

CHAPTER II

FROM HIGH SCHOOL TO COLLEGE

During the period 1910-1936, Princess Anne Academy embarked on an ambitious educational program that would transform the institution from a high school to a full-fledged four year college. This was accomplished under the direction of Thomas W. Kiah, the fifth principal. Kiah succeeded Frank Trigg, who left Princess Anne to be principal of the Virginia Collegiate and Industrial Institute in Lynchburg, Morgan's other branch campus. Kiah remained at Princess Anne as principal for twenty six years until his death in 1936, the longest tenure held by a head of the institution. Under Kiah's leadership the Eastern Branch responded to the demands of World War I, the innovations of the 1920's, and the changing mood of the 1930's. The impact of divergent educational philosophies, the racial climate, the depression, and state and national political events affected the activities of Princess Anne Academy. How the school responded and adapted to these developments sheds light on the higher education of the Negro on the Eastern Shore at this time.

The question of emphasizing an academic curriculum over an industrial one was the first issue resolved by Kiah. According to The Morgan College Bulletin, published irregularly by the Industrial Press on the Academy campus, "at Princess Anne Academy, the problem of correlating the academic and industrial courses is receiving most careful attention."¹ The students had a varied curriculum ranging from agriculture to zoology. The emphasis of the academic program was the "acquisition and use of the English language." Subjects in mathematics, science, and art were related to English courses and those in the industries. (The industrial arts courses stressed teacher training.) Yet all of the students were required to take one or more industrial subjects. In fact, no student could graduate in the academic course without graduating in one or more courses of practical industry.²

By 1913 all students were required to work on the Academy farm at least once a week. The Academy instituted a military style dress code. The uniforms, including a cap, cost each male \$10. The dress for the female students cost \$5. When working on the farm or in the shops, the students had to wear overalls and a blouse. Exercises in military drill were daily activities for the men while the women had calisthenics since "drill contributes both to good health and good order." The Princess Anne Academy Band was

¹The Morgan College Bulletin, II, No. 6 (Industrial Press, Princess Anne Academy, 1909), p. 84.

²Bulletin, op. cit., II, Nos. 7 & 8, 1910-1911, pp. 43-45.

organized, furnishing musical entertainment and instruction at 25¢ per pupil for upkeep of the instruments.³ At graduation, the students held their first Industrial Exhibit. All of the trade departments had exhibits, reports, and products. Various demonstrations showed how to separate milk, churn butter, hatch chickens, sew, cook, set type, etc. Highlighting the program was the Academy's welding class who sang the "Tinker's Song" while demonstrating their abilities.⁴ The Academy also offered a six week summer school emphasizing English, arithmetic, agriculture, domestic science, psychology, and a history of education in Maryland, with additional lectures and excursions. Eight faculty members plus Principal Kiah taught eight students for the summer of 1913.⁵

On April 25, 1913, a teacher's institute was conducted at the Academy with speakers from the U. S. Bureau of Education and the Maryland Agricultural College. Dr. F. B. Jenks from the Bureau spoke on "The Farm and the Teacher," lecturing his audience that "the farm should be carried into the normal school especially." Professor William Simon from the College continued the theme when he spoke on farm and factory labor in Maryland. He reiterated that "the school needs to come into closer communication with the farm!" The final speaker was John O. Spencer, President of Morgan, who

³Bulletin, op. cit., IV, Nos. 7 & 8, 1913-1914, pp. 50-53.

⁴Bulletin, op. cit., June 1913, p. 86.

⁵Bulletin, op. cit., IV, Nos. 7 & 8, p. 54.

reassured his colored audience that "the teachers of Somerset County have great things in store if they but only work for them."⁶

The Academy's industrial department came to the aid of the town of Princess Anne at the end of 1913. A fire on December 28th on Main Street completely destroyed the home, equipment, and files of the printer of the Marylander and Herald, the town's newspaper. As a result, the presswork of the paper was then done on the Academy press.⁷

Various issues of The Morgan College Bulletin contained articles favoring industrial education. One issue reprinted excerpts from "The Report on the Society for the Promotion of Industrial Education," which called for "improving the educational status of the skilled workmen, to increase their number and efficiency, to co-operate with teachers and educators in securing proper instructors and directors for the trade schools."⁸ Another issue quoted Dr. John J. Tigert, the Commissioner of Education, who stated that "if we had long ago made provision for the technical education of our Negro population, the increase in the value of our products, both agricultural and manufactured, would have been incalculably great."⁹

⁶Bulletin, op. cit., V, No. 5, May 1913, p. 65.

⁷Bulletin, op. cit., VI, No. I, January 1914, p. 1.

⁸Bulletin, op. cit., VII, No. I, January 1915, p. 149.

⁹Bulletin, op. cit., VIII, No. 10, December 1916, p. 129.

