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A HISTORY OF CLARKE MEMORIAL COLLEGE

A Thesis
Presented to
the Faculty of the Department of History
Texas Christian University

In Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements for the Degree
Master of Arts

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By
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August, 1952

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PREFACE

This work is an attempt to preserve the record of one of a number of great religious schools which have contributed much to the cultural, educational, and religious foundations of the American nation. It purposes to give an account of the heroic struggle of an institution that was founded upon the faith of a few visionary men who saw the opportunities and needs of a vast and untrained reservoir of mankind.

It delineates a spiritual landmark in Clarke College that has grown into the symbol of a mighty movement to bring man into a closer relationship with his God. The sacrifices, privations, and untiring zeal of the courageous men and women who fought to keep "Mississippi's most unusual school" alive are treated only in abridged detail.

This thesis grew out of an idea gathered from conversation with Professor W. J. Hammond of Texas Christian University on the value of unearthing and making permanent the historical data of our own denominational colleges in America. Two years of work as instructor in Clarke College revealed to the writer its spiritual power and intellectual integrity, and served inten-

sify the desire toward the study and writing of its own history. The effort was further accelerated by the reverence that so many patrons of the school held for its founder, Rev. N. L. Clarke of Newton, Mississippi. Most of all, however, the work of the institution itself in training ministers and laymen to become adequate servants in today's world need furnished the basic dynamic for this paper.

This material was drawn from streams of life directly intertwined with that of Clarke College. The denominational papers, local newspapers, minutes of the various associations in Mississippi, college annuals, and private notes proved valuable donors to this study. It was gathered through loans from libraries, schools, and private individuals. Friends of Clarke College voluntarily offered their services in helping locate items and articles of historical value.

The Clarke College Catalogues, the Clarke Call, the Evaluative Committee Reports, The Seer, and a miscellaneous collection of data on the school may be found in the Clarke College library, Newton, Mississippi.

The associational pamphlets such as the Minutes of The General Association of Regular Baptists of Mississippi,

minutes of Newton County Baptist Association, Bay Springs, and Mt. Pisgah Associations are held in the private library of W. J. McMullan, Newton, Mississippi.

The Minutes of the Mississippi Baptist Convention and The Baptist Record files are contained in the library of the New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary, New Orleans, Louisiana. The remainder of the material is found in the Library of the Department of Archives and History, Jackson, Mississippi.

Nowhere did the work seek to sacrifice the authenticity of the factual element for the purpose of colorful or convenient presentation. A somewhat graphic history of the institution was attempted in the light of the evidences at hand. All known source material was canvassed in an effort to focus the light of historical illumination upon the work, personalities, and contributions of "Mississippi's most unusual school."

CHAPTER I
BIRTH AND EARLY YEARS

Out of the early twentieth century there emerged Clarke Memorial College known as "Mississippi's most unusual school." This institution was a crystallization and portrayal of the hopes and ambitions of a few religious pioneers of the time. Its foundation and roots were laid deep in the progressive, intellectual, and spiritual awakening that had reached into the rural and agricultural sections of a then backward and somewhat illiterate state. Although the school began as a reflection of its own age, it became the relector of future times and events that lay out in the distance. Its progress and growth were never cataclysmic but followed the channels of a more sound evolutionary course. Nevertheless, Clarke College was an answer to very definite and pressing needs.

In 1907, "there were only four Baptist colleges in the state."¹ They were overcrowded with the large intake

¹"Education Rally Largely Attended," The Newton Record, October 17, 1907, p. 1.

of students. All of them were in dire need of added space and more faculty members. Blue Mountain College was an example of this extreme congestion. "There had been one thousand applications for admission to Blue Mountain Female College when only four hundred could be taken care of."²

²Ibid., p. 1.

If this condition existed in general over the entire state, it was even more critical in East Mississippi. This fact was given apt summary in the minutes of the General Association for 1907.

"This section is worthy of our most earnest consideration. The territory, of which the school is in the midst, contains 27 Baptist associations with a total of nearly 75,000 Baptists."³

³ General Association Mississippi Regular Baptists, 1910, p. 22.

Although these figures were given three years after the establishment of the college, they were not greatly different from those at the time of its foundation.

Many people were awakening to the fact that illiteracy creates economic problems. These opinions were made known in written articles and sermons alike. The following statements throw some light on the thinking of this era.

Ignorance shackles the minds, shackles the intellect, shackles our efforts. To show what a lack of education meant to this state, it was compared with Massachusetts. In Mississippi the average pay for every man in the state is less than 75 cents, while in Massachusetts the average pay for each man per day is \$2.50.⁴

⁴"Education Rally," loc. cit., p. 1.

These efforts and demands were not fragmentary and sporadic. They were continuous and general in their character and scope. Christian education held a place of paramount importance on most denominational programs. However, one particular meeting held at Blue Mountain set the hearts of many afire with the desire for a school. The description of that meeting follows:

Possibly the greatest array of Baptist brain and talent ever gathered in Mississippi was at the first encampment at Blue Mountain in 1906. The greatest address of the encampment, a mighty plea for Christian education, was delivered on the last night of the gathering by Dr. W. T. Lowrey, then president of Mississippi College.⁵

⁵The Baptist Record, October 12, 1922, p. 50.

W. B. Sansing, minister, then editor of the Mississippi Baptist, was present in the audience. He was so favorably impressed by the appeal that at the close of the meeting he asked that the speech be published. From that movement Sansing became an advocate of a Baptist school in East Mississippi.

Later that year, the death of N. L. Clarke, minister, further stirred the desire for a Baptist College. This man had left a deep impression in the hearts of religious people of this area. The following is a brief index to his fruitful life. "He was born in the state of North Carolina in what was Burke County, now Caldwell County, on the waters of the Catawa River, the seventh day of February, 1812. He was baptized at Gainesville on June 10, 1838."⁶ He was ordained April, 1841. His first pas-

⁶"The Personal Life of N. L. Clarke," Tracy Gallaspy Album, Article 1.

toral work was begun at this time in Newton, Kemper, and Neshoba Counties.

"Mr. Clarke spent a year and a half during the Civil War, 1861-1865, as missionary with the Confederate Army in the field, and began his work again in 1866."⁷

⁷The Newton Record, September 13, 1906, p. 1.

1869 he was called as pastor to the Sylvarena church in Smith County, fifty miles from his home. He also served as pastor of both Decatur and Newton Baptist churches.

During his ministry, "he received 2,500 converts into the church; had administered the rites of baptism to more than 1600 people."⁸ He stood at the bed of more than

⁸Tracy Gallaspy Album of Notes, Article 94.

500 during their deaths. He organized twenty-five churches in one association. He was present at the organization of the General Association of Regular Baptists of Mississippi.

He was moderator of the Mt. Pisgah Association for fifty-four years. Three thousand marriage ceremonies and almost three thousand funerals were performed during his ministry. He died in September, 1906.

The pendulum of thought had swung in the direction of denominational education under the leadership of such men as N. L. Clarke. It was largely through his efforts that East Mississippi Baptists became conscious of their needs and their responsibilities as a denomination. However, it was not until his death in 1906, that the work of his life culminated in the stimulation of a movement for the establishment of a Baptist college.

Then the movement for the establishment of a denominational college slowly gained momentum. The Mt. Pisgah Baptist Association went on record as desiring the establishment of such an institution. The resolution it passed read as follows: "We also recommend that this association in cooperation with the Bay Springs Association memorialize the General Association to take up this matter at once, this school to be built in memory of the sainted N. L. Clarke."⁹

⁹ Mt. Pisgah Baptist Association, Newton, Mississippi, September 16, 1907, p. 12.

The General Association of Regular Baptists of Mississippi took up the challenge. A series of rallies were held in the interest of education. The first meeting was held at the First Baptist Church of Newton, Mississippi. S. B. Culpepper, Pastor of the church, presided. He was assisted by W. B. Sensing, another minister, and Professor J. C. Hardy. Tremendous interest was manifested as shown by the following report: "All denominations joined in the movement, no services being held at any of the other churches, which was an indication of the interest manifested in a worthy cause."¹⁰

¹⁰ "Education Rally," loc. cit., p. 1.

This rally was followed by other significant steps. T. J. Miley was chosen as chairman of the assembly and W. B. Sansing as secretary.

The chairman announced the General Baptist Association had unanimously passed a resolution providing that the institution be established, and that committees had been appointed to carry out the work, viz: one to locate the college, one to solicit contributions, a building committee, and trustees of the school had been named.¹¹

¹¹"Citizens Meeting In Interest of College," The Newton Record, October 31, 1907, p. 1.

These committees were composed of two men from each of the following counties: Newton, Scott, Neshoba, Jasper, and Smith, and one each from Jones and Greene Counties. Twelve trustees were likewise appointed and apportioned along the same line.

Specific instructions were given to the committee for choosing the site of the college. These included such things as health, accessibility, financial backing, and future possibilities and welfare of the institution.

Newton made a great effort to secure the school. The local paper took up the general chant. "Newton seems to have all the natural advantages, besides being the home of the Reverend Mr. Clarke, which would be one of the reasons

for it being appropriate that the college come here."¹²

¹² Ibid., p. 1

The town of Newton appointed a committee to raise funds for the building of the college. "The committee named for this work consisted of S. B. Culpepper, G. H. McNeill, H. C. Majure, and J. A. McHaven."¹³ Another

¹³ Ibid., p. 1.

committee was appointed to take care of a building site. It was composed of J. C. McClinton, W. B. Crosby, and C. B. Hoyer.

The towns that desired to compete for the college were given one month to decide on the offers to be made. Final action was to take place one month from the 29th of October, 1907.

This announcement precipitated sharp rivalry among the neighboring towns for the college. Inasmuch as its final location was to be leased on the fact of the best inducements presented, many worthy offerings were raised by each group. The final inducements follow.

Bay Springs offered \$15,000.00 and 100 acres of land. Newton offered \$35,000.00, a 40 acre site, 50 scholarships and free water for five years. Philadelphia made a verbal offer of \$20,000.00 and 20 acres of land. Stringer proposed to give \$6,000.00, a site, and 500 acres of land. Summerland offered \$14,500.00 and 677 acres of land.¹⁴

¹⁴ The Baptist Record, December 5, 1907, p. 1.

A vigorous campaign was carried on by each of the six competing towns for the purpose of locating Clarke College within their city limits. The final decision was made at Bay Springs, Mississippi, by the local committee and the general committee.

Newton, Mississippi, was the site selected for the school. This agreement was reached only after a warm argument. During the discussion, worthwhile pleas were offered by each town.

Bay Springs originated a scheme to down Newton by first endeavoring to get the committee to decide that the center of the associational territory was south of the Alabama and Vicksburg railroad and vote for the college to be located at a point somewhere south of that line.¹⁵

¹⁵ "Newton Succeeds In Getting The College," The Newton Record, November 28, 1907, p. 1.

The proposition failed to carry by a small vote. Newton had gained the victory.

