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Polishing Cornerstones: Tift College, Georgia Baptists' Separate College for Women

Darin Scott Harris

ACCEPTANCE

This dissertation, POLISHING CORNERSTONES: TIFT COLLEGE, GEORGIA BAPTISTS' SEPARATE COLLEGE FOR WOMEN, by DARIN S. HARRIS, was prepared under the direction of the candidate's Dissertation Advisory Committee. It is accepted by the committee members in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree Doctor of Philosophy in the College of Education, Georgia State University.

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ABSTRACT

POLISHING CORNERSTONES: TIFT COLLEGE, GEORGIA BAPTISTS' SEPARATE COLLEGE FOR WOMEN
by
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This dissertation examines Tift College, formerly in Forsyth, Georgia, and the problems Tift faced as Georgia Baptist's women's college. Many of these difficulties were a result of the beliefs of Georgia Baptists on educating women and the fact that Georgia Baptists placed a greater value on education for males. This work also examines the role of feminism in a southern women's college. To complete this task, the dissertation examines the beliefs and attitudes of Georgia Baptists about education in general, and educating women in specific and how funding played a part in their education. The dissertation addresses Tift's struggle to remain a separate school for women and examines ideas of womanhood at Tift as determined by the curriculum imposed on the women, as well as documenting what Tift students felt about womanhood based on their statements in class papers, journal and newspaper articles, and various other archival sources.

These data show how attitudes and beliefs changed over the years, and while a strong feminist spirit may not have been achieved, the changes that were evident affected the purposes of the college. As the student body became more diversified, students were no longer content to become genteel, southern ladies or "polished cornerstones." Going against traditional roles, many students argued for a curriculum that would allow them to compete with men in the job market.

POLISHING CORNERSTONES: TIFT COLLEGE, GEORGIA BAPTISTS' SEPARATE COLLEGE FOR WOMEN

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ABBREVIATIONS

GBC	Georgia Baptist Convention
Quill	*The Campus Quill*
SBC	Southern Baptist Convention
TCMU	Tift College of Mercer University
Tift	Tift College, Bessie Tift College, & Monroe College

CHAPTER 1 - INTRODUCTION

The history of U.S. colleges has been dominated by the history of men and men's colleges, and only recently have there been significant studies on the role of women and women's colleges. Mary Ann Dzuback states, "The story of higher education in the United States is a story that cannot be understood without thorough attention to gender as the fundamental defining characteristic of American educational institutions, ideas, and practices."[1] Since many of the histories have been about male institutions, women, Blacks as well as other ethnic groups, and the poor have often been left out of these histories, or relegated to a few sentences tucked within hundreds of pages. When historians have examined these groups, and specifically women, the theme has often been that of access. Linda Eisenmann recently posed the question of "whether access was the best such framework"[2] for examining women's

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[1] Mary Anne Dzuback, "Gender and the Politics of Knowledge," *History of Education Quarterly* (Summer 2003). http://historycooperative.press.uiuc.edu/journals/heq/43.2/dzuback.html (24 Feb., 2006), par 7, retrieved February 24, 2006 21:40 EST.

[2] Linda Eisenmann, "Creating a Framework for Interpreting US Women's Educational History: Lessons from

educational history. She suggests four other possible contexts for examining these histories: institution building, networking, religion, and money. Dzuback adds to the idea of examining institution building the notion "of gender as a fundamental category that shaped hierarchy and power within and among educational institutions."[3]

Exploring gender and power within an institution seems remarkably important, especially if the institution being examined is a female college in the South. Education in the South, as in the rest of the country, was not equitable for males and females. Many of the most prestigious colleges and universities were begun as, or at least contained, a school of religion to prepare young men for ministry. In the South this was the case as well, but this occurred much later than in the Northeast. Protestants in the South, Baptists in particular, had no college in the South for either men or women until the nineteenth century.

> For many years sons of Southern plantation owners, lawyers, doctors, and merchants, attended colleges abroad and in the Northern states. It was one hundred and ninety years after the founding of Harvard that the first Baptist college, Furman University, was established in the South. Other colleges under church control which Southern students attended were William and Mary College, Williamsburg Virginia, founded in

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Historical Lexicography," *History of Education* 30 (2001), 455.

[3] Dzuback, 11.

> 1696; Yale University, New Haven, Connecticut, in 1701; Princeton University, Princeton, New Jersey, in 1746; King's College (now Columbia University), New York City, in 1754; and Rhode Island College (now Brown University), Providence, Rhode Island, in 1764. One only of these, Brown University was founded by Baptists. Sixty-two years elapsed after the establishment of that university before a Baptist college was founded in the South.[4]

The first degree-granting female college in the South was not established for another 11 years, with the opening of Georgia Female College in 1836. While female education in the South has often been shown to be behind the rest of the country, newer studies show that in some ways Southern female education was ahead of its counterparts in the North.

Farnham, in her study of antebellum female education, showed that Georgia Female College was not only the first degree-granting college in the South, but also in the nation, and that during this period the South had more female colleges than the North.[5] Other historians have noted that female education in the South had a curriculum which was often more rigorous than education for females in the

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[4] Charles Johnson, *Higher Education of Southern Baptists: An Institutional History, 1826-1954* (Waco: The Baylor University Press, 1955), 4.

[5] Christie Anne Farnham, *The Education of the Southern Belle: Higher Education and Student Socialization in the Antebellum South* (New York: New York University Press, 1994).

North, and that this curriculum was more closely aligned to the curriculum for males.[6] However, "It was assumed in the South, unlike the North in this period, that the well-bred female would not teach school; rather her education should fit her to be a lady—polished, competent, and subservient."[7] It is also possible, as John Hardin Best points out, "[In the South] the curriculum itself was less than crucial for the young because the teaching that really mattered would come from family, church, and social relationships."[8] This explanation would be true for both males and females, however, and does not specifically address the difference in education of women in the North and South.

Possibly this difference has had some impact on the fact that histories of female colleges in the South have

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[6] Nancy Beadie and Kim Tolley. *Chartered Schools: Two Hundred Years of Independent Academies in the United States, 1727-1925* (New York: RoutledgeFalmer, 2002); Farnham, *The Education of the Southern Belle;* John Rury, *Education and Women's Work: Female Schooling and the Division of Labor in Urban America, 1870-1930* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1991). This is argued by Irene Harwarth, Mindi Maline, and Elizabeth DeBra in a Department of Education bulletin for the Office of Educational Research and Improvement entitled: "Women's Colleges in the United States: History, Issues, and Challenges" found at http://www.ed.gov/offices/OERI/PLLI/webreprt.html.

[7] Barbara Miller Solomon, *In the Company of Educated Women* (Yale University Press: New Have, 1985), 21.

[8] John Hardin Best, "Education in the Forming of the American South," *History of Education Quarterly* 36(1): 39-51.

been fewer in number than histories of female colleges in the North.[9] The schools most often looked at seem to be those schools often referred to as the "Seven Sisters": Barnard College (New York, NY) – founded in 1889, adjacent to Columbia University; Bryn Mawr College (Bryn Mawr, PA) – founded in 1885; Mount Holyoke College (South Hadley, MA) – founded in 1837; Radcliffe College, now the Radcliffe Institute for Advanced Study in Women's Studies at Harvard University (Cambridge, MA) – founded in 1879; Smith College (Northampton, MA) – founded in 1871; Vassar College (Poughkeepsie, NY) – founded in 1861; and Wellesley College (Wellesley, MA) – founded in 1870, all found in the Northeast. In 1987, Sally Schwager wrote, "Studies of women educators and institutions outside New England have been relatively few, and on the college level, attention to the eastern women's colleges still prevails."[10] Nineteen years later, Linda Eisenmann states:

> The historiography of women's education is relatively young, whether examined comparatively across nations or individually by country.

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[9] Some notable exceptions: Christie Anne Farnham and Amy Thompson McCandless, "Progressivism and the Higher Education of Southern Women," *North Carolina Historical Review* 70(3)(July 1993), 317; Amy Thomas McCandless. *The Past in the Present: Women's Higher Education in the Twentieth-Century American South* (Tuscaloosa: The University of Alabama Press, 1999).

[10] Sally Schwager, "Educating Women in America," *Signs* 12 (2)(Winter, 1987), 336.

> Certainly, the past 25 years have produced a growing and impressive collection of studies that trace the development of educational options for women, both on the school and collegiate levels.[11]

In this article Eisenmann cites almost exclusively schools in the north and east or studies about these schools. Consequently:

> Southern women and Southern colleges have shared many of the burdens of Southern history. The image of the South as a poverty-striken [sic], guilt-ridden, and benighted region has tinged portraits of its people and institutions for generations. Southern women have been dismissed as "belles" more concerned with marital prospects than with mental accomplishments…. Southern women's colleges have been characterized as mere "finishing schools" for the wealthy.... More often than not, the term "educated Southerner" has been viewed as an oxymoron.
>
> The consequences of this diminution of Southern schools and omission of the Southern experience is, of course, an incomplete picture of the American educational scene.[12]

In light of this, it is important for historians of women's education to conduct historical research on female colleges in the South to gain a better understanding of how they were similar to and different from their counterparts in the Northeast.[13]

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[11] Eisenmann, 453.

[12] Amy Thomas McCandless, 1999, 8.

[13] An example: all of Wellesley's presidents have been women, and in the 140 year history of Tift College in Forsyth, Georgia only one woman was president and she only served for one year.

The South has had a distinctive culture from the Northeast or the West, and this distinctiveness must be addressed in dealing with the history of southern education. John Hardin Best, in his article "Education in the Forming of the American South," gave three causes for the distinctiveness of southern culture. The first of these was the climate, which allowed for the agrarian foundations of southern society. The second was "the ethnic and racial mix of the people."[14] Best claimed the traditional folk culture of the South has been another contributing factor. "Song, story, and myth have been richly effective in defining and sustaining what is southern."[15]

According to Best, however, the southern distinction has not been constant. There have been distinct shifts in the culture that must be acknowledged. Best describes three "broad chronological arenas." The first he terms the Old South. "The Old South extends from the seventeenth- and eighteenth-century foundings through the years of the early Republic – the agrarian economy based on slave labor that ended with the Civil War and Emancipation."[16]

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[14] Best, 40.
[15] Ibid, 41.
[16] Ibid, 48.

Best termed the second era, the New South. "The New South made the transition to a free labor economy with the caste division of White and Black firmly in place."[17] Along with this division of the races, this era "was accompanied by efforts to reach beyond agriculture to develop a more diverse economy in towns and small cities."[18] According to Best, this era ended with the Civil Rights Act of 1964, which marked "the legal and official demise of the caste system."[19]

The final period Best describes is the American South. In this era, the 1970s and following, there was growth in the economics of the South, both in industry and agriculture. Along with this there was political moment throughout much of the South that pushed society closer toward the mainstream of American society. These cultural distinctions are important to note when examining a school in the South, especially when that school's history covers, to some degree, all three of the chronological eras Best described.

One other area of southern society that Best only slightly touched on, but that is especially important in examining a religious school in the South, is that of

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[17] Ibid.
[18] Ibid.
[19] Ibid.

cultural religion. “The South’s commitment to a particularly fundamentalist brand of Protestant Christianity, has been noted by many commentators on Southern society but left relatively unexplored by historians and other scholarly students of Southern education.”[20] In the South this “particularly fundamentalist brand of Protestant Christianity” found its roots in Baptists, Methodists, and Presbyterians predominantly, and although they were different denominations, they had distinct similarities when it came to moral laws and family and social structure.[21]

Though the more Puritanical Protestantism in the North was early tied to education, Southern Protestantism did not have the same educational stance. Timothy Smith describes the situation encountered by missionaries sent to the early nineteenth century South:

> The young Congregational ministers sent out by the American Home Missionary Society [a Northern organization] after 1827...professed amazement at...the educational neglect of children which

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[20] Wayne Urban, “History of Education: A Southern Exposure,” *History of Education Quarterly* 21 (Summer 1981), 138. Since this time the study of religion’s impact seems to have grown.

[21] For more detailed analysis of these distinctions see the following church historians’ work: Robert T. Handy, “The Protestant Quest for a Christian America 1830-1930,” *Church History* 22 (March 1953), 12; and Samuel S. Hill, Jr., *The South and North in American Religion* (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 1980).

> they observed in Methodist, Baptist, and Presbyterian families. The missionaries immediately reacted by shifting their emphasis from primarily pastoral and evangelistic ministry to an educational one.[22]

While education was slow in coming to the South, it did find its place, and Protestantism was one factor that influenced its growth. One area in which Protestant groups impacted education was in the area of women's education. Most of the women's colleges in the nineteenth century were begun by religious groups, and in the South the majority of these were Protestant in their foundations. The Baptists of Georgia were active in establishing women's colleges throughout the nineteenth century; one in particular was Tift College.

In 1849 the citizens of Forsyth, Georgia began a college for females. Tift College was originally founded as Forsyth Female Collegiate Institute on December 21, 1849.[23] The school was strongly Protestant with three Baptists, three Methodists, and one Presbyterian on the original board of trustees. The school was technically non-denominational until 1855 when the three Baptists on

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[22] Timothy L. Smith, "Protestant Schooling and American Nationality, 1800-1850," *Journal of American History* 53 (March 1967), 690.

[23] B. D. Ragsdale, *Story of Georgia Baptists: Volume Two - Mercer University in Macon, Colleges for Women, Secondary School* (Macon: Mercer University, 1935), 198.

the seven member Board of Trustees and the Baptists of the town of Forsyth pushed to place the school under Baptist control. Tift survived until 1986, when it merged with Mercer University.[24]

As I study the history of women's education at Tift College, it is important to determine what Georgia Baptists thought about education in general, and specifically for women through the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Early Baptist education in Georgia was concerned first and foremost with educating White males for ministry. This can be seen in J. H. Campbell's account of the beginnings of the school that would later become Mercer University.

> The Georgia Baptist Convention, at its annual sessions in the spring of 1831, at Big Buckhead church, Burke County, adopted a resolution to establish a classical and theological school, the main object of which was the improvement of the rising ministry. If memory is not at fault, the resolution was offered by Rev. Adiel Sherwood. That school was located in Greene county, at what is now known as the village of Penfield, and was called Mercer Institute, in honor of Rev. Jesse Mercer.... Mercer Institute was opened as a Manual Labor School the 2d Monday in January, 1833, with thirty-nine pupils, (seven of whom had the ministry in view).[25]

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[24] For a detailed discussion of dead colleges, see Linda Buchanan, "Not Harvard, Not Holyoke, Not Howard: A Study of the Life and Death of Three Small Colleges" (Ph.D. diss., Georgia State University, 1997).

[25] J. H. Campbell, *Georgia Baptists: Historical and Biographical* (Macon, GA: J. W. Burke & Company, 1874), 46.

The education of females was not mentioned in an Education Report[26] of the Georgia Baptist Convention before 1850, however, in the second half of the century it became a frequently discussed topic. This is not to say that Georgia Baptist were not involved in educating women before 1850, though on a state level it was not a major published concern. Before this time female education was a much more localized activity, but a reading of the Education Reports shows that the education of females became an important

[26] The Georgia Baptist Convention created a committee to oversee educational endeavors in the state near the beginnings of the Convention in 1822. At each annual meeting of the Convention, the committee would submit a formal report. The annual reports of the Education Commission of the Georgia Baptist Convention (GBC) are one of the most important primary sources available on the topic of Georgia Baptist education. These reports were written by a group of individuals who were addressing a much larger body as to the state of Baptist education for the year. Obviously, since the reports are only a few pages long, not every detail of what happened in Georgia Baptist education is contained in the report. The report may present a glowing report of what has happened in the year; the next year may not describe much of what has happened in Georgia Baptist education, but instead may be very preachy about the importance of education, the lack of support in education, or a warning of what might happen if education is not supported. The reports are written by Baptists for Baptists, and as such Georgia Baptist biases are expected. While this is true, these are still one of the most important pieces of evidence as to what was going on in Georgia Baptist education. In fact, sometimes the biases that are very evident in the writing may tell as much as the more descriptive and statistical data that is given. These reports show the ideas of at least a small portion of the leadership of the convention, and what the pastors who were present were exposed to and commissioned to take back to their individual churches.

task for Georgia Baptists. The education of females by Georgia Baptists began around 1830; it is difficult to determine the exact date since the schools were operated by Baptist Associations, individual churches, or even church members. As the 1852 Education Report states, "Seminaries for the education of the sons and daughters of our people are springing up in all parts of the commonwealth, and are receiving a large and growing patronage."[27] By 1859, the Report claimed that there were "not less than 30 Female Seminaries, where the learned languages are studied and degrees are conferred."[28] However, it will also be seen that female education was separate, as well as different, from education for males.

Several of the Education Reports give a glimpse of what educating for womanhood might look like. The 1878 Report speaks to this,

> Nor can we too earnestly recommend the education of our daughters - their education for proper station in life which woman was designed to fill and to adorn. Their education should be practical, as well as ornamental, and thus suited to the changing state of their social condition.[29]

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[27] "Education Report," *The Annual Report of the Georgia Baptist Convention*, (1852), 15. In Special Collections, Tarver Library, Mercer University, hereafter referred to as GBC Education Report.

[28] GBC Education Report, (1859), 15.

[29] GBC Education Report, (1878), 24.

Womanhood was a “station in life” or sphere very distinct from manhood, and females, according to Georgia Baptists’ thinking, were designed for this purpose. The idea of separate spheres was not unique to Georgia Baptists, but was characteristic of much of U.S. society. According to Barbara J. Harris, there were “two widely held social prejudices. One was the belief that females were intellectually inferior to males.... The second prejudice held that respectable women should not work outside the home.”[30] Catherine Clinton’s description of the differences in the spheres for men and women is helpful in clarifying the distinct stations in life for each:

> In this new mythological kingdom, women reign from within the comfortable confines of the home. The hearth was her throne. Men ventured out of the household and into the workplace, which was increasingly perceived as the “real world.” Although males were forced into competition and conflict outside the domestic household, every man could return to his own unchallenged rule: his home was his castle.[31]

While these separate stations in life allowed for the subjugation of females by males, these roles were slowly changing. In the North, women began to work outside of the

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[30] Barbara J. Harris, *Beyond Her Sphere: Women and the Professions in American History* (Westport, Connecticut: Greenwood Press, 1978), 3.

[31] Catherine Clinton, *The Other Civil War: American Women in the Nineteenth Century* (New York: Hillard Wang, 1984), 18-19.

home, even for short periods of time. The ability to work outside the home allowed women to be self-supportive.[32] In the South women were not granted the ability to work outside the home as early; "Women had limited opportunities for social contact, and those they had were almost exclusively with other women."[33] The 1848, Seneca Convention in Seneca Falls, New York did not have a great impact on southern feminism directly, however, the publicity it generated, often negative, allowed the ideas of feminism to became more widely known. "The ideology of women's liberation, which was being worked out in the North by Sarah Grimke, Margaret Fuller, Elizabeth Cady Stanton, and others, had only begun to take shape in the minds of southern women."[34] One important aspect of feminism that arose from the convention was the distinction of feminists who believed that women's place was in the home and those who disagreed. This distinction gave common ground to suffragists and anti-suffragists. "On one subject all of the nineteeth-century antisuffragists and many suffragists

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[32] Thomas Dublin, ed., *From Farm to Factory: Women's Letters, 1830-1860* (New York, 1981).

[33] Paula Baker, "The Domestication of Politics: Women and American Political Society, 1780-1920" *The American Historical Review*, 89 (June 1984), 620-647.

[34] Eisenmann, 463. Sarah Grimke, from Charleston, South Carolina is an exception to this.

agreed: a woman belonged in the home."[35] This common ground allowed for women in the South, where separate spheres were strongly tied to Protestant doctrine, to espouse some aspects of feminism without causing social unrest. This was often done within the realm of motherhood.

> Through motherhood, women attempted to compensate for their exclusions form the formal political world by translating moral authority into political influence. Their political demands, couched in these terms, did not violate the canons of domesticity to which many men and women held.[36]

Many women in the South were also able to find ways of expressing themselves outside the home, usually through the church. "Organized church groups became one of the few institutional contexts in which women could connect purposefully to the community."[37] In the latter part of the nineteenth century, women's groups in churches began to influence society through ministries to the poor and missions groups, as well as through politically-oriented societies such as temperance groups. These groups created the platform for later feminist societies. According to Holly J. McCammon, "The move from working for these sorts of reforms to agitating for woman suffrage was not

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[35] Ibid, 620.
[36] Baker, 625.
[37] Linda K. Kerber, "Separate Spheres, Female Worlds, Woman's Place: The Rhetoric of Women's History," *The Journal of American History,* 75 (June 1988), 9-39.

difficult, and where such organizations existed, state suffrage associations may have been more likely to spring up, particularly so in the West and South."[38] With these changes taking place in society, the position or station in life does not appear to have been static, and so this may have been what prompted an emphasis on practicality of education as will be seen in Chapter 3.

Many historians have focused on the concept of separate spheres for men and women that were prevalent in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries.[39] Kerber asserts that while the separate spheres metaphor does seem to ring true in the early Republic, the rise of capitalism and industrialization, by the antebellum period, began to erode these spheres. Eisenmann seems to echo this sentiment, stating:

> The notion of an appropriate and "separate sphere" for women has been both a useful and a controversial metaphor in women's history. As some historians have observed, the line between the "public" and "private" realms is not nearly as clear as might be supposed from the frequent nineteenth- and twentieth-century admonitions for women to mind their own sphere. What is clear, however, is that certain issues were sometimes ceded to women, including most matters related to home and children. Women's history has also made apparent the notion that women frequently

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[38] Holly J. McCammon, "Stirring Up Suffrage Sentiment: The Formation of the State Woman Suffrage Organizations, 1866-1914," *Social Forces* 80 (December 2001), 458.

[39] For a concise overview, see Kerber.

> subverted these assignments and found ways to expand authority within their so-called sphere.[40]

Kerber claims that though historians continue to use the metaphor it is possible that "the noise we hear about separate spheres may be the shattering of an old order and the realignment of its fragments."[41] Kerber does not address the rise in educational opportunities for females, but focuses on employment opportunities; it could be assumed that increases in education also helped the breakdown, or at least an enlargement, of the spheres. "Women's colleges everywhere adhered to the religious ideal of virtuous, True Womanhood, but within its framework extended women's sphere beyond the familial role."[42] In a 1908 Report of the Board of Education of the GBC a statement about Tift seems to show that the women's sphere as it had been known was changing. The statement read, "The college is honestly trying to equip the young ladies who attended it for the widest and wisest usefulness, in whatever sphere they may be called to live and labor after college life is over."[43] That education was indeed helping to disintegrate the boundaries of the particular spheres is also evident by the fact that "By the late 1800s..., women

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[40] Eisenmann, 464.
[41] Ibid, 22.
[42] Solomon, 49.
[43] GBC Education Report, (1908), 61.

had entered graduate schools and college faculties, thus reducing the distinction between the domestic, private sphere and the independent, public sphere."[44]

While the spheres may have begun to break down during this period, it was a slow process. Kerber, as well as other historians such as Cott and Degler, has shown that changes in the characteristics of women's sphere helped women move out of their sphere by giving them a space designated for women only where they could reach out to the public sphere.[45] Women's groups in churches, at work, and in special interest groups gave women the ability to begin moving out from under the private patriarchal domination of family life. The Civil War was also a major factor in the fracture of the separate spheres by giving women opportunities to engage in activities outside their own home. According to Anne Firor Scott,

> these activities were partly an indirect protest against the limitations of women's role in the patriarchy. Suddenly women were able to do business in their own right, make decisions,

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[44] Erich M. Studer-Ellis, "Springboards to Mortarboards: Women's College Foundings in Massachusetts, New York,and Pennsylvania," *Social Forces* 73 (March 1995), 1053.

[45] Ibid, 15-17; Nancy F. Cott, "What's in a Name? The Limits of 'Social Feminism;' or, Expanding the Vocabulary of Women's History," *The Journal of American History* 76 (December 1989), and Carl N. Degler, *At Odds: Women and the Family in America from the Revolution to the Present* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1980).

> write letters to newspaper editors, and in many other ways assert themselves as individual human beings.[46]

It is important to keep the views of the Georgia Baptist Convention in mind when studying Baptist female colleges in the South, especially because the only voting members of this convention were men. While Eisenmann suggests religion as a framework for study, in the South and possibly elsewhere, this framework cannot be examined without looking at issues of gender and power. This is notably true in the case of Tift College, a small Baptist College in Georgia. In its 140-year existence Tift only had one female president and she served for only one year. In 1898, the year Mrs. Crawley served as president, the school, which had been locally owned, was assumed by the Georgia Baptist Convention, a group that did not allow its women members a vote until 1923.

Troy Seminary and Mount Holyoke were women's colleges that were started by women. In the case of Wellesley, the college was established by a man but led by both female presidents and faculty. These schools stand out as unique for their female leadership and have been studied. However, because gender is an important factor in educational

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[46] Anne Firor Scott, "Women's Perspective on the Patriarchy in the 1850s," *The Journal of American History* 61 (June 1974), 52-64.

hierarchy[47], it is important to examine institutions in which females were led almost exclusively by males. Recent scholarship has refuted the idea "that the women's colleges were devoid of feminist spirit"[48]; however, these works tend to examine female colleges in the Northeast. Are female colleges, such as Tift, which are owned by typically patriarchal religious groups, led predominantly by male presidents and faculty, and located in the South, "devoid of feminist spirit," or, in spite of this leadership, is some manner of feminist spirit able to exist?

This dissertation shows that the majority of the problems Tift College faced throughout its existence were a result of the beliefs of Georgia Baptists on educating women and the fact that Georgia Baptists placed a greater value on education for males than on education for females. Women at Tift might not have exhibited as strong a feminist spirit as may have been experienced in schools such as Wellesley, but evidence shows that changes in how women viewed womanhood affected the role Tift played in preparing women for their futures. To complete this task, the first section of the dissertation examines the beliefs and

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[47] Dzuback, 11.

[48] Patricia Ann Palmieri, *In Adamless Eden: The Community of Women Faculty at Wellesley* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1995), xvii.

attitudes of Georgia Baptists about education in general, and about educating women in specific. As Eisenmann suggested, money also played a large part in the development of Tift, and so the funding of Tift by Georgia Baptists will also be examined.

