

THE HISTORICAL EVOLUTION OF A BLACK LAND GRANT COLLEGE:
THE UNIVERSITY OF MARYLAND, EASTERN SHORE, 1886-1970

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CHAPTER I

THE NEGRO ACADEMY

During the latter part of the nineteenth century, a small school for the education of Negroes was established in the town of Princess Anne on Maryland's Eastern Shore. As an institution serving "the youth of Maryland of the colored race," its evolution to full-fledged status as a branch campus of the University of Maryland depicts the problems, struggles, and successes faced by a black school in the American South.¹ Throughout its history the school in Princess Anne underwent changes in name, status, and educational philosophy. It responded to the prevailing political, economic, and social forces of its times. During its first quarter century the school managed to survive, but by attempting to achieve both literary and industrial aims it succeeded in neither.

Just north of Princess Anne was a parcel of land with a colonial dwelling on it, named Olney. Built in 1798 by Ezekiel Haynie, a physician and surgeon in the Continental Army, Olney was a large Georgian mansion that had deteriorated over the years. The property was sold to various families

¹Princess Anne Academy Charter, December 31, 1890, University Collection, University of Maryland, Eastern Shore Library, Princess Anne, Maryland.

until it was bought in 1886 by John A. B. Wilson, a white minister of the Methodist Episcopal Church, who was serving in Princess Anne since 1832.² The founding of the University of Maryland, Eastern Shore is traceable to the acquisition of Olney, first under the auspices of the Methodist Episcopal Church.

Black education in Maryland in the post-Civil War era received practically no support from the state legislature. Those schools that did exist were operated by Protestant church denominations. The Methodists were particularly active in this regard by channeling funds through an organization called the Baltimore Association for the Moral and Educational Improvement of the Colored People. The Association provided teachers to man the Freedmen's Bureau schools that were set up in the counties in the period 1866-1868.³ In Somerset County, the first public school for Negroes at this time was established in a black Methodist church. Shortly after opening for classes, the school was burned by an angry mob of whites who feared that education would ruin blacks for field work and undermine the racial caste system.⁴

Black Methodists, particularly those at the Metropolitan Methodist Church at Princess Anne saw education as a way of overcoming racial aggression in Somerset County.

²Doris Maslin Cohn, "The Haynie Letters," Maryland Historical Magazine, XXVI (June, 1941), p. 2.

³William A. Low, "The Freedmen's Bureau in the Border States," Richard C. Curry, ed., Radicalism, Racism and Party Realignment: The Border States During Reconstruction,

⁴George R. Bentley, A History of the Freedmen's Bureau, (New York, 1974), p. 179.

way of overcoming racial aggression in Somerset County. Significantly, the congregation had been strong even in slavery times and had contained a large number of the free blacks of the county.⁵ The Waters family, free black farmers, and log cutters were active in working for the educational improvement of their race during the antebellum period. After the war, John Waters, the pastor of the Metropolitan Methodist Church, would be involved in the establishment of a college for Negroes on the Eastern Shore of Maryland for the sons and daughters of former slaves.⁶ Such was the background for the founding of Princess Anne Academy.

In 1867 the Freedmen's Aid Society of the Methodist Episcopal Church established the Centenary Biblical Institute in Baltimore as a school for the "higher" learning of Negroes.⁷ The Institute attracted many students and due to overcrowded conditions, the school sought new quarters. An additional building was obtained through the aid of John F. Goucher, a trustee.⁸ Within a few years applications again exceeded available space, and the school was forced to refuse admission to prospective students.⁹ At this time John Wilson was

⁵Robert W. Todd, Methodism of the Peninsula, (Philadelphia, 1886), p. 173.

⁶"70th Anniversary, Maryland State College Magazine," (The Salisbury Advertiser Press, 1957), p. 5.

⁷Annual Report of the Freedmen's Aid Society, Methodist Episcopal Church, (Baltimore, 1869), pp. 8-9.

⁸Ibid., 1879, p. 11.