This town offered a very desirable location for such a school. Here it sits astride the strategic spot where the Alabama and Vicksburg railroad crosses the Mobile and Chicago railroad midway between the Tennessee line and the Gulf of Mexico.

The town is also located in a healthful district. The following excerpt was published by a Clarke College supporter.

The town is high, several hundred feet above the level of the sea, and the health of the county is almost unsurpassed. The college campus consists of fifty-five acres of well selected and well drained land. Almost every stranger who has visited the grounds since the buildings have been erected has been heard to exclaim, "God made this place for a college."¹⁶

¹⁶ Ibid., p. 1.

The town offered a splendid spiritual background with four churches. Then, too, there was the fact of a hardy and energetic protestant constituency. Many denominations, other than Baptists, were located in this area and were to feed the college with both students and material backing.

A meeting of the building committee of Clarke College was held April 16, 1908, for the purpose of letting contracts for the construction of new buildings.

Nine contractors submitted bids ranging in price from \$16,500.00 to \$27,000.00. The latter bid was made by T. P. Windham of Norton. The lowest bid was presented by Norman and Hayes of Newton. \$16,500 was the figure named for doing the work. This bid won the contract for Norman and Hayes.¹⁷

¹⁷ "Contract to to Erect New Buildings Awarded," The Newton Record, April 16, 1908, p.1.

They immediately gave a \$6,000.00 bond as a guarantee of their performing the construction according to specifications. Much stress was placed on the immediate construction of adequate buildings. Work was to begin as soon as materials could be obtained. The goal was to complete them and have them in readiness for occupation by September, 1908.

Three buildings were to be erected. They included a chapel and two dormitories. The chapel and the dormitory for boys were to be two stories in height. At the end of the first session the chapel was to be converted into a girls industrial home. A permanent structure was to be erected in its stead.

Formal plans were laid for the opening of Clarke College on October 1, 1908. People came from all of the surrounding counties to attend the celebration. The Newton Public Schools were dismissed for the occasion. A large

portrait of the late N. L. Clarke hung on the wall.

People began gathering in Newton the day previous and when the hour for exercises arrived, it was observed that perhaps the largest crowd that ever assembled in Newton at a public gathering was on hand. People were here from all over Newton County, from Neshoba, Lauderdale, Jasper, Smith, Scott, Rankin, Jones, and perhaps other counties, and it is conservatively estimated that there were 2500 people on the college grounds. The large auditorium at the chapel was packed and hundreds of people could not even get inside. The citizens of Newton turned out en masse, the graded school, over 300 strong, was dismissed for the day, and the business houses were all closed for the occasion, and the business part of the city seemed almost deserted.¹⁸

¹⁸ "Clarke Memorial College is Opened," The Newton Record, October 1, 1908, p. 1.

Manu addresses were brought by several speakers. Included among these were Senator G. H. Banks; H. R. Holcomb, pastor of the First Baptist Church, Laurel; T. J. Miley of Newton, Mississippi; John L. Johnson of Clinton, Mississippi; and T. J. Moore of the Bay Springs Baptist Church. Most of them eulogized educational effort and especially that of Clarke College.

The members of the board of trustees elected S. B. Culpepper as president of Clarke College. The faculty members were then chosen.

The following teachers were chosen: W. B. Sensing, Newton; W. J. Shoemaker, Bay Springs; W. L. McMullan, assistant to the president; H. M. Weathersby, Bessemer, Alabama, history and literature; Ada Sumrall, Summit, preparatory department; and Minnie B. Austin of Mississippi.¹⁹

¹⁹ Ibid., p. 1.

After the day of celebration the school began its first session. "The school opened as announced as 'Clarke Memorial College,' with the buildings ready for occupancy, and the enrollment the first session reaching the surprising figure of 104."²⁰ A new school was born into the Bap-

²⁰ J. L. Boyd, Sr., "History of Clarke College," The Baptist Record, March 11, 1948, p. 8.

tist family.

The early days of Clarke College were to be darkened by clouds of disaster that have plagued her through the years. The first of these misfortunes to strike was the fire which destroyed the boys dormitory January 13, 1909.

The following article appeared in the Newton Record:

Shortly after the noon hour of yesterday, while the students were at dinner in the dining room of the girls dormitory, fire broke out in the boys dormitory of Clarke Memorial College. When discovered, flames

were bursting through the roof of the building. The firemen responded to the alarm, but insomuch as the nearest fireplug was on Scanlon Street, some 1500 or 2,000 feet from the burning building, they were unable to reach the fire with only 1,000 feet of fire hose. 21

21 "Disastrous Blaze at Clarke College," The Newton Record, January 14, 1909, p. 1

Practically all of the furniture was lost. Most of the inmates had their possessions destroyed. As a result the students were moved to other temporary quarters. There were not enough buildings on the campus to provide space for the classes. Appeals were made to the town of Newton for assistance. As a result Clarke College was granted the usage of the local Baptist Church building and the Newton High School auditorium.

President Culpepper announced immediate plans for rebuilding the ormitory. This was made possible by adequate insurance which was carried on the structure. The new building was to be composed of brick.

In no wise did the fire dampen the spirit of the teachers of the school. The surrounding Baptist associations rallied to the rescue. Appeals were made at each

associational meeting. The following is typical: "We recommend above all our own Clarke Memorial College and urge boys and girls to attend same."²²

²² Minutes of the Mt. Pisgah Baptist Association, September 19-21, 1908, Newton, Mississippi, p. 13.

The report further added, "We feel grateful to God for the work that has already been done in the movement."²³

²³ Ibid.

The General Association also spoke for the school in its second report. It related how the enrolment had grown from less than one hundred students to one hundred and forty-eight students. It told of the rebuilding of the boys dormitory and the addition of furnishings and improvements.

In speaking of the needs of the poorer students the report was specific.

We find among the students who come to college a goodly number of them are preachers who have just started in life and are trying to prepare. These, for the most part, are poor boys and need help, and the college is not able financially to give them the help they need.²⁴

24 Minutes of the General Association of Regular Baptists of Mississippi, October 27, 1909, pp. 16-17

A further appeal was made for the building of cottages for ministerial students. Also it asked for more room and for more money to pay the college debts.

The Bay Springs Association, in its annual report of 1909, likewise spoke for Clarke College. Religious benefits and church advantages were mentioned. It further stated, "that the institution has recently taken on an agricultural department, in which moneyless boys may be aided."²⁵

²⁵ Minutes of Bay Springs Association, September 15, 16, 17, 1909, p. 7

On June 17, 1909, the Board of Trustees of Clarke Memorial College held a meeting for the purpose of electing new members and transacting other business. The session was opened with a resume of the school's needs and plans. "A report of the president showed that he had collected in subscriptions during the past year amounts to \$62,473.75. This included cash paid and also over \$20,000.00 in life insurance."²⁶

²⁶ "College Faculty Is Named for Next Term," The Newton Record, June 17, 1909, p. 1.

In addition, the building committee reported that

the contract for the boys dormitory had been let to Wedgeworth Contractors for \$4,062.00. The college was to furnish the brick.

The following faculty was elected for the ensuing year: H. M. Weathersby, vice president and professor of Greek and mathematics; M. P. Bush, of Laurel, chair of mathematics and science; Daisy Lines, department of English and history; S. F. Parkinson, of Coffeetown, principal of primary department; Ada Sumrall, assistant in primary department; Minnie Austin, music department; J. S. Rushing, of Dayton, Virginia, voice and clarinet; Mrs. H. M. Weathersby, expression.

The board decided to establish an agricultural and industrial department to the college; the president and L. G. Gates, member of the board, were appointed as a committee to make arrangements for the purchase of a farm and the equipping it for the purpose. It was expected to have this department in operation during the next term.

The college began its second term with high hopes. President Culpepper was very optimistic in his welcome to the incoming students. "He was rejoiced at the flattering outlook for the college. He said that a 200 club

was organized at the close of last session with the view of enrolling that many students this year."²⁷

²⁷ "Clarke College Opens Second Annual Term," The Newton Record, September 16, 1909, p. 1.

This was the formative period of the school. It was the time of either a gradual growth or a rapid decline. The Baptist of Mississippi were watching Clarke College with sympathetic yet careful eyes. The school was to meet the test in numbers and spirit, but chronic financial trouble haunted her perennially.

In 1910, at the beginning of the third session of school the enrollment was almost two hundred students. Yet, an ominous warning was given by the board of trustees of that school. It was as follows:

We have subscriptions that are due us on November 1st of this year approximately amounting to ten thousand dollars. This subscription was taken on the five year plan. Then there is \$2,100.00 due on last year's notes that can be collected now without trouble. We then have \$2,200.00 due on subscriptions which have been taken this year.²⁸

²⁸ Minutes of the General Association of Regular Baptists of Mississippi, October 26, 1910, p. 24.

An appeal was then made for the friends of the school to make good their promises. "But brethren, we need what you are due us; we have an obligation to meet."²⁹

²⁹ Ibid.

They further claimed that the money was absolutely necessary to erase the indebtedness of Clarke.

At a meeting of the board of trustees of Clarke College in 1911, a committee was appointed to meet with a like committee from Mississippi College. They were to coordinate the work of the two institutions.

They emphasized the abrogation of differences between these sister colleges. They stated their objectives as consisting of the desire to educate Baptist men and women. Also the course were to be arranged to coordinate their curriculum. The agreement stated,

That a sub-committee consisting of J. L. Johnson and M. P. Bush be appointed to look into the adjustment of the curriculum of the two colleges; that the one will matriculate with the other in such a way that the junior courses of Mississippi College shall begin where the senior course of Clarke Memorial College ends.³⁰

³⁰ "College Agreement," The Newton Record, July 6, 1911, p. 7.

In addition, the school offered a unique system of entrance for students. "It is so arranged as to enter students as low as the eighth grade and carry them through six years of preparatory and college work, completing courses leading to the B. A. and B. S. degrees." 31

31 "Clarke Memorial College," The Baptist Record, July 11, 1912, p. 8.

S. B. Culpepper resigned in 1912, to do further study. He was succeeded by L. G. Gates of Laurel, Mississippi.

It had long been the desire of S. B. Culpepper to fit himself for more advanced educational work and at the last meeting of the board of trustees he tendered his resignation that he might pursue a course of study at Baylor University. This intention had been made known for several months previous and was presented as final. The resignation was accepted, and L. G. Gates of Laurel, Mississippi, unanimously chosen president. The many friends of the college regret to see President Culpepper leave the work, for he has done his part well, but look with hope to the time when he will be able to do a greater work.

The election of Rev. L. G. Gates is received with much satisfaction. Brother Gates has been a member of the board for three years and very greatly interested in the institution. This new relation means much good to the college and in a more pronounced way than ever before Clarke Memorial College shall meet the need for which it is created.³²

³²Ibid.

