CHAPTER III

A FULL-FLEDDGED FLEDGLING COLLEGE

The 1930's, while difficult years for higher education in the nation at large, were especially severe on black colleges and universities. New graduates found jobs non-existent; graduates from black schools struggled against unemployment, apathy, and racism. A majority of those fortunate to find employment were teaching in the segregated school systems in the South. The dilemma of the black college graduate was further compounded by the fact that, in the 1930's, white southern legislators and newspaper editors voiced increasingly more criticism of the purpose and expense of higher education for Negroes. For example, H. L. Mencken of the Baltimore Sun, in a series on the University of Maryland, described Princess Anne Academy as "a one-horse institution on the Lower Eastern Shore, ostensibly of college grade but actually little more than a glorified high school....It is so small that, despite the modest total expense of operating it, the cost per student is higher than that of any other school of the university."¹ As segregation in Maryland's

¹Baltimore Sun, May 20, 1937.
public colleges further compounded the educational problems of the Negro, it was vehemently denounced by the black community.

During this period blacks questioned and took to court to integrate previously all-white universities. The University of Maryland found itself a defendant. In 1935 Donald Murray sued the University to enter its law school. Thurgood Marshall, representing Murray, won the case to admit Murray to the law school in Baltimore rather than going out-of-state. The state gave grants to students seeking higher educational opportunities unavailable to them at Negro colleges in Maryland. This was a tacit admission by the legislature that if it could not provide separate but equal educational facilities, then Negroes had the right to a subsidy for study elsewhere. The Murray case "officially...opened all the University's professional schools to Negroes, but to avoid 'indiscriminate mixing,' the legislature increased out-of-state funds to $30,000."

More significantly for Princess Anne, the University at College Park feared more suits for entrance to the undergraduate schools. This was the rationale behind the state legislature's appropriation of $100,000 for the purchase of Princess Anne from Morgan College. It was hoped that Princess Anne College would offer a full, four year collegiate program for Negroes.² President Harry C. Byrd

of the University of Maryland lobbied to build up the Eastern Shore Branch with the argument, "If we don't do something about Princess Anne we're going to have to accept Negroes at College Park, where our girls are."³

The Murray case served to focus attention on the inadequate and unequal educational facilities afforded to Negroes in the state of Maryland. Princess Anne College and Bowie State Normal School were the only two state-funded institutions for the higher education of Negroes. Neither of these two schools compared with the University of Maryland's standards and offerings. Up until the Murray litigation it was painfully evident that the state was doing little if anything but the bare minimum required by law to provide higher educational opportunities for Negroes in liberal arts education, teacher training, the pre-professional areas of law, medicine and engineering, business, and the creative arts. Out-of-state scholarships were the pathetic means open to Negroes who wanted to pursue careers in the professions.

³At the 1935 legislative session, a Commission on the Higher Education of Negroes in Maryland was formed to report back in 1937 with its conclusions to the governor and legislature. Judge Morris A. Soper, who was also a trustee of Morgan College, was the chairman. In January of 1937 the Commission made its findings known to the state.

³Baltimore Sun, February 5, 1937.
The Soper Report discovered "that in comparison with the provisions for higher education of the white people, the State is far in arrears of reasonable and justifiable provisions for the colored people of the State." More specifically, the Commission recommended that "Princess Anne Academy had far better be abandoned altogether than continue its present pretense as a college....In its present condition, it is no credit to the State." As an alternative, Princess Anne Academy could be converted into "a high school with special emphasis upon vocational training." Fortunately for Princess Anne, nothing was done to implement the Commission's proposals. The school at Princess Anne, however, was now in the midst of a rivalry with Morgan College for recognition, appropriations, students, and political support. Henceforth most studies on higher education for Negroes in the State pitted Morgan College and Princess Anne against each other for power, control of Negro education, and money.

The State government in Annapolis now authorized numerous commissions to study the condition of higher education in Maryland. In 1939 the Report of the Commission on Scholarships for Negroes to the Governor and Legislature of Maryland was issued. This Commission also had harsh

4Report of the Commission on Scholarships for Negroes to the Governor and Legislature of Maryland, January 14, 1939, p. 3.

5Ibid., p. 55.

