teaching duties on Monday morning (11).

Morris taught history, speech, and debate at Abilene High School. The Abilene school system did not allow married women to teach at that time; the young family found their budget strained on Morris' salary. After one year, Mrs. Morris' father, a rural mail carrier at Waxahachie,
Texas, arranged for Morris to be the principal at the Ovilla, Texas, High School and for Mrs. Morris to be one of the teachers. When the Abilene superintendent, R. D. Green, was informed of Morris' plan to move, he arranged to have Morris' salary raised so that he could stay in Abilene. Morris later considered his decision to stay in Abilene to be one of the most critical decisions of his career. He taught at Abilene High School for three more years and coached the high school debate team to its first state championship (11).

In 1928, Don H. Morris was offered a job as teacher of speech by Abilene Christian College President Batsell Baxter. The college was completing ambitious plans to move to its new campus on the northeast edge of Abilene. Morris believed strongly in Christian education, and he decided to accept the job. This decision proved ultimately to be one of the most momentous choices of his life and one of the most significant events in the history of Abilene Christian College.
CHAPTER BIBLIOGRAPHY


10. Record from the Byrom Palmer Morris family Bible in possession of Mrs. Jacquelyn Morris Lawson.


12. Morris family Bible in possession of Mrs. Jacquelyn Morris Lawson (not the same Bible as is mentioned in footnote 10).
20. Interview with John C. Stevens, October 20, 1975.
21. Note by Don H. Morris, not dated.
CHAPTER II

THE EARLY WORK OF DON H. MORRIS AT
ABILENE CHRISTIAN COLLEGE

Background of Abilene Christian College

Abilene Christian College was founded as Childers' Classical Institute in Abilene, Texas, in 1906. A. B. Barrett, a native of Tennessee, had worked with A. G. Freed in establishing Southwestern Christian College in Denton, Texas, in 1905 (1). Late in that year, he went to San Angelo, Texas, to urge Church of Christ leaders to sponsor a private school. When local interest seemed to him to be insufficient, Barrett decided on his return trip to Denton that he would visit with members of the Church of Christ in Abilene, Texas, proposing that they help him to build a school.

Barrett soon was able to make this report in the first catalog of the new school:

The congregation showed their willingness to do so by subscribing five thousand dollars to the school. Of this amount Colonel J. W. Childers gave $2,250 off of his home property, which was secured as a site for the school, and he was given the privilege of naming the institute.

We then presented the matter to Abilene's businessmen, who contributed liberally to the school; thence we went to the Christian brotherhood where we found all anxious for the school, and glad to contribute their means to help build it.
This is how we raised the money. We have five acres of ground and buildings worth fourteen thousand dollars. This property is chartered; the Institute is incorporated, and held by five trustees. These men hold it for such a school as is proposed, and for the Church in Abilene to assemble in the Chapel Hall (2).

Barrett was the first president of the school.

Mounting tensions had developed within the great nineteenth century religious movement in America that produced the Disciples of Christ or the Christian Church and the Church of Christ. The leaders of the movement urged a return to primitive Christianity. Principal issues that developed between the groups were concerned with benevolent and missionary societies and innovations such as mechanical instruments of music in worship. The Disciples movement became the liberal arm of the controversy while Churches of Christ represented the conservative view. The National Census Bureau listed the two groups separately first in 1906. The controversies between the two groups partially explain the provision of the new school's charter which specified:

This Corporation is created for the following purpose to-wit: The establishment and maintenance of a college for the advancement of education in which the arts, sciences, languages and Holy Scriptures shall always be taught, together with such courses of instruction as shall be deemed advisable by the Board of Directors, and which shall be managed and controlled as hereinafter set forth by a Board of Directors, each of whom shall be a member of a congregation of the Church of Christ, which takes the New Testament as its only and sufficient rule of faith, worship and practice, and rejects everything
not required by either precedent or example, and which does not introduce into the faith, worship and practice as a part of the same or adjuncts thereto any supplemental organization or anything else not clearly and directly authorized in the New Testament either by precept or example (3).

Similar doctrinal problems had been anticipated by those who founded Gunter Bible College at Gunter, Texas, in 1903. The Childers' Classical Institute Charter was copied from the Gunter Bible College Charter with only minor changes (4).

The new institute was a preparatory school with primary and intermediate departments leading to high school. Three years of high school work also were offered, but there was no actual college department. Bible courses were offered in each department, but they were not compulsory (2, p. 17).

The school began on September 11, 1906, with a faculty of nine members. By January, twenty-five students were enrolled in all departments, and by the end of the first year, enrollment had grown to eighty-five. By the end of the second year, the school had enrolled one hundred and thirty students (5).

Financial difficulties and internal strife continually beset the small school. In 1909, the institution bordered on bankruptcy, but a group of Abilene citizens organized to raise eight thousand dollars to pay off the school's mortgaged indebtedness (6). H. C. Darden, a public school superintendent at Clyde, Texas, was hired to be the second president of the school in 1908 (7). He was given the use of the buildings and equipment with the understanding that
he would pay all expenses involved in operating and advertising the school. The president was allowed to have any profits gained from the operation of the institution. This practice continued through the presidency of R. L. Whiteside, the third man to head the school, serving as its president from the fall of 1909 through the spring of 1911 (8). James F. Cox was elected to be the school's fourth president in 1911 at an annual salary of $1,500.00 (9). The school's financial problems continued (10).

Jesse P. Sewell, a graduate of Nashville Bible School (now David Lipscomb College in Nashville, Tennessee), who had helped A. G. Freed and A. B. Barrett to organize Southwestern Christian College in Denton, Texas in 1905, became the fifth president of Childers' Classical Institute in 1912 (11). During Sewell's fourteen-year administration, the school grew from an unaccredited preparatory school into what was recognized by state accrediting agencies as an "A plus" four-year college (12). The faculty grew to twenty-five members and student enrollment reached 525 (13). After 1912, Childers' Classical Institute came to be known commonly as Abilene Christian College. At Sewell's urging, the Board of Trustees officially changed the name to Abilene Christian College in 1920 (14).

Batsell Baxter, another alumnus of Nashville Bible School, became the president of Abilene Christian College
in 1924 (15). The trustees of the college had discussed the promoting of a residential real estate development in order to help secure funds to liquidate the school's debts (16). This brought up several questions about acquiring adjoining land or even moving the campus to a new area, but the idea did not materialize immediately. Under Baxter, the school showed continued growth and it took on an air of optimism. Plans were made to expand and develop the original campus. Proposals were made to unite financially troubled Thorp Spring Christian College with Abilene Christian College and to create a children's home at the Thorp Spring campus (17). Construction of a new men's dormitory for $25,000.00 was approved. Plans were proposed to build a new building including several classrooms and an auditorium to seat 2,500 people (18). The letterheads and advertising of the institution read, "Abilene Christian College, A College of Highest Rank" (19). A new administration building was planned with the approval of the Abilene Chamber of Commerce. The building was to cost $150,000.00, half of which was to be raised by the constituency of the college and half by the citizens of Abilene (20).

Abilene Christian College had no endowment. At President Baxter's urging, the trustees unanimously agreed to raise a $500,000.00 endowment fund with the hope
finally of meeting requirements to maintain affiliation with regional accrediting associations (21). By the fall of 1927, the effort to gain endowment was deemed to be a failure largely because of unsettled plans to move the school to another location and because of the competition from the promotional campaign to collect money for the new administration building. The endowment project was abandoned (22).

The original campus of the school was outgrown. School officials inquired extensively about buying property adjacent to the campus, but prices were prohibitive. After considering several possibilities, the trustees decided to purchase three tracts of land totaling 680 acres on the northeast outskirts of Abilene and to move the school to the new location (23). The college campus was to have sixty acres, and the rest of the land was to be subdivided and sold as lots. The new subdivision was to be called "Abilene Heights" (24).

On January 28, 1928, the administration building on the original campus burned down (25). With the agreement of the fire insurance company, the $75,000.00 fire insurance settlement plus the $150,000.00 already in the process of being raised for a new administration building was applied to the development of the new campus (26).
Enthusiasm was high. New overtures were made to Thorp Spring Christian College to consolidate with the burgeoning Abilene Christian College (27). Mr. and Mrs. J. N. Luce of Spur, Texas, gave the school 640 acres of land in Dickens County, Texas, valued at $25,600.00, for a six percent lifetime annuity (28). President Baxter announced to the Board of Trustees that the school was "in the midst of its greatest year" (29).

Within a few months, 287 lots in the college's new subdivision were sold for $181,000.00, $61,400 more than the total cost of the land ($119,600.00), and more than 500 acres remained to be sold (30). The contract was given for the new administration building for approximately $150,000.00 (31). Soon afterward, a $149,000.00 contract was approved for two new dormitories (32). Trustees then agreed to the construction of a new gymnasium (33). Construction of a total of six major fireproof buildings was approved for the new campus. The school's indebtedness was approximately $350,000.00. Enthusiastic supporters envisioned that the college would be debt-free within only a few months if the lot sales continued as planned (34).

The constituents of Abilene Christian College, along with most American citizens, could hardly imagine what was about to happen to the American economy. The New York Stock Market crashed on Tuesday, October 29, 1929. By
"Black Thursday," October 31, the market was in shambles. The stock market crash inaugurated the nation's most severe depression. By 1931, twelve million Americans were unemployed. More than 5,000 banks had failed, and over 32,000 businesses had gone bankrupt (35). Many of the lots which Abilene Christian College had sold in Abilene Heights were sold on contracts; a large number of them were returned by default. The college's revenues dwindled as enrollments decreased. A long, desperate struggle against bankruptcy began.

Morris Comes to Abilene Christian College

When Don H. Morris became a teacher at Abilene Christian College in 1928, his salary was one hundred and fifty dollars per month. This was only one-half of the three hundred dollars per month that he had been making as a teacher at Abilene High School (36). Morris was an energetic and enthusiastic teacher. One of his debaters, Jack Pope, now a justice of the Texas State Supreme Court, recalls that coach Morris advised his charges, "Be confident. Make your opposition think that the confusion is theirs, not yours" (37).

Morris also was busy in writing for and editing Christian Education, a publication sponsored by Abilene Christian College featuring news of the school and items of general interest to members of the Church of Christ.
Morris frequently wrote the section of the paper entitled "Exes." This entry is typical of his humor and jocularity:

The school did a poor job in its graduating about 1921-1922--it failed to get rid of certain "celebrities." Several students of that class filtered into faculty places in A.C.C. (38).

During the summers of 1928, 1929, and 1930, Don H. Morris completed the requirements for a Master of Arts degree in education at the University of Texas. He preached for Churches of Christ in and near Austin. In the summer of 1930, Morris' roommate was J. W. Treat, who later received his Doctor of Philosophy degree at the University of Texas. Treat has served for many years as the head of the language department at Abilene Christian College. Treat recalls that Morris preached that summer at the Northside Church of Christ in Austin. The two men roomed together in a ramshackle boarding house near the university campus. Don H. Morris was gathering materials for his thesis, entitled "Teaching Contracts in the Public Schools of Texas." Often, upon leaving the room, he would admonish his roommate, "Now if this old building catches on fire, be sure whatever you do to get my thesis materials and get out of here!" (39).

Don H. Morris frequently spoke to churches and civic groups in the Abilene area. When the great depression of 1929 struck, the financial effect on Abilene Christian College was immediate. All of the college administration and faculty began to seek ways to recoup declining financial
support. Early in 1932, the entire faculty voluntarily returned half of its salary to help alleviate the college's financial plight (40). Morris made many trips seeking donations to help Abilene Christian College. His optimism and enthusiasm drew the attention and appreciation of faculty members and trustees of the college (41). The Board of Trustees approved a new fund-raising effort called the Abilene Christian College Ten Thousand Club. Don H. Morris immediately became a leader in this effort to secure 10,000 donations of ten dollars each from the constituents and friends of the school (42).

The financial crisis persisted. G. C. Brewer, a well known preacher for the Church of Christ, wrote in the spring of 1931:

   It is easy therefore for our readers to see that the college is truly in a crisis. It must have help from some source or it will be ruined forever (43).

By the fall of 1931, the financial condition of the school was grave. Numerous efforts to raise funds were largely futile. Several individuals were allowed to solicit support for a percentage of whatever they could obtain, but these attempts to get money were unsuccessful. Church of Christ preachers were called upon to help in the efforts, but money was scarce. Abilene Heights lot forfeitures continued to come in (44).
Trustees selected twenty Abilene church leaders and business men for the school's first "Advisory Committee" for the express purpose of helping the school to get out of its economic predicament. Don H. Morris was selected to be a member of that Advisory Committee (45). From this committee, Don H. Morris and five other men were chosen as a special group to work out financial plans for the college (46). Within ten days the group formulated plans to contact Church of Christ members throughout the state of Texas. The group proposed putting about thirty workers in the field to get as many people as possible to attend county meetings. Beside seeking gifts to the school, it was proposed that representatives of the college should seek loans from individuals totaling $350,000.00 (47).

A large "Mass Meeting" was planned to be conducted in Abilene on November 24, 1931. In this meeting, representatives of the college planned to seek first all possible donations to the school, after which they hoped to secure as many notes as possible for one thousand dollars at six percent per annum interest for five years. These notes and smaller ones were to be secured by lots in the college's subdivision, Abilene Heights. The lots had fallen to about one-half of their appraised value in 1929. Existent notes on lots in Abilene Heights were to be "discounted in sufficient amounts to make them active." Plans were offered
whereby parents could contribute in advance during the drive in order to pay for their children's education later. Selected college lands and houses were to be sold at prices "low enough to move them" (48). A vigorous mail campaign urged all people who possibly could to attend the "Mass Meeting."

The final results of the effort were encouraging, but they fell far short of solving the college's financial problems. The Mass Meeting brought in $10,221.99 cash donations, over $5,000.00 cash in real estate sales, and about $35,000.00 in pledges and real estate contracts (49). On November 25, 1931, the trustees of the college were surprised to receive a letter of resignation from President Batsell Baxter. Baxter had decided to accept the presidency of his alma mater, David Lipscomb College in Nashville, Tennessee. Baxter's letter stated, "The wonderful response to our recent emergency appeal for funds gives evidence of a loyalty and support that assures the future of the school" (50). The Board of Trustees reluctantly accepted Baxter's resignation which took effect on June 1, 1932 (51). The trustees asked James F. Cox, former president of the school and later the college dean, to be the new president, and Cox accepted (52).
Morris Becomes Vice President

Soon the trustees saw the need for a younger man to help the president bear the heavy burdens of administering the school and raising funds. The post of vice president was created, and Don H. Morris was selected to fill it. The Board of Trustees agreed "... that Don Morris be authorized to go into the raising of money without any restrictions as to his means, or expense" (53).

As Don H. Morris became vice president of Abilene Christian College, the school's financial condition was grave indeed. In 1931, the faculty voluntarily cut their salaries by ten percent. The following year, the administration and faculty returned fifty percent of their salaries plus other pledges and gifts in an effort to help the college pay its bills. President Baxter's final report to the trustees urged them to plan to establish an endowment fund for the college. It was a hopeless plea in view of the fact that the school could not get enough money to pay its due accounts (54).

G. H. P. Showalter, editor of the Firm Foundation, an influential periodical among members of the Church of Christ, wrote of past criticisms of Abilene Christian College. He said:
The Firm Foundation and its editor are and have always been friends of Christian education and particularly friends of Abilene Christian College. Sacrifices have been made and successes have been achieved that are of a character that should arouse within us feelings of gratitude and appreciation. This school at present is laboring under financial and other difficulties and hindrances. It owes a large amount of money, and a campaign is being arranged for raising funds. A sympathetic attitude on the part of those who believe in the school is requested (55).

Money was needed immediately. Sixteen hundred acres of land in Yoakum County which had been given to Abilene Christian College were offered for sale for five dollars per acre (56). The President of the Board of Trustees, J. S. Arledge, President James F. Cox, and Vice President Don H. Morris were selected as a committee to make a list of the college's debts that had to be paid and to make recommendations for a campaign to raise funds (57). One company offered to lend the college two hundred thousand dollars at twelve percent per annum interest, deducting twenty-four thousand dollars from the principal as the original discount (58, p. 72).

Don H. Morris became even more active in campaigning for financial support for the school after becoming vice president in 1932. J. S. Arledge, president of the Board of Trustees, had been paid $150.00 per month as a fund raiser. He was so impressed by Morris' efforts that he split the monthly amount with him through 1932 (59). A loan was secured with the Caldwell Company of Nashville,
Tennessee, but the relief was only temporary (58, p. 73). Debts were coming due, and the school could not pay them. Furthermore, approximately $50,000 in outstanding Abilene Christian College bonds were due to mature in the summer of 1933, and no funds were available to redeem them (60).

The Hardin Gift

J. M. Radford of Abilene had been a great friend of Abilene Christian College. In the heart of the Great Depression, he devised a plan to buy utility stocks and municipal bonds which were selling for as low as eighteen cents on the dollar to trade at even exchange for outstanding Abilene Christian College bonds. Radford died on July 4, 1933, and further efforts to recover the school's bonds lagged (58, p. 79). Bankruptcy seemed inevitable.

John G. and Mary Hardin of Burkburnett, Texas, had become wealthy in land trading, wheat growing, and oil speculating early in the twentieth century. The Hardins had made large gifts to Simmons College (later Hardin-Simmons University) in Abilene, Texas, Buckner Orphan's Home in Dallas, Mary Hardin Baylor College of Belton, Howard Payne College of Brownwood, Baylor University in Waco, and several churches in Texas. Abilene Christian College officials had made several contacts with the Hardins appealing for help but to no avail.
Creditors of Abilene Christian College, including the General American Life Insurance Company of St. Louis, Missouri, asked that the school be put into receivership. Whereas the book or paper assets of the school in 1929 were over $400,000 in excess of liabilities, by 1933, the liabilities were $370,000 in excess of assets (58, p. 73).

After determined efforts by school officials, the John Hardins gave Abilene Christian College $160,000.00 worth of Joint Stock Land Bonds in an annuity to help liquidate the outstanding indebtedness of $233,000.00 against the buildings and equipment on the college campus (61). Hardin required an agreement that the school would secure the interest on the annuity gift by a first mortgage on the campus, the proceeds from the boys' and girls' dormitories, and signed notes and pledges by friends of the college for an amount double that required to make the monthly payment. Also, the college agreed to name its administration building after Cordelia Hardin, the first wife of John Hardin and a member of the Church of Christ (62).

Vice President Don H. Morris was put in charge of the program to obtain the eight hundred dollars required each month to pay the six percent annuity on the $160,000 Hardin gift (63). The school had been saved from financial ruin. Morris pursued the annuity program with vigor. He
was complimented many times for his efficiency. On the
death of Mr. Hardin in 1938, O. L. Clark, trustee of the
Hardin estate, said that "Abilene Christian College had
lived up to its obligations with Mr. Hardin more
faithfully than any other institution" (64).

Other Duties

Don H. Morris was involved in many duties during his
vice-presidency other than his work in caring for the
Hardin annuity. He continued to teach speech and to serve
as head of the speech department. In 1933, Morris
organized the first Abilene Christian College Debate
Tournament. The tourney became an annual tradition
drawing many outstanding high school and college students
to the campus each spring for a wide variety of speech
contests (65). Morris frequently represented the school
in official functions, conducted public relations functions
with friends of the school, and worked in various financial
committees of the college (39). He served as advertising
director, sending out information to prospective students
(66).

Morris was selected to plan a financial campaign to
be inaugurated at the annual Abilene Christian College Day
in 1935 (67). President Cox reported to the trustees,
"Mr. Morris, your very efficient vice president, is
directing advertising to the entire satisfaction of myself
and others" (68). Morris served with the president and secretary of the Board of Trustees in a planning committee to redesign Chambers Hall, a major building on the campus (69). In 1936, Morris was allowed to read the Annual President's Report to the Board of Trustees showing that the school's indebtedness had been reduced approximately $275,000.00 since 1929, leaving the total outstanding debt at $90,000.00. He also was chosen by the trustees to review the insurance program of the school and to make suggestions for its improvement (70). Morris wrote numerous articles for prominent Church of Christ journals in which he commended Christian education and led in efforts to gain favorable publicity for Abilene Christian College among members of the Church of Christ (71). In February of 1937, the audit report of the college showed $107,000 in "unidentified property." The trustees named Morris to a committee to appraise the value of the college lots and all property owned by the school in the city of Abilene (72). The 1937 school yearbook had this dedicatory message:

Because of his possession of those qualities which are the measure of high ideals and genuineness of character; because of his contagious cheerfulness and inspirational devotion to Abilene Christian College; because of his arresting foresight in his unselfish endeavors to promote the intellectual and spiritual development of our institution, we, the Senior Class of nineteen hundred and thirty-seven,
devotedly dedicate the twenty-second volume of our PRICKLY PEAR to a man with a splendid past and a greater future, DON HEATH MORRIS (73).

Morris was tireless in his work.

The Abilene Christian College Board of Trustees underwent a major reorganization in 1937. Morris was placed on two key committees, the Executive Committee and the Finance Committee. The work of these committees was defined as follows:

The duties of the Executive Committee shall be (1) to study, formulate and recommend to the board for its adoption the aims, ideals and policies of Abilene Christian College; (2) to determine the general plan of organization of the board, its officers, standing committees, etc., and to specify their duties and responsibilities; (3) to see that the provisions of the Charter are faithfully carried out and to recommend needed changes in the Charter; (4) to hear, to consider, and to advise upon questions arising in other committees; and (5) to formulate plans for future growth, expansion and perpetuity of Abilene Christian College; to recommend same to the board for adoption, and to see that all adopted plans are carried through to a successful conclusion.

The duties of the Finance Committee shall be as follows: (1) to keep an accurate record of the real estate and permanent property of the college; (2) to buy, sell and transfer real estate of the college; (3) to collect and invest moneys realized from sales and solicitations; (4) it shall authorize, supervise, and direct any campaigns for funds or property; (5) it shall build up, preserve, and protect the permanent fund of the college (74).

The Executive Committee included the president of the Board of Trustees, the president and vice president of the college, and two other board members. The Finance Committee consisted of the president of the Board of Trustees, two other board members, the vice president of
the college, and the college fiscal agent (74). These appointments reflect the growing prominence of Vice President Don H. Morris in the administrative leadership of Abilene Christian College.

In 1938, Abilene Christian College still had no permanent endowment fund. Vice President Morris and other Executive Board members recommended that the college should try to establish a one million dollar endowment fund, build a new library, construct a new fine arts building, and make every effort to meet Southern Association of Colleges and Universities standards. They also proposed the instituting of a graduate school (75). Morris made several trips in the interest of seeking endowment funds (76). The pressing needs of the school often took him away from his home and family (77). Once a person called the Morris home and asked if Vice President Morris were there. Morris' five-year-old son, Tommy, had answered the telephone. He replied, "No, daddy is not here now, but he's coming home in a few minutes to tell us good bye" (78).

A New Administration

The administration of James F. Cox at Abilene Christian College was one of great progress. The school had weathered some of its most difficult years. Student enrollment had increased from 356 in 1931 to 592 in 1938.
Indebtedness was reduced from $400,000.00 to less than $65,000. Salary schedules for administrators and teachers had more than doubled, and that had been accomplished without any help from endowment (79). But these years had also been fraught with persistent problems for the school.

The most nagging difficulty had been the long, perilous, exhausting battle against bankruptcy. Several propitious larger gifts, many smaller contributions, very careful financial management, and great personal sacrifice by administrators and teachers had brought the college through the long night of the Depression. A second problem, though not so pronounced, during this period was one of student discipline. In May of 1934, fourteen college boys tied several cows in the auditorium and administration buildings (80). The Board of Trustees recommended to President Cox that every boy involved be suspended from school and that, in order to re-enter school, each boy would be required to "make acknowledgements in chapel" (81). In 1935, the trustees were dissatisfied with the discipline of students. They invited President Cox to attend their meeting and to work with them on the matter (82). In his last yearbook message to the students, President Cox wrote, "There have been very few things to mar our peace and happiness during this nine months" (83).

A third problem confronting the school during those years was the matter of recurring criticism of school
policies and personnel among preachers and members of the Church of Christ. Some of these criticisms seem frivolous now, but they were very serious at the time they were made. Abilene Christian College was the first college affiliated with Churches of Christ which emphasized a complete athletic program (84). Few collegiate athletic programs at that time were financially self-sustaining. This fact galled some constituents of the school as they heard frequent pleas for donations.

Throughout 1936 and 1937, G. H. P. Showalter, dignified and respected editor of the Firm Foundation, a leading periodical among members of the Church of Christ, led a virtual tirade against intercollegiate, "commercialized" athletics, especially football, in Christian schools. Football at one time had been banned at Abilene Christian College. President Jesse P. Sewell threatened to expel several boys who had been caught playing the game on campus contrary to college rules in 1913, but the sport grew in popularity with the students, and by 1917 the school fielded its first intercollegiate football team (85). Editor Showalter used every conceivable argument against the football program. He wrote:

    I could sincerely wish that the "athletic craze" were curbed. I am as certain as I can be that an enormous amount of evil is being done in this way in the schools--"our schools." Personally, I have no endorsement of or any sympathy for it (86).

One month later, editor Showalter wrote:
Who can read the New Testament and suppose that if Christ were here on earth today, he would be crowding in a jam of people for a ticket to see "cats," or "tigers," or "steers,"--or something--in a "big play"--or fight--with all the profanity, vulgarity, gambling, and other types of high-handed wickedness, upon which the maledictions of Heaven have been recorded in God's holy word? (87)

One week later, the venerable editor quoted one young Christian college student who had commended his editorials. He then concluded, "At least some of the fine young men sent to the Christian Colleges have not yet bowed the knee to athletic Baal" (88).

When President Cox tried to answer this wave of criticism, Showalter wrote that he loved the colleges, but that ". . .they must eliminate things that are ungodly, unscriptural, and of the world, the flesh, and of the devil" (89). Many letters agreeing with the sentiments of Showalter were published in the Firm Foundation. Among the numerous articles condemning football was one entitled, "Come Let Us Reason Together." It condemned the sport on the basis of an Associated Press news release that showed that twenty-two deaths had occurred in 1936 from sandlot, club, high school, and college football programs. Nineteen had died of injuries, two had died in a locker room fire at Purdue University, and one had been hit by a bolt of lightning during a practice scrimmage. The editor noted
that many teams had "doctors and ambulances to treat injuries they are expecting." The conclusion was firmly stated that "general brotherhood feeling is against commercialized athletics" (90).

A second area of criticism of Abilene Christian College among some of its constituents was the school's increasing emphasis on gaining membership in the Southern Association of Colleges and Universities. Editor Showalter warned against sacrificing Biblical convictions and spiritual principles in order to gain affiliation and accreditation. He declared that colleges usually become the "brothels of apostasy and error" (87). President Cox answered that seventy-five percent of Abilene Christian College students planned to teach or to go into other professional training, and that accreditation would help them professionally. He wrote that a college could live up to high academic standards and still be Christian (89). As the censure of efforts to "standardize" the school continued, President Cox wrote of renewed efforts to gain accreditation, admitting that the school was not perfect, but maintaining that it was trying to do a good work (91). Criticisms of efforts to gain accreditation did not subside among some of the patrons of the school.

A third area of criticism of Abilene Christian College concerned the doctrine of premillennialism, a belief that
Christ will become king for a thousand years on earth after His return, as opposed to the belief that Christ is now king, reigning at God's right hand and that His kingdom, the church, already exists. Great controversy raged over this doctrine in the early 1930's among members of the Church of Christ and some other religious groups. College officials had gone on record as being firmly opposed to premillennial teaching (92). But Charles H. Roberson, head of the Bible Department at Abilene Christian College, had written a book several years earlier which had some premillennial-type material in it. This caused a festering mistrust in the school by some of its constituents (93).

A fourth area of censure of the school involved the suspicion by some patrons that Abilene Christian College sought direct contributions from the treasuries of the Churches of Christ. Churches of Christ are independent and autonomous; they have no hierarchies or brotherhood-wide organizations. Some members of the Church of Christ maintained that a local Church should be able to contribute to any worthy work, including the Christian college. Others felt that such a practice would be a breach of local church autonomy, that it placed local churches in the position of supporting an organization that was largely secular in nature, and that such support by churches would encourage the creation of an institution very much like the missionary
society which was condemned in the Charter of the school. This battle continued throughout the 1930's, and it will be treated later in this work. In President Cox's Annual Report to the Board of Trustees in February of 1939, he mentioned the fact that the school had often been the target of negative statements:

Abilene Christian College has never been nor will it ever be free from criticism. This is sometimes just; many times it is very unfair and unjust. Recent criticisms of the College have been met by a campaign of constructive advertising through the publication of a Bulletin. This Bulletin is being edited by Vice President Don H. Morris, and is approved and paid for by the President's Office. This policy was approved by the Board, and results have been quite gratifying. At the present time, our critics are quiet and it seems that the brethren are more friendly toward us than they have ever been (94).

