



Association (parent body to the Bertie Union) in May 1848. Nine additional Trustees were elected to supplement the three Trustees who had been appointed by the Union Meeting and "fully empowered to take any steps necessary to the originating of the [proposed] Seminary." Additional endorsement was forthcoming one year later when the neighboring Portsmouth [Virginia] Baptist Association joined the Chowan in sponsorship of the school, naming additional Trustees to represent that body.

Designed to offer educational advantages to young women and girls at various levels or stages of academic preparation, the first academic year commenced on October 11, 1848, when eleven young girls, ages 8-14, began their studies under the tutelage of Principal Archibald McDowell and a small corps of teachers whom he had enlisted as his assistants. First to earn a diploma upon successful completion of a prescribed course of studies in the Institute's Collegiate Department was Ann Jones Ward (later, Mrs. John Wheeler Moore) of Hertford County in 1853. The Institute's Primary Department (comparable to elementary school) was discontinued after 1855; the Preparatory or Academic Department (comparable to junior/senior high school), in 1924.

The old Hertford Academy lot on

Broad Street, Murfreesboro—containing a school building and a dwelling house—served as the initial campus, 1848-52. In the latter year, operations were moved to the present McDowell Columns Building, which had been erected on a 28-acre tract of land purchased for that purpose in 1851. The Columns, with the addition of an East Wing in 1905-06 and an auditorium/dormitory annex in 1922-23, continued to be the primary building on campus until the decade of the 1950s. This central complex had been augmented with a Steward's House (old Athletic Building, demolished in the early 1960s), three small wood-framed cottages ("Faith," "Hope," and "Love,")—the last of which was destroyed by Hurricane Hazel in 1954—and Stone Cottage, which was constructed in 1913 and removed from the campus in the early 1980s.

The Institute remained in operation throughout the Civil War years, except for a period of some six weeks immediately following the fall of Roanoke Island to Federal troops in February 1862. It faced, and weathered, severe financial crisis in the aftermath of the War years, thanks—in large measure—to a coalition of twelve men who formed a Joint Stock Company, purchased the mortgaged property from its creditors, and operated the school



Chartered by act of the North Carolina General Assembly, January 29, 1849, Chowan Baptist Female Institute had its origins one year earlier as a result of the deliberations of the Bertie Union Meeting, held with Pleasant Grove Baptist Church, Hertford County, North Carolina, January 28-30, 1848. This educational enterprise—contemplated and approved by the Union Meeting as a "school of high order," wherein the daughters of Baptists in northeastern North Carolina and Tidewater Virginia might be educated under denominational influence or auspices—gained the further endorsement of the Chowan Baptist

BY HARGUS TAYLOR

CHOWAN COLLEGE: A SESQUICENTENNIAL OVERVIEW

It almost goes without saying that Dr. Hargus Taylor is the undisputed authority on the history of Chowan College. The chair of the department details related to the publication of A History of Chowan College (1964), by Edgar V. McKnight and Oscar Creech. He coauthored Three for the six-volume Dictionary of North Carolina Biography (1988ff). Commissioned by Chowan's Board of Trustees in 1995, he is currently