6Baltimore Sun, May 20, 1937.
words for Princess Anne. "The school at Princess Anne, even with two years added to its junior college curriculum, touches mainly the industrial field and that inadequately." The final recommendations reached by the Scholarships Commission were as follows: "(1) Establishment of a bi-racial Board of Regents of Negro Higher Education corresponding in powers to the Board of Regents of the University of Maryland, to include Princess Anne College and the administration of Negro out-of-state scholarships. (2) That Morgan College be made a state college. (3) That $55,000 for each year of 1937 and 1938 be appropriated for scholarships." The first recommendation was not acted upon. The two remaining ones received due consideration. The only direct action taken was the appropriation of $30,000 for scholarships and their administration for the years 1937 through 1939. And Morgan College did become a state institution in 1939. From this time, Morgan State College would fear the black land grant college at Princess Anne as a competitor for state support and enrollments.

In response to public criticism, Princess Anne concentrated on expanding its agricultural program and general land grant activities. An Adult Short Course in agricultural training and home care was established, livestock facilities were greatly improved, all farm buildings were electrified, and scholarships were awarded to Negro

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7 Report...on Scholarships, op. cit., p. 2.
8 Ibid., p. 55.
students interested in pursuing agriculture at the college. 9 The College utilized the local WPA authority to install water mains and fire plugs, the only gratuity it would receive from the Roosevelt Administration in Washington. Although enrollments would not justify major outlays of money to Princess Anne Academy, the state improved virtually every aspect of the school's physical plant during the 1930's—from women's dormitories to a trades building and gymnasium. A $200,000 building program for Princess Anne College was designed to strengthen the school and lessen black demands for an end to separate but equal higher education in the state.

Robert A. Grigsby, the Acting Dean of Administration for the College during this era, described his Arts and Science program in a few general and terse sentences. He was more specific, however, when he described his school's Mechanic Arts Division, a part of the curriculum that whites were most interested in. Given the prevalence of white supremacy doctrines in the state and a widespread belief in the inability of the Negro to profit from a liberal education, the land grant mission guaranteed the school's survival.

Yet ironically, the students of the black 1890 colleges did not share the same enthusiasm for agricultural education as did their white mentors in the southern

9Biennial Report of the University of Maryland and the State Board of Agriculture, XXXIV, No. 3, (March 1937), p. 93.
legislatures. After 1930, Princess Anne College and other black 1890 schools received a small but significant influx of middle class blacks who had heretofore shunned these schools as institutions for "the culturally deprived."

Low tuition and the uncertainties of the times made the 1890 schools more attractive to the black middle class.\textsuperscript{10}

When Princess Anne sent a representative to attend the annual Conference of Presidents of Negro Land Grant Colleges in 1936, Dean Grigsby learned that all of the 1890 schools had very small enrollments in agriculture. There was not much enthusiasm for students to major in this area. As one man at the conference succinctly put it, "Boys do not leave home for college with thoughts of feeding hogs."\textsuperscript{11} The U. S. Department of Agriculture was equally uninterested in Negro land grant education. In the 1930's, according to one historian, the Department of Agriculture displayed little sympathy for the plight of black farmers and black agricultural agents in the South. The Department of Agriculture believed that it could not push the South too far on the subject of Negro land grant education because of the need for Southern congressional votes on New Deal legislation. Thus the Department acquiesced to white supremacy to get Southern political support. Although blacks were employed


by the Department of Agriculture, particularly in the southern extension service, none had any influence on policy decisions in Washington.\textsuperscript{12}

Also, the U.S. Office of Education in the 1930's was totally lacking in authority for the collection of important statistics on black land grant education. It had no legal power to compel Maryland and other southern states to submit and provide reports on black higher education that could have been used as leverage by the federal government for the improvement of instruction and curricula at the Negro land grant institutions. Because of the handicaps imposed by the Depression, many important publications and reports on Negro land grant education were either delayed or cancelled.\textsuperscript{13}

Thus did Princess Anne College experience a phenomenon little understood at the time—the expansion of a land grant mission to provide an agricultural education to students who did not want it, to please Washington officials who were apathetic at best, to satisfy state officials interested solely in racial segregation and white supremacy.

