

100 YEARS

1867 - 1967



Salient Factors In The Growth And Development Of Johnson C. Smith University

Charlotte, N. C.

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**Salient Factors In The Growth
And Development Of
Johnson C. Smith University**

Charlotte, N. C.

A History by Arthur A. George

Edited and Completed

By ARTHUR H. GEORGE

Dean Emeritus, Theological Seminary

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C. J.

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JOHNSON C. SMITH UNIVERSITY
CHARLOTTE, N. C.

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DEDICATION



*This book is dedicated to
Dr. Rufus Patterson Perry,
Eighth President of
Johnson C. Smith University
1957-1968*

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INTRODUCTION

The history of Johnson C. Smith University was written by Arthur A. George in partial fulfillment of the requirement for the degree of Doctor of Education in the School of Education of New York University.

This history is designed to present and analyze the growth and development of the administrative and curricular aims and practices of Johnson C. Smith University, 1867 to the present.

Arthur A. George made this statement in his introduction of the history of Johnson C. Smith University. "While I had hoped to do my doctoral project in some field of social studies and education which did not deal with Negroes, since I am one of them and have studied them all my life, the decision to undertake the history of Johnson C. Smith University, although not without appeal, appeared to me to be justified only on these grounds: the possibility of showing that the oral tradition of Smith was not far removed from documentable facts, and that certain of the stereotyped notions held by many alumni of the school are not based on such facts. I trust it is not immodest to hope that this study may gain some circulation among Smith alumni as well as educational leaders interested in Negro higher education."

FOREWORD

Among the potent institutions having as their aim the Christian education of an encircled group in the Southland, there is none wielding a greater influence or making a more significant and definite contribution than Johnson C. Smith University at Charlotte, North Carolina. This Institution had its beginning in 1867, when two long-visioned and social-minded young white Presbyterian ministers, one from the east and the other from the south, saw that something should be done to help these freedmen adjust themselves to the new national life lest their state be worse than the first. To this end, they established a school that would spiritually, morally and intellectually equip the group for a higher destiny. This was a noble experiment, a daring venture of faith. There were those who prophesied failure. There were those who said it was not worth while. The atmosphere was not altogether friendly. (There was no money and only two teachers. Today the Institution has a splendidly trained faculty and staff, a student body of approximately 1200 and more than 6000 graduates scattered throughout the world whose hands are seen and whose voices are heard in almost every character building movement in their respective communities. These pioneers performed a gargantuan service in spite of hostile sentiment. It does not yet appear how many of the present-day leaders among our group would have achieved had it not been for these pioneers.

The Institution is a member of:

1. Southern Association of Colleges and Schools
2. Association of American Colleges
3. Council of Protestant Colleges and Universities
4. American Council on Education
5. Council on Theological Education of the United Presbyterian Church, U.S.A.
6. Presbyterian College Union
7. United Negro College Fund
8. American Association of Theological Schools
(Associate Member)
9. Approved by the American Medical Association
10. American Association of Colleges for Teacher Education

Affiliated with the Board of Christian Education of the United Presbyterian Church, U.S.A.

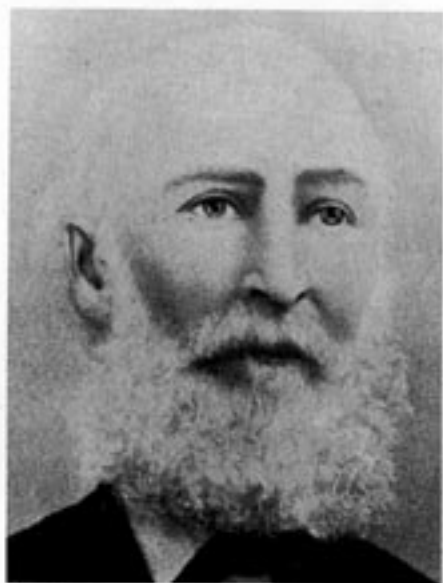
BIDDLE MEMORIAL HALL
Oldest Building on the Campus





REV. S. C. ALEXANDER

CO-FOUNDERS



REV. WILLIS L. MILLER

Chapter I Sixty Years—Johnson C. Smith University—1867-1927

of the parochial school, and the Rev. Alexander's instruction in the Bible and Catechism. The students were employed as janitors and waited in that capacity in the evening churches, six of which had already organized in the Charlotte area.

Miss Nancy D. Hinkle, trustee, appealed to the church papers for help by the President's issue and responded by informing the secretary of the Finance Committee of her willingness to give \$1,000.00 in honor of her husband Major Henry J. Hinkle who was killed in the war between the states in 1872. She also gave \$200.00 with the provision that the school be named, "The Henry J. Hinkle Memorial Institute." Later on she gave \$200.00, making a total of \$1,400.00.

According to Father Matthew Jones who was a student of the school on D Street and a graduate of the seminary in 1878, "There was a building on Trade Street between College and Beaufort Streets

First Period—1867-1891

Salient Factors

in the Growth and Development

of

Johnson C. Smith University

The Presbytery of Catawba, which was organized on October 6, 1866, appointed the Rev. S. C. Alexander to establish a Theological School at Charlotte, North Carolina, with the expectation that the students gathered would be able to pursue their course of study while they exercised their gifts among the people. The Committee on Freedmen of the Presbyterian church, U.S.A. determined to follow through on this suggestion, and accordingly, the school was established on April 7, 1867 on D Street with the Rev. S. C. Alexander as director and the Rev. W. L. Miller associate and Field Agent.

The first session commenced May 1, 1867, and continued five months with an enrollment of eight or ten students. It is said that these consisted of discreet and pious young men of average ability who possess a knowledge of elementary branches of education. In the primary branches these were under the instruction of the teachers

of the parochial school, and the Rev. Alexander's instruction in the Bible and Catechism. The students were employed as catechists and assisted in that capacity in the care of churches, six of which had already organized in the Charlotte area.

Mrs. Mary D. Biddle saw an appeal in the church papers for help for the Freedmen's cause and responded by informing the secretary of the Freedmen Committee of her willingness to give \$1,000.00 in honor of her husband Major Henry J. Biddle who was killed in the war between the states in 1862. She also gave \$400.00 with the provision that the school be chartered, "The Henry J. Biddle Memorial Institute." Later on she gave \$500.00, making a total of \$1,900.00.

According to Father Matthew Ijams who was a student of the school on D Street and a graduate of the seminary in 1874, "There was a building on Trade Street between College and Brevard Streets known as the Confederate Navy Building. The Rev. Alexander purchased it for \$150.00 and it was in the process of being razed and loaded on a wagon pulled by oxen when Colonel Myers found out that the materials from the razed building was to be used in the construction of a school for ex-slaves on D Street which was in the eastern part of the city, he told the Rev. Alexander that he would give the school eight acres of land on his farm which was in the western part of the city. The wagon already loaded turned about from facing the east to face the west. Biddle Memorial Hall and the J. B. Duke Memorial Library stand on a part of the eight acres. Later on other acres were purchased from Colonel Myers until the school had a total of seventy-five acres."

The Freedmen's Bureau of the U. S. Government had received large sums of money set aside as pensions for the Negro soldiers who died in battle in the war between the states and as the kinsmen of the heroes could not be found the money was given to such schools as Fisk University, Atlanta University and our Institute. Through the assistance of General D. D. Howard, Biddle Memorial Institute received \$3,000.00. Up to June 1869 no one had been elected president of the school. The Reverend Alexander, the founder, had conducted the school co-jointly with the Reverend W. L. Miller from 1867 to 1869. In September, 1869, the Reverend William Alexander of the Theological Seminary of San Faefall, California, a brother of the founder was elected first president of the school. He declined the offer.



MAJOR HENRY J. BIDDLE
(After whom the school was first named)

DONOR OF THE FIRST LAND



COLONEL W. R. MYERS

In 1870, The Reverend Stephen Mattoon was elected as the first president. He assumed duties as president in February of that year. The Reverend Alexander continued in the school until May, 1871, when he accepted a northern pastorate where he could better educate his children in a manner similar to his own preparation. The president did not have a long association with the men who had made the first sacrificial effort to set the school in running order, but he was a man of unusual qualifications, highly educated, possessing great executive ability, and was deeply religious. Prior to coming to the school he had served for a number of years as a missionary in Siam.

The new president was welcomed by a student body of 80 men and by a Board of Trustees eager to have him direct the program. There were also gathered about him a new faculty (all white). They were the Reverend John Shedd, a returned missionary from Persia, the Reverend Almon C. Perry and the Reverend S. J. Beatty.

The dormitories were filled to capacity, and due to the lack of space, many applicants had to be refused admittance. The first efforts of the administration were in the direction of campus expansion. Among the first demands President Mattoon listed with the Committee of Freedmen were in the direction of material accretions — buildings, a general fund for the students, bedding, and substantial clothing, the latter a constant demand.

The next efforts of the President were turned toward the strengthening of the Theological Seminary which had 12 enrolled students. The work there was not on the same level as that of the college. This was due in part to the urgent need for men to work in the ministry, and in part to the fact that a great deal of subject matter, now entirely within the province schools of theology, was at that time considered a routine segment in the collegiate department. Men were sent from the school those early years trained in the original languages of the Bible, Systematic Theology, Old and New Testament Literature, Ecclesiastical History as well as Presbyterian Law. Yet they were not trained as yet in the variety of sub-heading of these general classifications as were students in other Presbyterian Seminaries, notably Princeton, where courses were offered in Arabic, Homiletics, Church Government. Students were admitted to the school even if they had not finished college but none were given a degree.

It was the primary aim of the school to prepare ministers for the

southern field. It was assumed or implied that a Presbyterian Seminary would do so in accordance with the standard of the church which it served and the church which gave support. President Mattoon, therefore, pressed his views that the school was no longer in an embryonic stage and that the people served by its graduates had also grown so that the school should be taken under the care of the General Assembly's Standing Committee on Theological Seminaries.

This Committee, on May 15, 1873, upon the insistence of President Mattoon, stated:

The Committee recommends that the Assembly commend the Institution to the generous liberality of the churches, and include it in the regular list of Theological Seminaries, as soon as the official action of its Board of Trustees to this effect is presented.

On this recommendation, the Assembly took necessary action, and henceforth the Institution was included in its regular list of Theological Seminaries.