This tone of acquiescence, however, was not universal, complete, or eternal, as later discussions in this treatise will indicate.

Another recurring problem which vexed President Cox was the bickering that persisted among some trustees of the college. Cox urged board members to forget personalities and to unite for a better Abilene Christian College (95). Board president W. H. Free adjured, "I am constrained to recommend that we put aside petty personal feelings and get behind the college solidly as one man and as Christians should do" (96). In one board meeting, seven trustees resigned after a particularly stormy session (97).
James F. Cox asked to be relieved as president of Abilene Christian College. In the summer of 1939, the board of trustees unanimously agreed to elect Morris as president for a three-year term effective upon the expiration of James F. Cox's term on June 1, 1940 (98). As Morris completed his last Annual Report of the Vice President to the Board of Trustees, he was given a rising vote of thanks for his "splendid work" in the vice presidency. At the same meeting, it was agreed that arrangements for the inauguration of Don H. Morris as the next president of Abilene Christian College would be made and carried out by the local board (99).
CHAPTER BIBLIOGRAPHY


3. "Charter of Childers' Classical Institute," Article II.

4. Board of Trustees of Childers' Classical Institute, "Minutes" (hereafter referred to as BOT "Minutes"), November 3, 1906.


7. BOT "Minutes," March 16, 1908.

8. BOT "Minutes," May 21, 1909; February 13, 1911.


11. BOT "Minutes," April 22, 1912.


17. BOT "Minutes," February 28, 1924.

27. BOT "Minutes," October 17, 1927.
32. BOT "Minutes," November 7, 1928.
33. BOT "Minutes," June 17, 1929.
34. Interview with Guy Scruggs, August 21, 1975.
36. Interview with Mrs. Don H. Morris, October 22, 1975.
40. BOT "Minutes," February 24, 1932.
41. Interview with B Sherrod, October 23, 1975.
42. BOT "Minutes," February 26, 1930.
44. BOT "Minutes," February 25, 1931.
45. BOT "Minutes," October 12, 1931.
46. BOT "Minutes," October 19, 1931.
47. BOT "Minutes," October 29, 1931.
49. BOT "Minutes," November 30, 1932.
50. BOT "Minutes," November 28, 1931.
51. BOT "Minutes," November 25, 1931.
52. BOT "Minutes," December 31, 1931.
54. BOT "Minutes," February 24, 1932.
56. BOT "Minutes," April 25, 1932.
57. BOT "Minutes," September 26, 1932.
59. BOT "Minutes," February 23, 1933.
60. BOT "Minutes," May 1, 1933.
61. BOT "Minutes," January 8, 1934.
63. BOT "Minutes," January 8, 1934.
64. BOT "Minutes," February 23, 1938.


68. BOT "Minutes," February 20, 1935.

69. BOT "Minutes," January 6, 1936.

70. BOT "Minutes," May 4, 1936.


75. BOT "Minutes," February 23, 1938.

76. BOT "Minutes," March 22, 1938.

77. Interview with Mrs. Madge Nelson, November 29, 1974.


80. BOT "Minutes," May 21, 1934.

81. BOT "Minutes," May 17, 1934.

82. BOT "Minutes," June 24, 1935.

83. *The Prickly Pear*, 1940, p. 3.


95. BOT "Minutes," February 19, 1936.

96. BOT "Minutes," February 23, 1937.

97. BOT "Minutes," February 24, 1937.

98. BOT "Minutes," August 24, 1939.

99. BOT "Minutes," February 23, 1940.
CHAPTER III

THE PHILOSOPHY OF THE NEW PRESIDENT

Early Statements

The new president of Abilene Christian College, Don H. Morris, had strong convictions about Christian education and the future of the school. Many major tenets of his educational philosophy are stated in his last Report of the Vice President to the Board of Trustees on February 23, 1940; his first Semi-Annual Report of the President to the Board of Trustees at Abilene Christian College on February 24, 1941; his first Annual Report of the President to the Board of Trustees at Abilene Christian College on August 21, 1941; his Address to the Faculty when he was president-elect on May 14, 1940; and his Inaugural Address on November 9, 1940.

Morris' philosophy matured, of course, through his years of experience as an administrator. He served in an era of dramatic changes in the American culture. His presidency also spanned a time which was filled with the vicissitudes of an expanding, developing college.
Purposes of Abilene Christian College

In his last report as vice president to the Board of Trustees, Morris expressed his appreciation for the opportunity to serve as the school's next president. He said that since he had become a student at Abilene Christian College in 1922, he loved the school more than anything in the world except the church and his family. He declared his strong intention to do everything possible to build the school and to promote the purposes for which it stood. Morris mentioned a feeling of great obligation to the constituency of the college:

We owe it to the students who have been entrusted to our care, and to their parents who patronize us, and also to the men and women who have invested their money in Abilene Christian College, to do nothing short of the best that we possibly can. For every dollar paid for tuition and room and board, we must give the student and his parents the most that we possibly can for that dollar, and for every dollar invested in Abilene Christian College by one of its friends, we must pay in dividends the best that we can in character building, and in furnishing the world honest, hard working, progressive Christian citizens (1).

As he reviewed the original purposes of the college, Morris declared:

Now we must do more than just state these plans. We must make them the very part of the fiber of our being—we must make these purposes and considerations our guide in everything that we do and in every decision that we make, and make them so much a part of us that they will direct us under all circumstances. Remember, we are to give young men and women an opportunity for the kind of training that will make them successful—make them attain a maximum of success in their life's work—and at the
same time give them the teachings and influence of real Christianity which will in itself, I believe, contribute to success in their chosen vocations.

We must take these purposes into consideration in the selection of our faculty, in our classroom procedure, in our matters of discipline, in the supervision of the work that students do on campus, in our student activities, and in everything that we do. We must remember, as our ideal, that a Christian must be honest, that he cannot be lazy and be the right kind of Christian, that he cannot follow after or teach errors of doctrine, and that he cannot fail to worship and serve the Lord. I am saying that we must have as our purpose and objective at all times that we must lead our students into practicable, workable, pure Christian living in this world of ours (1).

In his inaugural speech, Don H. Morris reviewed briefly the history of Abilene Christian College emphasizing its original purposes to be a pre-eminently Christian school built on the conviction that the Bible is God's revealed word. He quoted from the first Catalogue of Childers' Classical Institute, which stated that the three pre-requisites of a good school are a wisely chosen course of study, the right kind of teachers, and a high moral tone and which pledged that the school would never be diverted from its original purposes. Morris then promised:

I stand here today with our faculty, our board of trustees, and our student body of 1940-1941 to repeat to those who may invest here either with patronage or with money, that solemn pledge. Men may contribute to and patronize this school resting assured that it will not be diverted from its original purposes. Here shall we have an institution where our sons and daughters may receive training in the arts and sciences and in those branches necessary for successful business and professional life, and at the same time have that which is transcendentally more important, the stabilizing, inspiring, saving
influences of Christian teaching and associations. In attaining this noble end, we shall continue to be guided by the words cut in the corner stone of Hardin Memorial Building, "We believe in the divinity of Christ and in the inspiration of the Holy Scriptures," and we shall be guided too by the words of the Book also cut in this same corner stone, "Contend earnestly for the Faith once for all delivered unto the saints" (2).

During his presidency, Morris had photocopies made of the college charter and early Board of Trustee Meeting Notes. He kept these in his desk, and he made it his policy to read them often (3).

A Complete College

Don H. Morris wanted Abilene Christian College to be a complete college. Through the years, supporters of the institution had different conceptions of what the school should be. Many felt that it should be primarily a seminary for educating preachers and church leaders (4). Indifference to professional emphases had caused some constituents to be unconcerned or even antagonistic toward efforts to gain accreditation for the college. Within the purposes and abilities of the institution, Morris wanted the school to offer the broadest, most comprehensive program possible to its students (5).

The matter of intercollegiate athletics demonstrated Morris' belief that no part of the total school program should be neglected. Critics of the athletic program, particularly football, thought that the college had no
responsibility to become involved in athletics. The previous administration had yielded on the question. In 1936, J. E. McKenzie, president of the board of trustees, proposed a new stadium saying, "I think this will add a great deal to the prestige of the school with the general public." In the same board meeting where this proposal was made, the following statement of the board of trustees was phrased:

Be it resolved by the Board of Trustees of Abilene Christian College in regular session assembled on this the 19th day of February, 1936, that we deplore the tendency of the times to over-emphasize the importance of athletics in high school and college life, and while we heartily approve of Intramural Sports when properly conducted, we believe the time is now here when Christians and Christian Colleges should take a decided stand against commercialization of athletics, and we want it understood that while we would like to have all boys and girls who are naturally endowed for winning in athletics, we do not want and will not offer them free tuition or other inducements to attend Abilene Christian College. We do not believe that brawn should be emphasized rather than brain, especially in a Christian College (6).

Four months later, B Sherrod ("B" is Sherrod's proper name; it is not an initial or a nickname), a trustee who later would serve for many years as president of the board of trustees, moved that the previous statement of the board be rescinded. The motion was approved, and the trustees decided to encourage the coaches to proceed in building up the athletic department (7).
The question of emphasizing athletics continued, however, and in 1938, President James F. Cox admitted that offering of scholarships and subsidies to athletes "is here to stay," but he also said:

"It is my judgment that Abilene Christian College should continue its intercollegiate athletics, but that big-time athletics be forever banned from the school. Our aim should be rather to win at least a majority of our games with schools in our class. Abilene Christian College cannot nor should it subsidize athletics just for the purpose of putting out championship teams (8)."

In his final report to the board of trustees, Cox said, "It is my judgment that athletics will always be a liability in the small college" (9).

Don H. Morris was resolute in his feeling that every part of the college's total program should be carried out with fervor and ardor. He was careful not to irritate the supporters of the school, but he pressed for successful athletic teams, for the band, for the debate teams, singing groups, and all of the other programs which would bring the college before the public in a wholesome light and which would advance the education of the students. He frequently said, "We can do it. Let's have the best" (5). He became a recruiter of athletes. When Morris learned of an outstanding high school athlete, especially if he were a member of the Church of Christ, Morris would visit him
urging upon him almost as a spiritual duty the responsibility to come to help the school. Morris helped to recruit some of the better athletes in the history of the college (5).

Morris justified his emphasis on athletics by telling his critics that approximately half of the students at Abilene Christian College were studying to be public school teachers. Many of them would be coaches involved in athletic programs, and they would need the best background possible. When his detractors complained about deficits in the athletic department, Morris countered that the other departments of the school were not self-supporting, but that these departments were retained for what they could do for the students, and that he felt the same way about the athletic program (10). President Morris was one of the most zealous supporters of the athletic teams; he often sat on the bench with the athletes during a game. On one occasion, in a game with Midwestern University at Wichita Falls, Texas, an Abilene Christian College player broke away into an eighty-eight yard touchdown play that won the game in the closing minutes. The dignified Morris, in a dress suit, forgot himself and raced down the sideline to the goal matching the ball carrier stride-for-stride. Athletic Department game films have preserved for posterity Morris' sideline dash (5).
Don H. Morris wanted Abilene Christian College to be more than a seminary or a finishing school. He frankly stated that he wanted every department, every instructional program, and every extracurricular program to be superior, and that he wanted Abilene Christian College to offer the widest possible educational opportunities for its students within the framework and the purposes of the school (11).

Delegation of Authority

Don H. Morris believed that the trustees, by the very nature of their title, held the school in trust. It was their responsibility to plan and make policies that would insure that Abilene Christian College would be the type of school that the Charter proposed. Morris saw his role as president as one of being responsible for the details of organization, of procedure, and of management in order to execute the policies of the Board of Trustees. In turn, he expected to be trusted with the authority to delegate responsibilities and duties to other administrators and school personnel (1).

The new president had his conception of most of the duties and responsibilities of the department heads written out before he took the reins of the school. He recommended that each person to whom authority was delegated should know definitely, and have in writing, what his duties and responsibilities were and what work should be done in his
area or department. He proposed that changes should be made when necessary, but that those whose job responsibilities were changed should be fully informed of the alterations and that they should, where practicable, have some voice in making the changes (1). Morris proposed that most of the work with particular problems of faculty members should be referred to the dean of the college and department heads. When they were unable to work out problems, then Morris would become directly involved. Otherwise, he desired that problems should be solved within the department (5). Gordon Bennett, who served as president of McMurry College in Abilene during much of Morris' administration, when asked what he considered was Morris' greatest asset as a leader, replied, "He had outstanding ability to surround himself with very capable people and to delegate authority effectively" (12).

Delegating authority was not always easy for Morris, however. The enrollment of Abilene Christian College grew from 661 in 1940 to 3,110 in 1968, when Morris became chancellor. The administrative duties in the school grew accordingly. Trustees often urged Morris to rest more and to delegate work to others. His long-time secretary reports that Morris often would delegate responsibility, but occasionally when a subordinate would bungle the job, Morris would resume the responsibility himself (13).
When Don H. Morris suffered a stroke in the fall of 1966, trustees moved quickly to provide temporary leadership for the college. Morris later said that "a nice, mild stroke" could have many advantages. He said that his stroke, which left him unable to continue his administrative duties for several weeks, had reminded him of the ability of his staff to carry on work delegated to it (14). The administrative organization of Abilene Christian College was greatly changed after Morris left the presidency. Before that time, the diligent Morris was pressed to perform all of the demands of his office. Morris' successor, John Stevens, asserts that as the school grew larger, delegating authority probably was one of the most difficult adjustments that Morris had to make (15).

Faculty Improvement

Shortly before he became president, Don H. Morris wrote to every department head in the school, requesting a complete report on each department including the number of students in the department, the number of classes taught by each instructor, and the number of students majoring in the department for the previous five years. He asked for information and suggestions in evaluating each department and each teacher in the department. Morris and Dean Walter H. Adams then made a rating sheet whereby they could rate each teacher according to his classroom procedure,
scholarship, influence among the students, the general success of his work, and his value otherwise to the school. The ratings were taken before two meetings of the Teachers Committee of the college and, after discussion, recommendations were listed by the committee for the president's use (1).

President-elect Morris, with the concurrence of the dean and the Teachers Committee, advised the trustees to retain the faculty intact, but he suggested definite places where improvement should be made; in some cases he recommended that eventual replacement should be made. He urged that the changes should be "worked out without haste, in a charitable way, and yet in a business-like manner, for the good of the school." He further said, "It is my purpose to call, within a short time, meetings of the instructors in each department, and at that time discuss with them frankly the work of each department, with the purpose of improving the work of each department where such improvement needs to be made" (1).

Many of Morris' reports to the trustees commended the teachers of Abilene Christian College. He often reminded the board that the faculty of a school ultimately has more to do than any other factor in the success or failure of the institution. Virtually every report to the trustees mentioned the sacrifices made by the school's teachers in
order to remain with the college. The salary scale perennially was lower than those of most other colleges in the state. Low faculty salaries was one of the deficiencies that barred the school from membership in the Southern Association of Colleges and Universities (16). At almost every general meeting of the trustees in the 1940's, Morris urged the creation of an endowment fund in order to help provide adequate teacher salaries.

In the financially meager years of the 1930's, Abilene Christian College offered very few incentives to its teachers to advance their formal training. Leaves of absence with partial pay (usually one-third of normal salary) were given spasmodically; no uniform or consistent provisions were made for such leaves. At one time, the board decided against subsidizing educational leaves of absence altogether (17). The college had no hope of gaining membership in the Southern Association if it did not increase the number of doctorates on its faculty. At the imploring of Don H. Morris, the board finally established a definite policy to pay teachers partial salaries while they were on leaves of absence in order to encourage them to enhance their educations (18). After the program was established, Morris reinforced the decision of the trustees by frequently commending them for making paid leaves possible and by urging teachers to take advantage
of the opportunities the program provided. It was also with the encouragement of Don H. Morris that a teacher retirement plan for Abilene Christian College teachers was approved (19).

At the request of Don H. Morris, the board approved a plan to encourage teachers to participate in professional organizations by paying their expenses to professional meetings if the teachers were officers of the organization or on the program; otherwise one-half of their expenses to the meetings would be paid by the school. Morris also proposed and helped to make possible giving teachers six weeks vacation in the summer with pay and giving certificates of merit and cash awards to outstanding teachers (20).

Morris believed that teachers should show continuous growth in their work. In 1944, he secured board approval of this plan:

Every teacher in Abilene Christian College from the youngest to the oldest should be required to show in writing and have approved by the President and the Dean a definite plan for self-improvement while in service. This might take several forms, such as summer school attendance, auditing courses in Abilene Christian College, doing research work, or systematic reading (21).

Morris frequently commended the faculty for their loyalty and for their sacrifices. In faculty meeting talks and in general public addresses, he commended the teaching profession. He was particularly proud of the thousands of
public school teachers that had been trained at Abilene Christian College (22). On numerous occasions he cited the large number of Abilene Christian College alumni who were teachers and administrators in other Christian colleges (13).

Don H. Morris' enthusiasm for teaching and teacher improvement was expressed in a speech that he made to the students and teachers of Abilene High School on Business-Education Day:

As one who chose to be a teacher because he wanted to be one, I want to talk to you about teachers and teaching. I want to congratulate you because you are teachers. I hope that each of you is a teacher because you chose to be one. And I hope that each of you will remain a teacher because you believe that there is no higher calling.
For sheer joy what is there that is finer than standing in a classroom of youngsters? What greater thrill is there than telling a class about the government of the United States or how it started? What greater thrill than helping a boy to understand a simple principle of mathematics that he can use throughout life?
What greater thrill than teaching a six-year-old to read, or in teaching a sixteen-year-old how to understand and enjoy a great piece of literature, or how to read that piece of literature aloud so others will understand it and enjoy it?

Morris concluded his speech by discussing the intellectual void that would exist without teachers. He spoke of highly successful people whom he had formerly taught, and he noted the great rewards in personal satisfaction that come to teachers (23).
Don H. Morris exhorted his faculty members to encourage their students to be teachers and to remember themselves the happiness and satisfaction that derive from teaching. He told them never to apologize for being teachers (24).

Fiscal Policies

The financial management of Abilene Christian College in its early years had at times been rather casual; budgets often were loosely constructed. Before he became president, Don H. Morris proposed full financial record-keeping and strict adherence, as much as possible, to the approved budget (17). Soon after he became president, Morris asked that special efforts be made to collect old accounts, and he urged the liquidation of the remaining college debt as soon as possible (1).

Morris advocated continuing financial appeals to the greatest possible number of the college's patrons and friends. He felt that a larger number of gifts, even if they were small, contributed to a wider friendship and base of support for the college (10). At the same time, Morris appealed for more intense efforts in securing large gifts to the school, especially as favorable tax laws increased the incentives for such contributions (8). A discussion of Morris' methods in soliciting funds for Abilene Christian College is reserved for Chapter Five of this dissertation.
During the Depression years, administrators and teachers in some private colleges were often paid late. It was not unusual for them to be paid only a portion of their salary during difficult and straitened times. Morris promised the teachers at Abilene Christian College that a matter of high importance with him would be to see that they were paid their full salary each month on time. One of his first acts as president was to go to a local bank and make arrangements to borrow enough whenever it might be necessary to be sure that every faculty member was paid on time (14). B Sherrod, who for many years served as President of the Board of Trustees, remembers that one of Morris' first goals in fund-raising when he became head of the school was to secure enough financial help that the school would never be forced to delay paying their teachers their full salary (25).

Buildings and Equipment

When Morris became president, the world was in an uneasy state of affairs. Much of humanity had suffered from the blight of depression in the 1930's. War was spreading in Europe and looming before the world. Abilene Christian College was in a period of reassessing its past and wondering about its future. Morris envisioned a much larger school in years to come, but his immediate requests
for upgrading equipment, beautifying the campus, and building a new science building were modest beside proposals that he would make in ensuing years (1).

When Don H. Morris became chancellor, almost twenty-nine years after assuming the presidency, he spoke of the school's past financial struggles. He told a reporter who was writing a feature story for the local newspaper, "Don't sensationalize it. The financial support was not what it is now, but we had many friends and supporters and we always had confidence" (26). Nevertheless, to the financially beleaguered school personnel of 1940, Morris' inaugural plea may have had some ring of sensationalism to it:

    Just because we have come to where we are financially, we must not let ourselves believe that it is all right to stop here. In fact, this is all the more reason that we should go ahead. Let every friend of the school realize that there must be sacrifice in the years to come. There must be new buildings, a science building, more adequate library and classroom facilities. There must be liquidation of the debt that we now have. There must be endowment in direct contributions or in funds or in both. If Abilene Christian College is to continue even its present efficiency, you and I must invest our money in it; some of us must invest dollars, some of us $10.00 at a time, some $100.00, some $1,000.00, and there must be some somewhere who will make investments of $100,000.00. In the future, as announcements of needs are made by the board of trustees, we ask for your support in this respect 100 percent (2).

During his administration, Morris had a part in securing several millions of dollars in support of the school.
The Student Body

Morris' reports to the trustees typically emphasized the size, nature, and outstanding achievements of the student body. He felt that the administration of the school should give special consideration to allowing students to have a full and active part in the educational and spiritual life of the college (14). He said:

A special effort should be made to create among students the spirit of loyalty to the ideals of Abilene Christian College, and everything possible should be done to get the students to have pride in the ideals of the school and to be opposed to those things which might break down or subvert the ideals and principles of the institution (1).

Morris upheld the principle of openness and honesty in dealing with students. He frequently advised, "Deal with them on the top of the table; they can always spot a false note" (27).

The president's door was open to all students. Often he would go outside his office and greet students as they passed by. But Morris expected a certain amount of respect and decorum in his association with students. Clyde Austin, president of the student body in 1953, recalls going into the president's office in tattered clothing and receiving "the silent treatment" from Morris. After that, Austin says, he was more careful about his grooming when he went to see the president (27).
Several times each year, Morris would have dinner with student officers after which they would retire to his office to discuss school matters. Morris used these occasions to answer any questions which the leaders had about the college (27).

Morris enjoyed mingling with the students of the college. He fondly remembered one September morning when he was walking across the campus. He spoke a friendly greeting to a large freshman student who was dressed in ranch-hand type clothes and cowboy boots. The boy said, "Say, fellow, will you help me with this trunk?" Morris set down his briefcase and assisted the student in carrying the large trunk up some stairs to a second floor dormitory room. He straightened his suit, returned to his briefcase, and proceeded to his office without telling the young man that he was president of the school. When other administrators laughed about what he had done, Morris jokingly said, "The boy was very large; I was afraid to refuse to help him" (28).

Another example of Don H. Morris' amity toward students is revealed in this letter which he received after he became chancellor:
July 12, 1969

Dear Brother Morris,

My name is Karl Love and I am an A.C.C. graduate--attended college in Abilene during 1954-1956.

I just wanted to write a note to you to express my deepest personal gratitude to you for the many, many years of service and giving that you freely and joyfully gave to thousands upon thousands of young people.

There was one time that you especially touched my life and I wanted you to know about it.

I came to A.C.C. in 1954 after having just been discharged from the Marine Corps. I had fought in Korea for over a year, 1951-52, and was a very troubled, disturbed man. I did not want to go to A.C.C., but had promised my dear mother (a widow) that I would for at least awhile. When I arrived on campus I was tense, lonely, and generally depressed. And the first thing I confronted was a line of students registering. How I hated lines! We had lined up in Korea, it seemed eternally, even to die!

And I nearly left right then, but you came by, and for some reason you stood close to me, put your arm around me--asked if I were a veteran--and I replied I was--you said I needed to be patient with my new world--you said--and I shall never forget it--"Give us a year, Karl."

After you had left--I stood in that line and the compassion you demonstrated, the good, solid touch of you--it helped. It was hard to adjust, but I did reasonably well. I graduated, went on to work in Columbia Christian College as Dean of Students, helped in a mission church, went on to become Claude Guild's assistant for awhile at Forth Worth Christian College, established a church at Western Hills in Ft. Worth (where Dr. Speck is now going to work for awhile) and am now in Brasil as a part of the greatest challenge of my life.

It's way past due, my expression of gratitude to you for your love and strength and wisdom, all of which you shared with me that day in 1954. God bless you!

Gratefully,

Karl W. Love (29)
Morris felt that he and the school had a paternalistic type of responsibility toward the students. He very often, when talking to a student about some problem, would say, "Now if I were your father, I believe that I would want you to . . ." or he would say, "Now I believe your parents would want you to . . ." (13). He took seriously the role of the school in loco parentis, that is, as surrogate parents or guardians to the students trusted to the school's care. As the school grew larger and as social patterns changed, Morris found this role of the college more and more difficult to fulfill, but he never lost sight of the concept, and he urged the personnel of the college to help to look out for the welfare of individual students (14).

During World War II, Morris asked faculty members to write to and encourage students who had been drafted into military service and to "keep them in contact with ACC" (30). Even after the college enrollment had grown to several times its pre-war size, Morris encouraged the teachers and dormitory supervisors to become personally acquainted with the students, to be accommodating to them in every situation, and to express appreciation to them whenever appropriate (31).

The hundreds of public school teachers from the United States, Central America, and South America who took part in the American Studies Program which was offered for several summers at Abilene Christian College were most
impressed with the friendliness of Morris and the personal interest that he took in them. Dr. and Mrs. Morris hosted a reception in the president's home during each session of the program. The warmth and informality of the Morris' hospitality impressed the teachers, especially those from Central and South America, where dignitaries generally were very aloof and formal. Morris was able to converse in Spanish, and he delighted in speaking with those whose native language was Spanish (32).

The waves of student activism that swept several college campuses in the 1960's never materialized at Abilene Christian College. John C. Stevens credits several things for this fact: the type of students that attended the college, most of whom were from strong Christian homes; the promise by the students in the form of a pledge signed when they enrolled that they would obey the rules of the school; the threat of suspension of any students who were disruptive or incorrigible; and the positive leadership of the school which kept careful watch over matters which might develop into student unrest (14). Stevens recalls one time when a group of students planned a meeting in the college auditorium to discuss some action which Morris had taken. Morris learned of the meeting, went to the auditorium at the time the meeting was to start, went to the microphone just as the meeting was called to
order, and said, "I am going to perform my duties as president of this school. I am going to run this college, and this meeting is dismissed." The meeting broke up, and the matter quickly subsided. Stevens continues, however, by saying that, although Morris was firm, he was kind, and the students generally thought that he was fair (14).

Morris considered the alumni of the college as one of its most important assets. His interest in the student body did not stop at graduation. He enjoyed maintaining contacts with college alumni and visiting with them whenever possible. Several of his trips to foreign countries were highlighted by visits with college alumni who were living there either as missionaries or professional people. The Alumni Office of the college was a very important part of Morris' program to keep the school in contact with its constituency. One alumnus wrote Morris a very emotional and sarcastic letter about a misunderstanding that she had had with the school. Morris looked into the matter immediately; he wrote to the woman explaining in detail the matter which had caused her hard feelings. The school had been correct in the matter, but Morris did not belabor the point. In a kind and respectful way, he concluded his letter by writing, "I am including in this letter, the letter that you wrote to me, because I do not think that you would want it to be a part of the permanent records at Abilene Christian College" (13).
Good Will of the Constituency

It is not an unusual thing for private colleges to be criticized by various elements of their constituency. Abilene Christian College had been the object of censure by a few many times during its early history. The new president did not propose to ignore criticism. He wanted friends and patrons of the school to be better acquainted with the institution and even to offer their suggestions for its improvement. He told the trustees:

I believe that the best way to cause the brotherhood to have confidence in the college is to let them know that everything here is open to their inspection—that we have nothing to hide, and that we are glad to sit down and discuss with anyone, anywhere, our problems, our successes, and even our failures. I suggest that in addition to our regular publicity program we carry on the following: First, resume the publication of our Abilene Christian College News Bulletin. Second, continue the series of meetings with church leaders that we have already started. These meetings should be held throughout the Southwest, and especially in Texas, Oklahoma, Kansas, Eastern New Mexico, and Western Arkansas (1).

Morris' philosophy was not to yield to every criticism.

The president-elect told the faculty in May of 1940:

I have said at all times that we do not intend to try to do everything that everybody wants us to do, but that we do want the good-will and support of all those who are interested in the school as we try to run it. In other words, the purpose of these meetings [with church leaders--OC] shall be to get acquainted with the brotherhood, and to give the brotherhood an opportunity to get acquainted with us.
In that same faculty meeting, Morris reminded the teachers that their integrity and moral purity were vital in gaining and holding the respect and good will of the constituency (33).