The second section of the dissertation deals with the aspects of Tift remaining a separate school for women. Throughout most of the school's history the trustees considered both coeducation and coordination with men's schools nearby though the charter specifically stated that the school was for women. Tift finally merged with Mercer University 137 years after its original charter in 1849.

The third section of the dissertation examines ideas of womanhood at Tift as determined by the curriculum imposed on the women by the trustees, administration, and denomination. This section documents what women of Tift felt about womanhood based on their recorded statements in class papers, journal articles, newspaper articles, and various other sources. By examining the words of the women who attended Tift this dissertation shows how attitudes and beliefs changed over the years, and how these changes affected the purposes of the college.

CHAPTER 2 – WHAT GEORGIA BAPTISTS BELIEVED ABOUT EDUCATION

The late twentieth and early twenty-first centuries saw a rise in the discourse on private education in the form of charter schools. Private education is nothing new in the United States. Schools were opened early in the European settlements of North America; and often they were begun by the churches in the settlements. Private schools, both secular and religious, were the norm in much of the U.S. until the common school movement gave rise to full-blown public education. In the introduction to the book they edited, *Chartered Schools*, Kim Tolley and Nancy Beadie emphasized this when they state, "We contend that the academy is a significant institution in American history. We would press this point further by saying it was the *dominant institution of higher schooling from the late eighteenth to the late nineteenth century*."[1]

One study of the school system of New York states that 64 state-sponsored academies became public high schools

[1] Kim Tolley & Nancy Beadie. "A School for Every Purpose: An Introduction to the History of Academies in the United States" in *Chartered Schools: Two Hundred Years of Independent Academies in the United States, 1727-1925*, ed. N. Beadie and K. Tolley (New York: RoutledgeFalmer, 2002), 3.

within a twenty year period from 1853 to 1874.[2] This study does not include information on private academies, but do give some indication of the rapid transformation of public education. While in the South these changes took place much slower than they did in the North, they did occur there as well. Public schools were discussed, and even sparsely experimented with in areas of the South prior to the Civil War, but it was not until Reconstruction that common schools began to proliferate. Dorothy Orr, in *A History of Education in Georgia,*[3] wrote, "Thirty years after the establishment of the common school system, private schools had, to a large extent, disappeared. By 1894 the academy, or secondary school, practically had been blotted from the map." While this may have been true for many private schools, not all of the groups supporting private schools felt the need to withdraw from supporting private education in view of the growing system of public education in Georgia.

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[2] Sevan G. Terzian and Nancy Beadie, "'Let the People Remember It': Academies and the Rise of Public High Schools, 1865-1890," in *Chartered Schools: Two Hundred Years of Independent Academies in the United States, 1727-1925*, ed. N. Beadie & K. Tolley (New York: RoutledgeFalmer, 2002), 251.

[3] Dorothy Orr, *A History of Education in Georgia* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1950), 250.

When studying the history of education, or any history for that matter, it seems logical that prevailing ideologies of the people living in the space and time examined would be considered along with the activities that occurred. However, according to historian Jon Butler, "Religion has not fared well in the historiography of modern America."[4] In the particular facet of educational history, educational historian, Wayne Urban adds, "The South's commitment to a particularly fundamentalist brand of Protestant Christianity, has been noted by many commentators on Southern society but left relatively unexplored by historians and other scholarly students of Southern education."[5] According to Charles A. Israel, religion should readily be studied by historians, in that "While many of the individual and personal aspects of religion elude the historians' net, religion in its institutional forms—in denominations particularly but also on smaller community-church levels—is often easier to detect if not to understand."[6] Without studying the impact of religion on the activities of the South, the historical

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[4] Jon Butler, "Jack-in-the-Box Faith: The Religion Problem in Modern American History," *The Journal of American History*, 90 (March 2004), 1358.

[5] Urban, 138.

[6] Charles A. Israel, *Before Scopes: Evangelicalism, Education, and Evolution in Tennessee, 1870-1925* (Athens: The University of Georgia Press, 2004), 4.

picture, it seems, will not be as clear as without this type of study. According to Butler, "historians should grapple seriously with religion in modern American private and public life because doing less produces substantial misinterpretations of that history and the many peoples who made it."[7]

In the South this "particularly fundamentalist brand of Protestant Christianity" found its roots among Baptists, Methodists, and Presbyterians predominantly, and although they were different denominations, they had distinct similarities as Robert T. Handy, a Southern church historian commented:

> The Protestants were an aggressive, self-confident, and surprisingly homogenous group. To be sure they were divided into denominations among which considerable tension could arise, yet there was a fundamental similarity. De Tocqueville stated that "they all differ in respect to worship which is due to the Creator; but they all agree in respect to the duties which are due from man to man. Each sect adores the Deity in its own peculiar manner, but all sects preach the same moral law in the name of God."[8]

While the more Puritanical Protestantism in the North was early tied to education, Southern Protestantism did not have the same educational stance. Timothy Smith describes

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[7] Butler, 1360.
[8] Handy, 12.

the situation encountered by missionaries sent to the early nineteenth century South:

> The young Congregational ministers sent out by the American Home Missionary Society [a Northern organization] after 1827...professed amazement at...the educational neglect of children which they observed in Methodist, Baptist, and Presbyterian families. The missionaries immediately reacted by shifting their emphasis from primarily pastoral and evangelistic ministry to an educational one.[9]

While education was slow in coming to the South, it did find its place, and that place was influenced by Protestantism.

In understanding the role Tift played and the issues Tift faced, I consider specifically the Southern Baptists' influence on education in Georgia. "In 1900, Frank H. Kerfoot of the Home Mission Board of the Southern Baptist Convention (SBC) estimated that three-fifths of all Baptists in the world lived in the South."[10] However, a century earlier there was no "Southern Baptist." There were several different groups of Baptists in the United States, however, in Georgia, at the beginning of the nineteenth century only what later became Primitive or Old Line Baptists were in the state. Nickolas Bedgewood was

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[9] Smith, 690.

[10] John M. Heffron, "'To Form a More Perfect Union': The Moral Example of Southern Baptist Thought and Education, 1890-1920," *Religion and American Culture*, 8 (Summer 1998), 182-183.

the first Baptist preacher in Georgia, in 1763, though the first Baptist church was not established until 1767.[11] Other Baptists came to the state and began churches, and in 1784 the first Baptist association in Georgia was formed. Jesse Mercer began sponsoring the Missions movement in Georgia before 1800; however, it was not until 1820 that a severe division began between the Old Line and Missions Baptists. It was within these Missions Baptists that "The General Baptist Association of the State of Georgia was organized June 29, 1822, [however,]...the name was changed in 1827 to The Baptist Convention for the State of Georgia...but the body is most often called the Georgia Baptist Convention [GBC]."[12] This convention was the split of the Mission Baptists from the Old Line Baptists, and once it became its own convention grew in numbers and influence over the nineteenth century. Reverend S. G. Hillyer, in *Reminiscences of Georgia Baptists*, states that in the 1820s "I doubt if there were twenty thousand white

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[11] Charles F. Wells, *Condensed History of Baptists: Mainly Georgia Primitive Baptists*. (Self-published: Macon, GA, 1963). This short work gives a very concise history of Primitive Baptists, but it does speak to the groups that would later make up Southern Baptists regarding how they differed in beliefs – specifically missions.

[12] No author. "The Georgia Baptist Convention, 1822-Present." http://www.gabaptist.org/common/content.asp?, 169

Baptists in all the State."[13] The growth of Baptists was impressive, and just the Missions (GBC) portion of the Baptists in Georgia "was comprised of 1,132 churches with 69,869 members in 1850 and 1,422 churches with 95,727 members ten years later."[14] The population of the state in 1850 was 906,185 with Baptists making up 7.7% of the population. That percentage was 9% in 1860.[15] The Civil War had devastating effects on the GBC so that by 1870 "only about 37,500 Baptists were affiliated with the body."[16] The Baptists of Georgia grew quickly however as can be evidenced via the fact that by 1880 "the convention claimed 1,066 churches with 84,196 members,"[17] over twice the membership of ten years earlier.[18] This membership

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[13] S. G. Hillyer, *Reminiscences of Georgia Baptists*. (Atlanta: Foote & Davies Company), 1902.

[14] No author. "The Georgia Baptist Convention, 1822-Present." http://www.gabaptist.org/common/content.asp?, 169

[15] These numbers are based on the Georgia Census Bureau numbers and the information found on the Georgia Baptist Convention webpage. One reason the number is low is that the census reported both Whites and Blacks, while the GBC was composed of only Whites. Blacks were segregated to their own churches and associations. Since Blacks had little or no voice in education during the time, the adjusted percentage that would have impacted Georgia education would have been closer to 12% in 1850 and 18% in 1860.

[16] No author. "The Georgia Baptist Convention, 1822-Present." http://www.gabaptist.org/common/content.asp? , 169

[17] Ibid.

[18] Note that Baptists here and in the Education Reports of the GBC refers only to Georgia Southern Baptists even

impacted schooling in Georgia. Of the 375,000 children attending public schools in 1895, the GBC Education Committee estimated that 75,000 or 20% of these were children of Baptist parents.[19] This number did not take into account the many children enrolled in Baptist or other private schools around the state.

With this large influence on education in the state it is important to determine what Georgia Baptists thought about education as it was growing and developing through the nineteenth century, and the annual reports of the Education Commission of the Georgia Baptist Convention (GBC) are one of the most important primary sources available on the topic. These reports were written by a group of individuals who were addressing a much larger body as to the state of Baptist education for the year. Since the reports are only a few pages long, not every detail of what happened in Georgia Baptist education is contained in the report. The report may present a glowing report of what has happened in the year, the next year may not describe much of what has happened in Georgia Baptist

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though the Missions branch of Georgia Baptist was not technically Southern Baptist until the formation of the Southern Baptist Convention in 1845. The term “Baptists” throughout the remainder of this paper will refer to Southern Baptists or those who would become Southern Baptists.

[19] GBC Education Report, 1895, 18.

education, but instead may be very preachy, about the importance of education, the lack of support in education, or a warning of what might happen if education is not supported. The reports are written by Baptists for Baptists, and as such Georgia Baptist biases are expected. While this is true, these are still one of the most important pieces of evidence as to what was going on in Georgia Baptist education. In fact, sometimes the biases that are very evident in the writing may tell as much as the more descriptive and statistical data that is given. It shows the ideas of at least a small portion of the leadership of the convention, and what the pastors who are present are exposed to and commissioned to take back to their individual churches.

These reports taken along side the articles found in the *Christian Index*, the weekly newspaper for Baptists (and sometimes Methodists) in and around Georgia, help provide a clearer picture of the attitudes of Baptist leadership on education. These articles are often very blatant in their bias, however, even with this very evident bias, the articles, letters, and advertisements show what was being disseminated among Georgia Baptists during the nineteenth century.

The Education Reports of the nineteenth century show that Georgia Baptists expressed the importance of education early on and that importance seems to have grown throughout the century. The importance of education for Georgia Baptists was expressed for different reasons at different times. The two most important were religious reasons such as education's influence on evangelism and growth of the believer, and more pragmatic reasons such as taking care of the less fortunate and preparing individuals for life.

In 1849 the Committee on Education for the Georgia Baptist Convention expressed in its annual report a concern for education. "The great body of our Denomination need to be roused to a proper estimation of the value of mental cultivation, as connected with the success we contemplate in our various enterprises."[20] The importance of education was by mid-century one of the most pressing concerns of Georgia Baptists, as the 1861 Report shows. "Your Committee look upon the profession of teaching the youth of our Country, as next in importance to the preaching of the Gospel."[21] The next year's report states this even clearer, "That education, like its elder and more worthy sister,

[20] GBC Education Report, 1849, 15.
[21] GBC Education Report, 1861, 7.

religion is of highest importance to a free people."[22] The reasons that education was so important to Georgia Baptists are multifaceted, but one of the most important reasons is tied to the evangelistic nature of Baptists. The 1897 Education Report states, "We are solemnly bound to take advantage of everything that will make us more efficient in the great work of evangelizing the world, and none of us will deny that consecrated education yields an immense increase of power."[23] They believed that education allowed the mind to more easily understand the truths of God's Word. "The first step in religious experience is the perception of truth. It is faith which saves, and truth which sanctifies. The greater the mental power, the more abundant are the natural resources for discovering and appreciating truth in its various relations." [24] The importance for evangelizing was focused on at various times throughout the century, and helped move Georgia Baptists into the twentieth century. The 1900 Report says:

> Evangelism and education, the conversion and cultivating of all within their reach, directly or indirectly, by all available means, is the imperative and unavoidable duty of every Baptist, laid upon him by every consideration of piety, pride, patriotism, and philanthropy...remembering the evangelical and enlightened sentiments and

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[22] GBC Education Report, 1862, 11.
[23] GBC Education Report, 1897, 42.
[24] GBC Education Report, 1876, 20.

> struggles of our fathers during a part of one hundred years, let us resolve to rededicate ourselves and all we have to the christianization and civilization of the nearly two million souls in our beloved commonwealth.[25]

It was not only evangelism that was tied to education in the minds of Georgia Baptists, but also personal growth in obedience and devotion to God. "It is the chief end of man to glorify God, and God is most glorified by that one who most wisely improves the talents committed to him – mental as well as moral." [26] The 1876 Education Report reads:

> [E]ducation, which trains and develops the mind, increases the opportunities for becoming truly religious enlarges the possible range of spiritual life and sanctified affections, and greatly multiplies the power and means for Christian achievements.
>
> To neglect one's own education is to deny to God improved and increased service of heart and life. To be indifferent to the education of others, is to be careless of their opportunities for eternal salvation. The obligation of mental cultivation and development is involved in "the first and greatest commandment." "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy strength, and with all thy *mind* [italics in original]."
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> In view of the high moral obligation and interest to advance the cause of true education, there is no part of Christian duty in behalf of which we may more fitly consult together in our religious assemblies, or more appropriately unite our labors and prayers.[27]

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[25] GBC Education Report, 1900, 40.
[26] GBC Education Report, 1881, 20.
[27] GBC Education Report, 1876, 20-21.

Not all religious leaders felt this way. There were those who opposed education, probably in light of the fact that many of the religious leaders of the time period were themselves poorly educated. This, however, began to change as the nineteenth century drew to an end.[28] To overcome this reticence by some toward education, one Southern Baptist preacher in Tennessee, J. B. Hawthorne, in 1898:

> explained to his congregation that education could lead to great spiritual and religious gains. In response to some naysayers who warned that continued education would eventually lead to a loss of faith, Hawthorne argued the opposite: "every step that a man takes in intellectual progress prepares him for a loftier appreciation of the Christian religion."[29]

It appears that the Education Committee took a similar stance on this issue.

This personal aspect of growth would have had one important facet besides glorifying God. Education would also assist Georgia Baptists in confronting beliefs antagonistic to their own. According to McCandless, "The massive immigration from eastern and southern Europe that occurred at the turn of the twentieth century had little impact on the southern United States."[30] However, the 1870

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[28] Paul Harvey. "The Ideal of Professionalism and the White Southern Baptist Ministry, 1870-1920," *Religion and American Culture* 5 (Winter, 1995), 99-123.

[29] Israel, 39-40.

[30] McCandless, 8.

Education Report spoke to the large immigration occurring in the United States and the importance of confronting beliefs not Baptist. “Our country will soon be filled up with immigrants from all parts of the world, bringing with them habits and sentiments, and isms, which will imperil the best interests of our children. The proper education of the head and heart is, perhaps, the best defense we can provide for posterity.”[31]

One of the leading fears Baptists seemed to face was the arrival of Catholics into the state. The 1874 Report speaks clearly of the fear of Catholics, specifically within the realm of education in Georgia:

> Nearly all professing Christian denominations are turning their attention to the establishment of institutions of learning, as a mighty instrumentality for increasing their numbers, enlisting public sympathy, and augmenting their power. They have learned that youth is the period for instilling into the tender mind and heart the dogmas of their religion; and, while the mind is thirsting for knowledge, and drinking freely from the fountains of science, the artful sectarian seizes the opportunity to induce it to imbibe the dangerous drug of heresy. Never before, in the history of this country, have greater efforts been made by the propagandists of Romanism to win the hearts of our children. The charms of formularies, and the studied arts of the Sisters, in their female seminaries especially, are rapidly making proselytes of the daughters of Protestants; *yea, of Baptists*. They boldly declare that, if we will let them educate

[31] GBC Education Report, 1870, 12.

> the daughters, in less than two generations this country will belong to the Pope of Rome.[32]

Whether this claim is real or exaggerated, one can see Baptists feared that Catholics might take away from their own influence in Georgia. Not only was this fear expressed in concern for the education of females, but also of Blacks. Four years after the previous statement, the Education Report expresses this concern:

> The Augusta Institute, for the education of colored young men, under the care of our brother Roberts, has, at present, ninety-two students, fifty-five of whom have the ministry in view. We recommend our brethren to aid in sending these pious and promising young men who have the ministry in view. And your committee *urge this*, in view of the fact, among other facts, that the Catholics are making strenuous efforts to control our colored people by giving them cheap or gratuitous education. They are locating one of their strongholds in Savannah, in our own State, while in Baltimore and New Orleans are the others.[33]

It is interesting in light of this statement that Georgia Baptists did little in the way of educating Blacks. They operated a small school for prospective Black ministers for about six years, until in 1880 it began to receive support from the American Board of Home Missions. Even though Black education was not a high priority for

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[32] GBC Education Report, 1874, 26-27. Italics in original.

[33] GBC Education Report, 1878, 24. Italics in original.

Georgia Baptists it was important that education be used to combat heresy, as well as prepare the individual for evangelism and religious service.

Georgia Baptists seemed to support education not only for religious reasons, but also for pragmatic considerations. These seem to fall into three categories: those considerations that focused on the individual's preparation for life, considerations for those who were less fortunate, and considerations that dealt with the Baptist's relationships with the outside world.

Education as part of an individual's preparation for life is seldom seen in the education reports of the first half of the century. The first clear statement of the importance of education to prepare individuals for their own future–-outside of those preparing for ministry, is found in the 1870 Education Report which states, "Heretofore education was sought in a good degree as an ornament, now it is a necessity. We must educate our children or doom them to compete for a living, with degraded freedmen and miserable immigrant paupers from the old world."[34] Obviously societal changes in the form of former slaves and new immigrants competing in the workforce, as well as economic depression following the

[34] Ibid.

Civil War, influenced the thinking of the White, Southern Baptists in Georgia.

By 1886 the importance of education for the individual is still evident; however, the tone of the report is somewhat less competitive.

> The aim and end of education should be to prepare the recipient for his life's work, and to elevate and strengthen his moral and religious nature. An education that does not increase industry, but that fosters idleness is a curse to the individual and a calamity to the public.... Industry, invigorated and directed by practical education is the great need of the people.[35]

Again in 1887, the Report ties education to occupation without regard to whether that education is designed for those heading toward ministry or some secular occupation. "Every occupation, from the lowest to the highest, is demanding educated men for its successful prosecution…"[36] As the end of the century faced Georgia Baptists, education became even more important. "As civilization advances and life grows more complex, educational needs increase."[37] In the dawning of a Southern industrial revolution and grand advances in agriculture, as Best argued in his description of the changes from the Old South to the New South, this

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[35] GBC Education Report, 1886, 34
[36] GBC Education Report, 1887, 34.
[37] GBC Education Report, 1894, 32.

sentiment for education as preparation for life seems appropriate.

Georgia Baptists' self-image seems to have been an important factor in forming the collective mindset toward education. The Report of 1849 shows how Georgia Baptists thought others viewed them. "The Committee notices with much satisfaction, the progress of education among our own people, and hail with thankfulness, the coming day, when the reproach will in no sense, justly attach to us that, as a denomination, we are ignorant and uneducated."[38] As Georgia Baptists opened more schools their perception of themselves in regard to education seemed to improve. In 1855 the Report states, "In view of what has been done, we would express our firm conviction, that the Baptists of Georgia will ever maintain a fair comparison with any other class of our citizens, in affording facilities for the education of the young."[39] And, in 1859, "Our Educational interests were never so bright and prosperous. We have lived to see the old odium expire, 'the Baptists are unfriendly to education.'"[40] As the century drew to a close, this positive self-evaluation toward education had not waned, "Whatever may have been true concerning Baptists

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[38] GBC Education Report, 1849, 15.
[39] GBC Education Report, 1855, 13.
[40] GBC Education Report, 1859, 15.

of former times, certainly they of to-day are no laggards in the world's onward march toward all attainable knowledge."[41]

While the perceptions appear to have changed over the century, the fear of falling back into reproach in the eyes of others seems to keep the importance of education in the foreground of Georgia Baptist thought. In 1875, the Education Report gives evidence of this:

> The denomination that undervalues or neglects this great interest [education], will inevitably be left behind in the struggle for supremacy in power and usefulness. As Baptist we cannot afford to be idle. And it is a source of thankfulness, that the minds and hearts of our forefathers were so earnestly appreciative of the importance of the subject, and, that so long ago they went to work to lay the foundations of a structure whose fair proportions are the joy and praise of our whole people. And it is not too much to say that no class or party or denomination in our State, are doing as much for education as the Baptists of Georgia.

This fear of being seen as ignorant or unfriendly to education seems to be used as a way to influence the denomination to support the educational initiatives financially. In 1899, Education Report uses this tactic:

> Baptist young men are going to be educated. Shall we sit idly by and allow others to offer them better advantages than we? "No, emphatically no," answers every Baptist heart that believes in our mission as conservators of truth and guardians of religious liberty. But

[41] GBC Education Report, 1891, 21.

> answering thus, we lay ourselves open to the charge of stupidity, not to say insincerity, unless we give Mercer an endowment adequate to the great work we demand at her hands.[42]

While Baptists were concerned that others did not view them as uneducated, their interest in education was also focused on improving the world around them.

Georgia Baptists regarded education to be important in taking care of those who were considered less fortunate; however, they supported public education more than their own Baptist schools for taking care of the less fortunate. Public education in Georgia began in 1839, but only in a few places around the state. Twelve years later the Education Report made its first statement about the public education system, "this Committee [would] not be regarded as transcending their proper function, in noticing with pleasure and commendation, the efforts now making in several parts of this State, for the establishment of an improved system of public education."[43] The 1867 Report shows how Baptists felt about public education as a means of civic responsibility toward the less fortunate:

> [I]t becomes us as good citizens, looking forward to a prosperous future of our country, and as faithful Christians who desire the purity of Zion, to bestir ourselves, not only in behalf of High Schools, Colleges and Universities, but to

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[42] GBC Education Report, 1899, 39.
[43] GBC Education Report, 1851, 13.

> put forth every exertion in behalf of Common Schools, in which thousands of the poor and ignorant of our people may be fitted for usefulness in Church and State. Let us remember that it is the few educated men in a community who give character to the political and religious institutions of a country.
>
> Let us, then, as a denomination, looking not only to the political, but the religious future of our country, determine to do our part in wielding that powerful instrumentality for good education of the young. Let us encourage the common school; let us crowd their halls with students; let us contribute freely of our means for their endowment; let us see to it, that every year there shall go forth from our academies, colleges, and professional schools, increasing supplies of earnest, educated men who will become centers of influence, and perpetuate our ideas in the political and religious institutions of the country.[44]

Not only did common schools give opportunities to the less fortunate, these schools also gave opportunities to the Baptists of Georgia. Baptists who were not able to afford to send their children to a Baptist school or for whom a Baptist school was not close enough to attend were still able to provide their children with an education. Also, an increase in the number of educated children in the state provided a larger number of potential students for Baptist colleges. Common schools also allowed Baptists to exert their influence throughout more of society by sending Baptist teachers to the common schools.

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[44] GBC Education Report, 1867, 9-10.

Though Georgia Baptists supported public education, they were not above showing their disappointment with public education, and did so several times throughout the century:

> We feel called upon to deplore the proneness on the part of many of our people to obstruct the cause of education by the employment of incompetent teachers in the common schools, merely because they are cheap. What a fatal mistake of economy! The result is the degration of the profession, the ruin of pedagogue and pupil.... Much of this evil is, doubtless, attributed to our defective public school system…. Let us sincerely hope that the present inefficient system may soon be remodeled and rendered available for the purpose originally contemplated.[45]

Public education struggled in Georgia until after the beginning of the twentieth century, but after the 1877 Georgia Constitution was ratified, improvements became more numerous. Dorothy Orr, in *A History of Education in Georgia*, states, "Thirty years after the establishment of the common school system, private schools had, to a large extent, disappeared. By 1894 the academy, or secondary school, practically had been blotted from the map."[46] This does not appear to be the case with Georgia Baptists. They, believing that the public school system was

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[45] GBC Education Report, 1881, 23.
[46] Orr, 250.

deficient, strove to create more and better schools for their children.

> The masses of our people are more indifferent to the cause of education to-day than they were before the establishment of the public school system by the State government.... The fact that the government has undertaken the work of educating the children of the land seems to have removed from parents all sense of responsibility in the matter, and this indifference has been communicated to the children. Whether this state of things is due to the system itself, or to the inability of the State to develop the system, is not for us to say, but the facts are undeniable.... We would urge the Baptists of Georgia to promote the establishment and maintenance of good schools throughout the country, so supplement the efforts of the State to educate the children, where that is the only feasible plan, but wherever practicable to organize and maintain good schools, independent of State aid, and under the influence and control of Christian men and women of our faith and order.[47]

The indifference toward education could have been, as the Georgia Baptists state, a removing "from parents all sense of responsibility in the matter." However, it is also possible that the indifference was toward formal education and was based, in part, on the importance of the church and family in the raising of children in the South.[48]

Once again, the separation from the state, as well as the support for the state, can be seen in the previous statement. Also within the statement can be seen the idea

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[47] GBC Education Report, 1886, 35.
[48] Best, 46.

of Baptist influence in the schools. This idea permeated Georgia Baptists' statements on the role of teachers and the vocation of teaching. In 1855 the Committee on Education expressed its concern over the need for teachers in the Baptist academies and primary schools. The concern seemed to have been specifically with acquiring male teachers.