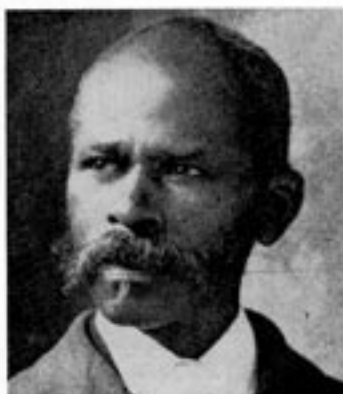
The nucleus of an endowment for the Theological Seminary at the Institute was raised (the amount was \$700.00) as well as a partial endowment of the Presidential chair. Income from these two sources relieved the Committee on Freedmen of the burden which resulted from the necessity to pay the full salaries of all members of the faculty and administration.

The year 1876 brought several changes, in addition to the first graduation from collegiate or scientific department — that of Daniel Culp. In this year the Henry J. Biddle Memorial Institute was incorporated as Biddle University by the state legislature and was enabled to grant degrees as were customary in the great American Universities of the day, including purely honorary degrees. There were some 45 students in the school; 30 of these were preparing for the ministry. The Institution, in this respect was surpassed only by the Japanese Mission Schools.

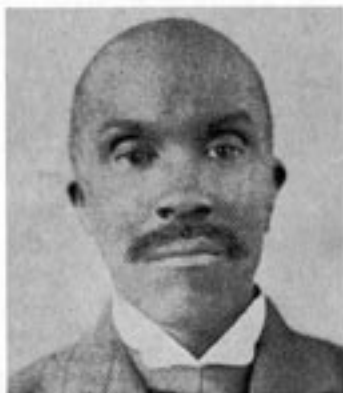
Just as all looked bright for continued swift growth for the school which in 11 years had developed where it was a national example, disaster struck. In 1878, the house of President Mattoon, which housed the administrative offices and classrooms also, was destroyed by fire. In a holocaust which gutted what was then the chief mainstay of



REV. CALVIN MCCURDY
First student to register



REV. B. F. MCDOWELL
*One of the first to graduate from
the Theological Seminary*



DR. DANIEL WALLACE CULP
*First to graduate from the
College in 1876*

the physical plant, the official records of the school from the time of its conception were completely destroyed.

A brick structure was erected on the lot for the President at a cost of \$3,500. Incidentally, this house was destroyed by fire in January, 1944. The wife of President McCrorey and her nurse were burned to death.

The faculty and trustees devised for an administration and classroom building to be built of bricks and to be three stories in height. This addition to the campus was to have twelve recitation rooms, two rooms for social purposes, and an "audience chamber" seating 600 persons. The cost of this structure was \$40,000.00. A program was launched to raise the needed funds. The citizens of Charlotte contributed liberally. This was a vast change of heart from the days of Messrs. Alexander and Miller, who had experienced only contempt from these people of Charlotte, with few exceptions. With this help a building which would provide academic atmosphere rather than a private home and several frame buildings, was completed and dedicated in the fall of 1883.

Dr. Stephen Mattoon who was the first President of the Henry J. Biddle Memorial Institute, 1878-1884; 1885-1886, was born in Champion, New York, May 5, 1815. When he assumed the office of President, the school was timidly peeping over the hills of both hope and promise. He found among the students who had learned to read for the first time in the school — grown men who later stood creditable examinations in Greek and Hebrew before the Church judicatories. There were among them men who were born beneath the level of society and knew what the slave and overseer's lash meant. Dr. Mattoon gave the school status and laid the foundation stable and sure that has increased in strength and prestige as the years have gone by. His experience in Siam and in this country was varied and large. He began his work in the school during a critical period in the history of the Southland. A new and tremendous responsibility faced him — to train unenlightened, brow beaten and encircled mass to useful and intelligent citizenship. It was an era when most of the people from the North, who in any way were connected with the educational efforts in behalf of the Negroes, were looked upon with suspicion and treated with no small degree of contempt. But Dr. Mattoon gave the school status and laid the foundation stable and

FIRST PRESIDENT OF BIDDLE UNIVERSITY



DR. STEPHEN MATTOON

and his influence on the Negro race enhanced his standing among the racial group. The entire absence of any disposition upon his part and that of his wife to intrude themselves upon those who stood aloof, the Christian welcome they gave all who approached them, and their devotion to the work committed to them at length dissipated all opposition and indifferences, and won for them respect and in the end the general favorites of the people.

Dr. Mattoon was not only a great president, teacher and administrator, he was also a great humanitarian. He was absorbed in the interest and welfare of the ex-slaves and their children. He bought land and sold to the ex-slaves making the payment so low that all could afford to meet them. This was called the gospel of home ownership. His heirs donated 15 acres of land to the school worth \$25,000 during the 50th anniversary.

The next two presidents of the school had a very short tenure — Dr. William A. Holliday, 1884-1885, Dr. William F. Johnson, 1886-1891. No major events occurred during their administrations. They simply carried on the work so nobly consolidated by president Mattoon.

In 1902 The Reverend E. P. Cowan joined the Committee on Freedmen. From then until 1918, when he died, he exercised close control over the details of every administrative matter as well as the curricular policy at Biddle. Mr. Cowan was adamant in his insistence that "the work of Biddle among the Freedmen lay most properly in the vocations and industries" — so much that he almost wrecked the academic program of the school. He was thought by many to have been reared in a slave-holding family because of his attitude and Missouri heritage. The oral tradition that Mr. Cowan was from a slave-holding family caused this investigator to seek the true facts concerning his early life from every available source, but no evidence was discovered that his family was even able to own such property as slaves. It was observed, however, that every report issued by Mr. Cowan's office referred to Biddle as an industrial school. These reports were sent to the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in the USA, to the Hartshorne Conference on Negro Progress, to the Slater Foundation, Phelps-Stokes Fund, and to such newspapers and church papers as carried the news of these ventures.

In contradistinction to the machinations of Mr. Cowan, every re-

port issued by the Biddle administration itself, for use in the same places and by the same agencies as those prepared by Mr. Cowan, emphasized that trades were secondary or even ignored after 1907 when the second colored President was elected.

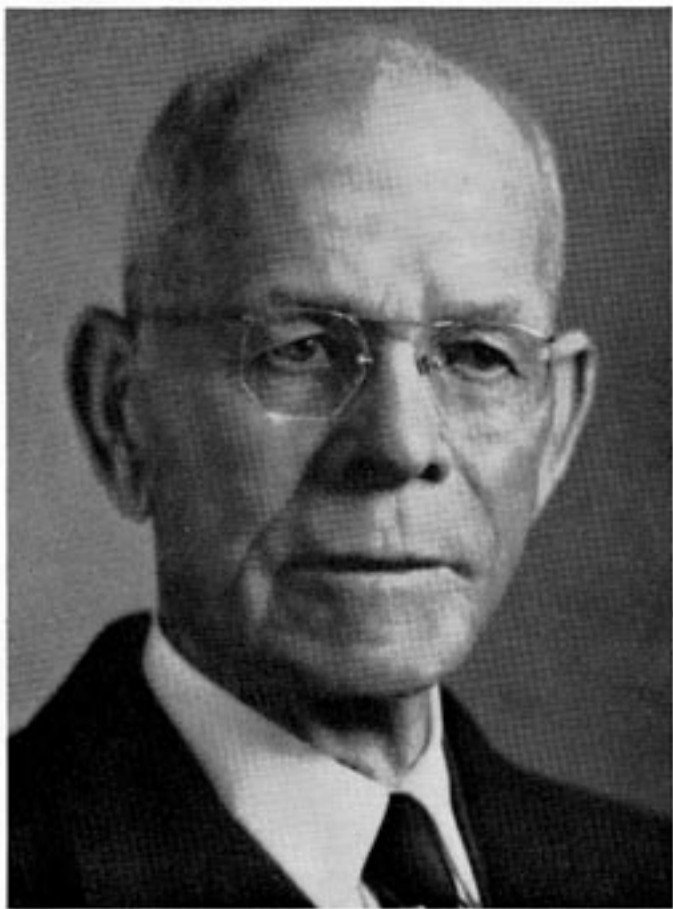
The Reverend Daniel J. Sanders, Biddle's first Negro President, was not himself a college graduate. He had received his theological training from Alleghany Seminary, taking the prize for Hebrew when he was in the Middle Class and graduating with honors. He had served as a missionary in Wilmington, North Carolina, where he had championed the cause of his people in a semi-monthly newspaper, *The Africo-American Presbyterian*, of which he was founder-owner and editor. This paper was "devoted to the educational, material, moral, and religious interest of the Negro." Like all the Presidents before him, Dr. Sanders not only had exceptional executive ability, but was a powerful and persuasive preacher, a requirement the trustees have imposed on all the incumbents in that office until 1947 when the first layman was named President.

It was Dr. Sanders who had traveled with the Scotch students fifteen years earlier in quest of funds for Biddle, and whose efforts had been so handsomely rewarded when over \$12,000 eventually came to the school from this source. Yet, when Dr. Sanders came to the Presidency the circumstances at Biddle in no way favored him. The general opinion in the church was that the time had not come when a Negro should be given the responsibility of directing the affairs of the institution. Many church papers expressed this view. The students, "having known only white presidents and teachers, were skeptical as to the fitness of a colored man as president." There was at that time only one Negro teacher on the faculty. This was indeed, an experimental "first" for Biddle University.

The white staff did not tarry long after Dr. Sanders came into office. As they left they were replaced for the most part, by qualified Negro teachers. The first three went into the theological seminary where the Reverend A. P. Bissell, a Ph.D. from Leipsig, was the only white member of the staff who remained. Of the three colored men who joined the staff of the seminary, A. J. Frierson, who was assistant professor of Greek Exegesis, was slated for professional recognition as the "equal of any in the land."

{ The first year of the new administration was "a year of unparalleled

FIRST NEGRO INSTRUCTOR



DR. GEORGE E. DAVIS

FIRST PREDOMINANTLY NEGRO FACULTY 1891-92



*Front row, left to right—A. U. Frierson; G. E. Davis; President D. J. Sanders; W. F. Brooks; J. C. Johnson.
Back row, left to right—W. M. Hargrave; S. B. Pride; G. Carson; H. A. Hunt; A. P. Bissell; F. C. Mabry.
(When Dr. Sanders was elected President all the white staff with the exception of Dr. Bissell resigned.)*

prosperity." There was an increased enrollment, an increase in aid to supplement funds for students and a program of expansion was formulated. The sum of \$400,000 was set as the amount needed to give the University the strength of similar schools among the whites, \$250,000 to be used toward the endowment, and \$50,000 for the erection of dormitories and needed buildings.