Accreditation

For several years, administrators at Abilene Christian College had hoped for full membership in the regional accrediting agency, the Southern Association of Colleges and Secondary Schools. When Morris became president, the school lacked several important qualifications: adequate academic qualification in the faculty, certain buildings and facilities which the Association had recommended, sufficient educational expenditure per student, adequate library, and satisfactory endowment. Morris believed that the accreditation of the college was a matter of utmost importance. He told the faculty of his desires to gain "standardization" as soon as possible, and he called upon them for full cooperation (33). An energetic school improvement program enabled Abilene Christian College to be accepted into membership of the Southern Association in 1951.
The College and The Church

Don H. Morris had an evangelistic, religious devotion to Abilene Christian College. He made a sharp distinction, however, in the Church of Christ and the Christian College. He believed that the Church is a divine institution; he readily admitted that the college is a human organization. Zealous proponents of Christian education had repeatedly asserted that the colleges produced eighty-five to ninety percent of the ministers and church leaders. Such claims chafed the school's critics. One gave the major part of the credit for producing church leaders to Christian homes and faithful churches (34). Another editor affirmed that the schools recommended themselves too highly, and that they would profit by some of the humility that the New Testament recommends to the churches (35).

Morris did not want a feeling of competition between the college and the church; he felt that their work should be complementary. He told an Abilene Christian College Lectureship crowd of several thousand in 1968:

If you ever hear an ex-student of a Christian college in Abilene, in California, in Oklahoma, Tennessee or Michigan talk in such a way that he appears to emphasize the importance of the college more than he does the church (and I have known of ex-students to do this), please understand that this is simply over-enthusiasm on the part of this individual. This happens just as sometimes individuals become over-enthusiastic about their hometown, their business, or
some other organization of which they are a part. The real test of the Christian college and its work—the real test of its influence upon the church is the growth and spirituality of congregations of the church in those areas where the ex-students of the college live (36).

Morris took pride in the number of church leaders produced at the school, but he did not exalt the college above the church. He urged every student to be a faithful, devout member of the church (37).

Nevertheless, Morris approached the work of Abilene Christian College with religious fervor and zeal. His speeches and reports were frequently laced with Scripture references and moral admonitions. He often referred to the work of early leaders and teachers in the school with profound respect and appreciation. He told the faculty that while from an organizational standpoint the school is not the church, it should be just as near the church as one would want his family to be near the church (31). In efforts to retain effective teachers and administrators at the school, Morris frequently told them, only partly-jokingly, that they could not go to Heaven except from the Abilene Christian College hill (38).

Unity

Morris believed that basic unity was essential to the progress of the college. He did not propose a stereotyped uniformity of thinking within the personnel of the school,
but he did believe that the school could not operate efficiently without harmony within its ranks and understanding between it and its constituents (39). As he concluded his Inaugural Address, Morris made this admonition:

May I lay down one more rule to guide us in the years that are ahead. One of the most significant phrases in all of the New Testament is "singleness of heart." It was the prayer of the Master for his church that it might be one. Unity is essential to the life of a nation at a time of crisis. It is essential in a congregation of the Lord, and it is essential in a school dedicated to His Cause. There may be obstacles to overcome, but agreed as we are in the way that is right, let all the hundreds and thousands of us who believe in Abilene Christian College join hands, and in united step march down the highway that is ahead. The day is bright and the scenes that we shall see are beautiful and glorious (2).

J. W. Treat, Morris' classmate at the University of Texas and long-time fellow teacher, said in later years that Morris' principal contribution as an administrator was his "unifying influence" (40).

Academic Freedom

Maintaining an atmosphere of unity and conformity to a school's purposes without impairing academic freedom is a persistent and complex problem in education. Academic freedom basically is a safeguard of freedom of learning rather than a license of the teacher; it is essentially the protection of rational inquiry. The process of free rational inquiry is fundamental to liberty and to true education (41). Ideally, full and free inquiry always
brings a teacher or student to the discovery of the precepts and purposes of the educational institution. Problems arise when teachers feel that inquiry has no responsibility to the purposes of the institution, or when administrators and constituents of the institution feel that education has only the right to consider certain conclusions without the privilege of unlimited inquiry.

The frequently stated purpose of Abilene Christian College historically was to provide education for Christian living (42). A large stone plaque over the door of the Bible Building at Abilene Christian College is engraved with the words of Jesus Christ, "Ye shall know the truth and the truth shall make you free." Through the years, the matter of academic freedom at the school was subject to appraisal and review. Trustees, administrators, and patrons of the college generally had definite ideas as to what should be taught there. Any hint of unbelief in the Bible as God's Word or in the divinity of Christ could bring immediate scrutiny by the administration. Other moral and religious ideals of the school were similarly protected (10).

Educational control at Abilene Christian College was accomplished through several means. First, by the provision of the school's Charter, every trustee of the college was required to be a faithful, active member of the
Church of Christ in good standing with his home congregation. Second, every administrator of the school was, by board policy, a loyal member of the Church of Christ. Third, by administrative and board policy, every member of the college faculty, with the exception of a few teachers at satellite campuses in later years, was an active member of the Church of Christ (43). Don H. Morris was a staunch advocate of these policies. During his administration, when some students and teachers challenged the requirement that teachers be members of the Church of Christ as not being specifically stated in the Charter of the school, Morris was decisive and firm in defending the school's policies (44).

A fourth protection of the college's religious heritage was its student body, which was made up perennially of over ninety percent members of the Church of Christ (22). Fifth, the college's original purposes were defended by a large constituency of patrons, ministers, editors, and other friends who were vigilant against teachings which were contrary to orthodox brotherhood thinking. Sixth, the school was legally bound by various stipulations in wills and bequests of its benefactors which made gifts contingent upon the school's maintaining its original purposes and preserving specific doctrines and ideals (45). All of these safeguards were recognized and defended by Morris.
Several statements appear in the Board of Trustee Meeting Notes concerning the preservation of Bible teaching. In the depth of the Depression, trustees responded to a substantial and timely gift to the college with the following statement:

Whereas, the trustees of Abilene Christian College feel very grateful to all parties concerned in this matter, this donation, like many others, having come at a very opportune time. They are constrained to believe that the hand of God played an important part in this matter, and feel that just as long as Abilene Christian College hews to the line and teaches the unadulterated doctrines of the Bible, and does right, that people of God will continue to support it (46).

In his first address to the faculty as president of the college, Morris declared that a person could not "... follow after or teach errors of doctrine" and be an acceptable Christian college teacher (33). Morris promised the trustees, "You may state to anyone, there are no left-wingers on the faculty at Abilene Christian College" (47). A trustee of the college, in discussing the possibilities of offering advanced graduate work in Bible at Abilene Christian College, deplored the tendency of some young men to go to Harvard and Yale and "go berserk" in liberalizing their theology (48). In 1964, John Banister, a prominent evangelist for Churches of Christ and a member of the Board of Trustees, warned the faculty against materialistic
thinking, allowing academic excellence to take precedence over doctrinal soundness, and drifting away from the "main stream" of the church (49).

Against this background of allegiance to its charter and the doctrines implied by it, in 1946, Don H. Morris advanced in a faculty meeting the principles of academic freedom prescribed by the Southern Association of Colleges and Secondary Schools:

1. The teacher must have all freedom to teach the truth, without which there is no hope of sound education. Of course, this academic freedom does not protect the teacher who seeks to overthrow the principle out of which it springs.

2. This guarantee of freedom means security of position after a reasonable probationary period. This principle emphasizes the importance of filling teaching positions on the basis of merit alone.

3. Sound education is founded on democratic ideals and reflects the spirit of democracy, which declares certain rights to be inalienable. The conscientious exercise of these rights should in no way affect the status or tenure of a member of the staff of a college.

4. The people through their duly elected representatives have the right to determine, within the framework of constitutional guarantees, the policies of educational institutions which they support. The Board of Trustees is the legislative body whose function it is to determine the broad policies of the institution. However, it has not the right to assume duties of the administration in the employment or discharge of staff members against the recommendation of the administrative officers.

5. No agency or officer should be allowed to deprive the board of control of its powers.

6. Freedom to investigate and to publish the results of research is fundamental to the promotion of higher education and social progress.
7. Trustees should not seek to suppress ideas by proscribing or burning of books. It is the responsibility of the faculty and the administration to discard books which are not deemed suitable for its library.

8. Sound education can be developed only when bias and prejudice have been eliminated in the relation between teachers and students, between faculty and administration, and between administration and Board of Trustees (50).

While Abilene Christian College was seeking accreditation, some patrons made nervous pronouncements that the school would be controlled by the accrediting agency rather than by the Bible (25). Morris insisted that these principles in no way interfered with the institution's commitment to its original purposes. He stated that no institution offers unrestricted freedom to teachers, that freedom requires responsibility, and that academic freedom and academic responsibility are complementary (51).

Morris read this statement by the Middle States Association of Colleges and Secondary Schools to the college trustees:

Academic freedom has to do with a method of inquiry rather than the personal views of the inquirer. It gives him a right as a scholar and implies an obligation. It debars him from preconceived conclusions. It obliges him as a teacher to present all interpretations fairly, because it asserts the student's right to know the facts.

Academic freedom does not require neutrality on the part of either the individual or the institution. It is consistent with earnest and declared efforts to advance a particular point of view, if it be insisted that complete access to the facts underlines the argument and that the argument be plainly distinguished from the inquiry. To restrict the availability or
limit the presentation of data or opinion, even though they may be considered erroneous, is to deny academic freedom.

If these principles are accepted as positive guides for action, an institution of higher education may legitimately announce the point of view or religious position to which it is committed, and if it chooses, engage only instructors who adhere to that position. They may be employed on condition that they will resign if their views change, but meanwhile they must be required to know and teach their subject, including the controversial aspects, completely and objectively (52).

The Southern Association suggested that each of its member institutions should adopt and record a statement of principles of academic freedom to which the institution subscribed. It proposed that these principles, while allowing for the purposes of the college and the right of its administration to govern the school, should be conducive to high faculty morale and a strong sense of faculty freedom (53). Morris worked with a committee of the administration and faculty on a Statement of Academic Freedom for Abilene Christian College. He reported to the trustees, "I have been pleased, but not surprised, that our faculty members believe, just as you and I do, that academic freedom should not be unlimited" (54).

Under Morris' direction, Abilene Christian College adopted this statement taken from a similar statement by the Coordinating Board of the Texas College and University System:
Institutions of higher education are conducted for the common good. The common good depends upon a free search for truth and its free expression. Hence, it is essential that the faculty member be free to pursue scholarly inquiry without undue restriction, and to voice and publish his conclusions concerning the significance of evidence that he considers relevant. He must be free from the corrosive fear that others, inside or outside the university community, because their vision may differ from his own, may threaten his professional career or material benefits accruing from it.

Each faculty member is entitled to full freedom in the classroom in discussing the subject which he teaches. Each faculty member is also a citizen of his nation, state, and community; and when he speaks, writes or acts as such, must be free from institutional censorship or discipline.

The concept of academic freedom must be accompanied by an equally demanding concept of responsibility, shared by governing boards, administrators, and faculty members.

The fundamental responsibilities of a faculty member as a teacher and scholar include a maintenance of competence in his field of specialization and the exhibition of such competence in lectures, discussions or publications.

Exercise of professional integrity by a faculty member includes recognition that the public will judge his profession and his institution by his statements. Therefore, he should strive to be accurate, to exercise appropriate constraint, to show respect for the opinions of others, and to avoid creating the impression that he speaks or acts for his college or university when he speaks or acts as a private person.

A faculty member should be judicious in the use of controversial material in the classroom and should introduce such material only as it has clear relationship to his subject field.

A faculty member has the responsibility to provide due notice of his intention to interrupt or terminate institutional services.

Don H. Morris appended these thoughts to the accepted statement:

In the Christian college, as well as in other institutions of higher learning, there should be a proper balance between academic freedom and academic
responsibility. Freedom in an orderly society is always limited and never absolute. The freedom of a teacher in Abilene Christian College, therefore, is limited by his relationships in society, by the authority of the Scriptures, and by those purposes for which the college exists.

After including the statement of the original purposes of the school set forth in the Charter, Morris concluded:

It is clear from these qualifications of Board members that the founders of Abilene Christian College fully intended that the institution would be committed to New Testament Christianity. To this end, it is the policy of the College that each person on the faculty or administration should be a faithful Christian both in name and practice. In accepting a position as a member of the faculty or the administration, the teacher or administrator understands that this academic freedom is not regarded as a license for the propagation of a principle or an ideology that violates the basic purposes of the institution (53).

These principles were repeated by Morris several times, but they probably were never stated more forcefully than in his last speech to the faculty as president of Abilene Christian College on May 14, 1968 (55). The complete text of that speech is appended to this dissertation.

Americanism, Socialism, Communism

Don H. Morris was an enthusiastic exponent of free enterprise and the American way of life. During World War II, he encouraged Abilene Christian College faculty members to assist in war bond sales and other patriotic efforts (56). Morris feared a creeping socialism in America and a corresponding loss of individualism and local control of government. He believed strongly in the separation of
church and state, and yet he felt that democracy is the form of government most conducive to Christianity and that Christianity is the greatest moral stimulant to democracy. In 1949, Abilene Christian College began a new public relations periodical entitled *Horizons*, of which Morris was the editor. The publication continued through 1969. In it Morris made many statements about American democracy as a superior way of life and about the dangers of government paternalism. His political conservatism is reflected in this typical excerpt:

The best assurance that our democracy shall not perish is that our children be taught by men and women guided by the only rules of life that can make democracy live--the teachings of Jesus of Nazareth. Much of today's ominous trend toward the welfare state is a result of teaching of so-called liberals done behind the mask of academic freedom. Teachers of that kind usually emphasize subject matter over development of character. They almost invariably are strong supporters of centralized power in education. Destruction of democracy is inevitable if our teachers lose their belief in and their desire to teach the principles of morality, respect for authority, and self-reliance which makes "living off the government" repugnant. Two wars have been fought in a generation because people gained much learning while their hearts were untouched by the revitalizing spirit of Christianity. Centralized power was the seed of the anti-democratic ideologies that brought on these wars. Because it takes away individuality, centralized power is contrary to the Christian principles that alone can preserve our way of life (57).
Morris also wrote for the college's publication *Vision*, a monthly pamphlet used to promote the Annual Bible Lectureship at the school. Here, as in other places, Morris emphasized hard work, honesty, self-reliance, and freedom of the individual. After relating how the Production Credit Associations of Texas had paid off a $7,835,000.00 loan from the government under the Farm Credit Act of 1933, Morris stated:

This thing is also encouraging because it proves there are people in our country who desire independence from government aids, and consequent controls, even though such may cost them more in taxes. This is encouraging because it shows that some of our people kept their thinking straight enough to recognize that each person must help provide every dollar the government spends for any purpose, including outright grants as well as subsidies or loans.

We have observed that a large portion of our people are really fearful of the ultimate effect of government paternalism. The tragedy is that so many of those who have such fears have not themselves withstood the temptation to ask for or at least agree to government handouts to their own communities. The excuse so often is, "If we don't get it some other community will" (58).

Similar statements were made by Morris throughout the 1950's and the early 1960's upholding individual freedom and warning against an expanding federal bureaucracy.

Morris believed that "big government" leads inexorably to socialism and that socialism ultimately expresses itself in communism. He wrote:
The liberties nurtured in our form of government depend primarily upon preservation of local self-government—the right to elect those who govern right down where the people live. Or should we say that we must restore and hold intact the full power of the local government?

The one sure way to undermine democracy is to take government further and further from the people (60).

Concerning the importance of free enterprise in maintaining individual freedom, he wrote concerning the oil industry:

As long as individuals are allowed freely to engage in the oil business as employers and employees—free from undue government control—there will remain opportunity for young people (60).

Morris told a crowd of one hundred and fifty businessmen at an Abilene Kiwanis Club luncheon:

One of the awful results of socialism is that it governs—it regulates and directs by bureaus and by centralized government and leaves out the checks and balances of the traditional American system. Every time we take another step toward socialism, we lose a little more of the protection that our freedom has always had. Just a few more steps and we will be at least half socialist, which means we will be half slave and half free (61).

At a "College Town Hall Meeting" at Abilene Christian College in the spring of 1952, Morris told a group of students that socialism always ends in communism. He said:

You do not have democracy, production, and socialism together. If you have socialism and democracy, people sooner or later vote not to work—or not to work long enough to have sufficient production for people to eat and live. Then somebody has to step in to make them work and it becomes a dictatorship or communism (62).
Whatever deficiencies may have existed in Morris' political and economic theories, they did not diminish his abhorence of government's encroachment on individual liberty when he felt that such encroachment stifled freedom and initiative.

In 1956, the Board of Trustees of Abilene Christian College gave Dr. and Mrs. Don H. Morris a two-month vacation in Europe and the Near East (63). On that trip, Morris visited Russia and other Communist nations. His antipathy to Communism was reinforced by what he saw and heard. He decried the absolute dictatorship of Communism and the privation of the people in Communist nations (64). Several successive issues of Horizons reminded readers of the importance of free enterprise and of the responsibilities of freedom. Morris warned of moral degeneracy in the United States; he believed that such deterioration of moral principles threatened the foundations of democracy (65).

In the wake of Russia's first successful satellite launching and the highly publicized failure of America to launch its first satellite, many people in the United States made panic-stricken pronouncements that American education had failed, leaving the nation technologically inferior to the Soviet Union. Morris urged moderation and restraint in making sweeping changes in the American educational system and in accepting massive government support
of science education. He noted that many Soviet technicians had been educated outside Russia. He wrote of the need to upgrade American science education, but he also made these observations:

We began to realize that we have a right to fear Russia not so much because her educational system has produced scientists, but because her schools have failed to produce a nation with leaders of character who love peace and who respect humanity.

Reason tells us that while great scientists are needed in America, we cannot afford to overlook the weightier matters and make the same mistake Russia has made. Neither can we afford Federal aid in the form of scholarships lavishly conferred and raise up a generation accustomed to living off the labor of others (66).

Morris' disdain for socialism and Communism was not just a matter of economics. He opposed totalitarianism for moral and religious reasons, declaring that it violated principles of freedom and individuality in such a way that it destroyed individual dignity and self-assertiveness.

Don H. Morris deliberately avoided expressions of partisan politics which might alienate part of the school's constituency. This statement appears in the Board of Trustees Meeting Notes:

There was then a discussion of the policy of the President of the College and other Administrators with regard to participation in political campaigns. While no official action was taken, it was the consensus of opinion that, since Abilene Christian College belongs to the public, its top officials should not take any public part in political campaigns (67).

Such political neutrality was not always easy to attain or to project to the public. Morris recalled an occasion when
the governor of Texas came to Abilene to campaign for re-election. A member of the election committee asked Morris to introduce the governor on television. Morris declined, and, with some explanation, the committee member and the governor accepted his reasons. That evening, there was a reception for the governor at a downtown hotel. Morris and a friend went to the hotel to "shake hands with the governor." A local newsman took their picture shaking hands, and the picture was on the front page of the next morning's local newspaper (68).

Morris did attempt to avoid partisanship, however. But this consideration did not prevent his expressing deep feelings about what he felt were principles of Americanism. Upon the death of Dwight D. Eisenhower, Morris read a respectful tribute during the college's regular chapel service on March 31, 1969. In that speech, he spoke of Eisenhower's warmth and of the American people's love for him, even many of those who had voted against him (69).

One of the rare instances of Morris' expressing a strongly partisan, political view was his full support of President Lyndon B. Johnson and the involvement of America in the Vietnam War. Perhaps Morris' stand was influenced by his genuine friendship for President Johnson as well as his abhorrence of Communism, but his stand was unequivocal. This article by Morris appeared in several publications:
The scriptures say simply and definitely, "Honor the King." The Caesars whom Peter enjoined Christians to honor were men of power, but they were not known for their justice or their character. But still the Apostle wrote, "Honor the King."

I should honor and respect the President of the United States because of his position and the fact that he is our leader. I should pray for the President for the same reason and also because the scriptures tell me to do that. I should respect and pray for the President just as it is incumbent upon me to obey the laws passed by Congress and signed and approved by him.

Another thing, we in the United States have got to find some way to quit killing our Presidents by overburdening them with responsibilities too heavy for any man to bear and by subjecting them to pressures and criticisms so unfair and so inconsiderate as to break the heart of any man.

A few days ago I had the privilege in the White House of shaking hands with and exchanging a few words with President Johnson. He looked absolutely worn out, as if he had been through a wringer, as we say.

I said to myself later, "After all, who could do what we ask him to do? Who could answer all the conflicting voices in the face of all the demonstrations and selfishness? Who could restore order to the land, at the same time save the world in Asia, and make for prosperity and happiness at home?" No man could, and we ought to quit treating our Presidents that way.

To me the answer is loyalty and respect--loyalty to and respect for our system of government, for our free way of life, and for our leaders.

If we will be loyal to our way of life and our leaders, America can win the war quickly, and we can gradually and definitely revitalize our nation so that we can have happiness and peace and prosperity at home (70).

The educator's frequent statements about democracy and his extensive work with the American Studies Program at Abilene Christian College caused Morris to be honored by the Freedoms Foundation at Valley Forge, a corporation
established at Valley Forge, Pennsylvania, to promote Americanism. Further discussion of those honors is reserved for the next chapter of this work.

Government Aid to Private Education

Closely related to Don H. Morris' philosophy of individualism and self-reliance as essential ingredients of democracy was his firm conviction that educational integrity is dependent on freedom. He expressed deep concern about the encroachment of the federal government on education, especially upon private education. This belief, of course, was related to his persuasion that in democracy there should be a clear separation of church and state. Morris wrote:

Our country is the island of liberty in the world because we have been much more successful in maintaining real and practical separation of State and church.

More important is the strengthening of this position and quick annihilation of any trend toward the weakening of it. Here there must be no organizational connection between church and government. Our government must not give financial support to any church or religious movement because such, as inconsequential as it might seem, could easily be the beginning of the end of our religious freedom.

The welfare of every individual is at stake (72). Morris condemned government education grants for private schools. He wrote, "Although American colleges are seed beds wherein democracy is brought to bud, they do not need the artificial climate of 'protection' offered by government education grants." Morris declared that any growth made
possible by government aid would only be expansion. He explained, "Expansion is increase in size. Growth is an increase in stature" (73).

Morris declared that federal aid to education with its resultant federal control and federal centralization of education could lead to a dictatorship that could change the philosophy of America in an alarmingly short time (74). In a speech to the Junction, Texas, Chamber of Commerce, Morris asserted that centralization in government weakens the ability of people to produce, and that production under socialism requires a dictator. He said that centralization in government would be radically increased by federal aid to education (75).

Morris also opposed federal aid to education for fiscal reasons. At an Abilene Kiwanis Club luncheon, Morris observed:

We are all opposed to excessive federal spending that seems to be threatening our very economic existence. And yet, when it comes to a matter involving our own interests, we are often there with our hands out, palms up, for our share (76).

It will be noted in the next chapter of this dissertation that Abilene Christian College was on occasion the beneficiary of federal assistance. The school had accepted a large number of military surplus buildings shortly after World War II, the gift of a large complex of apartment buildings at Big Spring, Texas in 1951, and the benefit of
a large enrollment of war veterans whose education was financed through the "G.I. Bill." Furthermore, in February of 1955, the college received a forty-year loan from the Federal Housing and Home Finance Agency for $1,725,000.00 at three-and-one-fourth percent interest in order to build a new boys' dormitory, a new girls' dormitory, and a new cafeteria (77). Morris was one of the leaders of the efforts which finally materialized in the Texas Tuition Equalization Grant Program which became law in Texas in 1971 (38).

Morris made three lines of argument to answer those who questioned his philosophy in accepting government help for Abilene Christian College after making so many statements opposing government aid to private education. First, he made a distinction between government assistance to an individual and direct government aid to the school. He considered the "G.I. Bill" and the Texas Tuition Equalization Grants to be assistance to students, and he believed that those programs of assistance to individuals in no way violated the separation of church and state (14). Second, Morris made a distinction between loans and grants or gifts. In answering an endowment corporation's inquiry about the college, Morris explained:
Abilene Christian College does not have a written statement of policy concerning federal aid programs. We have always opposed the national government's increasing its participation in support of education. I have personally gone on record with the National Education Association and other educational groups, as well as with our congressmen and senators, as being opposed to the enlargement of federal government support of education. I must say, however, that with regard to the National Defense Loan Fund, the trustees of the College voted to participate in that program because we felt that to refuse to do so would deprive our students of the opportunity of financing their education. Furthermore, we have borrowed money from governmental agencies for the construction of dormitories and a cafeteria. We do not consider this an outright grant, because we are paying the money back--principal and interest--on schedule (78).

Third, Morris insisted that policies of the government in making loans and in offering other assistance to education had changed so that there were "no strings attached" which might cause the college to sacrifice any freedom or integrity (10).

Morris did not change his feelings appreciably about the fiscal irresponsibility of massive federal intrusion financially into education. He said, "While many of us thought that this kind of policy on the part of the government might be unwise, when the laws were passed providing for a change in policy and the money was available, part of it was there for Abilene Christian College and we deserved to get our part" (68).

Dr. Robert Hunter, Vice President of Abilene Christian College, asserts that Don H. Morris' earlier resistance to federal assistance to the school mellowed somewhat as the
laws posed less threat to the institution's freedom and as the constituents and trustees became more agreeable toward accepting the help (38). There was some resistance by constituents as the college began to accept loans from the federal government. One group of approximately fifty people in Midland, Texas, sent Morris a telegram of strong protest. Morris and other officials contacted the people involved and arranged for a meeting with them in Midland. Only nine people came to the meeting, and, after visiting with the school officials about the matter, their objections were mollified (68).

Racial Integration

One of the great social and moral problems in the history of America has been the treatment of minority races. The Declaration of Independence proclaimed the equality of men and the inalienable rights to life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness. The moral as well as the legal aspects of racial bigotry were involved in the Civil War that sharply divided the United States of America in the nineteenth century. Racial prejudice and its inhumane intolerance have persisted to some degree into modern American culture. Higher education generally was not free from the social blight of racial discrimination, especially against the American Negro.
The National Association for the Advancement of Colored People was founded in New York City, in 1909, by sixty Negro and white citizens for the express purpose of ending racial segregation and discrimination in every phase of public life. Momentous court battles were fought in order to gain for members of minority races rights inherently implied in American democracy and explicitly declared in Amendment Fourteen of the Constitution of the United States.

In 1948, the Supreme Court of the United States ruled that restrictive covenants preventing real estate owners from selling their property to members of minority groups could not be enforced by federal or state courts. On May 17, 1954, the Supreme Court held in the case of Brown versus the Board of Education of Topeka that compulsory segregation in public schools denies the constitutional right of equal protection under the law. Other legal cases were pursued breaking down racial barriers in American culture and education.

There were mixed feelings about racial integration at Abilene Christian College on the part of the trustees and patrons of the school. When the subdivision, Abilene Heights, was created as a part of the school's move to their new campus in 1929, a clause in the charter of the new development prohibited ownership of any of the lots by persons not of the white race (79). A similar restrictive
clause was written into the Extension of Abilene Heights charter when the college opened another subdivision in 1950 (80). These restrictive clauses were repealed by the college trustees in 1952 (81).

From its beginning, Abilene Christian College had maintained a policy of refusing admittance to Negroes. Many foreign students had attended the college, including people from Asia (particularly India) and Mexico and other places, whose skin color ranged from tan to very dark brown, and no racial problems were encountered, but the ban on Negro enrollment continued. One Church of Christ preacher was refused admittance to Abilene Christian College because he was a Negro (82). ("Negro" is used in this discussion because the restrictions of the school were on the basis of race rather than color, as has been mentioned in regard to the enrollment of foreign students who were not "white.") He pursued his degree at McMurry College in Abilene, which had integrated shortly before. Some patrons of the school were disturbed that he had been refused admission to Abilene Christian College (82).

Don H. Morris was a personal friend to many black Church of Christ ministers and members. He had worked closely with the administration of Southwestern Christian College in Terrell, Texas, a school for black students operated by members of the Church of Christ. Two factors
made Morris reluctant to integrate Abilene Christian College precipitately. The first factor was that he did not want to undermine Southwestern Christian College's enrollment. On the other hand, Morris knew that Southwestern Christian College and other programs sustained by members of the Church of Christ for higher education among blacks, did not offer the opportunities that Abilene Christian College offered. From this viewpoint, he encouraged the trustees to open the college to Negroes. Morris did not attempt to "push" the board on the integration matter, however. He reasoned that the policy to admit blacks should originate with the trustees and that he would administer that policy to the best of his ability (25).

