To the Graduate Council:

I am submitting herewith a dissertation written by Carol Anne Guthrie entitled Education and the Evolution of the South: A History of the Berry Schools, 1902-1970. I have examined the final copy of this dissertation for form and content and recommend that it be accepted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy, with a major in history.

Dr. James Cobb, Major Professor

We have read this dissertation
and recommend its acceptance:

Accepted for the Council:

Associate Vice Chancellor
and Dean of the Graduate School

EDUCATION AND THE EVOLUTION OF THE SOUTH:

A HISTORY OF THE BERRY SCHOOLS, 1902-1970

A Dissertation

Presented for the

Doctor of Philosophy

Degree

The University of Tennessee, Knoxville

Carol Anne Guthrie

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ABSTRACT

The history of the Berry Schools parallels important social and educational changes in the South throughout the twentieth century. In its first forty years, the school embraced a philosophy similar to that of the Southern Education Movement, whose leaders advocated practical mechanical and agricultural training as a means to uplift the South. Also, the school strove to inculcate its rural students with the paternalistic, planter-class values of its founder, Martha Berry. The school did this by developing a work program which trained students in practical matters such as farming, animal husbandry, construction, and carpentry. The student work program also enabled Berry, a boarding school, to keep its operating expenses at a minimum.

With the onset of the Depression and the designation of the South as the "number one" problem facing America, leaders at the Berry Schools found themselves struggling against a tide of change. Radical leftists, such as Don West, charged Berry exploited its students for their labor. Berry students began to balk at the restrictive social life policies. With Martha Berry's death in 1942, school officials found themselves facing enormous pressures both within and outside Berry. During the late-1940's and early-1950's, as educational expenditures in the South rose, Berry struggled to redefine itself before it became obsolete. Berry ran through a succession of presidents, looking for a successor to Martha Berry. The Berry Schools needed a leader who could resolve the conflict between those supporters who wanted to cling to Berry's traditional rural

identified, work-oriented past and those who wanted to modernize the school to meet the demands of post-World War II America.

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INTRODUCTION

Historians may disagree about the reasons for the resurgence of the American South since 1900, but all would agree that the region underwent a remarkable transformation during this century. Integral to forging the modern South has been the renewal and reorganization of Southern education, for without the elevation of the Southern educational system to a competitive national level, the so-called "Southern miracle" most likely would not have occurred, for contained in the story of the evolution of Southern education in the twentieth century is also the story of the South's revival as a whole region. In exploring the twentieth century South's growth, scholars have tended to focus their attention on the various economic and political features of the region's rebirth, producing both microcosmic studies reflective of the heterogeneity of Southern life and macrocosmic interpretations which pursue a unifying logic behind the South's development.

But when compared to the amount of scholarship on the South's economic and political life, educational developments have received little attention. Only a few studies have dealt with the specific field of education and the extent to which Southern educational reform contributed to the South's renewal. One option for studying the rebirth of Southern education is to use certain institutions as microcosms for better understanding the diverse forces and pressures which the South confronted during the twentieth century. Such schools as Lincoln Memorial University in Harrogate, Tennessee; Tuskegee Institute, in Tuskegee, Alabama; Berea College in Berea, Kentucky; and The Berry Schools in Mt. Berry, Georgia

tried to overcome educational neglect by offering their students training in regions where there were virtually no public schools. By stressing practical agricultural and mechanical training, such schools hoped to prepare their students for a better life. In return, these students would help revitalize the South. Many of these schools thrived during the first part of the twentieth century, in part because of the South's continued neglect of education.

After 1940, however, regional and national developments forced many of these schools to reassess their narrowly-focused educational philosophies and to remake themselves into institutions that would be competitive in post-World War II America. Among these institutions, the Berry Schools offers a unique perspective on the various philosophical, economic, and social issues Southern leaders confronted throughout this century. Berry's development during its first sixty-five years embodies the South's struggle to achieve educational (and, by extension, political and economic) parity with the rest of America.

Berry opened in 1902 as a private boys high school that stressed practical agricultural and mechanical training. The school's founder, Martha Berry, hoped to rectify the appalling educational deficiencies of the mountainous regions of North Georgia and Alabama. Coming from a prosperous Rome, Georgia planter family, Berry lived and worked in the cotton business which so dominated the Southern economy of the nineteenth century. Her father owned a plantation prior to and after the Civil War, and opened a cotton brokerage house at which Martha Berry worked during her late twenties and early thirties. Berry grew up in an atmosphere of *noblesse oblige* and adopted many of the values and attitudes prevalent in

her planter class. During her mid-thirties, the unmarried Berry turned her attention to educational philanthropy, first offering Sunday School classes and, in 1902, opening a boys' high school. The school quickly expanded to include a girls' high school, an elementary school, and a college; collectively, the institution would become known as the Berry Schools. Martha Berry shaped a distinctive philosophy for her schools which combined a utilitarian attitude toward work with an elitist view of the function of education. Her philosophy would inspire and at times impede the schools' growth into the 1960's.

Martha Berry was an educational pioneer, but she did not work in a vacuum. Her views mirrored those of a breed of New South advocates who launched an educational reform movement in the late 1890's. Educators and writers such as Walter Hines Page and Charles Dabney began promoting educational reform which they hoped would stimulate the reconstruction of the South. This Southern Education Movement advocated industrial and agricultural education as a means for uplifting the South. Berry shared many of their beliefs and, in her own way, put into action the philosophies of the Southern Education Movement.

At first reflecting its founder's elitist, planter class upbringing, the Berry Schools embraced many of the values of the Southern Education Movement. Following Martha Berry's lead, the schools' faculty and staff sought to inculcate progressive ideals to their rural students, while preparing them to take their place as productive citizens. During Berry's first thirty years, school officials successfully implemented an educational philosophy based on agricultural and industrial education. Between 1902 and 1932, the school thrived; student enrollment increased,

land was purchased, buildings were constructed, and a physical plant was established. Reliance on student labor meant that costs remained low, and by 1925, the schools were relatively self-sufficient.

Martha Berry contributed to the schools' solvency by undertaking a series of fundraising campaigns in the North, which capitalized on the schools' reputation as havens for unfortunate white rural and mountain youth. Berry's biggest coup came when the notoriously parsimonious Henry Ford made a four-million dollar donation to the schools. During these years Berry and its founder became known throughout the nation as a philanthropic institution which was striving to meet the changing economic, social, and educational needs of the South. Martha Berry herself became noted worldwide for her work, winning a number of national awards and honors, the most notable being her selection in 1930 by Good Housekeeping magazine as one of America's twelve most influential women.

The Berry Schools, however, did face ongoing problems resulting from their philosophy and success. Animosity developed between the schools and the nearby community of Rome, as Berry began to accumulate thousands of acres of land. Martha Berry compounded these local tensions by putting severe restrictions on the interaction between the people of Rome and the Berry schools.

Aside from facing local criticism, school officials were forced to confront contradictions between the ideals of their mission and the demands of survival. The Berry Schools' stated mission was to train students as agricultural, industrial, and educational leaders. But because the schools' maintenance depended upon student labor, conflicts arose between the demands for student work and the needs of student

education. Students periodically complained that their work took precedence over their classes. School officials, such as President Robert Adams, continually sought ways to integrate student work experiences with classroom training.

Charges that Berry exploited its students increased as the schools' reputation grew nationally. Depression era politics intensified these criticisms, as Berry's mission became even more scrutinized by right-wing and left-wing critics, who used the school to illustrate what was good and/or bad about the American political and economic system. Leftist leaders accused Berry of perpetuating an unfair system similar to that faced by Kentucky coal miners and Detroit automotive workers. These critics claimed that Berry exploited its students for their labor without adequately preparing them for life after graduation. Under the guidance of noted leftist Don West, radicals inside and outside the school managed to capitalize on these criticisms and bring off a one day strike at the Berry Boys High School in 1933. School officials acted swiftly to crush the nascent radical movement and to repair any damage to its reputation.

Yet Berry's leaders could not stop the forces of change which this strike represented, as New Deal politics and World War II expenditures began changing the educational and economic life of the South. Berry's survival would depend upon the ability of its leaders to confront these changes and remake Berry into an institution that could compete in a new America. Southern educational reform and rising economic prosperity eroded the school's original purpose. The GI Bill, typical of increased government expenditures in the nation in general and the South in particular, created new and often better opportunities for potential Berry

students.

Martha Berry's death in 1942 complicated the process of reform, as the school tried to reconcile her vision with the changing realities of Southern life. Tensions arose between "old guard" Berry employees and alumni, who resented attempts to revise Martha Berry's dream, and new faculty and staff, who hoped to remake the school into a modern institution. Between 1942 and 1954, a succession of directors and presidents tried to reconcile Berry's mission with the changes taking place in Georgia and the South. Confronted with declining enrollments, economic losses, and recalcitrant old liners, Berry's leaders struggled to forge a new purpose and identity for the school.

With the appointment of John R. Bertrand as president in 1956, Berry's new mission finally began to crystalize. Under Bertrand's leadership, Berry was transformed into a modern, liberal arts college. The boys' high school, the original Berry School, was transformed into a private preparatory academy, as it was subordinated to the college. The academic reputation and status of the college increased with the addition of a number of Ph.D.'s to the faculty, the accreditation of the college by the Southern Association of Colleges and Secondary Schools, the adoption of racial integration, and the general relaxation of the restrictive student life policies (a phenomenon common at colleges throughout the nation during the 1960's). The cornerstone of the school, the work program, would be dramatically altered. Students still would be able to work at Berry, and work for their tuition; but the systematic, mandatory work program upon which Berry had been built was dropped, replaced by a voluntary, need-based program, similar to most other

colleges and universities. Bertrand also worked to integrate the schools more with the community, reaching out to Rome leaders and allowing, for the first time, Romans to attend Berry. This latter reform reflected the school's overall abandonment of its rural-identified mission.

Just as Martha Berry stamped her own personal vision, colored by her *noblesse oblige* planter background, onto the school in its early years, so too would Dr. Bertrand reshape Berry into an institution which would correspond to his views about the purpose and place of education in the South. As one of a new class of post-World War II Southern leaders, Bertrand mirrored Martha Berry as a dynamic leader whose guidance and vision reshaped the school into a viable and prosperous post-war institution.

CHAPTER 1

THE BERRY SCHOOL PHILOSOPHY

The extraordinary progress the South has achieved in its march toward industrialization and modernization has been a major accomplishment. As Gavin Wright and other scholars have noted, the South's industrial, commercial, and educational growth since 1940 has exceeded that of any other region in the U.S. Of the South's many achievements, the strides it made in education were astounding. Prior to the Civil War, the parochial, agrarian, plantation society of the Cotton Kingdom viewed education as less of a right and more of a privilege. The South, hampered by its scattered population and tradition of anti-intellectualism, made few attempts at funding public education in any broad-based, meaningful way.[1] Following the Civil War, many Southerners considered public education a very low priority because economic despair made public education financially unrealistic. Southerners were also wary of funding schools because of uncertainty and insecurity about the possibility of having to educate their newly-freed slaves.[2]

With the rise of Henry Grady's New South Movement, Southern boosters, eager to attract investment from Northern industrialists, began championing the cause of education. Educational reform appealed to New

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[1]Dorothy Orr, A History of Education in Georgia (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1950), p. 16.

[2]Gavin Wright, Old South, New South: Revolutions in the Southern Economy Since the Civil War, (New York: Basic Books, Inc., 1986), pp 14, 78-80.

South advocates because they felt it sent a message to Northern investors of the seriousness of Southerners to modernize and diversify their economy and society. Furthermore, a population which was educated in the basic skills of reading, writing, and arithmetic, in conjunction with specialized agricultural and mechanical training, could serve as an enticement for Northern industrialists to relocate their businesses down South. Such educational advocates as Edgar Gardner Murphy and Charles Dabney argued that a more educated populace would spur economic growth[3].

Despite the growing demand for educational reform, Southern states were slow to respond. Many Southern entrepreneurs, fearful of losing their docile employees to the big city or the North, saw education, particularly high school and college, as an uncontrollable force which would elevate the expectations and desires of Southern laborers.[4] Because many Southern leaders distrusted public education as bad business, educational reformers often channeled their work into private efforts.

Between 1880 and 1910, many privately funded religious and secular high schools and colleges opened to address the South's educational deficiencies.[5] Anxious to correct the inequities in educational opportunities between blacks and whites, many philanthropists directed their energies toward helping Southern African Americans receive an

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[3]Hugh C. Bailey, Liberalism in the New South (Coral Gables, Fl.: The University of South Florida Press, 1969), pp. 131-32; Dewey Grantham, "The Contours of Southern Progressivism," The American Historical Review, v. 86, no. 5, December, 1981.

[4]Wright, pp. 78-80.

[5]Orr, pp. 175-188; John Samuel Ezell, The South Since 1865, 2nd ed., (Norman, Okla.: University of Oklahoma Press, 1975), p. 46.

education. Such educational leaders as Booker T. Washington founded, organized, and administered private high schools and colleges.

Perhaps less well-known, and less thoroughly researched, are the efforts of numerous Southern men and women who worked to bring educational opportunities to dispossessed rural Southern whites, whose economic, geographic, and social isolation often-times left them as disfranchised politically, economically, and socially as African-Americans.[6] One of these reformers, Martha Berry, began a private boys' high school in 1902 that blossomed into a nationally renowned institution by the 1930's. Despite gaining recognition during her lifetime, Martha Berry's work became mythologized by her successors and lost to historians of the South.

Today her school is known as Berry College, a four-year liberal arts school not unlike a variety of other small, private educational institutions throughout the country. Situated on over 25,000 acres of forest and farm land, Berry is located in Floyd County, about 75 miles Northwest of Atlanta. Rome, the county seat of Floyd, is the closest city to Berry and serves as an industrial and commercial center for Northwest Georgia, particularly in the cotton, textile, and lumber industries.[7]

The school opened in 1902 as the Berry Boys' Industrial School, a private, boarding high school that offered agricultural and industrial training, along with courses found in a standard high school curriculum, to the rural mountain people of Southern Appalachia who lacked access to public school facilities. Berry offered a low-cost education and was

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[6]Orr, pp. 188. Ezell, pp. 45, 55, 260-261.

[7]"Rome and Floyd County," a publication by the Floyd County Chamber of Commerce, 1991.

subsidized by student work and private donations.[8] The school prospered and expanded to include a Girls' High School in 1909, an elementary school in 1914, a junior college in 1926, and finally a four-year college in 1932.[9]

As the school grew in size, so did the fame of Martha Berry. She travelled throughout the Eastern seaboard, speaking about her schools at various fundraising gatherings; her success and influence was secured with her selection in 1930 as one of Good Housekeeping Magazine's twelve most influential women in America.[10] But Martha Berry's national renown did not survive her death in 1942. Her mission had been to provide education for those who had little or no access to public schools. In the post-World War II South, her work became obsolete because of increasing state and national expenditures on education. During the 1950's, school officials and supporters redefined the school's mission in order to keep the school open. Berry would become a dramatically different school than the one Martha Berry had begun, and in the process, her reputation would fade from the national consciousness.

Martha Berry's anonymity has been furthered by the lack of significant scholarship about her work. Berry's biographers depicted her as a sainted crusader bereft of any serious flaws. Berry administrators contributed to her deification by describing her in flowery terms in

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[8]Evelyn Hoge Pendley, Sixty Years of Education for Service, published by The Berry Schools, Mt. Berry, Ga., 1963), pp. 3-15.

[9]Ibid.

[10]Alice Booth, "Martha Berry," Good Housekeeping, August, 1931, pp. 50-51.

school publications aimed at raising money and increasing enrollment. Berry biographers and school historians usually focused their attention exclusively on her and her schools, episodically describing day-to-day events at the school. History has forgotten Martha Berry because no one has written about her and her work from an historical perspective. Little to nothing has been written about how Martha Berry's work was shaped by economic, social, and political forces. What is known of Martha Berry can be found primarily in six biographies: Martha Berry (1932), by Tracy Byers; Miracle in the Mountains (1958), by Harnett Kane and Inez Henry; A Lady I Loved (1966), by Evelyn Hoge Pendley; Martha Berry: Little Woman with a Big Dream (1968), by Joyce Blackburn; Angel of Appalachia (1968), by Elisabeth Myers; and Martha Berry (1972), by Mary Kay Phelan.

Typically, each of these books depicts Martha Berry's life in a mythical fashion, relying on similar conventional stories and anecdotes to sketch her life and concomitantly the history of the Berry Schools. Berry's first biography, published in 1932, was written by Tracy Byers, then a press secretary at Berry, who wrote the book for two stated reasons: to explain how important Martha Berry's ongoing work was, and to show how desperately the school needed money.[11] Because Martha Berry was still alive at the time of the book's publication, it lacked any historical perspective and served primarily as a fundraising tool. In fact, Byers' close association with Berry inspired him to exaggerate and romanticize her achievements.

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[11]Tracy Byers, Martha Berry, (New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons, 1932), pp. 5-9.

> Martha Berry alone stepped out of her environment. She found herself in the grip of an idea; something must be done. . . since no one else was making it his business, she must make it hers. It is amazing enough that this idea should obsess her to the extent of making her sacrifice her entire life for it, but even more amazing is the fact that with no preparation she should be able to carry the idea to a successful conclusion.[12]

Byers' book did, however, provide the blueprint for future Berry biographers, laying a foundation of highlighting similar people, incidents and events as influential in shaping Martha Berry's life.