⁹Minutes of the Session of the Delaware Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church, (Baltimore, 1886), p. 33.

transferred out of Princess Anne to the Dover Delaware district pulpit. He contacted the Centenary Biblical Institute to deed his land for Negro education.¹⁰

While a plan for a Negro school in Princess Anne was well-intentioned and progressive, the response of the white community in Somerset County was less than enthusiastic. In the late 1880's the lower Eastern Shore of Maryland remained relatively untouched by the boom of America's industrial forces. Somerset County was a rural area of small farms and villages. Life was static; heritage and family defined an individual's social status. The relationships between the white residents and the Negroes were also clearly delineated. In custom and law Somerset County upheld white supremacy. Somerset whites had reacted to the end of slavery with bitterness and apprehension. The free Negro had always been feared in the county and community leaders quickly developed alternatives such as forced apprenticeships, black codes, and segregation that would keep the Negro in a subordinate position in the post-Civil War era.¹¹ Believing that education would alter prevailing social arrangements, Somerset County Commissioners spent a scant \$89 yearly on black education.¹² The idea of land being sold for use by Negroes for educational purposes was met with hostility.

¹⁰Land Office Records, Somerset County, 1886, IV, p. 309.

¹¹William A. Low, "The Establishment of Maryland State College," Charles B. Clark, ed., The Eastern Shore of Maryland and Virginia, (New York, 1950), II, pp. 749-750.

¹²Annual Report on the Public Schools of Maryland for 1871, (Annapolis, 1872), p. 31.

John Wilson was enlightened in his racial attitudes. His friendship with Joseph Robert Waters, the black minister at the Metropolitan Methodist Episcopal Church in the Delaware Conference who promoted the idea of a school in Princess Anne, was unusual given the racial etiquette of the period. Waters and Wilson worked together in founding the school. They agreed that Olney was the logical site, and Wilson purchased the land in June of 1886.¹³ F. Maslin Frysinger, president of the Centenary Biblical Institute, and John F. Goucher traveled to Princess Anne to view the property. "On August 24, [1886], Olney and its sixteen acres was deeded by Wilson to the Centenary Biblical Institute for \$2000.¹⁴"

Olney served as the chief building of the campus. It housed the administration, principal's office and residence, classrooms, dining hall, and dormitory. (The school opened on September 13, 1886 with nine students in attendance.) Their first task was to clear the land and repair Olney which had over the years deteriorated into a granary used by local farmers. By the end of the first year, thirty seven students, a majority from Somerset County, were enrolled at the school, then commonly referred to as the Delaware Conference Academy.¹⁵ Financial support for the academy was funnelled through the

¹³Low, "The Establishment of Maryland State College," op. cit., p. 750.

¹⁴Land Office Records, op. cit.

¹⁵Low, op. cit., p. 751.

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Centenary Biblical Institute and the Delaware Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church. The Delaware Conference consisted of the congregations of Negro Methodists along the east coast from New York to the southern end of the Delmarva peninsula. Once the school in Princess Anne was opened, the Delaware Conference promoted and supported its programs wholeheartedly.

(In 1888 board members of the Delaware Conference recognized the growing need for industrial education at the academy and authorized "the enlargement of the Industrial Department at the Delaware Conference Academy to include carpentering (sic), painting and dressmaking."¹⁶ By 1891 enrollments numbered eighty five students, fifty four men and thirty one women, ranging from eight to thirty three years of age. The school year lasted for thirty six weeks but the average attendance was twenty weeks for men and eighteen weeks for women. Twenty men were taking courses in the agricultural department.¹⁷ Except for farm and garden work, students were required to provide their own tools.¹⁸ All pupils had to participate daily in manual work projects on the campus. Certificates of graduation were granted to students completing three years instruction in one branch of

¹⁶The Morgan College Bulletin, (Baltimore, 1937),
p. 20.

¹⁷Bernard C. Steiner, History of Education in Maryland, (Washington, 1894), p. 331.