The second factor that caused Morris to be deliberate in encouraging integration was that he wanted true integration rather than a de facto segregation which might occur if one or a few Negroes were received into the institution without providing for them to be a true part of the college and its program (10).

Despite the racial prejudice of some constituents, efforts were begun to provide for the integration of blacks at Abilene Christian College in the late 1950's. By 1960, an Integration Committee was completing plans to admit blacks to the school (83). The college officially became integrated in the fall of 1961, after the Board of
Trustees unanimously agreed that any applicant meeting the admission requirements to the graduate school should be admitted regardless of race (84). The school's plan allowed any qualified applicant with sixty hours credit to enroll as an upperclassman in 1962, and any qualified student to enter the freshman class in 1963, regardless of race. Black students were encouraged by the administration of the college to mix freely with the student body; the black students were readily accepted by most Abilene Christian College students (82).

Interracial dating began soon after Abilene Christian College became integrated. Morris did not try to forbid such associations, but he did recommend counseling for both parties explaining some of the social implications of racially-mixed dating and interracial marriages. If the relationship seemed to be serious, Don H. Morris made it a practice to inform the parents or guardians of both dating partners. Several interracial marriages did occur, causing consternation with some parents, but Morris believed that forbidding such marriages interfered with personal rights of the people involved and that such a policy would be beyond the rights of the college. After a few years, the counseling efforts were abandoned for the same reason (82).

Morris requested a list of the black students from the Dean of Students every semester so that he could become
personally acquainted with them. When integration became a policy of Abilene Christian College, Morris said, "I believe it is the right thing to do." Morris later expressed his regret that the school had not accepted Negro students sooner, especially as he thought of the valuable contributions that may have been made to society by giving the best possible training to black preachers of the gospel of Christ (82).

Moral Philosophy

The grandparents and parents of Don H. Morris were members of the Church of Christ. Morris was baptized as a young man. All of his undergraduate college work was done in schools conducted by members of the Church of Christ. His wife was a member of the same church, and all of his three children became members and married faithful members of the Church of Christ. For many years, Morris served as an elder of the College Church of Christ in Abilene (85).

Abilene Christian College has traditionally banned smoking, drinking, and dancing on its campus. An interesting sidelight on the smoking ban is that through the years some of the trustees of the college smoked. When one board member suggested that the on-campus ban of smoking be enforced upon the trustees of the college, the motion was abandoned without further discussion (86).
Morris did not smoke, drink, dance, or gamble. He spoke out strongly against what he considered to be immoral practices (10). In 1961, Morris led a group of citizens who prevailed upon the Abilene City Council to pass a motion picture censor law authorizing a Citizens Review Board to rate movies and calling for fines on movie houses that violated the censorship ordinance (87).

In 1957, an Abilene businessman secured a small tract of land on the northern edge of Abilene, incorporated it, and named it "Impact." A local option for liquor election was conducted in the new little "town" in 1962, and the sale of alcohol was legalized. The effort was a financial boon to its organizers as it provided a liquor outlet for legally dry Taylor County. Morris was steadfast in his opposition to the enterprise (88). By 1965, restaurant owners in Texas attempted to get a bill passed in the Texas Senate authorizing the sale of miniature bottles of liquor for consumption in eating establishments. Morris fought the proposed bill in Abilene and then went to Austin, Texas, where he appeared before the Texas Senate Jurisprudence Committee. He argued that an atmosphere of drinking would not necessarily increase tourism as some has claimed. He proposed that the greatest tourist attraction would be a wholesome atmosphere that would cause families to come to Texas by the carload rather than causing individuals to
come to conventions. He said that the law, if passed, would increase alcoholic consumption in Texas, "otherwise, why could the liquor people be in favor of it?" Through the efforts of Morris and others, the bill died in the committee meetings (89).

With all of Morris' opposition to liquor, he was compassionate toward those with drinking problems. It was a source of pride to him that Dr. Paul Southern, head of the Abilene Christian College Bible Department for many years, was a leader in Alcoholics Anonymous programs and other efforts to rehabilitate alcoholics in Taylor County. Morris recalled the time during World War II when the shortage of gasoline often caused people to travel in car pools. Morris signed up in a car pool for a trip to Dallas. One man in the car was drinking whiskey from a flask and becoming offensive to the other passengers. He began to behave rather obnoxiously toward a woman beside him, and Morris could restrain himself no longer. He told the man, "You should not be drinking that liquor. It is causing you to act improperly." The tippler replied, "Shouldn't be drinking it? It's made to drink. If you don't drink it, what else could you do with it?" Morris replied, "You could pour it out." The man retorted, "Pour it out? Oh, no! I may be drunk, but I'm not crazy!" Morris often chuckled when he told the story (90).
When the Texas Legislature voted to put the non-binding parimutuel betting proposal on the 1968 primary election ballot, Morris worked diligently for its defeat. Morris cooperated with Harold Kirkpatrick, Executive Secretary of the Texas Council of Churches, and T. A. Patterson, Executive Secretary of the Baptist General Convention of Texas, to lead a statewide effort to defeat the proposition (91).

Don H. Morris frequently made speeches in which he called attention to what was involved in the name, Abilene Christian College. He suggested that the first word in the school's name reflected the debt that the college owed to the citizens of Abilene, that the last word stated the responsibility of the institution to be an outstanding educational organization, and that the word "Christian" described the ideals by which the school should live. When Morris spoke the name of the college, he always emphasized the word "Christian." In his deep, strong voice, he would intone Abilene Chr-ris'-tian College (32).

In a chapel speech to the whole faculty and student body on September 21, 1964, Morris emphasized the importance of the word "Christian": 
The catalog says, "The Christian College is obligated by its very nature to strive for excellence in every area of its life and work. To be less than Christian or less than a college is to renounce its unique role in higher education. This means that Abilene Christian College puts "First things First."

It means that the Board of Trustees and the public expect us to be a Christian College. It means that every teacher should be a Christian in the full sense of the word.

It means that we ask our students to conduct themselves in keeping with Christian ideals. It means that anything that the College puts its stamp of approval on—such as public programs—should be high class, and entertaining certainly, but that it should never be irreverent or crude or coarse or suggestive. If such does raise its ugly head here, you and I have the responsibility of preventing it in the future because we are a Christian College.

Yes, we are a Christian College. This means that we worship together. It means that the College believes—that Board members believe, that all teachers believe, and that we invite all students to believe—that the College believes that Christ is God's Son and that He was raised up from the grave. The College believes that the Bible is totally the inspired Word of God, and that only by living by it may we serve successfully in this life and gain the life to come (92).

These are some of the principles expressed by Don H. Morris repeatedly as he served in the presidency of Abilene Christian College for twenty-nine years.
CHAPTER BIBLIOGRAPHY

1. Board of Trustees of Abilene Christian College
   Meeting "Minutes" (hereafter referred to as BOT
   "Minutes"), February 23, 1940.

2. Text of Don H. Morris' Inaugural Speech as
   President of Abilene Christian College,
   November 9, 1941.

3. Interview with Mrs. Jerolene Fulks, October 22, 1975.

4. Abilene Christian College Faculty Meeting Notes,
   May 26, 1958.

5. Interview with A. B. Morris, February 6, 1975.


10. Interview with A. C. Scott, August 20, 1975.


12. Interview with Gordon Bennett, August 26, 1975.


15. Interview with John C. Stevens, October 20, 1975.


23. Text of speech by Don H. Morris for the Business Education Day at Abilene High School, not dated.


30. Abilene Christian College Faculty Meeting Notes, November 12, 1942.

31. Abilene Christian College Faculty Meeting Notes, October 19, 1955.

32. Interview with J. W. Treat, August 29, 1975.

33. Abilene Christian College Faculty Meeting Notes, May 14, 1940.


43. BOT "Minutes," February 20, 1956.

44. Interview with Mrs. Gorman C. Kenley, January 9, 1975.

45. Abilene Christian College Faculty Meeting Notes, May 14, 1968.

46. BOT "Minutes," September 1, 1930.

47. BOT "Minutes," October 4, 1947.


49. Abilene Christian College Faculty Meeting Notes, September 5, 1964.

50. Abilene Christian College Faculty Meeting Notes, April 11, 1946.


55. Abilene Christian College Faculty Meeting Notes, May 14, 1968.
56. Abilene Christian College Faculty Meeting Notes, November 12, 1942; April 20, 1944; April 17, 1945.


60. Don H. Morris, "Of Oil and Men," Horizons, April, 1950, p. 3.


73. Don H. Morris, "Free to Go," Horizons, June, 1951, p. 3.
81. BOT "Minutes," February 26, 1952.
82. Interview with Garvin V. Beauchamp, August 26, 1975.
85. Interview with Guy Scruggs, August 21, 1975.
86. BOT "Minutes," February 24, 1947.
88. Interview with Mrs. Don H. Morris, January 9, 1975.
89. The Dallas Times-Herald, March 17, 1965, p. 8A.
90. Interview with Mrs. Jacquelyn Morris Lawson, January 8, 1975.
CHAPTER IV

THE PRESIDENCY OF DON H. MORRIS AT
ABILENE CHRISTIAN COLLEGE

The Beginning

Don H. Morris officially became the president of Abilene Christian College on June 1, 1940 (1). The transition of leadership from the previous administration to that of Morris occurred smoothly. Former president James F. Cox was retained as a teacher of speech and Bible (2). Plans were made for Morris' formal inauguration during the school's annual Homecoming activities on November 9, 1940. Approximately two thousand people gathered for the inaugural services. W. H. Free, an original trustee of the college, gave Morris the charge from the board. Morris' acceptance speech received a rousing ovation as he concluded by saying, "The day is bright and the scenes that we shall see are beautiful and glorious" (3). Morris' widow recalls that he approached his new responsibilities without noticeable change of attitude or conduct, and that he treated the presidency simply as an important job that needed to be done well (4).
One of the first tasks performed by the new president was to borrow seven thousand dollars from an Abilene bank to pay the ninth month salary to the teachers of the college (5).

The 1940-41 enrollment at Abilene Christian College was 710, the largest in the school's history (6). During his first year, Morris was especially concerned about paying off the school's approximately sixty thousand dollars indebtedness and seeking accreditation by the Southern Association of Colleges and Secondary Schools (7). In December of 1940, Morris met with a Southern Association committee in Memphis, Tennessee. He was encouraged by the meeting. He proposed that the college should make a dedicated effort to be approved by the association as soon as possible (8).

Morris set about the task of encouraging harmony among the college trustees. He did not condemn certain diversities of opinion among the men, but he did urge them to maintain respect for each other and to be guided by the best interests of the college. When W. H. Free resigned, after serving as a trustee from 1906 until 1942, he said that he had seen years of internal strife in the board, but "now there is utmost harmony and friendship among the members" (9).
The Premillennial Problem

Shortly before becoming president of Abilene Christian College, Vice President Don H. Morris had proposed a policy of openness with the school's critics and willingness to discuss accusations against the college. Morris' "put everything on the table" policy soon was brought to a test. On February 21, 1940, the president-elect offered a crowd of about one hundred Church of Christ preachers at the college's Annual Bible Lectureship the opportunity to express any criticisms which they had of the school (10). One preacher, well known to Churches of Christ, asked Morris if he were serious or if he were just "playing to the galleries"? Morris smilingly replied that he was serious. The preacher declared that the school was under a shadow; he named several criticisms of faculty members in previous years. Former president Jesse P. Sewell went to the rostrum and replied that all of those criticisms involved matters that had happened many years before. He asked, "Why not bring up present day events?" (11).

Thereupon, J. L. Hines, a preacher for the Church of Christ, arose and quoted excerpts from the book What Jesus Taught which had been written fifteen years earlier by Charles H. Roberson, head of the Abilene Christian College Bible Department. The statements were alleged to be
premillennial; Hines asked Roberson, who was in the audience, if he wished to repudiate them. The premillennial controversy had been waged rather hotly for several years within the Church of Christ and some other religious groups. The premillennial view was that Christ would establish an earthly kingdom to last for one thousand years after His return to earth. The view held by most members of the Church of Christ was that Christ is already reigning, His kingdom already exists as the church, and that when Christ returns the kingdom will be delivered up to God and the earth will be destroyed. The dispute had been conducted with such ardor in the early 1930's that the Abilene Christian College Board of Trustees had made a formal resolution renouncing premillennialism in 1935 (12).

Charles H. Roberson denied that he had made any premillennial statements. That evening, at the lecture service, before several hundred people, Don H. Morris, who was in charge of the service, allowed Roberson to make a statement about what had happened at the morning session (Morris later said that he had no idea what Roberson had intended to say and do). Hines and Roberson gave speeches answering each other until the stalemate was broken by a closing song service. Subsequently, Roberson signed a statement repudiating premillennial views and saying that
if he taught them, he did so unconsciously. Immediately several preachers charged that a man who would teach heresy "unconsciously" was an "unsafe" teacher. The controversy continued to boil until May of 1940, when, in a meeting of Church of Christ leaders in Dallas, Texas, Morris was told that, if he desired to receive support from those leaders and other members of the Church of Christ, the college would need to dismiss Roberson and another "unsafe" teacher from the Abilene Christian College faculty (11).

The dispute grew stronger through the latter part of 1940, being carried on in several Church of Christ periodicals and congregational bulletins. Don H. Morris, whose original purpose was to create goodwill toward the school, could see that the situation was deteriorating. Therefore in January of 1941, with the approval of the Board of Trustees, Morris made through Church of Christ brotherhood papers a statement totally disclaiming premillennial views. He persuaded Charles H. Roberson to repudiate anything in his book which could be construed to be premillennial. He also assured readers that he possessed signed statements from every teacher in the school to indicate that the faculty had no premillennial leanings or sympathies. Roberson made arrangements with his publisher to reclaim all unsold copies of the book.
Correction pages were offered to all who might request them. Morris' statement was respectful and decisive. The school's repudiation of premillennialism was complete, and the charges against Abilene Christian College in this regard subsided quickly (10).

World War II

Japan shocked America and much of the world by the massive air attack on the American naval base at Pearl Harbor on December 7, 1941. The United States declared war on Japan the next day and on Germany and Italy shortly afterward. The United States immediately began the most massive military build-up in its history. Many Abilene Christian College students were drafted into or enlisted in the military service. From August of 1942 until August of 1943, eighty-five male students left the college to become a part of America's growing military force (13). Twenty-eight students got their call to the draft in one day (14). The military draft was disruptive of the educational plans for many young men. Several students were drafted shortly before the end of the spring semester of 1942. Don H. Morris wrote to government officials in Lubbock, Texas, and gained permission for young men who had left school in their senior year to finish their college work by correspondence and to graduate with the summer class (15).
During the fall of 1942, a financial campaign was pursued to pay off the college's debt. Leaders of one hundred and eighty-four congregations of the Church of Christ took up special collections, and ninety-two hundred individuals added their contributions to the fund drive. In February of 1943, Morris announced to the trustees that the school was free of debt and that all of its bills were paid up to date (14).

Morris asked that a trust fund be started immediately for a new science building to replace the "shack" in which the science department had been doing its work. He advocated long-range planning for the college's future, and he predicted that an enrollment upsurge after the war would replace the declining number of students during the war years. Morris quoted to the trustees this statement from John Ruskin:

> When we build let us think that we build forever. Let it not be for present delight or for present use alone. Let it be such work as our descendants will thank us for, and let us think, as we lay stone upon stone, that a time is to come when these stones will be held sacred, because our hands have touched them, and that men will say as they look upon the labor and wrought substance of them, "See! This our fathers did for us." (14)

Morris closed that same annual report to the board with these words:
It should be mentioned that this is my third year as president of Abilene Christian College and that in this meeting you should elect the president for the next period of years. I have never asked for any position in our school. If you think it best for me to continue in my present work, I shall do so gladly, as anyone with normal ambition would. I want you to feel, however, that when and if you believe someone else can serve in a better way, that it will be your duty as well as your privilege to choose that person (14).

The trustees unanimously elected Don H. Morris to a new three-year term as president.

By the summer of 1943, school personnel were discussing plans to expand facilities for an anticipated post-war boom of students (16). Campus buildings were inadequate for any great increase in enrollment. Teacher salaries had been pared to eighty percent of the pre-war salary scale because of decreased revenues associated with the wartime enrollment decline. These factors and others caused Don H. Morris to ask the Board of Trustees to raise $325,000.00 in the period between September 1, 1943 and January 1, 1946, in order to build a new science building and a new dormitory plus providing additional operating expenses and a contingency or "security" fund (13).

Morris also appealed to the board to establish a new agriculture department and a department of religious education, to improve the home economics department, and to secure full-time directors for the boys' dormitories
rather than using faculty members as the school had done in the past. The financial campaign was scheduled to reach $200,000.00 by June 1, 1944, $300,000.00 by June 1, 1945, and $325,000.00 by January 1, 1946 (13).

In February of 1944, Morris proposed to the trustees that the school's two largest dormitories should be named for two families who had befriended the college in previous years. The dormitory on the south side of the campus was named McDonald Hall after the A. F. McDonald family whose gift in 1909 saved the college financially. The dormitory on the north side of the campus was named Zellner Hall after M. Zellner, a rancher from Loraine, Texas, who for many years served as president of the Board of Trustees (17). B Sherrod, who for many years was president of the Board of Trustees of Abilene Christian College and a close associate of Don H. Morris in securing large gifts for the school, joined forces with Morris in suggesting that the college should honor large contributors by naming buildings after them. This policy was carried out frequently during the Morris administration (18).

After the move to the new campus in 1929, the planning of the future of Abilene Christian College had been very limited. Two factors contributed greatly to this lack of long-range planning: one, the school's constant financial
deficit coupled with a depressed American economy made planning of great financial expenditures unrealistic, and two, the school plant had been adequate for the enrollment of the school before World War II. Morris foresaw the expanded enrollment that shortly would be thrust upon the institution. He asked that the inactive board members be replaced with enthusiastic ones, and he requested a commission made up of trustees and administrators in order to propose a long-range building program for the college (17). In the summer of 1944, architects were hired to design seven new campus buildings to be built over a period of six years at a total cost of $649,000.00 (19).

The new Agriculture Department began in May of 1944 (20). Mr. and Mrs. S. N. Allen of Christoval, Texas, gave the college a 112 acre farm on the northeast corner of the campus to be used by the new department (21).

The Post-War Boom

The enrollment of Abilene Christian College in the fall of 1944 was 485. Don H. Morris told the trustees, "I am sure we are on the upward swing again." His report to them stated that every dormitory was filled to capacity. A furnished apartment was bought across the street from the campus to house five couples and six male students. Students were being housed on the dormitory sun porches.
Chambers Hall, the men's dormitory, had three occupants in every room. The need for completing the college's financial campaign, begun in the fall of 1943, was urgent. President Don H. Morris and Vice President W. R. Smith decided to give virtually all of their time to complete it by the end of 1944 (22). The lack of money was not the only barrier to constructing desperately needed buildings. The war effort of America had created a critical shortage of building materials. Morris predicted that the college could have as many as nine hundred or one thousand students soon after the war's end. The crisis of inadequate facilities was foreseen, but efforts to prepare for it were painfully slow (23).

On January 30, 1945, Morris announced that Mr. and Mrs. E. D. Chambers of Afton, Texas, had set up a trust of $65,000.00 to be matched by $60,000.00 from the college. Fifty thousand dollars of the amount was to be matched by the school for the construction of a new dormitory. Fifteen thousand dollars was to be combined with ten thousand dollars from Abilene Christian College for a new home economics unit (23). After considerable effort, Morris was able to secure a building permit from the War Production Board that would allow the school to buy the
materials for building a one hundred thousand dollar science building. The groundbreaking ceremony for the new science building occurred on September 17, 1945 (24).

The expansion of facilities was far too leisurely to please Morris. He predicted an enrollment of one thousand by 1947 or 1948, and he declared, "Large additions in facilities must be provided before the fall term of 1946, or we cannot accommodate the students for that semester." The Board of Trustees decided to proceed with plans for a $350,000.00 girls' dormitory (24).

The United States Congress passed the Serviceman's Readjustment Act of 1944 (the "G.I. Bill") for veterans of World War II. In the fall of 1945, Don H. Morris was authorized by the trustees of the college to sign a contract with the United States government for World War II veterans to attend Abilene Christian College on the "G.I. Bill of Rights" (25).

The surrender of Japan aboard the U.S.S. Missouri in Tokyo Bay on September 2, 1945, marked the end of the Axis war effort and therefore the end of World War II. It was also the prelude to over two million veterans' enrolling in American colleges under the "G.I. Bill." The preparation of Abilene Christian College to receive several hundred of these veterans was virtually frantic. Don H. Morris sought and obtained twenty-five
prefabricated houses (called "hutments") at a military installation in McGregor, Texas, for a nominal lease from the United States government. He also obtained by a similar lease contract fifty trailer houses from a government installation at Denver City, Texas (26). Morris also led in obtaining four large "CCC buildings" from Camp Barkley near Abilene to be converted into dormitories (27).

An important part of the college's efforts to create student housing was the new girls' dormitory being built on the northern edge of the campus. Mrs. Julia Chambers, whose family had given fifty thousand dollars toward the construction of the building, had requested before her death on July 23, 1945, that the dormitory be named for Mrs. Bess McKenzie, wife of J. E. McKenzie. McKenzie had served as president of the Board of Trustees through the years of the Depression. The request was granted according to the trust contract between the college and the Chambers family (28).

The upsurge in enrollment continued. Don H. Morris cooperated with the federal government by putting its recommended agricultural courses in the curriculum for the benefit of veterans (29). He also executed a contract with the Veteran's Administration for vocational rehabilitation training by correspondence (30).
College housing remained critically inadequate. Morris intensified his search for surplus government buildings. Structures sufficient to provide forty-three apartments were acquired from the Federal Public Housing Authority (31). Five houses were bought from the United States Army for a total of $5,000.00 (32). Thirteen cottages which had been used to house army officers at Camp Barkley were received from the Federal Public Housing Authority. From the fall of 1945 through the fall of 1946, enough temporary housing was accumulated and set up to accommodate 170 married veterans, 242 single veterans, 162 nonveterans, and thirteen faculty families (33).

In the year 1946, thirty-five new faculty members were added (34). Classroom space was urgently needed. Don H. Morris requested and ultimately received six more surplus buildings from the Federal Works Agency to be used for classrooms (35). Even with the massive utilization of temporary, government surplus buildings, the facilities of Abilene Christian College were insufficient for its student body. Two programs of supreme importance were launched by Morris and the college trustees in 1946. One was a financial campaign for three million dollars to be put into effect immediately to secure funds for operating and expanding the school. The other was the resolution to make a determined effort to gain entry into
Southern Association of Colleges and Secondary Schools as soon as possible (36). Both of these programs finally were accomplished, but the first one caused a serious problem between the college and some members of the Church of Christ.

The College in the Church Budget Controversy

The pressing need for additional facilities and operating funds caused the trustees of Abilene Christian College to inaugurate with fervor the campaign to secure three million dollars. Robert M. Alexander, a Church of Christ minister, was hired by the college to lead the drive. The campaign committee proposed the following plan, and it was approved by the trustees:

How we hope to raise $3,000,000.

When brethren realize the importance of trained workers in the church and when they realize that our Christian Colleges are the only institution that can be depended upon to give the church this trained leadership, we believe brethren everywhere will be delighted to INVEST their money in such training in view of the need now and the increasing need for the future.
We should find brethren who will cooperate in congregations to invest

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Congregations</th>
<th>Investment</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>25</td>
<td></td>
<td>$10,000</td>
<td>$250,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>50</td>
<td></td>
<td>5,000</td>
<td>250,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>100</td>
<td></td>
<td>3,000</td>
<td>300,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>100</td>
<td></td>
<td>2,000</td>
<td>200,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>100</td>
<td></td>
<td>2,500</td>
<td>250,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>200</td>
<td></td>
<td>1,000</td>
<td>200,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>200</td>
<td></td>
<td>500</td>
<td>100,000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Total: $1,550,000

500 individuals to invest

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Individuals</th>
<th>Investment</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>250</td>
<td></td>
<td>500</td>
<td>250,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>250</td>
<td></td>
<td>1,000</td>
<td>250,000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Total: $2,050,000

Individual Donations from $10,000 up to $500,000

| Total | $1,000,000 |

Sum total: $3,050,000

With proper interest in Christian training and with proper cooperation in a program of Christian service and with the help of Almighty God, this can and will be done (36).

Churches of Christ are autonomous. No church organization exists beyond the local congregation under its own elders. There are no synods, districts, hierarchies or other organizational arrangements over the various local churches. One of the controversies which divided the Church of Christ and the Disciples of Christ was the creation of "societies" outside the framework of a local church to perform evangelistic work. Private enterprises, such as publishing houses and religious periodicals, were
organized and supported by individuals or groups of individuals, but they were not organically connected with the Church of Christ and, therefore, they were not directly supported by contributions from church treasuries. Orphan homes and homes for the aged were financed with money directly from churches, but their support was defended on one of two bases: one, that they were homes or quasi families and could receive church assistance as such, or two, that an orphan home could be organized as a part of a church's work overseen by its elders and that money sent to that eldership could be spent on its benevolent program.

The Christian college was neither a "family" nor the work of a congregation. It was a separate organization privately owned and privately controlled by a board of trustees. In the words of Don H. Morris, the college and the church "are two separate institutions." Morris conceived that the college is "human in origin" and the church is "divine" (37). Some members of the Church of Christ felt that if the colleges became organically related to the church and supported by it that they would become in principle very much like the missionary societies implicitly forbidden by the Charter of Abilene Christian College.
Large audiences of people acting as individuals had contributed to the school as contribution baskets were passed at the annual lectureships. Local ministers and church leaders had often solicited funds from individual members to help the college. Announcements were made in worship services of some Churches of Christ that a "special contribution" would be taken for a Christian college and that people could contribute as individuals and the funds would be sent directly to the school. But the sending of moneys out of Church of Christ treasuries to Christian colleges had been resisted by numerous church leaders for several years.

In the 1938 Annual Bible Lectureship at Abilene Christian College, the customary collection was taken at one service by passing containers into which individuals could put their contributions to the school. G. C. Brewer, a prominent Church of Christ minister, and later a recipient of an honorary doctorate from Abilene Christian College, urged all elders in the audience, when they returned to their home congregations and planned their new church budgets, that they should budget a regular amount out of the church treasury to Abilene Christian College. The immediate and widespread negative reaction to Brewer's plea caused James F. Cox, then president of the school, to make this public statement on March 4, 1938:
I have never, myself, raised any money nor have I authorized any one to raise money through the churches. I regret that Brother Brewer mentioned the matter the other night. We asked him to say a few words to encourage the people to give to Abilene Christian College, but we did not authorize him to make a statement about churches putting Abilene Christian College in their budgets (38).

Incidentally, some of the rooms in McDonald Hall on the Abilene Christian College campus have commemorative plaques on their doors indicating that they were furnished by Churches of Christ in 1929 (39). Nevertheless, the battle among Church of Christ preachers and editors over the "college in the church budget" was just cooling down when Robert M. Alexander and other financial campaign leaders sent letters to churches over the state of Texas asking elders to arrange meetings in their respective areas so that individuals could be informed about the fund-raising effort.

Abilene Christian College needed funds immediately to prepare for its burgeoning enrollment. The enthusiasm with which the new fund drive was begun perhaps contributed to the negative reaction of some church leaders. The letter of the elders of one church to Robert M. Alexander included this paragraph:

Furthermore, we do not appreciate the tone of your letter notifying us that you and President Morris had planned to have such a rally here on August 17. It seems to us that if the school respects the local church, instead of writing us to the effect that you had such a rally planned and
hoped that we would cooperate with you in it, you would first have written and asked for the approval of the church here for such a rally. Of course, if it is your plan to hold the rally in Lufkin whether the local church cooperates or not--then we have nothing further to say for we have no control over the town as a meeting place for any kind of gathering (40).

Statements from Alexander that the college supplied ninety-five percent of the church's best preachers and that the church was dependent upon the college for future leadership irritated several preachers and church leaders. One editor spoke of the Brewer statement of 1938, and then surmised:

Less than ten years later Bob Alexander sits cross-legged in his office at headquarters in Abilene Christian College, divides the state into districts, directs the churches to arrange mass-meetings at central points, and plans to do just what Brother Brewer suggested in 1938. It took the seed of Brewer's suggestion a good while to sprout, but it is now growing fast. Brother Alexander is telling the churches through official communiques sent out from headquarters, and through the Firm Foundation, "and not charged for as advertising," that the stalk depends on the sucker for its health and fruit-bearing ability, and that if the stalk doesn't carefully and liberally support the sucker, then the stalk will die. When the fog has cleared away, it may be clear that we will have to pull the suckers off the churches. At least it is good practice in growing corn (38).