The securing of the endowment meant that \$150,000 a year would be released from the Freedmen's Committee for other projects. It also implied a faith that Biddle could carry on satisfactorily without the rigid supervision of the Pittsburgh office—if it did not reveal a subtle move on the part of the Freedmen's Committee to be rid of the only school in its care which really attempted first-rate collegiate work.

The annual cost of the operations of Biddle University by that time had reached \$150,000. Unfortunately, the financial depression which swept the nation about this time had a doleful effect on progress in raising the endowment fund. Nevertheless, a dormitory, Carter Hall, was constructed from funds left the school by Mary A. Carter of Geneva, New York, supplemented by a \$5,000 grant from the Freedmen's Committee. Negro contractors were in charge of construction and the labor was supplied by students under supervision of faculty members.

It was about this time that the opportunity for greater service to both the school and community became a topic of speculation. The library was inadequately housed in one large room in the Administration Building. It consisted of only a few thousand volumes, most of which had been bequeathed to the institution by retiring ministers. There were, it goes without saying, numerous duplicate copies. The room was at the same time used as a class room, which of course decreased its value for either purpose. Dr. Sanders asked the philanthropist, Andrew Carnegie, for the gift of a library. He received a reply in the affirmative, with certain conditions attached. Mr. Carnegie offered to donate a library gift of \$12,500 provided a similar amount was raised by the school as new endowment and for its upkeep. A field secretary, Dr. H. T. McClelland, was appointed to direct a drive to raise this amount and he spent considerable time at the task. His instructions were that solicitation for this special project was not to be conducted in such a way that the general income of the school would

be lowered. Accordingly, he concentrated on securing individual gifts for the library fund.

Dr. Sanders died in March, 1906, and the school felt the loss of his guiding hand in its financial difficulties so acutely it was necessary for a time to halt library solicitation in order to maintain regular contributions.

In Dr. Sanders' place the Reverend Henry Lawrence McCrorey was elected. He was destined to spend forty of the most fruitful years of his and of the school's life in the Presidential chair. Dr. McCrorey was a product of all three academic schools at Biddle. He had entered at the age of twenty-three as a student in the preparatory department. He exhibited such unusual intellectual abilities that when he graduated in due course from the theological seminary in 1895 he was asked to serve as instructor in the preparatory school, then as instructor and finally as professor in the college of arts and sciences, and before his election to the Presidency, he had been a professor in the theological seminary, proud to call him its graduate.

Dr. McCrorey made his first task that of completing the library fund. He succeeded in raising \$2,500 more than was required, making possible a better building than had been originally planned. It was erected and ready for dedication on May 30, 1912. This became the largest library of any Negro school in the state. There were 7,500 books on the shelves at the time of the dedication and more than one thousand volumes were added that same year.

Extra-curricular activities were not neglected during this period. In 1892 Biddle University had won the first Negro college football game ever played in the United States. A trophy on display in the central hall of the University Administration Building bears this inscription: "First Negro College Football Game, Livingstone College, 0, Biddle University, 4, December 27, 1892, presented by the National Classic, October 15, 1949, Washington, D. C."

Other extra-curricular events consisted of more erudite practices. The catalogue throughout this period listed "... four flourishing literary societies, the Mattoon, the Clarisophic, the Johnson, and the Douglass. The exercises consist of composition, discussion and debate, and there is a Moot Court connected with them. ... The students are required to each become a member of one of these societies and to attend upon the exercises."

However the most famous and well-supported extra-curricular activity was the Junior Prize Oratorical Contest. Every winner of this, for which gold medals were awarded, was listed in the University catalogue. Prizes were awarded by the Alumni Association, but the participants were selected (or eliminated) under faculty sponsorship. The prize was coveted and winners were assured of adulation of both the Alumni Association and fellow-students. Winning students whose past reputation may have been insignificant became lions in every sort of discussion from birth to death, and the ever-popular theological arguments concerning the Creation and Virgin Birth. The actual cash or scholarship remuneration for this prize was small. Nevertheless, the active interest in participating, or at least attendance at every contest finals, was apparently mandatory throughout this period for all students and alumni within commuting distance. It is reported that attendance at these contests often exceeded attendance at other annual commencement activities. (The contest was discontinued in the final period covered by this study.)

Rules and regulations governing conduct as well as the stipulations for admission of students were crystallized during this period. Every catalogue throughout the period carried this statement:

1. No one under twelve year of age will be admitted to the school. Applicants who are strangers to the faculty must bring a satisfactory certificate of good character, and steady industrious habits. Every student by his enrollment, contracts to obey the regulations of the University.
2. Students are expected at all times to act with respect and courtesy toward their instructors and fellow students, and observe cleanliness and neatness in person, clothing and room.
3. All students are required to attend chapel exercises each morning; day students are excused on Saturdays.
4. In order to preserve health, cultivate manual skill, develop taste, and at the same time keep the buildings and grounds in order, and improve and beautify the grounds, all the students except day students are expected to work one hour each day.
5. Students from abroad are required to board in the home unless excused by the faculty; and shall pay \$6 per term if regarded as day scholars. Board, including furnished room, light, fuel, and washing of bed clothes, is \$8 per calendar month, payment made two months in advance. Any student who without satisfactory

arrangement, shall not pay within ten days from the first of the month, shall forfeit the privileges of the institution.

6. Day pupils must pay their dues, \$6 per term, at the beginning of each month, and while on the grounds be subject to the rules of the institution.
7. Punctuality and diligence in regard to all duties and exercises are required.
8. During the time set apart for study, students will remain in their rooms or in such places as may be designated for study. Talking, loud studying, or visiting from room to room during study hours, and boisterous, rude conduct in any of the buildings at any time are prohibited. All students are expected to be in their rooms and quiet between 10:30 P.M. and 6:00 A.M. All lights out at 10:00 P.M.
9. Low, vulgar or profane language, the use of ardent spirits, wine or beer, tobacco in any form, keeping or handling of pistols, and games of chance are prohibited.
10. Students are forbidden to mark or deface in any way the buildings or furniture, or to throw slops, waste, paper, water, or anything that would cause a nuisance, from the windows or about the grounds. Any damage done by wantonness or carelessness must be paid for by the person doing the same.
11. Students are forbidden to entertain other students, their friends, or strangers in their rooms overnight. Students having friends for whom they desire either meals or lodging will report to the Superintendent.
12. The students are forbidden to hold any public meeting on the premises of the University for any purpose whatever without special permission from the President.
13. The students are forbidden to give entertainments of any character and invite guests without special permission.
14. Students are allowed to attend church in Charlotte on the Sabbath but no one will be permitted to leave the grounds at other times without special permission.
15. A monitor shall be appointed for each floor or building who shall report any neglect or disorder.
16. Violations of the rules will subject the offender to discipline.

Elsewhere the catalogue states that "students of the School of Arts and Sciences are subject to all the Rules and Regulations for the gov-

ernment of the students of the University, except that cadet duty (for students in the Preparatory department), and services in the school of Industries are optional."

It is important to note that the men who were in the school of Arts and Sciences were often past twenty-one years old when they entered. (As stated previously, Dr. McCrorey, the second Negro President, was twenty-three when he entered the preparatory school.) Such rigid regulations and uniform application to students of all schools and at any age, gave rise to the criticism that at Biddle extra-curricular and social activities were at an absolute minimum, the whole of the lives of the students being devoted to academic and religious pursuits.

The Classical course of study was as rigidly applied as the rules governing behavior. The catalogue states that "students are required to conform to the prescribed courses in every particular unless expressly excused by the Faculty." Also that "the discipline is impartial and firm and all demerits arising from misconduct or infringement of the Rules and Regulations enter in and modify the grading, and when the number of demerits reaches 25 in any one term the delinquent is subject to suspension." Further, the catalogue states concerning examinations that the examinations are both oral and written and the requirements in connection therewith are absolute, except that a student may be conditioned for one term in not more than two studies . . . and anyone failing in any three studies is required to repeat the year or is dropped from the school.

Nevertheless, this was the period when both instruction and curriculum dropped to the lowest level in the history of Biddle. It is true that the preparatory school had by far the greatest number of students it had ever enrolled but many of them did not continue their studies on the collegiate level. It is also true that more attendance, however, at Biddle, no matter what department or what the standards, actually made the pupil who could prove such attendance eligible for employment in various mission and public schools, as teachers, principals, and directors. These facts, coupled with the contemporary popularity of the trades, made it more necessary for the administration to concentrate its interests in the direction of the preparatory school. This was done, therefore, to the point where the collegiate department was allowed to proceed under the momentum of its past glory.

It is not possible to date the beginning of the decline, except as it appears to have been concurrent with the 1892 appointment of Dr. Cowan to the Committee on Freedmen, and continued some years after his death. It was gradual and persistent. The memory of "Old Biddle" was good enough to cause qualified observers to make complimentary statements concerning the school as late as 1898. Two of them said:

I spent about two weeks at Biddle a year ago and made a careful examination of its methods. I am fully persuaded that the academic work of this Institution is well done as in our best northern colleges, and that the discipline of the institutions is better than in most of them.

(Signed) David R. Breed
Member of the Committee on Freedmen

Mr. Breed wrote this from the Pittsburgh office of the committee on April 21, 1898.

This statement appeared in the catalogue of Biddle in 1898. At the same time Dr. Cowan was reporting in these words:

The Industrial Department is better organized and more efficient than it ever was before in the history of the Institution. Prof. Hunt, a graduate of Atlanta University, is a practical carpenter. Look into the shoe shop and you will find a dozen men (the room will hold no more) who an hour ago were reading Greek and Latin; now they are sitting on cobbler's benches and are driving wooden pegs. In the next room a dozen or more are setting type, while two others are turning a large printing press, and a third man is feeding the machine.

The decline in curricular practices at Biddle during this period is reflected in the arrangement of the list of graduates which appears in the back of all the early catalogues. Of the 597 men who graduated from the preparatory school during this period 194 fell into a new classification—"went to other schools, etc." This appears to be a polite way of saying one of two things. Biddle University was not good enough for these men, and there was nothing that a graduate of the lowest school there could gain by going any further at Biddle but repetition of the same studies, at the hands of the same instructors for four more years in college, and three more years in the theological school—or these men simply had had enough of education and were now pursuing whatever jobs came their way.

Of the classes of 1903, 1904, 1907, and 1909, every one of the preparatory graduates went into the college department, the respective classes numbering twenty-four, thirty-four, twenty-eight and twenty-five. All others, with the exception of the 194 in the "went to other schools, etc." classification, were listed as preachers and teachers in the south.