¹⁸Catalogue of the Centenary Biblical Institute for 1888-1889, (Press of Centenary Biblical Institute, Princess Anne).

the industrial department as well as to those in the liberal arts and teacher training programs. The school also held summer sessions which it advertised as a "miniature Chatauqua" whereby teachers could "combine recreation and study."¹⁹

(Henry E. Alvord, president of the Maryland Agricultural College and familiar with the work of the Academy, wrote in his 1891 annual report that Princess Anne "is admirably managed, is doing most creditable work, and promises to be the foundation for great practical usefulness in the future.")

Alvord recommended that two buildings be constructed. An industrial building is needed, Alvord wrote, "to accommodate shops and storage for the departments of smithing, wheelwrighting, carpentry, painting, shoemaking, and tailoring besides shed room for brickmaking and masonry." In addition, the female department "should have a building for its entire use, as study rooms, dormitories and quarters for instruction in domestic arts." Alvord concluded his report by stating that "the progress and usefulness of this school will be greatly retarded until these two necessary buildings can be provided."²⁰

While teachers and administrators worked to make the Academy grow and prosper, important political events on the national level were changing the direction and purpose of black education. By the 1890's the early optimism, energy,

¹⁹Ibid.

²⁰Steiner, op. cit.

and support for educating the Negro had waned for various reasons. Northern urban problems held the attention of the churches, and appropriations for black education in the south were curtailed. In the southern states the white supremacists were reasserting and consolidating their power. As the Redeemers gained control of local and state governments, black educational and political gains were gradually eroded. Education, considered by Negroes to be the last hope, suffered proportionally more setbacks especially after the Supreme Court ruling of Plessy vs. Ferguson. Greater inequalities developed as two separate systems for educating whites and Negroes evolved. "Massive financial discrimination against the already conveniently segregated Negro schools apparently developed out of a conjunction of motives: increased white desire for education, white racial hostility, and efforts of taxpayers to limit taxation."²¹ The rationale behind Negro education was to prepare the race for a caste position in society. The ideals of Negro education were sacrificed as an educational system based on racial inequality and discrimination took hold.²² The lofty hopes of a "classical and literary" education were replaced by a common sense philosophy of industrial education that received the solid support of northern corporate philanthropy. Schools like Hampton and Tuskegee became models of the new orientation of Negro education.

²¹Louis B. Harlan, Separate and Unequal: Public School Campaigns and Racism in the Southern Seaboard States, 1901-1915, (Chapel Hill, 1958), p. 269.

²²Henry Allen Bullock, History of Negro Education in the South, (2d ed.; Cambridge, 1967), p. 93.

(The second Morrill Act passed by Congress on August 30, 1890, provided increased federal and state funding for land grant institutions first established under the Morrill Act of 1862. The 1890 law ostensibly forbade appropriations to any college where racial distinctions were a criteria of school admission. Yet the law stipulated that the "establishment and maintenance of such colleges separately for white and colored students shall be held to be a compliance with the provisions of this act...."²³ Thus the second Morrill Act institutionalized current practices regarding the education of blacks by its sanction of separate institutions for the two races. The black 1890 land grant schools did not have a happy birth. These colleges were founded in the age of separate but unequal education.

The idea of appropriating federal and state funds for black schools was not new in 1890. Prior to the passage of the second Morrill Act, many southern legislatures had interpreted the 1862 land grant act to include black schools. In the 1870's the legislatures of Mississippi, South Carolina, Virginia, and Kentucky gave a fixed percentage of their 1862 funds to black schools.²⁴ The 1890 law codified the practice for the entire south. State legislatures in the region selected seventeen black schools as recipients of federal funds. Maryland was no exception.

²³John W. Davis, "The Negro Land Grant College," The Journal of Negro Education, II, (July, 1933), p. 314.

²⁴Oscar Chapman, "Historical Study of Negro Land Grant Colleges," (unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, Dept. of History, Ohio State University), pp. 70-71.