The school year of 1913 opened with N. R. Stone and M. P; Bush serving as co-presidents of Clarke College. Nevertheless, they resigned before the completion of the session. The board of trustees immediately elected E. Godbold of Louisiana, to the position. He declined the presidency, and the board elected M. O. Patterson to serve in this capacity.

At this time, M. O. Patterson was engaged in a meeting at Waynesboro, Mississippi. When summoned before the board of trustees he consented to serve as President of Clarke College. A brief summary of his life in 1913 follows:

He is a graduate of Mississippi College and also of the Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, which institution conferred the degree of doctor of divinity upon him shortly before he entered upon his work as pastor of the church here. Prior to that he had served as pastor of one of the Jackson churches for several years. He is one of the state's leading clergymen, of scholarly attainments, and well equipped from every standpoint to serve the institution in an efficient and proficient manner. He is held in high esteem by all who know him, and his many friends believe that his selection as the executive head of the college argues well for the future growth of the young educational institution. Patterson will continue to serve as pastor of the Baptist church here.³³

³³ "Dr. M. O. Patterson To Head Clarke College," The Newton Record, August 21, 1913, p. 1.

Perhaps the rapid turnover of presidents reflected in some measure the uncertain conditions existing at Clarke College. The old General Association assisted by sister associations had fought valiantly to keep the school afloat in the midst of the depression and crop failure. The town of Newton, Mississippi, responded with great effort. Several gifts were made by her to students and to the school. The following is an example of such effort: "The people of Newton have shown new faith in the school by subscribing recently \$12,000.00 to help pay it out of debt."³⁴

³⁴ "Clarke Memorial College," The Baptist Record, July 13, 1913, p. 4.

However, these efforts were not sufficient to keep the school in adequate financial condition. Under the auspices of the general association, Clarke College steadily increased a deficit in her spending. By 1913, a crisis had been reached that demanded immediate attention. "At this time the college was encumbered with an indebtedness of \$33,162.40 pressing for settlement."³⁵

³⁵ Jesse L. Boyd, A Popular History Of Mississippi Baptists, Jackson, Mississippi, 1930, p. 227.

And consequently, in December, 1912, the Board of Trustees of Clarke Memorial College recommended that the school be taken over by the Mississippi Baptist State Convention.

On the 26th day of December, 1912, the presidents of Mississippi Woman's College and of Clarke College, together with a committee from their boards of trustees, appeared before a meeting of the commission held in Jackson, Mississippi. The purpose of the meeting was to urge action on their twin propositions for convention aid. "Both colleges were requested to prepare and present at once to the commission a detailed, written report, giving the assets and liabilities of their respective colleges." ³⁶ The meeting adjourned with the under-

³⁶ "Report of Education Commission," Proceedings of Baptist State Convention, November 12-14, 1913, p. 54.

standing that the commission would meet next in Newton, Mississippi.

At its next meeting, the education commission concluded that if satisfactory arrangements were made, it would sanction the acceptance of Clarke Memorial College as a denominational school.

At the March meeting of the commission, therefore, Clarke Memorial College was instructed to ascertain

whether or not the City of Newton would raise as much as \$15,000.00 toward liquidating the indebtedness of Clarke Memorial College, amounting to approximately \$33,000.00.³⁷

³⁷ Ibid,, p. 55.

After receiving information that the citizens of the town of Newton and the trustees of Clarke Memorial College had pledged themselves to reduce the indebtedness of the school to the amount of \$15,000.00, the commission recommended that the school be accepted as a denominational junior college. However, a board of trustees was appointed by the state convention to serve when the conditions laid down by the commission were met.

At a meeting in Columbia, Mississippi, in 1913, Clarke College's request to become a school of the state convention was granted. "Those were the days of the celebrated Clarke College quartette. While the matter was before the convention for consideration, the quartette was called for."³⁸ After it had given its song, the question was

³⁸ "History of Clarke College," The Newton Record, November 9, 1922, p. 1.

put before the convention. That body voted to receive the school into the membership of the Mississippi Baptist Convention.

CHAPTER II

THE MISSISSIPPI BAPTIST CONVENTION TAKES CONTROL

During the transfer of Clarke College to the Mississippi Baptist Convention it was stipulated that the school retain only junior college status. This eliminated the conferring of full degrees. The following statement may clarify the procedure: "Beginning with the next session the old habit of granting substitutions in the A. B. and B. S. degrees will be abolished, and a Ph. B. course will take its place."³⁹ Clarke had former-

³⁹ Charles D. Johnson, "Clarke College Notes," The Baptist Record, April 30, 1914, p. 5.

ly been a four year college.

The junior college was to serve as a denominational school which fed the other Baptist colleges with students. This fact, along with its splendid secondary department, attracted many students. It reached both boys and girls who would have otherwise been denied an education.

The advent of Clarke College into the fellowship and privileges of a denominational institution gave the

institution decided advantages. It had definitely outgrown the sponsorship of the General Association of Regular Baptists of Mississippi and her sister association of Bay Springs and Mt. Pt. Pisgah. But even with this transfer of ownership there still remained a \$15,000.00 indebtedness with interest. Therefore, it was necessary for the convention to meet this obligation.

The Education Commission was duly empowered with the authority in 1914, to raise \$100,000.00 for the building program at Mississippi Woman's College and for the liquidation of the Clarke College indebtedness. The commission stipulated that the campaign should be under the direction of W. E. Farr.

We are thoroughly convinced that Brother W. E. Farr should remain in charge of the campaign and that the campaign should be prosecuted under his direction and under the supervision of the secretary of the state convention board.⁴⁰

⁴⁰ Mississippi Baptist State Convention, Seventy-Seventh Session, November 12, 1915, p. 53.

Twenty-five thousand dollars was to go to Clarke College and seventy-five thousand dollars was to be designated for Mississippi Woman's College. By November, 1916, \$91,000.00 had been reached in cash subscriptions.

Yet, much of the pledged money was not collected. Therefore, accruing interest on outstanding debts and current operating expenses proved a constant burden for the school until it finally became a private institution.

The spirit of the town of Newton, Mississippi, should never be forgotten. Many times the citizens came to the financial rescue of the tottering college when all seemed lost. All Mississippi Baptists should be grateful to the local Baptist church and to the citizens of all creeds and denominations in this town.

Donations from many private sources over the state proved of invaluable assistance. J. R. Buckwalter of Union, Mississippi, furnished funds to place electric lights in every room of the dormitories. He had been a recent visitor at Clarke College. At the invitation of the faculty he was shown the grounds and buildings. The work of the institution was outlined to him and its program explained. This so favorably impressed him that before leaving he made his contribution ~~to the school.~~ He was also influenced by the fact that "every man and woman ~~who had graduated from the college had been a~~ woman who had graduated from the college had been a ~~Christian.~~"⁴¹

⁴¹ "True Friend Gained by Clarke," The Newton Record, December 9, 1915, p. 1.

Nevertheless, despite these efforts by many supporters, Clarke College remained a needy school. The faculty responded to the challenge with determination. The following quotation from The Baptist Record shows the effort made by this group.

But never have I known of a more heroic, self-sacrificing set of men and women than those who compose the faculty of Clarke College. Since Christmas one member has been making a clean contribution of \$50.00 per month to the college. Another, \$40.00 per month, two others, \$90.00 and still another, \$160.00 per month.⁴²

⁴² W. M. Bartich, "Clarke Memorial College," The Baptist Record, March 18, 1915, p. 3.

This is only part of the picture. During the \$100,000.00 drive for Clarke College and Mississippi Woman's College the response of the school was unusual. The faculty and students gave \$2,400.00. The senior class gave \$900.00.

At times humor became mixed with pathos during this era of financial insecurity. The gifts ranged from horses to bales of cotton. M. O. Patterson, under the title, "Buy a Bale," offered to admit students who could furnish two bales of cotton.

The proposition, stated simply, is every student who enters during the above time, he or she will have the opportunity of placing two bales of cotton at \$100.00, or one bale at \$55.00 on expenses for this session.⁴³

⁴³ M. O. Patterson, "Clarke Memorial College," The Baptist Record, September 24, 1914, p. 5

IN addition to this aid, Clarke College received considerable help from the convention which met in the chapel of the Woman's College, November 18, 1915. The principal purpose of this meeting consisted primarily of reports related to Mississippi Baptist educational interests. Such men as W. M. Whittington of Greenwood, Mississippi, and J. W. Provine praised the committee who worked on the \$100,000.00 campaign.

"The speakers of the evening, after a song from the Clarke College Quartette, were W. M. Whittington, M. O. Patterson, W. E. Farr, R. A. Venable, and Bryan Simmons."⁴⁴

⁴⁴ "Baptist Convention Aids Clarke College," The Newton Record, November 18, 1915, p. 1.

Before adjournment later that night, \$2,075.00 was raised in industrial subscriptions for Clarke College. This money

was to be used to pay teachers' salaries for the remainder of the session. In addition to this, the convention assumed all indebtedness of the institution made since it took control of Clarke College.

In March, 1915, M. O. Patterson resigned as president of Clarke College. He was succeeded by R. A. Venable, Clinton, Mississippi, an instructor on the regular faculty. Venable had served as president of Mississippi College. He was also instructor in the chair of Bible at Clarke College. After serving one term he resigned as president of the school.

T. A. J. Beasley was elected to succeed him in this position. "President Beasley has an excellent record as an author, school man, and preacher."⁴⁵ Beasley did not

⁴⁵ "Rev. T. A. J. Beasley to Head College," The Newton Record, March 23, 1916, p. 1.

accept the position of the presidency of Clarke College. Therefore, Bryan Simmons was chosen for the office. He had served the denomination in the capacity of raising money for the Baptist Hospital at Jackson, Mississippi. It was the wish of the convention that he might be able to lead the Baptists of Mississippi in the liquidation

of all outstanding indebtedness against the school.

The Baptists adopted a unique plan for a budget in 1917. These gifts were to come from each local church and were put into one central fund. Each phase of the cause was to receive a certain portion of the entire state offering. The report of the committee follows:

We recommend that the churches of the state put the following causes on their plan of regular contributions and give such amounts and in ratio as to secure the following sums:

State missions, \$44,000; Home missions, \$26,500; Foreign missions, \$37,500; Ministerial education, \$6,000; of which \$4,000 is to go to Mississippi College and Clarke Memorial College, and \$1,000 each to the Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, at Fort Worth, Texas, and the Southern Baptist Theological Seminary at Louisville, Kentucky; the subscription secured at this convention by Dr. A. T. Robertson to be included in this budget; aged ministers' relief, \$2,500; Christian Education, \$2,500; Orphanage, \$20,000; Mississippi Baptist Hospital, \$5,000; Home mission loan fund, \$1,500; Total for all purposes, \$170,000. This will require a division of contributions on the following percentage basis: State mission, 25%; Foreign missions, 20%; Home Missions, 15%; Hospitals, 6%; Orphanage, 12%; Ministerial education, 4%; Education, 15%; aged ministers, 2%; and Home mission loan fund, 1%.⁴⁶

⁴⁶ "Baptists Adopt Plan for Budget in 1917," The Newton Record, November 23, 1916, p. 1.