Miracle in the Mountains, the next book to deal with both Martha Berry and her schools, was written by Harnett Kane, a moderately successful author during the fifties, in collaboration with Inez Henry, one of Martha Berry's personal assistants and secretaries.[13] Published in 1956, this bestseller offered a highly romanticized vision of Martha Berry as a miracle-worker who could turn any disaster into a blessing. As with the Byers' book, Miracle in the Mountains virtually gave Martha Berry sole credit for initiating an interest in education in the South. Kane and Henry even implied that Martha Berry alone planned and organized the concept of industrial and agricultural schools, and was largely responsible for their introduction in Georgia and throughout the South.

> Georgia's county superintendents met on the campus in 1906 to study her methods. Within a few months a bill came before the state legislature to provide for a system of agricultural and mechanical schools. . . . Soon school after school went up

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[12]Ibid, pg. 8.

[13]Harnett Kane and Inez Henry, Miracle in the Mountains, (Garden City, N. J. : Doubleday and Company Inc., 1958), p. 97.

in Georgia.[14]

While Martha Berry's schools were becoming well known at the time, she could not claim to be the inspiration for what was a general movement throughout the South towards industrial education.

In 1966, Evelyn Hoge Pendley, an English Department faculty member at Berry and daughter of former Berry comptroller Herman Hoge, published her reminiscences of Martha Berry. Pendley's A Lady I Loved offered a more personalized picture of Martha Berry, filtered through the eyes of one who had grown up on the Berry campus in the twenties and thirties.[15] In 1968, two separate biographies were published, one by Joyce Blackburn and the other by Elisabeth Myers.[16] Both relied heavily on the three previous books, presenting the same overall factual account of Martha Berry's life from her early life at the family home, Oak Hill, under the spiritual guidance of her father, to her interest in educating poor mountain children and subsequent founding of the Berry schools. Neither Myers nor Blackburn stray from the traditional manner in which the Berry story had been previously told, only highlighting or discounting well-known Berry stories.

The most recent book written about Martha Berry is Mary Kay Phelan's 1972 juvenile biography for the Crowell Easy-to-Read Social Studies

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[14]Ibid, pg. 83.

[15]Evelyn Hoge Pendley, A Lady I Loved, (Mt. Berry, Ga. : The Berry Press, 1966).

[16]Joyce Blackburn, Martha Berry, Little Woman with a Big Dream, (Philadelphia: J. B. Lippincott Co., 1968); Elizabeth P. Myers, Angel of Appalachia, (New York: Julian Messner, 1968).

Series.[17] Drawing heavily from previous works, Phelan broke no new ground in the scholarship about Berry.

While it would be easy to criticize these aforementioned authors for their lack of objective scholarly research, it must be remembered that historical analysis was not their intent. Nonetheless, these works have served to mythologize Martha Berry and her philanthropic achievements, thereby obscuring the true importance of her work and her schools' place in the history of Southern education in the twentieth century. Although this literature has served to cloak the contributions and influence of Martha Berry, neither she nor her schools should be neglected by history. Martha Berry and the Berry schools were not only closely linked to social and economic currents of the first half of the twentieth century, but they also mirrored the philosophy and values of that era.

Born in 1866 into a wealthy Georgia family, Berry's background placed her among the South's socioeconomic elite. Educated at home and at the Edgeworth Finishing School in Baltimore, Berry seemed destined to assume the life of a country gentleman's wife. Yet she spurned marriage proposals, instead working with her father, and later her brother, in the family cotton brokerage business in Rome. Already leading a somewhat unconventional life for a woman of her background, Martha Berry, at age 31, turned her attention to the appalling educational conditions of her native North Georgia.

The 1870 School Law required Georgia to provide a skeletal means of support for the organization of a public school system based on county

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[17]Mary Kay Phelan, Martha Berry, (New York: Thomas Y. Crowell Corporation, 1972).

boards of education.[18] Hampered by racial prejudice and the return of Bourbon Democrats who opposed publicly funded education, Georgia struggled to establish an acceptable school system. Inadequate funding, resulting from very low tax rates, made this goal impossible and inequities began to spring up between the state's schools. Because no clear regulations were established for the structuring of county school systems, most cities and towns in Georgia broke away from their county board and established separate and independent school systems. These urban schools were then entitled to share part of the woefully meager state educational fund. Because school systems supplemented the monies they received from the state with funds raised from property taxes, city and town school systems undermined rural area systems by removing their richer tax base from county schools.[19]

The creation of separate city and town schools created a wide disparity in educational facilities between city and county, including North Georgia. In Floyd County, the city of Rome established its own Board of Education and school system, leaving the Floyd County Board of Education without an economically strong tax base. Of the four counties adjacent to Floyd--Bartow, Chattooga, Polk, and Gordon--each had at least one city school system by 1906.[20] This division left an insufficient number of county-maintained schools (particularly high schools) for the rural population. For example, in Floyd County the first county-run

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[18]Orr, p. 169.

[19]Ibid, pg. 223-249, 262.

[20]Report of the Georgia State Board of Education, 1894 and 1906, Index of Tables.

consolidated high school for secondary education was not opened until 1922. Before that, Floyd County students who wanted a high school degree had to attend either the Rome City High School, or a private school such as Berry.[21] Of the counties adjacent to Floyd, Bartow had only one county-operated high school as of 1916, Chattooga had none, Polk had eight, and Gordon had fourteen, some of which were city maintained.[22]

Private schools existed in many of the smaller communities, usually supported by local funds. Operated by one teacher or a circuit teacher, they were opened for only a few months a year and mostly offered elementary-level classes. These schools were often small, one-room buildings usually in poor condition.[23]

Martha Berry opened just such a private school in 1898 after encounters with local children, who told her they had never been to school. Expanding her operations to include three day schools, Berry envisioned that education could uplift poor, backward Southern Appalachian white youth out of their misery. She quickly grew disenchanted with these day schools because she feared the students' home life undermined her efforts at remaking them into model citizens. Wanting to have greater control over the totality of her student's lives and recognizing the fact that she did not have the proper training to teach them herself, Berry used 83 acres of the land she had inherited from her father to open the

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[21]Gene Toulouza, "An Analysis of the Adequate Program of Education in Georgia with Particular Emphasis on Floyd County", (Master's Thesis, The University of Tennessee, 1956), pg. 7.

[22]Report of the Georgia State Board of Education, 1916, Index of Tables.

[23]Orr, pg. 219, 250.

Berry Boys' Industrial High School in 1902.

Aside from the educational deficiencies which helped spawn the Berry Schools, philosophical forces at work in Southern educational circles indirectly helped shape Berry's ideology and success. The Southern Educational Movement was born out of the Progressive Movement's affection for championing education as a way to uplift society economically, socially, intellectually, and spiritually.[24] Based on a liberal, progressive belief that better organized schools would strengthen Southern society, the leaders of the Southern educational movement assumed that education would provide the opportunity for individuals to better themselves and their region. Improving Southern education would also provide economic dividends by supplying the properly skilled and trained workers essential to the region's industrial expansion and growth.[25]

The roots of this Southern educational movement can be traced to an 1898 educational conference held at Capon Springs, West Virginia. Among those attending the conference were Northern philanthropists George F. Peabody and Robert C. Ogden and Southern reformers and educators J.L.M. Curry, Walter Hines Page, and Charles Dabney.[26] This conference met yearly to discuss educational ideology and methodology, as well as ways to foster interest in a Southern public school movement.

The movement flourished from 1901 to 1914, particularly with the establishment of the Southern Education Board in 1902. Funded by educator

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[24]Bailey, pp. 131-32.

[25]Clinton Allison, "The Conference for Education in the South: An Exercise in Noblesse Oblige," Journal of Thought, 16 (Spring 1981), p. 43.

[26]Bailey, pp 137-38.

and philanthropist Robert Ogden, the Board served as an important link between Northern philanthropists and Southern educational leaders. More importantly, it improved public awareness of the necessity and benefit of education.[27]

As leaders of the Southern educational movement, the members of this Board believed education was the elixir which would cure the ills of the impoverished and troubled South. Among the more notable of these reformers was Walter Hines Page, editor of World's Work, a magazine which served as a mouthpiece for the movement's views. Other noteworthy members included Edgar Gardner Murphy, an advocate of federal funding of education; J.L.M. Curry, first president of the Southern Education Conference; and Charles Dabney, Board member and noted educational theorist and scholar. Despite the presence of such Northern philanthropists as Peabody and Ogden, the movement's direction and focus came primarily from Page, Murphy, Curry, and Dabney, all Southerners.[28]

These leaders, along with the many other Board members, were fundamentally a conservative, upper-middle class group who embraced traditional values of thrift, cleanliness, and hard work. The educational agenda they promoted reflected their social and cultural bias.[29] Historians such as Karier and Anderson have criticized these educational reformers for wanting to promote industrial education in order to gain economically from what would become a more skilled work force. Given

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[27]Bailey, p. 138; Charles Dabney, University Education in the South, (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1936), p. v.

[28]Bailey, pp 132-33, 137.

[29]Allison, pp. 41-2.

their collective prejudices about race and class, it seems more likely that they operated with no concealed economic motives. Instead, their advocacy of a utilitarian education stemmed from their own biases and beliefs. According to Clinton Allison,

> they were upper class paternalists with a variety of motives including Christian idealism and the wealthy's sense of *noblesse oblige*; born and nurtured in the Nineteenth century they accepted the conventional wisdom of their class and time[30]

particularly as it related to blacks and poor, rural whites. Despite their racist and paternalistic beliefs, these reformers and their movement were nonetheless a major catalyst in creating a new age in the South. With their pamphlets, magazines, yearly conferences, fundraising work, and countless other activities, they managed to effect a fundamental change in the educational attitudes and policies in every Southern state.[31]

These reformers believed that education would solve problems such as child labor and the convict lease system, while producing "economically fruitful citizens with a vital critical attitude toward themselves."[32] Education would better prepare young people to fulfill their potential as productive members of society. Rural education, in particular, would bring Southerners into the mainstream of American economic and social life. Achieving this objective did not, however, have to spell an end to the basically conservative, fundamental values and qualities of Southern rural life. These educators paradoxically believed that industrial and

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[30]Ibid, pp. 52-53

[31]Bailey, pg. 151.

[32]Ibid, pg. 131.

agricultural instruction would prepare rural Southerners to enter the modernized economy of the twentieth century, while maintaining their integrity and character as yeoman farmers.[33]

Leaders of the Southern Educational Movement favored a practical education consisting of mechanical, industrial and agricultural training. One of the movement's publications, Southern Education Notes, consistently stressed this functional approach to schooling.

> The boy or girl who has received a brain education alone is but half-prepared for life. But the boy or girl with the fitting which a modern manual training high school can and does give has two chances in this world."[34]

Agricultural training was especially emphasized by leaders of the movement. Although these educators supported the Henry Grady model of an industrialized New South, they argued that most of the region's educationally deficient citizens were rural farmers who would benefit most from training in modern agricultural methods.[35]

Equally important to the movement was how its educational goals would be implemented and administered. Segregation was a fact, and it was made clear by the Southern members of the Board that mixing the races was not an option to be considered. This generated conflict between Board members, since many of the Northern members had joined with the hopes of

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[33]William Link, "Making the Inarticulate Speak," Journal of Thought 18 (Fall 1983), pp. 66-67.

[34]Houston Chronicle, quoted in Southern Education Notes, August 25, 1902, p. 5.

[35]Progressive Farmer, quoted in Southern Education Notes, September 22, 1902, pg. 1.

assisting blacks.[36] Ultimately the Board's Southern members gained the upper hand and deemphasized black education by preying on fears that race-mixing would promote social equality, and that white children of good (or at least the right) stock were being overlooked.

> The neglected white children of our Southern States--particularly in the rural communities--are of the best English and Scotch stock and they are capable as the children of our race in any part of the world.[37]

Reformers such as Page and Dabney guided the Southern educational movement, providing it with direction and inspiration. This movement was not, however restricted to these elite leaders, for its ideals were carried out by hundreds of local progressive educators and reformers. Women were especially prominent among the progressive leadership at the local level. Women's clubs, dominated by white, upper-middle class matrons, took up the mantle of educational reform. By the early twentieth century the rank-and-file educational leadership at the local level included many prominent women, such as Rebecca Latimer Felton, the first woman from Georgia to serve in the Senate. Born and reared in North Georgia, Felton lived in Bartow County, which was adjacent to Martha Berry's Floyd County home. While helping to advance her husband William's political career, Felton became involved in several reform movements, supporting temperance and fighting against the convict-lease system.[38]

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[36]Louis Harlan, Separate and Unequal: Public School Campaigns and Racism in Southern Seaboard States, 1901-1915, (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1958), pp 75-101.

[37]Walter Hines Page, Southern Education Notes, May 5, 1902, p. 1.

[38]Bartley, History of Georgia, pp. 118-21.

Felton also championed educational reform. Aside from being a friend of Martha Berry and benefactor to the school, Felton herself opened a school in Cartersville and publicly advocated providing education for rural white girls, stating:

> I believe . . . we must prepare to demand compulsory education for this class of apathetic and illiterate people and with this compulsory education we must contrive to inaugurate some system of manual training to arouse interest in their minds.[39]

Like Rebecca Felton, Martha Berry made her greatest contribution as a local reformer, becoming a foot soldier fulfilling the aspirations of the Southern Education Movement. In establishing her schools to educate rural white Southerners, she put into action the movement's call for practical education and epitomized its assumptions and values. Berry was even a member of the Southern Educational Conference and spoke at the Ninth Conference for Education in 1906.[40] Like the movement's leaders, Berry felt that education was an important means to provide rural mountain people with opportunity, or at least provide them with access to opportunity via a practical education.[41] Although the rural South was economically backward, its people were valuable. "The mountain boy--robust, rugged, lineal descendant of Scotch-Irish, English and Huguenot ancestor--our very 'kith and kin," she wrote, "are wild for an opportunity

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[39]Ibid, 121-22.

[40]Sixth Conference for Education in the South, 1903; Ninth Conference for Education in the South, 1906.

[41]Martha Berry, Uplifting Backwoods Boys in the South,(Mt. Berry, Ga.: The Berry Press, 1904), pg. 8.

to learn to Read and Write."[42]

Unlike most members of the Southern Education Movement, Martha Berry did not seek local, state or national government assistance. She maintained that education was not a right to be extended like charity, but a privilege that would be appreciated only if the recipient had to work and earn it.[43] With this attitude, Berry would justify using student labor literally to build her schools from the ground up. This lack of interest in government aid also revealed her unwillingness to brook outside interference in the Berry Schools' operations. Martha Berry would run her schools with an iron hand concealed cleverly in a velvet glove of decorum and propriety, utilizing talents and traits acquired early in life.

Berry imposed her views and prejudices onto her boarding school, even living in the boys' dormitory during the first few years of the school's existence so she could more closely train them in the social graces of living. For Martha Berry an education included the ability to maintain certain standards of dress, behavior, speech, and hygiene. As she wrote in 1904:

> The home life of the school is also a discipline in social intercourse and the training of gentlemen. . . . The teacher and the pupil are brought into daily contact in various ways. They eat at the same table and share the same fare.... In this way, an error or lapse of speech in conversation or in

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[42]Official fundraising letter from Martha Berry to Potential Donors, September 29, 1909, pg. 1. When research began on this project, most of the school related primary sources were housed in the Martha Berry Museum. Most of the documents used as sources for this dissertation were reviewed while they were in the Berry Museum. In 1989, Berry College opened a Berry College Archives in its library, to which written material previously housed at the Museum was relocated.

[43]Letter from Martha Berry to Alice Wingo, Dean of Girls, September 18, 1924, pg. 1.

> manner may at once be corrected without offense to the pupil, who almost invariably appreciates our efforts in this direction. They rise when I enter the room, they ask the blessing at the table, they conduct the evening prayers and singing and they have been taught to be uniformly courteous and polite. One of the chief principles that we inculcate from the very entrance of a pupil into the school is that whatever is worth having is worth working for.[44]

Berry actively sought to strip her students of the values, customs, manners and habits she considered backward and inferior, thereby shaping them into right-thinking and proper-acting citizens, who showed proper respect to their "superiors." Berry students would be taught to shed their backward rural table manners and their unpleasant, rustic ways of speaking.

Martha Berry's educational vision incorporated an elitist, *bourgeois* attitude about what kind of behavior and values Southern men and women should possess. Students were required to purchase clothes that had been donated to the school, for handouts meant charity and charity did not instill the proper work ethic in students.[45] Two hours of work a day were mandatory in addition to the work required of those students working their way through school in lieu of paying tuition.[46]

Martha Berry herself never actually taught the students in the classroom beyond an occasional Bible study session or etiquette class.[47] Yet her influence on the educational growth of her students was paramount,

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[44]Berry, Uplifting, pg. 8

[45]Ibid.; Berry, "Planting and Care," p. 87.

[46]Berry, Uplifting, p. 8.

[47]Evelyn Hoge Pendley, "Some Facts About Martha Berry," undated unpublished manuscript.

for she was the central figure in the early years of the school in establishing the direction of the curriculum, particularly the balance between work and study. Furthermore, her emphasis on social amenities meant she saw herself as an example for the students and sought to shape their values to her own.[48] Every aspect of the school reflected this goal, from the school motto, "Not to be ministered unto but to minister," to an early school song, "Be a lifter not a leaner."[49] All aspects of school life exemplified this total commitment to transform her students into "useful and respectful citizens."[50]

Possessed of a sense of *noblesse oblige* typical of her class, Berry believed her lifestyle and values were the ideal basis for training and teaching her students. During the years when Berry lived in the dormitory, the male students balked at doing their laundry until made to feel inferior for letting Miss Berry do it. As she herself said in a 1935 speech referring to this incident, "I've never had to do my washing because my father and grandfather worked hard and it wasn't necessary."[51] Even despite frequent absences from the school because of illness and fundraising trips, Berry consistently kept her hand in the socialization and indoctrination of her students. In a 1925 letter to Alice Wingo, she reported having visited the new dormitory, Clara Hall:

> I noticed on the bureaus were a number of cheap photos and pictures of boys. There must be no pictures of boys on the

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[48]Berry, Uplifting, p. 13.