Naturally a speech by a student at the Academy on "The Growth of Industrial Education" won first prize in the Academy's oratory contest. The student declaimed the need for more "industrial schools, farms and shops like Hampton and Tuskegee Institute and our own school, Princess Anne Academy. The time is no more in which man is judged only by 3 R's..., but he is being measured as well by 3 H's--head, heart and hand; trained to some definite object in the industrial callings."¹⁰

Although the federal government supported black land grant education with the passage of the second Morrill Act of 1890, it was not until 1916 that the U. S. Office of Education concerned itself with a formal evaluation of the quality of education at these schools. In 1911 the Bureau of Education called upon Thomas Jesse Jones to make a report for the Phelps-Stokes Fund on the status and statistics of Negro education. Jones, a native of Wales, and former chaplain at Hampton Institute, worked as an educational statistician for the Census Bureau before he undertook the survey of the Negro schools.¹¹

(The Phelps-Stokes survey team visited Princess Anne in October, 1915, and described the Academy as "a small well-managed school of secondary grade with a few pupils in elementary classes.) Effort is made to adapt the work to the

¹⁰Bulletin, op. cit., XIV, No. 5, May 1922, p. 45.

¹¹Charles William Dabney, Universal Education in the South, (Chapel Hill, 1936), pp. 457-458.

needs of rural teachers. Manual training and agriculture, though well-taught, are subordinated to literary studies."¹² Although the reported enrollment for the year was 159, the survey found only 123 students in attendance at the institution-- fifty one males and seventy two females. Eighty students boarded on the Academy grounds. Thirty eight pupils were in the elementary program; sixty three pupils were in the normal department; and twenty two were enrolled in the college preparatory department. The faculty, "all colored," totaled twelve.¹³ The chief difference between the school's college preparatory program and the "Industrial" program in the curriculum, Jones found, lay in the inclusion of Latin as a requirement for the college bound. All pupils in the secondary department at Princess Anne were required to take twenty periods per week in industries. This probably reflected the view that while a literary education was intellectually desirable, industrial training would help students survive hard times. The school now had regularly scheduled summer sessions "arranged for the improvement of rural teachers." For 1915, attendance numbered thirty five.¹⁴

The physical plant consisted of eleven buildings-- the main building, two dormitories, students' dining room,

¹²Thomas Jesse Jones, et. al., Negro Education: A Study of the Private and Higher Schools for Colored People in the United States, Bureau of Education, Bulletin No. 39, (Washington, 1916), p. 325.

¹³Ibid., p. 326.

¹⁴Ibid.

mechanics building, and number of cottages and barns. The buildings were in good condition, "but fire protection is inadequate."¹⁵ The Academy had \$2000 in library books, \$1500 in livestock, and \$4950 in scientific apparatus and machinery. The land, consisting of 118 acres, was worth about \$6000.¹⁶ The Academy operated on a budget of \$10,000 from federal appropriations; \$5328 including tuition and fees, scholarships, and other sources; and \$7676 from the boarding department and the farm.¹⁷

Another survey conducted by the General Education Board reported on education in Maryland. This commission concurred with the Phelps-Stokes Report and noted that Princess Anne with its "good-sized farm, rather ample quarters and equipment, attempts to prepare elementary colored teacher." The Board also stated that federal appropriations "has made agriculture and agricultural pursuits prominent and (has) given the school an industrial atmosphere."¹⁸

Following the publication of the Phelps-Stokes Survey of Negro education, Americans focused greater attention on the black colleges. Under the light of public scrutiny, southern legislatures gave better financial support to the

¹⁵ Ibid., p. 327.

¹⁶ Ibid.

¹⁷ Ibid.

¹⁸ Abraham Flexner and Frank P. Bachman, Public Education in Maryland: A Report to the Maryland Education Survey Commission, (New York, 1916), p. 78.

1890 schools and many improvements were initiated. Princess Anne Academy was given more attention and, most important, a bit more money to carry out the school's programs. Although the Maryland Legislature regularized and increased state appropriations to the Academy, it paid no attention to the recommendation of the Phelps-Stokes survey that "the provision of the land-grant act for agricultural and mechanical training be more fully recognized in the general management of the school."¹⁹ The mandate was clear. If Princess Anne Academy were to fulfill its educational mission as prescribed by the 1890 law, it had to develop and be funded in ways similar to that of the 1862 college in the state.)

Unfortunately the Academy was denied access to land grant revenues. The Smith-Lever Act of 1914 provided federal and matching state funds for farm and home demonstration agents. Yet the Smith-Lever Act was structured to give maximum benefits to the 1862 schools. Princess Anne Academy, therefore, was squeezed out of the vital field of agricultural extension work. The State declined to establish an agricultural experiment station at the Academy, thus denying thousands of black farmers in Maryland the benefits of agricultural research directed towards solving their problems with crops and livestock. Maryland was not unique. "Not one of the states which supports a separate land-grant college for Negroes has established in connection with the institution for Negroes an experiment station," according to John W. Davis,

¹⁹Jones, op. cit., p. 327.