This was to mark the beginning of a highly efficient system of budgeting for the denomination. It was to be of great help to Clarke College in keeping its program from utterly falling.

From its beginning as a school of local Baptist associations until its passing into the hands of private individuals, Clarke College labored under tremendous difficulties. The administration heads underwent a rapid turnover. These changes were not due to a lack of faithfulness on the part of the administration. Greater opportunities and better salaries must have played a part in their decisions. From 1908 to 1930 the successive presidents of this college were the following:

S. B. Culpepper, 1908-1911; M. P. Bush (acting), 1911-1913; M. O. Patterson, 1913-1915; R. A. Venable, 1915-1916; Bryan Simmons, 1916-1918; T. A. J. Beasley, 1918-1920; John F. Carter, 1920-1923; H. T. McLaurin, 1923-1929; W. T. Lowrey, 1929-1930; John F. Carter, 1930-⁴⁷

⁴⁷ Jesse Larey Boyd, A Popular History of Baptists In Mississippi, (Jackson, Mississippi, 1930), p. 313.

Despite adversity and hardships Clarke always carried on its program and made plans for the future. The enrollment of students continued to grow steadily larger every year. However, with an increasing student body and with the general maintenance cost accelerated, the indebtedness continued to increase. Yet so precarious had the position of the school become that Bryan Simmons, the retiring

president, proposed its closing in 1918. His statement was as follows: "The war times call for re-adjustment, and I venture two or three suggestions. It might be well to have Mississippi College put in a preparatory department for the period of the war and let this school close."⁴⁸

⁴⁸ Bryan Simmons, "Clarke Memorial College," The Baptist Record, February 21, 1918, p. 7.

The 1918-19 session of Clarke Memorial College seemed to have a bright prospects for the school. T. A. J. Beasley had been chosen as president. He had a supporting faculty composed of approved teachers. The school continued to struggle and make general progress. Many Baptist people failed to help support the institution. Oftentimes it received financial aid sparingly. Despite these conditions it usually managed to meet adequately whatever test came its way.

These were the days of World War I. Many of the young men were being drafted for the armed services. President Beasley offered a course in military training. He himself had experienced six years of such training.

In 1920, John F. Carter was chosen to succeed T. A. J. Beasley as president. He had served as vice president of the school.

President John F. Carter becomes head of Clarke Memorial College in a favorable time. He was born at Cherry Creek, Mississippi, in 1888, converted when fourteen, and ordained at 24. He is a graduate of Mississippi Heights Academy at Blue Mountain, and a B. A. graduate of Mississippi College, graduating with distinction after working his way through school. He taught three years and then took the Th. M. degree at the Fort Worth Seminary. He is now preparing his thesis for the Th.D. degree. He is a scholarly high-toned, Christian gentleman and deserves the cordial support of the denomination in his plan and purpose to make Clarke College the best possible school in its class.⁴⁹

⁴⁹ The Baptist Record, November 11, 1920, p. 9.

During the year 1920, Clarke entered into the raising of Mississippi's quota of the \$75,000,000.00 sought by Southern Baptists. This fund was to be allocated to the most needy divisions of the Baptist cause. Clarke was to receive a proportion of the entire amount raised in Mississippi. "At a meeting of the educational commission in January, Clarke College was assigned 10% of the amount raised for Christian education in Mississippi."⁵⁰ Approxi-

⁵⁰ Mississippi Baptist Convention, "Report of Board of Trustees of Clarke Memorial," November 16-18, 1920, p. 1.

mately \$10,000.00 was received from this source. Most of this money was used to absorb the indebtedness against the college.

The institution likewise needed repairs, equipment, cottages for ministerial students, and a general endowment fund. So critical did the problems become that the education commission met in 1923 to decide its fate.

This group visited Clarke College in a body. It voted unanimously that the school had a place in the denominational program and deserved to continue. In order for it to fulfil its mission, however, the commission recommended that two things should be done. They were as follows: "First, the buildings would have to be renovated and new equipment provided. Second, a strong president with an adequate faculty paid a living wage."⁵¹

⁵¹ "Clarke Memorial College," The Baptist Record, May 17, 1923, p. 5.

The commission further stated that it would provide out of the 75 million campaign \$7,500.00 for the repairs and equipment. Also an additional \$5,000.00 would be allocated for the current operating expenses of the college. "This decision was contingent upon the request

that the trustees of Clarke College raise \$2,500.00 in the town of Newton and among the friends of the school."⁵²

⁵²Ibid., p. 5.

The \$2,500.00 was raised in three or four days. As a result plans were made immediately for repairs. Every room in the two dormitories of the school were renovated. A new plumbing unit was installed; and the heating system was reconditioned. This enabled the school to provide adequately for 200 students.

That same year a new president, H. T. McLaurin, was chosen. He was a graduate of Mississippi College. After completing his work in that institution he served several years as principal of Son's Academy, a secondary school. After terminating his service with that school, he entered Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary as a student. There he received his Th. M. degree. In recent years he has held several pastorates. Prior to his selection as president of Clarke College, he served as enlistment missionary in the eastern section of Mississippi.

Seemingly, Clarke was headed for a more prosperous era. However, in February, 1924, fire destroyed the ad-

ministration building. An insurance policy of \$9,000.00 was carried on the structure, but it covered only half the loss. Thus the trustees of the college and the education commission were confronted with another serious problem. All officials agreed that if the school were to continue, a new, fireproof, brick building should be constructed.

In June, the trustees of Clarke College made the following proposition to the education commission:

That plans be made immediately for the construction of an administration building on the campus of Clarke College to cost not less than \$50,000.00; that the citizens of Newton, the trustees and friends of the college in that section of the state would agree to raise \$16,000.00, this amount with the \$9,000.00 insurance would total \$25,000.00; that the education commission provide by loan or bond issue the remaining \$25,000.00, these bonds or notes as well as the interest when due and payable to be liquidated with the funds accruing to Clarke College from present to future campaigns.⁵³

⁵³ Minutes of the Mississippi Baptist Convention,
November 11-13, 1924, p. 72.

This proposition was agreed to by the education commission. The Merchants Bank and Trust Company of Jackson, Mississippi, agreed to loan to the commission the \$25,000.00 to be paid in five equal annual install-

ments at the rate of 6% interest. The loan secured by a mortgage on the college property.

At a meeting of the board of trustees of Clarke College June 12, 1924, at which D. M. Nelson, member of the education commission, was present, the contract for construction of a new building was awarded.

The successful bidders were Oden and Glenn Brothers of Hattiesburg, Mississippi, for the erection of the building; the Hattiesburg Plumbing Company of Hattiesburg, received the contract for heating and plumbing; while Hobbs Plumbing Company of Meridian, contracted to do the electric wiring of the structure.⁵⁴

⁵⁴ "Contract Let for College Building," The Newton Record, June 19, 1924, p. 1.

Further prestige was given to Clarke College by the acquiring of the Scanlon property. It comprised fifty acres of land in front of the present campus. On this land, at the time it was acquired, there was located an athletic field, several dwellings, and the Scanlon home. This additional property gave Clarke College a campus of one hundred acres.

The transaction was made possible by a \$3,750.00 gift by J. R. Buckwalter of Union, Mississippi. This was half the purchase price. The president of the college and the board of trustees were to raise the other half of

the required sum.

A note of optimism continued with an enrollment of 425 for both the regular and summer sessions of school. Also the standardization committee of the State of Mississippi visited Clarke College in 1926. It voted favorably upon the status of the school.

"this placed Clarke Memorial College on the same standard list of junior colleges, giving her the same recognition as given for the first two years in any junior college of the state."⁵⁵

⁵⁵ Catalogue of Clarke Memorial College, Newton, Mississippi, 1923, p. 9.

Of general significance to the friends of the college was the fact that the East Mississippi Normal was held at Clarke College during the summer school of 1926. "Proportional credit will be given for summer work as is given for work during the regular session."⁵⁶ The Baptist

⁵⁶ Catalogue of Clarke Memorial College, Newton, Mississippi, 1926, p. 12.

colleges now recognized in this little college a colleague of intrinsic value to the general program.

The following is a typical eulogy of the times:

"More and more is our Baptist co-educational junior college finding a plaxe in the hearts of our Baptist people."⁵⁷

⁵⁷ Mississippi Baptist Convention, November 16-18, 1926, p. 47.

Further tribute was also paid to the school's specific work in meeting a specific need in Mississippi educational fields. Clarke fitted most adequately into the consolidation effort of this era.

It is said that this is the age of consolidation, and since Mississippi leads all the other states in the union in the number of consolidated schools, it is easy to see the need of a junior college where students from these schools may complete their high school work.⁵⁸

⁵⁸ Ibid.

The largest senior class in the history of Clarke College received diplomas May 20, 1927. There were eighty-two who graduated at the time. B. H. Lovelace of Clinton delivered the baccalaureate address.

"There were four main buildings now, plus some teachers' homes and cottages. Clarke possessed a beautiful campus of one hundred acres and had an unsurpassed

natural drainage."⁵⁹

⁵⁹ A History of Clarke Memorial College Compiled by Clarke College Students, Newton, Mississippi, 1952, p. 7.

The year 1928, found Clarke still in a period of general progress. Its academic status was widely recognized, and the school seemingly enjoyed a permanent place in the denominational life. A report by H. T. McLaurin, president of the school, was very favorable. There were seventy-three graduates. The same report emphasized the large number of former Clarke students who were then employed in strategic positions. According to the report, "Over 200 former students are now teaching, and 75 graduates are now going to senior colleges."⁶⁰

⁶⁰ The Baptist Record, November 22, 1928, p. 3.

In 1929, H. T. McLaurin resigned as president of Clarke College. He had served in that capacity since 1923. W. T. Lowrey was elected as president of Clarke College to succeed him. Lowrey had served as president of Mississippi

College and Blue Mountain College. This was a great effort to bring Clarke College back to its former place in the denomination. Yet the school was headed for disaster.

In 1929, pessimism seemed to pervade the ranks of the entire state convention as regarded the ultimate fate of the school. A report by W. T. Lowrey reflected this attitude of gloom. In this summary of conditions, he said, "The financial condition is most embarrassing. The indebtedness is about \$35,000.00. The income is not sufficient to pay running expenses to say nothing of the interest and debts."⁶¹

⁶¹ Mississippi Baptist Convention, November 12-14, 1929, p. 70.

A joint meeting of the Baptist Education Commission and the Board of Trustees of Clarke College was held in Newton, Mississippi, March 7, 1930. An agreement was reached between these two bodies that Clarke College needed \$15,000.00 to continue to operate. There was some indication that the town of Newton would raise money to partially liquidate the outstanding debt of

\$40,000.00. This was treated as follows:

The president further said that if the commission would do these things mentioned above, the Baptist Church and citizens of Newton would guarantee to pay a large part of the outstanding indebtedness of more than \$40,000.00⁶²

⁶² J. W. Lee, "The Future of Clarke College," The Baptist Record, March 13, 1930, p. 5.