[49]Kane and Henry, p. 314

[50]Berry, Uplifting, p. 13.

[51]Unpublished speech, delivered by Martha Berry in 1935.

> bureaus and the walls of the girls room--and all the cheap gee gaws must be discarded. . . . The doors should be left open so the rooms can be inspected every morning. I trust you will instruct the girls to stand and say "Good morning, Miss Berry" when they meet me on campus. I feel that is a common courtesy owed me as the director of the three schools. The dining room must be kept cleaner and in better order, and I think the food could be simpler. Please instruct the girls not to talk to the boys as they come into chapel.[52]

From this brief inspection and report it is abundantly clear what Martha Berry considered to be an appropriate lifestyle for her students. By forbidding pictures and "gee gaws" she would reinforce the simplicity of daily living and the integrity of one's home whether it be a farmhouse or a dormitory room. Martha Berry's sense of decorum translated into policies which were designed to keep her pupils, particularly the girls, from exhibiting vulgar behavior or decorations. Berry students would not sully the dignity of their room by displaying cheaply made ornaments or movie magazine photographs of Rudolph Valentino. Besides which, such displays were not only garish, but could create potential animosity between those students who could afford such "gee gaws" and those who could not.

Martha Berry hoped to mold students who were tasteful, duly respectful and appropriately humble, as is reflected in her request to make the food simple; one must eat to live, not live to eat. Male-female relationships were not to be entered into lightly or frivolously, for she had seen too many fifteen- and sixteen-year-old girls married and burdened

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[52]Letter from Martha Berry to Alice Wingo, September 18, 1925, Berry College Archives, Mt. Berry, Georgia.

with families in the harsh environment of the mountains.[53]

As was evidenced by her desire to be formally addressed, Martha Berry believed she had a certain status that had to be maintained and that her students owed her something. "I want to feel sure that you are really loyal and that I can count upon you every time . . . some people can never be loyal to anything," she explained. "They lack that fine quality. We at Berry know the joy of service and of giving one's best. . . ."[54] This desire for loyalty was not merely self-aggrandizement but demonstrated her belief that one should be able to commit oneself to some goal or purpose, whether it be a job, a family, or the Berry Schools.

An important part of this commitment, one which Martha Berry, her faculty and staff constantly stressed, was the necessity of work. To carry out a goal one had to pursue it faithfully and doggedly, no matter how much effort it required.[55]

Berry's emphasis on work reflected her commitment to the ideals of the Southern Education Movement. All students were required to work, regardless of their ability to pay tuition, for without work they would not fully appreciate the education they were receiving.[56] But Martha Berry's philosophy would have been unimportant had it not been translated

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[53]"The Dark Corner," Unpublished, undated short story attributed to Martha Berry; letter from Martha Berry to Elsie Ford, staff member, May 11, 1932.

[54]Martha Berry, "A message From Miss Berry," Open Letter to the Berry School News, 9 October 1916, p. 1.

[55]Unpublished letter from Martha Berry to Alice Wingo, December 7, 1925, Berry College Archives, Mt. Berry, Georgia.

[56]Unpublished letter from Martha Berry to Alice Wingo, November 12, 1930, Berry College Archives, Mt. Berry, Georgia.

so successfully into reality. The fact that she did succeed in building the school along the lines she did showed a deep commitment to carrying out her philosophy, no matter what obstacles she might have to overcome.

Berry's dedication to her dream did not come without controversy and conflict. In 1909 the Rome and Northern Railroad requested the right-of-way passage through her land. Berry vigorously fought their request, feeling it was an invasion of her domain which would detrimentally interfere with the school's welfare. Using her prestige and connections, Berry did manage to persuade the company to run the railroad through the acres of land toward the back of the school's property, yet the incident shaped her further relationships with outside authority figures.[57] "Isn't it a shame that a lone woman has had to fight a rich Northern operation to keep them from ruining property that is set aside for such a cause?" Berry wrote. "The railroad laws in Georgia are so lenient, they can go wherever they choose, but in this case they ought not to choose to come through our property."[58] When the opportunity arose sixteen years later to purchase the very same connecting line, Martha Berry immediately decided to buy it and protect her school from further outside influences. By buying the existing rail line and negotiating with Southern Railroad, she was able to build a spur line onto the Berry campus, thereby continuing a process of building up the acreage of the Berry Schools. In her desire to expand the school, Martha Berry wanted to keep people connected with her and the school away from external influences over which

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[57]Unpublished letter from Martha Berry to Nellie Peters Black, September 15, 1909, Berry College Archives, Mt. Berry, Georgia.

[58]Ibid.

she had no control.[59]

Berry particularly wanted her school and its students to have little or no contact with Rome and its citizens.[60] Her distrust was probably rooted in her belief that the local citizenry had failed to assist the mountain people through educational facilities. While she enjoyed visitors and encouraged them to visit (particularly her Northern philanthropic acquaintances), she rarely wanted any outside help in terms of policy- or decision-making.[61] Furthermore, because she had started a boarding school to eliminate what she believed to be the detrimental influences of home life on her students, she may well have perceived Rome as a kind of Sodom and Gomorrah from which she must protect her students. Trips to Rome were either forbidden or severely limited during her lifetime.[62]

Also, Martha Berry disliked having people from Rome on the campus, for fear they might come into contact with the visitors she was trying to impress and solicit for money. In a 1925 letter to Alice Wingo, head of the Girls' School, Martha Berry wrote: "I do not wish any Rome people--

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[59]Unpublished letters from Martha Berry to Frank Campbell, Assistant to Henry Ford, March 9, March 27, May 12, May 27, 1925; Samuel H. Cook, Half Century at Berry, manuscript published by the Berry Schools, 1961, p. 3.

[60]Unpublished letter from Martha Berry to Alice Wingo, March 11, 1930, Berry College Archives, Mt. Berry, Georgia. Taped interview with Tracy Byers, one in a series of taped reminiscences done for the school's Fiftieth Anniversary, 1963, Martha Berry Museum.

[61]Unpublished letter from Martha Berry to Nellie Peters Black, September 15, 1909, Berry College Archives, Mt. Berry, Georgia.

[62]List of Student Regulations for the Girls, undated document, Martha Berry Museum.

doctors, ministers, or speakers entertained at the school. I often have an impromptu guest and I do not wish them to come in contact with local people."[63] So concerned was she with guests who might provide funds for the schools that she would often limit or stop altogether student parties, particularly at the Girls' School, because the young women would be needed to entertain guests.[64] Friends of Berry, she felt, must be kept happy and amused, for "they were like flowers. . . [which] have to be fed and watered and cultivated.[65]

Her dislike of Rome and its citizenry also stemmed from the conflict between city and county boards of education, which translated into hostility between city and county residents. The animosity between Martha Berry and the local residents of Rome can also be attributed at least in part to ignorance, for neither side knew much about the other and Martha Berry was unwilling to open her doors to Romans in order for them to learn of her work on a first-hand basis. As for the people of Rome, their animosity was not only fueled by this, but also because the Berry Schools sold agricultural goods and competed with Romans in the same market.[66] Finally, misunderstanding between Rome and Berry was increased because Berry constantly purchased land and expanded toward the Rome city limit.

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[63]Unpublished letter from Martha Berry to Alice Wingo, March 20, 1926, Berry College Archives, Mt. Berry, Georgia.

[64]Unpublished letter from Martha Berry to Alice Wingo, September 9, 1925, Berry College Archives, Mt. Berry, Georgia.

[65]Unpublished letter from Martha Berry to Alice Wingo, May 19, 1927, Berry College Archives, Mt. Berry, Georgia.

[66]Protest Injustice to Berry Students: To Farmers and Workers of Floyd and Bartow Counties, Flyer, 1933, Martha Berry Museum.

By Georgia law, this land could not be considered part of Rome's tax base if the city expanded.[67]

Martha Berry's interest was limited to the underprivileged Anglo-Saxon youth of rural areas, and her interests did not carry over to young people who lived in the cities. It did not carry over to support the education of blacks in the South either. Like many other Southern leaders and educators, she felt that Northern philanthropists were devoting too much time and money to the cause of black education.[68] While she perhaps did not see the broader implications of the issue in the same way as the leaders of the Southern Educational Movement, she nonetheless saw schools such as Booker T. Washington's Tuskegee Institute as a direct threat to her school. In a letter to Nellie Peters Black in 1909, Martha Berry complained:

> I had an engagement at Bar Harbor and Newport, places I have always wanted to have an opportunity to tell the story of my work. I had to cancel them and come home [to settle the railroad difficulty]. . . . It almost broke my heart to learn that Booker T. Washington had a large meeting at Bar Harbor [with] the largest single check being for $10,000.[69]

Although Martha Berry recognized the propensity of philanthropists to help black schools, she did not make an enemy of Washington and, in fact, occasionally corresponded with him. Both of their respective institutions operated with the same goal, to train formerly unproductive

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[67]R. A. Denny, Correspondence. Rome News Tribune, 2 November 1921.

[68]Unpublished letter from Martha Berry to Nellie Peters Black, September 15, 1909, Berry College Archives, Mt. Berry, Georgia.

[69]Ibid.

and economically and socially inferior young people to be productive. Furthermore, the two educators travelled in the same circles when on fundraising trips. Washington even sent Martha Berry names of donors. "I am sending you the names of all the visitors with their addresses with the hope that you interest them in your work. . . ." he wrote her in 1915. "Please do not use my name in any use you make of the list."[70] For both, then, Northern philanthropists were means to an end, that being the respective financial security of their schools. Yet the racial barrier between them was evident and did not disappear, nor did Berry stop reminding her donors that her charges were white boys and girls of good Anglo-Saxon stock.[71]

Despite fears that Washington undercut her fundraising efforts, Berry successfully built up the school's endowment and properties. As she focused her attention on the school's financial viability, Berry began to divest herself of direct control of the schools. As her schools thrived, so did Martha Berry's reputation. Georgia made her a Distinguished Citizen in 1924. In 1925, Ida Tarbell chose her as one of America's fifty greatest women. Also in 1925, she received the Theodore Roosevelt Medal of Distinguished Service.[72] Over the next fifteen years she was awarded many honorary degrees, and was most proud of her honorary Doctor of

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[70]Unpublished letter from Booker T. Washington to Martha Berry, May 8, 1915, Berry College Archives, Mt. Berry, Georgia.

[71]Unpublished letter from Martha Berry to Unnamed Donors, June 1918, Berry College Archives, Mt. Berry, Georgia.

[72]Kane and Henry, p. 296.

Letters from the University of Georgia.[73] In 1930, Good Housekeeping Magazine chose her as one of America's twelve greatest women,[74] and in 1939, the National Institute of Social Sciences awarded her its gold medal. Since previous medals had gone to Marie Curie, Charles Evans Hughes, Andrew Carnegie, William Howard Taft, Herbert Hoover, and Calvin Coolidge, Martha Berry's selection elevated her national reputation, and by extension her work, to an all-time high.[75]

With these honors began the creation of the myth of Martha Berry. In the article accompanying her Good Housekeeping award, Alice Booth maintained that Georgia had no free school system. Further, Booth told of going to a poor community, Possum Trot, by then owned by the Berry Schools, and seeing "the poverty and ignorance on the sunshiny hilltops."[76] As Berry accepted these awards, she continued to portray the student body as poor mountain children, though many were coming from small towns and they were certainly not children like the ones who confronted her that day in 1897. But this was the impression that people wanted to believe.[77]

Because of the slanted image Martha Berry gave to her work and the willingness of journalists and the public to accept that image, the real

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[73]Ibid.

[74]Booth, Good Housekeeping, 1931. The other women selected were: Grace Abbott, Jane Addams, Cecelia Beaux, Willa Cather, Carrie Chapman Catt, Grace Coolidge, Minnie Maddern Fiske, Helen Keller, Dr. Florence Sabin, Ernestine Schumann-Heink, and Mary E. Woolley,

[75]Typed manuscript of the speech made by Martha Berry in accepting the Award, May 10, 1939, Martha Berry Museum.

[76]Ibid.

[77]Berry Speech, November 26, 1935.

Martha Berry and the very real problems that made the Berry Schools necessary began to fade into the background. The Berry mystique was one that would prove impervious to real facts, such as the school strike and the increasing ill health of Berry and other school leaders.

CHAPTER 2

ADMINISTRATIVE AND STUDENT LIFE AT BERRY

From its inception The Berry Schools strove to fill an extraordinary gap by providing inexpensive, practical education and training to rural people who had no access to public education.[1] Deficient rural education was a particularly thorny problem in Georgia because of the division between city and county boards of education and the resulting lack of revenue for rural county areas. Martha Berry, concerned less about the reasons for the deficiencies in Southern education and more about the backward existence facing her North Georgia neighbors, opened the Berry Boys' Industrial School to help mountain families whose only sin was living in an area without adequate educational facilities.[2]

Policies and Procedures of The Berry Schools

On January 12, 1902, the Industrial School's doors opened and within the next few weeks six students had enrolled.[3] They, along with their successors, were all from the South, primarily Georgia, but also a good number from Alabama and Tennessee. There were a few students from South Carolina, North Carolina, Virginia, and Mississippi.[4] Because the school

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[1]Boys' Industrial School Catalog, 1902-3.

[2]Ibid.

[3]Martha Berry, Uplifting Backwoods Boys in the South, manuscript published by the school, 1904, Berry College Archives, Mt. Berry Georgia.

[4]Various School Rosters from 1907, 1908, 1913. Berry Alumni Directory, 1902-34, 1935, Berry College Archives, Mt. Berry, Georgia.

relied on student labor to remain self-sustaining, it was necessary to restrict the age of male students to sixteen years and older, for younger boys could not manage the grueling work. As a result of this restriction, the average age for the student body at the boys' school was between eighteen and nineteen. When admitted in 1909, women were restricted to fourteen years and older, with their average ages ranging from sixteen to eighteen. Applicants were further restricted to those individuals who lived in rural areas and were unable to attend more expensive schools.[5] For the first few years this requirement was limited further to those who did not have a school within fifty miles of their home.

The Boys' Industrial School was officially chartered and incorporated in 1903. In the school's charter Martha Berry stipulated that the school should remain nondenominational, but Christian, and that the teachers be Protestant.[6] Furthermore, a self-perpetuating Board of Trustees would manage the school, but "Martha Berry shall be consulted as far as practicable; it being the wish, desire, and intention of the petitioners to give to said Martha Berry the active management of said school . . . with the right to name her successor in her will."[7]

The charter, renewable in twenty years, was drawn up by Moses Wright, who assisted Martha Berry with legal matters pertaining to the

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[5]Boys' High School Catalogue, 1915-16; Report by Martha Berry to The Board of Trustees, April 26, 1917, Berry Collge Archives, Mt. Berry, Georgia.

[6]Copy of application located in The Southern Highlander, a Berry Schools publication, December 1915, pp. 27-8, Berry College Archives, Mt. Berry, Georgia.

[7]Ibid.

opening of the school.[8] The first six members of the Board of Trustees included Martha Berry herself; her brother Thomas Berry, of Rome, co-owner of the Brunswick and Birmingham Railroad; John Paul Cooper of the Darlington School for Boys in Rome; John J. Eagan, the chairman, an Atlantan with large real estate holdings and owner of the American Cast Iron Pipe Company in Birmingham; John H. Reynolds, president of the First National Bank of Rome; and Moses R. Wright, Martha Berry's brother-in-law, of the Denny and Wright law firm in Rome and Judge of the Seventh District Superior Court.[9] As Martha Berry made more Northern contacts, however, the board expanded to include many wealthy Northern industrialists. Among them were such men as V. Everett Macy, Director of the Seaman's Savings Bank, the Union Trust Company, and the Albany and Southern Railroad; and Henry Higginson of Boston, a director of A.T. & T. and the General Electric Company.[10]

Serving as director of the school, Martha Berry herself was actively involved in the day-to-day operations of the school. She provided for the care and well-being of students and faculty, oversaw all financial matters, arranged for the expansion of the school via fundraising and land purchases, and tried to instill in her students the values of hard work, cleanliness and thrift.[11] These assumptions eventually became

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[8]Ibid.

[9]Samuel H. Cook, Half Century at Berry, (Mt. Berry, Ga.: Berry Press, 1961), pp 48-76.

[10]Ibid, pp. 57, 61.

[11]Martha Berry, Untitled, unpublished manuscript, dated 1906, Martha Berry Museum, Mt. Berry, Georgia.

institutionalized in "The Berry Code," which was published in the student handbook.

> I promise at all times to keep my clothes, my body, and my mind clean. I will always cultivate those habits which will help me to become strong physically, mentally, and morally, but I will spurn those which will harm me. I will not speak vulgar or profane language, get angry when things displease me or allow my mind to harbor foolish or wicked thoughts. . . . I promise not to be content with slip-shod or merely passable work. I will take an interest in all my work and learn to do the right thing in the right way. "Order is Heaven's first law." Therefore I will be orderly and cheerful in all my work. . . . I will be polite under all circumstances. No Berry boy or girl is ever rude.[12]

As evidenced by the figures shown in Table 1, the school prospered under Martha Berry's guidance. Through her perseverance, an endowment for the school was obtained with a $50,000 matching donation made by Andrew Carnegie in 1909.[13] Intent on providing for the financial security of the school, Martha Berry purchased large amounts of land adjacent to the campus, some of which were owned by her brothers and sisters.[14]

As the boys' high school stabilized and grew in reputation, Martha Berry decided to open a girls' high school which would attempt to reach the female counterparts of her male students.[15] The girls' high school opened on Thanksgiving Day, 1909, with twelve girls, two teachers, and

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[12]"The Berry Code" as presented in the 1930 Student Handbook, Berry College Archives, Mt. Berry, Georgia.