> It must at once strike the mind of every-one as an obvious truth, that if there be a propriety in our rearing and sustaining, as a denomination, colleges and seminaries, there is a like propriety in securing the services of our brethren in academies; indeed it is a question, whether, of the different grades of schools, the latter is not the most important. The limits of a report do not furnish the opportunity to discuss this question, but it will not be denied, that the presence and influence of our brethren in the primary school, would go far towards making these schools auxiliary to the prosperity of our higher institutions.[49]

There is no real explanation of whether they needed teachers overall, or if they just wanted male teachers. It appears that the call for "brethren" would cause the schools to become better suited as feeders for the colleges that Baptists operated. After discussing the need for male teachers, this report also brought up the topic of normal instruction to train them. It then goes on to offer this praise, "We are gratified to know that on of our literary

[49] GBC Education Report, 1855, 13.

Institutions (the Georgia Female College) has such a department."[50] However it is possible that at the time of this request, 1855, that "southern men had doubts about women as well as slaves,"[51] when it came to thoughts of rebellion. However, "Southern gentlemen hoped very much that no southern lady would think well of such goings-on, but clearly they were not certain."[52] According to Kimmel:

> The male antifeminists were also wary of the feminizing clutches of mothers and teachers, because their refined civility would lead to the undoing of American masculinity…. Children, especially young boys, were seen as impressionable and vulnerable to feminine wiles, and women were depicted as dangerous and tempting threats to masculinity.[53]

Attitudes such as this were not anything new, as early as 1770 there were those who expressed the attitude that "mothers were too indulgent to discipline spirited youth."[54] This led to the belief that male teachers would best be able to teach boys. Vine explains, "Since they doubted the mother's ability to teach the child to behave with decisiveness and authority, it became important for boys to

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[50] Ibid.
[51] Scott, 53.
[52] Ibid.
[53] Michael S. Kimmel, "Men's Responses to Feminism at the Turn of the Century," *Gender and Society* 1 (September 1987), 270.
[54] Phyllis Vine, "The Social Function of Eighteenth-Century Education," *History of Education Quarterly* 16 (Winter 1976), 411.

learn how to command authority from those who claimed to know: their teachers."[55]

The idea of training male teachers resurfaces toward the end of the century as discussions focus on a department of Pedagogy at Mercer University. "Let it be our great ambition to prepare those who shall teach the people in the school-room and from the pulpit."[56] At the time of this report, Mercer was still an all-male school, and even thought there were several Baptist female colleges in Georgia at the time, they were not mentioned in this report.

Whatever the reason for the 1855 request, it seems as if the call for male teachers was answered. "We notice the fact that many of the most promising graduates from our Colleges, have lately turned their attention to teaching as a profession. Your Committee look[s] upon the profession of teaching the youth of our Country, as next in importance to the preaching of the Gospel."[57] As these men entered the field of teaching, their entrance brought up another issue, namely that of salary. Within the teaching profession there was always a distinction in pay between male teachers and female teachers. In New England, as early as the 1850s,

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[55] Ibid.
[56] GBC Education Report, 1894, 33.
[57] GBC Education Report, 1861, 7.

there was an emphasis on paying female teachers a lower wage. "If towns could hire female teachers, a practice they loathed, but pay them less, increased expense of school reform would be offset by women's lower wages."[58]

It seems as though this was true in the Baptist schools as well. While again this report makes no mention of female teachers, it does argue that with the movement of men into the teaching profession there was a need for higher pay.

> In order to encourage young men of promise to devote their time and talents to teaching, it is necessary that as great pecuniary inducements should be held out to them, as to those about to enter the professions of Law and Medicine. In no way can the people of Georgia more effectually promote the cause of Education, than by giving encouragement sufficient to induce young men of first rate ability to turn their attention to teaching as a permanent profession.[59]

Baptists seemed determined to get "men of first rate ability," and were convinced to do less was unthinkable. This was, in fact, one of the criticisms Georgia Baptists had against the public education system as seen earlier. Georgia Baptists seemed to have a sincere desire to support their teachers with finances as well as encouragement. The

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[58] Jo Anne Preston, "Domestic Ideology, School Reformers, and Female Teachers: Schoolteaching Becomes Women's Work in Nineteenth-Century New England," *New England Quarterly* 66 (December 1993), 538.

[59] Ibid.

1868 Report encouraged the people, “If we cannot all become teachers, we can at least occasionally visit the school house, and by our sympathy hold up the hands and cheer the spirits of the much neglected instructors of our youth.”[60]

Georgia Baptists supported education, from their own institutions to the public schools, and the individuals who worked within them. That education was important to Georgia Baptists cannot be questioned, although reasons for education’s importance may have varied. However in this study it is essential to examine Georgia Baptists’ beliefs and actions in reference to women’s education to see how they affected the women’s education and educational institution. The education of females was not mentioned in an Education Report before 1850, but in the second half of the century it became a frequently discussed topic. This is not to say that Georgia Baptists were not involved in educating women before 1850, though on a state level it was not a concern. Before this time period female education was a much more localized activity, but a reading of the Education Reports will show that the education of females eventually became an important task for Georgia Baptists. While this was true, it can also be seen that female education was separate, as well as different from,

[60] GBC Education Report, 1868, 10.

education for males, even while successfully maintaining several female schools.

CHAPTER 3 - GEORGIA BAPTISTS AND WOMEN'S EDUCATION

The education of females by Georgia Baptists began around 1830, however, it is difficult to determine the exact date since the schools were operated by Baptist Associations, individual churches, or even church members. The 1852 Education Report states, "Seminaries for the education of the sons and daughters of our people are springing up in all parts of the commonwealth, and are receiving a large and growing patronage."[1] By 1859, the Report claimed that there were "not less than 30 Female Seminaries, where the learned languages are studied and degrees are conferred."[2]

An Education Report seven years later states, "The three Male, and most, if not all of the Female Colleges under our denominational supervision, are in a highly prosperous condition."[3] It should be noted that the terms "seminary," "college," and later "school" are used interchangeably and according to Georgia Baptist historian Robert Gardner some of these schools in truth offered

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[1] GBC Education Report, 1852, 15.
[2] GBC Education Report, 1859, 15.
[3] ibid.

little more than a high school curriculum.[4] In light of this the desires of the 1875 Education Committee seems to make sense:

> Your Committee concludes this report with the expression of their cordial sympathy with the movement to establish a Female College of the highest grade, for the Baptists of the whole State, and the earnest hope that the noble enterprise may be inaugurated at the earliest practicable period.[5]

The importance of this enterprise may well have stemmed from the movement of Catholicism into Georgia and its potential impact on Baptists. The 1874 Report speaks clearly of the importance of religious education in general and the fear of Catholic education in Georgia.

> Nearly all professing Christian denominations are turning their attention to the establishment of institutions of learning, as a mighty instrumentality for increasing their numbers, enlisting public sympathy, and augmenting their power. They have learned that youth is the period for instilling into the tender mind and heart the dogmas of their religion; and, while the mind is thirsting for knowledge, and drinking freely from the fountains of science, the artful sectarian seizes the opportunity to induce it to imbibe the dangerous drug of heresy. Never before, in the history of this country, have greater efforts been made by the propagandists of Romanism to win the hearts of our children. The charms of formularies, and the studied arts of the Sisters, in their female seminaries especially, are rapidly making proselytes of the daughters of Protestants; *yea, of Baptists*. They boldly declare that, if we will let them educate

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[4] Robert Gardner. Personal Interview, September, 2005.
[5] GBC Education Report, 1875, 26.

> the daughters, in less than two generations this country will belong to the Pope of Rome.[6]

Whether this fear brought about the desire for a "female college of highest grade" cannot be determined for sure, but the fear of losing their daughters to the Catholics was real, and so Baptist education for females seems to rise in importance and volume around this period. Georgia Baptists became not only interested in college education for females, but also even down to the academy level.

> It should be our policy to establish similar academies, as far as possible, all over the state, as feeders to the University [Mercer], and for the general diffusion of knowledge and of Baptist influence; and for these latter purposes we are of opinion that female schools are quite as valuable as others; and we trust that at no distant day, we shall have numerous schools of this character under our charge.[7]

For the second half of the nineteenth century Georgia Baptists were committed to educating females, and as the century progressed, so did the impact of that commitment. As the 1892 Education Report states:

> In the grand work of preparing our sons and daughters for noble manhood and womanhood, and of providing for society, the State and the church the material of their highest usefulness and most solid progress, there must be no step backward.[8]

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[6] GBC Education Report, 1874, 26-27.
[7] GBC Education Report, 1873, 19.
[8] GBC Education Report, 1892, 24.

While committed to educating women, the purpose of the Baptist education for women was dissimilar from the purpose of educating men. Baptist historian B. D. Ragsdale gives evidence to this in a 1935 statement about one Baptist school:

> Quite persistent has been the use of the phrase "female school," but does a school have sex? The feminine character of the Forsyth school [later Bessie Tift College] is well indicated by one paragraph in its curriculum announcement. "Ornamental and Fancy Department -- Painting in oil and water Colors; Grecian Painting; Oriental Painting on Glass; Penciling; Monochromatic Drawing; Wax Fruits and Flowers; Crape Work; Embroidery; Paper Flowers; Resin Fruit, etc.[9]

The 1923 President's Report explains some of the distinctions of education for the ladies of Tift.

> Can our daughters be "polished after the similitude of a palace" unless we train them to recognize and reproduce the harmony of music, to express and transcribe the indefinable glories of the heavens, "which declare the glory of God," and to practice the still higher art of adorning real truth with such power of human expression as to render the truth irrestible [sic]. Southern womanhood can not preserve her glories on wax records and player piano films. Our Baptist people will continue to enrich the human race with a refined, cultured, modest, Christian womanhood.[10]

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[9] Ragsdale.

[10] Aquilla Chamlee, "President's Report to the Board of Trustees of Tift College," 1923, 2. In Special Collections, Jack Tarver Library, Mercer University, Macon, Georgia.

These practices were attained by ladies of Tift through the school of Fine Arts. However important the arts were the leadership determined that they "must not hesitate, where necessary, to put a check on the pupil who would injure her literary work by overloading herself with 'specials'..., [and] save 'the specials' from militating against the best possible attainments in the school of Liberal Arts."[11] The 'specials' were voice, instrumental, or other fine arts classes the women took, which at different times in Tift's history did not count toward a degree, and often included additional fees above tuition.[12] Whether fine arts or liberal arts the theme seemed to be to prepare them for womanhood, not for specific career aspirations.

Several of the Education Reports give us a glimpse of what educating for womanhood might look like. The 1878 Report speaks to this:

> Nor can we too earnestly recommend the education of our daughters - their *education for* proper station in life which woman was designed to fill and to adorn. Their education should be practical, as well as ornamental, and thus suited to the changing state of their social condition.[13]

Womanhood was a "station in life" very distinct from manhood, and females, according to Georgia Baptist

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[11] Ibid.
[12] Various Tift catalogues.
[13] GBC Education Report, 1878, 24.

thinking, were designed for this purpose. However, this position or station in life does not appear to have been static, and so there is an emphasis on practicality of education. The 1881 Report gives an even more precise picture of education for females.

> But while we are thoughtful of the interests of our sons, we must not be unmindful of the welfare of our daughters. The education of the latter is, in no sense, less important than that of the former. True, the course of training may be, and ought to be, in some respects different, but the general plan should be the same. And that such a plan is in successful operation, we do not hesitate to declare … our girls may be instructed in the practical use of their mental facilities, their moral natures will not be neglected, and they may be prepared to enter upon life with all those accomplishments of utility and grace necessary to fit them for their important sphere. Women should neither be slaves nor toys. They are designed, by an all-wise Creator, as help-meet for man, and they should be educated accordingly.[14]

In this passage education is described as the same "general plan," though again there are differences. The most distinct difference would be the object of importance. For males, the object of importance would be the individual -- the man and his life work. For the female the object of importance is the man and his work. She is not educated for herself, but in order to be the best help to him that she can be. While this may have been the dominant

[14] GBC Education Report, 1881, 22.

attitude, it is possible that not all of the schools for females held strongly to this idea:

> Many who wrote concerning “Female Piety” and “Female Education” about a century ago seem to have regarded women as widely different in type and taste and talent from her lordly brother. Yet schools for young ladies exploited their daring in fashioning a curriculum very much after that of a college for men, and proudly exploited the women who mastered such courses. The “Regular Courses” at Madison [Georgia Female College] omitted the Foreign Languages, and placed them as elective, extra or special, along with Music, Art and other ornamental and cultural courses.[15]

After this statement Ragsdale lists a four-year curriculum plan for Georgia Female College (see Table 1).[16]

Table 1 Four-Year Curriculum – Georgia Female College

Year	Courses
First	History of U. S., Syntax, Geography of the Heavens, Botany, Arithmetic, Use of Globes
Second	Rhetoric, Evidences of Christianity, History, Natural Philosophy, Algebra, Geometry I & II
Third	Logic, Mental Philosophy, Natural Theology, Geometry completed, Application of Algebra to Geography, Chemistry
Fourth	Political Economy, Moral Science, Plane and Spherical Trigonometry, Analytical Geometry, Geology, Astronomy

[15] Ragsdale, 176.

[16] For a comparison of male and female curriculum see Appendix C.

Ragsdale not only describes some differences in the education of females, but also makes a declaration of the success of Baptist education for females in that the school's "proudly exploited the women who mastered" the curriculum equal to the males. This is a recurring theme throughout the Education Reports. It seems apparent that a Committee whose responsibilities include describing the state of Baptist schools would declare success as often as possible; even still it is important to try to determine what they claimed as success.

The 1876 Report claims that the female colleges "are all making valuable contributions to the cause of religious intellectual culture,"[17] and in 1879, the Report states, "We have female schools and colleges, conducted by our brethren and sisters, reasonable in their charges, and equal in all respects to the best in the land."[18] At least seven of these schools are named specifically in various Education Reports, with reference to others that are left unnamed. Of those schools that are named, several are referred to at different times through the century, and physical growth in numbers of students and teachers, as well as curriculum and facilities can be seen.

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[17] GBC Education Report, 1876, 21
[18] GBC Education Report, 1879, 22.

Southern Female College in LaGrange is one of the schools named, and in 1880 the Report claims that the school "is a flourishing institution with twelve teachers and one hundred and fifty scholars."[19] Eleven years later the Report states:

> The faculty now numbers twenty-five persons, while the number of boarders have reached 156, and the number of private music pupils have been 224, being, so far as known, the largest music class of any college in the United States. A library and museum building has been constructed since the last convention.[20]

By 1893, the college was also "enlarging its already excellent library and purchasing apparatus for the scientific department.[21]

Another school, the Georgia Female Seminary, at Gainesville [later renamed Brenau] also saw growth over the eleven year period from 1880 to 1891. In 1800, the school had "one hundred and seven pupils and eight teachers,"[22] and by 1991 the Report states:

> The large boarding department, recently completed at a cost of nearly $10,000, has been full all the year. There are 175 pupils in the literary, and 65 in the music department of this excellent school. The building is heated by steam, and electric lights and water-works are to be put in during the summer.[23]

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[19] GBC Education Report, 1880, 21.
[20] GBC Education Report, 1891, 22.
[21] GBC Education Report, 1893, 22.
[22] GBC Education Report, 1880, 22.
[23] GBC Education Report, 1891, 22.

It should be noted that the Georgia Female Seminary was never under the control of the Georgia Baptist Convention. However, "[t]he school, though entirely owned and controlled by an individual, continued to be regarded with popular favor as a Baptist institution."[24] In both of the schools described above, success can be seen by increased numbers and facilities, as well as increases in supplies such as libraries and scientific apparatus. Along with these successes, some of the Reports give evidence to growth in curricular offerings. The 1893 Report claims that Shorter College, in Rome now boasted "a curriculum broad and thorough, a full corps of accomplished teachers in literature, science, music and art.[25] Education for females, though different in some respects from education for males, did seem to prosper in the second half of the nineteenth century.

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[24] Ragsdale, 285.
[25] GBC Education Report, 1993, 22.

CHAPTER 4 – HOW GEORGIA BAPTISTS PAID FOR WOMEN'S EDUCATION

Georgia Baptists believed that educating their daughters was important, and the remaining chapters of this dissertation will focus more specifically on how that belief was exemplified at Tift College, one of Georgia Baptists' most important female colleges. Tift College was originally founded as Forsyth Female Collegiate Institute on December 21, 1849.[1] Only six girls graduated while the school was Forsyth Female Collegiate Institute. "The six who graduated were Louise Chaney, Jullitte McKay, Mary Norman, Mary Peuritoy, Martha Smith, and Mary Zellner. The document they received proclaimed each 'Mistress of Art.'"[2] Originally it was not a Baptist school, and though it had the word "female" in the name there is evidence that it may have been coeducational, as a separate school for males was opened when the Baptists took over control. In 1855 the Baptists on the Board of Trustees and in the town of Forsyth pushed to place the school under Baptist control.

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[1] B. D. Ragsdale, 198.

[2] Grace McKay, "The Early History of Tift College 1849-1879." An unpublished student paper for a historiography class, June, 1965. In Special Collections, Jack Tarver Library, Mercer University, Macon, Georgia.

"One item in the terms of the transfer was that the Baptists should pay $3,500 to the Methodists, which amount was to be used for the school for the boys, as it would be turned over to their control and known as Hilliard Institute."[3] At this same time the girls' school's name was changed to Monroe Female University, and then again changed in 1867 to Monroe Female College (MFC). In 1898 the name was changed to Monroe Female College a Normal and Industrial School, in 1906 to Bessie Tift College, and finally in 1956 it was shortened to Tift College.

When Tift College was started it "was to be a united community enterprise to nurture a fading prosperity."[4] While the school ceased to be a united community enterprise in 1855 when the Baptists of the community became the sole leadership of the school, and even more so in 1898 when the school became the property of the GBC, it did in some ways fulfill the original goal of the citizens of Forsyth. "The school was a great blessing to Forsyth, soon after Mr. Wilkes had made the college a fixed fact the houses of the village were repainted, old fences were repaired, new houses were built, and real estate advanced over 100 per

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[3] Ibid., 205.
[4] McKay, 2.

cent."[5] The school itself, however, struggled financially for most of its 158-year existence. Many of these struggles were the result of the larger world of which the school was a part.

The first major economic struggle for the school came in the wake of the Civil War. The August 21, 1861 diary entry of Miss Julia A. Stanford stated, "School opened today. Quite a small opening."[6] The administration tried to keep the school open during the War, but by 1864 President R. T. Asbury resigned and the school was converted to a Confederate hospital. By the end of the War the buildings were badly damaged and the furniture destroyed. However, the Trustees determined to reopen the school, and did so in 1866. Finances were so bad that the girls often paid their tuition in grain and supplies. "For the three months in college the girls payed [sic] 16 bushels of corn, 4 bushels of wheat, 60 pounds of bacon, and 6 pounds of hard soap."[7]

Much of the debt of the college was assumed by men of Forsyth and teachers of the school. This allowed the school to continue, but it continued to struggle financially. "In 1871 the debt situation became so

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[5] Ragsdale, 199.

[6] As quoted in Grace McKay, 7. Original source no longer found in Tift archives.

[7] As quoted in Grace McKay, 8. Original source no longer found in Tift archives.

desperate that an appeal was made to the town to issue bonds and purchase an interest in the institution."[8] In 1872, when R. T. Asbury became the president of the school he "agreed to pay the Trustees $500 per year for the use of the college."[9]

The school began to slowly rebuild economically and in enrollment but, in 1879, the school was burned down and all of the supplies were lost. There seems to be some evidence that the fire was intentional since "the treasurer was ordered to offer a reward of $25 for the apprehension of the party who fired the College building with proof to convict."[10] There does not appear to be any indication that anyone was ever convicted. "Efforts to rebuild the college brought a great many problems and interest in the project declined."[11] The school ceased to offer classes at some point, although the president offered classes in his home for a short time. The school did not open for classes again until the Fall of 1883, making this the longest period of suspended classes in the school's history. Money

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[8] Grace McKay, 8.

[9] Ibid. See Appendix A for an overview of the presidents of Tift.

[10] Kathy Summerford. "Monroe Female College 1879-1900." An unpublished student paper for a historiography class, May 28, 1865, 2. In Special Collections, Jack Tarver Library, Mercer University, Macon, Georgia.

[11] Ibid., 4.

was so scarce when the school finally reopened that there was none for a piano at the opening ceremony, so the Trustees "offered a mortgage on the college property in order to secure the needed funds"[12] for the piano.

Once the school was up and going it again began to grow, and in 1898 it became the property of the GBC. This relieved the financial strain from the people of Forsyth and placed it upon all the Baptists in Georgia. While this relieved some of the financial worries the school still faced trying times along with the rest of the country in the wake of World War I, the Great Depression, and World War II. Nevertheless by the mid-twentieth century Tift had increased its endowment and began a time of limited financial security.

The financial struggles addressed so far were the result of events beyond the control of the leadership of Tift; some of the financial struggles, however, were the result of Tift being a women's college. This is most evident after the school was owned by the GBC. The GBC had one male college, Mercer University, and it was proposed in 1873 that there be one Baptist women's college. At the Baptist Convention at Rome, S. G. Hillyer, a former president at Tift, submitted the following proposition,

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[12] Ibid., 5.

"Resolved, That it is the sense of this body that the Baptists of Georgia need a well-endowed institution of learning for the higher education of our daughters, under the control of this Convention."[13]

The Convention felt that while the proposal sounded like a good idea, it would "appoint a committee of five to report,… upon the expediency and practicability of establishing such an institution, and on the means and measures necessary for that purpose."[14] The next year the committee reported, "While we are deeply impressed with the conviction that such an institution is needed we consider the present as an unpropitious time to undertake its establishment."[15] Though the Convention did not act on the idea at the time, the initiative had been voiced, and the leaders of other female schools besides Tift began to vie for the position as the one Georgia Baptist women's college. "Bids for the new school were entered by Stone Mountain, Penfield, Dalton, Milledgeville, Forsyth, Marrietta, and Gainesville."[16] This vying for position "was no tame affair as the contest waxed warm through three

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[13] Ragsdale, 209.
[14] Ibid., 210.
[15] Ibid.
[16] Ibid., 211.

consecutive conventions," but seemed to end in defeat for all parties at the Convention in 1876. [17]

The debate was not over, however, when in 1877 W. C. Wilkes, who had been the first president of Tift, "stirred and led the people of Gainesville to such an interest and effort that they were ready to put over a school on the Convention when it met there."[18] The mayor of Gainesville submitted a proposal to the Convention stating:

> If the Baptist denomination under the management of the Baptist Convention of the State of Georgia will establish at Gainesville a female seminary of high order, the City of Gainesville will by her regular constituted authorities bind herself to donate to said Convention for the use of said college six acres of land which they may select…
>
> The City of Gainesville further binds itself to donate to the said Baptist Convention the sum of twenty-five thousand dollars.
>
> We further submit, that we believe that twenty thousand dollars can be secured by voluntary contributions....[19]

The Convention accepted the proposal of Gainesville and opened up the door to the acceptance of other schools as well.

> Resolved, (1) That we take under our control the institution of learning for girls, which the city authorities of Gainesville propose to build and which they so generously tendered this body.
>
> Resolved, (2) That in accepting this proposition from Gainesville we do not disparage the claims of any other similar institution.

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[17] Ibid., 217.
[18] Ibid., 218.
[19] Ibid., 277.

> Resolved, (3) That in accepting this proposition we do not assume any financial liability whatever.
>
> Resolved, (4) That we are ready to accept and adopt any institution of learning which may be tendered us: provided said acceptance does not involve a financial responsibility on our part.[20]

Even though Gainesville Seminary became the first women's college owned by the GBC, it was not this school that created the most conflict for Tift, as "Any support, control, or supervision of the school by the convention during this period was barely nominal."[21] The relationship that Shorter College gained with the GBC, however, created many more problems for Tift. Shorter College, in Rome, was chartered in 1873 as Cherokee Baptist Female College, twenty-four years after Tift was chartered. At the 1873 Convention in Rome when S. G. Hillyer first made the proposal to establish an official Baptist college for females the Baptists of Rome began working on establishing their own women's college in Rome, Georgia. "In just a few weeks after the original resolution had been offered..., the Rome people had definitely under way their plans for the Cherokee Baptist Female College."[22] Within months the school had put in a bid to be the GBC women's college. By 1876 since the convention declined all the bids by the

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[20] Ibid., 278.
[21] Ibid., 283.
[22] Ibid., 211.

schools, Shorter remained a locally owned Baptist women's college until 1902, four years after Tift had become a Convention-owned school.

It was in 1901 that the GBC made the decision to

> devise some system of coordination and co-operation of these several schools by which a bond of sympathy may be placed around them, which will give them strength and dignity before the public, enable them to find favor with the generous who are able to help, and result in establishing a grade of scholarship which will give them harmony and consistency in the prosecution of their work.[23]

The initial list of schools the GBC considered contained four female colleges: Tift, Shorter, Southern Female College in College Park, and Southern Female College in LaGrange.[24] The GBC had specific guidelines in place before it would admit any Baptist schools into what had been designated the "Mercer System of Schools." A commission was set up to interact with any Baptist school in Georgia and was "clothed with authority to negotiate for the ownership or control of said schools: provided, that in no wise shall they involve this Convention in any financial

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[23] GBC Education Report, 1901, 26-27.