C. R. Nichol, a former president of Thorp Spring Christian College and a leading evangelist and debater in the Church of Christ, recalled his policy of refusing college support from church treasuries and wrote, "I have not changed my views on the subject an iota" (41).
Many writers and speakers expressed themselves on the issue. Some critics were certain that Morris and the school were soliciting contributions directly from the churches (42). Don H. Morris was ambivalent on the matter as were some of the trustees (43). Some of the friends of the school quoted the James F. Cox statement of 1938 to prove that the school was opposed to receiving gifts from church treasuries (44). W. W. Otey, a well-known preacher and journalist within the Church of Christ, wrote:

Finally from the standpoint of policy, if that is the word, I am settled in the firm belief that if Bible colleges would declare that they seek support only from individuals, and not from the Lord's treasury, that the results would be in the end more money, more students and more peace and unity. There is now a rising tide of protest approaching flood dimensions, far greater, I fear, than any directly connected with those schools have any idea. In answer to a strong appeal to Don Morris to declare that they will no longer ask the church as such for support, I have just a few hours ago, received a letter from him assuring me that a statement from Abilene will soon appear in the Firm Foundation so declaring. I have the utmost confidence that those managing the schools will do so, for the sake of peace (45).

The first year of the three million dollar campaign (June 1, 1946 to June 1, 1947) brought in a disappointing total of $211,000 in cash donations. Don H. Morris reported to the trustees about the criticism of the college's efforts to secure funds. He asked them to review the fund-raising program and to make recommendations. The board made a formal resolution to solicit
funds from individuals and business firms as in the past "... and as was decided in this campaign" and not to solicit donations from the churches (46). With this announcement of board policy, the "college in the budget" issue subsided in the months that followed.

The Drive for Accreditation

Abilene Christian College's post-war enrollment flourished from 481 in 1944-45 to 673 in 1945-46 and to 1453 in 1946-47 (47). By early 1947, Don H. Morris was fully committed to helping his school gain membership in the Southern Association. Abilene Christian College's students came from thirty-five states and seven foreign countries. Morris told the trustees that many educational institutions outside Texas would not accept Abilene Christian College credits for teacher certification. He noted increasing strictness in entrance requirements at universities where the school's students might want to do advanced work. He declared, "It is imperative that Abilene Christian College becomes a full member of the Southern Association" (34).

The college was on the Accredited Non-member List of the Southern Association, but that list was to be discontinued in December of 1948. In January and February of 1947, Morris conferred with President W. J. McConnell of
North Texas State Teachers College, President
L. H. Hubbard of Texas State College for Women, who was
also Chairman of the Commission on Higher Learning for the
Southern Association, and President Umphrey Lee of
Southern Methodist University, Chairman of the Commission
on Standards of the Southern Association. On February 12,
he consulted with M. C. Huntley, Executive Secretary of
the Southern Association (34). Morris presented the
college trustees with this list of specific needs which he
formulated after his conferences with other educators:

Increase faculty doctorates from 8 to 12.

Add six teachers in order to reduce average teacher
load from 26 to 23.

Increase faculty salaries by $600 per year.

Increase endowment to $1,600,000.

Increase annual instructional expense per student
from $115.00 to $150.00.

Increase library seating from 12 percent of the
student enrollment to 25 percent.

Increase library expenditures for books and periodi-
cals from $3.50 per student to $5 per student.

Increase library salaries from $4 per pupil to $5
per pupil.

Improve alumni records and contacts (34).

The list was extensive, and most of the areas of improve-
ment called for a significant increase in educational
expenditures. A rapidly growing student body portended a
proportionate increase above already projected levels of improvement. Morris optimistically proposed bringing M. C. Huntley, Executive Secretary of the Southern Association, to the campus to become acquainted with the school and to offer suggestions, setting out immediately to meet the qualifications, and making formal application for admission to the Southern Association at the December 1947 meeting with the hope of being elected to membership in December of 1948 (34).

Meanwhile, by the summer of 1947, the third floor of the library building, which had been used for dormitory space, was changed and repaired to allow expansion of the library (48). By fall, faculty salaries were brought up to Southern Association standards (46). The college endowment still was deficient, and the college needed at least two more teachers with doctorates (46).

The ambitious plan to make formal application for admission to the Southern Association by December of 1947 simply fell short of its mark. A letter from the Executive Secretary to Don H. Morris indicated that several extensive improvements were yet needed. Ten faculty members were on leave of absence at half-pay working on advanced degrees. Morris was undaunted in encouraging renewed effort to gain accreditation for the school, but the program would be delayed for awhile (49).
New Planning Commission

By early 1948, Don H. Morris perceived that Abilene Christian College was at a critical point in its history. A ten-year development plan begun in 1944 had decidedly underestimated post-war growth of the institution. Morris advocated a Twenty-year Planning Commission which would consider future professional schools associated with the college, new buildings and campus development, new expansion of curricula, and a new organization to plan and handle annuities and other gifts as well as developing relationships with educational foundations (49). In the fall of 1948, trustees approved Morris' proposal for the new planning commission. The college employed the John Price Jones Corporation of New York City as special consultants for carrying out their developmental program. This corporation had been very successful with other private colleges in showing them how to set up and manage a development program. They assisted Morris, the rest of the administration, the trustees, and the school's constituency to plan and think in larger terms financially than ever before (50). The specialists worked with two main objectives: setting up development procedures for the immediate present, and teaching Abilene Christian College officials how to organize and sustain an outstanding development fund program (51).
The lack of organic relationship of the college to any sponsoring church organization created some fund-raising limitations. An auxiliary organization was needed to receive and handle special business investments for the benefit of the college in order to relieve the school of some burden of investment management. Trustees established a corporation for this purpose and named it the Abilene Christian College Foundation for Christian Education (52). The growing program of the institution made it impossible for the president and a few assistants to make all of the trips needed on behalf of fund-raising efforts. Morris recommended an expansion of the college development program into a separate division of the administration of Abilene Christian College.

The new Planning Commission of the Board of Trustees proposed a twelve-year program which, in light of the disappointing progress of the campaign to gain three million dollars for the college, seemed audacious to some. Immediate goals included $815,000 for endowment and $40,000 for cafeteria improvement. The second step in the plan called for $1,395,000 for new campus buildings and endowment. The final step proposed the expenditure of $5,848,000 for new dormitories, a new library, a new student center, a graduate school of religion, and more endowment (52).
The post-war enrollment figures peaked at 1689 in the 1948-49 school term. Student registrations slumped to 1333 by 1951. Morris attributed the decline to the decrease in veteran enrollment, the smaller high school graduating classes in the area, and the depletion of wartime savings by parents of potential students. He asked the trustees for full support of the new development program and predicted that the school would gain in enrollment in coming years (53). Morris pressed for new men's dormitories to replace the old government surplus buildings which were yet housing several hundred students. He also began to organize new efforts to seek accreditation with the Southern Association (53).

The Social Club Question

A controversy developed within the college in the spring of 1949 which sharply divided both the faculty and the students of the college. Several sorority-fraternity type organizations had existed for several years at the college. Some faculty members asserted that the "social clubs" should be modified to keep them from interfering with classroom activities. Others asked that the clubs be forbidden altogether. Typical of the objections to the "social clubs" were these charges which were brought in one faculty meeting:
1. They tend to create class distinction—members of some of the clubs have a feeling of superiority and aggressiveness which tends toward selfishness;
2. They engender strife, hatred, and jealousy;
3. They create unhappiness and a feeling of inferiority on the part of some students who are not invited into a particular clique;
4. They are extravagant and wasteful;
5. Initiation rites are crude sometimes bordering on paganism;
6. Some encourage activity not in keeping with Christian ideals;
7. Some of these groups move definitely in the form of permanent organization with a powerful political influence, which means that they eventually may start dictating to the Administration. This might be attributed to a general laxity of discipline, supervision and organization (54).

The social club question was discussed extensively in The Optimist, the student newspaper, and in faculty meetings. A special study of the question was made by a faculty committee. The controversy persisted into the spring of 1951. President Morris, who had been a member of a social club while he was a student at Abilene Christian College, decided that it was time to resolve the question as much as possible, and he determined to initiate that resolution within the faculty and the administration.

Don H. Morris presided over the meeting of all of the teachers of Abilene Christian College on May 7, 1951. He reviewed the work and the recommendations of the faculty committee on social clubs; he asked that all questions be discussed as objectively as possible and with as little emotion as possible. Morris asked that discussion be kept
brief and to-the-point and that everyone be allowed to express himself. Especially, he asked that any decisions made should be in view of what was best for the college. He stated that after the voting was over, he wanted all of the faculty to stand together as a unit; he told the teachers that he did not expect everyone to agree with everything that others said, but that after the decision was made, all of the faculty should stand united in that decision.

After several faculty committee recommendations were read, the motion was made to suspend social clubs for one year; the motion failed, 46 votes to 18. After minor alterations were added to the committee recommendations, the motion was made and seconded that social clubs be banned at Abilene Christian College; that motion failed by a vote of 35 to 27. A motion to postpone action until the next meeting also was defeated. Morris then asked for a vote on keeping social clubs at Abilene Christian College subject to the committee recommendations. The motion carried by a vote of 53 to 18, and in effect the social club question was settled (55).

Renewed Effort for Accreditation

Don H. Morris worked closely with Dean Walter H. Adams and the faculty through 1951 and 1952, reporting to
them often about the school's fiscal condition, the need to increase enrollment, and the progress on the accreditation program of the school (56). Morris and Adams met regularly with Southern Association officials. By 1951, one persistent problem continued to blunt efforts for accreditation: the lack of sufficient endowment. Every other requirement of the association was being met except for this one, and appeals for endowment funds and gifts went largely unheeded. Then the college received an interesting offer. J. B. Collins, president of the Abilene Christian College Board of Trustees, owned 13.37 acres of land near Big Spring, Texas, that the United States government had leased during World War II as a site for one hundred and sixty apartments for the families of servicemen who were stationed in Big Spring. The property was called "Ellis Homes." The buildings were classified as temporary; they were to be demolished after the war, but their destruction had been delayed. Collins offered to give the school the land if it could get the government to give it the buildings. The plan was to place the apartments, valued at $603,524.00 into the college endowment (57).

Don H. Morris and Board of Trustees President B Sherrod went to Washington, D. C. to ask the government to give the apartments to the college rather than tearing
them down (58). Morris and Sherrod offered to buy the property from the government (59). The two men met in the Honorable Sam Rayburn's office with the director of the Federal Public Housing Administration. The housing official advised the men to wait; he said that there was a possibility of a law's being proposed that would enable him to give such property to colleges and cities that owned the land (59).

Morris and Sherrod visited with Congressmen George Mahon of Lubbock, O. C. Fisher of San Angelo, and Omar Burleson of Anson, Texas (who also was a trustee of the college). The solons quickly helped to gain approval in the House of Representatives for the bill to grant such property to schools and cities. Morris and Sherrod also visited with Texas' new senator, Lyndon B. Johnson, who obtained the approval of the bill in the United States Senate almost immediately (58, p. 178).

Abilene Christian College officials were advised that one complicating factor in the Ellis Homes property was that the town of Big Spring had been told that the apartments would be demolished after the war. The college's hope of obtaining the apartments would be greatly enhanced if it could secure the approval of the city of Big Spring for it to have the buildings. College officials went to the Big Spring Chamber of Commerce, civic clubs, and other
community groups, and solicited their help. A shortage of homes in Big Spring at the time made the college's offer to maintain the apartments well and to make them available for rent an attractive proposition to officials and civic leaders (58, p. 178).

Hardin-Simmons University also had been given a smaller, adjoining parcel of land which had thirteen apartments on it. Hardin-Simmons officials cooperated with Abilene Christian College representatives in securing the approval of Big Spring civic leaders to gain the property for the benefit of the colleges (60).

Morris returned to Washington and received the title to the Ellis Homes property on June 25, 1950 (58, p. 179). On that very day, Communist troops from North Korea invaded South Korea in an attempt to unite the country by military force. All military bases and equipment were immediately "frozen" in view of the potential American military build-up that might be required. School officials applied for possession of the property. Repeated calls by Don H. Morris to housing officials in Fort Worth and Washington failed to bring the necessary application blanks. The Federal Public Housing Authority finally notified Morris that it did not want to negotiate the Ellis Homes property with two schools. Abilene Christian College made arrangements to obtain the interest of
Hardin-Simmons University in the Ellis Homes property with the promise to return Hardin-Simmons' share when full ownership of the property was obtained from the Federal Public Housing Authority (61). Three of the apartments were built on property owned by both schools. Officials of the two schools worked out an agreement for the settlement of that difficulty (62).

Morris' repeated attempts to get application blanks from the district office of the housing authority in Fort Worth were futile. Finally Morris went to Washington and contacted the Director of the Federal Public Housing Authority. Morris was told that there was a rumor that the law which would provide the college with possession of Ellis Homes was frozen because of the Korean War. Officials frankly declared that they would not give the school possession of the property at that time (59). Some officials were very brusque with Morris; they advised him to go home and forget about the matter (4). He conferred with Congressman Omar Burleson. Burleson said, "Let's go get Lyndon." Morris and Burleson went to a door of the United States Senate and sent for Senator Lyndon B. Johnson. Senator Johnson said, "Yes, the law has been frozen. There is just one man that can change it, and if
you will, just give me time and let me work at it the
right way; in your case, since this has already been dis-
cussed with you, I can get this done" (59).

Morris remained in Washington ten more days; he went
to Senator Johnson's office every morning. Finally,
Johnson called him on Friday afternoon about five o'clock
and said, "The President of the United States has ordered
the Commissioner of the Federal Public Housing Administra-
tion to make an exception in your case and one other case,
and to transfer this housing to Abilene Christian College." He said, "You go on home; they will fix it up." Morris
replied, "No, I am going to stay until Monday. I came to
get the application blanks and I want to take them home
with me" (59). On Monday morning, Don H. Morris went to
the Federal Public Housing Administration offices to re-
ceive the application blanks. The men in the bureau were
very upset with him, but they wrote out the thirteen dif-
ferent required legal instruments penciling in necessary
corrections on some of the printed forms. Morris took the
forms to Abilene and instructed his secretary in typing out
the instruments with the corrections (59). The formal
application for Ellis Homes was made, and Abilene Christian
College received the property shortly thereafter (63).

Abilene Christian College had several parcels of
property which had been given to it on annuity contracts.
The Southern Association would not count for endowment any properties with annuity obligations (57). But the Ellis Homes property could be added to the endowment of the college, increasing it from $269,872.16 to $873,396.19. That gain made it possible for Abilene Christian College to make a realistic application for membership in the Southern Association in December of 1950, which led to full membership in December of 1951 (59).

Mrs. Don H. Morris recalls her husband's trip to Washington to receive the application blanks for Ellis Homes. As he left, he told her why he was going and that he did not know when he would be able to return. Following Senator Johnson's call on Friday, Morris had spent all day the following Monday acquiring the application forms under very trying circumstances. When Morris had the forms in hand, he returned to his hotel room and called home. He told his wife, "Well, I should be home soon. I have what I came up here for." Mrs. Morris says that he was so overwhelmed with emotion and relief that he could not continue the conversation; he broke down and wept. Only after several minutes was he able to express a halting "Good night." The last major barrier to accreditation had been overcome (4).

The acceptance of Abilene Christian College by the Southern Association was viewed by Morris as the beginning
of a new era. The enrollment of 1,333 in the fall of 1952 was the lowest at the college since the fall of 1945. Eighty-two young men had withdrawn the previous year to enter the military service in the Korean War. Morris was undaunted by the decline in students. He proposed that school officials should pursue plans for an expanded campus of sixty-five acres and provide for a future enrollment of 4,500 students (64).

Immediate plans called for new permanent dormitory buildings and a graduate school. Morris asked trustees to plan for a new auditorium facility to seat 4,000 (65). The school faced the ever-present problem of securing funds for the proposed improvements.

The Mabee Dormitory Gift

The Korean War had created a shortage of basic building materials, especially of construction steel. Don H. Morris went to Washington, D. C., in the fall of 1952, to obtain permits to buy "critical materials" for the building of a new boys' dormitory (66). Throughout the spring and summer of 1952, trustees pursued plans to proceed with the new building (67).

The Sunray Oil Company of Tulsa, Oklahoma, had leased mineral rights on B Sherrod's ranch in Reagan and Upton Counties in Texas. Sherrod visited with Paul E. Taliaferro, a member of the Church of Christ and vice
president of the Sunray Oil Company (68, p. 48). He inquired about the company's plans in drilling for oil on the ranch. Taliafero suggested that school officials contact Frank Stickle, chairman of the Mabee Foundation in Tulsa, Oklahoma. The Mabee Foundation had been established by J. E. and L. E. Mabee who had built an oil empire in Oklahoma and Texas (58, p. 180). Sherrod called Don H. Morris, who was in New York at the time, and told him about the Mabee Foundation. Morris returned to Texas by way of Tulsa; he was encouraged by the favorable reports that he heard from Mabee Foundation officials.

Morris and Sherrod went to Tulsa within a few days and met with Stickle. They told him of their desires to build a boys' dormitory. They related how all of the boys' dormitories had been given to girls, and the boys were living in government surplus barracks. Stickle replied, "I see no reason why we can't do that for you; we have made most of what we have in West Texas." He told the men to go home and make an application for the gift (58, p. 181).

The proposed boys' dormitory included accommodations for 308 students. The estimated cost was between $650,000.00 and $700,000.00 (67). During the Abilene Christian College Lectureship in February of 1952, Don H. Morris received a registered letter asking him to come to Tulsa immediately to close the deal for the dormitory. The letter also
warned Morris that if he disclosed prematurely the plan of the Mabee Foundation to build the dormitory, the offer would be withdrawn. Only Lawrence Smith, the college bursar, and B Sherrod, president of the board of trustees, knew the contents of the letter. Although it was "lecture week" at Abilene Christian College, one of the busiest weeks in the year for Morris, he left immediately to go to Tulsa to confer with officials of the Mabee Foundation (39).

The Mabee Foundation agreed to pay for the construction of the building if the college would allow the foundation to select the contractor, the Al Ward Company of Tulsa, Oklahoma. Friends of the college were to pay for the architect's fee, clearing the site, providing paving and walks, furnishing the building, and other associated expenses which totaled $106,000.00. The building was completed on June 15, 1953, at the cost of $644,065.64, which was paid by the Mabee Foundation (69).

B Sherrod considers the Mabee Dormitory gift to have had a significant influence in increasing Don H. Morris' vision in obtaining larger gifts for the school. The amount given by the Mabee Foundation would have required years of tedious campaigning to secure by conventional fund-raising techniques which the school had employed for many years. This gift of several hundred thousand dollars had been obtained almost "for the asking." Sherrod asserts that
more money of this type is available than ever before if educators can only discover the means to encourage people to give it. Sherrod says that the Mabee gift gave Morris a great sense of personal satisfaction and "set him afire" with renewed zeal for the development program of the college (18).

The Graduate School

Abilene Christian College administrators and teachers had desired a graduate school for many years. Graduates who wished to preach or teach found it necessary to go elsewhere to do graduate study. In its February, 1952, meeting the board of trustees authorized a committee of trustees and faculty members to study what would be involved in creating a graduate school. At the first meeting of the committee on May 25, 1952, it was suggested that Don H. Morris and other committee members should interview officials of the Southern Association in regard to graduate school standards.

On June 2, 1952, Don H. Morris conferred with J. M. Godard, Secretary of the Southern Association. Ten days later, Morris and three other committee members met with T. S. Painter, president of the University of Texas and chairman of the Commission on Higher Education of the Southern Association. At both meetings, suggestions were
offered and encouragement was given to the school to continue its preparations for a graduate department. In December of 1952, Morris and other college administrators had additional interviews with Godard, Painter, and Frank Hubert of the Texas Education Agency. Detailed plans for the graduate program were placed before these men, and with minor changes in the proposed program, Abilene Christian College officials were encouraged to proceed with their plans for a graduate school (70).

The Graduate School Committee proposed that a Graduate Council be formed to direct the graduate school. The college trustees approved the proposal and agreed to inaugurate the graduate school in the summer of 1953, offering the Master of Arts degree in Bible, the Master of Science degree in Bible, the Master of Arts degree in Education, and the Master of Education degree (69). Morris worked out an agreement with officials of Hardin-Simmons University for graduate students to take courses in certain minor fields, except in Bible, for transfer when they were not available at Abilene Christian College. Also, agreements were made to share the library resources of the two schools (71).

Morris told the college trustees of three needed improvements associated with the new graduate school: one, some faculty improvement was needed in several minor
areas; two, additional library expenditures of approximately $26,000.00 per year would be required; and three, instructional costs per student would need to be raised from $225.00 to $300.00 (71). Income from the new Mabee Dormitory was applied to graduate school expenses (69). Tuition was raised from $145.00 to $160.00 per semester, and faculty salaries were increased twenty percent beginning in the fall of 1953 (72).

A New Development Program

As the new graduate school was being established, Don H. Morris was leading another program to enlarge and advance Abilene Christian College. The first two phases of the long-range development program adopted in 1948 were completed by December 31, 1952. They brought in a total of $2,173,739.21 in gifts to the college not including oil royalty on 2,739.87 acres in West Texas or $605,000 willed to the school (71). Morris worked with the Development Office to plan "Phase Three" of the long-range program which was to be carried out from January 1, 1953 to January 1, 1960. The program was outlined as follows (71):
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Project Description</th>
<th>Cost</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Additional units to Administration Building</td>
<td>$925,000.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To provide classrooms and offices for Graduate School of Religion, Home Economics Department, and general classrooms.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Combination Field House and Auditorium</td>
<td>$750,000.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To meet student needs, accommodate crowds of 6,000 to 7,000 that come for the Lectureship and other meetings on the campus.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Two additional Boys' Dormitories</td>
<td>$1,300,000.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student Center</td>
<td>$300,000.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Library</td>
<td>$525,000.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Two additional Girls' Dormitories</td>
<td>$1,300,000.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agriculture Building</td>
<td>$350,000.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New and Larger Auditorium</td>
<td>$1,000,000.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Endowment</td>
<td>$2,500,000.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Demonstration School</td>
<td>$700,000.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Athletic Stadium, Location and Cost to be determined later</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

$9,650,000.00
Don H. Morris worked diligently through 1953 to promote the new phase of the development program. At the annual meeting of the college trustees in February of 1954, the board unanimously expressed appreciation to Morris for his tireless work and urged him to "take better care of himself." They encouraged him to delegate more responsibility to others (73). But some of the college's most impressive growth was about to take place, and Morris delighted in helping to cause it. Enrollment grew from 1,333 in 1952 to 1,786 in 1954. The Development Office was having unprecedented success in gaining gifts for the school (74).

Trustees approved an architect's plan submitted by Don H. Morris to make the college Administration Building into a large "U-shaped" structure by adding a new Bible Building wing and a Citizenship Center wing (75). In February of 1955, Morris announced the approval of a loan from the Federal Housing and Home Finance Agency for $1,725,000.00 for forty years at three-and-one-fourth percent interest for the construction of a new dormitory to accommodate 312 boys, a new dormitory to house 210 girls, and a new cafeteria (74). College officials broke ground on February 22, 1955, for the new $375,000.00 Bible Building which was financed by a campaign for funds from patrons and friends of the college (74).
The Edwards Ranch Gift


In June of 1947, Morris and B Sherrod conducted a meeting of friends of Abilene Christian College in San Angelo, Texas. They requested the names of potential donors to the school. Among the several names given was that of William B. Edwards, an elderly hermit-like rancher who lived fifty miles southeast of Fort Stockton, Texas. A few weeks later, Morris and Sherrod stopped at San Angelo on their way to Fort Stockton. They asked the person who had given them the name for more information about Edwards. The party asked the men to forget the whole matter. He apologized for even mentioning the name; he said that a trip to see Edwards would be a waste of time and money (58, p. 166).

William B. Edwards was a thrifty, industrious rancher who had spent his life accumulating a vast holding of ranch property. He was a pious man of simple tastes. He was respected by his neighbors for his honesty, but he had few close friends or associates (18). His mother was deceased, but she had been a member of the Church of
Christ (50). Edwards worked on his ranch daily from approximately 4:00 a.m. until 2:00 p.m., after which he spent the rest of each day reading and studying (58, p. 167).

After the visit with their informant in San Angelo, Morris and Sherrod proceeded to Fort Stockton and went to the Edwards Ranch. The weather was very hot and Edwards' concrete-walled room had no air conditioning, so the two men visited with him briefly in the shade of a chinaberry tree in his front yard. As they visited, Edwards sat on a little wooden bench that he had made (58, p. 167). Sherrod vividly recalls that first visit to the Edwards Ranch. He says:

Brother Morris had been traveling and raising money for several years, and I was more or less a novice, but it didn't take me long to find out that his approach could be improved on. His approach was that the college was in bad shape and that we had to raise some money to keep it going or it would go broke and have to close up. I argued with him, and I think I convinced him, to cease telling prospective donors that we were in bad shape and would have to raise some money to keep it going. But to approach a person that had money, we needed to say that we need to build a greater institution rather than to keep from folding. And that was the technique that we used in twenty-odd years that I traveled with him (18).

The men did not ask Edwards for a donation. They told him that they wanted only to tell him about Abilene Christian College and what it was trying to do for its students.
Morris and Sherrod made another visit in 1948, and another one in 1949. Each time the old gentleman was respectful, but he would not spend a great deal of time visiting with them. He apologized for being so busy. Still no donations were solicited. The next visit to Edwards by the men was in late 1949. During that visit, Edwards said that there had been hard feelings between him and some of his family and that he had no heirs to whom he wanted to leave his property. Edwards also complained about government encroachment on free enterprise, saying that he was "raising cattle for the government on the halves" (50). He said that if he sold the approximately $20,000.00 worth of steers that he owned, "the taxes would eat him up." Morris and Sherrod suggested that he give the school the cattle on an annuity in order to gain a tax savings for himself (58, p. 167).

Two important principles which Morris consistently practiced were involved in this matter. One, Morris did not try to "hard sell" or push people for contributions (4). He cautioned Development Office workers to avoid being brusque or obtrusive in soliciting gifts for the college (76). His fund-raising visits emphasized informing others about the work of the college in a way that would let the institution "sell itself" and "cultivating" friendship toward the school (18). One large donor to the
school was being contacted by another private college in Texas as well as by Abilene Christian College. When pressure was put upon the potential donor to "close the deal" and to "make a commitment" to the institution, the man rebelled and gave his whole estate to Abilene Christian College (50). The second principle which was consistently applied in Morris' fund-raising efforts was to make the individual's gift to Abilene Christian College as attractive to the donor as possible from the standpoint of tax advantages, annuity payments, and other incentives (50). When the annuity gift of the cattle was suggested to Edwards, he replied that such a gift would not help the college appreciably, but if and when he did help the school he would make a gift that would "really be worth something" (58, p. 167).

During one visit, Edwards told Morris and Sherrod that his lifelong ambition had been to own one hundred sections of land debt free by the time of his death. He had bought an adjoining twenty-and-one-half section ranch for $35.00 an acre. The property had a home on it valued at $225,000.00. Edwards mortgaged his ranch for $150,000.00 for a down payment and made a note for $300,000.00 on the new ranch. The note for the new ranch was to be paid out
for $22,500.00 per year plus interest, and the mortgage was to be paid with a relatively small annual payment plus a balloon note at the end (58, p. 168).

In 1954, Edwards mentioned that he did not want to die and leave a debt against his property. Morris and Sherrod suggested the possibility of his deeding the ranch to the college and retaining a full, life estate if Abilene Christian College would give $25,000.00 per year to help in retiring the debt against the property. Both parties agreed to think about the matter, and Morris and Sherrod agreed to confer with the college trustees about making such a commitment (50). College Bursar Lawrence Smith recalls that when the Edwards Ranch proposition was presented to the Board of Trustees, there were many long faces and "people staring out the windows." The school was borrowing from every available source to maintain operating funds. After some discussion, the trustees agreed to offer Edwards $25,000.00 per year with a full, life estate in the property (50).

Morris and Sherrod took the offer back to Edwards, who informed them that he had considered the proposition and that he would make the agreement for $50,000.00 per year. The two men met Edwards in Fort Stockton early the next morning and worked out the papers in his lawyer's office whereby the Edwards Ranch was deeded to Abilene Christian
College. They called the county clerk and asked her to keep her office open late that afternoon in order to file the deeds. Upon their return to Abilene, Morris and Sherrod arranged a meeting of the Executive Board of the college and received formal approval of what they had done (77). Sherrod personally guaranteed the transaction, telling the trustees that if they ever "wanted out of the deal," he would be glad to "buy up their contract" (18).