[13]Unpublished letter from Martha Berry to Potential Donors, October 2, 1909. Berry College Archives, Mt. Berry, Georgia.

[14]Cook, pg. 35.

[15]Martha Berry, "Story of Berry", Undated, unpublished Manuscript, Berry College Archives, Mt. Berry, Georgia.

TABLE 1

STUDENTS ENROLLED, ACREAGE OWNED, AND ASSETS OF THE BERRY SCHOOLS, 1902-1912[a]

Date	Students Enrolled	Acreage Owned	Assets[b]
1902	75	83	$ 5,000
1906	--	--	45,900
1908	150	1,000	150,000
1912	200	2,000	250,000

[a]Sources: Boys' High School Catalogue, 1902, 1906, 1908, 1912; Financial Report by John H. Reynolds, 1906; letter from Martha Berry to Potential Donors, 1908, no month or day.

[b]Assets include value of land, buildings, livestock, machinery, buildings, tuition, and goods produced (mostly agricultural).

three buildings. Martha Berry hoped that the girls' school would provide the women of Appalachia with training comparable to the men in order to prepare them for rearing children and keeping respectable households.[16]

> It is not the aim of the school to send girls to college or to make them specialists in any industrial lines, the purpose is to prepare them for service in the home and to teach them to do the practical things which a woman on a farm should know. . . and also to give them enough literary education to enable them to enjoy good reading and enough of the esthetic studies to appreciate the natural beauties around them and that they may be able to furnish their country homes simply. . . . and harmoniously.[17]

As a part of her continuing efforts to expand the school's land holdings and to provide additional work opportunities for the high school boys, Martha Berry acquired, between 1914 and 1915, 5,000 acres of land at the foot of Lavendar Mountain, located roughly six miles from the Berry campus.[18] Because the land was near isolated communities such as Possum Trot, Martha Berry decided to open a grammar school there in order to teach primary grades to boys who were too young to attend regular school at Berry. Built by male student laborers from the high school, the Mountain Farm School opened on January 4, 1916, with ten students. Over the next ten years, Berry continued to procure land between the main campus and the Mountain School and, as more buildings were added, the Farm School expanded its purview to accept older students. With this growth, its name was changed in 1922, to the Foundation School. As elementary

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[16]The Martha Berry School for Girls Catalogue, 1910.

[17]Martha Berry, Report to the Board of Trustees, April 22, 1916, unpublished manuscript, Berry College Archives, Mt. Berry, Georgia.

[18]Cook, pg. 36.

education in Georgia became more and more widely available, fewer and fewer students enrolled in the Foundation School, until it was closed in the late 1920's. In 1930, the boys' high school relocated to the former Foundation School.[19]

The boys' high school moved primarily because a junior college was begun in 1926. Realizing that the educational needs of her students were changing, Martha Berry, along with Leland Green and Board chairman Robert Alston, pushed for this addition. A coeducational junior college opened in 1927 with twenty-one students. By 1928, the number of students had increased to ninety-nine, and in 1932 the junior college's program was accredited.[20] Also that year, 1932, the college expanded to become four-year, and graduated seventeen students from a total of 393. Despite the college's inability to gain accreditation for its four-year program, student enrollment grew rapidly, so that by 1940, the student body numbered 689.[21]

The mission and goals of the college were not unlike those of the high schools: to provide low-cost higher education for high school graduates unable to attend a more expensive college. A work-earned program was established and operated like that at the high school.[22] Although the school stressed industrial and agricultural training, the college's curriculum included a wide variety of liberal arts classes.

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[19]Ibid.

[20]Evelyn Hoge Pendley, Sixty Years of Education for Service.

[21]Ibid, pp 10-11.

[22]Byers, pp, 174-76.

The college's enrollment, particularly in its first fifteen years, consisted primarily of Berry high school graduates, and those who were not largely came from Georgia.[23]

As the Berry Schools expanded in size and scope, Martha Berry began to divest herself of control and the administrative bureaucracy increased. This growth made it necessary to increase the school's income; consequently, Martha Berry found herself away from campus more and more. Because her approval was needed on all financial matters, these absences often created delays in the school's operation, particularly since almost all goods and services were produced on campus.[24] With Martha Berry absent from campus, management of the school's financial affairs fell into the capable hands of Herman Hoge, who served as Berry's comptroller from 1910 to 1953. Working out of a central office, Hoge directed the financial concerns of the school's several departments, ranging from Academic to Agricultural.[25] Because students performed most of the construction, planting, maintenance, and repairing, it became Hoge's responsibility to oversee all purchases, to protect against duplication and waste, and to maintain records of all expenditures, such as salaries, supplies, and equipment.[26]

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[23]Ibid.

[24]Robert Adams, Report of the High School, unpublished manuscript submitted to the Board of Trustees, the Berry Schools, Spring 1914, Berry College Archives, Mt. Berry, Georgia.

[25]The Southern Highlander, November, 1916, pp, 22-23.

[26]Ibid.

In order to operate in Martha Berry's absence, each department would submit monthly requests for their needs and Hoge would review the requests and plan a monthly budget of expenses. Upon Martha Berry's return, this budget would be submitted for her approval, and she would write a single check from the school's general account to cover all that month's expenses. If the monthly expenditures were to exceed the proposed amount, then the excess would have to be applied to the next month's budget. This way, expenses would be kept to a minimum. Any money the school received, whether it be a gift, tuition, or profit from the sale of goods, would be placed in the general account from which only Martha Berry could draw.[27] This method proved to be unwieldy during the 1910's and early 1920's because of Martha Berry's frequent fundraising trips. By the late 1920's, concurrent with the school's growing prosperity, Hoge obtained direct access to funds in the general account.[28]

As of 1912 the school's non-financial matters were handled by the various department heads. The principal of the high school headed the Academic Department, overseeing the faculty, planning curriculum, enrolling students, preserving discipline and administering punishment, maintaining the library, providing for student and employee health care, planning class schedules, and assisting with publicity and school publications.[29] The first vice-principal headed the high school and the second vice-president the grammar school grades. Because the industrial

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[27]Ibid.

[28]Unpublished letter from Herman Hoge to Alice Wingo, April 10, 1931, Berry College Archives, Mt. Berry, Georgia.

[29]Robert Adams, Report of High School, 1914.

and agricultural work was linked to the academic goals of the school, the principal was responsible for coordinating students' work schedules and classes.[30]

During the institution's early years, it faced a serious crisis regarding the balance between student work and student education. Up until 1912, much of the industrial and agricultural work was poorly organized and administered, and students not only were receiving little educational training from their work, but the necessity of their working meant that many of them suffered academically.[31] Because of this, Principal Robert Adams proposed some changes in the Industrial Department of the school so that it would operate more productively and provide students with the most efficient and profitable means of attaining both an education and practical training. In his proposal, adopted by the Board of Trustees and put into effect in the fall of 1912, Adams suggested that the Industrial Department be divided into four divisions: Boarding, which included the kitchen, baking and dining room; Campus, which included grounds keeping, road building, care of buildings, and the laundry; Agricultural, which included the farm, dairy, gardens, orchards, poultry, livestock, experiments and demonstrations, and some extension work in the community; and Mechanical, which included shops, printing, the cannery, building, painting, and repairs.[32]

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[30]Ibid.

[31]Robert Adams, Preliminary Report on a Plan for the Industrial Department of the Berry Schools, unpublished manuscript submitted to the Board of Trustees, The Berry Schools, October 15, 1912, Berry College Archives, Mt. Berry, Georgia.

[32]Ibid.

To train and utilize the students most efficiently, each would be required to work in all four departments. During their first year, students alternated working between the Boarding and Campus Departments; the second year was spent in Agriculture; and the third in Mechanical. The fourth year was devoted to learning and/or honing special skills, as well as taking on the responsibility of supervising newer students. This rotation method enabled students to become acquainted with the campus's infrastructure. By their senior year at the high school, students could perform specialized tasks that Berry otherwise might have to hire people to perform.[33]

The faculty and staff constantly struggled to make the industrial work serve the students educationally, rather than merely making students provide cheap labor. Berry often faced public accusations that students were not there to learn but work.[34] Such critics pointed to the school's low graduation rate as evidence of Berry's exploitive policies. From founding day January 13, 1902 through 1910, thirty-five students graduated but many of those had been in school elsewhere for three years or longer.[35] It seemed to the outside world, particularly people in and around Rome, that students enrolled at Berry were called upon to work for the school more than they were called upon to learn.

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[33]Ibid.

[34]Robert Adams, Special Report on the Organization of the Berry Schools, unpublished manuscript submitted to the Board of Trustees, the Berry Schools, Spring, 1914, Berry College Archives, Mt. Berry, Georgia.

[35]Alumni Directory List, 1903-1913.

By adopting Adams's reform plan, agricultural and industrial work paralleled course work, and consequently more nearly fulfilled Martha Berry's goal of a utilitarian education. To accomplish this, certain courses were added, particularly mechanical instruction such as elementary joinery, carpentry and building, and machine usage.[36] This way, hopefully, students merely would not work and attend classes, but would learn the complexities of and the principles behind their various jobs.

With the adoption of Adams's recommendations, the school's operating procedures were solidified into a format that, with a few minor alterations, would not change until the 1950's. There were now three major divisions of bureaucracy: the Financial Department, Academic Department, and Industrial Department.[37] With the changes in the Industrial Department, it became necessary for the school to find an Industrial director. D. W. Densmore, who had been in charge of the shop, was promoted to head of the new department, a position he held until 1924 when O. Wayne Skinner assumed the post, holding it until the late fifties. In Densmore's first year end report in May 1914, he too addressed the ongoing difficulty of providing a positive relationship between the students' work and education. Under his guidance, the Mechanical Division of the Industrial Department added some more classes and streamlined work schedules.[38]

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[36]Adams, Report of the High School, 1914.

[37]Ibid.

[38]D.W. Densmore, Report of the Industrial Department, unpublished manuscript submitted to the Board of Trustees, the Berry Schools, April 15, 1914, Berry College Archives, Mt. Berry, Georgia.

The school's operation, however, still depended on Martha Berry's presence to make final decisions. To address this problem, Principal Adams suggested, in the spring of 1914, that changes be made to the school's administration.[39] These changes, Adams hoped, would continue the process of making work and education compatible, as well as restructuring the school's operations so that it would be easier to function in Martha Berry's absence. He suggested the Agricultural Division be separated from the Industrial Department and made into its own division. This new department would be under the supervision of a trained agriculturalist who could provide proper training for the students. Adams hoped this change would take the agricultural operations of the school out of debt through better management and planning.[40]

Organizationally, all aspects of the school would be divided into two general areas: Instruction and Discipline, and Financial. Any matter relating to the finances of the school would be directed to Herman Hoge and any educational matters would be directed to the principal.[41] Adams also proposed that in Martha Berry's absence, the boys' high school principal would be the acting head of the school, with the first and second vice-presidents following in the chain of command. Adams pointed out several other weaknesses in the existing structure which had hindered the educational efforts of the school. Adams thought that the school was perhaps losing sight of some of its purpose by seeking to reap profits

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[39]Adams, Special Report, 1914, pp 4-5.

[40]Ibid.

[41]Ibid, pp 2-4.

from student labor.[42] ". . . [B]oth academic and industrial work should be placed on the same plane . . ." he noted.[43]

Adams' proposal was also clearly critical of the school's educational and administrative procedures, for he as much as said in his report that the school was failing to teach and train its students properly, and that their work for the Industrial Department lacked any purpose or direction. Because of this, he proposed that the Educational and Industrial Departments operate with the same standards and that they be directed by one person, an educator. He suggested the boys' high school principal as the logical candidate to oversee the school's industrial and academic phases, and it would be to him that department heads answered.[44]

Between 1914 and 1917, the Board of Trustees adopted several of Principal Adams' suggestions. The Agricultural Department was separated from the Industrial, and an agriculturalist was hired to consolidate the work and to offer classes in agricultural techniques and methodologies.[45] Although Adams and his immediate successor, W. C. Atkins, were not given control of the school's operation, a later principal, G. Leland Green, would be.[46]

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[42]Ibid, pp 2 and 3.

[43]Ibid, p. 4.

[44]Ibid, pp 3-5.

[45]W. C. Atkins, Report on the High Schools, unpublished manuscript submitted to the Board of Trustees, the Berry Schools, April 13, 1915, Berry College Archives, Mt. Berry, Georgia.

[46]Pendley, Sixty Years, pp. 10-13.

Both the Board and Martha Berry recognized the failure of the school to coordinate student work and education, for they dropped Latin and higher math from the curriculum in order to accommodate industrial training in such areas as welding and painting. More agriculture courses were also added and integrated into the students' work at the school farm. Each industrial foreman taught a class in his own field to the students who worked under him, and the method of allocating work was altered to make it more efficient and educationally oriented.[47] Previously, students would work daily two to four hours and then attend classes. With the changes in the industrial program, students worked two days a week for eight hours, then attended classes four days. This system remained in effect until the late fifties and the reforms of President John Bertrand. The renewed emphasis on strengthening education was reflected in the expansion of the library, the addition of a trained librarian, and the training of students in library usage.[48]

The Berry Schools' Faculty and Staff

With the changes and solidification of the school's operation, stability was insured and Berry prospered. Part of the school's success should be attributed to the faculty and staff, many of whom were equally as dedicated to their employer as Martha Berry. On the whole, the majority of faculty and staff at Berry were from the South. Until the

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[47]Atkins, High School Report, April 13, 1915.

[48]Ibid.

opening of the college, few had degrees beyond the B.A.[49] Although not true of the faculty, many staff members were graduates of Berry. Unlike the students, who were primarily from Georgia, no one state dominated as the home of faculty and staff, with many coming from North Carolina, South Carolina, and Virginia, as well as Georgia.[50]

In most cases, Berry advertised through the usual methods for faculty members. If considered for the job, prospective teachers and staff members were given an oral interview and a written examination. The written exam was very taxing, covering every field of study including history (all eras), five languages (Latin, Greek, French, German, and Spanish), mathematics, geography, pedagogy and English.[51] If hired, the faculty were given their pay and board. Most lived on the Berry campus, continuing a tradition begun in the earliest days of the school.[52]

The best documented hiring of a faculty member during the school's early years was that of Caroline Bostick Hoge. As Miss Bostick, she applied to teach domestic science in 1912. Elizabeth Brewster, then-principal of the girls' high school, responded in a letter that the pay was "forty dollars a month and board for the school year of eight months."[53] Brewster's letter further stated that "we have a beautiful spirit in the school and all the teachers as well as the pupils are very

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[49]Boys' High School and Girls' High School Catalogues, 1914-40.

[50]Ibid.

[51]Written Examination for Teachers, June 13, 1913.

[52]Faculty Contract, 1918.

[53]Unpublished letter from Elizabeth Brewster to Caroline Bostick, June 23, 1912, Berry College Archives, Mt. Berry, Georgia.

happy and enthusiastic in their work."[54] Stressing the family aspect of teaching at Berry, Brewster asked Bostick to write again "if the position still appeals to you."[55] In her second letter to Bostick, Brewster detailed some of the more realistic aspects of life at Berry. She explained that there was a school for boys very near to the girls' school and that it was important for teachers to conduct themselves "with considerable dignity."[56] Bostick was hired and taught at the girls' school until the 1950's.

Married faculty were commonly assigned houses on campus, which were subject to inspections from Martha Berry at any time. One popular anecdote told by Inez Henry, Martha Berry's last personal secretary, concerns a new teacher's wife who was sitting on her porch rocking one afternoon. She received a call, left briefly, and when she returned, the rocker had disappeared. When the unnamed faculty spouse asked about it, she was told that no one connected with the school could be seen idling, and that everyone, including faculty spouses, should work to make Berry better in some way.[57] This incident, like so many others told about Martha Berry, exhibits how deeply her personal philosophy and value system was ingrained in the school, even her obsession with cleanliness. Faculty and staff were expected to keep their houses spotless. Inez Henry reminisced once that no one dared to hang out laundry or own a pet because

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[54]Ibid.

[55]Ibid.

[56]Ibid.

[57]Kane and Henry, p. 292.

Martha Berry thought both were eyesores.[58]

While there is no way to calculate the attrition rate for the faculty during the first forty years of the school, faculty employed at the Berry Schools seemed to have been loyal.[59] Pay was somewhat less at Berry than at comparable schools, although this was mitigated in part by the opportunity to live on campus (and to eat in the cafeteria, if they wished). Many faculty would donate large percentages of their salaries back to Berry, particularly during the Depression years.[60] The best example of this loyalty can be seen in Berry's Alumni News, where faculty members even after leaving were noted for their donations to the school.[61]

Berry's faculty and staff clearly included many devoted and hard-working individuals, six of whom in particular helped shape and direct the school during their years of service. Elizabeth Brewster, Herman Hoge, S. H. Cook, M. Gordon Keown, Grady Hamrick and G. Leland Green all made contributions to Berry which were as much responsible for the success of the Berry Schools as those of Martha Berry herself.

Elizabeth Brewster was the first teacher at the Berry Boys' Industrial School, but her attachment to the work of Martha Berry began earlier than its 1902 opening. A graduate of Leland Stanford University with a major in botany, Brewster came to Georgia in 1900 to assist Martha

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[58]Ibid.