The citizens of Newton rallied in their usual enthusiastic way to this challenge. They were unwilling to lose their college. The following excerpt was quoted from The Newton Record: "Some weeks ago the Newton Baptist Church voted to assume an obligation of \$10,600.00 and the citizens of the town subscribed \$11,000.00 more to help liquidate the institution's indebtedness."⁶³

⁶³ "Newton Is Unwilling to Lose Clarke College," The Newton Record, March 20, 1930, p. 1.

This amount, along with the sale of some property owned by the school, would reduce the indebtedness of the college to a few thousand dollars. This indebtedness would be less than any previous figure since 1924.

However, at a special session of the Baptist convention, which convened at Jackson, Mississippi, a large

majority voted to discontinue Clarke College. This decision was contingent upon the fact that the Baptist Orphanage purchase the property owned by the school.

Much opposition to this movement was evidenced. Unfavorable articles appeared in The Baptist Record and in local newspapers. It was contended that this property had been given in good faith for education among East Mississippi Baptists. Also it was agreed that any diverting of the property to any other channel would be a betrayal of the purpose for which the school was founded.

In addition, many voiced their opposition to the removal of the orphanage from Jackson, Mississippi, to Newton. The following quotation is one example:

I believe Jackson furnished opportunities for our orphans than can be gotten nowhere else in the state. If reports be true at this time, I am unable to see how their school opportunities can in any way be equalled at Newton. So far as I am able to learn, there are five good Baptist churches in Jackson. Newton has only one.⁶⁴

⁶⁴B. E. Phillips, "Grave Mistakes," The Baptist Record, May 1, 1932, p. 14.

It was further pointed out that the orphanage at

Jackson was near the Baptist Hospital. There the orphans could obtain free treatment. Private hospitals could never expected to give this type of service.

These protests were largely ignored by the Baptist leaders. Because of their belief in such necessity, and because the trustees of the Baptist Orphanage had not reached an agreement about the transaction, a new meeting of the convention was deemed necessary.

Accordingly, a special session of the Mississippi Baptist State Convention was called by L. G. Gates to meet Tuesday, July 15, 1930, in the auditorium of Clarke College, Newton.

The action of this session rescinded the action of the former special session held at Jackson, Mississippi. It voted for the education commission to liquidate the \$40,000.00 indebtedness of Clarke Memorial College. It was further to borrow enough money for adequate operation of the college. Clarke was to receive \$5,000.00 each year toward sufficient endowment.

At the regular session of the Mississippi Baptist Convention, Clarke College was again voted to be closed. The property of the school was to be sold, and the proceeds applied on debts. "Mr. W. N. Taylor made a motion

striking out the section closing Clarke College."⁶⁵ The

⁶⁵ "Report of the Mississippi Baptist State Convention," The Baptist Record, November 27, 1930, p. 2.

discussion waxed fervent and heated. "The Taylor substitute of motion to strike out the recommendation to discontinue Clarke College was lost, and Clarke College is to be closed."⁶⁶

⁶⁶Ibid., p. 2.

The future of the college was very uncertain. The Baptist denomination had decreed that the school die. But the non-supporters of the school did not reckon with the tenacity of its followers, for they underestimated the diligence and faithfulness of the citizens of Newton, Mississippi. No doubt, their efforts and intentions were based on the highest motives. But history was later to prove them unwise and perhaps unnecessary in closing the institution.

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CHAPTER III
DAYS OF STRUGGLE AND ECLIPSE

During the crucial days of 1930, John F. Carter was elected as president of Clarke College. He held both the Ph. D. and Th. D. degrees. This training, combined with his capacities of leadership, fitted him for the difficult task of heading the school in its darkest hours.

Many people began to hope that the school would not be disposed of, for although the convention had ordered the college discontinued and the property sold, no buyer was found available. Their thoughts were crystallized into action by a number of supporters of the school. A group of Baptist brethren in East Mississippi, feeling that it could be operated by private subscriptions, sought to lease Clarke College for five years.

The Board of Trustees on April 8, 1931, received the offer from the brethren, who constitute a holding commission, and leased the property to them for a period of five years at a consideration of \$1.00 a year.⁶⁷

⁶⁷ Mississippi Baptist Convention, November 17-19, 1931, p. 52.

John F. Carter served as president of Clarke College for one year, resigning in 1931. He was succeeded by A. A. Roebuck, a prominent educator in the state. Roebuck was a graduate of Clarke College, Mississippi College, and received his Master of Arts degree from the University of Alabama, in 1930. He announced his intention of carrying on the cause of his alma mater with zeal.

Clarke College now became the peoples' school. Appeals were given to all Baptists to lend their efforts to the promotion of its welfare. The following quotation is an example of the attitude of school officials:

The college will put forth every reasonable effort to keep in touch with its patrons and inform same of students' progress, etc. Clarke College will, therefore, be typically a school of the people fostering the high ideals of Christian character and efficiency. 68

68 A. A. Roebuck, "Clarke College," The Baptist Record, September 3, 1931, p. 12.

The school remained on the accredited list for Mississippi Junior colleges. Efforts were made to keep

this good rating. Expenses were reduced to a minimum. "Total yearly expenses in the dormitory amount to \$230.00."⁶⁹ Girls living in the industrial home had

⁶⁹ Ibid.

expenses reduced another \$90.00 per year.

At a meeting of the Clarke College Holding Commission May 15, 1932, S. L. Stringer, then superintendent of Pearl River Junior College, was unanimously elected president of Clarke College for the next school year. A. A. Robuck had previously tendered his resignation.

Stringer came to the school well prepared in educational training.

For many years he was a successful high school principal and superintendent. More recently, he served at Picayune during which time he taught in the S. T. C. Summer Schools. For the past five years he has been the superintendent of Pearl River Junior College.⁷⁰

⁷⁰ "Clarke College Elects S. L. Stringer, President at a Meeting," The Newton Record, May 19, 1932, p. 1.

In 1933, the convention met at Tupelo, Mississippi.

This excerpt from The Baptist Record shows how vitally important this meeting was for Clarke College. "It was rumored before the convention met that there was some likelihood of Clarke Memorial College being sold to the Congregational Methodist Church."⁷¹ It was further under-

⁷¹ "Baptist Convention Retains Local School," The Newton Record, November 23, 1933, p. 1.

stood that this Methodist group was very anxious to purchase the local institution to convert it into a four year church school.

The convention in session did give consideration to disposal of this property. The convention board recommended such sale. However, a committee appointed by the convention board the year before, did not recommend that the college be sold at the time. It was voted to leave it under the same status.

In 1935, S. L. Stringer resigned as president of Clarke College to enter the race for State Superintendent of Education. He was succeeded by C. Z. Holland as president. The property was leased to Holland at \$1.00 per year. The contract included these terms:

The property is to be insured for twenty thousand dollars. It is to be kept in reasonable repair and to be used for school purposes. The school is to be operated in keeping with principles and policies of the Mississippi Baptists. 72

72 C. Z. Holland, "Reports of Clarke Memorial College to Baptist State Convention," The Baptist Record, December 19, 1935, p. 7.

Furthermore, the premium on the policy was paid for twelve months. It was made out in favor of the board of trustees of the school.

Other general improvements were made during the days of Clarke College private operation. Several hundred dollars worth of labor and material were spent on repair and upkeep of the buildings, while needed purchases were made in books for the library. In addition, a dairy barn was built for the school and a herd of six cattle were purchased. Finally, two hundred dollars worth of Federal work scholarship money was used for beautifying the campus and buildings.

It was officially announced in Newton, Mississippi, April 16, 1937, that the trustees of Clarke Memorial Col-

lege had leased the school to W. L. McMullan, a local businessman.

C. Z. Holland had resigned as president of the school to become promotional secretary for the state Baptist convention board. C. R. Mosley was to act as president under the advisory plans of McMullan.

During this era, the sceptics were many who believed that Clarke College was doomed to die. Nevertheless, the school continued to live and to serve this section of the state with benefit. In fact, the enrollment for 1937 showed an increase. "The session opened September 7, 1937, with an enrollment to date of 106, which is an increase over the previous session." ⁷³ McMullan

⁷³ J. L. Boyd, "Excerpts From Proceedings of the Mississippi Baptist Convention," The Baptist Record, November 16-18, 1937, p. 2.

then serving as president of the school.

During this session, an appeal was made to the people of this section for support. This explanatory statement came from The Newton Record: "Clarke Memorial College is the oldest denominational junior college in Mississippi and has a history to be proud of." ⁷⁴

⁷⁴ "Clarke College to Open September 7," The Newton Record, September 2, 1937, p. 1.

W. L. McMullan continued as president of Clarke College during 1938. Under his leadership the school was confronting successfully many financial difficulties. Yet there was enough light to show its true worth and value to Newton and the state of Mississippi.

In that year, \$500.00 was spent on repair for the school. This money was given by the town of Newton, and again the townspeople paid the rent. Still, the school in general was making a contribution to Baptist life. The following statement is a typical illustration of the local appreciation for the school: "The enrollment is 101, and the faculty is made up of people with good degrees. There are 30 ministerial students. Two girls are missionaries."⁷⁵

⁷⁵ "Report From the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board," The Baptist Record, November 24, 1938, p. 3.

Clarke College struggled for life during these years. Yet, although it existed in constant danger of being closed, such men as W. L. McMullan and others of like caliber persistently fought its battles.

In 1940, W. L. McMullan surrendered the lease he held, and the institution was then leased to Freeman E.

May. May was a Newton County man and a graduate of Mississippi Southern College. He had done some graduate work at the University of Texas.

The school opened its doors under the guidance of this educator for its 32nd session with opportunities being offered to boys and girls of limited financial means. The tuition was only \$5.00 a month, while room and board were \$12.00 a month. The cottages were offered rent free to ministerial students. The total cost for those staying in the dormitories amounted to \$173.00 a semester.

Many doubters now became converted to the idea that Clarke College did have a place in the life of their denomination. This was given emphasis by a general awakening of Baptists to its value. Then, too, the depression had largely disappeared. This gave people renewed courage and greater financial strength. Still there was no general stampede of financial supporters to its aid. There were then only gifts of minor significance received. However, these were soon to grow through the concerted effort of the Baptist constituency.

Most of the gifts to Clarke College were from individuals. However, though they were faithful, the main

hope lay in denominational support. This interest became brighter in 1940 in a report from the trustees.

"The State Convention is now paying one thousand dollars a year to be applied on teachers' salaries."⁷⁶

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⁷⁶ "A Message From the Trustees," The Baptist Record, September 12, 1940, p. 12.