(In order for the State of Maryland to continue to receive its federal funds under the 1862 act for the Maryland Agricultural College located in Prince Georges County, the legislature had to give its assent to the Morrill Act of 1890. President Alvord needed all federal funds for the Agricultural College since the state legislature only budgeted \$6000 in appropriations. With the state legislature meeting only every two years and having already closed session for 1890, Alvord needed federal funds to continue until the 1892 Assembly approved the Morrill Act.²⁵ (Since the law "specifically provided that the land-grant funds be equitably divided where separate schools for the two races were maintained," Alvord negotiated to have Princess Anne Academy designated a state supported school for blacks.²⁶)

(On December 31, 1890, Alvord contacted John F. Goucher, president of the Board of Trustees of Morgan College, and drew up a contract to "adopt" the school at Princess Anne "(the same being the Industrial Branch of said Morgan College) as the Eastern Branch of the Maryland Agricultural College."²⁷) Accordingly, the contract provided "for the youth of Maryland of the colored race, like facilities for general education and especially for instruction in agriculture and mechanic arts--conducted in a separate school,--to those provided for the

²⁵Steiner, op. cit., p. 328.

²⁶Dwight Oliver Wendell Holmes, The Evolution of the Negro College, (2d ed.; New York, 1969), p. 151.

²⁷Princess Anne Academy Charter, op. cit.

white youth of Maryland, and to thus confirm in spirit and letter, to the provisions of the Act of Congress approved August 30th, 1890...."²⁸ (Morgan College maintained day to day control of the institution.) The Maryland Agricultural College agreed to give a sum not exceeding \$3000 of federal monies from its Morrill Act appropriations to Morgan to be spent at Princess Anne for the salaries of an industrial superintendent, two instructors, equipment, tools, and materials.²⁹

Despite the rhetoric of the 1890 law, the black land grant schools would not enjoy the equal financial support accorded the 1862 schools. The 1890 schools suffered from severe discrimination in the funding process.³⁰ (Throughout the decade of the 1890's the funding of the Maryland Agricultural College increased significantly while that of Princess Anne remained static.³¹) In 1900 the Academy could have received \$25,000 annually in state and federal funds. It received less than this sum, however, due to the fact that funding was based on the number of black farmers in Maryland. With only 6,000 black farmers compared to 30,000 white farmers in the state during this period, Princess Anne Academy seldom

²⁸Ibid.

²⁹Ibid.

³⁰Holmes, op. cit.

³¹George H. Callcott, A History of the University of Maryland, (Baltimore, 1966), pp. 228-238.

received more than 39% of its allotted appropriation.³² It is against this national backdrop that we now turn to a specific examination of the growth and development of the Princess Anne Academy.

(During the first ten years of the school's existence, Princess Anne Academy vacillated between two educational philosophies.) On the one hand the school's Methodist directors emphasized training in the liberal arts. On the other hand, given the prevalent caste arrangements in the south, the school could not overlook the obvious need for training in those practical subjects which would immediately benefit black people. This dilemma would not be resolved until after the turn of the century.

The first principal of the school was Benjamin Oliver Bird, a graduate and former teacher of the Centenary Biblical Institute. He, his wife Portia, and Jacob C. Dunn, a black minister, made up the entire faculty. Bird earned a yearly salary of \$800 and his wife received \$300.³³ In addition to his administrative duties, Bird also taught mathematics, geometry, and algebra. Portia Bird taught geography, history, and elocution, and Dunn instructed in grammar and languages.³⁴

Bird continued as principal of the Academy until his death in 1897. His wife succeeded him and remained head of

³²Davis, op. cit., p. 320.

³³Minutes of the Proceedings of the Baltimore Conference, (Baltimore, 1891).