[59]Berry Alumni Quarterly, April, 1935, p. 3.

[60]Donor Lists in the Berry Alumni Quarterly, 1925-50.

[61]Berry Alumni Quarterly, April, 1935.

Berry with the day schools.[62] During the first three years the Boys' Industrial School was open, Brewster taught most of the classes, but as the number of students grew so did the number of instructors, and Brewster began concentrating her efforts on her post as head of the English Department. After the founding and assured success of the girls' school, Brewster left the boys' school, in 1913, to become principal of the Berry Girls' High School, in which post she attended to administrative duties, taught English and history, and supervised the landscaping. Brewster left the school in 1920, apparently because of ill health, and went to California. In 1928, she returned to Berry and became the dean of women at the newly-opened college.[63]

During her years of service to Berry, Brewster remained a close friend and advisor to Martha Berry. While she did not take the mission of the school to heart as strongly as Martha Berry (as evidenced by her skepticism about the opening of the Boys' Industrial School), she nonetheless was instrumental in organizing and planning the school's mission and direction.[64] Before the administrative structure of the school was streamlined in 1914-15, Brewster often handled many of the administrative responsibilities in Martha Berry's absence. Furthermore, until a permanent Industrial Manager was hired, she often supervised work

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[62]J. Paine, "Elizabeth Brewster", unpublished manuscript, p. 1, Berry College Archives, Mt. Berry, Georgia.

[63]Ibid, pp 3-4.

[64]Evelyn Hoge Pendley, "Miss Elizabeth Brewster", undated, unpublished manuscript, Berry College Archives, Mt. Berry, Georgia.

schedules and the upkeep of the grounds.[65]

Herman Hoge's connection with the school began in August 1910, when John Eagan, chairman of the Board of Trustees, transferred him from his accountant position with coal mines in Jellico, Tennessee, to Berry as comptroller. Before that time, Eagan had taken on much of the management of the school's finances himself.[66] In 1916, Hoge married Caroline Bostick, a teacher of home economics at the girls' school. They had two children, one of whom, Evelyn, went on to write about the school and teach English there.[67] Hoge's most difficult time as comptroller came in the early 1930's. Frequently forced to bargain with creditors, he later wrote, "they knew we'd come through, and for months we would live off our good name."[68] Hoge spent forty-three years as comptroller of the school, retiring in 1953. He had handled Berry's finances through the difficult early years and remained in his position to help Berry grow more stable and solvent. In fact, his 1953 retirement would partially compound the difficulties the school faced trying to readjust its mission and purpose during the 1950's.

Samuel Henry Cook had an equally long tenure with the Berry Schools. He arrived from Davidson College in 1909 and taught English. When World War I came, Cook enlisted and this was his only time spent away from Berry

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[65]Ibid.

[66]Evelyn Hoge Pendley, "John Eagan," undated, unpublished manuscript, Berry College Archives, Mt. Berry, Georgia.

[67]Evelyn Hoge Pendley, "History of the Beginnings of the Girls' School," undated, unpublished manuscript, Berry College Archives, Mt. Berry, Georgia.

[68]Kane and Henry, pg. 272.

in the sixty-six years he was connected with the school. After the war he returned and several years later assumed the position of the dean of the boys' school.[69] After receiving an honorary doctorate from Davidson College, Dr. Cook went on to become the dean of the college in 1927, a position he held until long after Martha Berry's death. Cook was particularly popular with the students because of his counseling ability and willingness to bend the more restrictive rules.[70] Much in the tradition of James Hilton's Mr. Chips, Dr. Cook devoted his life to his work. He never married and lived and worked at Berry in some capacity until his death in 1975.[71]

Rivaling Cook for his tenure at Berry was M. Gordon Keown. Keown's connection with the school began in the spring of 1904, when at the age of twenty-two he left Everett Springs Academy, where he had been teaching, to come to the Boys' Industrial School to complete a high school degree. Upon graduation the following year, he briefly attended the University of Georgia, but returned to Berry to work as a cashier in the school store.[72] Keown left Berry after marrying a teacher in the girls' school, but Martha Berry persuaded him to return and act as purchasing agent. Keown was known as a shrewd bargainer, and is credited with saving the school a great deal of money in land and property transactions.[73] In 1921, the

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[69]Taped Interview with S. H. Cook, made as part of Berry's Fiftieth Anniversary celebration, April, 1963, Martha Berry Museum.

[70]Ibid.

[71]S. H. Cook Obituary, The Cabin Log, Student Annual, 1975.

[72]Cook, p. 60.

[73]Ibid.

Board of Trustees made him an Alumni Trustee, a position he held for thirty-five years. Upon Martha Berry's death in 1942, he was appointed, as her will requested, acting director of the Schools. He relinquished that position in 1944, and two years later became treasurer of the Board of Trustees, a position he held until his death in 1956. As with Herman Hoge's retirement, Keown's death in 1956 would partially contribute to the school's period of readjustment.[74]

Henry Grady Hamrick also arrived at Berry first as a student. He came in 1908 and graduated in 1912. After graduation, he went to business school in Atlanta to study business administration and bookkeeping.[75] In August 1913, he received a letter from Martha Berry asking him to return as assistant bookkeeper. He returned and shortly thereafter, in December 1913, Martha Berry asked him to go to Lavendar Mountain and begin what would become the Foundation School. He moved to Lavendar Mountain with twelve high school boys and began work. By 1932 he was given the title of superintendent of the boys' school, but his connection with Berry ended in 1940 when he and his wife left.[76]

Of final note among the more significant early Berry faculty and staff members is G. Leland Green, who in 1920 came to the Berry Schools as principal. Of her many close and loyal assistants, Martha Berry seemed to trust and respect Green a great deal. Prior to Green's arrival, Martha Berry had been unwilling to delegate much authority to her principals, but

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[74]Kane and Henry, p. 270.

[75]Byers, For the Glory, p. 67.

[76]Ibid, pg. 68-71.

Green soon took sole responsibility for the school's academic side.[77] As Martha Berry began to concentrate her energies more and more on fundraising, Green assumed a larger role in running the school. It is to Green that the idea of starting a college is usually attributed. When the college opened, he became president of the Berry School, Incorporated, thus giving him control of the college and high schools.[78] He led the fight for accreditation for several years. Upon his retirement in 1944, he was briefly succeeded by Dr. Cook, but it was twelve years before another president with any permanence was hired.

Through their loyalty and adherence to Berry's philosophy, Green and his fellow faculty and staff members accepted and reflected the twin goals of work and mission. In much the same way, the life of students at Berry mirrored Martha Berry's ideals. While their tenure at the school was shorter than most faculty and staff members, students were constantly inundated with Martha Berry's values. Every aspect of their lives was planned, from their course work to their social life , especially in the early days of the school.

Student Life at the Berry Schools

The first school catalogue, published in 1902, noted that "the teachers occupy the buildings as the students [*sic*], and they endeavor by precept and example to inculcate gentlemanly habits and manners."[79] That

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[77]Various letters from G. Leland Green dealing with the administration of school policy; Pendley, Sixty Years, pp. 13-15.

[78]Pendley, pp. 12-18.

[79]Boys' Industrial School Catalogue, 1902-03.

first catalogue, although less explicit, nonetheless reflected Martha Berry's faith in the Protestant Work Ethic. From the very beginning of the school's existence, each student was required to work two hours a day in lieu of tuition.[80] As expenses and the size of the student body grew, it became increasingly difficult to keep from charging tuition. By 1905, tuition costs were implemented, although the two hours of work a day were not eliminated because of the need to utilize student labor to keep operating costs at a minimum.[81] Instead, work was integrated more fully into the school's philosophy, with the creation of a work-earned tuition program. Students accepted into this program were allowed to work for their tuition. Yet many students did pay for their tuition.[82]

Aside from the age limit and restriction to rural youths, other admission requirements obligated each student to submit a physician's report and two reference letters. School policy requested that these letters address the applicant's character more than with his or her academic abilities. Application forms also required students to identify the city or town closest to them, the last school they had attended, their teacher there, and the textbooks they had used.[83] This information was used to evaluate students and place them in the proper grade, as well as to insure that applicants truly were from rural areas that lacked post-elementary education. The parent or guardian form asked about the

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[80]Ibid.

[81]Elizabeth Brewster "The Chronicles of a Flatwood School", p. 20, unpublished manuscript, Berry College Archives, Mt. Berry, Georgia.

[82]Adams, Report of the High School, 1914; Cook, pp. 36-8.

[83]Catalogue for the Boys' High School, 1915; attached applications.

applicant's character, religion, and previous education, as well as the family's ability to pay tuition costs. There was also a qualification at the bottom of the form. Boys were admitted "only upon the express condition that they . . . remain at the school until the end of the term."[84] It was therefore made clear to the parents, who had to agree to this in writing, that they could not have their children return home during the term except for very unusual circumstances. This reflected Martha Berry's concern that students might be hindered by outside influences which interfered with their education and work schedule.

It is difficult to evaluate the financial hardship of students and their parents, particularly before 1926. Records indicate that for some students the cost was exorbitant, causing them to have to leave, while for others tuition was not too difficult to accommodate. Work-earned tuition was available, but only for students who had been enrolled in school at least one quarter.[85] The number of these tuition credits increased as the school gained financial solvency, so that by the Depression most of the high school students were at least partially working for their tuition. Those on the work-earned program toiled eight to ten hours a day for six days a week during the summer or the term preceding a semester in school. They were then credited with so many hours of work at a rate of pay per hour.[86]

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[84]Ibid.

[85]Ibid, pg. 11; Cook pp 36-7.

[86]Catalogue, 1915, pg. 19; Cook pp. 35-7.

Aside from tuition, other costs which students had to absorb either through accumulating more work hours or money included an athletic fee, a physics and chemistry lab fee, a diploma fee, room fees, meal fees, textbooks, any off-campus medical expenses, and uniform fees. For a senior in 1915-1916, one semester would cost approximately $54, making his yearly expenses over $100. During the 1914-1915 school year, half of the students paid all their expenses, a fourth paid a half or more of their expenses, and the rest paid some portion of their costs.[87]

Upon entering the school, students were required to fulfill a number of personal and material requirements. Because of the poor medical record of the rural South, it was often necessary for entering students to receive medical attention such as vaccinations or hookworm treatments. In 1914, the school physician reported performing twenty-three circumcisions.[88] Of the many ways in which Martha Berry engaged in social engineering, such cases of circumcision seem to be the most extreme. Adult male circumcision, even with anasthesia, must be traumatic, psychologically as well as physically. Nonetheless, Berry officials encouraged this practice, presumably out of fear that students' rural hygiene standards put them at high risk for infection. Also, Berry's faculty and staff (including Martha Berry) most likely harbored very ambivalent, uncomfortable nineteenth century attitudes about sex and sexuality.

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[87]Catalogue, pp. 18-19.

[88]Adams, Report of the High School, 1914.

With medical treatments completed, students were assigned to dormitories according to age and classification. At the boys' high school, each student was required to bring sheets, blankets, a bed-spread, towels, a clothes bag, a broom, and light bulbs. As their daily uniform, the boys had to have blue overalls (a total of three pairs) in addition to work clothes, night clothes, coats and shoes.[89] Students were assigned to a grade based upon their previous education experience. To enter the high school, students had to present either an acceptable diploma or take an entrance exam which led to their placement.[90]

The grammar school, a subdivision of the boys' high school, was a four-year course of study offered to those boys who were not educationally ready to enter high school. The course of study at the grammar school consisted of a series of required classes and no electives. English was taken each semester and ranged from the simple ABC's, composition and required readings of Black Beauty and The Swiss Family Robinson, to learning grammar, spelling, letter writing and more difficult reading like Charles Lamb's Tales from Shakespeare and Lord Tennyson's Enoch Arden. Arithmetic was also required each year and began with addition, subtraction, multiplication and division, then fractions, decimals, U.S. money, measures, and practical applications of mathematical problems to industrial and agricultural work. The third year of math added square roots and percentages. The fourth year included interest, vocational algebra and business forms. Spelling, penmanship, and physical education

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[89]Catalogue, 1915, pp. 20, 23.

[90]Ibid, p. 36.

were required each year, as was a course in Bible study.[91]

Geography, which ethnocentrically focused on the United States and Europe, was added the second and third year. A four-year required course called Country Life provided general practical information about maintaining a small family farm, such as when to plant certain crops and how to determine when chickens would lay. In the third and fourth years some elementary vocational classes were required in wood and iron work. Singing was also taken in the third and fourth years. In the fourth year of grammar school, students took U.S. history, civics and government. The first class in agriculture was required during the fourth year with a focus on soil analysis, plant life, manure and fertilizers, farm crops, trees, gardens, plant diseases, insects, livestock, dairying, feeds, and farm management. A four-year hygiene, sanitation and physiology sequence centered on understanding the human body and its care, including the study of the effects of alcohol, drugs and disease on the body as well as the prevention of illness through domestic and public hygiene.[92]

Clearly the grammar school curriculum was designed to prepare students not only academically, but also for entering a meaningful, progressive profession upon graduation. Berry's philosophy as reflected in its grammar school coursework stressed the importance of the work ethic, the need to uplift the rural South by upgrading its citizens, and the importance of a practical education. As evidence of its commitment to help rural people of the South, particularly those with limited

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[91]Ibid, pp. 31-2.

[92]Ibid.

financial means, Berry offered a special short course at the grammar school to provide quick but practical training in how to more efficiently manage and operate a farm. This special short course consisted of concentrated work in all the areas offered during the four-year course, but added more practical study in animal husbandry, mechanical work, gardening and horticulture.[93]

For those students accepted into boys' high school or moving up from the grammar school, there was a four-year course of study with more flexibility in course selection. Students could select from four areas of concentration, or majors, in the program: Agricultural, English, Mechanical and Normal (teaching). Students chose a major during their first semester in order to begin the sequence of necessary classes. Each student was required to take four classes, and only those maintaining an eighty-five average or above could take more courses. Table 2 shows the four-year sequence, with an asterisk marking electives taken toward particular majors. The figures indicate the number of periods per week each class met. Each class counted as one-half a credit, despite the fact that some met four periods weekly while others met eight. Students were required to have sixteen credits to graduate, with between thirteen and fourteen credits being earned from required classes.[94] Although not listed in Table 2, two weekly Bible study periods were required, as were two years of Physical Education. Classes in spelling and penmanship were

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[93]Ibid., pp. 32-33.

[94]Ibid., p. 38.

TABLE 2

BOYS' HIGH SCHOOL CURRICULUM

FRESHMAN YEAR

Fall Term		Spring Term	
English V	.4	English V	4
Mathematics I	.4	Mathematics I	4
General Science	.4	General Science	5
*Animal Husbandry	.5	*Horticulture/Gardening	5
*Woodwork	.8	*Woodwork	8
*Ironwork	.8	*Ironwork	8
*Mechanical Drawing	.8	*Mechanical Drawing	8

SOPHOMORE YEAR

English VI.	.4	English VI.	4
*Algebra II	.4	Modern History.	4
Modern History.	.4	Physiology and Hygiene.	4
*Mechanical Drawing	.8	*Mechanical Drawing	8
*Farm Mechanics	.8	*Farm Mechanics	8

JUNIOR YEAR

English VII	.4	English VII	4
*Geometry	.4	*Geometry	4
*Education I.	.4	*Education I.	4
*Chemistry	.6	*Civics & Advanced U.S. History	4
American History	.4	*Chemistry	6
Chorus Leading	.2	Chorus Leading.	2

SENIOR YEAR

*English VIII	.2	*English VIII	2
*Solid Geometry	.4	*Algebra III	4
*Education II	.4	*Education II	4
*Economics	.2	*Economics	2
Physics	.6	Physics	6
*Agriculture	.5	*Agriculture	5
*Soils and Fertilizers	.2	*Botany	5
Woodwork or Ironwork.	.8	Woodwork or Ironwork.	8[a]

[a]Compilation of curriculum from various school Catalogs, 1915-1930.

continued until a "satisfactory standard was achieved."[95]

The student body was divided into three sections. Two sections attended classes for four days and the third section worked two eight-hour days. Kitchen help rose at 4:00 or 4:30 a.m., as did the students who milked in the dairy. Work students rose at five, ate breakfast and were at work by 6:00 a.m., while the regular students rose at 6:00 a.m., had breakfast at 6:30 and were either at work or in classes by 7:00 a.m. Except for a break for lunch and chapel, students were in classes or worked until 4:00 p.m., when those not working had a recreation period. Dinner was served at 5:30 p.m., followed by evening chapel, and by 6:30 students were required to be in their rooms studying until 9:05. After that time they could relax or talk until 9:30 when all talking was to cease. Lights were turned off at 10:00 p.m.[96]

Saturday was set aside for extracurricular activities and for club meetings. Among the extracurricular activities open to the students were literary societies, somewhat akin to debating societies, the most prominent and long-lasting being the Athenian and Philomathean. Members learned speaking techniques, public speaking, and held inter-club debates, usually with prizes. A Country Life Club, later the Agricultural Club, met once a month and carried on the ideas of the country life courses. The boys' high school had a very active Y.M.C.A. chapter that held weekly Bible study classes and did work in nearby Sunday Schools.[97] A bi-monthly

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[95]Ibid., p. 48.

[96]Ibid., pg. 63.

