

The Pendulum

Serving the Elon College community

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Elon College

No student housing

by Lynne Rambo
Special to The Pendulum

For Elon's first class one hundred years ago, every applicant was accepted, but there was no place for them to stay and no buildings had been completed.

Female students were housed in private homes throughout the community, and male students were either housed at the "Elon College Hotel" or expected to "camp out" on the third floor of Main Building, which was the primary structure of the campus until 1923.

In Elon's first years, all applicants were accepted, providing they had "satisfactory character references." Today, by contrast, approximately 40 per cent of all applicants are accepted through an intensive process of applications and, sometimes, interviews. Once students were admitted, they were required to take placement examinations to determine whether they would be part of the college proper" or required to enter the two-year academic, or "prep," curriculum.

Once students were admitted to "college proper," they could follow two paths of study,

"classical" or "philosophical." Both paths included courses in English, Greek, Latin, chemistry, analytical geometry, zoology and general history.

Students who completed the classical path received a Bachelor of Arts degree. Students in the philosophical path received a Bachelor of Philosophy degree.

In Elon's charter, awarded by the N. C. General Assembly on March 11, 1889, the institution was placed "at all times under the control of the convention of the Christian Church," a denomination that would become part of today's United Church of Christ.

The site for the campus was chosen in January of 1889 because of its proximity to Gibsonville, two miles west, Greensboro, 15 miles west, and Burlington, five miles east — and for the 33 varieties of trees that grace the site.

Workers were instructed to remove only those trees that absolutely had to be removed. A majority of those left standing were enormous oaks, the inspiration for the brand-new college. The Hebrew word "elon" means oak, or strength.

Town events change

by Lynne Rambo
Special to The Pendulum

Town happenings in and around College were quite different hundred years ago. According to weekly "Alamance Gleaner," March 1 and 14 editions of

remodeling of the courthouse commenced last Monday, when the foundations were partly dug out..."

J. W. Flanigan left for Washington, D. C., Saturday night in the army of office-seekers.

He is an applicant for a fat government job, with light work and heavy pay..."

"There were three droves of mules in Graham last week..."

"Mr. P.R. Harden is sick and shows no signs of improvement..."

"...and our editor Mr. R. A. Noell is the happy recipient of a handsome swinging lamp, a present from the editor of the Roxboro Courier."

On second thought, maybe things haven't changed all that much.



Prize possessions: Students gather for the cornerstone ceremonies at Alamance building

1889: a year of celebration

When Elon College was getting started, some significant events were taking place around the nation.

The year was 1889, and on February 9, the Department of Agriculture was made a cabinet office.

The Johnstown flood occurred on May 31 when a dam in western Pennsylvania broke. The flood wiped seven towns out of existence in 15 minutes. At least 5,000 people were killed. Property damage

was estimated at \$10 million

On Nov. 2, President Benjamin Harrison declared North Dakota and South Dakota the 39th and 40th states of the union. Six days later, he declared Montana the 41st and Washington the 42nd.

Other events were recorded and opinions delivered during the year by the Alamance Gleaner:

Grover Cleveland continued to receive as much attention as if he were still president, apparent

testimony not only to his popularity but to the fact that his successor was seen by many as something of a bore. Indeed, Cleveland would be re-elected to the second of his unique split terms in 1892.

The U.S. Senate, however, confirmed all of President Harrison nominations to executive office.

And, finally, on December 25, 1889, in a kind of celebration of the year, Oklahoma enacted legislation licensing the sale of liquor.

Stokes remembers history, traditions

by Cheryl Kern
Assistant Editor

An old gentleman, smiling amiably, wearing a gray suit and walking with a cane, entered the Elon College Library. He was immediately greeted by all the librarians and the workers.

Walking back through the stacks to find a place to talk, he said, "I remember being a little boy and being asked to be quiet in the library."

Dr. Durwood T. Stokes, author of "Elon College: Its History and Traditions," was born in 1908 here in Alamance County. "The first time I came to Elon was by horse and buggy with my grandfather. It was very small then, about five buildings. Saddleclub Road wasn't even paved yet."

Dr. Stokes' father was in real estate and his mother took care of his home. He has two brothers and one sister, all still alive. One

brother lives in Henderson, N.C., and his other brother and sister live in Alamance County.

The fondest memory Dr. Stokes has is of before he was six: "I remember my dad taking me to the railroad station early one morning to see Theodore Roosevelt make a speech when he was running for president."

see Stokes page 3

Inside

Editorials	page 4
Photo essay	pages 6 & 7
Entertainment	pages 9 & 10
Sports	page 12