³⁴Low, op. cit.

the school until 1900. Bird's commitment to the school's expansion was illustrated by his purchase of an additional 103 acres of land, the remainder of the Olney estate, from Clara E. Morris of Princess Anne, for \$7500.³⁵ John F. Goucher advanced \$1500 for the sale of the property.³⁶ The deed of sale was made to the recently chartered Morgan College, formerly the Centenary Biblical Institute. Student labor also added a wing to Olney for classroom and dormitory use.³⁷

By the end of the 1893 term the school was progressing. The faculty was enlarged and included six mechanic arts teachers who provided part time instruction. Bird was Principal and Superintendent of the Agriculture and Industrial Departments and taught English studies. Portia Bird, Assistant Superintendent of the Girl's Industrial Department, taught dressmaking, laundering, and cooking, and English in the Normal Department. Male faculty members taught Latin, Greek, Mathematics, tailoring, blacksmithing, masonry, carpentry, shoemaking, and farming. Two women taught English studies.³⁸

The school was divided into three departments. The Classical Department had six students; the Preparatory Department for Morgan College had twenty eight students; and the Normal Department had three classes--senior (ten students),

³⁵Land Office Records, 1890, VIII, pp, 586-587.

³⁶Minutes of the Proceedings, op. cit.

³⁷Steiner, op. cit., p. 205, p. 331.

³⁸Report of the Maryland Agricultural College for the Year Ending June 30, 1893, (Baltimore, 1894), p. 48.

middle (twenty three students), and first (thirty four students). Of the 101 students, fifty five were male and forty six were female. They came primarily from the Eastern Shore of Maryland, a few were from Delaware, Pennsylvania, New Jersey, New York, Virginia, and Bermuda.³⁹ All students were required to work one hour daily and a half day on Saturday on agricultural and mechanic arts pursuits. According to Superintendent Bird, "as a means of encouraging habits of industry and self help, on the part of the students, all extra work on the farm, the care of the Campus, and also the janitor work, is given them, for which they receive a fair compensation." Tuition, board, laundry, and expenses for the year cost about \$70 per student.⁴⁰

A new girl's dormitory was built on the grounds by Mr. and Mrs. Dexter Smith of Massachusetts, in memory of their deceased daughter Eliza. The dormitory had room for fifty girls as well as a study room, bath room, reception room, teacher's room, and hot and cold water. The much improved Cooking Department now had a new large range and boiler, and the Laundry Department had stationary tubs and laundry stoves. Both also had hot and cold water. The school, however, still had need of an improved building for the Industrial and Mechanic Arts.⁴¹

During the year forty men were taught farming and gardening. Of the 121 acre farm, ninety acres were arable

³⁹Ibid., p. 45.

⁴⁰Ibid.

⁴¹Ibid., pp. 45-46.

and suitable for grain, fruit, and vegetable cultivation. Yet there was a drought and results were not as successful as anticipated, even though "experiments in manure and commercial fertilizers" were applied. To encourage the students to remain in Princess Anne through the spring planting, they were paid for their labors. Bird suggested that a fund be set up to aid the students for their work.⁴²

In spite of the fact that blacksmithing was characterized as "undesirable for the 'cultured,'" six men received training in the trade. The students made chains, tools, hooks, rings, staples, and they repaired farm implements, made new ones, welded, and saved the farm considerable expense. The students in bricklaying (eight) and carpentry (nine) also did work for the Academy. They constructed a laundry and an oil house. "The wood work on the laundry and oil house, embracing the making of window frames, roofing, laying of the floor, etc., has furnished practical and profitable instruction for students, thus affording them assistance and saving considerable expense to the school!" The students also built tables, benches, ironing boards, step ladders, tool boxes, and repaired plows, wagons, and furniture.⁴³

The Household Department trained the female students "to take charge of affairs of a well-regulated home." They received instruction in sewing, baking, cooking, laundering.

⁴²Ibid., p. 46.