[24] The leaders of Southern Female College in LaGrange (also called Cox College), the Cox family, chose to move the school to College Park. The people of LaGrange battled for rights to the school but lost. They quickly started a new school in the old building, giving it the same name. For a more detailed account, see Ragsdale, 286-300.

obligation."[25] Since the Convention was not willing to accept any financial obligations, some schools had to initially decline admittance. Tift, although already accepted as a Convention school, apparently was allowed to reconsider in light of the new system, but accepted the move into the Mercer System "with an agreement on the part of the Commission to give its active and material support during the next convention year, to aid in consummating, if possible, the movement for enlargement already inaugurated by the Board of Trustees of Monroe College, under the direction of the Convention."[26] Since Tift was already a Convention school it seems that it received first place in regard to financial support. Shorter desired entrance into the Mercer System, but had to settle, at least for the first year, for mere moral support. Shorter, like Tift, was trying to raise money for enlargement, and so the Commission agreed to "endorse [Shorter's] financial agent and give its moral support to Shorter during the next conventional year, in its plans to raise $50,000.00 for enlargement."[27] However, if Tift had chosen to decline entrance in the Mercer System, "the Commission would then

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[25] GBC Education Report, 1902, 76.
[25] Ibid., 79.
[26] Ibid.

be free to open the question of immediate moral *and material* support to Shorter."[28]

In 1903 the Commission made the following statement regarding financial obligations to Tift and Shorter. "The Education Commission recommends that the active and material support of the Convention shall be given to Monroe College until July 1st, 1904, after which time the active and material support of the Convention shall be bestowed on Shorter College."[29] It appears that Shorter voluntarily gave up the promise of financial support from the Commission in 1903. B. D. Ragsdale claimed, "In 1903 in view of Monroe's continued and urgent needs, Shorter waived her rights and claims to the field."[30] Unfortunately for Shorter, efforts "to get into the field to raise money for enlargement [was] each time... hindered or preceded by the campaigns and claims of Mercer, Bessie Tift (Monroe) and the secondary schools."[31]

In 1909, a similar situation occurs, and some disillusionment seems evident on the part of Shorter's leadership. The Education Report of that year stated that Tift College needed money, and Capt. H. H. Tift, "offered

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[27] Ibid., italics mine.
[28] GBC Education Report, 1904, 77.
[29] Ragsdale, 265.
[30] Ibid.

to give one dollar for every five that Georgia Baptist would give... up to $300,000.... The Education Board gives Bessie Tift the right to enter the field at once."[32] Shorter was also in need of money, and its Trustees claimed they could "secure a gift of the property worth $30,000, and $50,000 in Rome if the Baptists of the State could promise $50,000."[33] It obviously did not seem right to the leaders of Shorter that Tift would supply $60,000 to the people's $300,000, while Shorter would supply $80,000 to the people's $50,000, and so the following note was added in the Education Report, "This college [Shorter] was one of the first of our institutions to come under the control of the Convention and feels that it has never had proper consideration at our [the Convention's] hands."[34]

By 1911 the people of Rome had pledged $225,000 for Shorter's new building, and the Education Board deemed "it only fair and just that the Baptists of the state at large contribute at least one hundred thousand dollars toward the completion of the magnificent plant during the coming year [1912]."[35] The report also encouraged the Baptist of the

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[31] GBC Education Report, 1909, 66.
[32] Ibid.
[33] Ibid.
[34] GBC Education Report, 1911, 85.

state to continue their support of Tift's endeavor to raise $300,000.

By 1912 it had become apparent to the Education Board that "The schools are forced to meet a competition on the part of the State."[36] This competition was both in the form of fund raising and enrollment, and in 1913 the Board made the following statement in regards to Tift and Shorter.

> It is made our duty by the duty of the last Convention to make some report of the efforts to bring Bessie Tift and Shorter into adjustment for the purpose of avoiding injurious competition…. We have to report that no progress appeared possible in the direction of modifying the curriculum of either Shorter or Bessie Tift Colleges. Both institutions are committed to the scheme of a liberal education for women. Foreseeing that any proposition to induce either of them to accept as its distinctive field of education the work of providing normal and industrial training for young women would not be acceptable, the committee and the Board have felt it their duty to allow matters to continue as before…. Your Board can only express the hope that those charged with their administration will in every way discourage all efforts to discredit either in the affection of our people, and that here may be found adequate interest in the education of Baptist girls to support and endow both.[37]

Competition between schools in the South was not uncommon. The South was a "poor region with the lowest per capita wealth and the highest ratio of children to adults in the nation, [which] was trying to run too many separate

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[35] GBC Education Report, 1912, 74.
[36] GBC Education Report, 1913, 67.

institutions."[38] The fear of competition had been an issue in the minds of some Georgia Baptists from the moment that Tift became a Convention school in 1898. An editorial in *The Christian Index* soon after Tift's acceptance by the Convention shows this.

> The acceptance of Monroe College starts the Convention on a new line of work, that of female education, and brings it into competition with private schools at LaGrange, College Park, Rome, and Gainesville. In this competition there will be a serious disadvantage, since these schools are wide-awake, well equipped and furnished, and Forsyth has practically nothing.
>
> By this hurried action, without time for cautious consideration and calculation, we fear that a serious mistake has been made.[39]

It appears that when the Convention accepted Tift it tried to alleviate some of this competition. All of the women's colleges listed above were literary colleges, and when Tift was adopted, "special instructions of the Convention stated that the school should be known as Monroe College, a Normal and Industrial School, and the charter was so changed March 15, 1899."[40] Since its beginning in 1849 the school had been a liberal arts school with the earliest catalogues still in existence showing a curriculum consisting of four years of English, four years of Latin,

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[37] McCandless, 13.

[38] T.P. Bell & I.T. VanNess, eds. *The Christian Index*, April 7, 1898, 6.

[39] Eugenia W. Stone, *Yesterday at Tift*, (Foote & Davies: Doraville, GA, 1969), 79.

four years of mathematics, three years of history, three years of science, and two and a half years of philosophy.[41] This curriculum held throughout most of the nineteenth century with only occasional minor changes. However, after the adoption by the Convention a plan to move toward a normal school curriculum was begun. In 1900, the Trustees addressed the Convention stating, "We request this Convention to authorize us to appoint a committee to go before the next session of the legislature to ask that a certificate of our normal department shall entitle holders to first-class license."[42]

In 1900, Dr. C. H. S. Jackson became the president of Tift, and "he had broader views about that idea of 'Normal and Industrial' name and proceeded to put his ideas into practice."[43] In his plan girls would take a regular four-year liberal arts curriculum and then a fifth year of normal study and practice teaching. Dr. Jackson's reasons for the fifth year of normal study were expressed in the 1902 catalogue. "The Normal course includes all the required studies in the Literary department, as a basis of 'what to teach' and the special courses which follow, as a

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[40] "Monroe Female College," (Atlanta, Ga: Jas. P. Harrison & Co., State Printers, 1879), 14.
[41] Stone, 145.
[42] Ibid.

basis of 'how to teach.'"[44] Jackson believed that since the "larger percentage of the teachers in our schools are women, and to a greater or less degree the beginning of the education of every individual is left to women" it was important to give all of the women of Tift "some acquaintance with a knowledge of 'how to teach.'"[45] Dr. Jackson served as president until 1914, and by 1916 in the second year of his successor,

> all students who received the A.B. degree received at the same time professional certificates from the Georgia State Department of Education because in the degree program were incorporated the full number of hours and specific courses required by the State for certification.[46]

Even though some changes took place, they were ineffective in prohibiting competition. By 1914 the competition had reached a critical point. The large amount of money provided by the people of Rome had placed that school [Shorter] in a position of relative security. In contrast, Tift was $90,000 in debt and "The nature of some of the claims against the institution involves an actual

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[43] Charles Hadden Spurgeon Jackson, *Catalogue and Prospectus of Monroe College, and Conservatory of Music, Oratory and Art, and Normal and Industrial School for Girls, Owned by the Georgia Baptist Convention,* (Macon, GA: The J.W. Burke Company, 1902), 53. In Special Collections, Jack Tarver Library, Mercer University, Macon, Georgia.

[44] Ibid.

[45] Ibid., 145-146.

peril of the property."[47] In light of the fact that Shorter was now in relative financial security while Tift was not, and that they were still in competition with one another, the Education Board made the following resolution to the Convention at large:

> Four years ago the Education Board has urged upon the Convention the necessity of bringing Bessie Tift College and Shorter College into relations of co-operation. Our efforts to achieve this desired result have not succeeded.... We believe the time has now come in deference to the critical necessities of Bessie Tift College, and in the interest of our Baptist cause, when the Board should recommend a course with may result in saving Bessie Tift College, and at the same time, conserve the real interests of Shorter College....
>
> *Therefore, Be it Resolved,* That Shorter College be allowed to withdraw from the agreements entered into between it and the Convention....
>
> *Second:* That the Convention… will look with favor upon the continued and enlarging usefulness of Shorter College and commend it to the sympathy of the Baptist people of Georgia....[48]

With this move Shorter was no longer a Convention school, leaving Tift as the only Baptist women's college owned by the GBC. The conflict between the two schools was not, however, over. Because of this move the motives of the school leaders were questioned. "The proposition or consent of Shorter to withdraw from the convention showed, in the judgment of many, a generous and magnanimous spirit.

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[46] GBC Education Report, 1914, 66.
[47] Ibid, 66-67.

Others thought that such a policy had in it an element of self-interest."[49]

Four years after Shorter withdrew from Convention ownership, the President's Report to the Trustees of Bessie Tift gives evidence of another type of competition. President J. H. Foster stated,

> I received a letter from a teacher in a public school informing me that a representative of Shorter had been at that school and had said that there were only three standard [women's] colleges in the state of Georgia: Agnes Scott, Shorter, and Wesleyan.[50]

A letter addressed to President Foster from Elizabeth A. Colton, the president of the Southern Association of College Women showed that Agnes Scott was in 1918 "the only standard college for women," and that Shorter had "never been recognized in any way either by the Association of

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[48] Ragsdale, 267. It is not the purpose of this study to try to discover the motives of the leadership of the schools, or even to create a complete picture of "who did what to whom" in this situation, but to show that the competition between the schools continued for some time. While there is no indication in Ragsdale's history as to what was meant by "an element of self-interest," Shorter's hands were tied by the Convention when it came to raising money, and there were men in Rome who were very adept at doing that. Once Shorter broke from the Convention these men raised large amounts of money for Shorter's endowment. See Robert G. Gardner, *On the Hill: The Story of Shorter College* (Rome, Georgia: Shorter College 1972), 154.

[49] J. H. Foster, "President's Report to the Trustees of Bessie Tift," May 24, 1918, 18. In Special Collections, Jack Tarver Library, Mercer University, Macon, Georgia.

Colleges and Secondary Schools of the Southern States or by the Southern Association of College Women."[51]

While this alleged statement was in error about two of the three colleges mentioned, President Foster apparently felt that, in some way, leaving Tift off the list was part of a larger conspiracy or perhaps a deliberate attempt to discredit Tift, and he used the letter from President Colton to clear up the misrepresentation. He stated, "I have not used this letter publicly once, but have kept it in my pocket and whenever the statement was repeated have showed it to the party who had been deceived."[52] Along with this alleged deceitful report, President Foster claimed that Tift had lost many of the best girls applying to the school because of an outside attack on the credibility of the school. "The argument used by our opponents was 'Surely a girl like you would not go to Bessie Tift – that is only for poor girls.'"[53] This could have stemmed from the fact that the $90,000 debt Tift had when Shorter left the convention had grown to $103,000 by 1918. President Foster does not state outright that these "opponents" were from Shorter, but his report does tie them to the deceptive comments the public school teacher reported.

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[50] Ibid.
[51] Ibid., 19.
[52] Ibid., 18.

The competition between the schools continued when the Southern Baptist Convention had established a financial initiative for their work called the Seventy-Five Million Campaign. "The Southern Baptist Convention (SBC) proposed to raise $75,000,000 in five years, 1919 to 1924, for foreign, home and state missions, Christian education, ministerial relief, orphanages, and hospitals."[54] In 1919 the Georgia Baptist Convention was going to divide up about $2,000,000 it had received from the SBC to be divided up among the schools in the Mercer System. Mercer University received $925,000, while Tift received $370,000 and the secondary schools received $337,000. Shorter College, having withdrawn from the Mercer system in 1914, asked to be reinstated in 1919, and while it was not reaccepted into the system, the school was given $185,000 of the two million dollars. There is no indication that this was of concern to the leaders of Tift. In 1923, however, when another $4 million was to be divided up between Mercer, Tift, and the secondary schools, it seems that Shorter also expected a share of this money.[55]

In a 1923 letter to Dr. Aquilla Chamlee, then president of Tift, from Trustee W. V. Lanier, Mr. Lanier

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[53] Gardner, 1972, 154.
[54] GBC Education Report, 1919, 21.

stated, "I cannot bring myself to think that we should make any reference to Shorter in the report or the budget. It is evident in my mind that the only reason that Shorter is insisting is on account of the gain she will get of a financial nature."[56] By this point it is evident that the leadership of Tift was opposed to Shorter's claims.

> When the relationship was severed by Shorter in the Carrolton Convention Bessie Tift became the sole college for Baptist girls under Convention control. If the Convention can have no control why should we continue to give her publicity in our Convention or the endeavors of the Convention? I am fully convinced that Bessie Tift has suffered much because of the fact that the Convention has continued to allow Shorter liberties that several colleges in the state have as much right to in the tacit relationship that has been used to her advantage in many ways.
>
> If Bessie Tift is the child of the Convention why should not the Convention put all its support to the maintainance [sic] and support of her child and not be dividing the substance with a foster child that in days gone by has asked to be relieved of family connection.[57]

The frustration of the leaders of Tift may have created enough tension that Shorter was not awarded any of the funds that year.

While the tension between Tift and Shorter seemed to have dissipated after this period, there is ample evidence that the competition between the two schools did cause

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[55] Personal letter from W. V. Lanier to Dr. Aquilla Chamlee, November 3, 1923. In Special Collections, Jack Tarver Library, Mercer University, Macon, Georgia.

[56] Ibid.

tension between leaders of the schools and the Convention, and possibly hindered both schools from excelling. However, it was not until 1923 that there was any mention of a much greater competition taking place within the Convention. In the same letter from W. V. Lanier, he said,

> I could not advocate any plan that did not give Bessie Tift what I think is a fairer distribution of the funds. I cannot see the wisdom of making a plea for $2,500,000.00 for Mercer and only $500,00.00 for Bessie Tift unless it is the intention to do all the work at Mercer. This would force co-education at Mercer – a thing I cannot think is to the best interest of the work or the Kingdom.... If Bessie Tift is to do the work for women she should have the same, or more nearly the same, financial consideration.[58]

A simple examination of GBC Education Reports shows the dramatic difference in financial distribution between the male and female colleges as will be seen in the following paragraphs.

As McCandless argues, “Generally speaking, women’s colleges faced greater financial difficulties than men’s colleges or coeducational institutions in the same region.”[59] In 1913 Mercer had a larger enrollment (332) than either Tift (224) or Shorter (250), but by comparison of males to females there were 142 more women enrolled in Georgia Baptist colleges than men. However, Mercer’s

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[57] Ibid.
[58] McCandless, 35.

endowment was $600,000, while Tift's was $5,000 and Shorter's was $40,000. Endowment for male college education was thirteen times greater than that for female college education.

By 1919 when the first installment of the 75 Million Campaign was dispersed, Mercer received $925,000, while Tift received $370,000 and Shorter $185,000.[60] The college for men received almost twice as much money as both the female schools together, and almost three times as much as Tift, the Convention's only female college. This decision was obviously not based on enrollment, since in 1919 Mercer's enrollment was 355, 23 more students than in 1923, while Tift's enrollment was 446, an increase of 222 students in the same period.

After the 1919 financial disbursement, the data changed somewhat. Shorter by this time was no longer a Convention school, so comparing only Mercer and Tift data, enrollment between the two schools was fairly equal with Mercer having 460 students and Tift 463. Mercer's endowment[61] had grown from $600,000 in 1913 to $633,893, a

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[59] Shorter was no longer a Convention school by this time.

[60] Mercer had separated its finances into endowment and scholarship funds. Its actual endowment dropped to $420,105, and the new category, scholarship funds, was at $213,788. Tift actually had no money listed under

difference of $33,893. Tift's endowment had changed from $5,000 to $19,750, a difference of $14,750. However, the big difference can be seen in the changes in the value of the college property. In 1913 Mercer's property was valued at $200,000 and Tift's at $215,000. By 1920, Mercer's property had grown to almost three times its 1913 value, to $588,350, a difference of $388,350. Tift's property had grown to $315,887, not even twice its 1913 value.

When the 1923 disbursement of funds was approaching the Education Board was suggesting $2,500,000 to Mercer and only $500,000 to Tift, or five times more money for the education of males than females. Tift President Aquilla Chamlee said of this condition, "We are facing a very critical situation with reference to the attitude of our Convention leaders toward our future development."[62] In addressing the Education Board about their proposal and budget, Dr. Chamlee "told them plainly what [he] thought of both papers and that if these two papers were adopted for the convention it meant the destruction finally of every school except Mercer."[63]

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endowment, and $19,750 under scholarship funds. GBC Education Report, 1920.

[61] Personal letter from Aquilla Chamlee to W. V. Lanier, November 5, 1923. In Special Collections, Jack Tarver Library, Mercer University, Macon, Georgia.

[62] Ibid.

One of the main problems with the disparity of funds may have stemmed from the fact that the Chancellor of the Mercer System of Schools was also the president of Mercer. W. V. Lanier, a Trustee of Tift stated,

> I do not see how any man can be entirely impartial in his thinking concerning all the institutions as Chancellor and at the same time Pres of one. Especially is this true when he has so great an ambition for one as he evidently has for Mercer in the overshadowing of the others.[64]

However, the Chancellor must not have had the final say in the proposal because a meeting was set to finalize the proposal before it went to the Convention at large. At this meeting "The Mercer men agreed to give Bessie Tift College one-fourth of the funds raised for Education and to give the secondary schools one-fourth and Mercer one-half."[65] While this was still a two-to-one ratio of money for male education to female education, it was much better than the five-to-one ratio originally proposed. According to Dr. Chamlee, "There was a very definite feeling manifest in all the meetings that Bessie Tift College has not had a fair showing..., [and] our brethren generally feel that we

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[63] Letter from W. V. Lanier to Aquilla Chamlee, November 18, 1923. In Special Collections, Jack Tarver Library, Mercer University, Macon, Georgia.

[64] Letter from Aquilla Chamlee, November 26, 1923. In Special Collections, Jack Tarver Library, Mercer University, Macon, Georgia.

are not even now getting enough."[66] He added that he was "greatly interested in the increasing number of men who are saying that the discrimination in favor of the boys should be supplanted for the time, at least, by greater consideration for the girls."[67] From this time on Tift received a larger percentage, but never equal to what Mercer received. Mercer, in fact, grew much larger after this time period and possibly required a larger share.

As was seen earlier the endowment for Mercer was much larger than the endowment for Tift, and this caused problems for Tift throughout its existence. McCandless points out that this was a problem for many women's colleges. "Because of low endowments, they found it difficult to provide adequate facilities for students or to pay for well-trained faculties."[68]

One reason for male colleges having greater endowments was, as has been shown, greater emphesis and importance was placed on education for males. Also, male graduates went into a money-making career while female graduates went to the home. Hence females typically did not have access to funds for donating toward their alma mater except through

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[65] Ibid.
[66] Ibid.
[67] McCandless, 35.

their husbands. This can be seen through the story of Bessie Willingham Tift, for whom the school was named.

Bessie Willingham graduated from Tift in 1878 and several years later married Henry Harding Tift.

> In 1905 he and Mrs. Tift were in attendance at the Georgia Baptist Convention when Dr. C.H.S. Jackson, the president of Monroe College made an urgent plea to the convention for critically needed funds. The school was in dire need of $37,000 – a lot of money in 1905. Unless this was forthcoming, it looked desperate for the school. Mr. Tift, who was not sitting with his wife wrote a note and sent it to her by an usher, "Bessie, you may give the $37,000." Mrs. Tift in turn wrote a note and sent it by usher to the rostrum to the presiding officer, Dr. Aquilla Chamlee, saying, "Mr. Tift says he will give the $37,000. Thank God."[69]

After this experience Bessie and Henry Tift became much more involved in giving to the school, and in 1907 the name of the college was changed to Bessie Tift College in their honor.

They not only gave large sums of money, but Mrs. Tift was instrumental in beginning an Alumnae Association.[70] She also paid attention to the needs of individual students. In a 1910 letter to Tift President C.H.S. Jackson, Mrs. Tift wrote,

> I have just learned that Harriet Garnell is not taking music because she is not able. I want this girl to have every advantage the college

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[68] Stone, 82.
[69] Ibid., 163-4.

> affords. Please see that she has, and what her parents cannot give her it will be my delight to pay.[71]

While in this letter she speaks of paying herself, one can assume since she did not work outside her home, that this payment cam from discretionary funds Henry Tift passed to his wife. There were many other women and men who gave money to Tift, but the story of Bessie Tift shows a hindrance women graduates and women's colleges faced.

For Tift, the competition between the several small Baptist women's colleges, and specifically with Shorter, for both funds and students, created financial difficulties. However, the greatest economic encumbrance Tift faced was the disproportionate disbursement of funds for female education when compared to funds for male education. In addition to this, because Tift alumnae were often only able to give back to Tift through their husbands, raising an endowment and supplying operating funds was a continuous struggle. These struggles created problems in gaining accreditation. Tift was founded in 1849, but was not fully accredited until March 28, 1946, 97 years later. Accreditation will be addressed in greater

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[70] Bessie Willingham Tift, Personal letter to Tift President, C.H.S. Jackson, November 29, 1910. In Special Collections, Jack Tarver Library, Mercer University, Macon, Georgia.

detail in the next chapter, since it was a major issue in Tift remaining a separate women’s college.

CHAPTER 5 – TIFT'S STRUGGLES TO REMAIN A SEPARATE COLLEGE

In a recent study of Southern Baptist education for women, Lori Bland Bateman stated, "In 1880-1920, whether women were educated in separated, coordinated, or coeducational Southern Baptist institutions was determined by societal factors, practical concerns, and situations unique to Southern Baptist life."[1] Separated colleges were colleges only for women based often on the ideas that women were intellectually inferior to men and to reduce the "possibility of immoral or at least scandalous behavior due to the close proximity of young men and women."[2] Coordinated colleges according to Bateman "consisted of a men's and women's college under a single administration and board of trustees. [These s]chools theoretically maintained separate identities."[3] Coeducational colleges were schools in which men and women both attended the same

[1] Lori Bland Bateman, "Separation, Coordination, and Coeducation: Southern Baptist Approaches to the Higher Education of Women, 1880–1920," *Baptist History and Heritage* 38 (Summer–Fall 2003), 94.

[2] Ibid. 90.

[3] Ibid. 91.

school.[4] Within a five-year period between 1894 and 1898, leaders at Tift considered each of these institutional styles in the school's struggle to survive and prosper. Not only did the school consider all three of these institutional styles, but also just as Bateman suggested, the Board of Trustees took into account societal factors, practical concerns, and situations unique to Southern Baptist, or specifically Georgia Baptist, life.

While the school came under the control of Baptists in 1855, it was not a denominational school in the same sense that Mercer University was. Mercer, the Baptist university for boys was started by the Georgia Baptist Convention (GBC), its trustees were appointed by the convention, and the buildings were owned by the convention. In comparison, Tift was owned and supported by the Baptists around Forsyth and its trustees were local Baptists, however, as early as 1873 the school's third President, S. G. Hillyer made a proposal to the GBC that there be one Georgia Baptist women's college just as Mercer was for the men. This desire for such a college was one of the situations unique

[4] Bateman gives examples of several colleges that exercised coeducation, however the scope of her study does not include whether males and females experienced the same curriculum choices.

to Georgia Baptists which the Trustees of Tift would reflect on as the years progressed.

As was seen, Hilliard Institute was separated from MFC in 1855, and they remained completely separated until 1884 when a rather unique method of cooperation, unlike any that Bateman discussed, began. The Trustees' Report of August, 1884 states:

> Resolved that it is highly important that the pupils of Monroe Female College and Hilliard Institute be educated upon a high basis. To that end it is the sense of this Board that the labor of the respective teachers of said Institutions, be divided between said schools upon such terms as said teacher may agree upon – so that the same may be made equal – in no event to interfere with the tuition of either institution. To that end the president of Monroe Female College is authorized to make terms with the principal of Hilliard Institute – It being the object of this scheme to give the girls and boys, the benefits of the talents of both Institutions, securing to each the benefits of co-education, in separate schools, under separate management.[5]

No further mention of this plan is made in the Trustees' Reports, nor does the secondary literature address the fulfillment of this attempt at segregated coeducation.

The agreement may have come from outside pressure of the citizens of Forsyth, since that is what initiated the Trustee's consideration of actual coeducation ten years

[5] Monroe Female College Trustees' Reports, 1884, 25. In Special Collections, Tarver Library, Mercer University.

later. According to the Trustees' Report for August 13, 1894:

> A petition signed by a number of citizens both in and out of the town asking that we unite the Monroe F[emale] College with Hilliard Institute making of the two schools one mixed school controlled by a separate board from either said board to be chosen by the two boards was on motion of J. M. Ponder.[6]

Underneath this entry are two underlined words, "respectfully declined," and while no reason was stated in that report, several resolutions were made in the next Board meeting, which occurred the very next day, that shed light on their decision.

> On motion of J. M. Ponder the following resolutions were adopted – for maintaining M F College as a school for Girls only – Resolve – 1st we the Trustees pledge our support in restoring to M F College its once grand and proud standing as a school for female education. 2nd ...supply one principal and not less than his assistants to teach our daughters and…for their monthly salary – 3rd That the high standing and the Curriculum of M F College be kept up to the present standing and if the Trustees think advisable to be raised."[7]

These resolutions show the trustees' desire to keep Tift as a women's college in respect to the dream of becoming the Convention's women's school. Joining with Hilliard Institute, which was under the control of the Methodists, would not only make them coeducational, but would also give

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[6] MFC Trustees' Reports, 55.
[7] Ibid. Underline in the original.

joint control between Baptists and Methodists, hence taking them out of consideration for becoming the GBC women's college.

The Board of Trustees tried several schemes that would hopefully gain the school financial support as well as propelling Tift toward becoming a Convention school. The first plan was set forth nine days after the previous resolutions were made. The Board voted "to offer the College to the Rehoboth Ass[ociation]."[8] With this plan the school could remain a school for females and become an associational school rather than a city school. The Georgia Baptist Convention was divided into associations consisting of one to several counties. Forsyth was located within the geographic area of the Rehoboth Association, and since the school opened, several of the Trustees were not directly from Forsyth, but from the Rehoboth Association. Becoming a school that was supported by the whole association rather than just the city of Forsyth would have no doubt afforded the school some financial support as well as political support within the Convention for its campaign to become the Convention's female college. There is no mention of any response by the Association in the Trustees' Reports or in secondary literature, but in this case no

[8] Ibid. 56.

further mention of an agreement between the school and the Rehoboth Association seems to indicate that it did not happen.