Edwards maintained the ranch for four more years until October 25, 1958, when he had a stroke at his home. He was placed in Memorial Hospital in Fort Stockton, unable to talk until the time of his death (78). One of Edwards' nephews took possession of the property and leased surface or grazing rights of the ranch for ten cents an acre for ten years with a long-term option for renewal. The normal lease rate was seventy-five cents an acre and the normal duration of such leases was not over five years. Edwards' nephews and nieces were able to get the county judge to approve the lease (58, pp. 171-2).

The college held a deed to the Edwards Ranch, but it was forced to sue for possession of the property when Edwards died in early 1959. The first trial was conducted in the District Court at Fort Stockton. There were thirteen specific issues in the trial, but the principal questions were whether Edwards was of sound mind when he
deeded his property to Abilene Christian College and whether Morris and Sherrod used undue influence on him. The trial lasted six weeks and ended in a hung jury (58, p. 172). Morris reassured school personnel by saying, "There is no doubt that Mr. Edwards had the ability to deed his land to Abilene Christian College, and there is no doubt of Mr. Edwards' desire to do that" (79).

A second trial was conducted in Fort Stockton beginning August 15, 1961, after the college's plea for a change of venue had been denied (80). Many witnesses testified of Edwards' soundness of mind and his ability to conduct his extensive and often complicated business affairs. The jury ruled that Edwards was of sound mind on December 15, 1954, when he deeded his property to the school, but that Don H. Morris or B. Sherrod or both used undue influence on him (18).

The second trial at Fort Stockton lasted almost as long as the first, and the lawyers' questioning of Morris and Sherrod was particularly harsh and severe. Morris' secretary of many years recalls his fatigue and sorrow from the ordeal (81). A high school history class visited the court room one day when Morris and Sherrod were called "city slickers," "crooks," "yellow dogs that slipped in,"
and "vultures waiting for the poor old man to die."

Morris was particularly grieved that the name of the college should be so defamed before the young people (81).

The case was appealed to the Court of Civil Appeals at El Paso, Texas, and the trial was conducted there in the summer of 1963. The higher court declared that there was no evidence of undue influence in the Edwards Ranch matter, that the District Judge at Fort Stockton had denied valid objections of the college attorneys, and that many statements by the attorneys of the opposition were allowed that should not have been (18). On August 7, 1963, possession of the Edwards Ranch was given to Abilene Christian College. An appeal by attorneys of the Edwards heirs to the Texas State Supreme Court was refused as the state's highest court could find no indication of reversible errors in the El Paso trial (82).

The Edwards Ranch gift added substantially to the college's net worth, and the prospects of mineral development in that area of Texas made it a very important financial asset to the school, but the long, arduous trials bore heavily on Morris at a time when his other burdens of office were already great (81). It is of interest to note that the entire 1959 volume of "Board of Trustees of Abilene Christian College Meeting Notes" was given to the
the college's lawyers for use in preparing their cases. During the trials it was lost, and Abilene Christian College has no copy of these important records (83).

The Golden Jubilee

As 1956 approached, Don H. Morris happily anticipated the celebration of Abilene Christian College's golden anniversary. Two new dormitories, a new cafeteria, and the Bible Building were under construction (84). The new Bible Building was paid for by August of 1955, less than eighteen months after the campaign to finance it began. Seventy-two hundred friends of the school had given a total of $335,600.00 to finance the structure (85). The school selected for its golden year motto, "First Things First for Fifty Years" (85).

The Development Office of the college was having increasing success in securing gifts. Its mailing list had grown to over 48,000. In 1956, over 417,000 bulletins and publications promoting the college were mailed (86). Morris encouraged the expansion of contact work among members of the Church of Christ and businessmen in Abilene, promotion of alumni giving, cultivation of giving by foundations and corporations, and the pursuit of renewed efforts to conduct major fund campaigns (87). Besides several large annuity gifts to the college in 1957 by
individuals, a grant of $149,500.00 was received from the Ford Foundation (88). The Alumni Association of the college adopted a Pay-for-a-Day Program in 1957 whereby a contribution of $245.00 underwrote the operating deficit of the college for one day. One hundred and twelve ex-students and friends "paid for a day" in 1957 (89).

Besides the encouraging work of the school's Development Office, 1956 was a memorable year for Morris and his family for two other reasons. In the spring of 1956, college trustees presented Mr. and Mrs. Don H. Morris with a "well earned" two-month tour of Europe and the Near East (90). On the trip, Morris visited many Church of Christ mission congregations and spoke in Frankfort, Germany, to the European Lectureship sponsored by members of the Church of Christ. Morris also toured Russia during which time he spoke with government officials about possibilities of expanding Church of Christ mission work behind the Iron Curtain (91). The second very memorable event of 1956 for Don H. Morris was the bestowal of an honorary doctorate degree upon him by McMurry College of Abilene. Harold G. Cooke, president of McMurry, said of Morris:

He is one of the finest citizens of Abilene and one of the finest Christian men to be found anywhere. Mr. Morris has always been a good and helpful friend of McMurry College, and his distinguished career as college administrator is well known to all (92).

Morris was listed in the 1956-1957 Who's Who in America (93).
In its golden jubilee year, Abilene Christian College enrolled 2,210 students, its largest student body up to that time. Its total assets were $10,799,360.03, and its net worth was over seven million dollars (94).

The American Studies Program

In 1957, Morris contacted several foundations, corporations, and large businesses in order to familiarize them with the college's educational program (95). In that year, the Coe Foundation of New York City extended a grant of $9,500.00 which provided scholarships for forty-seven public school teachers to attend the Abilene Christian College American Studies Program, an intensive six-weeks study of American history, economics, and education. The Coe Foundation ultimately supported American Studies Programs at fifty-seven colleges and universities in the United States (96). The Coe Foundation increased its grant to $12,500.00 for 1958 for full room, board, and tuition scholarships for fifty school teachers to attend the program during the first six weeks of summer school (95). Also, in 1958, the Texas Educational Association of Fort Worth, Texas, matched the Coe Foundation grant so that fifty public school teachers could engage in the program during the second summer semester.

When Morris contacted Coe Foundation officials in
early 1962, he received increased grants to bring school teachers from Latin America to receive the same instruction, only in the Spanish language, beginning that summer (96). Through the years, the American Studies Program in Spanish drew students from every country in Latin America including some refugees from Cuba. With some special grants from other sources, the program also was offered in Portuguese to twenty-five teachers from Brazil in the summer of 1964 and again in 1965 (96). Morris became very involved in the program by meeting all of the students, conversing with them in Spanish, making welcoming addresses and other speeches to them, and by having a reception for each group in his home. The American Studies Program continued through the summer of 1975 (96).

The late 1950's were years of some of Morris' strongest statements about free enterprise, democracy, and the American way of life. Morris stated that "a program of good citizenship is in keeping with the principles that the College has stood for since its beginning." A strong emphasis on Americanism led the way for the construction of the Citizenship Center, the south wing of the Administration Building, which was completed in 1960. In commending the American Studies Program to trustees, Morris said in his 1958 annual report:
As suggested, this new program of scholarships will give us an opportunity to present to the public the citizenship training program at Abilene Christian College. This should assist us in finding donors for the Citizenship Building and other needs of the College (95).

Morris' many speeches and articles promoting Americanism, along with his leadership in the American Studies Program and related efforts, did create great interest in the new half-million dollar Citizenship Center building. These efforts also caused him to be honored with the George Washington Honor Medal from the Freedoms Foundation at Valley Forge in Valley Forge, Pennsylvania, in 1960 (76).

The Master Planning Council

In the late 1950's, Abilene Christian College was enjoying the best support and greatest growth in its history. Don H. Morris believed that times of success and growth required as much or more planning than other times. Morris spoke often of the superiority of long-range planning rather than piecemeal, fragmented efforts to develop the college. By February of 1958, he had arranged for the approval of a "Master Planning Council" to "work out long-term objectives of the college in view of the purposes and ideals of the college" (95). The Master Planning Council was comprised of ten special study committees as follows:
1. COMMITTEE ON PROJECTED ENROLLMENT - to try to ascertain enrollment trends and their educational implications for the future.

2. COMMITTEE ON CONTROL OF ENROLLMENT - to study the advisability of limiting enrollment with particular attention to the educational purposes of such control and the practical criteria by which it would be done.

3. COMMITTEE ON STUDENT HOUSING AND SUPERVISION

4. COMMITTEE ON AVAILABILITY OF FACULTY - to analyze faculty needs and suggest ways to meet them without affecting the academic or Christian ideals of the College.

5. COMMITTEE ON PHYSICAL EXPANSION - to investigate needs for housing and other buildings and to suggest a timetable for their construction.

6. COMMITTEE ON OPERATIONAL FINANCES - to study the college's operational expenses in order to find areas which could be economized and to suggest matters where additional funding is needed.

7. COMMITTEE ON CURRICULA - to see if more courses are needed to fulfill Abilene Christian College's stated purposes; also to see if some present courses do not contribute to those purposes.

8. COMMITTEE ON ULTIMATE GOALS - to determine what Abilene Christian College wants to do ultimately in the academic world; to study academic expansion and its implications in physical expansion.

9. COMMITTEE ON RELATIONSHIP TO OTHER CHRISTIAN SCHOOLS - to study possibilities in helping other Christian Colleges and in establishing off-campus or extension centers.

10. COMMITTEE ON AVAILABILITY OF FUNDS - to suggest practical and realistic plans to raise funds consistent with immediate and future needs of the college (95).

Trustees and faculty members worked with college administrators on these key committees to plan the future of the college.
By the beginning of 1958, the Graduate School of Abilene Christian College was offering masters degrees in nine major fields (95). Late in the year, Don H. Morris and other college officials were making detailed studies of new buildings most critically needed to accommodate student enrollment which had grown to 2,454 (97). In 1959, much of Morris' time and energy was consumed by the Edwards Ranch trial at Fort Stockton, Texas. Morris still took the time to lead a brotherhood campaign among Churches of Christ to secure funds for the one million dollar Church of Christ building in Manhattan, New York (98).

1960, A Busy Year

Nineteen hundred and sixty was a year full of activity for Don H. Morris and Abilene Christian College. The contract for the construction of the Citizenship Center was awarded in February (101). The Edwards Ranch litigation was in progress at Fort Stockton, Texas. The Integration Committee proposed a plan which the trustees approved by which the college was integrated racially in 1960 (101).

Abilene Christian College instituted an Estate Planning Program in 1960 which enlisted attorneys, bankers (especially trust officers), insurance underwriters, investment counselors, accountants, tax consultants, selected businessmen and several church leaders to concentrate efforts in twenty-five population centers in Texas in order to encourage bequests, annuities, and trust investments beneficial to the school. The program was not one of direct fund-raising. It was an effort to educate potential donors about favorable tax features which could bring tax savings to the donor through judicious estate planning. The program involved one hundred key men in estate planning services for Abilene Christian College (101).

Another important development in 1960 in which Morris had a key part was the approval of a loan from the
Community Facilities Administration of the Federal Housing and Home Finance Agency. The $1,193,000.00 loan was used to build Gardner Hall, a dormitory to house 352 women, which was completed in 1961 (102). Morris and other administrators led the Abilene Christian College faculty and staff in preparing a 252-page Self Study for the Southern Association of Colleges and Secondary Schools. The Self Study was completed by January 1 of 1961, in commemoration of the tenth anniversary of the college's membership in the Southern Association (103).

In 1960, Morris also served on the Board of Trustees of Ibaraki Christian Foundation in the interest of raising money for Ibaraki Christian College in Ibaraki, Japan (104). He was a featured speaker at the Eleventh District Texas Congress of Parents and Teachers at Galveston in April (105). In October, Morris attended the meeting of the Independent College Funds Corporation in New York City, a corporation which made contributions each year to colleges in Texas through the Texas Foundation of Voluntarily Supported Colleges and Universities (106).

The American Founders Life Insurance Company

A gift of life insurance company stock which was worth over one-half million dollars was made to Abilene Christian College in May of 1961. The story of the beneficent company began in 1952, when B. Sherrod, president
of the college trustees, began to think of new approaches to securing finances for the school. Sherrod and Morris agreed that a wide base of support through gifts of a large percentage of the constituency was important to the school. Morris did not belittle even the smallest gifts to the college. He preserved through the years, under the glass that covered his desk, a letter from an aged friend of the college who had enclosed a pledge of $2.00 which she had earned by ironing (107). But Morris and Sherrod agreed that the expenses involved in operating a growing college could hardly be met by spasmodic contributions of a few dollars or even a few hundred dollars from individuals.

In 1954, Sherrod met in Austin, Texas, with several men who were interested in Christian education to discuss the possibilities of setting up a life insurance company for the benefit of several Christian colleges (58, pp. 209-10). Horace Busby, Junior, son of the evangelist who had baptized Don H. Morris several years before, suggested the name, American Founders Life Insurance Company, and the group approved it. The company was granted incorporation in April of 1954, and by the end of that month it was selling insurance. It became one of the fastest growing insurance companies in Texas. By the end of 1955, the company had twenty million dollars worth of insurance
in force. Within a few years after its first office opened in a basement under a camera shop in Austin, Texas, the company built a large, new office building on Interstate Highway 35 in north Austin (58, pp. 213-223).

In the original meeting in Austin, the founders of the company decided to give twenty-five percent of the net profits of the company to colleges operated by members of the Church of Christ. After a few years, company directors believed that that arrangement was hindering the sale of stock. They decided to give the colleges a fixed number of shares of stock. They set up a separate corporation, the American Founders Educational Foundation, to administer and distribute funds from the dividend and to distribute the balance of shares that had been authorized to go to the colleges (58, pp. 210-212).

Although Don H. Morris was aware of the new company and its purposes, he discreetly stayed in the background of the operation. Company founders were careful to avoid being characterized as a "Church of Christ insurance company." The stocks could be bought by anyone, and several members of the board of directors were not members of the Church of Christ (58, p. 211).

The gift of 10,000 shares by the company in May of 1961 was made with the agreement by the school that the stocks would be held in trust for twenty-five years and
that the gift would be added to the college's endowment (108). Smaller gifts also were made to other Christian colleges. This gift and subsequent ones by the American Founders Life Insurance Company greatly benefited the college financially.

The year 1961 was eventful for Don H. Morris in other ways also. The second Edwards Ranch trial at Fort Stockton, Texas, took place that summer. In February, Morris spoke to more than 2,500 church leaders at the Preachers and Elders Dinner at the Abilene Christian College Lectureship (109). On March 3, he spoke to an overflow crowd of 6,700 persons in Shrine Auditorium in downtown Los Angeles to highlight the Pepperdine College Lectureship (110). Morris also served on the steering committee and later as an incorporator of a foundation to establish a Christian college in Hong Kong (111). In October of 1961, he was the featured speaker for the nationally televised Herald of Truth program. Morris discussed standards of morality in modern entertainment, particularly in the motion picture industry (112).

The Design for Development

Probably the most important accomplishment of 1961 for Don H. Morris was the work that he did with the new Director of Development, Walter Burch, with the assistance of Charles Auger of the John Price Jones Company of New
York, in formulating a bold new plan for the growth of Abilene Christian College. The plan was called "Design for Development." The Design for Development included a detailed financial history of the college and a projection of its needs for the next ten years based on a thirty percent enrollment increase. The study was extensive, and its projections were ambitious. It became an influential guide for Abilene Christian College development activities during the 1960's (113).

Don H. Morris presented a seventy-six page report outlining the "Design for Development" to the college trustees on April 16, 1962. He traced the history of the new plan from the board's authorization of a Master Planning Council in February of 1958, the subsequent appointment of a Campus Planning Committee, and the eventual appointment of a campus-planning firm to assist the Planning Committee. Morris showed that the Long-term Development Campaign, a twelve-year effort begun in 1949 to raise $8,385,000.00 in gifts, had succeeded in bringing in $6,919,389.05 of which $3,062,326.11 was cash. He asserted his faith that the amount the school had received in gifts over the past ten years could be doubled in the next ten years. Then Morris presented this list of improvements called for in the Design for Development (114):
Debt liquidation $3,019,000.00

Faculty Salary Improvement (for faculty raises of 85% in the next ten years) 428,000.00

Student aid scholarships 1,773,000.00

Coliseum-Auditorium 1,200,000.00

Library 1,500,000.00

Cafeteria 300,000.00

Student Union Building 1,000,000.00

Fine Arts Building 500,000.00

Dormitory by 1967 (dormitory for men and reconversion of McDonald Hall to accommodate women) 1,000,000.00

Dormitory by 1970 (to replace housing of temporary World War II surplus barracks) 1,000,000.00

Funds for Endowment (to be added to the present $2,500,000 endowment) 7,200,000.00

$19,600,000.00

The new plan for development was the largest one ever undertaken by the college.

Morris was optimistic about the Design for Development. He pointed out that the Annual Alumni Gift Fund had grown from $58,054.68 given by 752 alumni in 1956 to $114,830.46 given by 3,993 alumni in 1960. Also, the Gifts and Bequests Program of the school had enlisted 490 attorneys, accountants, trust officers, and other professional men to assist in estate planning on behalf of the school. In its first
two years (beginning in 1960), the program had brought in $1,621,168.46 in gifts and known expectancies to Abilene Christian College. The school also had developed a file of Confidential Deferred Gifts to include the names of individuals who had definitely named Abilene Christian College in their wills (with present value, if reported), names of individuals who had created testamentary trusts through their wills in favor of the college (with present values of trust principal, if reported), and names of individuals who had designated the college as irrevocable beneficiary through insurance policies (with the amount of policies, if reported). The Confidential Deferred Gifts File had grown from twenty-two bequests in 1960 to eighty-nine entries in the spring of 1962. Known value of seventeen of the bequests was $1,977,014.00 (114).

For its Gifts and Bequests Program, Abilene Christian College received the Number One ranking in the public relations and development projects category from the American College Public Relations Association at its 1961 national conference in Denver. It also received first place for its public relations periodical Horizons at the same meeting. Morris proudly enumerated to trustees a long list of public relations awards won by the school's Development Office from 1959 through 1962 (114). Beside his confidence in the work of the Development Office, Morris based his
hope for the success of the Design for Development on a gradual raising of tuition from twenty dollars per semester hour in 1963 to twenty-nine dollars in 1971, and on continued efforts to enlist the goodwill and support of the constituency of the school. The trustees accepted the Design for Development unanimously (114).

Other Events of 1962-1963

The Edwards Ranch case was appealed to the Court for Civil Appeals in El Paso, Texas, in the fall of 1962. The school's enrollment had grown to the point that the limit was reached on the number of students that could be accommodated in two chapel periods in the college auditorium. All of the dormitories were filled to capacity, and, in spite of staggered lunch periods, the cafeteria facilities were taxed to the limit (115). Morris was assisting the Austin, Texas campus planning firm of Jessen, Jessen, Milhouse and Greeven in developing a new campus expansion plan (116). The critical need for facilities caused Abilene Christian College to limit its enrollment in the freshman class to 1,030 in 1963 (117).

A highlight of 1962 for Don H. Morris was a four weeks visit to the Orient in November and December (118). During his trip Morris lectured to the Eighth Annual Far East Fellowship, a gathering of American servicemen who
were members of the Church of Christ in the Tokyo area. The lecture series lasted five days (119). Morris also spoke on the campus of Ibaraki Christian College in Ibaraki, Japan, before flying to Seoul, Korea, to address another group of servicemen at a three-day gathering. This was followed by speaking tours of two days each in Taipei, Taiwan; Hong Kong; and Bangkok, Thailand (120). Morris was deeply impressed by the religious conviction of many American servicemen. He expressed his concern for their encouragement from Americans at home (121).

In May of 1962, Morris was appointed to the Board of Visitors of the Freedoms Foundation at Valley Forge (122). Don H. Morris received his second honorary degree, the Doctor of Laws, at the regular commencement exercises of Pepperdine College in Los Angeles on June 9, 1963 (123).

The National Development Council

Inflation and added proposals increased the projected expenditure of the Design for Development from the original estimate of $19,600,000.00 to $22,916,500.00 by the fall of 1963 (124). Morris and Assistant President John C. Stevens led a steering committee whose work was to suggest means for implementing the Design for Development. The committee proposed the formation of the National Development Council to be made up of business and professional leaders to help in promoting the college's
development program. The National Development Council met for the first time on October 24, 1963, and selected Dean Walling, an ex-student of Abilene Christian College and president of the Western Geophysical Company of America, to be its Chairman. The United States was divided into twenty-six regions and a chairman was selected for each region. Immediate plans were made to pursue programs of soliciting major gifts, helping in estate planning, conducting general fund-raising campaigns, and producing development publicity (124).

Plans called for the National Development Council to have one hundred wealthy and influential men to lead in securing funds for the Design for Development. By November of 1954, the number in the council was 119 (125). College trustees approved the expenditure of an extra one hundred thousand dollars for new personnel and literature to "accelerate the tempo of the Design for Development" (126). During the first thirteen months of its existence, the National Development Council brought in commitments of $3,729,000.00 through its major gifts program alone (125).

Abilene Christian College's financial condition was improving in other ways. The long, tedious Edwards Ranch litigation ended on January 29, 1964, when the Supreme Court of Texas confirmed full ownership and right of possession of the property in favor of the college. The
forty-one thousand, eight hundred thirty-nine and seven tenths acre ranch was the largest gift in the college's history. An example of its value to the school was the report to trustees that the property's net earnings from June 1, 1963, to November 5, 1964, were $625,175.62 (125). Other financial subscriptions to the school in the period from February 1, 1963 through January 31, 1964, totaled $1,079,036.07 (127).

The college was fully integrated racially by the summer of 1964 (128). A three-year graduate program in Bible leading to the Bachelor of Sacred Biblical Knowledge began in September of 1965 (129).

With the assistance of the National Development Council, Abilene Christian College pursued Phase I of the Design for Development. The plan called for a $10.4 million campus improvement program from 1965 to 1968. In that time the school actually raised $10.8 million. Seven new buildings were constructed during that period, and a 596 acre farm was purchased for use by the college's Agriculture Department. During Phase I, $326,000.00 was designated for scholarships, and $1,300,000.00 was added to the college endowment not counting $1,500,000.00 from the Gardner and Edwards ranches which was put into the endowment just before the Design for Development was announced (130).
Phase II of the Design for Development began after Don H. Morris became the Chancellor of the school in 1969 (131). That part of the development program ultimately raised $22 million including a $6 million gift from Mr. and Mrs. H. R. Gibson, Senior, of Dallas, Texas, in February of 1973 (132). Before all of this came to pass, however, Don H. Morris was to receive one of the outstanding tributes of his career.

Don H. Morris Day in Abilene, Texas

In celebration of his twenty-fifth anniversary as President of Abilene Christian College, friends of Don H. Morris arranged a special commemorative dinner at the Cooper High School gymnasium in Abilene, Texas, on May 22, 1965 (133). Sixteen leading Abilene businessmen worked with the Abilene Chamber of Commerce and Abilene Christian College personnel to host the event. Abilene Mayor W. Lee Byrd officially designated May 22, 1965 as Don H. Morris Day (134). Hundreds of congratulatory letters and telegrams, including messages from former students, trustees, faculty members, and dignitaries, flowed into Morris' office as the day approached.

Twelve hundred people attended the dinner to hear tributes to Don H. Morris. His first grade teacher, Mrs. R. C. Love of Denton, Texas, described Morris' early
boyhood. A fellow student at Thorp Spring Christian College, Virgil P. Lee, recalled Morris' college days. Morris' debate colleague at Abilene Christian College and later Dean of the school, Walter H. Adams, reminisced about his association with Morris as a student and then as a college administrator. Elbert Hall, a prominent Abilene businessman, recounted the honoree's work as an Abilene High School teacher, and the Honorable Jack Pope, Associate Justice of the Texas Supreme Court, told of Morris' work as a debate coach when Pope was an Abilene Christian College student. B Sherrod, for many years president of the school's Board of Trustees, praised Morris as a college administrator, and the Honorable Louie Welch, Mayor of Houston, Texas, and an ex-student of Morris, acclaimed his former teacher as a Christian citizen. Finally, Abilene Christian College alumnus M. Norvel Young, President of Pepperdine College, extolled Morris as a Christian educator.

The Honorable W. Lee Byrd, Mayor of Abilene, presented Morris with a large plaque with the following inscription:
Presented to
DON HEATH MORRIS
in commemoration of your twenty-five years of service as President of Abilene Christian College

For your dedicated leadership
For your unquestioned integrity
For your wise counsel
For your contagious good humor
For your immeasurable influence for good
For your great example as a Christian educator in this free land

All of Abilene proudly salutes you

Abilene, Texas
Saturday, May 22, 1965 (136)

The Don H. Morris Commemorative Dinner was climaxed by the presentation to Dr. and Mrs. Morris of a check for five thousand dollars, contributed by Abilene businessmen and friends of Abilene Christian College, to finance a 47-day trip around the world (137). The Don H. Morris Day celebration was one of Morris' most treasured memories (4).

Design for Development, Phase I

The years 1965 and 1966 were a period of intense building and expansion on the Abilene Christian College campus. In January of 1965, college trustees authorized Don H. Morris to apply for a Federal Government grant of
four hundred forty-nine thousand, eight hundred fifty-one dollars to be applied to a $1,350,000.00 improvement project on the school's science building (138). On May 8, 1965, the Moody Foundation of Galveston, Texas, gave the college $500,000.00 to aid in the construction of a $1,496,000.00 Coliseum-Auditorium to seat 5,200 people (139). Also, in May of 1965, four Abilene families donated $1,600,000.00 to build the new Evelyn McGlothlin Campus Center (140). Within ninety days of its inception, Phase I of the Design for Development had brought in donations of $5.7 million, over half of the $10.4 million goal scheduled for four years (137). In September of 1965, college officials secured a loan for $1,200,000.00 to build a new library (141).

Morris told the college trustees that he was glad that the development program had been delayed until a massive effort could be undertaken rather than using piecemeal efforts which could have been started sooner (142). Earlier cost estimates on the new Moody Coliseum-Auditorium were revised upward to $1,929,364.00 (143). The college was expanding its permanent facilities more rapidly than at any time since its move to its new campus in 1929.
Maintaining the Original Purposes

Abilene Christian College was enjoying success in many areas other than its physical expansion. The school had a growing "waiting list" of those who wanted to enroll. The Development Office was having unprecedented success. Morris believed that the greatest opportunities of the school were just being tapped, but he also feared the dangers of the school's drifting away from its original purposes.

During the middle and late 1960's, reports were filtering back to Morris from the school's constituents that some faculty members were "liberal" in their philosophy and theology (18). Academic freedom and its implications was being discussed extensively among school personnel. In February of 1966, Morris told the college trustees:

A little over a year ago Dean Adams and I had conversations with a member of our faculty that led to his resignation. I give you this information to help you see that this is not just a thing that we have thought about in just the last few weeks.

At the last Lectureship, it was felt that some of the lectures were of such a specialized type that they did not serve the churches as they should. One of the lectures caused considerable criticism.

In January, before the Lectureship, Dean Adams, Dean Barton, Brother Southern and I discussed the need of there being a better rapport between the members of the Bible Department and the preachers of the Brotherhood.

After reminding trustees of the provision of the Abilene Christian College Charter for all of the college trustees to be faithful members of the Church of Christ, Morris continued his report by saying:
This particular provision in the Charter, I think, is the bedrock of our purposes and I ask the Board to assist me and the faculty of the College so that we may indeed comply with our objectives as a Christian College. If you hear adverse reports, please report them to me. You and I and the faithful faculty of Abilene Christian College all working together can keep the College strong, Christian, and of great service to all humanity.

Partly because of things resulting from the Lectureship, there have been more reports than usual that have come, probably, to members of the Board. Here on the campus I don't hear them, but I do hear them from friends of the College and members of the Board. We don't know what will be the entire result of this. It might be that sometime in the near future the Bible Department might need to make a statement. These are matters of judgment. Sometimes a statement should be made; sometimes not.

I want to say this, gentlemen: I have never been more determined in my life that this thing be worked out for Abilene Christian College--in a fair way to our faculty and so that the College will stand without undue criticism before the Brotherhood.

Of course you know that I don't have many more years at this job at the best. I have told many people--I have told the administration--that this will work out the right way. If there are any questions or suggestions, I would like to have them (144).