Reporting to the Hartshorne Clifton Conference in 1908, Dr. McCrorey stated this:

The school has had a total enrollment of nearly 8,000 students, and has sent out from its several departments 988 graduates, of whom 524 have been from the normal and preparatory courses, 295 from the collegiate and 129 from the theological. Ten of the graduates are professors in the University. Presidents Young of Harbison College, Byrd of Cotton Plant College and McCrorey of Biddle University are numbered among its graduates.

The general catalogue through 1912 lists only 307 graduates holding bachelor's degrees. Twenty of these were in the scientific course, where only one language (a choice of Greek or Latin) was required. Adding the 124 above the collegiate level reported in the earlier (1867-1891) period, the total number of men graduated from Biddle at the end of the period under discussion is but 431 above the preparatory school. So that if in 1908 it could be reported that the school had served 8,000 students during its existence, a great majority of them never graduated from the lowest school at Biddle. Of the 307 graduates holding bachelor's degrees, only sixteen were reported as having left the south to follow their choice of profession, and all of them were physicians, business men and lawyers.

After 1907 an upturn in matters of curriculum enrichment and elevation became apparent when Dr. McCrorey began to de-emphasize the trades. They were still required in the preparatory school where students seemed destined to terminate their education after four years or less, but were made entirely optional for students at the collegiate level. The strict academic requirements imposed on the men make it appear unlikely that they could study trigonometry, Greek, Latin, and the Bible in the original languages (as well as English) and still find time to study a trade. The aforementioned subjects were offered on a required basis (for Bachelor of Arts candidates) in each semester. By

1912, so many requirements had been added to the graduation total that no class was graduated at all that year. The requirements were listed thus:

To receive the degree of Bachelor of Arts, the student must complete sixty-one year hours of work (a year hour being the completion of one hour a week of recitation or lecture for a year, or two hours a week of laboratory for a year) in addition to fifteen hours of high school work as a prerequisite to first entrance.

These efforts to restore the curriculum to its former high level met with mixed reactions on the part of both faculty and students. There are seven names on the students rolls at Biddle in the year 1911 which appear the following year on the students rolls at Lincoln University, the arch rival of Biddle. Only a few faculty members went out of their way to determine the areas in which the curriculum could be improved, as it was restored. The notable example was Dr. J. D. Martin, Adjunct Professor of Latin and father of three sons who as Biddle students were classified as pre-medical and pre-dental students. Insofar as was possible, Dr. Martin insisted on the inclusion of any and all college courses required by the Medical and Dental Schools at Howard, Shaw and Meharry, and when one of his sons was required to take some make-up courses at the Howard Medical School, these exact courses appeared in subsequent catalogs at Biddle. They appear to have been largely in the fields of natural sciences and Latin.

Second Period—1891-1912

In the second period of its existence, 1891-1912, Biddle University did not make the progress that characterized the first (1867-1891) period. The practices of the school satisfied the aims as stated, for it continued to *train teachers and preachers for the Negro race* in the south where they were kept in touch with the people with whom they were to work. Nearly one hundred per cent of those graduated from the various departments of the institution are listed as actively engaged in one or both of those professions by 1912. This includes those graduated from the seminary, the normal and collegiate course, as well as those from the industrial and preparatory departments.

The degree to which the stated administrative and curricular aims of Biddle University were satisfied in this second period was not in keeping with the implications inherent in a school that was to be the "Colored Princeton." More than 8,250 students were enrolled at Biddle from the time of its founding, the great majority of them during the years covered by the second period. Most of them never graduated from even the lowest department of the school. While the blame for this cannot be placed entirely on the institution, it contributes to the contention that the vast plurality of men who could boast of Biddle training by 1912, had not been exposed to the classical training one could logically expect of a "Colored Princeton." The catalogue listing through 1903 leaves no doubt, however, that these men entered the teaching profession, although it cannot be determined that they taught academic subjects exclusively. Fortunately for Biddle, the ordination requirements of the Presbyterian Church kept these men out of Presbyterian pulpits as ministers, although any number were accepted with open arms by other denominations. The extent to which these men were able to obtain professional positions on the basis of mere attendance at Biddle, and to hold these positions, is the extent to which the actual accomplishment through practices of the announced aims of Biddle were diluted through the second period. The external forces making possible such a prostitution of the true goals of the educational

CLASS OF 1892



Front row, second from left, Dr. H. L. McCrorey, President Johnson C. Smith University; third from left, Dr. D. J. Sanders, President then. Second row, second from left, Dr. R. L. Douglass, Professor, Johnson C. Smith University..

activities of Biddle are discussed more fully in a later chapter. Yet it is to the credit of the administration at Biddle, that in face of the large numbers of students who found it possible to manage without further training, the school made persistent efforts to improve and enrich its curricular offerings toward the end of this period. There was courage enough on the part of the administration to add so much to the requirements for its bachelor's degree in 1912 that no student could qualify without an additional year of preparation.

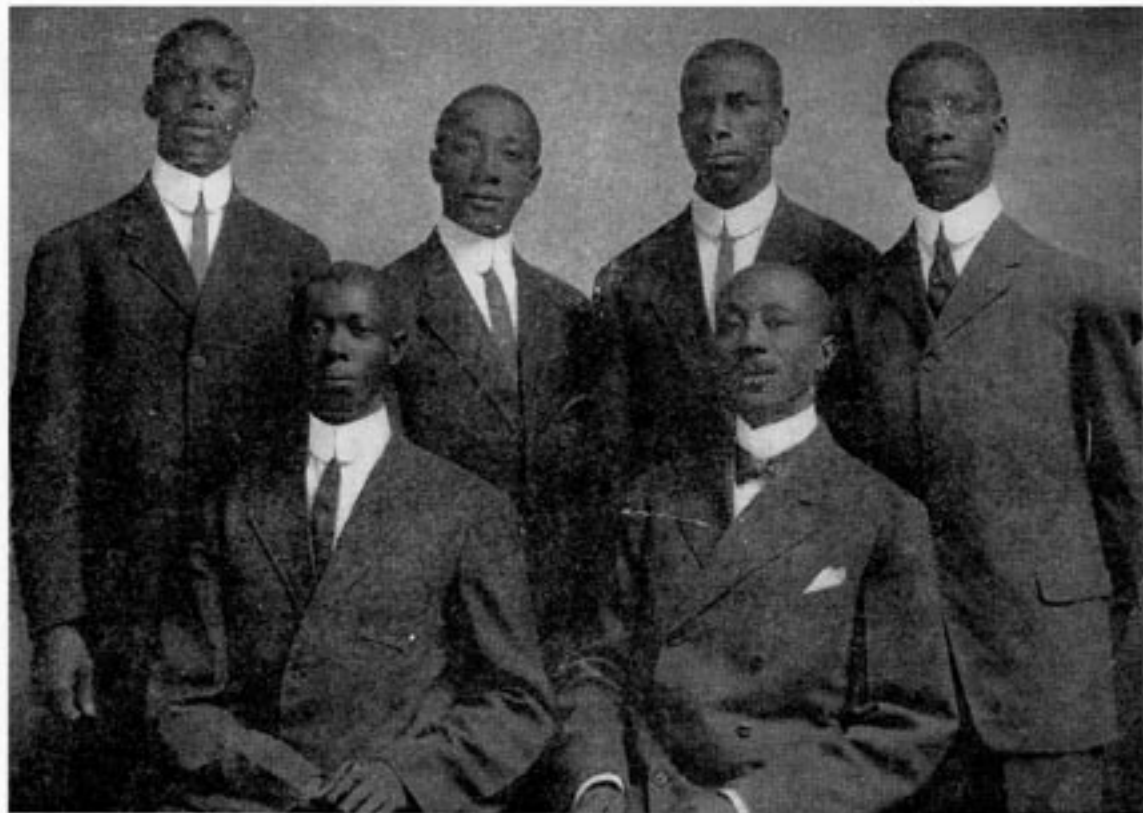
Third Period—1913-1923

The third period of growth of Johnson C. Smith University began with higher academic requirements instituted in the year 1912 and ended with a group of developments so inclusive in nature that the name of the school was changed. This period marked the last phase of what can be thought of as the adolescence of Biddle University. It had been founded with high aims, had reached those goals, had been recognized by northern graduate schools and had trained a Negro administration by the end of its first period, less than a quarter of a century after its founding.

In the second period poor coordination between the local colored administration and the absentee white northern fiscal offices of the school resulted in a weaker program and notable disparity between the actual work and the school's announced aims. The factors which contributed to the improvement of this situation were pronounced by 1907 when Dr. McCrorey became the second Negro President. They were brought to fruition in 1912 when he closed the period of decline in curricular practices by instituting curricular reforms designed to bring the aims and practices of the school into closer harmony. This move strengthened the position of the Negro administration and won friends whose benefactions by the end of the third period did much to make the University what it is today.

On March 31, 1913, Dr. E. P. Cowan, the defender of the idea that Biddle should be a trade school, celebrated his seventy-third birthday. Three years earlier his staff had been increased by several full-time Board members. Among them was his nephew, the Reverend John M. Gaston who was destined to be the successor of his uncle. Much of the work of the Board was turned over to Dr. Gaston and he became the champion of the cause of Biddle before the church and philanthropic groups that contributed to its support. Not one of the reports to which his name is appended refers to Biddle as a trade school, but as "... the school of highest grade maintained by the Presbyterian

THE FIRST JOHNSON C. SMITH UNIVERSITY QUINTET



Seated, left to right: Dr. S. Q. Mitchell, Dr. Thomas A. Long. Standing, left to right: John O. Foster, Richard S. Allen, Dr. D. W. Clairborne, Raynond A. Martinez.

Church in all the southland. . . ." In Dr. Gaston and Dr. McCrorey there existed a partnership of responsibility whereby the realization of the goals of the founders could finally be realized by their successors. A strong local administration of qualified Negroes, who knew the people with whom they were to deal, and a strong absentee white fiscal administration also well acquainted with the problems and the people, made up this partnership. (That teamwork lasted thirty-seven years, closing with the retirement of Dr. McCrorey in 1947.)