⁴³Ibid., pp. 46-47.

and housekeeping. "For the sake of economy and uniformity of dress, the girls were required to appear at Commencement in white dresses made by their own hands."⁴⁴

The graduating class numbered eight in 1892 and seven in 1893. All of the above programs were accomplished on a budget of \$2,402.72 for 1892 and \$4,043.06 for 1893. In 1893 the Maryland Agricultural College gave \$3800 to its Eastern Branch in Princess Anne, one-fifth of the \$19,000 given by the Federal government under the second Morrill Act appropriations. This clearly violated the spirit of the 1890 mandate wherein funds were to be equitably distributed. In addition, the State Normal School at Bowie coveted Princess Anne's meager share for its own uses.⁴⁵

(Princess Anne Academy continued to prosper notwithstanding the economic depression of 1894. The number of students increased to 130.) The faculty now numbered twelve with printing added to the curriculum. Tuition, room, and board still cost the student \$70 for the year. The course of study remained basically the same. The Academy farm was prospering due to ditching, fencing, and improved cultivation. Bird still requested that an industrial arts building be constructed if "the generosity of the friends of the school be supplemented by aid from the State."⁴⁶ In 1894 eleven students graduated. The budget for that year was \$3,623.39.

⁴⁴ Ibid., pp. 47-48.

⁴⁵ Report of the Trustees for the Year Ending June 30, 1893, Maryland Agricultural College, (Baltimore, 1894), p. 11.

⁴⁶ Report of the Maryland Agricultural College, 1895, op. cit., p. 85.

With the 1895 annual budget of \$3,790.43, Princess Anne Academy graduated seven students.⁴⁷ In 1897, ninety three students were enrolled and thirteen graduated at the end of the school year. Under construction at last was an industrial arts building costing \$5000.⁴⁸

The third principal of the Academy, Pezavia O'Connell, had a Ph.D. from the University of Pennsylvania, class of 1898. He remained at Princess Anne for two years until 1902. Dr. O'Connell, a minister in the Delaware Conference, cultivated strong ties between the school and the church. Several pews in the Methodist Church in Princess Anne were reserved for the faculty and students. Chapel was mandatory, once daily and twice on Sunday.⁴⁹

The new spirit and direction of industrial education was reflected at Princess Anne with the appointment of Frank J. Trigg, the school's fourth principal from 1902-1910. A graduate of Hampton Institute where Booker T. Washington was a classmate, Trigg understandably reoriented the curriculum. In a letter to his alma mater, Trigg described his accomplishments. "We have laid down a definite course of study in Agriculture and have simplified the original literary course...."⁵⁰ Now special emphasis was placed on industrial education course work. The teaching staff, many of whom

⁴⁷ Ibid., p. 86. The Annual Report, Maryland Agricultural College and the Experiment Station for the Year Ending June 30, 1895, (Baltimore, 1895).

⁴⁸ Low, op. cit., p. 752.

⁴⁹ Annual Catalogue of Morgan College (Baltimore, 1902),
p. 34.

⁵⁰ "70th Anniversary," op. cit., p. 4.

studied at Hampton Institute, Cornell Agricultural College, and Michigan Agricultural College trained the Princess Anne students in agriculture, blacksmithing, carpentry, wood working, printing, domestic science, domestic arts, poultry craft, home gardening, and "the general proprieties of house-keeping."⁵¹ Students selected their own trades. On a typical day the students "rise at 5:45 a.m. and retire at 9:45 p.m., thus devoting at least eight hours to rest and sleep; of the remaining time about ten hours are spent in Literary Work and Manual Training."⁵²

In the 1903 school year, the Academy introduced a night school program to attract additional students. Night school students were required to labor during the day on campus, attend classes in the evening, and were paid a stipend of \$10 a month. They also had to work summers. The school required that those students in the program be sixteen years of age and weigh 130 pounds. By 1904 there were eight students participating in the program. Subsequently, night school was phased out due to lack of enrollments.⁵³

It is interesting to note at this point that public funding of the school was done on the basis of the proportion of whites and blacks attending public school in the state. The trustees of the Maryland Agricultural College could there-

⁵¹Jay S. Stowell, Methodist Adventure in Negro Education, (New York, 1922), p. 90.

⁵²G. F. Richings, Evidences of Progress Among Colored People, (Philadelphia, 1902), p. 121.