At about the same time that Morris was making this statement to the college trustees, the growing uncertainty of some members of the Church of Christ about the reliability and orthodoxy of Abilene Christian College came to a climax during the Annual Bible Lectureship of 1966. Some statements were made in key lectures by visiting speakers that either implied or explicitly declared the direct guidance and operation of the Holy Spirit in evangelism (145). The generally accepted view of members of the
Church of Christ is that God revealed Himself through the Holy Spirit in the Bible, and that Christians are to be guided solely by the Bible in matters of religious faith and practice.

The immediate reaction to the lectures was that a group of approximately twelve prominent ministers and church leaders went to the home of Don H. Morris to complain about what they had heard. The emotional session took place soon after the evening lecture, and it lasted for several hours into the night (146).

Morris was conciliatory about criticisms of the school, but his strong feelings concerning the college's becoming more liberal in its theology persisted through the remainder of his presidency. They are reflected in his last speech to the faculty as President of Abilene Christian College. The text of that speech is appended to this dissertation. Several teachers felt that Morris' philosophy and the original purposes of the school were too strict for them. When Morris felt that the teachers involved could not or would not be convinced to yield where serious matters of the school's original purposes were concerned, they were given the opportunity to resign. Morris' successor, John C. Stevens, says that Morris held no grudges against those teachers (147).
Don H. Morris Suffers Stroke

Don H. Morris' schedule of work was very busy through 1965 and 1966. He and Mrs. Morris took a twenty-five-day tour of Latin America in July of 1965, as a part of the trip around the world presented to the couple during the Don H. Morris Day Dinner. Their itinerary included visits to many congregations of the Church of Christ in Mexico and other Latin American countries (148).

Information Office files at Abilene Christian College indicate a busy schedule of speeches and sermons at civic clubs, educational meetings, and churches during the fall of 1965 and the spring of 1966. In June of 1966, Dr. and Mrs. Morris took a three-week tour of Spain, Portugal, and Morocco, visiting with Church of Christ leaders in the Iberian countries (149). Construction on the Moody Coliseum-Auditorium began late in the summer of 1966 (150). Morris encouraged trustees to authorize building the new Student Center as soon as possible (151).

The burdens of his office had left Morris very tired. Upon the advice of a physician, he entered Hendrick Memorial Hospital in Abilene on November 15, 1966. Two days later, while or just after undergoing arterial examinations, Morris suffered a stroke that affected his left side (152). The stroke was considered to be "light" and Morris began to improve almost at once. Within a week, it
was reported that he had "regained his speech and mental alertness" (153). He was released from the hospital by December 15, but he could have only a limited amount of visiting at home. His physicians estimated that it would be after the first of the year before he could resume any duties in his office (154).

When Morris suffered his stroke, college trustees moved quickly to provide for continuing leadership for the school. An Administrative Committee made up of John C. Stevens as Chairman, Dean Walter H. Adams, Business Manager Lawrence L. Smith, and Dean of Students Garvin V. Beauchamp assumed the duties of the presidency during Morris' sickness and convalescence (155).

Morris Returns to Work

Don H. Morris was able to resume his work by February of 1967. One of Morris' first requests to the Board of Trustees after returning to his presidential duties was larger salaries for the faculty. He said, "Something must be done if we are to attract and hold competent teachers; this, without question, is the number one problem we face" (156).

Morris was elected for his tenth three-year term as President of Abilene Christian College in February of 1967.
Plans were made to reduce greatly his administrative responsibilities by delegating many of them to a five-man Administrative Committee (156).

In the spring of 1967, contracts for $1,295,967.00 were given for construction of the new science building. Construction continued on other buildings in Phase I of the Design for Development (157). Morris encouraged the selection of a Committee on New Goals to plan and implement Phase II of the Design for Development. Plans were also laid for Phase III of the program to begin as soon as Phase II was completed (158).

Even with a reduction in his administrative burdens, Morris' schedule remained full. In May of 1967, he returned to his native De Soto, Texas, to speak at the De Soto High School commencement exercises (159). In June, he delivered the commencement address at Crowley's Ridge Academy in Paragould, Arkansas. In doing so, Morris finished the cycle of speaking on the campus of every one of the twenty junior and senior colleges operated by members of the Church of Christ (160). In September, Morris was a featured speaker at the Annual Harding College Lectureship in Searcy, Arkansas (161). In November, he delivered the principal address at the Southwestern Christian College Lectureship in Terrell, Texas (162). Morris was an active member of the Anti-Crime Council of
Texas, a group of government and religious leaders who organized to help defeat the proposal to legalize pari-mutuel betting on horse races in the statewide May 4, 1968, referendum. The Council also proposed to "fight crime, especially organized crime, on all fronts in Texas" (163). Morris was selected to membership on a Citizens Advisory Committee on Vocational-Technical Education in Texas. The fifteen-member group met in a series of seminars with the Texas State Senate Committee on Vocational-Technical Education and formulated a report to present to the 1969 Texas Legislature (164).

Oklahoma Christian College awarded Don H. Morris his third honorary doctorate, a Doctor of Letters degree, on August 5, 1968. The Abilene Reporter-News humorously reported that Oklahoma Christian College had given Morris the "third degree" (165). With the retirement of Dr. Law Sone at Texas Wesleyan College in Fort Worth, in the fall of 1968, Don H. Morris became the oldest college president in Texas in point of service (166).

Morris' Presidency Draws to a Close

The old order was giving way to the new at Abilene Christian College. Effective September 1, 1969, Dean Walter H. Adams, Morris' long-time associate and dean of the college since 1932, became Vice President for Academic Affairs for one year, after which he became Dean Emeritus,
retiring from administrative work. At the same time, Lawrence L. Smith, college bursar from 1927 to 1964, and Business Manager from 1965 to 1969, became Vice President for Financial Affairs, allowing L. D. Hilton to become Business Manager and to take over the day-to-day financial operation of the college (167).

In an Executive Session of the Board of Trustees of Abilene Christian College in February of 1969, board president Willard Paine related the fact that Morris had been discussing with him for several months the advisability of appointing a committee to study arrangements for his retirement from his duties as president of the college. Morris spoke to the trustees expressing his feeling that the college needed younger men to assume leadership, especially in day-to-day operations. He asked for the transfer of leadership to be done in a way that would be best for Abilene Christian College, and he pledged his full cooperation. After Morris left the room, discussion centered on his great value to the school. A committee was selected to make a study relative to any change in Don H. Morris' title, the date of any proposed change, the possible successor as administrative head, and any other administrative changes that needed to be made. The committee was to report its suggestions by May of 1969 (167).
In the May 3, 1969 meeting of the board, trustees elevated Don H. Morris to the office of Chancellor of Abilene Christian College effective September 1, 1969. As Chancellor, Morris was relieved of administrative burdens in order to devote his talents to public relations and fund-raising duties. By his request, he was provided office space away from the Administration Building. Don H. Morris, his secretary, Mrs. Delno Roberts, and his successor, John C. Stevens, left the room as trustees deliberated about the new administrative arrangements. When they returned to the meeting, the group prayed together for God's blessings and guidance (168). The presidency of Don H. Morris ended twenty-nine years and three months after it began.

During those twenty-nine years, the number of permanent campus buildings at Abilene Christian College grew from eight to twenty-eight. The most notable physical improvements were the Foster Science Building (1946), McKenzie Hall (women's dormitory, 1947), Mabee Hall (men's dormitory, 1953), Edwards Hall (dormitory for men, 1955), Nelson Hall (dormitory for women, 1955), the Bible Building (1955), Catchings Cafeteria (1955), the Citizenship Center (1960), Gardner Hall (dormitory for women, 1961), Walling
Lecture Hall (1968), Moody Coliseum-Auditorium (1968), McGlothlin Campus Center (1968), and the Gibson Health and Physical Education Center (1968).

Enrollment increased from 661 in 1940, to 3,110 in September of 1969. The faculty grew from 40 full-time teachers to 142. College assets increased from $873,681.00 to $27,185,940.00. Physical plant value grew from $588,374.00 in 1940, to $15,575,405.00 in 1969. The annual college budget expanded from $172,525.00 to $6,834,049.00 during Morris' presidency.

Other highlights of Don H. Morris' years as President of Abilene Christian College were:

1. The accreditation of the school by the Southern Association of Colleges and Secondary Schools in 1951.

2. A Graduate School which began in 1953 and grew to the point of offering masters degrees in nine departments of study by 1969.

3. The addition of seven of the college's eighteen departments of undergraduate study; agriculture, psychology, industrial education, social work, sociology, recreation, and mass communications.

4. The creation of the Abilene Christian College Development Office in 1948, the Abilene Christian College Advisory Board in 1956, the $25.7 million Design for Development program in 1962 (which gained $10.7 million by 1969), and the Abilene Christian College National Development Council in 1963 (169).
Don H. Morris had served as the chief administrator of Abilene Christian College for over twenty-nine years of the school's sixty-three year history. On September 1, 1969, John C. Stevens succeeded Morris to the presidency.
1. Board of Trustees of Abilene Christian College Meeting "Minutes" (hereafter referred to as BOT "Minutes"), August 24, 1939.

2. BOT "Minutes," May 28, 1940.


4. Interview with Mrs. Don H. Morris, January 9, 1975.

5. BOT "Minutes," June 18, 1940.

6. BOT "Minutes," February 24, 1941.

7. BOT "Minutes," February 23, 1940.

8. BOT "Minutes," February 24, 1941.


15. BOT "Minutes," June 1, 1942.


17. BOT "Minutes," February 21, 1944.

18. Interview with B Sherrod, October 23, 1975.


22. BOT "Minutes," September 18, 1944.
32. BOT "Minutes," August 28, 1946.
33. BOT "Minutes," October 8, 1946.
34. BOT "Minutes," February 24, 1947.
35. BOT "Minutes," November 22, 1946.
36. BOT "Minutes," April 8, 1946.
39. Interview with Lawrence L. Smith, October 22, 1975.
43. Interview with A. C. Scott, August 20, 1975.


47. Records from Kenneth Rasco, Abilene Christian College Registrar.


50. Interview with Lawrence L. Smith, August 21, 1975.

51. Abilene Christian College Faculty Meeting Notes, October 29, 1948.

52. BOT "Minutes," November 24, 1948.


54. Abilene Christian College Faculty Meeting Notes, April 14, 1949.

55. Abilene Christian College Faculty Meeting Notes, May 7, 1951.

56. Abilene Christian College Faculty Meeting Notes, April 29, 1952.


60. Letter to Owen Cosgrove from Rupert Richardson, dated January 14, 1976.


64. BOT "Minutes," October 1, 1951.
69. BOT "Minutes," October 6, 1953.
70. BOT "Minutes," February 29, 1953.
71. BOT "Minutes," February 23, 1953.
72. Abilene Christian College Faculty Meeting Notes, March 3, 1953.
73. BOT "Minutes," February 24, 1954.
76. Interview with Robert Hunter, October 21, 1975.
77. BOT "Minutes," December 9, 1954.
79. Abilene Christian College Faculty Meeting Notes, February 16, 1961.
81. Interview with Mrs. Delno Roberts, October 22, 1975.
83. Interview with Mrs. Jerolene Fulks, October 22, 1975.
84. BOT "Minutes," February 20, 1956.
86. BOT "Minutes," February 18, 1957.
87. BOT "Minutes," November 9, 1956.
89. BOT "Minutes," February 24, 1958.
96. Interview with J. W. Treat, August 29, 1975.

110. California Christian, April, 1961, p. 4.


122. Letter from Kenneth D. Wells, President of Freedoms Foundation at Valley Forge, to Don H. Morris, dated May 15, 1962.


131. ACC Today, May-June, 1974, p. 3-A.


136. Text of plaque in Morris home in Abilene.


146. Interview with Mrs. Madge Nelson, November 29, 1974.

147. Interview with John C. Stevens, October 20, 1975.


156. BOT "Minutes," February 8, 1967.
164. The Houston Post, February 20, 1968.
CHAPTER V

DON H. MORRIS COMPLETES HIS WORK

The Chancellorship

Don H. Morris was serving in his ninth three-year term as President of Abilene Christian College when he suffered his first stroke in November of 1966. He returned to his office in February of 1967, and he was elected to his tenth term of office soon thereafter. College trustees made several adjustments in the administration in order to remove some of the tedious duties of the presidency from Morris (1). Morris pressed for immediate implementation of Phase II of the Design for Development and for the pursuing of Phase III as soon as possible (2).

Despite his ardor for his work, it was becoming apparent to Morris and to the college trustees that he could not maintain the pace of the presidency indefinitely. Cataracts on both eyes were impairing his sight. Soon it was discovered that a detached retina was destroying his vision in one eye. His physicians insisted that he sharply curtail his driving, especially on long trips (3). Mrs. Delno Roberts, his secretary of many years, observes
that Morris never lost his good nature or easy gait, but that he lacked some of the patience and elasticity of earlier years (4).

Morris decided that upon the completion of his tenth term as President, a new leader for the college should be appointed. He mentioned the idea to several co-workers and trustees, and they began to plan toward that end. Then, the trustees, with Morris' agreement, began to think in terms of changing the administration before his term expired. Their reasoning was that Morris probably would live longer and be more useful to the college in public relations and fund-raising work if the burden of the presidency were removed from him (4).

The public announcement was made on May 3, 1969, that Don H. Morris would become the first Chancellor of Abilene Christian College and that John C. Stevens, his assistant of many years, would succeed him as President (5). At a recognition dinner in his honor that evening, Morris spoke of his new position:

I have been trying to find out the difference between a president and a chancellor. I think this is it: the president has to do the day-to-day worrying about how to keep the students happy, the faculty happy, the parents happy, the trustees happy--how to keep everybody happy. All the chancellor has to do is to keep the president happy.

After commending his successor and expressing his optimism for the future of the college, Morris said:
The College will, I believe, continue to climb toward the heights academically. The new President and you will and must keep it true to the Bible--pure in this unique way. The money--the endowment and facilities--will come.

Team [Morris' nickname for Mrs. Morris--OC] and I plan to drive over the country talking to individuals about investing their estates in the College and its students. And there are new foundations to be contacted.

I will meet with groups of alumni, preachers, and friends, and tell the story of Abilene Christian College; and I will not be averse to meeting sometimes with the faculty and the Board of Trustees and saying to the faculty and Board, "Let's put our estates--large and small--where we have spent our lives."

Of course, as John and others go in, I might enjoy just piddling around the campus, talking to our fine young men and women, going to chapel, dreaming of the past and the future, and just taking it easy. This might be the natural thing to do, but during the past few months I have thought often of those beautiful lines by Robert Frost, which, the Lord willing express my desires:

The woods are lovely, dark and deep,
But I have promises to keep
And miles to go before I sleep.

It is now my great privilege to present to you the man we will all be calling Mr. President as we begin the next school year. We couldn't be blessed with a finer, more qualified, more solidly Christian servant and friend than John C. Stevens. I know you will want to join me in saluting him.

Morris quickly accepted his new role as Chancellor. He commended the Board of Trustees for their leadership in the change of administrations. He envisioned great new growth for the college in facilities, faculty salaries, and increased endowment. He wrote:
We look forward to working full time in encouraging friends of the college so these new goals can be reached in the years ahead. If we can do that, we feel that it will be better for the college to have younger men looking after the day-to-day operations, and for us to give our full time to improving new goals. It's being done at exactly the right time (7).

Morris also expressed these sentiments as he spoke at the commencement exercises in the summer of 1969 at the Moody Coliseum-Auditorium on the campus of Abilene Christian College. On that occasion, he reviewed the original purposes of the school and urged that the college should always be Christian in its ideals, sound in its finances, and strong in its academic emphasis (8).

Morris' new office was first located in the Foster Science Building and then in the new Brown Memorial Library Building. A few feet from his last office was the expansive Mall of the college which was surrounded by the large, new buildings constructed during the Design for Development. His secretary mentions his deep satisfaction in stepping out onto the Mall and surveying the facilities that he had had a part in bringing into being (4). Though he was often on campus, Morris did not loiter around the Administration Building. His successor, Dr. John C. Stevens, says that Morris offered him no criticisms and very little advice, and even that only when he was asked to advise (9).
Don H. Morris was in great demand for speeches at and away from Abilene Christian College. He also wrote many letters to personal friends and friends of the college during his years as Chancellor (10). Chancellor Morris spoke to all of the student body in Chapel on November 30, 1970. His subject was "Why I Believe in Abilene Christian College." Among the reasons that Morris listed for believing in the school was this statement:

I believe in Abilene Christian College because of the character of men who make up the Board of Trustees who guide it in its broad policies and purposes.

I believe in this college because those purposes call for a college of excellence, made so by high academics and heightened by a commitment to the leadership of Jesus as the Son of God as the head of the church—a college of excellence, enriched by its teachings of the Bible as the Word and the law of God (11).

Information Office files at Abilene Christian College disclose many speeches by Morris to schools, churches, alumni groups, other Christian colleges, and civic groups, especially as a spokesman for Christian education and Abilene Christian College.

Advisory Work

The Abilene Christian College Board of Trustees continued to seek the advice and counsel of Don H. Morris. On February 21, 1971, he spoke to the Endowment Committee about means for getting such funds. Morris felt strongly
that the public should be better informed on the nature and need of endowment. He said that securing contributions for buildings was much easier than gaining extra endowment. He proposed programs to personalize and dramatize the college's endowment needs. He especially urged means of informing the school's friends of the tax advantages in estate planning for endowment. He outlined three main areas of endowment solicitation: year-end unrestricted giving, personal solicitation of estates between $25,000.00 and $250,000.00, and personal solicitation of estates over $250,000.00. He concluded his address by saying:

We have too many times let the endowment program go by the board because it is a little hard to get hold of. Buildings have appealed to many donors. But the endowment program will succeed if we really communicate to our friends and sell them on it (12).

Morris also was called upon by administrators and trustees of other Christian colleges several times during his years as Chancellor. He conducted several meetings with leaders of some of the smaller, struggling Christian colleges and advised them about school management and fund-raising methods. During the annual Lectureship, it was not unusual for him to meet with one or several groups who were visiting on the campus and to help them in an advisory capacity (4).
Some of Morris' most valuable advisory work was done with other personnel in the Development Office, according to William Decker and Robert Hunter who often drove for Morris on fund-raising trips for the college. On such trips, Morris advised these and other Development Office workers of proper methods of fund solicitation. The following items are a condensation of some of the principles that Don H. Morris taught other workers to observe in fund-raising efforts. They are taken from an interview with Robert Hunter:

1. He taught us not to impose on people's time. Many people that we visited were very busy people, so he was methodical about corresponding or calling in advance of his visit to be certain that the visit would not be an inconvenience to the person being contacted.

2. He kept copious notes on each visit to add to the Development Office records. This matter helped the school greatly in the Edwards Ranch litigation. Morris had kept a careful record of each visit and what was done each time Edwards was called upon. Before a visit, Morris studied past records carefully and went over in his own mind the things that would help him to be effective in his calls on people.

3. Morris taught other workers to be positive and constructive in their comments about the college, but he insisted on forthrightness and truth. He was a man of absolute integrity. He would not have stood for anyone's trying to misrepresent the school.

4. He taught fund-raisers to be brief and precise in their visits without being abrupt.
5. He encouraged representatives of the school to take a genuine interest in others, in what they believed, in what they wanted to talk about, and what they wanted to do. This was an important part of the record-keeping that accompanied the visits.

6. He emphasized making the person feel that he was a friend of the college and that the college valued his friendship. He taught us to be thoughtful of others and to make them feel that, at that moment, they were the most important friends that the college had.

7. He taught us to express appreciation freely, and that we could not thank people enough. And so sometimes people would say, "You've thanked me when I made the gift, and then you have written me and thanked me by letter, and then you called me up a year later and said, 'I'm thinking of you as I think of the anniversary date of what you did for the college, and the work you helped us do, and now I want to report to you on what your gift has accomplished . . .' We did not ever seem to find an end to thanking people.

8. He taught the workers to be a part of a team effort. The building of the college was not the work of one or a few, but it took the help of every person working as a part of a team. Everything we did was for the good of the college, not for individual attention or individual praise (10).

Morris took great pride in the Development Office of the school, and he worked closely with it during his last few years (9).

Research

Chancellor Morris was able to spend more time in research than he had as president of the college. He reviewed the copies of early Board of Trustee Meeting
"Minutes" extensively. He also delved into the history of the Church of Christ in Abilene, hoping to provide an accurate account of the origin and early growth of congregations in the city and in nearby communities (13).

Morris studied the history of several Christian colleges. In July of 1973, he recorded a two-hour oral history tape as he was interviewed by R. L. Roberts of the Abilene Christian College library staff. The interview reflects extensive research done by Morris on the history of several early Christian colleges, particularly Thorp Spring Christian College and other colleges supported by members of the Church of Christ in Texas (14).

On July 21, 1973, Don H. Morris was the featured speaker for the Ex-students Reunion on the campus of Thorp Spring Christian College. The occasion was the one hundredth anniversary of the founding of Add-Ran College at Thorp Spring in Hood County, Texas. The speech was carefully researched; many references in it were taken from the book *Thank God, We Made It!* written by Joseph Lynn Clark, son of Randolph Clark who was one of the founders of Add-Ran College (15). Morris related with deep emotion the occasion when the student body and constituency of Add-Ran College divided over the introduction
of an organ in the worship services at the school (16). After tracing the introduction of missionary societies and instrumental music into Churches of Christ (Disciples) in Texas, Morris made this observation:

It might be noted here that colleges are often blamed by brethren for spawning departures from the faith. In Texas, at least, the record shows that a cross section of preachers and other members, not the college leaders, made the first digression, at Austin (16).

The latter part of the speech was a statement about the condition of Churches of Christ in Texas in 1973, and an exhortation to Morris' audience to remain true to Biblical teachings.

Another speech indicating Morris' great interest in research was given in the Chapel services at Abilene Christian College on September 27, 1973. It reviewed the very early history of the college and reminded the students of the original purposes of the school (17). Morris was involved in researching and writing a definitive history of Abilene Christian College at the time of his death (18).

Fund-Raising

The principal work of Morris in his last few years, however, was not in counseling or research; it was in fund-raising. Many extensive trips were taken contacting friends of the college, corporations, foundations, and other possible sources of revenue. Mrs. Morris, Robert Hunter, and
William Decker drove on many trips as Morris "cultivated" potential donors. Decker describes a typical trip to West Texas to visit with friends of the school. He recalls the good humor and optimism of Morris and his reminiscing about great events and associations in his years of service to Abilene Christian College. He also recalls Morris' extreme care in avoiding statements of gossip or expressions which were defamatory of others (this observation also was made by B Sherrod and by Mrs. W. D. Lawson). Decker states that Morris was intensely interested in advancing the college, and that, even in his advanced years and with his delicate health, Morris' fund-raising trips were comprised of long days and much, well-organized effort (19).

Morris was active and effective in fund-raising as long as he lived. The Development Office enjoyed continuing success during Morris' chancellorship (10).

His Last Years

Don H. Morris was slowing down from the fast pace of former years. He was able to spend more time with his family and close friends. In September, 1972, Morris suffered a serious heart attack; he was hospitalized for several weeks. One day, his wife left the hospital and drove to the family home. Two college girls were walking by the house, and they asked how Dr. Morris was. Mrs. Morris replied that he was improving and doing very well.
One of the girls replied, "He must be a tough old bird."

The story amused Morris, and he wanted to be sure to get the names of the girls (18).

Morris was highly pleased when his daughter, Mrs. W. D. Lawson, was named the recipient of the Abilene Exchange Club Golden Deeds Award for her work with the Christian Service Center of Abilene in 1973. Shortly before his death, Morris wrote an essay in a book entitled *What Lack We Yet?* The book was a collection of articles by forty-seven different writers stating their opinions of the greatest "needs" in the modern Church of Christ. Among the wide gamut of philosophical and theological suggestions, Morris' article was a simple appeal to Biblical principles of truth and goodwill to others along with the statement, "We need to practice what we preach" (20). In the article, Morris commended freely the work being done by organizations such as the Christian Service Center to relieve distressed humanity.

Only a couple of weeks before his death, Morris attended a Christmas party for indigent children at the Christian Service Center. One group of young, economically-deprived black children had been brought to the Center several months before by a worker named James Frazier. They proudly called themselves the "James Gang." Morris visited with the children quite awhile during the evening,
and before he left they told him that they wanted him to be an honorary member of the "James Gang." Morris was very pleased, and he told his family that he considered that among the greater honors that he had received in his life (21).

Morris' Death

January 9, 1974, was a cold day in Abilene. Don H. Morris left his home at 8:30 in the morning to do several tasks at his campus office before attending the last session of a Preacher's Workshop which was being sponsored by the college. The day before, Morris had dictated a letter to his secretary addressed to the United States Board of Paroles on behalf of a man in prison who Morris felt had been a victim of circumstances. He asked his secretary, Mrs. Roberts, to type the letter and to have it ready for him to sign shortly after lunch on January 9. After the last morning lecture in the Preacher's Workshop, Morris shook hands with several people, and then he walked back across the Mall from Moody Coliseum-Auditorium toward his office. The seventy-one year old educator was visiting with a faculty member as he walked along; he was in a jovial mood. Suddenly he slumped to the sidewalk. He was taken to the West Texas Medical Center where he was pronounced dead at 1:20 p.m.
Morris' funeral was conducted at 2:30 on Friday afternoon, January 11, 1974. The Abilene Christian College A Capella Chorus was on tour in New Mexico when Morris died. The rest of its trip was canceled in order for the group to return to Abilene and sing for the funeral services. The funeral was conducted in the building of the College Church of Christ where Morris had served as an Elder for eighteen years. Eulogies were given by Morris' successor, John C. Stevens, Dean of the college for many years, Walter H. Adams, and Treasurer of Abilene Christian College, Lawrence L. Smith. Morris was survived by his wife; one son, Thomas, of Abilene; two daughters, Mrs. W. D. (Jacquelyn) Lawson, of Abilene, and Mrs. Fred (Patricia) Schneider of Garden Grove, California; and by ten grandchildren. Interment was in Elmwood Memorial Park in Abilene.

At the Annual Abilene Christian College Lectureship of 1975, college officials announced a four million dollar campaign to be conducted in order to build the Don H. Morris Center of Fine Arts on the campus of the school. On July 14, 1975, Abilene Christian College announced the gift of $100,000.00 by the family of Don H. Morris to help in the campaign for the Don H. Morris Center.
Morris' close companion and helper during the years that he was Chancellor, Abilene Christian College Vice President Robert Hunter, recalls Morris and his influence with these words:

Dr. Morris left such an indelible impression in the lives of so many untold thousands that his name will be synonymous with Abilene Christian College. But he was always quick to point out that there were many great leaders and founders and builders in the history of the college, and he helped to perpetuate those names by recounting them and recalling them. And I hope that we can by that example always think justly and do justice to the many builders in many ways both large and small. I think he always said there have been no small gifts made to Abilene Christian College. They varied in size, but none were small gifts. All of the gifts were big in the hearts of those who made them, and this was his constant inspiration to us all. And we miss him greatly. All of us who worked with him, he was always convincing us that we must stay and give our lives here. He truly inspired that kind of dedication and loyalty, and therefore I think thousands will continue to serve Abilene Christian College and the church because he put them forth in his own life of conviction and service. So we will always be indebted to him for the many, many good things that he taught us (10).

Summary

Don H. Morris was directly associated with Abilene Christian College for almost all of his adult life, first as a student and then as teacher, vice president, president, and chancellor. At the time of his death in 1974, Morris had served as an administrator of the college for forty-two years of its sixty-eight year history. He knew personally every trustee and every president that had served the school.
He knew thousands of supporters, patrons, and ex-students. Next to the Church and his own family, Abilene Christian College was Morris' chief concern in life. He often assisted other educational endeavors, particularly other Christian colleges, but his life centered around the growth and development of his beloved college.

Morris grew up with Abilene Christian College, guiding its development from a small, financially beleaguered institution to a fully accredited, financially secure college with a graduate school. Despite his love for the classroom, Morris perceived that his greatest contribution to the institution lay in the areas of administration and development. He gained satisfaction in establishing and leading an outstanding development program.

Don H. Morris possessed great energy and intrinsic motivation that often was manifested in dogged persistence and determination. He was a quiet person in private life, but he was very articulate in pressing for the goals of Abilene Christian College.

As an administrator, Morris was firm and sometimes strict, especially in matters involving the original purposes of the college, yet there is ample evidence that he was gentle, tender-hearted, and compassionate. He disdained gossip and slander, and he often appealed to the spirit of Christian unity and the practice of the Golden Rule.
Morris was vitally concerned with the goodwill of the constituency of Abilene Christian College. He felt that such friendship could be maintained only by openness and fairness with all of the school's supporters. He insisted, therefore, on integrity and honesty in all areas of the school's endeavors. He was forthright in his declarations of his moral convictions. Throughout his administration, Morris did not hesitate to encourage Christian morality or to discourage conduct and policies which he felt would harm the morals of the school, the community, or the nation.