No record of the next plan can be found in the Tift Trustees' Reports; however the minutes of the Mercer University Trustees and several secondary sources give evidence of it. The Minutes of the Mercer University Trustees for June 31, 1897 state, "The Brethren from Forsyth were invited in and they tendered us the Monroe Female College for the Education of Girls. On motion a committee of five was appointed to take into consideration the acceptance of the college."[9] This plan, however, was also unsuccessful. The Minutes of the Mercer Trustees for July 5, 1897 have the following statement:

> The committee to whom was referred the matter pertaining to the Monroe Female College reported as follows which was adopted
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> That while we sympathize heartily with their situation and wish it all possible success yet being a chartered [unintelligible word] body we have no right or authority whatever to assume or discharge the trust offered.[10]

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[9] Minutes of the Mercer University Trustees, June 31, 1887, 382. In Special Collections, Tarver Library, Mercer University.

[10] Minutes of the Mercer University Trustees, July 5, 1887, 382. The report was slightly modified and submitted to the 1897 Convention. Here it read: "That while we sympathize heartily with this institution and wish it all possible success, yet being a chartered body with specified and limited functions, we have no right or authority

Though the offer to Mercer was not accepted, it was presented at the Convention's annual meeting that year, and it is possible that this presentation garnered for the school the needed sympathy of the Convention. The very next year at the state Convention meeting, "A communication from the Board of Trustees of Monroe Female College, Forsyth, tendering to the Convention the property of said college, was read by F. W. Barnett and referred to special committee."[11] The committee that considered the offer reported back to the convention that they thought "favorable to the acceptance of the property tendered."[12] The issue was reported as highly debated among those at the convention, though little was recorded about the debate, and in the end, a "vote was taken on the report of the committee, resulting in its adoption by vote of 66 to 20."[13] Thus, after years of deliberation, Tift College became a Georgia Baptist Convention School in 1898. It is possible that one condition influenced the Convention's decision.

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whatever to assume or enter upon the discharge of such trust as has been offered us by the people of Forsyth." See Ragsdale, 220.

[11] Minutes of the 76th Anniversary of the Baptist Convention of the State of Georgia held in Augusta, March 31 – April 4, 1898, 20. In Special Collections, Tarver Library, Mercer University.

[12] Ibid. 33.

[13] Ibid. 33-34.

In 1897, the trustees of Tift for the first, and only, time chose a woman to serve as the president.

"Mrs. Carrie D. Crawley, prior to her marriage was Miss Carrie Camp..., and she was reared near old Campbellton which was the original county seat of Campbell County...." There is little information about her life before her marriage, or during her marriage. [14]"She became a widow early in life…, [and] had a little boy named Earnest who was killed in an accident at the gin of Mr. Jesse Blalock...."[15] After these events "she turned to the field of education and had devoted her life to the training of young women."[16] When Mrs. Carrie D. Crawley became president of Tift, she already had much experience as a school leader. According to the Tift Catalogue of 1899, she had served as:

> Lady Principal, Middle Georgia College, Jonesboro, Ga.; President, Capital Female College, Atlanta, Ga.; Principal Mathematics Department, Georgia Normal and Industrial College, Milledgeville, Ga.; Principal, Southern Baptist College, College Park, Ga.; [and] President, Mrs. Crawley's School, Atlanta, Ga.[17]

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[14] C.D. Redwine, Personal letter to Miss Margaret Wise, January 1934. In Special Collections, Jack Tarver Library, Mercer University, Macon, Georgia.

[15] Ibid

[16] Stone, 29.

[17] Monroe Female College. *Catalogue 1899*, 12. In Special Collections, Jack Tarver Library, Mercer University, Macon, Georgia.

This experience gave Mrs. Crawley seemingly more leverage with the trustees, as they "allowed her much more authority than had previously been granted. This new authority allowed her to select the entire faculty and manage the boarding department."[18] It is possible that the trustees' decision to hire Mrs. Crawley, and then extending her more authority than previous male presidents had, may have been one of the deciding factors that pushed the GBC to accept Tift as the Georgia Baptist women's college in 1898.

As soon as the college was accepted by the Convention, they elected a new president, and one with little experience having graduated from Mercer University only nine years earlier, in 1889.[19] "Mrs. Crawley graciously stepped down and became vice-president and lady principal under the next president, a young and rather inexperienced professor, S.C. Hood."[20] Hood resigned after one year because he did not feel he was experienced enough to do justice to the job.[21] Mrs. Crawley also resigned the next year. After she left Tift she went to live with a nephew

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[18] Kathy Summerford, "Monroe Female College, 1879-1900" Unpublished student paper (May 28, 1965), 10. In Special Collections, Jack Tarver Library, Mercer University, Macon, Georgia.

[19] Ibid. 16.

[20] Stone, 29.

[21] Ibid. 31.

whose wife had died and "took charge of his children and taught them at home along with a few other children."[22] She eventually moved to Atlanta where she taught at an exclusive private school until her death at age 80.[23]

After Tift had become the Georgia Baptist school for women in 1898, Shorter College was also adopted as a female school by the Convention. This led to some conflict that has been addressed in another section of this dissertation, but in 1914 Shorter withdrew as a Convention school, once again leaving Tift as the Convention school for women in Georgia. With this distinction, one might assume that remaining a separate women's school would be assured, however, that was not the case. In 1923, at a joint meeting of the Boards of Trustees from Tift and Mercer University, a proposal was drafted entitled, "A Memorial to the Georgia Baptist Convention Presented by the Trustees of Bessie Tift College and Mercer University." The half-page proposal had one purpose, "to so relate these institutions as to enable Bessie Tift College to secure at a very early date recognition and rating as a standard college."[24] The

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[22] Redwine.

[23] J.E. Travis. Personal letter to Miss Margaret Wise, January, 1934. In Special Collections, Jack Tarver Library, Mercer University, Macon, Georgia.

[24] "Proposal to the Board of Trustees of Tift College by the Committee on Enlargement and Future Program of

goal of the committee was not to merge the two schools, but that was one possibility to help them reach the original purpose.

> We are not prepared at the present time to recommend the legal relationship, but we request from this Convention the authority to carry on our investigations, to work out our plans, to prepare our contracts, to make changes in our charters, and if need be, in order to accomplish the end desired, to merge the two institutions.[25]

At the same meeting the Committee on Mercer's Exchange of Teachers proposed that Tift "add four or five professors from Mercer, who shall teach six hours per week, and that we pay $1,500.00 each per year for this extra service."[26] There is no mention in this proposal that these four professors also be placed as the heads of their prospective departments at Tift. However, in a December, 1923, President's Report to the Board of Trustees, Dr. Chamlee explained that Tift "secured four Doctors of Philosophy, who are the heads of four departments of Mercer University, to give part of their time to us as heads of four departments at Bessie Tift."[27] These men also taught six hours each week at Tift. At the same time the head of

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Bessie Tift College." Board of Trustees Reports, March 2, 1923, 145-146. Baptist Archives-Special Collections, Tarver Library, Mercer University.

[25] Ibid.

[26] Ibid.

[27] President's Report to the Board of Trustees of Bessie Tift College, 1923, 9.

Tift's School of Journalism was lead by George M. Sparks, a teacher in Mercer's School of Journalism.

One might question the motives behind a move that places men at the head of every department at a women's college except for the Fine Arts Department, however, for Tift to become accredited a certain percentage of the teachers had to have doctorates. Tift did not have the finances to hire four full time professors with doctorates, and so this arrangement with Mercer allowed Tift to hire four professors at a reduced rate, and allowed these professors to receive a substantial raise in pay for their added duties. These professors were still paid their regular salary from Mercer, while at the same time receiving a full salary from Tift.[28] Even with this coordinated effort with Mercer, Tift did not receive accreditation due to the fact that its endowment was not large enough.

Seven years later, in 1930, an interesting twist occurred at Tift College that would change the future of the school. Tift for the first time in her history opened up classes to men during the summer school session. Vera

[28] The full salary from Tift of $1,500 per year was more than most of the women teachers made that year, however was still not enough to be considered full-time wages for a male professor with a doctorate.

Lynn, a student in school that summer, said, "Bessie Tift became a Co-Ed school this summer, and we will be able to say we were present on this great day that will make us the history of the school."[29] Only one man took courses, "C. J. Warnock, was the honored Co-Ed, and of course this made classes real interesting for some."[30] From this point on summer school classes were opened up to men, however, men were not allowed to receive a degree or go to the regular sessions in the fall and spring.

From this point on there was also much more talk about coeducation. Much of this had to do with the fact that Mercer became a coed school in the 1930s. Dr. Claudius Lamar McGinty, the school's President from 1938-1947, did not seem to think that coeducation would come to Tift. In a 1941 interview, Dr. McGinty "admitted that coeducation in the South, though slow in coming, has been well received. However..., it will not be so readily accepted by the heads of denominational schools as it has been by state authorities."[31] In 1942, Dr. McGinty again addressed the

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[29] Vera Lynn, "Bessie Tift Summer School," *The Campus Quill*, September 27, 1930, 2. In Special Collections, Jack Tarver Library, Mercer University, Macon, Georgia.

[30] Ibid.

[31] Frances Mobley, "Our President," *The Alumnae Quill* (Spring Issue 1941), 2. In Special Collections, Jack Tarver Library, Mercer University, Macon, Georgia. One might wonder when considering his statement, if he had ever read

move toward coeducation. This time it was in reference to an accelerated program that some schools were offering with continuous instruction all year.

> At present there is no concerted plan among the colleges of the state, except in the University System, where the schools already provide a summer quarter. This is true of Mercer, Emory, and Oglethorpe. These co-educational institutions will attract many girls of the present senior high school classes and will create a serious problem for us in getting students.[32]

Dr. McGinty resigned the presidency in 1947, and in an article written about his work at the school, the author stated, "In March, 1946 the college was accredited. In order to attain this the teachers' salaries had to be raised, the number of books in the library had to be increased, and men with doctorates had to be placed at the head of most of the departments."[33] There is no record of anyone ever questioning the idea of whether the department heads in a women's school should be men.

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the trustee's reports for the school since there were at least three separate occasions when Tift's leaders had considered some form of coeducation. However, Dr. McGinty was very interested in the school's history and wrote one of the few published histories of Tift.

[32] President's Report to the Board of Trustees of Tift College, February 6, 1942, 2. In Special Collections, Jack Tarver Library, Mercer University, Macon, Georgia.

[33] Unknown author. "Dr. McGinty Resigns Tift Presidency," *The Campus Quill*, May 31, 1947, 1. In Special Collections, Jack Tarver Library, Mercer University, Macon, Georgia.

By 1950, coeducation was becoming an even greater concern, and Dr. Gunn, Tift's fourteenth president, expressed his concern in his report to the Board of Trustees. "Since I became president many have suggested that Bessie Tift must soon become coeducational. We had as well face the fact that each year our greatest loss of students is first due to failure and finance and second to co-education at Mercer."[34] He went on to communicate his experience working for 13 years in a coeducational college, stating, "women's colleges offer young women much greater opportunities for developing leadership than are possible in co-ed colleges."[35] He also felt that it would have been "impossible to maintain the high spiritual standards in co-ed colleges that have been maintained at Bessie Tift," believing that the "spiritual atmosphere [had] been the greatest asset of the college during the first century."[36]

Coeducation continued to be a problem for Tift, and the leaders continued to fight it, all the while continuing to offer coeducational courses in the summers. In 1953, Dr. Carey Vinzant, beginning his second year as the school's president "sounded an optimistic note when he

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[34] President's Report to the Board of Trustees of Tift College, February 10, 1950, 2. In Special Collections, Jack Tarver Library, Mercer University, Macon, Georgia.

[35] Ibid.

[36] Ibid.

stated that in the face of prevailing conditions and the desire for co-education among the youth of the land, Bessie Tift had a slight increase in enrollment over the past two years."[37]

In 1977[38] Tift began to offer evening classes which were also opened to men. The evening school not only allowed male students the opportunity to take classes, but for the first time in Tift's history, men were allowed to receive a degree. One of the main degrees offered in the evening school was in criminal justice, and this connection to the criminal justice field led to a program for prison inmates.

However, in 1979 the alumnae of Tift complained about the school's opening of a program for prison inmates. One of their complaints was that under this program, "A convicted rapist may receive a Tift College degree, whereas a day student is dismissed if she becomes an unwed mother."[39] Tift dean, Gloria Raney, who was also an alumna,

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[37] Trustees Report, September 25, 1953. In Special Collections, Jack Tarver Library, Mercer University, Macon, Georgia.

[38] Between 1953 and the beginning of the evening classes in 1977 I found no evidence of the coeducation discussion. However, during this period the school continued to offer coeducational summer classes.

[39] Annita Weathersby and Vickie Smith, "Tift Lowers Its Standards?" *The Campus Quill* 45(8) (May 1979), 1. In

set aside that issue, claiming that no day student had been dismissed. The alumnae complaint continued, saying, "You can see that a convict may be admitted to the school yet a day student applicant can be refused admission for lack of evidence of good citizenship."[40] The alumnae backed their complaints with a threat, stating that they were going to see a lawyer about separating their funds from the general funds of the college. "The only way we know to be heard is to withhold our funds. If we're supporting Tift, we want Tift the way it was. We want it kept a women's college. That's the main thing, Progressive, but a single sex institution."[41]

The next week the trustees voted to "eliminate the program to reduce alumnae fear that 'incorrigible prisoners will be eligible to be on the campus with their daughters.'"[42] The leadership of the college was upset by the decision of the trustees. The loss of $75,000 in revenue would have been disappointing, however, most of the published comments by the leadership focused on the needs

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Special Collections, Jack Tarver Library, Mercer University, Macon, Georgia.

[40] Ibid.

[41] Ibid.

[42] Annita Weathersby, "Tift Trustees Dump Prisoners, Cost to School $75,000 a Year," *The Campus Quill* 45(9)(May 1979), 3. Quote by Trustee Charles F. Heard. In Special Collections, Jack Tarver Library, Mercer University, Macon, Georgia.

of the prisoners and the Christian purpose of the school. Tift President Robert Jackson stated, “I think it’s within the purview of Christian responsibility to help anybody who wants and is capable of receiving an education.”[43] The academic dean, Dr. Kenneth Morris, echoed this sentiment, “The idea that we cannot administer to those people that need help is sort of repulsive to me.”[44] The school’s director of the evening division, Ron Edge, who played a major role in getting the Correctional Center program started, stated that, “Approximately 68 percent of the inmates are Baptist and we are a Baptist institution, so I don’t know where the inconsistency is.”[45] The idea of men in an all-women’s college seemed not to be an inconsistency for him or the other leaders.

Possibly the opening of the evening division to men helped to desensitize these leaders to the changes in perception this would make to a women’s college. The alumnae of Tift were for the most part opposed to the evening school as well as the inmate program. However, the concerns about the evening division were not as grave.

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[43] Ibid.

[44] Ibid.

[45] Ibid. This seems to indicate an unusually high number of Baptist convicts, and may in itself be an issue for further study.

> While a great number of alumnae concerned about the Evening Division programs feel that those programs should never have been initiated, a compromise solution has been suggested which hopefully will enable Tift College to fulfill its commitments to the community and at the same time promote harmony among Tift's supporters.[46]

This compromise solution suggested by the alumnae proposed the "formation of a subsidiary corporation to administer an evening program...."[47] The plan would allow both males and females the opportunity to receive a degree, however,

> The newly created subsidiary corporation would be a non-profit corporation, the name of which would be chosen by the Board of Trustees, but would not include the word "Tift." The proponants of this proposal are agreeable to any such name which may be chosen, but suggest that "Monroe College" or "Forsyth College" might be a proper and fitting name for this subsidiary unit.[48]

This solution was sent to the Tift Board of Trustees from the lawyers hired by the alumnae to prevent the continuation of the Inmate Program and the Evening Division. After reviewing documentation of Tift, these lawyers were "of the opinion that such programs are in violation of Tift College's Charter and By-Laws....

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[46] "Some concerns of Tift College Alumnae regarding the Evening Division Programs and a suggested solution." An unpublished document accompanying a letter to the Tift Board of Trustees from McLain, Mellen, Bowling, & Hickman Attorneys and Counselors at Law, May 9, 1979. These were the lawyers hired by the alumnae. In Special Collections, Jack Tarver Library, Mercer University, Macon, Georgia.

[47] Ibid.

[48] Ibid.

Nevertheless, our efforts thus far have been directed toward avoiding litigation and finding as solution to this problem."[49] The current students at the time also voiced their opinions in a letter to the trustees.

> I must stress that though we feel the program is an asset as a separate entity from the day program, as a majority we are very much against Tift as a co-ed school. We fell it would destroy the ideals and many of the basic purposes and principles of Tift.[50]

According to the lawyers for Tift, "Neither in the original Charter nor in any amendment is there any specific prohibition upon enrolling male students and awarding degrees to males."[51] Eventually a compromise was reached in which the inmate program was discontinued, but the evening division remained. The name of the evening division was not changed; however, it was kept a separate entity as much as possible with its own publications and graduation ceremony. The evening division graduated approximately 230

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[49] John M. Bowling & John B. Gamble, Jr., In a letter to the Tift Board of Trustees from McLain, Mellen, Bowling, & Hickman Attorneys and Counselors at Law, May 9, 1979.

[50] Jenny McPherson. Letter from the SGA President to the Tift Board of Trustees, May 11, 1979. In Special Collections, Jack Tarver Library, Mercer University, Macon, Georgia.

[51] "Memorandum Concerning Degrees To Male Applicants." An unpublished document to the Tift Board of Trustees, May 11, 1979, 2. In Special Collections, Jack Tarver Library, Mercer University, Macon, Georgia.

men between 1979 and 1985.[52] These were the only men to receive degrees from Tift College in her almost 140-year history. A more important change, however, was underway at the same time.

[52] I could find no specific records kept of how many males graduated, and so this number represents all those whom I could tell were males by their names. There were however, instances where the names were unclear. Terry Hallman graduated as a regular (day) student, and the same year Terry B. Moore graduated from the evening division. Terry Hallman has to be a female because no males graduated as regular students. Terry B. Moore could be male or female, but available records do not always give an indication.

CHAPTER 6 – TIFT'S MERGER WITH A COEDUCATIONAL UNIVERSITY

On May 14, 1982 a confidential draft of a proposal "regarding the interorganizational arrangement between Mercer University and Tift College"[1] was sent to a committee of Tift trustees. This arrangement was truly a proposed merger in which "all of the assets of Tift are passing to or for the use of Mercer..., and all of the liabilities and obligations of Tift are assumed by Mercer."[2] This proposed merger would give Mercer "the right to determine the nature and the extend of the initiation, continuation, modification, or the discontinuance, of any and all of the programs, activities, personnel, and other aspects of TC-MU [Tift College of Mercer University]."[3]

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[1] Correspondence from R. Kirby Godsey, President of Mercer University to Trustees of Tift College, May 14, 1982. In O. Suthern Sims, Jr. "Tift College of Mercer University: The Merger Story," an unpublished collection. In Special Collections, Jack Tarver Library, Mercer University, Macon, Georgia.

[2] "Memorandum of Understanding Relating to the Interorganizational Arrangement for the Corporation of Mercer University and Tift College," point 13, page 7. In O. Suthern Sims, Jr. "Tift College of Mercer University: The Merger Story," an unpublished collection. In Special Collections, Jack Tarver Library, Mercer University, Macon, Georgia.

[3] Ibid. 9.

The trustees of Tift chose not to accept the proposal though they were the ones who requested a potential merger between the two schools. Acceptance of the proposal would have most likely been a death sentence for Tift College if what happened several years later was any indication. In the 1982 proposal there were no allowances for the protections of any of Tift's assets – faculty, programs, finances, students, or traditions. The proposal had been drawn up in its entirety by representatives of Mercer. In 1985, when talks of a merger started up again, representatives of Tift drew up "Tift College of Mercer University: A Proposal From the Tift College Board of Trustees to the Mercer University Board of Trustees." In this proposal Mercer would "accept all property, assets, and liabilities of Tift College,"[4] as in the 1982 proposal, however, in the 1985 proposal the Trustees of Tift sought to preserve Tift College by adding protective clauses within the proposal. One such clause proposed that Mercer "Make a good faith effort to operate Tift College of Mercer University as a women's college on the present Forsyth,

[4] Tift Board of Trustees. "Tift College of Mercer University: A Proposal From the Tift College Board of Trustees to the Mercer University Board of Trustees." In O. Suthern Sims, Jr. "Tift College of Mercer University: The Merger Story," an unpublished collection. In Special Collections, Jack Tarver Library, Mercer University, Macon, Georgia.

Georgia, campus, preferably for at least five years."[5] In all there were 17 clauses included to protect current students, alumnae and alumnae records, the names of buildings on the campus, endowment, scholarships, as well as faculty and trustees (see Appendix D). The proposed merger was accepted by Mercer, with only a few slight changes from the original proposal, on May 28, 1986.

The difference in the tenor of the two proposals may at first glance seem to be a consequence of the body drafting the proposal – Mercer's trustees the first and Tift's the second, however there were other factors that influenced the differences. In 1982 Tift was reeling from several poor leadership decisions. In the Tift College Enrollment Summary, one of the tools used in the decision to merge, it was shown that the women's college at Tift[6] had a declining enrollment and listed the following reasons:

> a. Since 1974, the College was graduating only about 30% of each year's freshmen class. The attrition was alarming, especially when good retention will graduate approximately 60%.
> b. The nursing program fiasco.
> c. Some incompetent faculty.
> d. Incompetent administration.
> e. Wholesale admission of students designed to fail, thus creating an environment which contributed to the brighter students leaving.

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[5] Ibid.

[6] At the time the women's college was a separate school from the night school.

> f. Leased dorm and classroom space to the State Department of Corrections. Moved students from one of the best residence halls on campus. Put in residence hall state employees – mostly male and mostly black. Employees shared dining hall, recreational facilities, campus in general, and classroom hallways in particular.
>
> g. Science labs were sadly neglected. Some were not fit for classes. Residence halls were run down. Buildings and grounds were deliberately neglected, created a negative atmosphere.[7]

Conditions had deteriorated to the point that "in 1983 the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools suggested to the Board of Trustees that a new president be named and that efforts be instituted to improve administrative competency, quality of the student body, and faculty morale."[8] With circumstances as they were in 1982, the 1982 proposal sounded more like a hostile takeover than an amicable merger. However, on January 1, 1984, O. Suthern Sims took over the presidency of Tift and many conditions began to change. The 1985 proposal stated:

> Since January 1, 1984, Tift College has experienced a complete turn around.... In the Fall of 1984 and the Fall of 1985, Tift College admitted the best two Freshmen classes based on SAT scores and high school averages in the school's history…. Over 50% of the faculty has been replaced in the last two years, and the doctoral percentage of the full time faculty is nearing 70. Alumnae support in terms of numbers

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[7] "Tift College Enrollment Summary," 3. In O. Suthern Sims, Jr. "Tift College of Mercer University: The Merger Story," an unpublished collection. In Special Collections, Jack Tarver Library, Mercer University, Macon, Georgia.

[8] 1985 proposal.

> of givers and amount given is at an all time high. Morale among students and faculty is superb.[9]

These changes by 1985 placed Tift in more of a position of strength. In addition to the conditions listed above, the proposal stated that Tift was "the only college sponsored by Georgia Baptists that [was] currently debt-free."[10] From this position of strength it appears that the Tift Trustees were able to secure a manner of protection for Tift's future, however, as the merger proceeded the 1985 proposal gave only mere illusion of protection for the future of Tift.

On November 1, 1985, President Sims sent out to Tift trustees a confidential white paper entitled "Straight Talk About Small Liberal Arts Colleges." The paper was based for the most part on information from *Three Thousand Futures*, a report of the Carnegie Council on Policy Studies in Higher Education. In the white paper Dr. Sims illustrated the predictions found in *Three Thousand Futures* by the use of a "case study of a <u>fictitious</u> four-year less-selective liberal arts college."[11] The "fictitious" college

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[9] 1985 proposal, 3-4.

[10] Ibid, 3.

[11] O. Suthern Sims, "Straight Talk About Small Liberal Arts Colleges." November 1, 1985. In Special Collections, Jack Tarver Library, Mercer University, Macon, Georgia. Underline in original.

was in essence Tift, however in the cover letter of the white paper, Dr. Sims cautioned the trustees to "not over-personalize the content of the paper to Tift."[12] Quoting from *Three Thousand Futures*, Sims showed that colleges "are particularly vulnerable if they are single-sex, and very small in size – with heavy fixed cost per student and unable to offer the range of programs, particularly technical ones, that students have been demanding."[13] Interestingly, none of the reasons listed in the white paper for declining enrollment of small, single-sex colleges were the same as the reasons the trustees listed in the merger agreement as reasons why Tift's enrollment was declining.[14]

Sims went on to show that endowment was a major hurdle for Tift as it had been for most of its existence.

> Everyone writing on the subject of the future of small, private colleges agree [sic] that endowment is the key to continued success and, indeed, to continuing existence.... Endowment in the amount of approximately $50,000-$80,000 per full-time student is the only long term solution for that college and for many like it.[15]

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[12] O. Suthern Sims. Letter to Trustees of Tift University. November 1, 1985. In Special Collections, Jack Tarver Library, Mercer University, Macon, Georgia.

[13] Sims, "Straight Talk." In Special Collections, Jack Tarver Library, Mercer University, Macon, Georgia.

[14] See note 218.

[15] Sims, "Straight Talk," 7. In Special Collections, Jack Tarver Library, Mercer University, Macon, Georgia. Underline in original.