8 In 1941, people unfriendly toward Clarke College scattered the rumor that the school would not open again. The local people again came to the aid of this institution. The following report was given in 1941, to silence the above rumors: "Throughout the state there has been renewed interest in Clarke, and it is hoped that some day Mississippi Baptists will again wake up to the fact that the school is rendering a distinct and unique service."⁷⁷

⁷⁷ Newton County Baptist Association, October 15-16, 1941, p. 14.

President May ^{SP} also gave rebuttal to the argument just then by undertaking a program of repairing and redecoration for the school.

After the resignation of president F. E. May in 1942,

J. L. Boyd of Meridian was elected as president of Clarke College. As to his early history, Boyd was born in Pike County, Mississippi, near McComb, and after completing the eighth grade, entered Mississippi College in the fall of 1901, taking two years in the preparatory department and then the full college course, graduating with the degree of Bachelor of Science in June of 1908, having remained out of school two sessions to teach.

Boyd then was superintendent of Lawrence County Agricultural High School for two years, resigning there to enter the Southern Baptist Theological Seminary at Louisville, Kentucky, in the fall of 1910. He was graduated from that institution with the degree of Master of Theology in 1914.

Upon completion of his seminary training, Boyd returned to his native state and was pastor of the Central Baptist Church of Coldwater. Early in 1916, he was called to the pastorate of the Galilee Baptist Church of Gloster which he served until entering the army as chaplain in November, 1917. He trained with the men in Camp Pike and Camp Dix and was overseas in France for nine months. While in France after the armistice, Chaplain Boyd was appointed to the post of Base School office of Base Section Number 2 to correlate all education work for the 85,000 soldiers

in that section while they were idle, waiting to come home. In this capacity, he made personal contacts for the American soldiers in all the schools and universities of France and England, as well as directed all teaching personnel, including Young Men's Christian Association, educational directors, in classes of every description from the primary grades to mechanical schools. He was among the group of educators who set up the American "Paper Shell University" at Beaune, France.

During this era, while Boyd was president of Clarke College, the academic program was accelerated for the benefit of the Army personnel. According to this plan, young men who contemplated entering the armed forces might take one or two credits each six weeks. This allowed them to receive credit on the work, but also enabled them to gain more rapid promotion in the armed services.

A report in 1943 indicated the progress of the school: "The outlook for the college is brighter than for some time in spite of the adverse conditions incident to the war."⁷⁸ To bear out this statement, two

⁷⁸ "Clarke College Announces Enlarged Program,"
The Baptist Record, May 20, 1943, p. 7.

two new departments were opened.

Interest in the school continued to increase. The following excerpt appeared in the Jones County Association bulletin of 1941: "Its finest service during its lifetime has been the discovery of gems in the rough, and giving them the polish which has enabled them to reflect light on the hilltops of responsibility."⁷⁹

⁷⁹ Minutes of Jones County Association, October 20, 1941, p. 4.

In 1943, a resolution was introduced at the Mississippi Baptist State Convention to allow Clarke College \$2,000.00 per year. This is somewhat clarified by this particular clause: "Second, that the said sum of two thousand dollars be collected and paid as and when other monies are collected and paid as said mission board."⁸⁰

⁸⁰ Mississippi Baptist Convention, November 16-18, 1943, p. 50.

A heartening note came from the ~~Newton County Association~~. The excerpt read, "Throughout the state there has been renewed interest in Clarke."

On April 6, 1944, it was announced that J. L. Boyd had resigned as president of the college. He had served in this capacity for two years. Other pursuits of business activity were given for causing this action on his part.

At a meeting of the Board of Trustees of Clarke Memorial College in April, 1944, William Earle Greene was elected as president for the year.

William Earle Greene was reared at Meridian, Mississippi. He received his junior college education at Clarke College. He also received his B. A. degree from Mississippi College. Later he earned the Th. M. and Th. D. degrees from the Baptist Bible Institute at New Orleans, Louisiana. "He served as pastor of the Ellisville Church, and for the past year in the capacity of enlistment pastor of the convention."⁸¹

⁸¹ "Greene Elected as President of Clarke Memorial College," The Newton Record, April 13, 1944, p.1.

The coming of this leader to Clarke College marked a new era in its history. His advent brought the most promising regime the school had known. From the doldrums and discouragements of Baptist indifference, he was to lead Clarke to new accomplishments; for under his administration, the task of ministering to boys and girls of every strata of social life was endeavored to be carried out. The Newton County Baptist Association printed the following article about this program:

Clarke Memorial College, under the able management of Dr. W. E. Greene, still adheres to its early aim to discover the deserving boy and girl and to encourage that one in every possible way to become a useful Christian citizen. 82

⁸² Minutes of Newton County Association, 1944, p. 16.

CHAPTER IV
RESTORATION AND PROGRESS

Clarke College was still under private control. Yet her growth and general revival caused a demand for her restoration to convention-supported status. People could not ignore its fight for life during the nadir of denominational effort to support the school. The fact that Clarke would not accept death after such a sentence had been decreed brought the school many admirers. Moreover, the ministry to needy boys and girls of Mississippi focused the light of denominational interest upon the school.

Not only had denominational interest shifted to Clarke College during these years, but denominational activity now found its way to the school. This only accentuated the need for state-wide support.

In 1945, the Baptist Preachers' School was held at Clarke from March 12 through April 6. This was under the auspices of the Mississippi State Baptist Convention. The school played a dominant part in making the event possible. "Under the arrangement that makes this school

possible, the college tenders the use of its dormitories, dining hall, classrooms, library, and other needed facilities available on its campus." 83

83 "Clarke College Will Have Preachers' School," The Baptist Record, February 1, 1945, p. 1.

To add further impetus to the movement for reinstatement, private individuals increased their gifts to the school. Two thousand dollars was received by the Mississippi Baptist Foundation for the endowment of Clarke College. "This is of special interest, because, for the first time in its history, the college has some endowment." 84

84 "Mississippi Foundation Gets \$2,000 for Clarke College," The Baptist Record, February 22, 1945, p. 9.

A general overall report of optimism was brought before the board of trustees after their annual meeting in 1945. The following figures show the essence of the paper analysis of the school: A total of 144 was enrolled, of which 42 were ministerial students. There were also 25 certificate course preachers. \$31,000.00 was handled by the office; \$7,100.00 was received as endowment. There

was part renovation of the dormitories. Thousands of trees were planted, and a large lake was provided.

More space was pleaded for in the face of a productive enrollment of between 200 and 300 students. There was urgent need for further renovation of the dormitories. The need was acute in the girls dormitory. "At least two shower baths (just one shower and one tub are now usable in the girls dormitory;)"⁸⁵ Also

⁸⁵ Ibid.

a general plea was made for the construction of ministerial cottages.

At its annual meeting in November, 1945, Clarke Memorial College was reinstated as a denominationally-supported school. The action came with a unanimous vote of the convention. The control was transferred to a board of trustees elected by the body in session.

The dreams of supporters over the state were now realized, and the school that had been privately operated since 1930, was once more in the charge of the convention.

The continued increase of regular students, plus the influence of the veterans, caused a housing demand at Clarke College. This necessitated more funds for

building and renovation purposes, and thus it became obvious that there must be a concerted, state-wide campaign for this institution.

During the interim, gifts were slowly trickling into the college treasury. The entire Kent estate was bequeathed to the college. The article appeared in The Baptist Record in 1946, as follows: "Clarke College will receive a considerable sum from the estate of the late Mr. R. C. Kent of Greenwood."⁸⁶

⁸⁶ "Clarke College to Receive Sum From Kent Estate," The Baptist Record, December 12, 1946, p.1.

Other gifts came but proved inadequate for the school. Most of them were absorbed in the repairing of the administration building, library, and other buildings on the campus.

Therefore, president W. E. Greene and the trustees of Clarke Memorial College laid plans for a strengthening and improvement campaign. A goal of \$350,000.00 was set which was to be allocated for both the construction of new buildings and the repairing of old ones. This was to become a crystalized program in 1947.

For this program D. H. McCall, Executive-Secretary

Treasurer of Mississippi Baptists, was chosen as director. Plans called for completion of the campaign in 1948. This was highly desirable in the face of the dire need for new dormitories for both boys and girls, a dining hall, and a new administration building.

In 1948, a meeting of the advisory committee of the Clarke College Campaign was held at the Baptist Building in Jackson. Reports were made on the work already done. "Approximately \$107,000 were reported in gifts, and many sections of the state are planning to take offerings this month and next, according to representatives in all districts."⁸⁷

⁸⁷ "\$107,000 in Sight For Clarke College," The Baptist Record, May 6, 1948, p.1.

Plans were laid for speaking campaigns in churches, during associational meetings, and all possible public gatherings. Pastors, graduates from Clarke College, and all friends were urged to give to the program themselves, and to solicit funds from other sources.

In addition, there was to be a special day set aside for a general offering. The Baptist Record included the

following article:

Easter Sunday, March 28, has been designated as the day for a state-wide offering for Clarke College. By all means, plan for the largest possible offering on this day. Coin envelopes will be mailed out all over the state for this purpose.⁸⁸

⁸⁸ "How You May Help Clarke College in This Campaign for \$350,000," The Baptist Record, February 12, 1948, p. 7.

The administration of Clarke College purchased from the War Assets Administration at Camp Shelby a large wooden theatre building. The lumber and materials from it were to be used in the college building program. The Student Activities Building was to be the recipient of most of the material.

"The dining hall-activities building was dedicated on Monday, September 5, 1949."⁸⁹ This was to be used

⁸⁹ "New Clarke Activities Building," The Newton Record, August 11, 1949, p. 1.

temporarily as an office building for the administration. Later the top floor was to be used for recreational purposes.

The year 1949 was a year of significant progress for Clarke College. The school was still showing great material growth.

The buildings now owned by the college were two dormitories, the administration building, the activities building, the music building, twelve faculty homes, 40 family homes; and the board of ministerial education owned homes for 33 families.⁹⁰

⁹⁰ History of Clarke College, Student Compilation, Op. Cit., p. 11.

The girls dormitory is now under construction. "It is hoped that one unit of this building will be complete by September, 1952. Further plans call for its completion in 1953."⁹¹

⁹¹ Interview with Eugene Keebler, Assistant Administrator to William Earle Greene, Date of Interview, January 1952.

In 1950, Clarke College went beyond its highest enrollment mark. "During the last session, 1948-49, the enrollment was 432. Thus far, it has reached 440 with two more terms to go."⁹²

⁹² "Clarke College Enrollment Still Increasing With 440 Students," The Newton Record, February 9, 1950, p. 1.

School opened in 1952 with an enrollment of over 400 for the first term. The number is growing every new

school year.

The college now has a membership in the Mississippi Association of Colleges, Mississippi Association of Junior Colleges, American Association of Junior Colleges, and the Southern Baptist Association of Colleges and Secondary Schools.⁹³

⁹³ A History Of Clarke Memorial College, Op. Cit., p. 98.

The growth of this school from both the material and academic standpoint merits attention, for once the forgotten institution, it now holds a prominent place in the denominational life of Mississippi Baptists.