Don H. Morris was an ardent exponent and proponent of freedom, industry, integrity, and democracy. He frequently extolled the advantages of free enterprise and the American way of life.

Morris' ability to lead people was one of his greatest assets. He never was refused any major request by the college trustees. He was meticulous in his preparation for trustees meetings, conferences with teachers, meetings with potential donors to the school, or public speeches. He gained the confidence of many people by being scrupulously honest and fair.

Morris carefully sought and developed others with outstanding ability to prepare for service and to supply continuing leadership at the college. He grew in his
ability to delegate authority to others, but Morris did not conceive of delegating authority as a matter of relinquishing ultimate responsibility and control. He was determined that appropriate work should be done correctly and with dispatch, and therefore he maintained the necessary control to see delegated work through to a satisfactory conclusion.

Perhaps the outstanding characteristic of Don H. Morris as an educational leader was his single-mindedness, his devotion, his persistence in leading Abilene Christian College toward the ultimate fulfillment of its original purposes. He had the ability to see a goal clearly and to work toward it tirelessly. As early as 1928, Morris had stated his life's ambition to contribute in every way that he could to the progress of Christian education. He never allowed the continual burdens of office that might have deterred a less committed and determined person to come between him and his devotion to the purposes of the school. Morris' basic philosophy of Christianity and Christian education was altered in his years at Abilene Christian College only in the sense that it was matured and intensified. The effect of his administration was the renewing and strengthening of the original purposes of the school. The life of Don H. Morris was fulfilled in his work at Abilene Christian College, and Abilene Christian College bears the lasting impression of his personality and philosophy.
CHAPTER BIBLIOGRAPHY

1. Board of Trustees of Abilene Christian College Meeting "Minutes" (hereafter referred to as BOT "Minutes"), February 20, 1967.


3. Interview with Mrs. Don H. Morris, January 9, 1975.

4. Interview with Mrs. Delno Roberts, October 22, 1975.


APPENDICES

I. CHRONOLOGY OF THE ADMINISTRATION OF DON HEATH MORRIS AT ABILENE CHRISTIAN COLLEGE

II. ADDRESS BY DON H. MORRIS AT ABILENE CHRISTIAN COLLEGE FACULTY MEETING, MAY 14, 1968
APPENDIX I

CHRONOLOGY OF THE ADMINISTRATION OF DON HEATH MORRIS
AT ABILENE CHRISTIAN COLLEGE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Event(s)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1852</td>
<td>Hamilton Rowan Morris (paternal great grandfather of Don H. Morris) settled fourteen miles south of Dallas, Texas, at the De Soto community.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1852</td>
<td>Allen Q. Nance (maternal great grandfather of Don H. Morris) settled one-and-one-half miles northwest of De Soto, Texas.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1898</td>
<td>July 3, Byrom Palmer Morris and Annie Laura Nance (parents of Don H. Morris) were married at De Soto.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1902</td>
<td>August 13, Don H. Morris was born two miles west of De Soto.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1906</td>
<td>Abilene Christian College was founded as Childers' Classical Institute at Abilene, Texas.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1908</td>
<td>Don H. Morris entered elementary school at De Soto.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1917</td>
<td>Don H. Morris graduated from the tenth grade at De Soto High School.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1918</td>
<td>Don H. Morris graduated from the eleventh grade at De Soto High School.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1918</td>
<td>Summer, Don H. Morris was baptized at De Soto by Horace Busby, Senior.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1918</td>
<td>Fall, Don H. Morris enrolled at Thorp Spring Christian College.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1920</td>
<td>Spring, Don H. Morris graduated from Thorp Spring Christian College.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
1920  Fall, Don H. Morris became a teacher of Latin and mathematics at Red Oak, Texas, high school.

1922  Don H. Morris entered Abilene Christian College.

1923  January 8, Don H. Morris dated Miss Alberta Allen the first time.

1923  Summer, Don H. Morris preached his first sermon at Waxahachie, Texas.

1924  Don H. Morris graduated from Abilene Christian College.

1924  November 1, Don H. Morris married Alberta Allen at Waxahachie, Texas.

1924-1928  Don H. Morris taught speech, history, and debate at Abilene High School.

1928  Fall, Don H. Morris became speech teacher at Abilene Christian College.

1929  September, Abilene Christian College moved to its new campus on the northeast edge of Abilene.

1930  Don H. Morris became the leader of the Abilene Christian College Ten Thousand Club.

1930  Summer, Don H. Morris received the Master of Arts degree in Administrative Education from the University of Texas.

1932  Fall, Don H. Morris became the Vice President of Abilene Christian College.

1934  The Hardin annuity gift saved Abilene Christian College from bankruptcy.

1934  Don H. Morris was put in charge of soliciting and handling funds to guarantee the Hardin annuity.

1937  Don H. Morris was appointed to the Executive Committee and Finance Committee of Abilene Christian College.

1939  August 24, the Board of Trustees selected Don H. Morris to be the next President of Abilene Christian College to succeed James F. Cox.
1940  June 1, Don H. Morris officially became President of Abilene Christian College.

1940  November 9, Don H. Morris was formally inaugurated as President of Abilene Christian College.

1941  December 7, Japan bombed the United States Naval Base at Pearl Harbor.

1943  February 22, Don H. Morris announced to the trustees that Abilene Christian College was free of debt and that its bills were paid up-to-date.

1943  February 23, Don H. Morris was elected to his second three-year term as President of Abilene Christian College.

1944  May, Abilene Christian College established a new Agriculture Department.

1945  September 2, Japan surrendered to the Allies on board the U.S.S. Missouri. World War II was over.

1945  September 17, ground was broken for the new science building at Abilene Christian College.

1945  Fall, Don H. Morris signed an agreement with the United States government to enable returning servicemen to attend Abilene Christian College on the "G.I. Bill."

1946  February, Don H. Morris was elected for a third three-year term as President of Abilene Christian College.

1946  Construction was begun on the McKenzie Dormitory for girls.

1945-1946  Don H. Morris obtained United States government surplus temporary housing for 170 married veterans, 242 single veterans, 162 nonveterans, and thirteen faculty families, and a classroom complex.

1946  Abilene Christian College began a financial campaign to gain three million dollars for operating and expanding the school.
1948 At the urging of Don H. Morris, the Board of Trustees established a Twenty-year Planning Commission for Abilene Christian College.

1948 Don H. Morris proposed that the Development Office be made a separate department of the college's administration.

1948 The John Price Jones Company of New York City was hired to assist in planning the school's development program.

1948 The Planning Commission of Abilene Christian College proposed a three-phase, twenty-year development program calling for eight million dollars.

1949 February, Don H. Morris was elected to a fourth three-year term as President of Abilene Christian College.

1950 September, Abilene Christian College gained full ownership of the Ellis Homes property in Big Spring, Texas.

1951 December, Abilene Christian College gained full membership in the Southern Association of Colleges and Secondary Schools.

1952 The Mabee Foundation of Tulsa, Oklahoma, gave $644,065.64 for the construction of Mabee Dormitory for men.

1953 Summer, the Abilene Christian College Graduate School was begun.

1954 The American Founders Life Insurance Company started in Austin, Texas.

1954 December, William Edwards gave Abilene Christian College a 41,000 acre ranch near Fort Stockton, Texas.

1955 February, Don H. Morris announced the approval of a federal government loan for a new boys' dormitory, a new girls' dormitory, and a new cafeteria.

1955 February, groundbreaking ceremonies were conducted for the new $375,000.00 Bible Building.
1955 Edwards Hall for men, Nelson Hall for women, and the Bible Building were completed.

1956 Abilene Christian College celebrated its fiftieth anniversary.

1956 Don H. Morris was awarded an honorary doctorate by McMurry College.

1956 Dr. and Mrs. Don H. Morris took a tour of Scandinavia and Europe as a gift from the Abilene Christian College trustees. Morris took a side tour of the Holy Land for five days.

1957 The American Studies Program began at Abilene Christian College.

1958 The Abilene Christian College Master Planning Council was started.


1960 The Citizenship Center Building was completed.

1960 The Abilene Christian College Estate Planning Program was instituted.

1960 May 3, Don H. Morris announced the approval of a federal government load for $1,193,000.00 for the construction of a new dormitory to house 352 women.

1961 The American Founders Life Insurance Company gave one-half million dollars worth of stock to Abilene Christian College.

1961 Don H. Morris and other Abilene Christian College personnel completed a Self-Study for the Southern Association on the tenth anniversary of the school's membership in the organization.

1961 Gardner Hall for women was completed.

1961 "The Design for Development" was formulated and introduced.

1962 Don H. Morris took a four-week trip to the Orient.
1963 August, Don H. Morris received the Doctor of Laws degree from Pepperdine College.

1963 August 7, the Texas Court of Civil Appeals in El Paso awarded full possession of the Edwards Ranch to Abilene Christian College.

1963 October, the National Development Council was originated.

1964 The Texas State Supreme Court refused to hear the appeal of the William Edwards heirs.

1964 Summer, Abilene Christian College became fully integrated racially.

1964 Summer, Abilene Christian College inaugurated the graduate program leading to the Bachelor of Sacred Theology degree.

1965 May 22, Don H. Morris Day was celebrated in Abilene.

1965 Don H. Morris applied for a $449,000.00 federal loan to improve the Science Building.

1965 The Moody Foundation of Galveston, Texas, granted Abilene Christian College $500,000.00 to apply to the construction of a new coliseum-auditorium.

1965 May, the McGlothlin and Carbin families gave Abilene Christian College $1,600,000.00 to build a new student center.

1966 Dr. and Mrs. Don H. Morris made a tour of the Iberian countries as a gift from the City of Abilene.

1966 November 17, Don H. Morris suffered a stroke while hospitalized at Hendrick Memorial Hospital in Abilene.

1967 February, Don H. Morris returned to his work at Abilene Christian College.

1967 February, Don H. Morris was elected to his tenth three-year term as President of Abilene Christian College.
1967  The Abilene Christian College Board of Trustees implemented Phase II of the Design for Development and made plans for the implementation of Phase III of the Design for Development.

1967  May, Don H. Morris was the featured speaker at commencement exercises at De Soto High School.

1968  Four major new buildings were completed at Abilene Christian College: the Walling Lecture Hall, the Moody Coliseum-Auditorium, the McGlothlin Student Center, and the Gibson Health and Physical Education Center.

1968  August 5, Don H. Morris received the Doctor of Letters degree from Oklahoma Christian College.

1969  May 3, Don H. Morris became the first Chancellor of Abilene Christian College.

1971  February 21, Don H. Morris was the featured speaker at the meeting of the Endowment Committee at Abilene Christian College.

1971  Summer, the annual Don Morris-Willson Lectureship began at Lubbock Christian College in Lubbock, Texas with the support of the J. M. Willson family of Floydada, Texas.

1973  Dr. and Mrs. Don H. Morris established a $25,000.00 scholarship fund for worthy, full-time students at Abilene Christian College.

1973  May 6, Don H. Morris was the featured speaker at the golden anniversary celebration of Abilene Christian College's class of 1923 (Don H. Morris' class).

1973  July 21-22, Don H. Morris was the featured speaker at the one hundredth anniversary of the founding of Add-Ran College at Thorp Spring, Texas.

1973  September 27, Don H. Morris delivered his last chapel speech at Abilene Christian College.
1974 January 9, Don H. Morris suffered a heart attack on the campus of Abilene Christian College. He was pronounced dead at the West Texas Medical Center in Abilene.

1974 January 11, funeral services were conducted for Don H. Morris at the College Church of Christ building in Abilene, Texas.

1975 February, the Board of Trustees of Abilene Christian College announced a four million dollar campaign to build the Don H. Morris Center of Fine Arts on the campus of the school.

1975 July 14, Abilene Christian College announced the gift of $100,000.00 by the family of Don H. Morris to help in the financial campaign for the Don H. Morris Center.
APPENDIX II

ADDRESS BY DON H. MORRIS AT THE ABILENE CHRISTIAN COLLEGE
FACULTY MEETING, MAY 14, 1968

Many speeches today begin with the superfluous statement that this is a time of change. The statement certainly is true with regard to higher education. The last years have been a time of bigger enrollments and a time of better facilities in most colleges and universities. It is a time of change at Abilene Christian College in both of these areas. Our enrollment this present year is the largest ever; and, with our Design for Development, it seems that during the next few years we will have at our command the most useful facilities ever afforded one of our Christian colleges.

In our information to the public we have referred to 1967-68 as "The Year of Change" at Abilene Christian College. When we announced the Design for Development three years ago, and during this present year of change also, we have remembered, I am glad, our promises and consequent obligations to our thousands of friends, to the church, and to the world. We have told our friends that we are advancing the changeless.
Advancing the changeless! A great institution like Abilene Christian College is much like a great oak; it grows and develops; it gets taller and it spreads its boughs; and yet its sources of life and strength remain constant and the same. We do advance the changeless, because our concepts of education at Abilene Christian College are as changeless as eternal truth.

In order to carry out the promises of Abilene Christian College, the founders of the College in its Charter provided for a Board of Trustees. At first the Board was made up of a dedicated group of five honorable and successful Christian men. The Charter has been amended at different times until now the Board is composed of forty-five men, all just as honorable and dedicated and as interested in the basic purposes of the College, I believe, as were those great men who started Childers' Classical Institute on its course sixty-two years ago.

The Board is the policy-making body of Abilene Christian College. Its responsibility is to set the purposes and the principles that guide the College. The business of the Board also is to see to it that the promises of the College which I have referred to--its policies and its principles--are lived up to, that its purposes are carried out by the officials of the College who are designated to do so.
To carry out the policies of Abilene Christian College, to see to it that its promises are kept, to see to it that the proper individual officials and teachers are employed to keep the promises, the Charter of the College provides that a President shall be employed by the Board. He is responsible to the Board for the operation of the College, for its promotion, and for the day-to-day decisions and impressions made on this campus. Through the Board, the President is also responsible to all who believe in the College--who believe in it because of the promises it has made and because of the principles which the College has declared it will follow.

Thousands of people have acted upon these promises. During the past nine months, 3,394 students and their parents, probably between eight and ten thousand individuals, have patronized Abilene Christian College. These individuals have made a contractual agreement with the College, based upon the principles for which they believe the College stands. They have trusted Abilene Christian College in the most far-reaching way possible. They have entrusted themselves (the students have), and the parents have entrusted their children to us for education, for direction, and for all-round development.

Abilene Christian College is responsible to another large number who have made gifts to it. At the time of
the February meeting of the National Development Council, 8,299 different gifts had been made in the Design for Development--gifts ranging from a few dollars to over a million dollars. Other than parents and students, these are the most important people that we do business with--people that we make our promises to. It is really astounding when you remember that counting parents, students, donors, and their wives and husbands, during the past three years, Abilene Christian College has been involved in this definite contractual relationship with probably 25,000 to 30,000 individuals.

To see to it that Abilene Christian College does its work--that our obligations are carried out in these contractual relationships, many other individuals make up its organization.

Among these individuals are the Dean of the College, who is responsible to the President for its academic program; the Business Manager, who is responsible for effecting all business functions of the College; the Dean of Students, who is responsible for student life; the Assistant to the President, who is responsible for public relations activities; and--at Abilene Christian College, the Assistant President, who assists in the general
administration of the College in any activity where his help is required. These people make up the Administrative Committee of Abilene Christian College.

Responsible to the different members of the Administrative Committee are those who carry out functions in each particular area. For example, in the public relations area are the Director of Development; the field men; the public information people, who look after all publications and deal with the news media; the keepers of public relations records; the secretaries, and others.

In the academic field, responsible to the Dean, are the Registrar and his staff, the Dean of the Graduate School, the heads of all departments, and all members of the faculty. In each department the faculty members are first of all responsible to the head of that department.

In the business area there are the Assistant Business Manager, the purchasing officer, and all who look after records, collections, and expenditures.

And in the area of student life there are the Admissions Director and his staff, the Dean of Women, the Dean of Men, the hostesses, and others who have their responsibilities.

All of this makes for a complex organization on this campus. But it is more than an organization; it is a group of wonderful men and women. I like to call it a family of
men and women who have banded themselves together to see to it that the great purposes of our College are accomplished. The Business Office, for example, must carry on all the business of the College with the kind of thrift and good judgment that guarantees the business effectiveness and the business integrity of Abilene Christian College.

Of course the most important function of Abilene Christian College is educational.

In our educational program, there are two basic functions which the College has set for itself. The first is academic per se; we are a college. We are morally bound to do the work of an institution of higher learning as best we can. The Charter of Abilene Christian College, written in 1906 and reapproved and extended for an indefinite time on May 26, 1967, requires the "maintenance of a college for the advancement of education in which the arts, sciences, languages, and Holy Scriptures shall always be taught, together with such other courses of instruction as shall be deemed advisable by the Board of Trustees." Yes, we are a college, and I am proud of the service we have rendered as an institution of higher learning. This service is attested to by the recognition given us by other colleges and universities, by the State of Texas, by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools, and the recognition that comes from thousands of alumni being
leaders in their professions and businesses throughout the world. We must continue to hold to our academic standards so that this service which we offer to young people may be the most far-reaching possible.

The other basic educational function of Abilene Christian College is religious. Every one of us is here first of all because of our religious purposes. Our Trustees, our National Development Council, our patrons, you and I—all of us—invest our time and money here because of this great purpose. We are glad to give ourselves to this cause because of the extent to which we believe in years past we have accomplished that most important of all of our purposes.

That purpose in which so many have invested their lives—men and women like Charles H. Roberson, Miss Jewell Watson, Brother Cox, Brother Baxter, Brother Sewell, and Mrs. Bishop—the purpose, I repeat, to which so many of us here today have given the greater part of our lives (and, as the Declaration says, "our sacred honor") is clearly defined in the Charter. The Charter of Abilene Christian College, referring to the College, says "...which shall be managed and controlled as hereinafter set forth by a Board of Trustees, each of whom shall be a member of a congregation of the Church of Christ, which takes the New Testament as its only and sufficient rule of faith, worship
and practice, and rejects from its faith, worship, and practice everything not required by either precept or example, and which does not introduce into the faith, worship and practice, as a part of the same or as adjuncts thereto any supplemental organization or anything else not clearly and directly authorized in the New Testament either by precept or example."

This paragraph from the Charter of Abilene Christian College sets the religious course of the College. The Charter enforces this commitment by stating further that the qualifications of Board members just given you, cannot be changed and that all gifts to the College are given and are to be considered by law to be given on this condition.

So we do have a commitment--a promise--a legal promise that can be enforced by law by donors to the College and their heirs. Also we have a moral commitment to all: to parents, to students, to alumni, to friends. The donors come in as a kind of surety of the promise that is made to all.

What does the promise say? It says that the policies of Abilene Christian College shall be made by men who believe in the church, the church that takes the "New Testament as its only and sufficient rule of faith, worship and practice and rejects from its faith, worship and practice everything not required by either precept or example,
and which does not introduce into the faith, worship and practice, as a part of the same or as adjuncts thereto any supplemental organization or anything else not clearly authorized in the New Testament either by precept or example."

Now there is not a person here today who doesn't know what that means. I know what it means, and I am honor bound by it. It means that religiously Abilene Christian College stands for the organization of the New Testament Church--that it stands for the law of conversion of the New Testament, the worship as taught in the New Testament--that religiously it stands for the name of the church in the New Testament and for Bible teaching on all matters. I am calling attention to this today as a review and as a reminder to all of us of our purposes and promises. We are all honor bound by these principles. It is not too much for the administration to expect that the teaching and influence of the College conform to these requirements. It is not enough not to expect it.

Someone will ask, "Doesn't this limit academic freedom?"

There is not a university or college in the United States where so-called academic freedom is not qualified or limited in some particular. I believe in freedom as much as any person here--freedom to search for truth and
freedom of expression as long as such expression does not interfere with the academic or religious aims of Abilene Christian College. We are controlled by our aims just as are other institutions.

The Commission on Colleges and Universities of the North Central Association of Colleges and Secondary Schools, in its Guide for the Evaluation of Institutions of Higher Education, recognizes "restriction of freedom of expression and action imposed because of religious or other particular institutional aims." The Commission further states that these aims "should be a matter of record and should be made known to prospective faculty members in advance of appointment."

Our aims are on record in the Charter and are discussed with prospective faculty members. (I do this myself.) No doubt they should be in a more available form. A committee of the faculty and administration has been working on this but has not completed it to date, for which I suppose I am chiefly to blame.

Also it will be of interest here to state that a special committee appointed by the Texas Coordinating Board in its recommendations last year to the Coordinating Board recognized "limitations . . . because of religious or other aims." The Committee also stated: "Exercise
of professional integrity by a faculty member includes recognition that the public will judge his profession and his institution by his statements."

This principle requires that the college teacher always remember to respect the aims of his institution in his actions and in his expressions. This principle (that the public will judge a faculty member's profession and his institution by his statements) also has to do with public denouncements and criticisms by anyone connected with a college.

The National Education Association in its code of ethics for the teaching profession states at this point: "The teacher will deal with other members of the profession in the same manner as he himself wishes to be treated."

We don't have to quote the NEA for that. This gets right down to where we live. This truth applies to anything said or done that reflects publicly upon any teacher or any segment of the College. It applies also to the little day-by-day utterances that may reflect upon colleagues, wound any, or divide the whole. We live in a close community and should be careful to treat others as we wish to be treated.

Knowledge, scholarship, and truth are important. The heart--attitude toward others--is also important. Feeling for others does not weaken truth; it strengthens and sustains it.
The NEA code of ethics also states: "The teacher will speak constructively of other teachers, but report honestly to responsible persons in matters involving the welfare of students, the school . . . , and the profession."

These are valid principles of manmade ethics. Every faculty member at Abilene Christian College should respect them. There are higher principles of loyalty and brotherly consideration of colleagues that are found in the Bible. These Bible principles, too, prohibit denouncements and public criticisms until every reasonable attempt has been made through proper channels to bring about what the faculty member thinks should be done.

All of this is very important at Abilene Christian College. It is especially important at this time.

Yes, I believe in freedom for every staff member and every teacher. And I believe in freedom for every department head, for the deans, for the business manager, for the president and every other official of the College as each carries out his responsibilities within the purposes of the College.

May I give an example. One of the most effective and one of the most pleasant relationships that I have on this campus is with the business office. Now I don't know a thing about accounting, and I don't know one lever or button on the IBM machines from the other. But I can add
and figure percentages. I can tell when an overcharge or undercharge is made or when a note has been paid if they will give me a list of the payments.

But the business office is free. It sets up its accounting system; it sets up its procedures for recording charges and for making collections. There is full freedom in that office.

But when I receive from a parent a letter or a long distance call (as I sometimes do) saying, "You have overcharged my son," or "You haven't given my son credit for a certain payment," I feel free to say to the patron, "I'll look into that immediately and let you know." Then I feel free to call Mr. Smith or Bill Hilton or Leao McDaniel or Don Drennan to find information to relay to the patron. If I can't understand what they tell me, I feel free to go in the office and ask, "Please write that down so this father and I can see what it is."

The business office, I am glad to say, is nearly always right. But if there is a mistake, I feel free to suggest that the business office, or I, write the patron and make the correction. Once in a while a mistake in the business office is unusually pronounced. Once the IBM room gave a student report that contained the amazing information that we had 17 students enrolled from No Trees, Texas. Now I wasn't going to include that in one of my
reports, because I knew that there weren't 17 people who live within ten miles of No Trees. So I said, "We've got to start over here, and something has to be changed in that machine."

There was no abridgement of freedom in that little incident. Likewise, there is no interference in freedom in most decisions or requirements by administrators on this campus.

In the religious and academic programs of the College, things can work in the same way. We may have problems and sometimes misunderstandings; but, if we will work with each other and make a few changes when necessary, even in personnel, all will be well. I believe enough in the restoration of New Testament Christianity, I believe enough in the harmony of God's wisdom as revealed in the Bible, and I believe enough in the efficacy of Christ's prayer for unity to believe that we here at Abilene Christian College, by working at it, can and will stand united on Bible teaching. By standing united on Bible teaching, then and only then can we accomplish the greatest purpose of Abilene Christian College. I appeal to you that all of us together may do just that.

As I have said, this is a statement of policy needed at this time. All of us need greatly to keep our balance in these days. We need to be slow to jump to conclusions
and to accept rumors and gossip. We need to have faith in each other; we need to have faith in ourselves; and above all we need to tie our faith to the everlasting purposes and principles upon which men have built Abilene Christian College.

I am not speaking today for the Board of Trustees, although I know how the Board stands on these important matters. I am not speaking for other administrative officials of the College, though all members of the Administrative Committee have expressed to me this same position. I am speaking for the President of Abilene Christian College, and I am speaking for him as long as I hold this office.*

*Abilene Christian College Faculty Meeting Notes for May 14, 1968, indicate that this speech was followed by a standing ovation from all who were present.
BIBLIOGRAPHY

Books


Clark, Joseph Lynn, Thank God, We Made It!, Austin, The University of Texas Press, 1969.


Memorial and Biographical History of Dallas County, Texas, Chicago, The Lewis Publishing Company, 1892.

Sherrod, B, Is It Worth It?, Austin, Texas, Firm Foundation Publishing House, n.d.


Articles


Cogdill, Roy E., "Robert Alexander's Apology," The Bible Banner, 8(June, 1947), 14-15.


"Don H. Morris as Chancellor," ACC Today, 25(May-June, 1974), 3-A.


Hines, J. L., "The Free-For-All at Abilene Christian College," The Bible Banner, 3(December, 1940), 14.


Morris, Don H., "Free to Go," Horizons, III (June, 1951), 5.


Morris, Don H., "Of Oil and Men," Horizons, II (April, 1950), 3.


Unpublished Materials


Lovet, Marion, Letter to Abilene Christian College, September 30, 1947.


Morris, Don H., Notes concerning his ancestry, made for Bennie Galloway of Abilene, Texas, November 25, 1969.

Morris, Don H., Note concerning his going to college at Thorp Spring Christian College, not dated.


Nance, David C., Letter describing Dallas County in the mid-nineteenth century, not dated, in possession of Mrs. Jacquelyn Morris Lawson of Abilene, Texas.

Richardson, Rupert, Letter to Owen Cosgrove, January 14, 1976.


Scruggs, Guy A., The History of Abilene Christian College, Masters thesis at Hardin-Simmons University, August, 1944.


Bulletins


Official College Records

Board of Trustees of Childers' Classical Institute, Abilene, Texas (later Board of Trustees of Abilene Christian College) Meeting "Minutes," Volumes 1-11, November 3, 1906 through February, 1975).

Abilene Christian College "Faculty Meeting Notes," May 14, 1940, through May 14, 1968.

Charter of Childers' Classical Institute, 1906.

Rasco, Kenneth, "Abilene Christian College Registrar's Office Record Summaries, 1940-1975."
Yearbooks


The Spring Board, Yearbook of Thorp Spring Christian College, Thorp Spring, Texas, 1920, Volume 2.

Catalogs


Bibles

Byrom Palmer Morris family Bible in possession of Mrs. Jacquelyn Morris Lawson, Abilene, Texas.

Morris family Bible in possession of Mrs. Jacquelyn Morris Lawson, Abilene, Texas.

Newspapers


Austin, Texas, Austin, Texas Statesman, September 29, 1967.


Houston Post, February 20, 1968.


Texts of Speeches


Morris, Don H., "Inaugural Address," November 9, 1941.

Morris, Don H., "Memorial Address" (honoring Dwight D. Eisenhower), March 31, 1969.


Interviews

Interviews with the following were made by Owen Cosgrove:


Beauchamp, Garvin V., August 26, 1975.

Bennett, Gordon, August 26, 1975.


Fulks, Mrs. Lewis (Jerolene), August 28, 1975.
Hunter, Robert, January 8, 1975.
Kenley, Mrs. Gorman, February 6, 1975.
Lawson, Mrs. W. D. (Jacquelyn Morris), February 6, 1975.
Love, Mrs. R. C. (Della), August 16, 1975.
Morris, A. B., February 6, 1975.
Roberts, Mrs. J. W. (Delno), November 22, 1975.
Scott, A. C., August 20, 1975.
Scruggs, Guy and Mrs. Guy (Bess), August 21, 1975.
Sherrod, B, October 23, 1975.
Smith, Lawrence L., October 22, 1975.
Stevens, John C., October 20, 1975.
Treat, J. W., August 29, 1975.