[97]Ibid., pg. 15.

student newspaper called The Berry School News (after 1932 Mt. Berry News) reported on various student activities and provided informative articles on practical topics and innovations in agriculture and mechanics. For the athletically inclined, there was an Athletic Association which coordinated inter-dorm competitions in such events as basketball, baseball and track.[98]

On Sundays students were required to attend Sunday School at 9:30 a.m. and a sermon at 11:00. Lunch was at 1:00 p.m., and dinner at 5:30 p.m. In between, students were free to study, visit fellow students, go to the library, or participate in other acceptable activities. At 6:00 p.m. dormitory prayer meetings were held on a voluntary basis, and at 7:15 p.m. voluntary Bible classes were offered by the campus Y.M.C.A. By 9:30 p.m. on Sunday, all lights were to be out in the students' rooms. With very few minor changes, the weekly schedule of male grammar and high school students changed very little until the late 1950's.[99]

In addition to campus activities, the school also arranged to have campus or visiting lecturers speak on a wide range of subjects from science and economics to literature and travel. Because of these events, there was an opportunity for students not only to broaden their education but also to develop social skills.[100] Student life was not completely restricted to work and study, for there was also time to develop friendships.

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[98]Ibid., pg. 15.

[99]Ibid., pg. 63.

[100]Ibid., pg. 15.

Women hoping to attend the Martha Berry School for Girls had admission requirements similar to those of the men. Aside from having to be fourteen and from the country, female applicants had to supply a doctor's certificate of health and letters referring to personal character. Like the men, women also had to take an entrance examination to place them in the proper class.[101] The women's fees were comparable to the men's. Tuition was approximately the same, but the women's spring semester was one month longer than the men's, primarily because of the extra duties the women had in preparing for summer visitors. Women were required to purchase material from which uniforms were made in the Senior sewing class and thus did not have the luxury or economy of bringing clothes from home. The women's uniforms consisted of blue wool serge jackets, four blue chambray day dresses, and two aprons. Like the men, women were required to furnish bed clothing, towels, and personal items.[102] Women were not allowed to leave school during the term except in an emergency, nor was correspondence or visitation with men (even family) permitted without permission of the dean, who also reserved the right to open mail.[103]

The women's program, while not divided into a grammar and high school, was a six-year course into which the student entered according to her previous education and score on the entrance exam. During the first

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[101]Catalogue of the Martha Berry School for Girls, 1913-14.

[102]Ibid.

[103]Ibid., p. 15; Unpublished letter from Elizabeth Brewster to J. W. Ratchford (student), November 7, 1916, Berry College Archives, Mt. Berry, Georgia.

year English, arithmetic, geography, Bible, reading, penmanship, spelling, cooking, and basket weaving were all required. The second year had the same courses with the addition of hygiene. In the third year physiology and American history were added, hygiene was dropped, and color studies and interior decorating replaced basket weaving. The fourth year, called the Junior year, included more English, classics, algebra, civics, English, history, and science which emphasized agriculture, flower and vegetable gardening, poultry raising and dairy work. A course was offered in home remedies and dietetic rules of health. Courses in the Bible, spelling, penmanship, sewing and cooking continued, along with a textile course to familiarize students with different types of fabric and weaving techniques.[104]

During the fifth, or Middle year, the English, spelling, penmanship, Bible, cooking and sewing classes continued, and ancient history, physics and botany were added. The math course focused on the practical use of algebra, and a course in applied design showed women how to furnish a house using such homemade items as rugs, pillows, lampshades, book-racks and pin cushions.[105]

In the sixth, or Senior year, the women's basic yearly studies continued. For those seeking to go to college, plane geometry was offered as an elective. For those preparing to teach, a course in math training was available in conjunction with a short course in practical business

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[104]Information on the women's curriculum was compiled from various Girls' School Catalogs, 1914-30, Berry College Archives, Mt. Berry, Georgia.

[105]Ibid.

math and accounting. Many of the senior classes were designed to prepare women for a teaching career, such as the pedagogy class which focused on a review of common school subjects and the methods of teaching and school management. Finally, for those focusing on home economics, electives were available in house planning, including the study of locations, buildings, and interior design.[106]

The women's day began at 7:30 a.m. and continued until 3:30 p.m. There was a half-hour chapel exercise which they attended with the men, and an hour lunch period. Evening hours were spent in activities similar to those of the men. There were several extracurricular groups for women. Their literary society was the Clionian, and there was a Y.W.C.A. chapter. While no athletic activities were organized for women, they could participate in the Home Economics Club and Glee Club, or work on the student newspaper. Female students could attend lectures on the men's campus, but were not allowed to sit and talk with them.[107]

If the men's industrial and agricultural training was designed to prepare them for practical work, then the women's courses were designed to train them to become efficient housekeepers, teachers or nurses. Math classes were practical in orientation, and useful endeavors such as record keeping were taught. Furthermore, female students had to maintain an account book, which was intented to teach them to write checks and to take charge of their finances, no matter how meager. As part of their home economics training, some students lived in the Practice Cottage, where

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[106]Girls' Catalogue, 1913-14, pg. 22.

[107]Ibid., pp. 16-22.

they learned first hands the demands of maintaining a houshold budget. While there, they were given a limited amount of money, which they used to buy the materials and supplies necessary for maintaining the cottage.[108]

Since teaching was a profession deemed admirable for girls, many of the courses were in teaching methods and the care and supervision of children. The women also oversaw a kindergarten and primary school whose students were the children of faculty and staff.[109]

The practical nature of the girls' training extended also to hygiene, health and home nursing. While there were no courses to train nurses, students were provided a good foundation for nursing school, and learned how to care for the sick and prevent illness through hygiene. Because cleanliness was a particular concern of Martha Berry's, the girls were required to take a class which taught them the proper way to scrub floors, polish windows, and maintain a proper house. The resident physician taught a course in sex hygiene, the prevention of typhus, care and nutrition of children, and community health procedures.[110] The practical nature of the women's classes extended to the cooking courses, with seniors training in teaching taking over the instruction of the first year class. Four months residence at the Practice Cottage was required of all students their junior year, and in the Senior year more advanced classes in household chemistry, household management and childhood

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[108]Ibid., pp 23-31.

[109]Ibid.

[110]Martha Berry, Report to the Board of Trustees, the Berry Schools, April 22, 1916.

development were offered.[111]

The more traditional academic courses were also intended to prepare the women for handling their household or professional duties. Math courses were designed to prepare the women for maintaining a budget. It seems likely that Martha Berry attempted to strip her pupils, male and female, of the unpleasant aspects of the mountain and rural dialects; therefore, English courses stressed the importance of proper speech and writing. Letter writing was deemed an essential tool for any proper woman or man, thus emphasis was placed on it in English classes as well. In order to help teach the women poise and self-confidence, they were required to take a Classics course in which they read and performed aloud.[112] One of the more interesting aspects of the women's training was the collection and preservation of folk games and old English ballads from their rural and mountain heritage; these courses reinforced the importance of the students returning to the country to carry on Martha Berry's work.[113]

Like the men, the women were required to work, but they did not use the two work days/four school days schedule until several years after the men. Instead, they followed the old procedure of working two hours a day, primarily because the women were in charge of taking care of visitors, often a daily job. The women were graded on their work like the men, and each one was required to serve at least a short time in each Industrial

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[111]Ibid.

[112]Martha Berry, Report to the Board of Trustees, the Berry Schools, April 26, 1917.

[113]Berry, Report to the Board, 1915.

Department. The areas of work for the women included the greenhouse; the dairy, where they learned to milk and make butter and cheese; and the Weaving and Manual Arts Department, where they learned how to spin wool and cotton, weave, and produce material which, in turn, was used by the women in the Sewing Department to make all the uniforms.[114]

Martha Berry kept in fairly close contact with her graduates and liked to point to their successes as proof of their good training. The educational and practical atmosphere at Martha Berry's School for Girls clearly made a deep impression on most of the students. Many of the graduates, ignoring societal pressures to marry and stay at home, went on to become teachers or nurses. In a sense, these women were receiving a dual message from their training. The school stressed the domestic aspects of women's roles but the graduates were not taught simply to go home with that knowledge and raise a family. Rather, they were to pass it on to as many people as possible. They were Martha Berry's torchbearers, and they carried the light of her educational calling throughout the South. Of the first thirty-eight graduates of the Girls' School, only one returned home without engaging in some sort of work.[115]

In a letter to John Eagan, Martha Berry detailed what had happened to the sixteen graduates from the class of 1915. Of those sixteen, three were training to become nurses and one, Christine Wright, had already secured a position as an assistant head nurse, because of the training she received at Berry. Wright wrote Martha Berry that "[m]y highest ambition

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[114]Berry, Report to the Board, 1917.

[115]Girls' Catalog, 1916, pp. 4-6.

is to become a good nurse and do good for others."[116] Four of the graduates married, and one of these continued to teach while another, Lena Lanier Baxter, became a voluntary attendant to the sick and elderly in her neighborhood. Six others were unmarried and teaching.[117]

In their letters to Martha Berry these Berry graduates echoed the ideals and ethics to which they had been exposed while at the school. One such student, Elsie Andrews, wrote to Berry about her experiences teaching. "I tried and succeeded to some extent to correlate their [her students] studies with their practical every day problems and work."[118] Winnie Shankel reported that "I have put into practice many practical things that I learned at Berry."[119] One graduate, Anne Sellers, wrote of experiences that almost paralleled Martha Berry's:

> I have a . . . . bad house to teach in . . . there is only one whole window in the house and several of the windows have half of the panes broken out. . . . I am trying my best to get them in the notion to fix it up this summer, I'm going to try to help pay some of it myself.[120]

Sellers' story bears a striking resemblance to Martha Berry's difficulties in getting members of her early Sunday school classes to repair the building where the meetings were held.

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[116]Unpublished letter from Martha Berry to John J. Eagan, May 24, 1916, Berry College Archives, Mt. Berry, Georgia.

[117]Ibid.

[118]Letter from Elsie Andrews quoted in letter by Berry to Eagan, May 24, 1916.

[119]Ibid.

[120]As quoted in an unpublished letter from Martha Berry to John Eagan, May 24, 1916, Berry College Archives, Mt. Berry, Georgia.

The final three of these sixteen, Ruby Tallent, Ethel Edwards and Lulu Ray, remained at the school and worked, Tallent in the kitchen, Ray in the laundry, and Edwards at various jobs.[121] The practice of remaining at Berry was common among at least four or five graduates each year; they stayed and worked at Berry for a short time, often to pay off their tuition debts. Familiar with how things were run, they would act as foremen for two or three years, usually at lower wages than someone hired off campus. As a result the school was able to maintain low labor costs.[122]

The concrete aspects of student life, classes, work and extracurricular activities provide some idea of what student life was like. They do not, however, paint a complete picture, for they provide no insight into such intangibles as student values and beliefs, camaraderie, fears, interests, and hopes. The student newspaper, Berry School News, offers some insight into what campus life was like for students during Berry's first thirty years. Students writing for the paper seemed fairly knowledgeable about current events and issues of the day. Among the various topics argued by the debating societies were whether the United States should enter World War I and the pros and cons of public utilities. Articles in the News also dealt with subjects of state and local concern. Students took to heart their country life lessons, for many of the articles and activities of the clubs revolved

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[121]Unpublished letter from Martha Berry to John Eagan, May 24, 1916, Berry College Archives, Mt. Berry, Georgia.

[122]Berry, Report to the Board, 1915.

around up-to-date agricultural innovations.[123]

If the newspaper is any indication of student opinion, then most believed wholeheartedly in the school's philosophy of work and mission. Articles appeared regularly which praised hard work and accomplishments of those who had made sacrifices to help others. Little poems and sayings reinforced the values set forth in one of the school's mottos: "You will never be sorry for: helping others at every opportunity, doing your best every day of your life, for living a clean . . . life, always being square and true, done as you would be done by[*sic*]."[124] The school ethic was often extolled in print as was the courageous and self-sacrificing work of Martha Berry. "You [Martha Berry] have lived a devoted life of service and have taught us the lesson of devotion to a noble purpose."[125]

The school paper also included reports on the spirited competition that existed between the various dormitories on the men's and women's campuses. Interdorm athletic, artistic and academic contests were apparently quite heated and the results were published in most editions of the paper. This rivalry came from an apparent sense of camaraderie, for the student body on both campuses were close-knit. Students even had nicknames for each other.[126]

Although students often developed special relationships with faculty

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[123]This information was drawn from several issues of The Berry School News between 1916 and 1932. Copies of The Berry School News are located in the Martha Berry Museum and the Berry College Archives, Mt. Berry, Georgia.

[124]The Berry School News, May 5, 1926, pg. 1.

[125]Ibid.

[126]Ibid.

and staff members, few students had close contact with Martha Berry because she was away much of the time. The distance between Martha Berry and the students grew greater as she grew older and the size of the student body increased, making it more difficult for her to meet with each one personally. Yet she tried to keep at least some contact with the students if only to maintain certain standards, such as prohibiting visitation between the two campuses and limiting student parties.[127] Usually Martha Berry wrote open letters to the students in the newspaper in order to keep the students aware of her and to stress her traditional message. As the years passed, her message often was infused with a sense of martyrdom which was perhaps designed to make students realize how much they were indebted to her.

> I have had to stand very much alone to give you boys these advantages. You know, boys, it actually costs $250.00 to keep a boy here for one year. Recently I have been very much hurt because two of our boys left here without saying "good-bye" to me. . . . These little things mean much to me, and you remembering them helps me write the letters that must bring in the money for current expenses. I may seem busy and hurried, but I am never too busy to stop and say "good-bye" and "God bless you" to my boys. . . . I am telling you all this because I want you to bear in mind and to remember that the people in this little office upstairs have to work very hard . . . . Although the sun shines brightly on the outside it is sometimes very dark in this office and I go home feeling very weary.[128]

In spite of Martha Berry's public descriptions to fundraisers and the reports from faculty and staff and the student newspaper, Berry was not an idyllic utopia. Students, alumni, and even some faculty often

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[127]Unpublished letter from Martha Berry to Elsie Ford, January 1, 1939, Berry College Archives, Mt. Berry, Georgia.

[128]Berry News, April 18, 1916, pg. 1.

complained about the strict separation of the sexes. Berry students were biologically adults, yet for reasons of Victorian propriety and prudery they were kept isolated from each other with the threat of expulsion hanging over their heads.[129] Tobacco and alcohol were not permitted, and for many who had grown up on country farms, these were not vices, but parts of daily life. These prohibitions proved particularly difficult for students returning from war. For a few years after World War I, the ban on tobacco was discreetly lifted by the men's dean of students, Dr. Cook, who recognized the difficulties inherent in treating adults as children. The restriction to campus also frustrated many students who wished to visit home or go into Rome.[130]

For some students the sheer difficulty of adjusting to work and school was too much and this, coupled with their feelings of homesickness and disenchantment with Berry policy, accounted for a number of yearly withdrawals from the school. For example, in 1917 eight of nineteen voluntary withdrawals (excluding military enlistment) from the boys' school total enrollment of 217 were because of homesickness.[131] Edgar Brown and Gordon Butler, two withdrawals from Berry, expressed dissatisfaction with the school in letters written to George Jones, the headmaster of Saint John's Haven on St. Simon's Island. The two wrote to Jones complaining that the faculty and staff did not like them. "All of

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[129]Unpublished letter from Grady Hamrick to Alice Wingo, March 24, 1930; List of Regulations for Girls, undated, Berry College Archives, Mt. Berry, Georgia.

[130]Cook, previously cited taped interview, 1963.

[131]Report on Reasons for Student Withdrawals, October 12, 1917, unpublished manuscript, Berry College Archives, Mt. Berry, Georgia.

the faculties has got [sic] it in for me and Gordon. . . . ," wrote Brown. "They want us to work three or four months and then ship us from here. . . the principle[*sic*] or Miss Berry hasn't even spoke to me since I been here[*sic*]."[132] In a letter to Principal Leggett, Jones responded to Brown's letters by urging Leggett to have patience with him. "I am simpley [sic] urging you to help him through his readjustment," particularly with the new work schedule.[133]

This particular appeal is indicative of many of the frustrations and anxieties faced by male and female students at Berry. Removed from the psychological security and comfort of home, they were expected to become responsible, hard-working adults who could master new skills at work and new material in the classroom. Because Berry students were from rural areas and farming families, their background and upbringing often compounded the difficult adjustment process facing students. Some were from families that owned their own land, some were not. This often created a sense of snobbery on campus, reinforced by Berry and the faculty. Students complained that comfortable work assignments were unfairly given to special students or Martha Berry's pets. One alumnus even reported that Berry was very particular about the female students sent to help her, stating that "Miss Berry only wanted the pretty girls."[134]

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[132]Unpublished letter from Edgar Brown to George Jones, April 1918, Berry College Archives, Mt. Berry, Georgia.

[133]Unpublished letter from George Jones to Principal William Leggett, April 13, 1916, Berry College Archives, Mt. Berry, Georgia.

[134]Quote from anonymous alumnus during Alumni Survey, 1990.

Some students would leave, unable or unwilling to conform to life at Berry. Some would complain bitterly about the demanding nature of life at the school, thus helping to engender a reputation in some circles that Berry exploited its students. But despite these protestations, most students stayed at Berry, completed their education, and remained steadfastly loyal to the school. Students sometimes expressed their devotion to the school in their literary magazine Reveille, writing such poems as "My Year at Berry" and "Wonderful Berry," which includes the following passage:

> In the northern corner of Georgia
> Is a great educational place
> For the boy and girl who have never
> Had a chance to prepare for life's race;
> People come from the mountainous regions,
> And from down where the corn and cane grow,
> To enlist as a student at "Berry," --
> The most wonderful school that I know

So satisfied were many Berry students' with their experiences that they recommended the school to family members. It was not uncommon for two or more siblings to attend. One former student reported that nine of her family members went to Berry.[135] This high level of student loyalty was instrumental in helping to promote the school and keep it thriving. Alumni often stayed on and worked at the school. Alumni donations became a vital component of fundraising efforts. However, some of these devoted alumni romanticized the Berry Schools and their experiences there, and after Martha Berry's death, these alumni would become obstacles to change and reform.