If Georgia Baptists had provided for the endowment of Tift in the same way that they provided for the endowment of Mercer, it is possible that this would not have even been an issue for Tift. Mercer, having graduated mostly male students, had alumni who could provide large gifts from their own resources. Tift having almost all female graduates had alumnae who had to give gifts out of their husbands' resources, and therefore they were usually unable to match the gifts given to Mercer.

By 1985, the time of the merger, Mercer University had been coeducational for over 60 years, and had instituted some measure of coeducation for 30 years prior to full coeducation. Coeducation at Mercer began in the early 1890s when Mercer opened a school of pedagogy and in 1893 the "school was thrown open to women."[16] In June of 1894 the president of Mercer suggested that Mercer become a coeducational institution, but the Board of Trustees decided to let Georgia Baptists decide that question at the annual convention. The notion was voted down in April of 1895, however, at President Gambrell's insistence, in June of 1895 the Board of Trustees voted "That women applicants

[16] "Catalogue and Annual Announcement of Mercer University," 1893-1894, 26. In Special Collections, Jack Tarver Library, Mercer University, Macon, Georgia.

admitted to the School of Pedagogy be also admitted to the other departments of the College of Liberal Arts in connection therewith....”[17] At that time the only women enrolled at Mercer was the president’s daughter, Pauline Gambrell, who received a Certificate in the School of Pedagogy in 1895. The first female graduate of Mercer was Mrs. W.E. Jackson who graduated from Mercer Law School in 1919, and the first undergraduate woman to graduate was Caroline Patterson in 1923.[18] The first Tift alumna to

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[17] Minutes of the Board of Trustees, Mercer University, June 3, 1895.

[18] Mercer was founded in 1838 as a single-sex college for men, and it was not until 1893 that the first woman attended. *The Catalogue and Annual Announcement of Mercer University, 1893-1894* stated “And when this school was thrown open to women, still further evidence was given that Mercer will not be behind the very foremost in meeting the reasonable demands of the people.” (25) The reasonable demands of the people must have meant the demands of the school’s president, since the only woman listed in any of Mercer’s catalogues prior to 1919 was Pauline P. Gambrell, daughter of President Gambrell, who received a certificate in the School of Pedagogy. (*Catalogue and Annual Announcement of Mercer University, 1894-1895,* 58.)

Whether Miss Gambrell went to Mercer by choice or coercion could be a matter of speculation, but there is no doubt that the president wished for Mercer to become coeducational. The school’s trustees did not seem as supportive of his idea and recommended “that the suggestion of Dr. Gambriel [sic] concerning the opening of the doors of the university for coeducation be referred to session of the Baptist Convention to meet in Waycross.” (Minutes of the Board of Trustees, Mercer University, June 6, 1894) In June of 1895, as Miss Gambrell was receiving her certificate in Pedegogy, the Trustees voted favorably for a resolution allowing “that women applicants admitted to the School of Pedagogy be also admitted to other departments of

receive a graduate degree from Mercer was Mary Francis Johnson (M.A.) in 1924, just one year after the first undergraduate woman, Caroline Peterson, received an A.B. in Theology. Nevertheless, "Mercer did not become co-educational other than a very few resident women students until 1930-31 when provision was made for a small number of women students to live on campus in one of the faculty apartments."[19]

In light of Mercer's history of educating women, one might question why Mercer would want to run a women's college that had a declining enrollment and whose financial projections were bad enough that the school's own trustees felt the need to close. In truth, the Trustees of Mercer did not have a desire to run a women's college. In a question-and-answer session with Tift students and alumnae soon after the announcement of the merger, Dr. R. Kirby Godsey, then president of Mercer and Tift College of Mercer

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the College of Liberal Arts in connection therewith." (Minutes of the Board of Trustees, Mercer University, June 3, 1895. This was, however, referred to the GBC and "After much discussion a vote was taken and the resolution lost." Therefore Miss Gambrell was unable to receive a degree from Mercer. The first female graduate from Mercer was Mrs. W. E. Jackson, who graduated from Mercer Law School in 1919. Though Mercer became coeducational in 1917, the graduate schools were the first to receive women, who had few graduate opportunities at women's colleges.

[19] Spright Dowell, *A History of Mercer University, 1833-1953* (Macon: Mercer University, 1958), 133.

University stated, “This school [TC-MU] is not going to close.... Our first option is to try to make this college successful on this campus.”[20] However, in a meeting of the Georgia Baptist Convention executive committee he stated, “Tift was in dire straits when their trustees came to our trustees. Our trustees made it clear from the first that we should not move forward to try to accomplish what Tift could not accomplish across the years.”[21] He also claimed, “Our merger with Tift became effective last June. But we actually began to recruit for Tift last February. We have not found enough students to sustain two separate operations.”[22] Debbie McAdams, Tift student government president, had addressed this issue several months earlier. “The uncertainty makes it difficult to recruit new students – and for the school to get back on its feet – because incoming freshmen don’t know where they’ll be this time next year.”[23]

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[20] “Q-and-A on Tift, Mercer Merger,” *The Monroe County Reporter* (March 5, 1986), 4. In Special Collections, Jack Tarver Library, Mercer University, Macon, Georgia.

[21] “Mercer President Faces Questions From Baptists,” *The Christian Index* (January 1, 1987), 16. In Special Collections, Jack Tarver Library, Mercer University, Macon, Georgia.

[22] Ibid.

[23] Jim King, “Tift College Students Take Stand for School’s Identity,” *Macon Telegraph & News* (October 19, 1986), 5. In Special Collections, Jack Tarver Library, Mercer University, Macon, Georgia.

Tift College of Mercer University existed for one year, and the decision to close the Forsyth campus came only nine months after the original merger agreement. While the merger was able to protect many aspects of Tift College, the college no longer existed at the Forsyth campus. Several of Tift's alumnae filed a lawsuit trying to reverse the merger, however, the Georgia Supreme Court voted in favor of Mercer, ensuring the demise of Tift College.[24]

Georgia Baptists historically desired to educate their daughters, but that education was at no point in Tift's history fiscally supported equal to male education. As Mercer grew and became coeducational that strong, well-endowed university was able to address the need for educating Baptist women in Georgia. Historically the curriculum had been similar, as will be seen in the next section, and so a merger between the two schools seemed to be a wise financial move for the schools.

What is confusing to anyone looking back, and was probably confusing to the women attending Tift at the time

[24] Tift College of Mercer University still exists today. The alumnae of Tift College and of Tift College of Mercer University support Tift Scholars, a scholarship program for women. They also raised an endowment for the school of education, and so the name was changed to the Tift College of Education at Mercer University.

of the merger, were the mixed messages about why the school was merging. Most often the merger was postured as a means of financial security, while at the same time the leaders of Tift were claiming that Tift was the only Georgia Baptist school without debt and that the alumnae donations were at an all-time high. The administration and faculty had been dramatically improved, as well as student morale. It is possible that to many Georgia Baptists, Tift College was no longer necessary “so that their daughters be cornerstones polished after the similitude of a palace.” It is possible that changes within the make-up of the student body were part of this change in the perception of need. The next section looks at Tift as a college for women. It examines the curriculum of Tift, and how that curriculum changed over time. It also examines the role of women using exclusively the written documents left by the women of Tift to see how their perception of the role of women changed over time. This section also looks at the influences of Black women on the Tift campus.

CHAPTER 7 – TIFT CURRICULUM FOR WOMEN

In 1985, an article in the Campus Quill stated, "No longer is Tift just an old traditional college for women; it is also a college accepting modern ideas and providing for the flexibility of change."[1] The proposed changes in curriculum and image were expected to "appeal to the more competitive women in our modern society along with those who want to learn to be competitive."[2] This article of hope about the future changes of Tift was written just three months before the announcement that Tift College would be merging with Mercer University. Would the changes that were proposed in November of 1985 have created an environment that would have been able to compete with the strength of coeducational colleges around Georgia? It is a question that can only be asked rhetorically, since the changes did not have time to come to fruition.

Unfortunately changes such as these were proposed much too late in the life of Tift College, and the school merged

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[1] Kelly A. Steele, "What Will Future Hold for Tift?" *The Campus Quill* (November 21, 1985), 9. In Special Collections, Jack Tarver Library, Mercer University, Macon, Georgia.

[2] Ibid.

with Mercer as “an old traditional college for women.” This is not to say that Tift College didn’t change in its near 140-year history, but the changes that took place did not create a school that remained competitive in a constantly changing society. In the school’s earliest days the curriculum was referred to as literary, with the graduates receiving a Mistress of Liberal and Fine Arts, or M.A. degree. While there did not seem to be a change in the curriculum, “the use of the Bachelor’s degree began with the class of 1890.”[3] The curriculum for the first 50 years of Tift’s existence didn’t seem to change in any major way. *Yesterday at Tift* records the course offering of the 1859-1860 catalogue as:

> four years of English, two of composition and two of literature; four years of Latin; four years of mathematics including algebra, geometry, trigonometry and mensuration; three years of history; three years of science, including a half year of each of botany, chemistry, physiology, geology, geography of the heavens, and astronomy; two and a half years of philosophy including natural, intellectual, and moral; evidence of Christianity; mythology; and logic.[4]

In addition to these courses for degree, women could pay additional fees for studies in piano, voice, and

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[3] Euginia W. Stone, 1969, 160.

[4] Ibid. 136. The earliest catalogue listing the complete course offering now in the Tift archives is from the 1878-1879 school year. See Appendix C for a comparison of curriculum offerings over the decades.

depending upon available instructors other music classes, art classes, and elocution. These classes were important for Tift because they brought in additional funds. Often "Southern schools were so dependent on student fees from art and music courses for their survival..., that they gave such subjects an unwarranted prominence in the curriculum."[5] While these fees were important to Tift, the administration of Tift determined that they "must not hesitate, where necessary, to put a check on the pupil who would injure her literary work by overloading herself with 'specials'..., [and] save 'the specials' from militating against the best possible attainments in the school of Liberal Arts."[6]

In 1898 Tift became the GBC college for women, and one of the qualifications for acceptance as such was to change the name of the school to Monroe Female College, A Normal and Industrial School. However, rather than causing a change in the overall curriculum, "When President C.H.S. Jackson started upgrading the curriculum he provided for the word 'Normal' by adding that training as a fifth year to the four-year A.B. course."[7] The "Industrial" signification of the new name did not receive quite such a

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[5] McCandless, 1990, 34.

[6] Aquilla Chamlee, "President's Report to the Board of Trusties of Tift College," 1923, 2. In Special Collections, Jack Tarver Library, Mercer University, Macon, Georgia.

[7] Ibid. 136-7.

distinction as an extra year of instruction. Instead instruction in home economics began, as well as "a course in telegraphy, a subject that had aroused [President Jackson's] personal interest."[8] An interesting curricular detail from 1898 was that Tift had a school of Journalism offering sixteen or more courses and a major offered. According to a 1925 *Campus Quill* article, Tift's Department of Journalism was the oldest in the world. "The school was organized as a separate department in 1898, ten years before the University of Missouri's department, which has been claimed to be the world's oldest journalism school heretofore."[9] A 1926 issue of *The Journalism Bulletin* placed Tift "along with some of the nation's leading institutions (the only Southern school besides Washington and Lee) as a pioneer in the field of newspaper writing."[10] Tift was listed alongside Washington and Lee College, Harvard University, Cornell University, University of Pennsylvania, Yale University, Dartmouth College, Temple

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[8] Ibid. 137.

[9] "Department of Journalism Oldest in World," *The Campus Quill* (November 6, 1925), 1. In Special Collections, Jack Tarver Library, Mercer University, Macon, Georgia.

[10] "Bessie Tift Listed Among Pioneer Journalism Schools," *The Campus Quill* (November 13, 1926), 4. In Special Collections, Jack Tarver Library, Mercer University, Macon, Georgia.

University, and University of Pittsburgh.[11] While Tift's claim for the oldest journalism department may be contested, it appears to be the oldest women's college with a journalism department.

A 1903 advertisement for Tift stated,

> Courses in Literature, Science, Art and Music. Industrial Department gives free instruction in various industrial arts and domestic sciences. Business course prepares girls for commercial and business positions. Full Normal course for teachers.

In this advertisement the school was called only Monroe College, and while it advertised normal and industrial courses the name had been dropped, and was not taken up again. By 1906, the normal courses had been incorporated into the four year A.B. degree and every woman who graduated with the degree was granted licensure by the State, and hence many of Tift's graduates went into teaching for at least a few years until marriage. There was a movement across the nation relating maternal instincts of women with teaching.

> In lieu of the prevailing disciplinary method whereby male teachers exerted their authority over their students by physical means, [Catherine] Beecher proposed that children could be persuaded to cooperate in the task of their own instruction through affective means, means that women were uniquely qualified to employ by

[11] Ibid.

> virtue of their special relationship to children.[12]

Around 1912 there was a request from the GBC Education Board that either Tift College or Shorter College become an Industrial and Normal School, but it was evident by 1913 that both schools were "committed to the scheme of a liberal education for women."[13] That same year there was a major change in the curriculum at Tift

> The curriculum offerings beyond the still required basic courses were divided into three groups: language-literature, mathematics-science, and history-philosophy. A student, in order to qualify for a degree, had to present a major (27 quarter hours) from one of these divisions and a minor (18 quarter hours) from each of the other two. The alternative was two majors.... This, then was the first step toward elective courses at the College.[14]

This change was intended for those students receiving a Bachelor of Arts degree. A Bachelor of Music (B.M.) degree had been offered since 1907. "In 1908 Converse College in South Carolina became the first liberal arts college to allow courses in music and art to count toward an A.B. degree, and other schools in the South soon followed suit."[15] Tift was one of these schools, and after the changes occurring in 1913 student were "allowed to

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[12] Preston, 534-535.
[13] GBC Education Report, 1913, 67.
[14] Stone, 137.
[15] McCandless, 57.

elect what in that period was the equivalent of 18 quarter hours for credit toward [the] A.B. degree from the fields of music, art, expression, domestic art and science."[16] This change only lasted until 1925 when the B.M. was no longer offered as a degree program, but merely as a diploma, and music and art classes were no longer allowed as part of the A.B. degree. In 1944 the announcement was made that "Additional courses will be added with the addition of equipment and staff to grant a B.S. degree in Home Economics as approved by the Department of Education."[17] By 1948, a student could choose a major for her A.B. degree in applied music and speech. In the years following World War I a slow change began to take place in the curriculum at Tift. This change was not something unique to Tift, as many schools across the country were fluctuating between two competing educational philosophies.

> Educational philosophy in the years between 1900 and 1960 seemed divided into two antithetical schools.... [T]he traditionalists, had its roots in the determination of the founders of women's colleges to give women an education that was every bit as good as that provided for their brothers.... The second school of thought had nothing against intellectual rigor or cultural enrichment; its advocates simply preferred an education that was useful, one that prepared

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[16] Ibid.

[17] "B.S. Degree now Offered Students," *The Campus Quill* (October 3, 1944), 2. In Special Collections, Jack Tarver Library, Mercer University, Macon, Georgia.

> women for life outside the cloister of the college.[18]

Georgia Baptists and the leaders of Tift struggled with this dichotomy of traditional or utilitarian education throughout much of Tift's existence. When speaking of the education of males and females Georgia Baptists argued that "the course of training may be, and ought to be, in some respects different, but the general plan should be the same."[19] By 1935, it was said that "the schools for young ladies exploited their daring in fashioning a curriculum very much after that of a college for men, and proudly exploited the women who mastered such courses."[20] However, even in the 1870s Georgia Baptists spoke of educating their daughters for the proper station in life, but that education "should be *practical*, as well as ornamental, and thus suited to the changing state of their social condition."[21]

One difference that can be seen between the Baptist men's liberal arts education and Baptist women's liberal arts curriculum was that women were never required to take Greek.[22] Farnham points out that this was typical of

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[18] McCandless, 53-54.
[19] GBC Education Report, 1881, 22.
[20] Ragsdale, 176.
[21] GBC Education Report, 1878, 24, italics mine.
[22] See Appendix C.

Southern women's colleges, but gives no explanation as to why it was this way.[23] While there is no record of the reasoning behind this difference, one may surmise that since women were not allowed to preach in Georgia Baptist churches, and since the study of Greek was focused around the New Testament, Georgia Baptist women had no need of learning Greek. Other than the distinction with Greek, Tift held to a liberal arts curriculum that was very traditional with requirements such as Latin, rhetoric, and philosophy well into the 1900s, but by 1926 instead of requiring Latin, Latin became a foreign language choice for some degrees. Other languages offered were German, French, and Spanish. From that time on, two years of foreign language were a requirement, but by the 1947-48 school year German was discontinued, and by the 1969-70 school year Latin was discontinued as a language option. Other traditional liberal arts classes such as philosophy, logic, and rhetoric were phased out as well.

Tift held on to the traditional liberal arts education until many coeducational schools, including Mercer, which had become fully coeducational around 1930, had been established and strengthened. Many of the public coeducational schools chose a more utilitarian approach to

[23] Farnham, 25.

education. McCandless states, “The utilitarian approach to women’s education, which was largely rejected by private white women’s colleges, was enthusiastically adopted by the black and public colleges and the white state-supported institutions of the region.”[24]

By the 1960s it seems that Tift started to move more towards a utilitarian style of education, but by then it was possibly too late to compete with the many coeducational colleges. By 1968 students could receive a Bachelor of Arts, a Bachelor of Science in Elementary Education, or Bachelor of Science in Home Economics. The school also offered certificates in secretarial sciences.[25]

As the school continued there were more and more curricular changes, however, structural changes seemed to overshadow some of these changes in curriculum. In 1977, A.B. degrees in criminal justice and business administration were first offered, however, these offerings were not for the traditional Tift student, but were part of a new Evening Division opened to both men and women.[26] By 1978, B.A. degrees were offered in: Art, behavioral

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[24] McCandless, 62.

[25] Tift College, “Announcements 1968-1969” Volume 68, 15. In Special Collections, Jack Tarver Library, Mercer University, Macon, Georgia.

[26] “Tift ‘The Unique College’ 1977-1978” *Bulletin* Volume 76, 27-29. In Special Collections, Jack Tarver Library, Mercer University, Macon, Georgia.

science, business administration, education, journalism, modern languages, music, music education, church music, health and physical education, religion, social sciences, and a B.S. in elementary education.

In 1979 Tift began offering a Bachelor of Science in Nursing degree. "The four-year nursing program, arranged on a quarterly basis, [included] a generic nursing curriculum with a strong liberal arts foundation."[27] This was an elaboration of an existing 23-year old program in which Tift participated in a 33-month nursing diploma program with Georgia Baptist Hospital.[28] Tift faculty members taught core courses for the first four quarters of the program at the hospital. After a student received her diploma, she was able to "transfer to Tift for an additional four to five quarters and earn a Bachelor of Science degree in one of the natural or social science degrees."[29] The changes allowed the students to specialize in nursing. There were 50 students enrolled in the program in 1979, and 71 new students in 1980. However,

> Because of the development of three additional Bachelor of Science in Nursing programs in the state and the subsequent decrease in numbers of

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[27] Untitled Press Release, February, 1979. In Special Collections, Jack Tarver Library, Mercer University, Macon, Georgia.

[28] Ibid.

[29] Ibid.

> prospective students for the Tift program, it was decided that it [was] not economically feasible for the college to continue the BSN program.[30]

According to Dean Kenneth Morris, "state health board requirements for an accredited nursing program 'put such a burden on the school – not just in staff and salary – the equipment and supplies – that it added up to what the executive committee felt could not be afforded.'"[31]

Obviously students enrolled in this program were upset by the committee's decision. One of their complaints was the timing of the announcement. The announcement was at the beginning of March, but the students "charged that Tift should have told them the program was about to be cut before [break]. 'Then we could have been making plans. We could have spent Christmas holidays getting set for another school.'"[32] Students were also upset about having to transfer and possibly losing up to one year's worth of credits. "'Tift won't be picking up the bill for an extra year in college, and today, that bill is substantial.'"[33] About a week after the announcement an editorial cartoon in

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[30] Tift Press Release, March 2, 1981. In Special Collections, Jack Tarver Library, Mercer University, Macon, Georgia.

[31] Wendell Ramage, "Tift College Eliminates Nursing Program," *The Monroe County Reporter* (March 4, 1981), 2. In Special Collections, Jack Tarver Library, Mercer University, Macon, Georgia.

[32] Ibid.

[33] Ibid.

The Monroe County Reporter stated, “And the moral of the story is... you can lead a Tift student to nursing, but you can’t make her graduate.”[34]

The problems caused by the cancellation of the nursing school did not cause the leadership to shy away from curricular changes, however, Dean Morris stated, “I wish I could say we wouldn’t make anymore mistakes, but I can’t. I just hope we won’t make another one as bad as this.”[35] By the fall semester of that same year the school had begun a Special Education program and a sociology major.[36] By January of 1982, Tift was “investigating a minor in Computer Science with future plans for a major in the popular program.”[37] In January of 1985, Tift announced what would be it last new program. It was “a new fashion

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[34] Editorial Cartoon, *The Monroe County Reporter* (March 11, 1981), 3. In Special Collections, Jack Tarver Library, Mercer University, Macon, Georgia.

[35] Ramage, 2.

[36] “Tift College Adding New Programs for Fall Quarter.” *The Monroe County Reporter* (August 19, 1981), 4. In Special Collections, Jack Tarver Library, Mercer University, Macon, Georgia.

[37] “Tift College to Offer Computer Science Minor.” *The Monroe County Reporter* (January 20, 1982), 7. In Special Collections, Jack Tarver Library, Mercer University, Macon, Georgia.

merchandising program to begin this fall as part of its women's college curriculum."[38]

Throughout the early history of Tift the curriculum was close in design to that of Mercer University. This is very similar to what Farnham pointed out with other female colleges in the South.[39] The "specials" courses were, however, designed for proper ladies – art, music, voice, and elocution. As these classes became electives within the more utilitarian degree programs, Tift's programs were intended to be fitting for a lady. Certificate programs in secretarial and nursing developed, as well as degrees in home economics, teaching, nursing, and later, social work and fashion merchandising.

Tift students could, of course, take majors in mathematics, sciences, or other more non-feminine designed majors, but these majors according to archival sources did not seem to be well publicized. In fact, from the administrator's own reports, "Science labs were sadly neglected. Some were not fit for classes."[40] It has been

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[38] "Tift begins new program." *The Monroe County Reporter*, January 23, 1985, 2. In Special Collections, Jack Tarver Library, Mercer University, Macon, Georgia.

[39] Farnham, 22-28.

[40] "Tift College Enrollment Summary," 3. In O. Suthern Sims, Jr. "Tift College of Mercer University: The Merger Story," an unpublished collection. In Special Collections, Jack Tarver Library, Mercer University, Macon, Georgia.

shown that the school’s curriculum was devised with a very distinct belief in what women’s roles were. The next chapter will address how the women who attended Tift viewed womanhood. The way in which women at Tift viewed womanhood changed over time, however, the curriculum changes did not keep pace with those changing views.

CHAPTER 8 – WHITE WOMEN ON WOMANHOOD

Prior to the twentieth century there is little recorded information of what students thought about the roles of women. However, in the early years of the twentieth century before women were allowed to vote, Tift students often addressed the roles of women. The editors of the *Monroe College Monthly*[1] included a paper read at a Baptist women's meeting. In this paper the author stated, "It is first of all essential that women should in a measure keep pace with her brothers in the vast fields of learning and in order for this to be possible she must have the careful preparation which would fit her for efficient service."[2] Another article from the same year stated, "There is a crying need for well-poised, intelligent, highly-

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[1] The *Monroe College Monthly* was an academic journal produced between 1900 and 1925 by the two literary clubs of the college.

[2] Mrs. Sol Newsome, "Monroe and Her Interests to Women," *Monroe College Monthly* VI no 2 (1905), 46. In Special Collections, Jack Tarver Library, Mercer University, Macon, Georgia. Mrs. Newsome wrote two of the earliest papers addressing the role of women, and so is the best source for how students viewed this topic. Obviously this does not mean that all students held these views.

spiritual women among the social ranks today."[3] Education was seen as the vehicle through which women would be able to keep pace with the men. "Our girls are no longer considered adequately equipped for the duties of live when they have imperfectly mastered the rudiments of the three R's, with perhaps, the added accomplishment of a smattering of art or music."[4]

Tift College was seen by the girls attending as a place designed to prepare them for this their place in society, and that place was still rooted in the individual sphere for women. Though Tift was seen as "a strong advocate of women's' rights... her every effort [was] to place women in her proper sphere."[5] Women's rights and women's sphere worked together in the minds of the girls at Tift. "It was intended by the Creator that women should have her rights, and she has not been given a secondary place in the management of the world's affairs. On her own throne she reigns supreme."[6] Her throne, of course, was in the home. However, while this was considered her chief domain, the ideal of service by this time had been extended

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[3] Mrs. Sol Newsome, "Monroe's Position, With Reference to Education," *Monroe College Monthly* VI no 3 (1905), 106. In Special Collections, Jack Tarver Library, Mercer University, Macon, Georgia.

[4] Newsome, "Monroe and Her Interests to Women."

[5] Newsome, "Monroe's Position," 107.

[6] Ibid.

into society. Women's clubs had come into vogue near the beginning of the twentieth century. Women's clubs were seen by those at Tift as organizations with potential for good or bad.

> Women's clubs certainly are anything but a blessing when they claim the best time and work of a woman, especially if she be a married woman and have a family, ...but, on the other hand, ...if, in short, it be such a place that each woman can return to her home or her work rested and refreshed, with new energy and aspirations, *that* club is a blessing, not only to the immediate members, but to their families and friends as well, their communities and indirectly to the nation itself.[7]

There is no mention in this article as to what types of women's club the author is referring to or if this applies to all women's clubs.

With the arrival of the women's clubs, women were no longer looking only at the home, but the world around them as a part of their sphere.

> The great problems of life, social, intellectual and moral are mediated upon, and a solution of them is continually being sought…. [W]ho is to reach the mass of humanity and bring it to its best self? Upon whom does the responsibility rest? It seems to fall especially upon the

[7] "Mr. Cleveland and the Woman Question," *Monroe College Monthly* VI no 6 (1906), 214-5. In Special Collections, Jack Tarver Library, Mercer University, Macon, Georgia.