Sometime earlier, the Synod of Atlantic, desiring to better the financial status of the University made an overture to the General Assembly to place the college of arts and sciences under the College Board of the Church. This would make the school eligible for funds given to the cause of education in the general collections of the church, without the stipulation that they be used exclusively for Freedmen. At this time, the Freedmen's Board had under its care 399 churches and missions, twenty-one colleges, seminaries, academies and institutes, with a total of 4,470 students in attendance. Biddle was only one of these, reporting in 1913 an enrollment of 177 students and sixteen of the 194 teachers in the employment of the Freedmen's Board.

By virtue of its connection with the Freedmen's Board, Biddle was recognized and given full rating of the College Board, which from time to time made grants to the program of the Freedmen's Board. Biddle, of course, shared in these grants. At the same time, the College Board released the funds of an estate in its hands to Biddle and made possible the establishment of a Chair in English Bible.

Undaunted by its failure to obtain unqualified recognition of the major Board for colleges under Presbyterian care, Biddle turned its efforts in Charlotte and Pittsburgh toward any and all sources which promised aid in its program of expansion. Dr. McCrorey constantly pleaded for funds necessary for erection of a theological dormitory. During World War I, he undertook to raise an endowment of \$150,000 by the time the fiftieth anniversary was to be celebrated, in 1917. His ambitious program was not successful but two significant bequests came as a result. At that time about \$40,000 in cash and lands was given to the school by friends in California and the daughters of Dr. Mattoon, the first President.

The curriculum was gradually changed to include professional courses in education. Provision was made for students to concentrate

FIFTIETH ANNIVERSARY CLASS - 1917



in one of several teaching fields—history, English, music, science, and language. The record does not show the manner in which majors were accomplished, but J. Ward Seabrook, who set up the department of education offered his testimony about that and other departments in a letter.

The program of professional courses in education at Biddle was deliberately planned to fit Biddle graduates to qualify for the highest ("A") Certificate issued by North Carolina. Dr. Seabrook, who had studied at Columbia and New York Universities, utilized his training from these institutions in adapting the Biddle curriculum to state requirements. (Dr. Seabrook's salary was paid in part by the state of North Carolina under a co-operative arrangement available at all colleges in the state.)

At this time, the five state schools for Negroes offered two options for their students, a two year program for elementary teachers and a three year "normal" course for others. The colleges of Shaw, Livingstone, Bennett and St. Augustine followed this plan, but Biddle offered only one course, the full four years required for its completion. It thus became the model followed when the other nine standard colleges in the state initiated four-year programs for teachers.

The North Carolina State Department of Education is held in high regard by the various associations and agencies which study educational progress among the Negroes of the South. In the 1928 *Bulletin* of the Bureau of Education, the U. S. Department of the Interior report attributes "the advanced state of the Negro Higher Education to the activities of the State Department of Education and to the favorable public attitude." For Biddle to become the pattern after which the professional education curricula of the state-supported schools, as well as some of the private schools, were modeled attests its leadership in this area. If North Carolina actually led the south in this respect, and Biddle led North Carolina, then Biddle was indeed unique in 1914-1915 when this program was launched by Dr. Seabrook.

The war years were kind to Biddle in that no significant decrease in enrollment can be noted in the catalogue listing. This may partially be attributed to the extreme youth of the great majority of the students, who, in this period, were mainly in the preparatory school. Too, a great number of the students in the collegiate department were avowed candidates for the ministry and consequently they were draft exempt.

While the catalogues do not show what had happened to the University Press, it appears that three of the catalogues during that period were printed by the A.M.E.Z. Printing Office and two by the Charlotte Observer Printing House, instead of the University Press as had been the custom since 1898. The catalogue for 1917 shows that while Biddle was not a Land Grant College, some efforts were made by the administration to provide the simple elements of military training for all those students who were potentially subject to the draft. The manual of arms, marching and drilling as well as calisthenics were taught. These activities continued until 1919, according to the catalogue.

With the end of hostilities, efforts of the administration turned to increasing the material assets of the institution. In 1921 the school lost its theological dormitory, kitchen, and dining room in a conflagration which made their immediate replacement mandatory if the school was to hold on to its student body. The Board of Freedmen reported that \$2,000 had been received toward replacement of the lost property by the end of the year, though it estimated that a total of \$45,000 would be necessary to complete the rebuilding plans.

The period was drawing to a close with the refusal of the General Assembly to transfer Biddle from the Board of Freedmen to the College Board, with the number of theological students declining, although there was an increase in the collegiate department. No significant increase in endowment or gifts for permanent improvement had been made. Finally, the disaster of a fire so extensive that the program of the entire school was threatened, must have made the future look very dark indeed to the administration, faculty and students.

At this critical moment Mrs. Mary Jane Smith, a white Presbyterian of Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, came to the rescue. She distributed her largesse in such an effective way that much of the uncertainty and pressure was immediately and permanently removed. She gave funds for the erection of a theological dormitory and refectory as soon as she heard of the need. Later she visited the campus and made several other significant contributions in memory of her husband, the late Johnson C. Smith. In 1923 the name of Biddle University was changed in his honor and in future was known as Johnson C. Smith University.

The administration and curricular practices of Biddle University were more in accord with the stated aims of the school than they had been since the administration had been given over to Negroes. The

PRINCIPAL BENEFACTORS



MRS. JOHNSON C. SMITH



MR. JOHNSON C. SMITH

school was now graduating students who qualified for the highest certificate issued by the state of North Carolina, possibly the highest requirements in the south at that time. The seminary general catalogue shows that all the students admitted in the year 1922-23 were graduates of a standard four-year college. The general catalogue of graduates from the college and preparatory schools was discontinued during this period so that it is not possible to discover the placement of their graduates. Placement, however, was not a stated aim of the school. But preparing men to preach and to teach, the stated aim—to *train teachers and preachers for the Negro race*—was satisfied. The implied and stated aims dealing with the *advantageous practice of training these men in the field in which they were to work*, was satisfied when Biddle made its preparation for teachers the highest offered in the state for Negroes.

The University finally realized the full standards of the Presbyterians when it insisted on college graduation as a prerequisite to admission to the theological seminary. The catalogue of 1922-23 does not mention the trades, nor does the report originating in Pittsburgh, although earlier catalogues of the period still carried some reference to the trades in the preparatory school.

The period closed with the aims and practices of the administration in a consistent relationship. The efforts were spent on finding the best steps for eventual attainment of the goals proper for the "Colored Princeton." The curriculum had been raised and enriched and the trades had been relegated to the vocational schools. The financial picture had improved and the campus enlarged. In 1923, Biddle was second to no college for Negroes in the state of North Carolina. The local administration of the college was entirely in the hands of Negroes, which, while not a stated aim of the school, is a measure of the success with which the stated aims of the founders were being met.

The aims stated for Johnson C. Smith University were substantially the same in the next decade as those which preceded it. Not so, however, the practices. Encouraged by benefactions of Mrs. Smith, and later those of a local white admirer of the work, James B. Duke, Smith became one of the privileged institutions for Negroes in the south. Through their combined gifts the scope and usefulness of the University was greatly enlarged. Hardly a dozen Negro colleges can boast of a permanent endowment as large as \$2,000,000; not only is Smith one

PRINCIPAL BENEFACTOR



MR. JAMES BUCHANAN DUKE

of these, but it had completed its drive for an endowment in that amount by 1929.

✓ During the academic year 1924-25 the school became the second one for Negroes to be rated as a standard four-year college by the state of North Carolina. Shaw University at Raleigh, which preceded Smith in this respect, is located eight blocks from the state Department of Education. By virtue of this proximity even today it is in a position to display its academic product advantageously. But, on the other hand, perhaps the most striking symbol of Smith's rising influence in the region is its chime clock. This was installed in the tower of its administration building. The only such novelty on a Negro campus in North Carolina, it can be heard every quarter hour chiming the time to Biddleville and Greenville, the suburban sections of Charlotte, which the University dominates. This clock, costing more than \$6,000, was paid for largely by Negro Presbyterians in the area served by the school.

In 1929 the high school department was eliminated, thus enabling the University to concentrate on the collegiate division and the theological seminary. The charter had not required the maintenance of the preparatory department. The school had done so on its own volition since the public high schools formerly were not of high enough calibre to assure successful collegiate progress for their graduates. Since most of the students at Smith came from North Carolina, and in that state, at least, the public schools were now much better, it was found possible to close the high school division without seriously damaging standards of entrance to the college department.

The collegiate division of the University had eight departments, including education, required by the state of North Carolina. By 1927 all the southern states, including Texas, which joined the ranks in that year, were accepting Smith graduates for their highest teaching certificates. For entrance, fifteen units of secondary work and graduation from a standard high school was required at Smith. To enter the college, the candidate was asked to present a report covering the record of his four years of work, presented by the principal of his high school. Some students were admitted by examinations conducted by the University college examination board. Of the fifteen units required for entrance, it was stated that ten must be in the following subjects: three in English, two in foreign languages, one in algebra, one in plane

geometry, two in history, and one in science. Students were not admitted to the college with conditions in any of these.

The theological seminary admitted students who were not college graduates, if they had three years of collegiate work, including courses in Greek and Hebrew. In that case, instead of the degree of Bachelor of Divinity, students earned the degree of Bachelor of Sacred Theology.

In accordance with the practice of those medical schools which accepted students after two years of college work, Smith had a four-year curriculum for degree candidates, but also offered a two-year pre-medical course. The standard degree curriculum was as follows: Four years residence in a college, the last of which must be at Smith; 128 hours of work on the semester basis of which the prescribed courses included fourteen credits in English, eight in science, twelve in ancient languages, twelve in either ancient or modern languages, ten in mathematics, six in ethics and psychology, and eight in Bible. The rest of the work was elective; however, all candidates in 1928 were required to present a major of twenty semester hours in one subject and a minor in another subject of not less than nine hours. Candidates in Arts could select from the languages or history and psychology, while candidates in science could select from either chemistry, physics, biology, or mathematics.

The first published financial statement of the college appears in the federal 1929 *Survey of Negro Colleges and Universities*. It reported that the financial administration of the college was in the hands of the President, who was also the treasurer. The income came from church appropriations, interest on the permanent endowment fund and student fees. The total income increased by 94 per cent in the five year period ending in 1927, the interest remaining constant and the gifts fluctuating annually. Students' fees rose steadily increasing 158 per cent in that same period. This was attributed largely to the growth of the college, and not to an increase in actual amount of money required for attendance, according to the *Survey*.

Of the faculty, the *Survey* had this to say:

"Ten members of the college faculty hold bachelor of arts degrees and one the bachelor of science degree; six hold the master of arts degree from recognized universities, and all those who do not hold advanced degrees have studied one or more summers at such universities as Harvard, Columbia, and Chicago. The salaries paid by Johnson C. Smith are slightly

above the average for Negro schools generally, with a minimum of \$1700 and a maximum of \$1900."