By far the most glaring discrepancy with regard to the College's land grant mission in the late 1930's lay in its inability to participate meaningfully in the work of


agricultural extension. Since the passage of the Smith-Hughes Agricultural Extension Act in 1917, the 1890 schools had been shut out of participating in the vital work of providing black farmers with technical and scientific assistance that white county agents had been providing farmers with for years. White agents tended to look for the independent farmer and planter and overlooked the poor Negro sharecropper or tenant farmer who, though a farmer, was landless.\textsuperscript{14}

In the South during the Depression there was a great need for Negro extension agents to provide help to black farmers who were fighting for their economic survival. As late as 1938 there were only 448 black extension agents in the South—one per 4,000 black farmers as opposed to 3,286 white agents or one per 1,000 white farmers.\textsuperscript{15}

J. T. Wooten, a high ranking official in the Department of Agriculture, publicized the crying need for more Negro extension agents during this time and frankly added that "not one of these (1890 black land grant schools) comes near meeting the standards...of service rendered by white colleges."\textsuperscript{16} In 1937, over $13 million was spent by


\textsuperscript{15}Ibid., p. 96.

\textsuperscript{16}Memorandum, J. T. Wooten, "Agricultural Background of the Economic Status of the Negro," typescript, Bureau of Education M38, Box 901, National Archives.
the states on cooperative extension work with only $804,000 allocated for extension work among Negroes. Blacks got only 6.2% of available funds when they were 25.6% of the population.¹⁷

Princess Anne College's problem in this regard was exemplary. In 1935, Maryland contributed only $15,513 for land grant activities, considerably less than the $20,961 in federal funds allotted the school. The State, by providing only a meager amount of funds, forced the school to depend heavily on its federal allocation. Yet most of the federal funds were specifically earmarked for teacher education and could not be used for extension work.¹⁸ The Legislature gave College Park complete control over Smith-Hughes funds, and from 1928 to 1938 denied Princess Anne College the vital funds needed in this area. During this period, Princess Anne College was the only 1890 college in the South that received no Smith-Hughes funds.¹⁹ Ironically, while Maryland Negroes starved in rural poverty during the Depression, students at Princess Anne College pursued the study of Latin and Greek.

Despite the many problems confronting the school, the faculty and staff of Princess Anne College took justifiable pride in awarding bachelor of science degrees to its first

¹⁸Ibid., p. 110.
¹⁹Ibid., p. 121.
class of seventeen graduates in June 1938. Princess Anne College offered four year degrees in agriculture and agricultural education, home economics and home economics education, and mechanic arts and mechanic arts education as well as a two year junior college course in arts and sciences. Dean Grigsby also reported that "students have passed with but little difficulty to the junior year of Howard University, Morgan College, and Claflin University" from the arts and science curriculum. The beginnings of a teacher training program in vocational studies on the secondary level were instituted. And the school's "practice house" where the girls learn "practical housekeeping" was completed. In addition, fourteen teachers with Master's degrees were added to the faculty and three assistants joined the administration, one of whom was the school nurse. The library bought over $5,000 worth of books.

Princess Anne College, despite its isolated location on the Eastern Shore, would be profoundly affected by World War II. The general consensus among black land grant presidents was that the impending conflict would put American race relations in a new dimension--one in which black


21 *Catalogue of Princess Anne College, Eastern Branch of the University of Maryland, 1937-1938,* (Princess Anne, Maryland), p. 9.

22 *Biennial Report, op. cit.*

23 *Biennial Report,* XXXIV, No. 4, (October 1940), p. 91.
and white Americans could make great social progress. Thus, new demands would be made of Negro colleges and land grant institutions.\textsuperscript{24} Robert C. Weaver, a specialist in the Office of Education, argued in the interests of national defense for the federal government to pursue a vigorous program of vocational education for blacks, to improve Negro schools, and to fight racial discrimination.\textsuperscript{25}

More specifically, Princess Anne College threw itself energetically into the war effort. At the beginning of the war the school reoriented its programs as faculty and students as well as the curricula adjusted to wartime activities. Draft deferred instructors conducted extension and resident classes in food production, food conservation, and farm machine repair. The College also presented lectures on bomb protection and gave first aid demonstrations.