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[135]Alumni Survey, June, 1990.

CHAPTER 3

THE BOYS' SCHOOL STRIKE

Berry's success during its first three decades, combined with the mounting fame of its founder, turned it into a showcase for advocates of agricultural and industrial education. Northerners and Southerners alike praised the school, arguing that it was a model institution upon which the South should and could be refashioned. Among the more notable of the schools' admirers was the industrialist Henry Ford, who became so smitten with the school and its work ethic that he donated four million dollars to Berry in 1928.

During the first two decades of the school's history, Berry experienced very little opposition or controversy other than the disaffection of some of the Rome community. As the school grew in size, so did its and Martha Berry's reputation. In fact, the few minor controversies that touched the school in the early days were all resolved in the school's favor. In 1916, when a student, Wilma Butler, lost her arm in a work-related accident, her parents sued the school.[1] Berry successfully thwarted the parents' efforts by having the case postponed for four years until 1921, when courts declared the school to be an eleemosynary institution. Since this meant that the school existed on charitable donations, it could not be held legally responsible for the accident.[2]

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[1]Cook, pg. 20.

[2]Ibid.

In 1921 a local Rome attorney, R. A. Denny, questioned the school's tax exempt status. In a letter addressed to Georgia governor Thomas Hardwick that appeared in the Rome News Tribune, Denny pointed out that Berry was not actually a free institution serving only poor mountain people. Students were required to supply money or labor for tuition and, in addition, were required to work sixteen hours a week throughout the school year.[3] At that time, Georgia had a law exempting endowments from taxation, but Denny maintained that if the endowment were invested in land then it was subject to taxation. "This institution has bought an enormous acreage in Floyd County, taking out of taxation such acreage and thereby . . . increasing the burden of the other property owners in the county".[4] It was Denny's contention (as well as the popular belief of many local residents) that Berry was purchasing an excessive amount of land which it neither needed nor used.[5] In the letter Denny also voiced another concern which would continue to grow and eventually lead to the most explosive event in the school's early history, the 1933 Berry strike.

> While this institution benefits a comparatively few children, who are all required to pay either in work or money a substanial tuition for their education, the common schools of the State of Georgia are crying for money, and the teachers of the common schools, to which the common people. . . who do not have . . . $140.00 must resort for the education of their children. . . . We feel that the duty that the state owes to these schools and pensioners . . . is an infinitely higher moral obligation than any duty owed by it to such private institutions as . . . Berry.[6]

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[3]R. A. Denny, correspondence, Rome News Tribune, November 2, 1921.

[4]Ibid.

[5]Ibid.

[6]Ibid.

Berry remained for the most part untaxed, but this controversy was the first public indication of the misgivings many people had about the Berry Schools and their role in education.

This explains some of Martha Berry's insistence on raising funds in the North and publicizing the school through The Southern Highlander, a magazine published at the school and used as a fundraising tool in the North. This magazine, begun in 1914, told of Berry's origins and reported activities of the school and its students. As with any publicity instrument, The Highlander was important in helping to raise funds as well as in creating the school's public image. The magazine was not distributed to students or their parents. In fact, students were prohibited from having copies.[7]

Despite its popular press, there were those who questioned Berry's value as an educational institution as well as its avowed goals. Public education in Georgia was still being neglected and Berry served the needs of only a few. With this came a concern about the philosophical ideals of Berry. Was this school really fulfilling its goal of educating the poor so they could, in turn, help fellow Southerners, or was Berry helping only a few who were being educated to enter the mainstream of society?[8] This questioning of the Berry goals was best exemplified in the work of several radical groups and institutions in the South. One such

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[7]Taped interview with Tracy Byers, made as part of Berry's Fiftieth Anniversary celebration, April, 1963, Martha Berry Museum, Mt. Berry, Georgia.

[8]Frank Adams, Unearthing Seeds of Fire: The Idea of Highlander (Winston-Salem, N.C.: John F. Blair, 1975), pp. 3, 13, 15; Don West, "Sweatshops in the Schools," correspondence, The New Republic, October 4, 1933, p. 216.

organization was the Highlander Folk School located at Monteagle, Tennessee. Founded by Myles Horton and Don West, the school opened on November 1, 1932, and sought to provide an educational center in the South for the training of rural and industrial leaders and for the conservation and enrichment of the indigenous cultural values of the mountains.[9] "We propose to use education specifically as one instrument to build a new social order," stated Horton.[10]

While the purpose of Highlander was very similar to Berry's professed ideals of training leaders for agriculture and industry, there was a marked difference in the long-term goals of each. Martha Berry never wanted to alter the existing social order, for she was a member of the elite who prospered within the system. This notion was typically Progressive and was shared by many turn of the century reformers. The Highlander School, however, possessed a more radical philosophy. To those at Highlander, schools like Berry did not help alleviate the poverty and unemployment of Southern Appalachia, but instead exploited the few by maintaining an unjust system.[11] Highlander School sought to alter the socio-economic structure which habitually kept farmers and laborers oppressed. Through education, Highlander's leaders hoped to overturn the status quo, but with knowledge not violence.[12] In Depression-era America,

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[9]Adams, pp. 26-28, 46; Anthony Dunbar, Against the Grain: Southern Radicals and Prophets, 1929-59, (Charlottesville: University Press of Virginia, 1981), pp. 42-45.

[10]The Highlander Folk School, Monteagle, Tn., undated statement of purpose sent to the Berry Schools.

[11]Adams, pp. 205-206.

[12]Adams, pp. 36, 53, 205-206; Highlander Report.

this philosophy grew stronger as more and more people faced poverty and starvation. It was perhaps inevitable that these two opposing educational philosophies eventually would clash, and at the depth of the Depression such a symbolic clash did occur, in the form of the 1933 Berry strike.

Don West, co-founder of Highlander, left there in April 1933 to return to his native North Georgia. His goal in returning was to organize schools similar to Highlander which would educate farmers and industrial workers for the "cooperative commonwealth."[13] Settling in Kennesaw, Georgia, forty miles southwest of Berry, West was practically in Berry's back yard.[14] West knew first-hand that he would be competing against Berry, for he had attended school there from 1923 until the spring of 1926. While Berry would later try to blacken his record, earlier it had applauded West's efforts in the March 1932 Berry Alumni Quarterly. By then, West had acquire a modest a reputation for his poetry and the Quarterly reported his success with pride, claiming West had realized the noblest ideals of Berry.[15] West himself seemed proud of his Berry roots, for in an April 15, 1932 letter to Martha Berry, he thanked her for her hospitality towards him on a recent visit to the school, especially noting his deep feelings for the school and its mission.[16] A year later, however, both West and Berry would be enemies, seeking to separate their work and

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[13]Unpublished letter from Myles Horton to Will Alexander, November 11, 1935, Martha Berry Museum, Mt. Berry, Georgia.

[14]Ibid.

[15]"Don West Achieves Fame as Poet," The Berry Alumni Quarterly, March 1932, pp. 11-12.

[16]Letter from Don West to Martha Berry in the Berry Alumni Quarterly, p. 22.

reputation from each other.

West's dissatisfaction with Berry grew as his personal and political philosophy became more radical. After leaving Berry, West briefly attended Lincoln University and Vanderbilt before moving to Kentucky to teach school. Afterward he travelled to Europe and studied at the International School at Alsinor, Denmark.[17] In a letter following the Berry strike, Taylor wrote that West seemed

> to have a smouldering temperament that broods over the wrongs of the working people, coupled with a highly individualistic ego that makes . . . working with others . . . impossible . . . . He seems to think all institutions handicaps to truth and right and all who labor in them timorous souls.[18]

If this description of West's nature and outlook is accurate, it is understandable that he would become disenchanted with Berry. As he became radicalized, West sought an opportune moment to express his views about the schools.

That moment came in late August 1933, when students at the boys' high school, disgruntled over the school's restrictive social policy and recent changes in tuition and work credit policy, sought redress for their grievances. The students specifically charged that the school had lowered the amount of money or credit per hour for summer work from eighteen cents to fourteen cents.[19] This was a somewhat minor concern, considering the

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[17]Dunbar, pg. 30; Unpublished letter from Alva Taylor to Will Alexander, October 16, 1933, Martha Berry Museum, Mt. Berry, Georgia.

[18]Unpublished letter from Alva Taylor to Martha Berry, October 16, 1933, Berry College Archives, Mt. Berry, Georgia.

[19]Dunbar, pg. 53.

school had traditionally adjusted work to tuition for work-earned students.[20] But for some students, especially those at the boys high school, this rate decrease demonstrated indifference during the worst years of the Depression.

Five or six students, among them Don West's nephew, Willis Sutton, served as the protest's ringleaders. About seventy-two students were sympathetic to the cause, but their exact goals were never made completely clear.[21] They undoubtedly wanted the restrictive regulations relaxed, and most wanted to create a student government as a way to respond to administrative decisions.[22] Following in the footsteps of contemporary labor leaders, the students decided that a strike would be the most effective way to show student solidarity. With some organizational advice and assistance from West, the students called a strike for August 28.[23] Whether caught up in the emotions of the event or coerced by peer pressure, the boys' high school students failed to show for work on the twenty-eighth of August.[24]

There are conflicting reports as to the length of the strike. Don

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[20]Cook, pp. 35-36.

[21]Unpublished letter from Bill Crawford, Berry student, to Willis Sutton, October 16, 1933, Martha Berry Museum, Mt. Berry, Georgia. Much of the material relating to Don West and the 1933 strike was found in several boxes which were stored in cabinets on the second floor of the Martha Berry Museum. The material was from the personal collection of Inez Henry, Martha Berry's last personal secretary.

[22]Crawford to Sutton; Dunbar, pg. 53; Hamilton Basso, "About the Berry Schools, An Open Letter to Miss Martha Berry," The New Republic, April 4, 1934, pg. 207.

[23]Dunbar, pg. 53; Basso, pp. 207-208.

[24]Dunbar, pg. 53.

West, in talking with Anthony Dunbar, author of Against the Grain, stated that the strike lasted two days, while Hamilton Basso in a story for the August 4, 1934, New Republic reported that the strike lasted only a few hours. Despite West's assertions, Basso's account seems to be the most reliable and consistent with other information about the strike, which was brief and non-violent. Students returned to work after consulting with faculty and staff member during a general assembly, at which administrators agreed not to punish strike participants.[25]

Still dissatisfied, a few of the students requested outside aid and through Sutton, Don West became directly involved in the student movement. West contacted the National Student League, a leftist organization which promoted worker revolution.[26] According to West, he and Clyde Johnson, a National Student League (N.S.L.) executive, came to Berry to discuss the strike with students, whereupon they were removed from campus and arrested.[27] In a letter addressed to a Berry student identified only as "Fred," an anonymous N.S.L. organizer described events at Berry and suggested a specially-prepared N.S.L. leaflet be distributed among the students. The N.S.L. also sent copies of the leaflets throughout the country, including Berry's Board of Trustees and such notable donors as Henry Ford and Emily Vanderbilt Hammond.[28] Through its actions and language, the N.S.L. wanted to demonstrate how their leftist, labor

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[25]Dunbar, pg. 53; Basso, pg. 208.

[26]Dunbar, pg. 53.

[27]Ibid., p. 53-54.

[28]Letter from National Student League to Fred, an unidentified Berry student, no date.

oriented ideas were superior to Berry's policy and mission.

One leaflet charged that Berry flew the National Recovery Administration's Blue Eagle flag, but did not abide by its eight hour work day limit. The N.S.L. went so far as to send flyers to the office of the N.R.A.[29] The handbills, reflective of the more radical outlook of the N.S.L. and West, emphasized Berry's wage cuts and lack of a student labor union. One leaflet, entitled "Berry Students Demand Justice," claimed that an unjust administration had denied students their civil rights of free speech and right to assembly.[30] Furthermore, it charged that principal Grady Hamrick had broken promises made at the time of strike and was threatening to expel any student who continued to complain.[31] The flyer listed six demands: 1) formal organization of a student government; 2) consultation of elected student officials on matters pertaining to students; 3) formation of student committees to investigate the cost of maintaining a student and the income received from his or her labor; 4) student review and, if necessary, firing of work supervisors; 5) reduction of tuition or an increase in wages to meet the cost of tuition; and, 6) two co-educational parties a month, as well as the two monthly trips to Rome promised in the catalogue.[32] The tone of the handbill was generally defiant and critical of Berry.

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[29]Protest Injustice to Berry Students, pamphlet, undated, uncollected papers of Inez Henry, Martha Berry Museum, Mt. Berry, Georgia.

[30]Berry Students Demand Justice, pamphlet, undated, uncollected papers of Inez Henry, Martha Berry Museum, Mt. Berry, Georgia.

[31]Ibid.

[32]Ibid.

The other leaflet was decidedly more radical, expressing the socialist leanings of the N.S.L. and Don West. Addressed "To the Farmers and Workers of Floyd and Bartow Counties, to All Communities of the South, to All Fair Minded People," this flyer condemned the exploitation of the poor and starved farmer and worker at the hands of the rich.[33] It went on to accuse Berry of exploiting its students by working them at slave wages and reaping a profit from their agricultural and industrial goods to the detriment of local farmers and laborers. Attempting to play on the existing fears and hostilities of local residents, the flyer's author(s) accused Berry of accumulating vast sums of untaxed land and flooding local markets with cheap goods that would undercut fair competition.[34]

> In the east Berry tells many "sob stories" about the poverty and ignorance of us and you hard working farmers . . . . They get money from rich people on the pretex [*sic*] that they will help you poor farmers. But what has Berry done for you? Nothing. Berry has taken a few of the best country boys and girls, and instead of educating them to return to their communities to better conditions there, they have been given desires to go away to cities.[35]

According to the N.S.L. letter to "Fred,", articles and letters would be written to magazines around the country. No articles appeared; however, a letter from Don West did appear in The New Republic of October 4, 1933. Headed "Sweatshops in the Schools," West's letter was brief but inflammatory. He wrote of the Berry strike, charging that it had resulted from decreased student wages and increased tuition and school store

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[33]Protest Injustice.

[34]Ibid.

[35]Ibid.

prices. West stated that the strike ended after administrative promises were made, but that in actuality students were being gagged because the school was "holding the club of expulsion over their head."[36] West did not, however, make mention of sweatshops; the heading was added by The New Republic. In his letter, West did fail to mention that the strike had occurred only at the boys' high school.

With the publication of this letter and the nationwide circulation of the leaflets, school administrators could no longer keep quiet about the incident. Instead of calmly and rationally responding to West's accusations, the school and Martha Berry over-reacted, making their own equally inflammatory accusations. One wonders why the school took this confrontational approach, since public sentiment and the press were on their side. Undoubtedly, they acted out of fear that the taint of "communism" would become associated with the name of Berry.

In responding to the crisis, the school first turned inward to make sure the activities of student agitators were stopped. Martha Berry and Board of Trustees' chairman Robert Alston addressed a general assembly of all the students in both the high school and the college.[37] At the meeting, Berry specifically asked students to take a loyalty oath to her and the school.[38] The students unanimously supported the school by taking

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[36]West to New Republic.

[37]Unpublished letter from Clyde West, Berry student, to Martha Berry, October 4, 1933, uncollected papers of Inez Henry, Martha Berry Museum, Mt. Berry, Georgia; Edwin Holman, Atlanta Constitution, October 8, 1933.

[38]Unpublished letter from Martha Berry to Emily Vanderbilt Hammond, October 6, 1933; Unpublished letter from Martha Berry to Eugene Gunby, alumnus, October 12, 1933. Both were found in the uncollected papers of Inez Henry. Most of this information is currently being cataloged by the

the loyalty oath. However, the pressure of such a meeting and the conviction that Berry was their only hope for a better future made it unlikely that students would openly challenge the school and its founder.

Perhaps fearing the bloody and violent connotation the word strike had in that era, the school was unwilling to admit that a strike had taken place.[39] Instead the school presented half the story, that which occurred after the N.S.L. and West became actively involved. In an Associated Press article circulated throughout the country, Berry claimed that seditious literature had been sent to unwitting students, who had dutifully turned it over to school officials. Arguing that the trouble was entirely external, Berry contended that a former student, using several aliases, attempted to call a strike at the Gate of Opportunity but "not a single student heeded the call."[40] This admission by the school does corroborate West's assertion that he came to campus.

Maintaining this story as the truth, school officials set about undoing the damage caused by what they asserted were false and damaging accusations. Using a good offense as their best defense, the school and Martha Berry first confronted The New Republic. In an October 6 telegram to the magazine, Alston charged that the West letter was libelous and that

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Berry College Archives, Mt. Berry, Georgia.

[39]Unpublished letter from G. Leland Green to L. Koch, Director, Commonwealth College, Mena, Arkansas, October 10, 1933; Unpublished letter from Robert C. Alston, chairman of Berry's Board of Trustees, to Nicholas Murray Butler, President, Columbia University, October 6, 1933. Both were found in the uncollected papers of Inez Henry.

