

The Significance Of Our 50th Anniversary Celebration

By ALFONSO ELDER

On June 30, 1959 the Board of Trustees of the North Carolina College at Durham set November 9-12, 1960 as the time for celebrating the 50th birthday of the college. The officers of the College were authorized on behalf of the Board to extend an invitation to graduates and former students of the college and to friends of the institution to join with the Board, the faculty, and students in the joys and benefits of this occasion.

As President of the College, I should like to add my personal sentiments to those of the Board and to say that within the limits of the intellectual and physical resources of the College we shall do everything possible to make this celebration a memorable one for all who participate.

But why make so much ado over a mere 50 years? A school that has reached only its 50th birthday is in one sense still in its infancy and from the point of view of time has very little of which it can boast. This would be true if time and events changed at the same rate, but they do not. Since 1900, the increase in the quantity and application of knowledge has been so rapid that it is appropriate to refer to the increase as an explosion. To have lived 50 years during the present century is to have witnessed a greater increase in knowledge, more technological and economic advances, and greater changes in cultural patterns than could have been witnessed a thousand years previously. Indeed it seems appropriate to repeat these words:

*We live in deeds, not years;
in thoughts, not breaths;
In feelings, not figures on a dial.
We should count time by
heart-throbs when they
beat For God, for man, for duty.*

Our 50th anniversary, therefore, is from one point of view an occasion for rejoicing in the privilege which has been ours to witness, and to some extent to have participated in, the marvelous changes which have occurred during the 20th Century. Further, it is an occasion for expressing gratitude for the rich intellectual heritage which we share with other institutions of learning; it is an occasion for reaffirming with other colleges our willingness and determination to accept with them the challenges which the present and the future impose upon educational institutions.

We are celebrating our coming of age as an institution with full status among institutions devoted to the pursuit of excellence in academic achievement.

We are rejoicing over the growing consciousness of people throughout America of the value of intellectual inquiry and of the growing dependence upon education as a force for promoting the peace and security of the world. We are taking time now with the aid of friends to plan ways in which we can measure up to the trust that has been placed in us.

These are the reasons why our 50th birthday is significant to us and why we think that it is appropriate at this time to consider with the aid of others the theme which we have adopted for the occasion:

Appropriate Directions for the Liberal Arts College.

Dr. James E. Shepard, the former president and founder of North Carolina College, often closed a letter to a new student or to a new faculty member by a statement which was characteristic of him as well as of the institution. As I extend a personal invitation to friends of the institution, to graduates and former students to join with us in celebrating our 50th birthday, I close as Dr. Shepard often did by saying:

"A cordial welcome awaits you."

Chemical Grads Become Researchers

Emphasis on research in the chemical, physical and biological sciences at North Carolina College has paved the way for the entry of its graduate in numerous science-related fields.

An increasing number of NCC graduates are engaged in research as college teachers and in scientific laboratories connected with hospitals and other such institutions.

Although teaching, medicine, and dentistry traditionally claim the largest proportion of NCC science majors who pursue higher degrees, departmental guidance into non-traditional areas is bringing results.

Within the past few years, four NCC graduates have earned doctorate degrees in science areas and several others are at present pursuing that degree.

Two 1950 graduates, Robert C. Freeman and William Randolph Johnson, recently earned doctorate degrees in chemistry from two leading universities. Both chemistry majors at NCC, Johnson earned his degree in organic chemistry at Notre Dame, and Freeman in the same

field at Wayne University.

Freeman is a research chemist at the Montasanta Chemical Company of St. Louis, and Johnson is professor of chemistry at Florida A&M University.

Catherine Caldwell, a 1954 graduate, recently earned a Ph.D. in bio-chemistry at the University of Wisconsin. She is professor of chemistry at Tennessee A&I University.

Two recent graduates with majors in chemistry are working on doctorate degrees in that field. They are Harold Powell, who is doing his work in organic chemistry at Michigan State University and Wade Kornegay in physical chemistry at the University of California at Berkeley. Physics graduate Napoleon Jones is working toward the doctorate in physics at Howard University.

A number of graduates have used their college training in chemistry as a basis for employment as laboratory technicians. Some of these include Miss Tishler Thomas, at Freedman's Hospital in Washington, D. C.; Harold Russell, at the Gynecological Laboratory at the University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill; Inez Jones, at the Duke University Hospital; and Peggy Y. Jackson, a laboratory technician at the Youngstown Hospital of Youngstown, Ohio.