Princess Anne College rallied to the drives for War Bond sales. Some courses that were considered unessential were eliminated from the curriculum. In their place were substituted courses in gardening for girls and accelerated shop work for boys. Due to the draft, male enrollments were reduced 87%. For keeping up the morale of those former students and employees of the College in the Armed Services, the faculty organized a special correspondence committee to


\textsuperscript{25}Memorandum, Robert C. Weaver to Commissioner J. W. Studbaker, July 18, 1940, Box 901, Bureau of Education Misc, National Archives.
keep them in touch with events at Princess Anne. Dean Grigsby was proud and pleased to report that "through increased efforts of faculty, students, alumni, and all others interested in the welfare of Princess Anne College, the institution maintained a full-time schedule" during the early months of the war.26

Throughout the war years Princess Anne College adapted its faculty and curricula to meet the changes brought about by the wartime conditions. Three faculty members were drafted and two left for war production jobs. To cope with the decreasing faculty and student manpower, more courses were discontinued. The lowest drop in enrollments occurred during the period from September, 1943 to June, 1944, when there were approximately fifty students on campus.

In fostering good community relations, the school conducted courses in poultry and swine production and general farm practices. Also the school offered courses in first aid and fire prevention as well as incendiary bomb lectures. The Home Economics Department helped the Red Cross in Princess Anne by making bed sheets for hospital use.27

Many improvements beneficial to the physical plant of the College were made during this time. For example, the

26Biennial Report, XXXIV, No. 5, (October 1942), p. 64.
27Biennial Report, XXXIV, No. 6, (October 1944), p. 91.
Biennial Report of the University of Maryland and State
Board of Agriculture enumerated the major changes and needs
of Princess Anne College as follows:

TABLE 2.--Physical Improvements, Major Needs, and Requests
for Princess Anne College, 1944.

DIVISION OF AGRICULTURE

I. Major physical improvements:
   1. Equipment
      a. Farm
         1942-43 - 1 electric pump (automatic)
         1942-43 - 1 Wigman electric heater (automatic)
         1943-44 - 1 electric bottle washer
         1943-44 - 1 mower (McCormick Deering)
      b. Poultry Plant
         1942-43 - 1 electric brooder
         1942-43 - 1 finishing battery (non-heated)
         1942-43 - 1 electric pump

II. Repairs:
   1. Built two "A" type hog houses.
   2. Repairs and build farm gates, doors, and screens and
      a continued repair of farm mences.
   3. Built two Maryland type range shelters for poultry.

III. Production:
   1. Planned out program of farming to get crop benefit
      payments to purchase lime for soil, which is
      greatly needed.
   2. Placed special emphasis on the production of
      vegetables, meat, poultry and dairy products for
      the student body.

IV. Major Needs:
   1. Farm buildings, utilities, etc.
      New horse barn or immediate repair of present one.
      Fencing materials for stock pastures.
      Running water for dairy barn and poultry plant.
      House for farm laborer.
      Dairy barn modernly equipped, silo, etc.
      House and fenced lot for goats.
      Facilities and equipment for killing hogs,
      curing meats, dressing veal, cows, etc.
      Corn binder
      Hay baler
      New farm truck
      Green-house, fixtures and facilities
      Farm mechanic building (farm shop), fixtures and
      tools
      Grain combine
"TABLE 2--Continued."

2. Poultry Plant
   Building to include students' quarters, feed
   and storage rooms, incubator room, etc.
   Enlarged space of the poultry plant with added
   buildings and facilities for broiler production.
   Facilities for killing and dressing poultry.

3. Campus
   Power lawn mower
   Walks laid about the campus
   Hard-surface and complete the campus roads
   Grade, landscape and seed the lawn

4. Laboratory and Classroom
   Soils laboratory table (teacher)
   24 Laboratory stools
   2 Wall cabinets:
   1 Distilling apparatus, wall type (electric)
   1 Balance dispenser, metric, with weights
   1 Sound 16 mm. projector
   Teaching facilities, such as, chairs, laboratory
   cabinets, book shelves, charts, etc.