The teaching schedules were fairly well arranged, except in a few cases where members of the staff were carrying an excess amount of work. The professor of English, for instance, had an abnormally heavy schedule and the reduction of this load was recommended in the *Survey*.

Other recommendations were as follows:

That the educational program be concentrated in a four-year program.

That the name of the institution be changed to Johnson C. Smith College unless there were genuine prospects of adding other divisions warranting the name "university."

That efforts be made to increase the enrollment of the seminary or that it be abandoned entirely.

That departments not occupying the full time of a professor be merged.

That a more conservative policy be maintained with respect to granting honorary degrees.

That graduate study on the part of faculty members be encouraged.

That heavy teaching loads be reduced.

That all classes exceeding forty students be divided.

That more modern textbooks and references be supplied to the library in the fields of science, psychology, philosophy, and education.

That the extension work of the University be expanded.

Secure in the state recognition which was the highest rating a college for Negroes could expect in 1929, Johnson C. Smith University did not move at once to follow the recommendations of the *Survey*. In 1929, Dr. Thomas A. Long, Professor of the Humanities, made an address which contains the only recorded reference to a movement to establish graduate and professional schools in areas other than theology at Smith. The charter made possible, but not mandatory, the establishment and maintenance of any schools deemed necessary to its purposes, but the financial situation did not justify a major expansion. The preparatory school was finally abandoned in 1929. The duties of the President were lessened so that he could devote his full time to the direction and promotion of the school, along modern

public relations lines. This made possible the intensive recruitment of students for both the college and seminary departments, especially those who were interested in the ministry.

In 1931 the Board of Trustees took action which made it possible to change the theological department officially into a seminary, setting aside for it a part of the property and endowment fund of the University. The necessary amendments to the charter were made and the Johnson C. Smith Theological Seminary was listed, with assets totaling \$425,000. In this same year the Board of National Missions, which had incorporated the work of the Board of Freedmen in 1924, set up a committee of white and colored laymen and ministers to study the overall educational program of the church for its Negro members. It made its report in 1931. Among the findings, number 5 read: "That a standard college training for Negro women be provided as soon as the way is clear."

At the time this recommendation was made the United States was in a financial depression and little immediate action could be expected. Barber-Scotia Seminary for Women at Concord, North Carolina, was the only school of its grade for colored women in the Presbyterian Church. Johnson C. Smith University had not been represented on the Findings Committee, but in 1932 its Trustees voted to make the University co-educational by affiliating with Barber-Scotia Seminary. This was done, and the Seminary became Barber-Scotia Junior College (for women only) with Smith offering the final two years of college work to women for the first time in its history. Dr. McCrorey became president of both institutions, with deans heading Barber-Scotia, the college, and the seminary at Smith.

By this time Dr. Gaston had become Secretary of the Unit of Work Among Colored People. This was the new name of the organization which succeeded the Freedmen's Board under the Board of National Missions. In this way he was associated as fiscal agent with both Smith and Barber-Scotia under the affiliation.

✓ In 1931, Johnson C. Smith University was elected to full membership in the Association of American Colleges. It was given the class "B" rating by the Southern Associations of Colleges and Secondary Schools. Just four years later, in December, 1933, it was given the "Class A" rating by the same accrediting agency as the University began the fifth period of its existence.



Johnson Cottage



University Press



Refectory



Smith Cottage



Berry Hall



Carter Hall



Berry Cottage



Center Entrance



Eggle Memorial Hall



Cogan Hall



Barn



Teachers' Cottage



President's Home



Library



Teachers' Cottage



Teachers' Cottage



Teachers' Cottage

Buildings of
Johnson C. Smith Univ.
Dr. H. C. McCrorey, Pres.

1925



Theological Dormitory



Teachers' Cottage



Teachers' Cottage



Main Entrance



Berry Hall

Fourth Period—1923-1932

In the period, 1923-1932, the institution blossomed into a distinctiveness that was unique among colleges of color in the southern region. The administrative and curricular practices were in harmony with the stated and the implied aims of the school. Teachers and preachers for the colored race were graduated every year and the training offered was of the highest calibre. The assets of the two schools, the college and the theological seminary, had been segregated from the general holdings of the institution and nearly \$2,000,000 added to those funds.

Recognition of the work done had come from the North Carolina State Department of Education, the Southern Association of Colleges and Secondary Schools and the Association of American Colleges. In the case of the "B" rating in 1931 by the Southern Association of Colleges and Secondary Schools, it should be noted that this organization, like similar groups, makes a practice of not granting its highest rating to a school upon initial inspection, but only after a probationary period. The highest rating given Smith from that Association came at the beginning of the subsequent period, in 1933.

Fifth Period—1933-1947

The developments in this period, 1933-1947, were not monumental, but rather the closing phases of the career of Dr. McCrorey and his partnership with Dr. Gaston. This close association, lasting nearly forty years, was responsible for the phenomenal growth of the school in accordance with the announced aims of the founders in the previous years. The period begins with the affiliation of Smith with Barber-Scotia Junior College for women, with the terminal courses offered on the Charlotte campus, and ends with the retirement of Dr. McCrorey in 1947.

The country was just shaking off the shackles of a crippling financial depression. Unemployment and bank failure were general throughout the United States, with Negro Families hardest hit by the national catastrophe. Some time earlier, the administration had felt that to meet the situation successfully, salaries would have to be lowered and all expenses curtailed. In spite of this situation the work does not seem to have been impaired, for losses of faculty members and students seem to have been only those which are frictional and to be expected even in normal times. The seminary faculty was increased in the face of the depression and the field of religious education was added to the curricula of the two schools, replacing the omnibus religion, Bible study, and English Bible courses. The class of 1934 was designated as the last seminary group to receive the degree of Bachelor of Theology. The new degree was the Bachelor of Divinity, used in all leading schools of theology. The seminary revived the spirit of the "training of catechists" by expanding the field work program to include in-service training. Charlotte, as a center of Presbyterianism among Negroes, afforded the seminary students opportunities to supply local churches during the academic year and summer vacation as well. This program brought the seminary into closer contact with churches of the community, aided the students by providing an internship where they not only faced situations associated with the active pastorate, but had the counsel of the faculty at the Univer-

sity. The program won the praise of the church when in 1937 the General Assembly's Standing Committee on Theological Seminaries stated: "We are especially impressed by the fine work being done by its (Johnson C. Smith Theological Seminary) students in preaching, home visitation, and Vacation Bible School work." The seminary enrollment increased along with that of the college and the number of candidates for the ministry in the college department was increased by 1938.

In the college department the major changes appear to have been in the natural sciences showing the greatest changes, also in the preceding periods. Modern languages were gradually substituted for Greek and Latin in the college, with the former disappearing from the catalogue in 1933 and the latter offered only as an elective. Not only did the institution receive the highest rating of the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools during this early part of the period, but also became a member of the American Medical Association, the Association of American Colleges, and the American Council on Education. The graduates were accepted freely and without question in the leading northern graduate schools, some making outstanding records in scholarships.

The faculty members contributed to the good repute of the school during this period in a way unique for Smith, since in the past the public services of the school had largely been of a ministerial nature. Members of the faculty held the following key positions in important educational organizations: The Presidency of the Associations of the Teachers of Language in Negro Colleges, the Secretaryship of the National Association of Collegiate Deans and Registrars in Negro Schools, the Chairmanship of the Commission on Higher Institutions of the Association of Colleges and Secondary Schools for Negroes, the Honorary Presidency of the Association of Social Science Teachers, and membership in the Executive Committee of the Colored Intercollegiate Athletic Association.

This professional participation did much to increase public awareness of the admirable practices at Johnson C. Smith University and was encouraged by the President. He himself became the President of the Presbyterian College Union, a member of the Board of Christian Education, and was cited in 1940 by the General Assembly of the Church "for distinguished service."

In 1938 the school was transferred from the Board of National Missions to the Board of Christian Education and the new reports from September 30th of that year were submitted to the General Assembly through the latter Board. The Enabling Act which made this move possible, stated in part:

That the Board of National Missions expresses to the Trustees of Johnson C. Smith University, Incorporated, its deep satisfaction in the progress of the University to date, its recognition of the contribution which the University has made to the Negro Churches, and its hopes and prayers for the continued progress and usefulness of the University. . .

This changed the status of the institution as a Presbyterian school, in that the church recognition was now on the basis of Christian education and not missionary needs of the Negro. It is the official acknowledgement by the church that Smith was able to take its place along with other schools under its care, meeting the usual standards of higher education as a self-sufficient institution.

During the period prior to 1941, when the relationship with Barber-Scotia Junior College was terminated, Smith began a series of extension programs in theology, education, and missions. The Ministers' Institute offered lectures on the campus to all who were interested—Baptists, Congregationalists, Holiness, Seventh Day Adventists and Presbyterians alike. Lectures were given by the faculty of the seminary and their invited guests. All expenses were paid for by the school. Courses in the professional education curriculum were offered in nearby towns where in-service teachers requested the school to do so. Vacation Bible school and Sunday School Extension was a summer feature beginning in 1941, when the overall enrollment was 150 children and the average daily attendance 100.

Affiliation with Scotia was terminated in 1941, and instead, women were admitted to the lower division of the college and the department of elementary education was revised to accommodate the anticipated increase in enrollment. Courses were patterned after the North Carolina state requirements for the "A" Certificate and the course, "Tests and Measurements," was a University requirement of all students taking the required eighteen semester hours of education.

The declaration of war in December, 1941, caused other changes at Smith. With the encouragement of the various war agencies of the

United States government, and General Hershey of the Selective Service Commission, the courses in the sciences were expanded and five semester hours of advanced mathematics were required of all draft eligible men students. The Enlisted Reserve Corps was organized to provide the exchange of instruction and information about the armed forces and to facilitate utilization of college skills for those students who were drafted.

The following war measures in addition to those enumerated above were instituted by the faculty

Courses in First Aid and Accident Prevention were added to the curriculum.

A course in Course of the War, offering one elective credit, was added.

In a few of the courses in Economics the materials were reshaped to conform to problems of the present day.

A course in practical Spanish was added.

The Mathematics Department offered a course in Map Making and Map Reading.