⁵³Year Book of Morgan College, 1903-1904 and 1904-1905, (Baltimore), p. 42, p. 56.

fore justify the one-fifth division of funds. The president or designated officer of the College had to make an annual inspection of the Eastern Branch in Princess Anne. "On the occasion of the last visit, work was in evidence which seemed to indicate that the spirit and letter of the law was being complied with ~~as far~~ as the expenditure of the said \$5000 was concerned.⁵⁴

By 1905, Princess Anne Academy's physical plant consisted of barns, stock, farming implements, teachers' dwellings, dormitories, and an industrial arts building. Student enrollments reached 185. Many guest speakers visited the school to address faculty and students. By far the majority were churchmen affiliated with the Delaware Conference and presidents and trustees of Morgan College. Nationally well-known figures such as Booker T. Washington, William E. B. DuBois, and Madame C. J. Walker also spoke before the student body.

Despite Trigg's efforts and the good wishes of distinguished visitors, the school was confronted with serious problems. Neither money nor power resided locally with the black leaders of the institution. Whites held ultimate financial power as trustees, regents, and legislators. They perceived of a black college as a latter day plantation for "good" Negroes. Such attitudes were also reflected on the national level. William Torrey Harris, the U. S. Commissioner

⁵⁴Biennial Financial Report of the Maryland Agricultural College, (Baltimore, 1906), pp. 13-14.

of Education, defended the establishment of black land grant colleges as a venture in civilizing the "barbarous." The first step to take with the Negro, according to Harris, was intellectual education and then industrial education. "The Negro must teach himself to be a capitalist," claimed Harris. With the New Industrial order the "negro must learn to manage machinery and make himself useful to the community in which he lives...."⁵⁵ Ironically, Harris would become one of the best friends of Negro land grant education for perhaps the worst reasons—the transformation of a black peasantry into an industrial proletariat.

The period 1890-1910 was one of great uncertainty for black land grant institutions in the south. They had to struggle against both the illiteracy and the inferior public school training of youths in the black community with far less resources at their disposal. The 1890 schools also waged a losing battle in competing with the private and better established Negro "Reconstruction" colleges such as Fisk and Atlanta University. Although the leaders of the 1890 schools were reluctant to admit it, private black colleges provided the main thrust of black higher education in this era.⁵⁶ The 1890 schools were expected to perform the functions of multi-purpose institutions with meager funds and limited resources. They were supposed to be teacher-training institutions,

⁵⁵William Torrey Harris, "The Education of the Negro," Atlantic Monthly, LXIX, (June, 1892), pp. 727-729.

⁵⁶Rufus B. Atwood, "Origin and Development of the Negro Public College with Special Reference to the Land-Grant College," The Journal of Negro Education, XXXI, (Summer, 1966), p. 244.

provide training in agriculture, as well as offer a liberal arts curriculum. The fact that the schools were able to survive such overwhelming odds against their very existence is remarkable. Of the major handicaps facing the schools, the problem of academic and scholastic direction was of paramount importance. The debates between an industrial versus a "literary" curriculum coupled with the educational level of the course work were not easily resolved.

Even including those students enrolled in the "Reconstruction" colleges, there was a dearth of qualified applicants who could pursue college level work in the 1890 schools. In Maryland there were no public high schools for Negroes on the Eastern Shore until after 1919. In the early days, the collegiate programs of these institutions were nebulous or non-existent. In the beginning the black land grant school had to provide the much needed secondary education for the Negroes, and this took priority over college level work. During this time black illiteracy rates were high in Maryland. In 1910 over 23% of the black population over the age of ten years was illiterate. Out of necessity Princess Anne Academy had to provide blacks with basic instruction in reading, writing, and mathematics. While the Academy offered courses beginning at the elementary level, the overwhelming majority of student enrollments was in the secondary department. Thus Princess Anne Academy provided instructional services to blacks that the county school systems in Maryland either could not or would not.