> educated, and to be more direct, it seems to fall most upon the educated woman.[8]

While women's roles seemed to be pushing beyond the borders of the home these changes were still based on the concepts of true womanhood and not a blurring between the gender lines. "[Tift's] idea of woman's rights, however, is not that of the noisy, boisterous clamorer, who would place women in the great whirl of politics and public life and put into her hands the reins that were never intended to be held by her."[9] To many at Tift, women being allowed to vote went against the ideas of true womanhood, and the women of Tift believed that they could change the world without the vote. "There is a better way for women to improve social conditions than going to the polls and casting a vote. She has an influence, and if she uses it for good on fathers and brothers, husbands and sweethearts, and on her children there will be no need to fear the state. It will take care of itself."[10]

Even though politics and women's suffrage were not especially important to the students of Tift, they were

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[8] "Mission of the Educated Woman," *Monroe College Monthly* VI no 5 (1906), 179-80. In Special Collections, Jack Tarver Library, Mercer University, Macon, Georgia.

[9] Newsome, "Monroe's Position," 107.

[10] "Mr. Cleveland," 215.

compelled to help change the world around them, and in doing so felt themselves a part of the women's movement.

> Verily, [Tift], unconsciously is a part of the great woman movement of the day. Her motif is not indeed that of the extremist who claim fellowship in this movement, and yet could in no sense be recognized as true exponents of its meaning. But truly [Tift's] tendency is to the enlargement and training of woman's power that she may be fitted to the ever changing needs of the world about her – first in her own home and then in the homes and lives of those about her.[11]

That passage was written in 1905, and the issues of women's rights and roles resurfaced in the journal throughout the first two decades of the twentieth century. In a 1912 issue of the journal there appears to have been a debate over the issue of suffrage. Esther Tatum wrote an article opposed to suffrage asking, "since home life is their sphere, why add the new responsibilities of voting?"[12] She went on to argue, "We have found from statistics that in countries where women vote, one-fourth of the public offices are held by women. They can't possibly have the time needed to care for the home if they do justice to

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[11] "A Letter from a Monroe Alumna," *Monroe College Monthly* V no 5 (1905), 14. In Special Collections, Jack Tarver Library, Mercer University, Macon, Georgia.

[12] Esther Tatum, "The Ballot for Women in America," *Bessie Tift Journal* XII no 8 (1912), 390. In Special Collections, Jack Tarver Library, Mercer University, Macon, Georgia. In 1910 the title was changed from *Monroe College Monthly* to *Bessie Tift Journal* in keeping with the change in the name of the institution itself.

their new work."[13] She claimed that if a woman was equal with men then she "would have to fight for her opinion and thereby lose the greatest claim of womanhood – her modesty and retiring nature."[14] Another argument she made is that most women are opposed to suffrage. The fact that the majority of women were not involved in the suffrage movement was, to her, evidence that they are not for suffrage. The great majority of women "glory in doing well those things which an all-wise Creator assigned a woman's part in life."[15]

On the other side of the debate, Grizella Merrill tried to show why women should be allowed to vote. One of her arguments was that women have been held to higher moral virtues. "That their morals are better than men's is proved by the fact that they are banned from society when guilty of the same offenses as men may commit quite pardonably, smoking, swearing, and vulgarity."[16] If this was true and because "The politics of today... are very corrupt...," then allowing women to vote would improve politics. She went on to ask, "Can you recall a single instance of a woman's leading in a movement which was not

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[13] Tatum, 390-1.
[14] Ibid. 391.
[15] Ibid. 392.
[16] Grizella Merrill, "The Ballot for Women in America," *The Bessie Tift Journal* XII no 8 (1912), 388.

an improvement? They are active in temperance and civic work; they are fighting social evils as well as they can with their hands tied by not having the ballot."[17] Her reply to the argument of women stepping outside her sphere was that voting is not outside her sphere.

> What is said of woman's belonging in the home is true. That should be her first consideration. But that does not bar her from the polls. Is man's main business in life to vote? No, he has to support his family but he may vote too, without neglecting his business.[18]

In 1913 there was another article on suffrage, but there was no debate. The article, "Resolved that Women Should Not Vote in the United States" repeated most of the same arguments Esther Tatum had used the year before, adding again the importance of women's sphere. "No where can women exert greater influence than in the home. Our homes are the unit of our nation. If every woman expended all her energy on that one unit in a great effort to make it morally pure, she will have conferred the greatest benefit possible on our republic.[19] The author summed up her article with this statement, "Stand for what is best

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[17] Ibid. 389.

[18] Ibid.

[19] Eunice Ginn, "Resolved that Women Should Not Vote in the United States," *The Bessie Tift Journal* XIII no 7 (1913), 239. In Special Collections, Jack Tarver Library, Mercer University, Macon, Georgia.

and highest in our land, but battle for it in your own sphere, the home."[20]

By 1915 women's suffrage still had not gained a strong foothold at Tift as evidenced by a clever story written by Estelle Walton. "The Turkey Suffragette" was a story in which a group of female fowl is complaining that they do not have the same rights as the male fowl. At one point the turkey hen said to her fowl sisters, "We are told we must stay at home and care for the rising generations, while our husbands go out and fight for them. But I ask, why would we not be truer mothers to fight, than to send our sons to be slain?"[21] She continued on proclaiming the rights of female fowl, and "so intense was the interest and breathless the attention that no one noticed the approaching cook until the poor old turkey suffragette was borne away."[22]

After the suffrage movement passed and women were allowed to vote, there was little written in the journal or

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[20] Ibid. 241.

[21] Estelle Walton, "The Turkey Suffragette," *The Centralian* (November 1914), 5. In Special Collections, Jack Tarver Library, Mercer University, Macon, Georgia. I have not been able to find out anything about this particular publication. It seems to have been only published for one year.

[22] Ibid.

newspaper about the role of women. Occasionally there was an item, such as a joke printed in the 1942 Alumni Quill:

Dr. McCullough: "Have you a book called Man the Master of Women".

Miss Cabiniss: "Fiction Department on the other side, sir."[23]

However there was one article written in 1935 entitled "Young Womanhood." The author echoed earlier students with statements such as: Women has always been in some way the power behind the throne...."[24] In addition to this, however, the author acknowledged that the role of women is society was changing. "Today [women's power] is more direct. We are shoulder to shoulder with a crisis that man alone cannot grapple with…. Surely we will lead them to the light of understanding."[25] She encouraged her sisters at Tift with this statement, "Whatever we may be asked to do in the coming years, meet it with a high courage," but also warned them to "above all keep your womanliness – that

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[23] *The Campus Quill*. 2 no 1 (1941), 4. The *Alumni Quill* was started in 1941 as a section of the *Campus Quill.* In Special Collections, Jack Tarver Library, Mercer University, Macon, Georgia. In 1940 the school newspaper *The Campus Quill* was started. I have used dates or volume and edition numbers, as different editors used different organizational methods.

[24] Martha Giles, "Young Womanhood," *The Campus Quill* (January 1935), 1. In Special Collections, Jack Tarver Library, Mercer University, Macon, Georgia.

[25] Ibid.

virtue that makes us the inspirational and courageous leaders of man through the years."[26]

During America's involvement in World War II a few articles were written about the role of women in the war. An open letter "To The Students of Bessie Tift" from Henry Morgenthau, Jr., the Secretary of the Treasury, was printed informing the students of the importance of their support of the troops, specifically purchasing War Bonds and stamps.[27] It was not until 1944 that the students of Tift left any documentation as to their views on women's roles in the war effort. In an editorial Mary Francis Thomas wrote, "In this total war effort womanpower can be one of the most powerful assets of any nation."[28] She went on to say that because of the low number of women volunteers, American womanpower was "still 'X' in the equation." Defending womanpower in America she asked about the reasons for the lack of female volunteers. Could it be that "she has less at stake," she "has less courage and patriotism," she is "soft physically," or that it is "a softness of

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[26] Ibid.

[27] Henry Morgenthau, Jr., "To The Students of Bessie Tift" *The Campus Quill* (Feb. 12, 1943), 1. In Special Collections, Jack Tarver Library, Mercer University, Macon, Georgia.

[28] Mary Francis Thomas, "American Womanhood," *The Campus Quill* 19 (May 9, 1944), 2.

character?"[29] She denied all of these as possibilities, claiming instead that it must have been "a lack of the realization of the serious need of her country." Clearly the author believed that if "a clarion call" had been issued the women would have responded.[30]

Soon after that article was another article in a subsequent issue by an alumna telling of her work "As the only civilian in the medical chemistry branch" at the Finney General Army Hospital.[31] In the article she spoke of the fascination the work afforded in allowing her to meet war heroes and the country's leaders. It seems that her work gave her opportunities to meet people she may never have met, taking her outside the sphere normally occupied by Tift women. "How else would I," she wrote, "have stuck needles in a General? How else could I go barging into the sick rooms of Georgia Supreme Court Justices, of prominent business men, generally protected by a battalion (almost) of secretaries?"[32]

In a 1961 essay for an English final that was later printed in the *Quill*, one student wrote of her reason for attending college. Before she attended Tift she said:

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[29] Ibid.
[30] Ibid.
[31] Virginia Marshall, "The Story of My Life in the Army," *The Campus Quill*, 19 (May 29, 1944), 3.
[32] Ibid. 6.

> I wanted to attend college to raise my social level. I felt that if I had a college education I would be above many people in the sense of job opportunities and social class. I could say with a sweet, refined voice that I had attended such-and-such college, or I had received my A.B. at Tift College. The boy I was planning to marry was attending college and I wanted to be on the same educational level as my future husband.[33]

After attending Tift for only one year she stated, "I want to learn for the joy of learning and not to impress someone by my accomplishments."[34] Even though her motivation for attending school seems to have changed, it is evident that her ideas of her role as a woman in regard to the world (job opportunities and social class) and to her future husband (same educational level) were vastly different than women who had attended Tift in the nineteenth century. While a college degree may have played a part in maintaining one's image of social class in the South in the previous century, job opportunities and the educational level of the husband were not goals of a degree.[35]

A humorous article in 1961 gives some evidence to the minds of the students of Tift when it comes to the

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[33] Anonymous Freshman, "I Was Expected to Go to College," *The Campus Quill* 26 (April 10, 1961), 3. In Special Collections, Jack Tarver Library, Mercer University, Macon, Georgia.

[34] Ibid.

[35] Farnham.

differences in males and females. The author makes her declaration, "Women are the weaker sex! Here, we've said it. By tomorrow we will know who our true friends weren't."[36] She claimed that women must be the weaker sex because they cannot open fingernail polish bottles, by the time they finally get aspirin bottles open they are a "quivering mass of protoplasm, nothing more – even our headache is gone."[37] The article ended, "There is really no argument – women are weak. They need men. That's all there is to it. We've said it, and we're glad. Now we are going to sit down and wait for all our nasty letters – and a man."[38]

This article shows that the women of Tift did not consider themselves weak, or the author would not have been expecting to lose friends and get nasty letters, but at the same time the author, and whomever she is including in the "we", did feel that she may be weaker and did "need men," if only to open bottles. Getting a man, or more accurately, a husband was very important to the students of Tift as evidenced again and again in the *Quill*. A 1963 article claimed that several Tift students had changed by

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[36] Charlene Pattillo, "Buttermilk and Short Shorts," *The Campus Quill* 26 (April 10, 1961), 3.
[37] Ibid.
[38] Ibid.

acquiring "something lacking by the majority of the students (and wanted by all students) – a husband!"[39] In a 1967 article, the author stated, "We are all going to grow up eventually and become 'bourgeois housewives of Suburbia with the acceptable amount of education and all the proper thoughts and opinions and social graces.'"[40] While this is to some degree a commentary on their education, it shows that becoming a housewife was still the expected norm for every student. A 1968 article also illustrated this expectation when the same author stated that seniors could placed into one of two groups. "There is the 'Just Wait Until June And I'll Be Married" type. [And,] the other extreme, the 'It's Almost June And I'm Not Married Yet!' type."[41]

With the advent of the Women's Liberation Movement, again there was a flurry of documented writing by the women of Tift addressing their roles as women. One article addressed changes in dress. "'I thought they were just

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[39] Margie Senn, "Matrimony Invades Tift Campus," *The Campus Quill* (February 6, 1963), 4. In Special Collections, Jack Tarver Library, Mercer University, Macon, Georgia.

[40] Cheryl Cooper, "Tune In – Turn On – But Don't Drop Out!" *The Campus Quill* 36 (October 1967), 4. In Special Collections, Jack Tarver Library, Mercer University, Macon, Georgia.

[41] Cheryl Cooper, "The Alienation of a Senior," *The Campus Quill* (May 1968), 4. In Special Collections, Jack Tarver Library, Mercer University, Macon, Georgia.

pulling my leg when they put that up,' commented Carroll Smith about the poster announcing pant suits as acceptable classroom dress."[42] Most of the students' responses in the article were favorable toward the change, but there were those that opposed the change. One Tift student stated, "I don't think it's feminine. I think we'll have trouble with the Georgia Baptist Convention."[43]

In the same issue was an article on family planning. A survey had been given at the school and of the 174 students responding, 94% had been in favor of family planning through the use of birth control. There were those opposed to birth control, which may have been partially because of the studets' beliefs about women's roles as ordained by God. "I believe that birth control is against the laws of nature and of God."[44] The next issue of the paper ran an article on the second half of the survey; most of the questions which focused on abortion. While most of the students were opposed to abortion because "We should not disobey God's law of 'Thou shalt not kill,'"[45]

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[42] Carol Griffen, "A First At Tift," *The Campus Quill* 39 no 2 (1970), 1. In Special Collections, Jack Tarver Library, Mercer University, Macon, Georgia.

[43] Ibid.

[44] Linda Hodges, "94% Favor Family Planning," *The Campus Quill* 39 (November 1970), 2.

[45] Jan Biggers, "Students Say 'No' to Abortion," *The Campus Quill* 39 (December 1970), 2.

there were several statements about why abortion was wrong. There was one student that claimed she didn't "feel a person could answer these questions truthfully until she has been in the situation – she may then act entirely different."[46] What was particularly interesting about this article was that the author did not mention men having any role in the decision making process, nor did any of the quotes placed in the article. However, the article outlined historical claims about abortion from Aristotle, Hippocrates, and "the Jewish people" which were male or dominated by males. The author also included information from the Christian Life Commission of the Southern Baptist Convention which was predominantly managed by men.

A 1973 article in the *Quill* was titled "WOMEN'S LIBeral Arts College???" In the article the author did not hide her dissatisfaction with the way the school was being led.

> Being an all female college it would seem almost natural that women's liberation would have seeped in by now. However, the over-all general opinion is that we don't need a group of liberationists behind us… we are already liberated within ourselves, we are in the "run of things" on our female-oriented campus…. Well, don't fool

[46] Ibid.

> yourself sister. It's the closest thing to an almost lie yet to be presented.[47]

The article is written in opposition to "a certain brochure full of mistakes gone uncorrected" even though the students' "opinions were voiced but without results."[48] The author went on to say, "As you can see, we are not expected to become concerned about the management or publicity of our college. We should leave that up to businessmen. However, would the overly dramatized words 'male chauvinist' have a better connotation for what we mean?"[49]

In the same issue of the *Quill* was an article entitled "How Come?" designed as "A new article just for students and faculty gripes…."[50] Amongst gripes such as, "How come the food gets worse the more we complain?" and "How come we have so many Wednesday chapels?" was the question, "How come an all-women college has a male admission staff?"[51] This issue of the paper contains the first documented

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[47] Carolyn Deloach, "WOMEN'S LIBeral Arts College???" *The Campus Quill* 41 (April 1973), 2. In Special Collections, Jack Tarver Library, Mercer University, Macon, Georgia.

[48] Ibid.

[49] Ibid.

[50] Carolyn Deloach, "How Come?" *The Campus Quill* 41 (April 1973), 2. In Special Collections, Jack Tarver Library, Mercer University, Macon, Georgia.

[51] Ibid.

statement against an aspect of the college because the school was "completely being controlled by our brothers."[52]

In March of 1974 the role of men in the leadership at Tift was once again addressed, this time in a letter to the editor. The letter was written in response to an article about Tift in the *Macon Telegraph* entitled "Staff at College Swaps the Desk for the Pulpit." The author of the letter was upset that in the article about the staff of Tift, "Not one woman was mentioned."[53] The author felt that the article gave rise to many questions such as, "Are women faculty and staff members at Tift not involved in religious activities? Are there, perhaps, no women on the staff and faculty? [and] If there are, do these women make no real contributions to God's Kingdom?"[54] She pointed out that unlike men, "women don't ordinarily get paid for their Christian service." In concluding her letter the author did not fault the writer of the *Telegraph's* article for excluding women, but pointed instead to the administration of the college, asking "Has male chauvinism which has long

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[52] Deloach, "WOMEN'S LIBeral Arts College???"

[53] Henrietta Godfrey, "Letters to the Editor," *The Campus Quill* 42 no 5 (1974), 2. In Special Collections, Jack Tarver Library, Mercer University, Macon, Georgia.

[54] Ibid.

characterized the administration at Tift College infected the releases of the new bureau too?"[55]

In 1975 an article in the *Quill* addressed sexism at the school and garnered a small debate. The authors, Karen Minton and Darlene Chase, felt that though Tift had missed most of the controversy over sexism that was prevalent across the nation, it was time "for polished cornerstones to take an account of their position on this subject and analyze its existence on campus."[56] One of the major issues the authors brought up dealt with the school's curriculum which focused "on education, an occupational field sometimes considered ideal for women," adding that "The non-teaching programs seem to be far and few between."[57] Some students seemed to accept sexism based on longstanding traditions at Tift, but did not "think Tift's education should be geared to just 'womanly jobs,' such as teaching and nursing, but should include more varied fields."[58] The authors also examined the norms of the school. "From the many feminine things sold in the College Store to the rigid

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[55] Ibid.

[56] Karen Minton and Darlene Chase, "Sexism in School, Some Say," *The Campus Quill* 42 no 11 (1975), 4. In Special Collections, Jack Tarver Library, Mercer University, Macon, Georgia.

[57] Ibid.

[58] Candy Warlick, "Students React to 'Sexism'". *The Campus Quill* 42 no 12 (1975), 3. In Special Collections, Jack Tarver Library, Mercer University, Macon, Georgia.

code of dresses at Sunday lunch and important assemblies, students are encouraged to be what men have always expected them to be: the 'proper' lady."[59] When it came to the role of women, most of the views articulated in the rebuttal article expressed affirmation for the traditional role of women. One student quoted in the article stated, "I will agree that there is this so called 'sexism' on Tift campus but it doesn't bother me in the least because I believe in the traditional role of the woman."[60] Another student stated, "There is sexism on our campus, but it doesn't bother me. I enjoy being a woman and I really don't care to compete in a man's world."[61]

The vote for the Equal Right Amendment (ERA) brought up more dissention among women, often in terms of misunderstanding, it seems, more than disagreement. One of the issues of ERA that caused confusion was the misunderstanding that passage of ERA would cause Tift to lose its single-sex status.[62] Other issues that were debated were the arguments that ERA would bring about unisex toilets and the drafting of women into the armed forces. In one letter to the Editor, a student wrote, "I feel ERA

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[59] Minton and Chase.
[60] Warlick.
[61] Ibid.
[62] The letters to the Editor in the November 1978 issue of the *Quill* spoke to these issues.

would benefit women in the long run through better clarify-cation of legal rights and giving women a chance to stand up for themselves and say, 'Hey, I'm a person too.'"[63]

It is evident that women's proper station in life was a viewpoint held by many Tift women throughout much of the school's history. However, this stance was challenged more and more throughout the twentieth century. Women's suffrage, women working through WWII, and the Women's Liberation Movement, all stretched, reshaped, and eventually tore apart the sphere women had once been confined to.

> The feminist movement affected the education of women and men in all kinds of institutions, both undergraduate and professional. As a result of federal legislation and accompanying affirmative action regulations, public efforts to reduce and eliminate discrimination against women in academia, as well as in the workplace, helped individuals to assert themselves, to reject age-old prejudices.[64]

This type of attitude became increasingly evident in the 1970s and 1980s as the women of Tift began to seriously question the leadership of the mostly male administration, both in the way they handled the business affairs of the school as well as the structure of the curriculum.

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[63] Debra Brightwell in a letter to the Editor, *The Campus Quill*, 45 (November 1978), 2. In Special Collections, Jack Tarver Library, Mercer University, Macon, Georgia.

[64] Solomon, 204.

However, “not only in the classroom, but also in the public sphere, female consciousness raising grew….”[65] In addition to these changes in ideology of students toward women’s roles, a more diversified student body also brought about more questions for the traditional make-up of the school. The next chapter examines how segregation of Tift helped to bring changes to the school.

[65] Ibid. 205

CHAPTER 9 – BLACK WOMEN ON AN INTERRACIAL TIFT CAMPUS

Tift College, when chartered in 1849, was begun as a college for women. However, unstated in the charter or any other documents found in the Tift archives was the signify-cation that Tift was a college for White women. Race was seldom mentioned in any surviving written materials from the first century of Tift's existence. This is not surprising when the history of Georgia Baptists as a whole is taken into account.

Blacks in Georgia attended segregated churches, and these churches were not part of the GBC. While race kept the churches officially separate, there is some evidence that Christian unity crossed, at least at times, racial lines. S. G. Hillyer, in his *Reminiscences of Georgia Baptists,* told a story his mother told him about her childhood church experience prior to 1800:

> There was once a gay young lady with no thought of piety, as far as I know, who accompanied her pious mother to her church. It was conference day. When the door of the church opened only one came forward, and he was a middle-aged negro. The young lady said to herself: "Surely the Church is not going to receive such a creature as that, he cannot tell an experience [of conversion]." Perhaps she scarcely deigned to listen to the poor darkey's words, preferring

> probably to indulge in her own thoughts. But presently, very much to her, the members rose to their feet and, with a sweet song of welcome, began to give the humble candidate the right hand of fellowship.[1]

This story obviously doesn't paint a picture of equity, but does show some slight crossing of racial barriers within the Baptist church in Georgia. Adiel Sherwood, one of the first White Baptists, often worshiped with Black Baptist churches. In 1818, "Within a month of entering his duties as teacher of the Waynesboro Academy, Sherwood attended the church of Venture Galphin, an aged black preacher."[2] Again, while officially separate there was a crossing of lines. When it came to Baptists and education, however, lines were seldom, if ever, crossed.

As one might imagine, Baptists in Georgia made no mention of the education of Blacks until after the Civil War. In these years following the war, Georgia Baptists, as well as all Southern Baptists, were figuring out how to deal with the newly freed Blacks. Isaac Taylor Tichenor, the Corresponding Secretary for the Home Mission Board of the SBC once remarked, "I do not know what to do about the colored people. I asked on of the wisest men in all the

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[1] S. G. Hillyer, 185.

[2] Walter Jarrett Burch, *Adiel Sherwood: A Baptist Antebellum Pioneer Georgia* (Macon, GA: Mercer Press, 2004), 25.

land. He said he was in doubt too. Something must be done for them, but I do not know what we should do."[3] He later commented that he would "make haste slowly."[4] Georgia Baptists seemed to have no better idea of how to deal with Blacks. The first statement in an Education Report referring to Blacks was in 1870, and had nothing to do with educating Blacks, but was instead an impassioned plea for the importance of educating White children. "We must educate our children or doom them to competing for a living, with degraded freedmen and miserable immigrants."[5]

In 1872 the tone of the report was more hospitable as the committee expressed a sense of growth in interest and opportunity in the area of education. In this report they stated, "Be it the pride of every Baptist represented in this Convention to speak a word of encouragement for every Institute of our people for the education of male or female, white or black."[6] The inclusion of Blacks in this statement probably was in reference to a new educational endeavor of Georgia Baptists that year, the Augusta Institute, as it seems to have been the only Baptist

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[3] Joe W. Burton, *Road to Recovery: Southern Baptist Renewal Following the Civil War, as seen Especially in the Work of I. T. Tichenor* (Nashville: Broadman Press, 1977), 71.

[4] Ibid. 73.

[5] GBC Education Report, 1870, 12.

[6] GBC Education Report, 1872, 16.

institution that educated Blacks. The Augusta Institute was started "for the education of our colored brethren in the ministry."[7] In 1875, the Committee reported:

> The institute for colored ministers, under the care and instruction of our esteemed brother, J. T. Robert, is doing a noble work for our colored population. We trust that many will avail themselves of the excellent course of instruction there, and that the school may prove an incalculable blessing in evangelizing and elevating the race.[8]

Any sense of equality seems to be totally lacking in each year's statement about the Augusta institute. The committee stated that J. T. Robert was "doing a noble work for our colored population," not "a noble work with," as well as the focus on "elevating the race."

While the Institute was started to educate black ministers, by 1878 there is some evidence that some Blacks were being educated without plans for ministry, however it is unclear if this occurred because of a genuine interest in the education of Blacks. Educating ministers was important because of the importance Baptists placed on evangelism, but teaching other Blacks not headed toward ministry may have stemmed from an ongoing competition with Catholics.

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[7] Ibid. 17.
[8] GBC Education Report, 1875, 26.

> The Augusta Institute, for the education of colored young men, under the care of our brother Roberts, has, at present, ninety-two students, fifty-five of whom have the ministry in view. We recommend our brethren to aid in sending these pious and promising young men who have the ministry in view. And your committee *urge this*, in view of the fact, among other facts, that the Catholics are making strenuous efforts to control our colored people by giving them cheap or gratuitous education. They are locating one of their strongholds in Savannah, in our own State, while in Baltimore and New Orleans are the others.[9]

The fear of Catholic intrusion into Georgia appears more powerful than any sense of happiness that Blacks were being educated.

Sometime in 1879 or 1880 the Institute was moved to Atlanta and came to be under the control of the American Board of Home Missions.[10] After this time there was no mention of the Institute in the Education Reports, however, in 1886 there was a report given by the Colored Minister's Institute. In this report Alvan D. Freeman, the presenter, speaks of a lack of funds and urges "the pastors connected with this Convention to hold institutes as often as practicable each year for the instruction of the colored people in their respective vicinities."[11]

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[9] GBC Education Report, 1878, 24.
[10] GBC Education Report, 1880, 22.
[11] GBC Education Report, 1886, 33

In 1892 the last statement about Blacks was made in the nineteenth century Education Reports. Unfortunately, its tenor is much the same as the first Report mentioning Blacks in 1870.