In order to improve student morale the following steps were taken:

- a. The institution secured various movies that the government sent out on defense production and on army and navy life.
- b. The student-faculty forum based topics for discussion on current war problems.
- c. Arrangements were made for tours through the local air base for those interested in aviation.
- d. A committee of advisors was appointed to serve as a clearing house for students' personal problems in connection with the draft.
- e. Aptitude tests were made for those of draft age.
- f. A display was arranged and literature pertaining to the war was furnished the students.
- g. Certain tests were made to ascertain the emotional stability of students of draft age.
- h. The courses in religion were changed so as to reinforce students' morale wherever possible during the war crisis.

The University took over the summer school which had been started in 1900 but for many years had been operated by the state of North Carolina as an agency for improvement of the academic attainments of teachers in the locale. This session was made a regular part of the school year and Freshmen who wished to enter the summer session upon high school graduation could complete the entire college course in three years. This acceleration of the program also applied to the other classes. Under this plan, all regular academic courses for credit toward graduation were offered several times each year. In this manner students were able to pursue their objectives without the interruptions caused by the difficulty of meeting prerequisite requirements for subjects needed for graduation.

The extra-curricular life on the campus was enriched by permission given social fraternities and sororities to organize under-graduate chapters. Each group is required to have a faculty sponsor. The groups operate under a Pan Hellenic Council, where the inter-fraternal business is transacted. The number of social events permissible in a single academic year are prescribed by the faculty. Activities connected with the initiation and pledging of new members are regulated by the Pan Hellenic Council. Students are required to have an average of not less than two points on a scale where three points represent a perfect "A" average.

The faculty policy on athletics was stated in the following fashion: Sports are permitted and encouraged within prescribed limits, chiefly for the following list of reasons. First, they provide wholesome recreation; second, they give healthful exercises in the open air. The faculty maintains supervision of the athletics so that it may be assured they are conducted on a high plane and that they do not interfere with the academic life of the college. The Board of Athletic Control, under whose direction games of basketball, baseball, football, tennis, wrestling and boxing are played, is a member of the North Carolina Inter-collegiate Association and the Colored Inter-collegiate Athletic Association, organizations which have done much to establish and maintain high standards in athletics.

According to Coach Jack S. Brayboy, the University does not now, nor has it in the past, given athletic scholarships. No mention of this appears in any of the records, the catalogue, the reports to the Boards, nor in the church papers. The practice seems to have been to

allow athletes to participate in the work-aid program available to all students after the first year in attendance. Under this plan, certain jobs which students can do without interfering with their school work are held for them instead of being given out through the annual contracts for outside hired labor needed at the school. Students—also elsewhere on college campuses—work in the various offices as typists, switchboard operators, dormitory receptionists, library assistants, do certain cleaning, wait on tables in the cafeteria, and drive school cars. In this way they can earn as much as one fourth of their annual tuition, including room and board. The catalogue states the "most of these scholarships are engaged beforehand by students who have already been in attendance at the University."

It is not clear just when the school terminated its full scholarship provisions for superior students, but by the end of this period almost all of the students were paying at least three-fourths of their annual tuition and fees. The catalogue lists only "a limited number of scholarships in the amount of \$90 for new students of superior ability who have the recommendation of their principals." In the case of withdrawal from the school for reasons other than military service or personal illness attested by the University physician, no refund of fees were made.

Prior to 1947 several faculty members of long standing had retired. Among them were Dr. Charles H. Shute, Dr. P. W. Russell, Professor E. L. Rann and Dr. George Davis, each of whom had been on the staff of the school more than twenty-five years. All of them, with the exception of Mr. Rann, were graduates of Biddle University, and had served in accordance with the missionary spirit the administration expected of its faculty. The 1947 retirement of Dr. McCrorey did not precipitate their retirement, but followed it. In the space of five years, therefore, all the major departments at Johnson C. Smith University had a change in top personnel, in addition to the change in the Presidency. The theological seminary, the departments of mathematics and ancient languages, the humanities, and English, all lost their long time officials. Each was replaced by other graduates of the institution. Dr. H. Liston, the new President, had graduated in the class of 1911, Caesar R. Blake, the new head of the English department, was a member of the graduating class of 1945, Dr. A. H. George, the Dean of the Seminary, in 1920, and Albert A. Thompson, heading the ancient languages department, in 1937.

In a way the tradition of inbreeding was to continue through these appointments, but the academic attainments of the new group were of a somewhat higher order than those they replaced. The period, 1933-1947, closed with the retirement of many who had been with the school through the really trying years, from the top level of administration down to the lower levels of servitude. A new day was dawning with the task before the changed administration and faculty presenting challenges never faced by their predecessors.

There is a consistent relationship between the stated aims and practices at Johnson C. Smith University during the period which ended in 1947. The School continued its efforts to *provide an educated ministry for the colored race* by elevating the seminary to the highest standards within its reach. It also instituted a program of both secondary and primary education courses of the highest order for those students who were interested in *entering the teaching profession*. The school accommodated itself to *the southern field* by placing its facilities and talents at the disposal of the country when war was in progress, through the establishment of the Enlisted Reserve Corps, special courses in war and war students in order to shorten their preparation and get them into the war effort.

When President Hardy Liston took office at Johnson C. Smith University in 1947, his staff was younger and less familiar with the tasks and responsibilities before them than their predecessors had been. The year 1947 was one in which the integration of educational opportunities for both races in the south was no longer a supposition of the far distant future, but an immediate, impending reality. During this period the regional accrediting associations agreed to rate Negro colleges on the same basis they had been using for similar schools for whites. At the same time, the criteria for rating colleges of any sort were changing from the rigid and often subjective checklists to a more flexible set of standards based on the clarity and lucidity of the announced aims of the schools and the methods employed for attaining these aims.

This situation worked to the advantage of Johnson C. Smith University. The campus was complete and well equipped for a normal enrollment of 400-500 students, all of whom were admitted on a selective basis, that is, required to be in the first or second quarter of their graduating classes. The financial position of the school was sound

in that the endowment of \$2,000,000 was not matched by most colleges for Negroes, only one other such school in North Carolina having half that amount. Dr. McCrorey stated that in his forty years as President, he had balanced the budget every fiscal year and that there was no deficit of any kind facing the new administration. Enrollment figures, bolstered by the continuing influx of veterans of the late war, were encouraging. There was a total enrollment of 919 students in all departments for 1948. (The University had accommodations for veterans and their families in temporary structures, and operated certain extension courses off the campus.)

The task confronting the new staff can be summarized in the need to adapt the heritage and aspirations of the founders of the school to fit present-day needs and potentials. Some of the new members of the faculty were graduates who had studied at the feet of men who represented the period when the spirit of the founders was more evident. Others were people who knew little of the background of the school. The faculty additions were the best that the resources of the school could command. In 1948 the catalogue listed members holding two new doctorates and there were four new degrees of that rank in 1952. In addition to this strengthening through new appointments, the University encouraged faculty members who did not hold advanced degrees to study for them. Through a policy of assisting teachers to qualify for and receive fellowships for further study the University has managed to keep at least two faculty members on leave preparing for advanced degrees each year since 1948.

The enrollment has been kept down consciously by the University. Officials of the administration feel that the best results can be obtained only if the student body does not exceed 600 in regular attendance. No plans for expansion to accommodate a greater number have been announced. Instead, the emphasis is placed on improvement of the present program of curricular and extra-curricular activities, and the physical plant. A new building housing a central heating and hot water system for all the buildings on the East Campus was erected in 1952, making it possible the complete modernization of that process on the campus and considerably reducing the hazards arising from the several separate systems in each building.

At the close of the school year, 1952-53, the faculty remained on the campus for two additional days, which were spent in conferences,

study and re-evaluation of the aims and objectives of the University. The reports have not been made available as the committees are still in force and meet weekly. They are: (1) "Educational Philosophy, Aims and Objectives of the Institution," (2) "The Needs of our Youth and the Demands of our Society," (3) "Guidance and Student Activities," and (4) "The Improvement of Instruction."

In June, 1952, the Board of Trustees voted to eliminate the reference to race carried in the charter of the University. This move is in keeping with the constant efforts of the school to identify itself with the vanguard of progressive changes in its area. There can be no doubt that for many years previous to this change, the enrollment of a student not of Negro parentage would have been illegal under the state laws. At the same time the Trustees elected to the Board two southern white men. One was William H. Barnhardt, a member of the southern Presbyterian Church, and the other Judge Francis O. Clarkson, an Episcopalian. They became the first local white men to serve on the Board of Trustees of Johnson C. Smith University in its entire history. This was accompanied by the announcement that the Honorary Degree, Doctor of Divinity, had been conferred upon the Reverend Robert H. Stone, Executive of the Mecklenburg Presbytery of the Presbyterian Church in the U. S. (Southern).

A concrete illustration that wounds caused by the local white opposition to the founding and early growth of the school were healed is found in the fact that the local papers carried full coverage of all the commencement events on this occasion, and editorial commendation of the school as well.

The curriculum of the liberal arts college had begun to show the influence of the newer movements toward general education in 1949. By 1952 the entire Freshman year was given to a study of the subjects and topics which would provide "a broad and substantial foundation in the major fields of knowledge." In addition to the departmental requirements for a major and a minor in a teaching or professional field, the University insists that students take the following subjects: Twelve hours of English, including composition and introduction to English literature; six hours of general mathematics; six hours of physical education, including plays and games; three hours in psychology; three hours each in biological sciences, physical sciences, social sciences, and a foreign language. In addition to these studies, the students

are required to take eight semester hours in the study of religion. Majors may be chosen from the following: Division 1, *The Humanities* (English, French, German, Music, Philosophy, Religious Education, Spanish, Speech); Division 2, *The Social Sciences* (Economics, History, Political Science, Sociology); Division 3, *Education* (Physical Education and Health, and Psychology, Elementary Education, Secondary Education, Geography, Art); Division 4, *Mathematics and Science* (Biology, Mathematics, Chemistry and Physics).

The present emphasis is on a building program to assist in obtaining full accreditation of the theological seminary. The program there is felt to be the equal in the other seminaries for Negroes in the area served by the school and a permanent administration and classroom building for the seminary is felt to be the last step in gaining this accreditation. The General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in the USA is presently raising funds for such work and the Johnson C. Smith University theological seminary is earmarked for a sum equal to the needed amount as soon as the goal is reached in local churches throughout the land. The site and plans for the necessary building have been drawn and approved and it is expected that by the fall of 1954 the groundwork for the building will be started.

