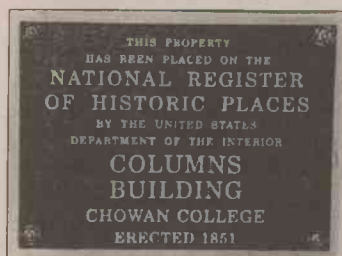


on behalf of its Board of Trustees, 1868-79. In the latter year, control of the institution reverted to a Board of Trustees elected by the Chowan Baptist Association. Trustees selection has been fully



vested in the Baptist State Convention of North Carolina since 1926.

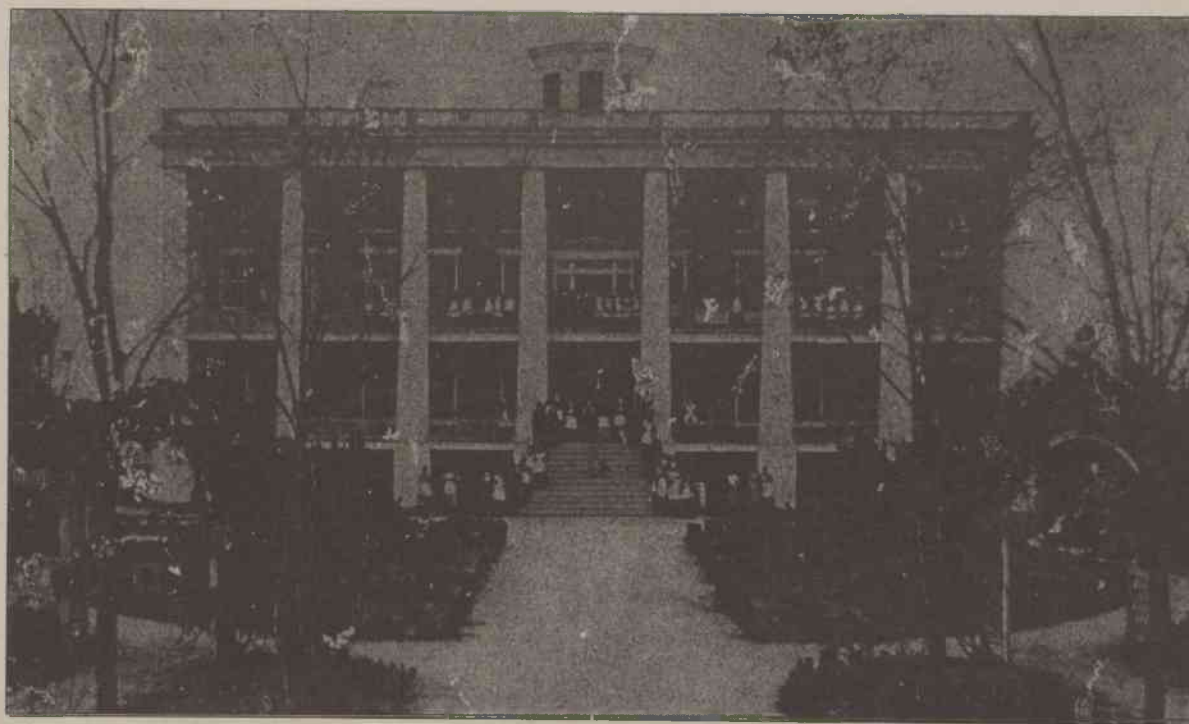
The curriculum of the Institute was upgraded sufficiently during the last decade of the nineteenth century and the first decade of the twentieth to enable the awarding of the first baccalaureate degrees (in distinction from literary diplomas) in 1911. In this connection, the name of the institution was also changed through amended charter from "Chowan Baptist Female Institute" to "Chowan College." For three decades thereafter an inordinate amount of time and energy was expended, necessarily, in the attempt to attain and maintain various educational "standards" expected (or required) by the North Carolina Department of Education, the Board of Education of the Baptist State Convention, and/or the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools. Coeducation was initiated in 1931 with the admission of male students to degree programs. Declining enrollments and inadequate resources to maintain a standard senior college necessitated a move to 2-year, or junior college, status in 1937. After witnessing an enrollment decline to 42 students in the Spring Term of 1942, the college suspended opera-

tions at the conclusion of the 1942-43 academic year, with such suspension to remain in effect "so long as the present emergency continues, or until the Board of Trustees sees fit to resume operation."

The Board of Trustees continued to meet periodically, however, throughout the period of suspended operation. In November 1944, the West Chowan Baptist Association voted unanimously to reopen Chowan College and appointed a committee of three persons to "take to the churches" recommendations for raising at least \$100,000.00 for repairs and improvements "looking forward to a ten-year expansion program which would put Chowan College on an equal basis with the best of our Junior Colleges"; and, once the college is reopened, "include in their local budgets a sum [for the college] averaging \$100 per church per year."

By 1949, the efforts initiated by the West Chowan Association—and concurred in by the parent Chowan Association—had issued in sufficient capital improvements and promised financial support to make reopening a foregone conclusion. Accordingly, classes resumed on September 16, 1949, with an enrollment of 135. Early progress towards meeting the earlier objective of "putting Chowan on an equal basis with the best of our Junior Colleges" was evidenced during the tenure of Forest Orion Mixon as President (1951-56), including initial attainment of accreditation by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools in 1956. The lengthy tenure of President Bruce Ezell Whitaker (1957-89) witnessed such continued progress that the institution gained a reputation as one of the best junior colleges in the nation by all quantifiable standards for such evaluation.

Resumption of senior college status was approved by the Board of Trustees in 1990, with baccalaureate degrees awarded to 53 students on May 14, 1994. Accreditation by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools as a Level II (4-year college) institution was effective January 1, 1994. Currently, Chowan offers baccalaureate degree programs through ten academic departmental units: Business, Education, Fine Arts, Graphic Communications, Language and Literature, Mathematics, Physical Education, Religion and Philosophy, Science, and Social Science. She approaches the twenty-first century with vision and determination to strengthen and expand academic programs, to magnify and multiply student services, and to improve and enhance physical facilities—all in the interest of maintaining a commitment to excellence in teaching, learning, and service.



the department of religion and philosophy kindled his first interest in the subject upon his arrival at Chowan in 1963 when he was asked to handle *Through the Years, A Pictorial History* (1972) with Herman Gatewood and prepared biographical sketches of twelve of Chowan's former presidents currently preparing a history of the college to be published with the observance of the Sesquicentennial.