CHAPTER V
RETROSPECT AND PROFILE

A cursory recapitulation of the history of Clarke College reveals many factors which contributed to the progress of the school. These have been partially delineated in previous chapters. However, to complete the picture, descriptions of its advantages, requirements, curriculum, buildings, and lastly, its religious and literary activities should all be given.

The paramount qualification for entrance into Clarke College is a desire and willingness to receive an education. Yet the school seeks to enlist those who are capable of being constructively trained. Advantage is offered to students by the administration who keep the expense of attendance at a low minimum. In 1910, it was much lower than other neighboring schools. "The cost of board, including room rent, heat and lights will be \$12.00 per month or \$36.00 per term of twelve weeks"⁹⁴ Even in 1947 and 1948, the school only

⁹⁴ Catalogue of Clarke Memorial College, 1910, p. 9.

charged \$79.00 for a quarter of nine weeks. "This included the following: matriculation, activities, tuition, medical fee, and room and board."⁹⁵

⁹⁵ Catalogue of Clarke Memorial College, 1947-48,
p. 14.

This low cost of entrance and attendance has led many students to Clarke College. This fact was made known through the bulletin and papers of the denomination. The following is an example:

There are large numbers of our Mississippi young people whose preparatory work has not been adequate to give them entrance into most of our standard institutions. Besides, the expense itself is frequently as prohibitive proposition in many of our schools. ⁹⁶

⁹⁶ Lauderdale County Baptist Association, September 20, 21, 1922, p.13.

Clarke College has taken care of both types of need.

Jobs are also provided on the campus to defray the expense of needy students, while low rent cottages are likewise available to married students. Then, too, these are augmented by many generous gifts sent by the patrons and friends of the school.

From its beginning as a school, Clarke College maintained a standard of regulations for the government of the student body. Of particular interest are some of these early rules. They are as follows:

No student will be allowed to be away from the college after dark except by special permission from the president. All students will be required to attend Sunday School and preaching Sunday morning. Mail for students will be delivered to them at the college and the correspondence of all students will be left to the discretion of the faculty. 97

97 Catalogue of Clarke Memorial College, 1913-14, pp. 1, 12.

Other rules governing the relationship of young men and women were often rather severe. "No young lady will be permitted to receive the attention of young men except by special permission" 98 Boys were included in

98 Ibid., p. 12.

similar rules. The following is a resume of the entire set of rules: "do what is right. Our pupils are taught by precept and example their duty to God and to their fellow man; taught always to respect the right and to labor for the welfare of their neighbors." 99

99 Ibid., p. 14

Even today students must adhere to a general regulation of conduct. The young women are governed by a dormitory council responsible to the Dean of Women. The duties of the council are to act as a executive body and to enforce dormitory regulations.

The boys are required to adhere to similar rules. No student is permitted to marry during the school session without permission of the parents and board of trustees. All students must be properly chaperoned during dates. Study hours and fun hours are to be followed in dormitories.

Clarke College is an accredited junior college. However, students who enter the institution must either possess fifteen units of work from a standard high school or successfully pass a college entrance examination. Only students who have reached the age of twenty years and have spent a minimum of nine weeks in the secondary division may take this test. The fifteen units must include "three units in English, two units in mathematics and two units in history." 100

¹⁰⁰Clarke College Catalogue, 1951-52, p. 22.

The maximum number of units that may be offered in vocational subjects is four. If less than two units is offered in a foreign language, additional work must be taken in college. No credit is given for work amounting to less than one-half unit.

St. Students who have done satisfactory college work in other accredited colleges may be regularly accepted at Clarke College upon the presentation of a certificate of honorable dismissal from the previous school attended. The final criteria for determining the evaluation of work done elsewhere is the type of work the student does after transferring to Clarke College.

Clarke College operates on the term plan. The academic year consists of four terms of nine weeks each. The classes must be met daily, Monday through Friday. The class periods normally run one hour (60 minutes) in length. The students regularly must carry three three-hour courses. The plan enables the school to admit more students at different periods of the year. This

division will also prevent the loss of extra time due to illness or other types of unavoidable withdrawals. It also reduces the number of courses, and thereby increases efficiency of both teachers and students.

This plan was begun in 1944, and has received the approval of the faculty and student body. Tuition, board, health fees and other charges are computed on the basis of nine-week terms. Graduation comes at the end of the fourth nine-week term.

It must be borne in mind that the school serves a constituency that is largely rural. The school territory is primarily that of the entire state of Mississippi. The background and needs of the students are kept in mind by the school leaders. A survey taken among 341 regularly enrolled students revealed important data concerning the parents of the group. Their occupational status was as follows:

There are thirteen professional and semi-professional workers, 105 farmers and farm managers, eleven proprietors, managers, and officials, four clerical and kindred workers, seven salesmen and saleswomen, twenty-seven craftsmen, foremen and kindred workers, seven unemployed, and 141 homemakers, and twenty-seven engaged in other types of work. 101

101 "Population Data for the School Community,"
Evaluative Criteria, 1952, p. 28.

Further statistics were revealed in educational qualifications of the parents. These questions were answered directly by the students and revealed that the parents were largely rural, having had little or no opportunity for adult education. The reports included fathers and mothers of approximately one-half the student body of February, 1952.

These subsequent figures were given:

109 parents attended but did not complete elementary school, 60 completed elementary school, 110 attended but did not complete high school, three attended but did not graduate from post-secondary school, nine completed a two-year college course, five graduated from four year college, and three were engaged in graduate study. 102

102 Ibid., p. 29.

Clarke College endeavors to meet the needs of students in light of their own background as well as that of parents. For this purpose, the secondary department was instituted as additional help to the college department. All secondary work at Clarke Memorial College is

subject to the regulations of the Mississippi High School Accrediting Commission and the Mississippi State Department of Education. Only teachers certified by the Mississippi State Department of Education are employed for secondary instruction. The secondary department is accredited by the Mississippi High School Accrediting Commission.

Special students are often admitted to the secondary department without high school credits. They are progressively instructed until such time as they may pass a college entrance test. On the other hand, they may do four years of high school work and then enter the college department.

A summer session of the school is held annually, and then two five-week terms of work are offered. They begin in the first week of June and end early in August. The courses are chosen from the general catalogue and are taught by the regular faculty members.

Special intelligence and mental ability tests are given upon the entrance of the student to the college. The A. C. E. Psychological, The Barrett-Ryan English, and the Iowa High School Content tests are examples of types used.

The same type of tests are given in the secondary division. Other tests are held for students of their department who desire to try for college entrance at the end of each nine-week term. They may also serve in placement and guidance of students.

A system of orientation and guidance is carried out by the college administration. Aims and methods are presented to enrolling students. The Dean's office collects and files all available personal, health, and scholastic information about the students. On this information, counsel is given the students. In addition, a standardized psychological examination, administered one or more times a year, aids further in guiding the student into satisfactory college work.

Among the requirements of Clarke College are that students must maintain a "C" average to remain in school. There, too, chapel attendance is coercive, while classes must be regularly met; and all unexcused absences are subject to grade penalties.

The college offers six years of work to students without high school background. It reaches boys and girls who are unable to attend school elsewhere. It not only

serves as a preparatory institution for Mississippi's three Baptist colleges, but it does a peculiar work of its own. Many students who never attend any other school are able to find a place in the ministry or some other field of endeavor.

In its curriculum, Clarke College meets the requirements of the State Education Commission. Its ambition is to reach as many students as possible with, at the same time, as broad and practical prescribed course of study as is possible.

Bible and Religious Education are two of the central subjects taught in the school. These include courses in Old and New Testament, missionary education, church efficiency, Christian doctrine, homiletics, and evangelism.

Clarke offers a variety of other courses as well. These include commerce, history, home economics, government, English, speech, Spanish, Latin, mathematics, music, sciences, and other courses.

At the present time, the buildings and grounds are receiving much attention. The college campus is a seventy-acre tract of land including level areas, hills,

and valleys. Part of the campus is wooded and is being transformed into a parkway. On the north side of the campus is located a three and one-half acre lake fed by a large number of natural springs. In addition to the campus, the college owns a 160 acre farm. It provides food for the college and offers employment to students deserving and desiring to work.

A recent survey by the School Planning Committee of the Mississippi Education Association was held at Clarke College. It reported favorably upon the general improvement campaign of the school. The following is an abridged account brought by the group: "In making this report the committee has kept in mind the limited and uncertain financial resources of the school and the progress it has made in the eight years since its reorganization."¹⁰³

¹⁰³ Planning Committee of Special Mississippi Education Committee, 1952, p. 1.

The buildings vary in appearance and size. Kent Hall, the dormitory for men, is a three-story building of frame and brick construction. It is the oldest edi-

office on the campus. Plans are being made to replace it with a modern dormitory of fireproof design. McLaurin Hall houses the women. It is a three-story brick building of semi-fireproof construction. It was formerly the men's dormitory but was converted to its present status. A modern dormitory for girls is now under construction. When completed, this building will have four wings and will house 176 girls. The cost of building will amount to approximately \$125,000.00.

The college also owns housing for more than forty student families, which are in the form of single and duplex cottages. The Board of Ministerial Education of the Baptist Convention owns property adjacent to the campus on which are single and duplex houses providing living quarters for thirty-two additional student families.

The administration building is the most important structure on the campus. It contains three stories which are used for classes, library, and office space. It was erected of brick at a cost of \$50,000.00, and is considered to be fireproof. The activities building was completed in 1950. It was built of yellow brick and contains two stories. The cost of construction amounted.

to approximately \$30,000.00. This low figure was due largely to the usage of students as laborers. The building is used both as a dining hall and as a place for recreation.

The music building was erected in 1950 at a cost of \$20,000.00. It is a wooden structure composed of two separate compartments. Each may be used simultaneously for the instruction of students. The concession building was completed in 1951 at a cost of approximately \$25,000.00. It now contains the offices of the administration, the printing press, the business office, and the concession. Students use the building largely as a social center during the hours when classes are not meeting.

The library is in the process of being stocked with additional books. It occupies the main floor of the administration building. At the present time, the library includes 6,200 volumes, including 1,700 volumes of gift collections. The college exceeds the minimum requirement spent annually in the library.

From the beginning of the school, the faculty and students of Clarke College recognized the value of social training in the literary field. Therefore, two

literary organizations, the Platonian and the Delta Kappa Societies, were formed in 1908. In 1909, the Aurelian and Euterpian Societies, two other literary societies, were organized. They were to be the means of training the mind of the student. "The purpose of the Aurelian Society was to train young men to think and to speak well."¹⁰⁴ The Aurelian Society and the

¹⁰⁴ The Seer, 1921, p. 54.

Platonian Society are still functioning at Clarke College today.

The Art Club was organized in 1946. The group holds regular meetings and permits those interested in art to discuss the subject from several angles. Membership is open to all students.