The period from 1947 to the present is not yet at an end and while its history is being made, the perspective of the past cannot be shown at this early date. During this period the school has continued to increase its services through the preparation of teachers for the colored race and has gone beyond that in many areas where segregated facilities are not required by either law or practice. Smith graduates are teaching in all the large cities of the north according to the Publicity Department. Seminary graduates are serving in the Armed Forces as Chaplains in an integrated system, and honor has come to those in Presbyteries where the races are mixed.

Efforts to continue this stimulation of the students for further service are evident in the revised Student Handbook prepared for the school year 1954-1955. In this booklet, the following requirements are listed for all students with an eye toward the realization of these aims: To promote the health of the students, to encourage a lay leadership in the church and to help the student develop a Christian character:

"Chapel and Religious Services—Chapel and religious services are essential parts of the college program. Attendance is com-

PRESIDENTS



REV. STEPHEN MATTOON
1870-1884



REV. W. A. HOLIDAY
1884-1886



REV. W. F. JOHNSON
1886-1891



DR. DANIEL J. SANDERS
1891-1907

PRESIDENTS



DR. H. L. MCCROREY
1907-1947



DR. HARDY LISTON, SR.
1947-1956



DR. JAMES SEABROOK
1956-1957



DR. R. P. PERRY
1957-1968

pulsory . . . Monday, Wednesday and Friday and Sunday at eleven. During these regularly scheduled hours, no other meetings or activities shall be scheduled.

"Health and Physical Examinations"—While a student is in residence every effort is made to protect his health and to promote his physical development; accordingly each student is required to undergo a thorough physical examination, including Chest X-Ray and Wasserman Test. The College Physician and Nurse are available daily and all students have the privilege of seeking emergency medical attention through the Nurse in charge, the Dean of Men, or the Dean of Women.

"The Student Christian Association"—The voluntary religious organization including all college students. Membership is also open to any theological students . . . interested in the program. It maintains active relations with the Y.M.C.A. and Y.W.C.A., Student Christian Association and Youth Groups of the Church."

Under Section IV of the Handbook there are listed twenty-seven student organizations recognized by the administration, ranging from a student council to the social fraternities and sororities.

Sixth Period— Years of Unprecedented Growth

The period 1947 to the present may well end as the most important in the history of Johnson C. Smith University, for during it the situation in which the school was founded has been almost completely reversed. No longer are masses of Negroes uneducated and without an enlightened religious leadership. Opposition to higher education for Negroes is all but extinct, with philanthropic foundations making annual grants for constant improvement of the facilities for those students. The Supreme Court of the United States has ruled on the illegality of separate educational facilities, and southern states are taking steps to accommodate themselves to the change in a manner which is presently advantageous to Negroes seeking higher education. Harmony exists between the religious groups which originally opposed the program of the Presbyterians at Biddle, with officials accepting honorary degrees from the school, actively supporting the program through employment of Smith graduates, and appointing them to positions of leadership in their policy-making bodies.

Of the announced aims of the school, all have met with consistent practice in the first seven years of this period, 1947-present. The stated aims—to help the student develop Christian character: lay leadership within the Church and state, have been satisfied by the demonstrated success of the school's graduates in each of these areas. The stated aim—to promote the health of the student has been accomplished by utilizing the services of the physical education department, the University physician and a full time nurse. The stated aim pertaining to preparation of the academic nature—to prepare the student for later professional work—has been met through the establishment of appropriate departments of instruction, under the direction of well prepared professors.

In addition to those stated aims, which the school has met consist-

ently and satisfactorily, the implied aims have been stressed by officials of Smith. Perhaps the most obvious of these lies in the insistence of the school in representing itself as a Presbyterian school, a practice similar schools with independent Board of Trustees have not followed so diligently. In the 1945 Yale Studies in Religious Education, Lincoln, the long-time sister-school of Johnson C. Smith University, is listed as a private school, while Smith is still listed in that way, though the support from the church is nominal. By that effort Smith still strives toward becoming the "Colored Princeton." The belief in the innate potential for intellectual advancement of the race is exemplified in the constant improvement of both the staff and curriculum.

Dr. H. Liston was the first layman to hold the office of President at Smith which more clearly delineates the duties of the other administrative officials of the school. The Dean of the college is in charge of academic matters and personnel. The same is true of the theological seminary and its Dean. These three men, in association with and under the direction of the Board of Trustees make up a triumvirate without counterpart in the history of the University. Each has clearly defined duties and responsibilities; with a minimum of teaching responsibilities they have the time to devote to the promotion of the separate divisions under their control. Thus the future development of the administrative and curricular aims and practices at Johnson C. Smith University can be directed by full time officials, who have the experience and training, as well as the support necessary to assure the continuing progress at the school.

Dr. Liston was formally inducted into office October 20, 1947. He died October 20, 1956. Compressed within the arc of these more than a million dollars worth of improvements were made. Dr. Liston had an atmosphere of dignified sternness about him that came from an impressive seriousness. He always seemed too busy or absorbed in thought of his duties to give himself to trivial frivolity or diversions. He was a man of strong convictions, positive, uncompromising, sure-footed in his approaches and attitudes and of a high mind, clean and honorable motives. The admiration of his fellow-educators for him came from an understanding of his solidarity of character, his lofty conception of duty and his sense of responsibility and rigid faith in his personal and official integrity.

The college in all of its achievements during Dr. Liston's tenure,

has been laid under tribute to him for his steady and energetic devotion to its progress and development.

Dr. Liston exercised an influential hand in the Church on all levels and in the community. He served whenever called upon and at no matter what personal sacrifice. He was a member of the Committee on Church Structure of the Presbyterian Church, U. S. A.; the Committee on Chaplains for the Army and Navy and Service Personnel of the General Assembly and a member of the World Alliance of Presbyterian Churches Holding the Reformed Faith.

He wrought well for the Institution, for the progressive life of faculty and students, for their abundant progress toward higher reaches of levels of living spiritually, intellectually and morally.

The McCrorey-Liston High School in Fairfield County, South Carolina was named in honor of him.

After the death of president Hardy Liston, the trustees persuaded Dr. J. W. Seabrook, a trustee of the institution, to come out of retirement to serve as acting president of the institution. He served from November 1956 to July 1, 1957. He brought to the institution forty-five years of accumulated experience as an educational administrator of ability. He kept the recognized machinery oiled to insure smooth operation for the new president.

Dr. R. P. Perry became president July 1, 1957. Upon assuming the presidency, Dr. Perry immediately established himself as a vigorous administrator of a church related college worthy to carry on the work so nobly begun by his predecessors. He exhibits all the quality of personal dignity and ease of insight both of himself and in the minds of the people about him. His warmth and quiet manner have endeared him to the church, alumni, and people of all walks of life. With a fresh and undiscouraged outlook he set himself to the task of elevating the college to a more lofty position in the academic field. With a dedication stemming from a robust Christian faith, he is striving to make the Christian image of an educated person meaningful at the institution.

He is furnishing the ideas, the leadership, and the drive to chart the new toward which the institution is moving with a vigorous and healthy stride. Under his leadership the student body had increased from six hundred in 1957 to twelve hundred in 1968. The endowment

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investments have increased from six hundred thousand dollars to two million seven hundred thousand dollars as of 1968. To the physical plant nine buildings have been erected at a total cost of six million, five hundred four thousand dollars; this includes a gymnasium with an Olympic swimming pool, three dormitories, a student union building, library, and science hall. The interior and exterior of Smith Hall has been renovated. A new entrance, driveways and ample parking areas have been constructed at a cost of one hundred thirty-three thousand dollars. The old library has been remodeled to accommodate student personnel services. Technological teaching media has been installed including two electronic language laboratories, an audio-visual aid center, curriculum laboratory and reading machine laboratory. A two self-study and a ten year projection were completed resulting into curriculum revisions and the establishment of a department of business administration. The total gifts since 1957 amounted to more than five million dollars.

A new charter was adopted resulting in an increase in the number of trustees and the closing of the Pittsburgh office. All of the investments and financial operations were moved to Charlotte, North Carolina.

The faculty has increased since 1957 from forty-nine members to ninety-three as of 1968, while the faculty compensation has doubled.

CONCLUSION

It has been pointed out that Johnson C. Smith University is neither the largest, the oldest, nor the richest of the colleges founded in the period just after the Civil War for the recently freed Negroes. Wilberforce and Lincoln Universities have a running battle over which of those two famous schools actually reached collegiate proportions first, there being a certainty that both did before Biddle Institute was made a University. However, these schools are delimited out of the present study for two reasons. In the first place, both are located in states where segregation is not practiced by law and in the second place, both of them are in states where the four Negro Synods of the Presbyterian Church in the USA have no jurisdiction.

In spite of the fact that Johnson C. Smith University is neither the oldest, richest, nor the largest of the Negro colleges, there have been more than a dozen significant instances where it has been in the vanguard of important policy and practice changes which have shaped the status quo at Negro colleges in general at present. The time span between the installation of a new practice at Johnson C. Smith University and its eventual adoption at similar schools is even more remarkable, in view of the superior advantages of some of the schools involved. The following instances of these practices at Johnson C. Smith which served as harbingers of the practices taken for granted at all Negro colleges in the present period are presented and discussed in the following outline.

Johnson C. Smith University was the first Negro college to undertake the following practices at the four-year collegiate level:

1. The Bachelor's Degree granted by Biddle University was the first such degree accepted for full value by a northern professional school. 1876.
2. Biddle University appointed the first Negro professor in a bona fide four-year college for Negroes in the entire South. 1886.

3. Biddle University elected the first Negro President of a bona fide four-year college in the entire south. 1891.
4. Biddle University won the first football game played between Negro schools. 1892.
5. Biddle University became the champion of the classical curriculum for Negro colleges. 1912.
6. Biddle University became the first Negro college in the south to offer professional courses in education in a four-year program. 1919.
7. Johnson C. Smith University received the largest individual philanthropic benefactions ever granted a Negro institution. 1923-1924.
8. Johnson C. Smith University became the first Presbyterian co-educational college for Negroes in the United States. 1932.
9. Johnson C. Smith University became the first Negro college in North Carolina to receive regional accreditation. 1932.
10. Johnson C. Smith University Theological Seminary became the first seminary for Negroes requiring college graduation as condition of entrance. 1935.
11. Johnson C. Smith University erected the first gymnasium on a Negro college campus in the state of North Carolina. 1928.
12. Johnson C. Smith University Libraries have the largest collection on a Negro campus in North Carolina and it is more extensive than the collection at seven of the well-known white colleges of the state. 1953.

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