The General Education Board, a Rockefeller philanthropy, after visiting Princess Anne and other 1890 schools, worried about the state of Negro higher education. To survive, these colleges needed "competent faculty, a capable student body, suitable facilities, and ample and continuous financial support."⁵⁷ Despite the devotion to the cause of higher education, headway was often disappointing. Black educators like Horace Mann Bond complained that southern institutions were being flooded with "cheap degrees and cheaper people."⁵⁸

Black apathy toward industrial education was also a problem. Few blacks wished to enter a curriculum that smacked of the old slave culture in an age of industrial expansion. Black youths got the idea that collegiate education consisted of cultural instruction as embodied in the liberal arts and sciences. Prejudice developed against practical types of agriculture and mechanic arts education which were the principal objectives of the curricula of the 1890 schools. The 1890 land grant schools emphasized training for an agricultural economy in which employment had begun to shrink even before the curriculum programs were underway. While an entire economic system of manufacturing that would require machinists and skilled laborers was being shaped, schools offering handicraft courses in broom and mattress making, blacksmithing, and hand laundering were outdated and irrelevant.⁵⁹ The

⁵⁷The General Education Board: An Account of Its Activities, 1902-1914, (New York, 1915), p. 204.

⁵⁸Horace Mann Bond, The Education of the Negro in the American Social Order, (New York, 1934), pp. 358-365.

⁵⁹Bullock, op. cit., pp. 186-189.

dilemma of Princess Anne Academy was that it tried to uphold its traditional academic mission and introduce industrial education. It had the faculty and resources to support neither of these programs adequately.

This period of ambivalence regarding curriculum emphasis did not help the students. On a higher level, the conflict was not over industrial versus collegiate education but the status of the Negro in the American mainstream. Teachers in the Negro schools most often originated in the same socio-cultural setting as their pupils. Consequently they tended to teach their pupils to grow up as they had done. Only occasionally did either teacher or pupil catch a glimpse beyond the horizon of his colored world and escape its limitations.⁶⁰

For those students who completed the course work, a major obstacle confronted them upon graduation. Jobs in industry were scarce, if existent at all. Given their training, employment alternatives were few. The greatest avenue taken by the graduates was in teaching. The faculties of the 1890 schools were made up of recent graduates. Princess Anne Academy was no exception.

The most outrageous inequity, by far, was in the matter of finances. In the words of Walter G. Daniel, a specialist in the U. S. Office of Education, "the general quality of education was inferior and the major concern of the state officials was the meeting of the legal requirement

⁶⁰Ibid., p. 153.

to divide the appropriation with a school for Negroes in order that Federal funds might be received by the State.⁶¹ A common practice in Maryland was to count the Negroes in order to receive Federal money but to forget them when the money was disbursed. A convenient excuse for discrimination in the allocation of funds to schools for the respective races was that the type of education that the Negro needed was less complex and therefore less expensive than that needed by the whites. Unfortunately the structure of Negro education became consistent with its function.⁶² From the beginning, Princess Anne Academy was to provide both elementary and secondary education in order to secure properly qualified entrants for the college departments. The federal appropriations, ostensibly to be used for "higher" education, were actually used for elementary and secondary grade work at Princess Anne. When subsequent federal legislation providing for agricultural experimental stations and co-operative extension services were enacted, Princess Anne Academy as a black land grant school reaped little.⁶³

Thus, by 1910, the school had reached a point where neither industrial nor classical subjects were taught with any proficiency. Besieged with chronic financial shortages

⁶¹Proceedings of the Conferences of Presidents of Negro Land Grant Colleges, (Frankfort, Kentucky), October, 1951, p. 65.

⁶²Bullock, op. cit., p. 87.

⁶³Proceedings, op. cit., p. 83.

to operate the school and forced to deal with three distinct bodies of administration, the school could hardly have been expected to fulfill even the minimal land grant function outlined in the 1890 law. (The transition from Methodist academy to land grant college did not ease the plight of the school.) The Academy was hard pressed even to maintain its function as a high school for black youths. A hostile community and an indifferent legislature prevented the school from actively participating in the educational life on the Eastern Shore. The struggle for survival reflected in the first decade of the school would form the central theme of the school's institutional development.