> We cannot consent that the Caucasian element of our republic shall be laggards in this educational movement. The impending political crisis, which threatens not only the disruption of parties, but the obliteration of race political distinctions, warns us that Caucasian supremacy is in jeopardy unless the education of the white race be kept in the fore.[12]

This regrettable statement fairly well sums up the work of Georgia Baptists with Black education in the nineteenth century. Overall, Georgia Baptists had little concern for Black education, and even where they did show some concern, namely theological education, their motives were at times circumspect.

There was, however, an interest in international work. Georgia Baptists were involved heavily in missions work with other countries, especially near the end of the nineteenth century and the twentieth century. This work impacted Tift in a couple of ways. First, as seen earlier, Baptist missions work was one source of permissible work for southern Baptist women outside of the home. The second way that missions impacted Tift was that missionaries

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[12] GBC Education Report, 1892, 24.

around the world began to send girls from other countries to Tift for education. In 1940, Maria and Esther Martinez, daughters of a Baptist minister in Cuba, were the first international students to attend Tift.[13] "Ruth (Ging Heng) Kao came next in 1947 from China."[14] Later there were other girls from China, Korea, Canada, Argentina, Sweden, and Japan. However, it was not until the 1967-1968 school year that the first Black woman was enrolled at Tift.

Prior to that date there was some discussion of segregation. In a 1959 Campus Quill editorial, a student stated, "Old beliefs, prejudices, customs, and traditions are not going to be abolished by court orders.... There are so many localities in which the new ruling cannot be yet applied."[15] The author went on to condemn the violence on both sides of the segregation struggle, and claimed that, "[w]e need to seek a time in which we can adjust and plan, a time to re-organize our ideals and then be willing to change our deep-seated beliefs if that be necessary."[16] There was no discussion of what might be best for the Blacks in the South, nor was there any recognition that the

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[13] Stone, 152.

[14] Ibid. See Stone for a full account of all the international students between 1940 and 1968.

[15] Carolynn Ann Allison, "Editorial," *The Campus Quill* (February 6, 1959), 2. In Special Collections, Jack Tarver Library, Mercer University, Macon, Georgia.

[16] Ibid.

order for desegregation came down in 1955, giving southern Whites four years to reorganize their ideals.

In 1961, it seems that the "deep-seated beliefs" were, for the most part, still in place. An article in the *Quill* stated, "Tift students have failed to broaden their views to include the entire scope of our rapidly shrinking world."[17] In regard to segregation the author went on to write, "Many students reacted that it didn't concern us – we're in a private school," but the author challenged her schoolmates to not remain "bottled up in our own little corner of the world."[18]

In 1967, that little corner of the world was finally integrated as June Hubbard became the first black student at Tift.[19] There was no mention of her entrance in the *Quill* as there had been for each of the international students who had attended prior to this date. The next fall when three more Black students entered Tift, there was again no notice in the *Quill*. The first mention of Black students in the *Quill* was four years after Miss Hubbard entered, in a 1971 article about discrimination against "Racial and Day Students."

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[17] Glenda Robinson, "Are We Concerned?" *The Campus Quill* (May 15, 1961), 2. In Special Collections, Jack Tarver Library, Mercer University, Macon, Georgia.

[18] Ibid.

[19] Stone, 156.

The article showed that 89 percent of Tift students surveyed felt that there was some discrimination against day students, students who drove in to school each day rather than living in dorms. Their basis was that day students were not represented on the student government. In comparison with that only "23 percent of the student body felt that there [was] some racial prejudice among Tift's faculty, administration, and-or students."[20] Also, 44 percent felt that Tift was discriminating by hiring only black cooks and maids. The author stated, "Many qualified their answers by asking whether any whites had also applied for these positions."[21] For a school where less than 25 percent of the students felt there was racial discrimination, there were several student implying discriminatory practices. "[O]ne student felt that the racial prejudice was 'against white students for being prejudiced towards black students…. Another student stated,

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[20] Jan Biggers, "Racial and Day Students Discrimination Voiced," *The Campus Quill* (May 1971), 2. In Special Collections, Jack Tarver Library, Mercer University, Macon, Georgia.

[21] Ibid. In many of *The Campus Quill* articles the authors do not capitalize "White" or "Black" when speaking to race. I have chosen to place the quotes in this text as they were found in the original, therein lies the reason for finding the terms sometimes capitalized and sometimes not.

‘being from out of state I took it as natural for the South to have all black cooks and maids.’”[22]

There were some students who seemed tuned to the discrimination on campus. “One pointed out, ‘if the black students are not discriminated against, then why do we have so few on campus?’”[23] This was similar to what was going on at many college and university campuses. Three years prior to this article, the University of Michigan had “a total domestic population of 32,261, [and] enrolled 797 Black students….”[24] In the same Quill article, another student asked, “Why should Negroes be made to go to chapel and sit there and listen to a Baptist minister who would not let them in his church?”[25] There was only one statement from a Black student in the article in which racial discrimination was voiced. The article did not say if she was the only Black student interviewed, the only one who responded, or merely the only one the author chose to quote in the article. This student said,

> I feel that the social endeavors here on campus are biased toward the white. The entertainment

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[22] Ibid.

[23] Ibid.

[24] James D. Anderson, “Past Discrimination and Diversity: A Historical Context for Understanding Race and Affirmative Action,” *The Journal of Negro Education* 76 (Summer 2007), 204. In Special Collections, Jack Tarver Library, Mercer University, Macon, Georgia.

[25] Ibid.

> is primarily toward them and it is not concerned with blacks at all. I feel that in choosing the entertainment, they should choose something that is likely to appeal to the black and interest them as well. We're adjusting to their likes and dislikes, now let them adjust to ours.[26]

In 1972, the first photograph of Black students, as well as an article solely about Black students appeared in the *Quill*. The article was about one student with a disability, how she was overcoming that disability, and how the other student was helping her.[27] The article was written by the first Black student to serve as one of the editors of the *Quill*. This opened up the voice of the Black students, and in 1973, some of the Black students felt that it was "time that we Blacks come out of the shadows and into the light."[28] They made strong accusations in the letter:

> In our class meetings, we have been overlooked as if we were a piece of furniture. As with the issue of the Miss Tift Pageant; the two Blacks nominated were the only names out of the seven that were rejected.... In the history of the class of "75", no Blacks have ever held offices of any kind.... We are only invited to class meetings for our vote and money.[29]

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[26] Ibid.

[27] Delores Dewberry, "Tift Has Dynamic Duo," *The Campus Quill* (November 1972), 2. In Special Collections, Jack Tarver Library, Mercer University, Macon, Georgia.

[28] Rosa M. Simpson, Melody M. Meyers, Roxie M. Grier, and Johnnie M. Josie, "Demand Equality," *The Campus Quill* (October 29, 1973), 2. In Special Collections, Jack Tarver Library, Mercer University, Macon, Georgia.

[29] Ibid.

These students went on to declare that "we the Black members of the junior class are going to start taking and demanding our way…. [W]e are strong, intelligent, and DETERMINED BLACK WOMEN, and with these qualities we won't be held down like our ancestors."[30] Again, this is similar to what was happening on other college campuses. "Throughout the 1970s and later, Black students complained of various forms of racism and discrimination as they proposed to make the campus a better place to live and study."[31] The next semester these women, along with other Black women at Tift, formed a new organization called Black Students on the Move.

> The purpose of the organization [was] to serve the community and campus in all areas, provide a cultural base for all blacks on campus, give them a sense of belonging, to make others more knowledgeable about black history and black accomplishments, promote loyalty to Tift and to prepare strong black leaders.[32]

While this did not necessarily give Black students leadership positions in the power structures already in place at the school, it did give them leadership roles as the organization had a president, vice president,

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[30] Ibid. all capitals in original.
[31] Anderson, 207.
[32] "Blacks Form Organization" *The Campus Quill* (February, 1974), 4. In Special Collections, Jack Tarver Library, Mercer University, Macon, Georgia.

secretary-treasurer, and a reporter. This organization may have served to help the Black women at Tift in much the same way women's colleges gave women the ability to have leadership roles they would not have had in coeducational institutions.

In May of the same year the school announced that it would offer a Black Studies Course, designed to "survey the attempts of Black Americans, from slavery to the present, to understand the nature of their position in American society and the nature of that society itself."[33] The course was added, but was the only course dealing with Black culture or history. In 1982 a student editorial by a Black student, Beverly Brown, stated, "I cannot understand why Tift, a liberal arts college, does not have a black history course."[34] She then asked two questions, "Has Tift intentionally kept courses concerning black culture out of the curriculum? [And,] what can be done to correct so grave a mistake if, indeed, it is a mistake?"[35] These were strong questions aimed toward the administration; however, no

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[33] Helen Ried, "Black Studies Course Added," *The Campus Quill* (May, 1974), 3. In Special Collections, Jack Tarver Library, Mercer University, Macon, Georgia.

[34] Beverly J. Brown, "Black Contributions Not Recognized," *The Campus Quill* (January, 1982), 2. In Special Collections, Jack Tarver Library, Mercer University, Macon, Georgia.

[35] Ibid.

response was made, at least within the campus newspaper. The same author the next month stopped asking questions and instead made accusations:

> The "corner stone" polishers of Tift College are falling short on their task. According to the 1981-82 Bulletin "the initial purpose of the founders and that of the present administration of Tift College is to provide quality education for young women in a Christian and cultural environment." The cultural environment for black students leaves much to be desired.[36]

She stated that in her three years at the school there had been only one activity that enhanced Black culture. "The initiation of more cultural programs would not only enhance black awareness, but also increase the dwindling black populous on campus. Both should be important to Tift administrators."[37] Black groups on other campuses stated similar complaints, often attributing feelings of isolation "in part, to the lack of faculty committed to work closely with minority students, and therefore, failing to provide them with personal, academic, and social support."[38] Brown went on to challenge Tift's administration further,

> The aim also states that "the College consciously seeks to... give the student an opportunity to grow in knowledge so that she may better

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[36] Beverly J. Brown, "Cornerstones Need Culture," *The Campus Quill* (February-March, 1982), 2. In Special Collections, Jack Tarver Library, Mercer University, Macon, Georgia.

[37] Ibid.

[38] Anderson, 208.

> formulate a true picture of her own beliefs.... Once again Tift falls miserably short. There are no sufficient role models to help shape a black student's beliefs. What kind of models are maids, cooks, and maintenance crews for the formation of polished cornerstones in today's materialist world?[39]

It was twelve years after desegregation that the first Black woman entered Tift and Black students were only on the Tift's campus as students for 20 of the 138 years Tift was a women's college, and as can be seen, those twenty years did not afford Blacks an equal education to the White students enrolled. The statement of Beverly Brown above gives evidence of the eventual end of Tift. She shows that Black students had no role model to help them become polished cornerstones, still the motto of Tift. Brown points out that Tift was no longer fulfilling its purpose and the next chapter will show that this was part of what brought about the school's demise.

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[39] Ibid.

CHAPTER 10 – PROBLEMS WITH POLISHING CORNERSTONES

Tift College was fraught with troubles throughout its history, and many of these troubles were related to the school's unique position as Georgia Baptists' separate college for women. That Georgia Baptists believed that education was important was readily seen through reports of their own Education Board. The reasons education was important were varied and often based on a sense of competition with other religious groups or pagan beliefs.

Georgia Baptists also claimed that education for their daughters was important; however, in this the beliefs of Georgia Baptists become less clear. It is obvious that when looking at Georgia Baptist education, that gender was, as Dzuback described, "a functional category that shaped hierarchy and power within and among [their] educational institutions."[1] While the reports of the Education Board stated that the education of females was no less important than the education of males, several scholars have noted that education for southern women "was to prepare her for

[1] Dzuback, 11.

gentility and not for profession."[2] This thinking was tied to the fact that many in the South, and many Georgia Baptists in particular, held to the idea of separate spheres for the different genders much longer than other areas of the country. So while saying the importance was equal, the reasons for education were not equal. This somewhat unspoken inequality in the educational philosophy of the GBC led to a major inequality in the funding of education.

As was seen, Georgia Baptists invested much more money in the education for males than in the education for females. This was in part a result of unclear beliefs as to how women should be educated. In the mid-1800s, coeducation in the American South was almost nonexistent, so Georgia Baptist began separate colleges for the sexes. Again, because Georgia Baptists felt more strongly about the education of males, the Convention began a male college, Mercer University. Because the Convention was not as dedicated to the education of women, the establishment of women's colleges was the responsibility of individuals, cities, and local Baptist associations. The proliferation of Baptist women's colleges scattered throughout Georgia created competition among them for both Baptist money and

[2] McCandless, 1990, 6.

Baptist students. As has been shown, the unequal fiscal support of female and male education made the growth of an endowment difficult, which in turn made gaining accreditation an arduous achievement for Tift.

As coeducation grew in strength within the public sector of college education, as well as among Baptist colleges in the West,[3] some Georgia Baptists began to change their views on coeducation. In the 1920s Mercer University, which did not face the economic challenges of endowment and accreditation, became a coeducational school competing with Tift and the other Baptist women's colleges for not only finances, but then also students. There were however, those who still believed that the sexes should be taught separately, and therefore Tift remained a separate women's college. That is not to say that the trustees of Tift were opposed to coeducation, and at various times throughout the school's history, as it has been shown, they flirted with the idea of coeducation. Through the years coeducation was manifested in the form of sharing teachers with Hillard Institute and with Mercer to requests for coordination with Mercer. In the end Tift could not compete with coeducation and in 1986 merged with Mercer.

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[3] Bateman.

It is possible that coeducation alone would not have been too much for Tift to compete with, if other factors had not also been acting on the school and its supporters. Because Georgia Baptists believed that education was similar but somewhat different for females than males, Tift developed, from its beginnings, a liberal arts curriculum. The liberal arts curriculum was very similar to the curriculum for males at Mercer. This, of course followed what scholars have pointed out about other female colleges in the South at the time.[4] This curriculum changed only slightly in the first 100 years of the school's history. While other schools around the state had more utilitarian curriculums Tift remained an "old traditional college for women."

Tift's history stretched across parts of all three of the chronological eras Best described–-Old South, New South, and American South. The school was founded in the latter years of the Old South period of agrarian plantation society. The school was formed to "polish" the daughters of wealthy Baptist families.

Most of Tift's history, however, occurred in the period Best referred to as the New South. Tift was able to make the transition into this period relatively easily

[4] Beadie and Tolley; and Farnham.

since the changes occurred more in essence of business – from strictly agrarian to more industrial, than in the fabric of society. While slavery ended with the Old South period, this new era still had "the caste division of White and Black firmly in place,"[5] and hence it did not affect the make-up of Tift. Changes in gendered roles did not change significantly in the initial years of the New South period, and the changes that did occur happened even more slowly in the South.

Kerber and Eisenmann noted that the idea of separate spheres began to break down during the antebellum or Old South period. While this may have been true for much of American society, it has been shown that women at Tift held to the ideas of separate spheres throughout the New South period and those ideas still existed to some degree into the American South period. In 1970 when Tift students were first allowed to wear pant suits into the classroom, some students did not consider it feminine,[6] obviously accepting separate dress codes for males and females.

In 1975, students were still expressing a belief "in the traditional role of women."[7] This was, however, printed in a *Campus Quill* rebuttal article to an article previously

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[5] Best, 48.
[6] Griffen.
[7] Warlick.

published on “Sexism in School.”[8] So while many Tift students continued to hold to traditional roles for women, a traditional curriculum, with any changes focusing on accepted feminine careers, remained acceptable.

However the traditional curriculum became more and more of a problem as the Tift students became further diversified in thought. Black women, an increase in the proportion of married women, as well as coeducational summer and night school women, diversified the student body and there began to be expressions of dissatisfaction with the traditional curriculum. In the minds of many Tift administrators, trustees, faculty members, and students, “polished cornerstones” were genteel, southern ladies. However, as the role of women changed throughout the twentieth century, a genteel southern lady was not what students were choosing to be, especially as the South experienced a transition to what Best described as the American South arena. The gendered curriculum for women, with majors in education, nursing, and fashion design were not helpful to many women who wanted to compete with men in the job market, and so they chose coeducational institutions or were dissatisfied with the curriculum at Tift.

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[8] Minton and Chase.

Students of the latter days of Tift College were no longer content to accept the rules and acquiesce to the male leadership of the school. They made their opinions known, even challenging the administration's authority. For example, as Tift integrated, and Blacks began to find paths into student leadership more changes were required of the school in traditions and curriculum.

Rather than make changes in the women's college that would make it more competitive with coeducational schools, the leadership focused on gaining revenue through a coeducational evening school and an educational program for prisoners. When these changes were confronted with the longstanding traditions and expectations of the alumnae, many of whom still held to very traditional roles for women, Tift struggled with progress. In spite of this the night school quickly grew, while mishandling of the nursing program and other administrative problems, along with a national trend toward coeducation caused the traditional women's college to dwindle in size. The longstanding belief in separate spheres led to years of tradition at the school. These traditions created an atmosphere in which coeducation was an unacceptable alternative for Tift College, and lent security to Tift's status as a separate women's college.

However, as the traditional roles of women continued to change in the American South period a new, more diverse group of women attended Tift and brought with them ideas and beliefs that at the time went up against the traditional curriculum and the administration that promoted it. The clash of dreams held by previous generations of alumnae supporting a traditional Tift and the more modern dreams of the students attending in the school's last two decades created an atmosphere that no longer supported the school's motto of creating polished cornerstones. This coupled with years of financial inequity and competition with Mercer, led to the school's demise. And so, in 1987, Tift College, after 138 years as a Georgia Baptist separate women's college, closed her doors forever.

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APPENDIXES

APPENDIX A

Presidents of Tift College

Williaim Clay Wilkes	1850-1867
Shaler Granby Hillyer, D.D.	1867-1872
Richard Thomas Asbury	1872-1879
Shaler Granby Hillyer, D.D.	1880-1881
Moses N. McCall	1883-1884
Richard Thomas Asbury	1884-1890
James E. Powell	1890-1895
Marshall H. Lane	1895-1897
Mrs. Carrie D. Crawley	1897-1898
Samuel Clinton Hood	1898-1899
Alexis A. Marshall, D.D.	1899-1900
Charles Haddon Spurgeon Jackson, D.D.	1900-1914
Joshua Hill Foster, D.D.	1915-1922
Aquila Chamlee, D.D.	1922-1938
Claudius Lamar McGinty, D.D.	1938-1947
William Fredrick Gunn, LL.D.	1947-1952
Carey Truett Vinzant, D.D.	1952-1969
Robert W. Jackson	1969-1983
O. Suthern Sims	1983-1987

APPENDIX B

Difference in Financial Support by Georgia Baptist Convention of Male College to Female College

	Mercer University - Males only until 1930s	Tift College - Females only	Difference in male and female
1913 Enrollment	332	224	108 more men than women*
1919 Enrollment	355	446	91 more women than men**
Growth	23	222	
1913 Endowment	$600,000	$5,000	120:1 (M$ to F$)
1919 Endowment	$633,893	$19,750	32:1 (M$ to F$)
Growth	$33,893	$14,750	
1913 property value	$200,000	$215,000	Female $15,000 more than male
1920 property value	$588,350	$315,887	Male $272,463 more than female
Growth	$388,350	$100,887	3.9:1 growth M$ to F$
1919 75 Million disbursement	$925,000	$370,000	$555,000 more to male than female (2.5:1)***
1923 75 Million disbursement	$2,000,000	$1,000,000	$1,000,000 more to male than female (2:1)
Total	$2,925,000	$1,370,000	

*At this time Shorter College was a GBC college and had an enrollment of 250, therefore the number of females in GBC colleges was 142 more than the number of men.

**Only Tift students, Shorter no longer a GBC college.

***Even though Shorter was no longer a GBC college they received $185,000, therefore the difference in male to female was $370,000 (1.7:1).

APPENDIX C

Comparison of Curriculum of Tift College and Mercer University

	Tift College	**Mercer University**
1879		
Freshmen	Latin – Caesar	Latin Ovid & Sallust
	Botany	
	History	
	Geography of the Heavens	
	Composition	Intro to Prose Composition
	Algebra (Loomis)	Algebra (Loomis)/Geometry
		Latin Grammar
		Greek
Sophomore	Latin – Virgil	Latin – Horace
	Composition	Composition & Elocution
	Geometry	Solid/Spherical Geometry
	Physical Geography	
	Evidence of Christianity	
	United States History	
		Greek
Junior	Latin – Horace	Latin – Cicero
	Rhetoric/Logic	Bain’s Rhetoric & Lectures
	Natural Philosophy	Political Economy
	Chemistry	Physical Sci. (Physics)
	English Literature	
	Trigonometry	
		Civil Engineering
		French
		Greek
Senior	Mental Philosophy	Philosophy
	Astronomy	Astronomy
	Geology	Chemistry/Geology
	Moral Science	Moral Philosophy
	Mensuration	
	Theology	
		French
		Physical Science

	Tift College	Mercer University
1903		
Freshmen	Rhetoric & Composition	Rhetoric & Composition
	Latin – Virgil & Cicero	Latin – Cicero
	Geometry & Algebra	Geometry
	Physics	
	U.S. Government	
	Bible	Bible
		Greek
Sophomore	Compositions & Readings	American Literature
	Latin – Horace	Latin – Cicero/Horace
	Trigonometry	Trig./Analytic Geometry
	Chemistry	Physics
	History – General European	Greek/Roman/Middle Ages
	Bible	Bible
	French or German	Greek
Junior	Modern Literature	English Literature
	Latin – Livy/Prose	Latin – Livy/Prose Comp.
	Calculus	Analytical Geometry & Calculus
	Biology/Zoology/Botany	Chemistry/Biology/Physics
	England & U.S. Economics	Modern European & U.S. Political/Constitutional History
	Bible	
	French/German/Greek	French or German
		Greek
	Logic/Psychology	
Senior	Shakespeare	Shakespeare/English Lit.
	Latin – Tacitus/Germania/ Agricola	Latin – Plautus & Terence
	Review of Arithmetic	Differential Equations
	Geology/Astronomy	Geology/Astronomy/ Biology/Chemistry
	History of France/ Political Economy	Political Science/ Political Economy
	New Testament	New Testament
		German
	Psychology	Psychology/Ethics
	Greek	Greek
	Normal classes were an extra year in addition to the B.S. or A.B.	Also had a B.S. where students didn’t take Greek but took extra math and science classes

By 1928 the introduction of more Elective classes in addition to Majors and Minors make comparisons much more difficult.

APPENDIX D

Tift Merger Articles of Agreement

In accepting the offer of the Tift College Board of Trustees to merge Tift College Corporation with Mercer University, the Mercer University Board of Trustees agrees to:

1) Accept responsibility for and control of Tift College Corporation as Tift College of Mercer University effective June 1, 1986;
2) Accept all property, assets, and liabilities of Tift College Corporation as Tift College of Mercer University including such held for Tift College by the Georgia Baptist Foundation effective June 1, 1986;
3) Make a good faith effort to operate Tift College of Mercer University as a woman's college on the present Forsyth, Georgia, campus, preferably for at least five years (this proviso does not exclude the operation of other programs on the present Tift College campus that are in keeping with Mercer University's statement of mission and purpose);
4) Accept all Tift College students (at the time of the merger) as students of Tift College of Mercer University and honor all student scholarships and other student financial aid in force at the time of the merger;
5) Accept all Tift College graduates as Alumni of Tift College of Mercer University and re-issue Tift College diplomas in the name of Tift College of Mercer University (to those who desire such);
6) Accept and maintain all student (and former student) records in the name of Tift College of Mercer University;
7) Accept and maintain all Alumnae and Alumni records;

8) Accept and agree never to change the names of any of the buildings on the current Tift College campus as long as the property is owned and/or operated by Mercer University;

9) Accept, maintain, and never change the names or intent of any of the endowed scholarships;

10) Add to the Tift College of Mercer University endowment proceeds from the sale and/or lease of all properties currently owned by Tift College Corporation that will become Tift College of Mercer University effective June 1, 1986;

11) Assure that in perpetuity there will be an endowed degree granting woman's college of Mercer University named Tift College of Mercer University and all women receiving financial aid from Tift College of Mercer University resources will be given the opportunity to receive their degree from Tift College of Mercer University;

12) Provide adequate space for the Tift College Archives and Memorabilia;

13) Provide proper care for and maintenance of Tift College Archives and Memorabilia and permit frequent public viewings of such;

14) Request as a "first choice" Trustee at least one Tift College graduate to be elected by the Georgia Baptist Convention at their annual meetings Fall 1986, Fall 1987, and Fall 1988. The intent of this proviso is that there will be in perpetuity at least three (effective Fall 1988) Tift College graduates on the Mercer University Board of Trustees at all times. Tift College of Mercer University graduates will be eligible for one or more of the three Tift College positions on the Mercer University Board of Trustees;

15) Appoint at least three Tift College graduates to the Mercer Universit President's Council effective Fall 1986, and assure that there will always be at least three Tift College and/or Tift College of Mercer University graduates on said Council;

16) Appoint, in addition to those stipulated in paragraph 14 and 15, a Board of Visitors for Tift College of Mercer University. Initially such a Board will consist of the elected members of the Tift College Board of Trustees. When through normal attrition, the Board of Visitors for the Tift College of Mercer University reaches 14 it shall stabilize at that number, and subsequent appointments to the Board shall be made by the President of Mercer University. The role of this Board shall be advisory only to the President of Mercer University;

17) Offer a contract for the 1986-87 academic year to all full time Tift College faculty. After the termination of said contracts, Mercer University will have no further obligation to Tift College faculty. For Tift College of Mercer University faculty, however, who do continue (at Mercer's invitation) on the faculty, academic rank held on or by the time of merger will be continued. Salary policies and fringe benefit policies for such continuing faculty will be comparable with those governing the faculty of the College of Liberal Arts of Mercer University. Effective June 1, 1986, Mercer University will have no obligation to Tift College administrative officers and staff members.