For years, students and faculty alike had felt the need of a college newspaper. This need was caused by the discontinuance several years earlier of a newspaper called the Clarke Echo. Therefore, the Clarke Call was begun in 1946. The paper usually ~~XXXXXX~~ carries some alumni news, and distribution is made periodically among members of the Alumni Association. The students receive a copy

every two weeks.

In addition, the college has such organizations as the Future Teachers of America, the sacred chorus, and The Seer. Each of these takes care of and reflects the life of some segment of students on the campus.

Each student is encouraged to join at least one of these student organizations, but he may also hold membership in others. Each group must have a faculty member as sponsor. Also, its finance must be transacted through the business office. This precludes the formation of an new organization without the permission of the college administration.

Clarke College had its inception as a religious school. As such, it has not departed from the first fundamental foundations laid in 1908. Christianity is emphasized in most of the activities of the institution. No teacher is employed who is not a Christian. All students are urged to become Christians and attend the local churches.

The school serves a wide area in a religious way. Most of the ministerial students from Clarke College pastor rural churches. In the school year of 1950-51,

they composed a large percentage of the enrolled students. "Of the total enrollment of 568, there were 271 ministerial students in this institution this past session, more than in any other college or university of the South."¹⁰⁵

¹⁰⁵ "Education Committee Report," Evaluative Criteria, 1952.

The idea of religious service has been carried out by the teachings of faculty members. It is written in every publication. It has been summed up in the following statement:

First, we endeavor to create an atmosphere that is friendly to the development of Christian characters. Second, in our classrooms the Bible, which is the textbook of Christianity, is fully and frankly taught. ¹⁰⁶

¹⁰⁶ Catalogue of Clarke Memorial College, 1920-21, p. 9.

Every morning before classes are begun, the students hold "Morning Watch". This is the early prayer meeting. All students are urged to attend. Singing, testimonies, and prayers are offered during this twenty minute period of religious devotion.

At noon, a prayer meeting is held in the center of the campus. A huge circle is formed, and students hold hands while singing and praying. This is under the auspices of the Baptist Student Union, a campus organization.

The Baptist Student Union is the foremost and most important organization on Clarke College campus. It is the voluntary religious activity of Baptist students. It centers around the church.

Thus, it is the connecting link between the campus and the church. Membership in the local Baptist church, its Sunday School, or Training Union, or any B. S. U. unit organization on the campus means membership in the Baptist Student Union. 107

107 Catalogue of Clarke Memorial College, 1947-48,
p. 12.

Furthermore, this organization coordinates the religious activity on the campus and points the students toward the local church.

In addition to occasional conferences, special weeks of emphasis, and social gatherings, it promotes the morning watch, a widely attended twenty minute devotional period held each school morning before class time. 108

108 Ibid.

Most of the work of the Baptist Student Union is done through unit organizations. The following are units of this central organization: Ministerial Association, Beacon Mission Band, Young Women's Auxiliary, Religious Education Association, Woman's Missionary Society, and several other groups.

Through the combined efforts of the Baptist Student Union and the Ministerial Association of Clarke College, our evangelistic efforts have grown into a far reaching program that is touching the lives of many Christians and non-Christians throughout this section. 109

109 "Clarke College Evangelistic Efforts," The Baptist Record, November 28, 1940, p. 13.

The school now enjoys the support of the state convention. A recent letter of report was sent to W. E. Greene, president, stating the proportion of the funds Clarke College was to receive from the general educational fund. The letter was as follows:

The Mississippi Baptist Convention has been supporting the work of Clarke College to the extent of 19.5 percent of statewide Christian education funds over a period of the past few years. It is expected that the convention will continue this proportionate support with little if any change in the foreseeable future. 110

110 Letter from Fyrser Hewitt to W. E. Greene, April 4, 1952.

Nevertheless, the college is in great need of substantial endowment. It has only a minimum amount aggregating less than \$10,000.00 in this fund. Efforts are being made to accelerate this movement. But the fact that the state convention voted in its last session to remove all workers from soliciting money in the field, except for endowment, will adversely affect this aim. Funds that could be used for endowment must be used for operating expenses.

Despite these factors, Clarke College has several positive factors in its favor. The present increase in enrollment assures the abiding interest of the people of the state. The construction of more buildings seems to give the school a degree of permanency. The ever-increasing number of graduates out in the field gathers much additional support.

A department of public relations, under the direction of O. P. Moore, former pastor of the Moorhead, Mississippi, Baptist Church, has been organized. Assisting him is a staff of three workers. The duties of this group include the solicitation of students, the education of the public through literature and conferences held at various churches, and the seeking of endowment funds from prospective donors throughout the state.

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APPENDIX A

"Clarke Memorial College" Co The Newton Record,
December 27, 1908, p. 1.

The movement to build a great denominational school in east Mississippi has been talked for some time by the Baptists of the state to perpetuate the memory of the late Rev. N. L. Clarke, who died September 11, 1906, and to be an inspiration to the future manhood and womanhood of east Mississippi. Resolutions were passed last September by the Bay Springs Baptist Association asking the several associations to take definite steps toward furthering the cause, which was enthusiastically done. Newton generously offered \$35,000, free water for five years, fifty scholarships for one year, and forty acres of land, to secure the school. Rev. S. B. Culpepper was put in this field to secure further subscriptions and has met with unqualified success. Mr. Culpepper is a most enthusiastic worker and has his heart in the cause; he has many friends who feel proud of his work and predict a great future for him.

Newton has four churches with a large membership. There are two Missionary Baptist churches, one Presbyterian, and one Methodist.

The New Central Baptist Church, which is about completed, is one of the handsomest edifices in the state, made of pressed brick and modelled in the state, in the most pleasing manner. The church cost \$10,000 and has a large membership.

APPENDIX B

Catalogue of Clarke Memorial College, 1910,
Newton, Mississippi, pp. 9-10.

ABSTRACT OF SCHOOL LAWS

* No student will be allowed to be away from the college after dark except by special permission from the president.

All students will be required to attend Sunday School and preaching Sunday morning.

Mail for students will be delivered to them at the college, and the correspondences of all students will be left to the discretion of the faculty.

All mail must pass through the hands of some of the faculty.

No young lady will be permitted to receive the attention of young men except by special permission.

All associations with young ladies is forbidden to young men except under same conditions as the preceding.

No boy will be allowed to visit in town except by permission of the president.

No girl will be allowed to visit in town except by special permission from her parents and faculty. And then she will be accompanied by one of the faculty.

No student will be allowed to leave his room during study hours without permission.

All students will be required to keep their rooms in good order.

No student must read anything during study hours except what is prescribed by a teacher.

No student will be allowed to change rooms without the consent of the teacher in charge.

Smoking in or about the buildings or on the campus, or in public places will not be tolerated.

No student will be given permission to visit home or elsewhere without request from parents or guardian direct to some member of the faculty.

Penalty for violating any rule or regulation of the College will be fixed by the faculty at from 1 to 25 demerits.

The above rules may be modified, or other rules may be added at the discretion of the faculty.

Any student receiving 25 demerits during the session will be expelled from school.

APPENDIX E

"College Meeting," The Newton Record,
April 10, 1924, p. 5.

RESOLUTIONS PASSED AT MEETING TO URGE RETENTION
OF COLLEGE

At a mass meeting held here a few nights since,
the following resolutions were passed:

Whereas, the Board of Trustees of Clarke Memorial
College of Newton, Mississippi, has communicated to this
meeting a letter from the Education Commission of the
Baptist Convention in regard to the proposition of the
new administration building at the college in Newton,
Mississippi, and

Whereas, said letter called for an expression from
the people of Newton as to whether said college was wanted
by the town of Newton, and,

Whereas, the people of Newton, represented by a
large number of its businessmen and professional men,
have assembled in a meeting to show their appreciation
of the college and convey to the Education Commission
their desire that the college remain at Newton,

Now, therefore, be it resolved by the people of
Newton, in mass meeting assembled, that it is the wish
and desire of the town of Newton that Clarke Memorial
College be kept at Newton, the birthplace of the said
college, where it was originated and where all the people
have a keen desire to see it succeed; and

Be it further resolved, that in order to help the
college succeed, the people of Newton hereby pledge them-
selves to all in their power to uphold the Board of Trus-
tees and the president of the college in all their under-
takings with regard to said college and they will, to the
extent that they are financially able to do, undertake
some of the financial burdens of the college as they have
in the days gone past.

Be it further resolved that a copy of these resolu-
tions be sent to the Education Commission of the Baptist
Convention and to the Trustees of Clarke Memorial College.

J. L. Byrd-----committee
W. D. Lowe
T. A. Baucum
C. E. Sumner

APPENDIX F

"Baptist Convention Votes Clarke Close," The Newton Record, November 20, 1930, p. 1.

INDEBTEDNESS WILL BE CLEARED IN PLAN

The Mississippi State Baptist Convention in session at Water Valley voted late Wednesday to discontinue Clarke College at Newton, which has been operating as a junior college under the auspices of that denomination for twenty-two years. The reason given for such action is that the denomination is not able financially to support so many schools, and that their other three institutions, Mississippi College at Clinton, Blue Mountain College at Blue Mountain, and Woman's College at Hattiesburg, operating as standard colleges furnish adequate facilities for the denominational needs. Of course, the people of Newton and this section regret that such action is to be taken, but they must yield to the wishes of the denomination in the matter, since the major support of the institution must come from their education commission. The following report comes from the site of the convention:

Water Valley, Nov. 19--Lifting of notes on four Baptist colleges through floating of a bond issue of \$325,000 was voted by practically unanimous consent of the state Baptist convention here tonight with the assembly then launching into a long discussion on the proposed unified board of trustees for the three standard colleges.

Discontinuance of Clarke Memorial College at Newton was approved late today by the Mississippi Baptist State Convention in session here.

Closure of the school followed a similar move about a year ago which later was rescinded and the school reopened. Today's actions leave the date of closing the school with the education commission of the convention.

Senator W. N. Taylor of Jackson, sought to save the school when he moved that the recommendation of the education commission be defeated. No record vote was taken on the original recommendation for discontinuance after the Taylor substitute was defeated 162 to 139.

APPENDIX I

"Report of Evaluative Committee," Mississippi State Department of Education, 1952

PURPOSES

As an agency of the Mississippi Baptist Convention, and in accordance with our philosophy, Clarke Memorial College seeks:

1. To offer standard secondary and junior college opportunities;
2. To emphasize preparation for the ministry and other church-related vocations;
3. To offer studies under Christian teachers of Baptist faith;
4. To maintain a strong moral and religious campus atmosphere, that will continue through the student's lifetime;
5. To aid in the development in each student of a well-balanced personality;
6. To extend special consideration to students above the average age who seriously seek education;
7. To carry forward a program of discovery and encouragement of worthy men and women who have not considered getting a college education;
8. To provide a program of mental health and physical well-being; and
9. To provide the above opportunities at the lowest cost consistent with comfort and efficiency.