

Years of Planning, Years of Change

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The transition from Old Trinity College to the new and modern Duke University required extensive building.

There was no landscaping anywhere. A narrow-gauge railroad train came up the main entrance to the Chapel where stone and building supplies were delivered and Italian stone masons were cutting stone for the Chapel.

The windows of the Chapel were hung with canvas to keep out the rain. When a stained glass window arrived from Europe, it was placed in its assigned position surrounded by the flapping canvas.

Our living room and what served as a porch was a huge lumber pile outside of the entrance to the Medical School on the quadrangle.

In the fall of 1930, we moved to the East Campus into the dormitories of Giles and Aycock, travelling back and forth by bus.

Hospital supplies came in an irregular fashion. The day we made the beds for the opening of the Hospital, the entire linen supply left on the reserve shelves was 24 sheets, and 144 pneumonia jackets.

The First Class

On December 30, 1930, 33 young women were admitted as members of the first class.

On that day, the following notice appeared on the bulletin board of the Medical School:

"The student nurses have arrived. Do not feed or annoy them. Be gentle and entertain them."

These students were housed in Giles

House on the Women's Campus. This was to be their home for the next 18 months. They, too, traveled back and forth by bus and had a record of no tardiness during the entire period.

The bus was reliable, too. It broke down only once. We were returning from the first Christmas party held in the Hospital. About midnight, just as we rounded the circle by President (William P.) Few's home, the bus came to a halt and could not be started. The students walked the mile to their dormitory in the dark singing Christmas carols. The next morning President Few thanked us for the serenade.

The students of the first class were the only ones to wear black shoes and stockings. A student in the second class developed a slight foot infection and was forced to wear white hose and shoes. They were so well liked by the entire student body that a petition was presented to the faculty to be allowed to wear them permanently. For their part, they promised to keep both hose and shoes immaculate.

The first uniforms were selected by Dean Baker and worn on April 1, 1931. The probationers were dressed in blue, a white apron and collar, with a "fetching" white organdy bowtie and black hose and shoes.

After finishing the second term of the probationary period in June of 1931, the bowties were exchanged for a white bib and cuffs during an impressive capping ceremony.

The Cap

It might be interesting to know how

the cap came into existence. Miss Ruth Bean went down to the linen room in the basement with a bit of cloth. There she stitched up four or five varieties of caps for samples.

Then Dean Baker, nurses Bean, (Louise) Grant, and I held a conference. A cap was chosen, but I thought the back of it was rather bare and suggested a few small tucks. . . It was agreed that the cap was improved. Later Miss Bean made the required number.

Of the 33 students admitted, 16 were capped. . .

The second class of 44 entered on September 25, 1931. . .

On June 12, 1932, the entire nursing personnel moved to the West Campus into the newly constructed nurses' home adjacent to the Hospital. Its capacity was 225 beds. We thought we would never outgrow it.

Another bulletin board notice awaited the students' arrival. This time it was official. It read:

"There will be no gentlemen callers in the nurses's home before 5 p.m. The only exception will be out-of-town visitors who are expected to remain only a short time."

The third class of 38 students was admitted in September, 1932. In the meantime, the first class had reached its third year. . .

The University commencement exercises of June, 1933, included 14 student nurses—13 from North Carolina and one from South Carolina.

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THE FIRST NURSING CLASS — This is the procession which took part in the first graduation ceremonies of the Duke School of Nursing. At the left are the school's instructors, followed by the senior nursing students (in black hose and shoes) and then by the nurses of Duke Hospital.