5. Agricultural Staff
   Poultryman
   Horticulturist
   Farm engineer (farm mechanic)
   Grounds caretaker

DIVISION OF MECHANIC ARTS AND INDUSTRIAL EDUCATION

I. Major Physical Improvements
   1. Construction of three section of concrete side-
      walk leading to new buildings.
   2. Installed new sewer line between dining hall and
      main line behind men's dormitory.
   3. Installed water line between green house and
      disposal plant.
   4. Refinished floors of gymnasium.
   5. Refinished floors in all rooms on second floor,
      women's dormitory.
   6. Repaired roof and drain pipes of Agriculture building.
   7. Welded a new back on boiler in men's dormitory.
   8. Various general repair work done in all college
      buildings including teachers' cottages. (Electrical,
      plumbing, painting and carpentry work)
   9. Installed automatic water pumping system at the
      poultry plant.
   10. General major repairs on farm machinery, such as,
       welding and other farm mechanics work.
TABLE 2--Continued.

II. Courses or Instruction Given in Relation to the War Effort
1. Pre-Induction Courses offered in the Division of Mechanic Arts and Industrial Education: for all students majoring in Industrial Education.
   (General Shop Course, including welding, general metal, drafting, and electricity.)
2. Increase of clock hours of laboratory work for all students majoring in Mechanic Arts and Industrial Education.

III. Needs
1. A full time man qualified to do general maintenance and repair work, with special mechanical skills in carpentry, plumbing, and electrical work.
2. Annual budget for Mechanic Arts and Industrial Education--$500.00. The Mechanic Arts budget is now $200.00 which is insufficient to purchase the necessary teaching materials and supplies and certain hand tools.
3. A larger budget for repairs and general maintenance in order to adequately take care of the growing needs of the physical plant.

IV. Request for Special Equipment to be used for Instructional Purposes and also in doing much of the Work in Repairs and Maintenance
1. One electric welding outfit and accessories.
2. One cement and concrete mixing machine, gasoline.
3. One electric floor machine for polishing, buffing, scrubbing, sanding and steel wooling.
4. One extra-heavy duty universal saw bench machine for general woodwork ripping (for saws up to 18 inch).
5. One heavy duty oor type radial drill press and accessories.
6. One squaring shear--sheet metalworking machine, capacity, 30 inch.
7. One slip roll former--sheet metalworking machine.
8. One heat treating furnace, bench or pedestal type.
9. One tool room precision lathe--South Bend type.
10. One automobile engine and chassis.

Given the perilousness of the times, Princess Anne College worked manfully to maintain and advance its facilities.

28Ibid., pp. 92-95.
and adjust its curriculum to the war effort. The school's educational and patriotic responses to World War II were admirable. Now, in the post-war years, Princess Anne College could plan for student expansion with the return of the soldiers from the battlefronts.

Almost immediately enrollments began to show a steady increase as veterans, former students, and new students flocked to the school. The catalogue advertised Princess Anne College as having "Home-like Surroundings, Healthful Climate, Modest Expenses, No Out-of-State Fees and a Post-War Curriculum."\(^{29}\) As former faculty members returned from the military services or war-related jobs to the academic life, Princess Anne College increased its scholastic and community activities. The New Farmers of America Conference, Farmer's and Home Maker's Short Course, 4-H Club, and youth and adult meetings were re-instituted. Athletic activities also began to bring more people in contact with the school. In the Department of Agriculture, the faculty continued to help in the post-war effort by giving of their services for "Victory Gardens," community canning, farm machinery repair courses and food production programs. Dean Grigsby summed up the spirit at Princess Anne College when he noted that "after V-E and V-J Day we took new courage and found ourselves working with and sponsoring prewar activities with a new determination."\(^{30}\)

\(^{29}\)Catalogue, op. cit.

With the added stimulus of the purchase of 100 acres of farm land, the school's Agricultural Department showed increased production to be used by students, livestock and poultry. The school bought a cow, a bull and sows to improve the herds. Fruits and vegetables were used and canned for student consumption. Dean Grigsby could optimistically state that "this gives us renewed faith that a supportive program in practical and scientific farming is in the making for Princess Anne College." 31

The school also benefited from the wartime surpluses. Princess Anne College acquired several thousand dollars worth of hadd tools from the War Assets Administration as well as two electric welders. The College also received cast-off machinery from the School of Engineering of the University of Maryland. 32 Princess Anne College was caught up in the post-war euphoria. Unfortunately a new crisis was on the horizon. Once again the State's Commission on Higher Education came out with another report dealing with the status of higher education for Negroes. Commonly referred to as the Marbury Report, Princess Anne College was once again fighting for its survival and competing with Morgan College to be the land grant school for blacks in the state of Maryland.