Samuel W. Hill and NCC's 75 voice mixed chorus have become an integral part of the college's cultural program. In addition to their annual concerts at Christmas and during the spring, the singers also travel throughout the East. They have been acclaimed by some of the leading music critics in the eastern part of the United States.

Noted Prof. Directs Celebration

In seeking a person of distinction and ability to organize the fiftieth anniversary celebration, the North Carolina College Board of Trustees reached into its own faculty and chose Dr. Helen G. Edmonds, graduate professor of history and one of America's best known women.

Renowned as professor, author and lecturer, Dr. Edmonds is in constant demand throughout the United States and Europe for appearances before college assemblies, educational meetings, business and professional groups, and fraternal and church organizations.

She holds the distinction of being the first woman ever to second the nomination of a candidate for president of the United States. The NCC professor made a speech on behalf of the second term candidacy of Dwight D. Eisenhower at the Republican National Convention in San Francisco on August 22, 1956, before a nationwide television audience of fifty million people.

Time and again, the United States government has called for her services in behalf of the Cultural Program of the Department of State. In 1954-55, she represented the government as a Specialist-Consultant in Germany, lecturing in the language of that country before audiences in all major West-German cities. She performed in a similar capacity in 1957 for the U. S. Department of State in Sweden, Germany, Austria and Denmark, upon special request of the French government in France.

In October of 1957, Professor Edmonds was President Eisenhower's Special Representative to the dedication ceremonies of the Liberian Capitol Building in Monrovia, Liberia. While in that country, she addressed the assembled Liberian Government and delivered six additional lectures in Monrovia and Kakata.

The NCC educator-historian has authored one book, *The Negro and Fusion Politics in North Carolina*, two monographs, four historical pageants, and numerous articles for leading scholarly journals. Her book was listed among the One Hundred Outstanding Books about North Carolina in a compilation by Professors Richard Walsler and Hugh T. Lefler of the University of North Carolina in 1956.

One of her monographs, "A Syllabus for the Study of Negro History in the High Schools of Virginia," was issued for use in St. Paul Normal School in 1939

and was used as resource material by the Core Planning Committee of the Virginia State Department of Education in Williamsburg, in 1940.

A native of Lawrenceville, Virginia, Professor Edmonds was trained in the St. Paul Normal School of that city and received her Bachelor of Arts degree at Morgan State College in 1933. She later earned the degrees of Master of Arts (1938) and Doctor of Philosophy (1946) in history at the Ohio State University. The distinguished scholar did post-doctoral research in 1954 at the University of Heidelberg in Germany as a Ford Foundation Fellow.

In addition to the Ford Foundation Fellowship, she has been awarded research-study grants by the General Education Board (2), and by the Carnegie Foundation.

Dr. Edmonds was honored by her alma mater, Morgan State College of Baltimore, Maryland, with the degree of Doctor of Laws in 1958. In that same year, the Bachelors-Benedict Club of Norfolk, Virginia, designated her "Woman of the Year."

Prior to assuming her present role as Graduate Professor of History at North Carolina in 1941, Dr. Edmonds was dean of women and professor of Greek, Latin and history at Virginia Seminary, Lynchburg, Virginia (1933-35); instructor in history at St. Paul Normal School, Lawrenceville, Virginia (1935-40); and consultant in the Virginia State Department of Education,



Dr. Helen Edmonds, historian, left, and Dr. Marjorie Browne, mathematician, are pictured here with U. S. Vice President Richard M. Nixon at a reception given in Washington by some newspaper correspondents who accompanied Mr. Nixon on a tour of the Near East.

Social Sciences Division (Summer, 1940).

She holds membership in the American Historical Association, the Association for the Study of Negro Life and History, American Teachers Association, Association of Social Science Teachers, and the Virginia Society for Research.

The following honorary societies have elected Dr. Edmonds to membership: Phi Alpha Theta National Historical Honorary Society, Zeta Chapter, Ohio State University (1938); Alpha Kappa Delta Honorary Sociology Fraternity, Ohio State University (1941); Pi Gamma Mu National Social Science Honorary Society, North Carolina College (1956); The Virginia Society of Research (1958); and the International Mark Twain Society (1951).



The Elders, NCC's first family