31 Ibid., p. 124.
32 Ibid., pp. 124-125.
The Marbury Report caused a stir in Princess Anne and College Park. It lamented the state's consistent "policy of providing higher educational facilities for Negroes which are inferior to those provided for whites." In addition, the report noted that "the state had not taken seriously its responsibilities for the development of a land-grant college program for the Negro population." Specific mention was made "whereby Princess Anne College became a branch of the University of Maryland...as an expedient solution to the problem of providing a state-owned land-grant college for Negroes."  

In comparison with other states with smaller Negro populations, other state land grant institutions had larger enrollments and greater incomes than Princess Anne College. The state of Maryland, the report commented, "has scattered its resources for Negro higher education among several institutions instead of concentrating them in a single center where a strong program could be developed."  

The Commission's in-depth study of Princess Anne College revealed the deplorable conditions of the school in comparison with other institutions in the state. Describing the physical plant of Princess Anne as "sadly deficient" and "a disgrace to the State of Maryland," the Commission made

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34 Ibid., p. 137.
numerous recommendations for the school from building dormitories and a dining hall to investing in constructing faculty housing since "there were almost no accommodations in the neighborhood where Negro faculty members may live." Since the school is a land grant college, agricultural facilities needed to be improved. Among the priorities Princess Anne College required a dairy barn, farm buildings, an agriculture building, and a greenhouse. Also on the list were the need to expand the limited library facilities and to pave walks and drives because "students must wade through mud and water during bad weather to get from one building to another."

The faculty also did not escape unfavorable notice. There were no Ph.D's, and more than one-fourth of the staff lacked Master's degrees. Princess Anne College instructors had "very limited scholarly preparation" and a high turnover rate. In essence, Princess Anne College came out of the Marbury Report as the "lowest ranking school of state-supported institutions." Princess Anne College was further handicapped by its unfortunate location on the inaccessible Eastern Shore because "it can never hope to attract a student body large enough for efficient operation as a land-grant college." 35

The University of Maryland also came under criticism for its neglect in developing Princess Anne's land grant

program. The Marbury Commission questioned how the white Board of Regents could have the interests of Negro higher education as a great concern. "Only when the institution is under the control of a board and a staff who are vitally interested in the development of a strong college program can the land-grant institution for Negroes prosper and fulfill its mission—the higher education of the Negro population of the State."36

On the other end of the spectrum, Morgan State College emerged as the great blank hope. More centrally located near the Negro population of the state and already having "developed relatively strong departments in science and other fields which are necessary for the support of an effective program in technical subjects such as agriculture, home economics, engineering, and industrial arts," the Marbury Report suggested transferring the land grant program to Morgan in Baltimore.37

With the Negroes pressing court action for admittance to the University of Maryland's campuses, and the recommendations that Princess Anne College be abandoned and the state focus attention on Morgan State College, President Byrd made "Negro education" his first priority.38 Also, the black community of the Eastern Shore responded to the Marbury Report by sending a large motorcade of students,

36 Ibid., pp. 330-331.
37 Ibid., p. 330.
38 Callcott, op. cit., p. 352.
faculty, and college well-wishers to Annapolis to protest publicly against any plan to terminate Princess Anne College. Despite the publicity, rhetoric, and recommendations, the ultimate outcome of the Marbury Report was the retention of Princess Anne College as the land grant college for Negroes still under the administration of the University of Maryland. 39

Byrd, however, was determined to build up his branch on the Eastern Shore. Perhaps the most far-reaching development affecting the school was its almost complete change in structure as an institution. (At the beginning of the 1947-1948 school year, Princess Anne College changed its name to Maryland State College, Division of the University of Maryland at Princess Anne. Robert A. Grigsby, who for his ten year tenure was only given the rank of Acting Dean of Administration, was replaced by Dr. John T. Williams, "the new head of the College [who] was given the title of President, with full authority to begin a reorganization of the school." 40