[40]Atlanta Constitution, October 8, 1933; other papers quoting from this article included the Montgomery (Alabama) Advertiser and the Washington Star.

the magazine should print a retraction.[41] Bruce Bliven, one of The New Republic's editors, immediately responded saying he would investigate the issue. He requested a letter from the head of the school stating the school's position on the alleged events at Berry.[42] Alston responded the same day, inviting the magazine to send a representative to campus and requesting once again that the magazine print an apology or retraction.[43] In hopes of further swaying the magazine and demonstrating the students' loyalty, the school sponsored a massive letter-writing campaign.[44] The magazine responded as follows:

> Most of the letters are from students and bear internal evidence that the writers have not seen Mr. West's letter. Indeed, a number of them say that his charges are not true, and add "Please send me a copy of the issue containing his statement."[45]

Fearful of losing donations because of the negative publicity generated by the incident, school officials began a letter-writing campaign to donors. In personal letters to her closer friends, and in a form letter to most donors, Martha Berry stressed the students' loyalty, noted the show of support in the assembly, and impugned Don West by

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[41]Unpublished letter from Robert C. Alston to Bruce Bliven, October 6, 1933, Inez Henry papers.

[42]Unpublished letter from Bruce Bliven to Robert C. Alston, October 6, 1933, Inez Henry papers.

[43]Unpublished letter from Robert C. Alston to Bruce Bliven, October 6, 1933, Inez Henry papers.

[44]Unpublished letter from Martha Berry to Charles Proctor, October 10, 1933, Inez Henry papers; The New Republic, October 25, 1933, p. 292.

[45]The New Republic, October 25, 1933.

portraying him as a "Red" socialist.[46] Overlooking the praise heaped on West just a year earlier, Martha Berry now maintained that West had been expelled from school and was seeking revenge.[47] Some students were also invited to write letters to donors, as well as Don West. "It is of the gravest importance that Herman Coots should write a letter to Don West. . . . " Martha Berry insisted. "I think it should be in his own handwriting. . . and [it should be] down [to my office] right away."[48]

Berry's response to the incident may seem excessive, but was actually predictable given the schools' xenophobic temperament and its fears of losing donors. However, some of the actions of Berry officials following the incident were unnecessary and somewhat unjustifiable, given the overwhelming words of support sent from well-wishers. Indeed, the only negative national publicity had come in the form of West's letter. A few college student organizations and a few private individuals sent letters to Berry protesting its treatment of students, but these were relatively harmless and could be easily overlooked.[49] Berry responded to

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[46]Unpublished letter from Martha Berry to Emily Vanderbilt Hammond, October 6, 1933, Inez Henry papers.

[47]Ibid; Unpublished letter from Martha Berry to Homer Cummings, Department of Justice, October 9, 1933, Inez Henry papers.

[48]Unpublished letter from Martha Berry to Grady Hamrick, October 6, 1933, Inez Henry papers; Unpublished letter from Joseph L. Hillman, Berry student, to Emily Vanderbilt Hammond, no date, Inez Henry papers.

[49]Unpublished letter from Arline Nowak, Secretary, National Student League of Fenn-Nash Colleges of Columbus, Ohio, to Martha Berry, October 10, 1933, Inez Henry papers; Unpublished letter from Serrill Gerber, NSL member and student at Los Angeles Junior College, to G. Leland Green, October 6, 1933, Inez Henry papers; Unpublished letter from David Lee, student at unidentified college in Atlanta, Ga., to Grady Hamrick, October 5, 1933, Inez Henry papers.

all these inquiries and received several retractions and apologies.[50] Yet Berry pursued West, hoping to expose any communist attachments he had. To do this Berry's leaders indirectly attacked the Highlander Folk School and Myles Horton, primarily because The New Republic had listed West's address incorrectly as Monteagle, Tennessee.[51] The school's president, G. Leland Green, wrote Sherwood Eddy and Will Alexander, director of the Commission on Interracial Cooperation, because of their attachment to Highlander.[52] Green asked them how they could support West (and by extension Monteagle) when he had made "ungenerous and unwarranted attacks upon an institution which . . . had done so much to build up the rural South."[53] In a letter of defense written to Will Alexander, Myles Horton asserted that he had no knowledge of the events at Berry. Horton also noted that Don West had not been associated with Highlander since April 1933.[54]

Seeking more substantial action against West, Berry wrote the Federal Bureau of Investigation on September 26, 1933, claiming that West

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[50]Unpublished letter from A.R. Mann, Provost, Cornell University, to Martha Berry, October 12, 1933, Inez Henry papers; Unpublished letter from William H. Snyder, Director, Los Angeles Junior College, to G. Leland Green, October 23, 1933, Inez Henry papers.

[51]Unpublsiehd letter from Martha Berry to the Men of Justice, an organization based in Atlanta, October 14, 1933, Inez Henry papers.

[52]Unpublished letter from G. Leland Green to Sherwood Eddy, October 9, 1933, Inez Henry papers; Unpublished letter from Will Alexander to Myles Horton, October 14, 1933 (mentions the incident at Berry), Inez Henry papers.

[53]Green to Eddy, October 9, 1933.

[54]Unpublished letter from Myles Horton to Will Alexander, November 11, 1933, Inez Henry papers.

had carried out communistic threats against the school.[55] After being advised that no federal statute was applicable to West's alleged activities, Martha Berry personally wrote Attorney General Homer Cummings, requesting that he protect Berry. Cummings did not respond.[56]

As a result of administrators' anticommunism and their fears about ramifications that might result from the strike, several innocent people came under scrutiny and attack. Chief among them was Walker Martin, a former Berry student forced to leave because of funding cuts. Martin went to Monteagle in the fall of 1932 to attend Highlander.[57] In a series of letters which were confiscated, copied and kept on file by the school, Martin described his life at Highlander and revealed his growing leftist outlook.[58] He wrote of a new social order and condemned Berry for taking the "flower of Southern youth . . . and turning out more supports [*sic*] for the system."[59] These letters carry the stamp of Don West's influence in their analysis of Berry as an institution incapable of bringing real change to the South. "The psychology . . . of the regime that makes Berry

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[55]Unpublished letter from J. C. Hanson, Acting Special Agent in Charge, U.S. Department of Justice, Bureau of Investigation, October 7, 1933, Inez Henry papers.

[56]Ibid. Unpublished letter from Martha Berry to Homer Cummings, October 9, 1933, Inez Henry papers.

[57]Unpublished letter from Walker Martin to Merle Barton, October 27, 1932, Inez Henry papers; Unpublished letter from Mrs. L. N. Martin, Walker's mother, to Martha Berry, October 10, 1933, Inez Henry papers.

[58]Unpublished letter from Walker Martin to Merle Barton, October 27, 1932, Inez Henry papers; Unpublished letter from Walker Martin to Merle Barton, December 17, 1932, Inez Henry papers; Unpublished letter from Walker Martin to Merle Barton, January 4, 1933, Inez Henry papers.

[59]Unpublished letter from Walker Martin to Merle Barton, December 17, 1932, Inez Henry papers.

possible 'in the training and education of youth,'" he wrote, "is sultifying [sic] and paralyzing the fine material that comes under its warping, twisting hand."[60]

While these letters reveal Martin's socialist leanings, they were not enough to convict him of complicity in West's actions at Berry. Yet the school accused Martin of being somehow involved with West. Shortly after the appearance of the N.S.L. leaflets, the school published a bulletin signed by representatives from thirty-one student organizations, which denounced the propaganda that had been circulated about Berry. Walker Martin was listed on the bulletin as one of the promulgators of the crisis at Berry. In the Associated Press article about the strike, Robert Alston implied that Martin was the real outside organizer of the strike, claiming he had been arrested during a raid in Atlanta with literature entitled, "A Declaration Against Berry."[61]

Berry's suspicions were no doubt further aroused when Martin, in a letter to Dr. Green, asked about having his brother, Gordon, admitted to Berry.[62] Green's response, while cordial, focused on reports of Martin's involvement in the events at Berry and his alleged arrests.[63] Berry students even wrote accusatory letters to Martin.[64] Despite written

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[60]Ibid.

[61]Atlanta Constitution, October 8, 1933.

[62]Unpublished letter from Walker Martin to G. Leland Green, October 4, 1933, Inez Henry papers.

[63]Unpublished letter from G. Leland Green to Walker Martin, October 1933, no date given, Inez Henry papers.

[64]Walker Martin to Matson Guthrie, Berry student (and friend of Martin), October 7, 1933, Inez Henry papers.

denials of his involvement which acknowledged his leftist leanings, Martin was still hounded by Berry. A private detective, identified only as Mr. Page, was hired by the school to investigate Martin.[65] In a report filed October 12, Page discussed Martin's relationship with West and claimed that West had asked Martin to assist a Ruth Mulkey at the International Labor Defense office in Atlanta in August. It was this office that had been raided, but no report was made of Martin's arrest. The report further accounted for West's activities for most of 1933.[66] On October 14, Page met with Martin's parents. Although defensive about the accusations made against her son, Mrs. Martin wrote Martha Berry of her son's former love for the school and admitted that her son had become radicalized after falling under the influence of Don West.[67]

Another victim of Berry's witchhunt was Mrs. Samuel Leonard who lived in Birmingham, Alabama, Martin's home at the time. Leonard wrote Berry requesting information on Martin, for employment purposes.[68] Berry hired Charlie Whiteside to investigate her, and he reported that she lived in a poor section of town on the fringes of a black community where she spread "communist propaganda."[69] "I'll find out more later . . . ,"

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[65]Internal Report entitled, Information brought in by Mr. Page," October 12, 1933, Inez Henry papers.

[66]Ibid.

[67]Unpublished letter from Mrs. Martin to Martha Berry, October 10, 1933, Inez Henry papers.

[68]Unpublished letter from Mrs. Samuel Leonard to G. Leland Green, December 1, 1933, Inez Henry papers.

[69]Unpublished letter from Charlie Whiteside to Martha Berry, December 8, 1933, Inez Henry papers.

Whiteside continued. "We will see that both of these parties are taken care of in case they start the least bit of trouble."[70]

Aside from Martin and Leonard, Berry kept information on other people and accumulated a large file of material on the strike and the principles involved, as well as on various communist and socialist organizations.[71] Students' mail was searched, copied and sometimes confiscated.[72] After Willis Sutton left Berry in the fall to attend school in Adairsville, Georgia, he wrote to his sister, Quinn, but the school kept the letter.[73] Quinn and her sister were closely watched by school officials, who made periodic spot inspections of their rooms.[74]

In response to Alston's October request, The New Republic sent noted South Carolina author Hamilton Basso to investigate. Arriving in Rome on January 8, 1934, he immediately went to the Sutton home and spoke with Willis.[75] The next day, Basso was escorted to Berry where he attended a chapel service, ate lunch, and began to interview various faculty and staff members about the work conditions at Berry and the charges made by

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[70]Ibid.

[71]There were several file folders of material relating to the strike including reports on the Highlander School, the National Student League, copies of incoming and outgoing letters and internal reports, Inez Henry papers.

[72]Unpublished letter from Charles Proctor to Martha Berry, October 18, 1933, Inez Henry papers.

[73]Unpublished letter from Willis Sutton to Quinn Sutton, October 3, 1933, Inez Henry papers.

[74]Unpublished letter from Charles Proctor to Martha Berry, October 18, 1933, Inez Henry papers.

[75]Hamilton Basso, The New Republic, April 4, 1934, pp 206-207.

West in his letter.[76] On Wednesday, Basso talked privately, off campus, in a rented car, with various students he had selected at random. Exactly seven months after Don West's letter, The New Republic carried Basso's report in the form of an open letter to Martha Berry.[77] In his article, Basso spoke kindly of Martha Berry's work and reminded readers of the purpose for his visit. Chronicling his investigation, Basso discussed the charges that West had made concerning tuition and work-earned credit. He was puzzled by the school's failure to inform him of the recent adjustment of the wages. Basso concluded that while prices at the school store were not at cost, as some letters to the magazine had claimed, they were generally less than average retail. Basso refuted Berry's assertion that there was no strike. He accurately recounted what had taken place on August 28 and surmised that most of the students involved were disgruntled over restrictive regulations. Students wanted to smoke, visit home during the school year, and visit with members of the opposite sex more freely.[78] In concluding his article, Basso reported a rumor that he had been watched while in Rome. While there is no written proof that Berry had Basso trailed, the school did keep a very detailed report of his visit and discussions while on campus.[79] Needless to say, Berry was not pleased with Basso's article and despite requests by the magazine, school officials made no official response, preferring instead

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[76]Ibid.

[77]Ibid.

[78]Ibid, pg. 208.

[79]Report on the visit of Hamilton Basso, Representative, The New Republic, Inez Henry papers.

to let the incident die a quiet death.[80]

All in all, Berry seemed to blow the incident out of proportion. Few papers outside the South ran the Associated Press article and most donors dismissed the flyer as communist propaganda. In response to the incident, the level-headed Emily Vanderbilt Hammond wrote to Martha Berry:

> I think you make a mistake taking Don West so seriously. . . . The whole affair will make the right-minded realize more than ever the need there is for just such a school as yours to counteract the radical element in this country. . . . You must not let fear creep in . . . . Don't encourage your students to hate even Don West and Walker Martin.[81]

But Berry did not heed Hammond's advice, instead over-reacting to what was at its most basic a grumble session by disgruntled, and possibly overworked, students. While the involvement of the N.S.L. was understandably aggravating, the school was in no danger of "communist" infiltration. Campus leaders had quickly rallied student, alumni, and donor support.

The actions of Martha Berry and school officials in responding to the strike happened for several reasons. For one, Martha Berry had enveloped the school in a cloak of secrecy, deliberately sheltering it and her students from the outside world. Being so isolated meant the school could control the public's impression of Berry. The only consistent criticism of Berry came from Rome, whose residents had long been blocked from becoming acquainted with the schools. Unaccustomed to being

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[80]Basso, pg. 208. Unpublished letter from Martha Berry to John Graham, her nephew, October 20, 1934, Inez Henry papers.

[81]Unpublished letter from Emily Vanderbilt Hammond to Martha Berry, October 14, 1933, Inez Henry papers.

reproached, Martha Berry and school officials did not know how to react, and so over-reacted. The left wing ideology of the attackers simply resulted in the school's defenses being intensified. Labor unions, communists, and strikes were all dirty words in 1933 as America engaged in a struggle over the rights of laborers and the validity of the capitalist system in the face of the unrelenting Depression. Always prone to shirk controversy, Berry feared having its name attached to such issues. That these critics chose to contact Berry donors only increased administrators' paranoia that the incident would undermine the school's credibility with its benefactors.

The real importance of the strike rests, though, not in how Berry responded to it, but in what it suggests about the types of demands and pressures Berry would have to confront in the coming decades. Martha Berry's views of propriety and decorum were slowly becoming antiquated, and the school would be pressured time and time again to make reforms to its student life regulations. In general, Berry found itself having to modify some of its entrenched practices. For example, shortly before Martha Berry's death, the Board of Trustees recommended that faculty be given the opportunity to help shape instructional policy. Ideas about education were being changed and modified. The relationship between the federal government and the various facets of society was revolutionized by Franklin Roosevelt's New Deal, which had identified the South as the number one problem facing America. The environment which had inspired and spawned Martha Berry's ideals was fading. During the coming years, the Berry Schools would confront many obstacles which had a more significant impact on the growth and development of the school than the 1933 strike.

CHAPTER 4

BERRY SEARCHES FOR A NEW LEADER

Martha Berry's death in 1942 left the Berry Schools rudderless, with no clearly identifiable leader who could provide guidance and a sense of purpose. While her day-to-day involvement in the school had not been substantial for over fifteen years, she was nonetheless a towering figure at the school, a lightning rod around which school operations ultimately converged. More importantly, her death only served to mythologize her image and mission in the eyes of those loyal successors who continued to teach at and administer "her" school.

Several of the faculty and staff not only had worked at Berry for most of their professional lives, but also had received their educations there. To these loyal men and women, Martha Berry was a saint whose self-sacrificing actions had provided untold opportunities for unfortunate rural Southerners. Many of these faculty and staff members would remain staunchly loyal to the memory of Martha Berry's original vision of the school well after her death.[1] Some such as Inez Henry, Berry's personal secretary, would help contribute to the creation of an elaborate mythology of Martha Berry's life, a mythology that would eventually be useful in helping to sell the school despite the necessary shift away from its original purpose.[2] Their allegiance to her legacy would sometimes help complicate the arduous task of redesigning the school to make it viable

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[1]Pendley, Sixty Years, pp. 2-3, 16-19.

[2]Henry, Miracle.

in the post-World War II South.

The debate over whether Berry should change, and if so how, would be an impassioned one within the school during the late 1940's and early 1950's as the Board and the administration searched for ways to keep the school financially viable and educationally sound. Furthermore, school officials faced an uncertain and changing future as national and regional developments forced the school to reassess its mission and viability. The sheer weight of this task took its toll during the 1940's and 1950's as a succession of men served under the new title, President of the Berry Schools. Between 1942 and 1955, five different men took the helm at Berry: Gordon Keown, 1942-44; William Baird, 1944-46; James Lindsay, 1946-51; Samuel Cook, 1951-53; and Robert Lambert, 1953-55. All devoted themselves to preparing Berry to meet the demands of the last half of the twentieth century, but none was able to complete the task because of enormous pressures both within and outside the school.[3]

The world in which Berry operated was changing rapidly. Important investments were being made in the South's economy and its people's lives during the years following Martha Berry's death, investments that would help contribute to the modernization of the region, particularly education. World War II expenditures contributed a "massive injection of capital" into the South, with close to $5 billion being spent on military facilities and war plants.[4] These expenditures were only a part of the public and private contributions made in the South from the Depression

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[3]Pendley, Sixty, pp. 5-10.

[4]Cobb, Industrialization, p. 51.

through the 1950's, which helped contribute to an increase in the per capita income of Southerners from 47 to 64 percent of the national average by the late 1940's.[5] Greatly driving the South's economic growth was a population increase fueled by migration into the South and a birthrate that was 1.5 percent higher than the rest of the nation's. James Cobb has noted that:

> As of 1960 all of the major statistical indicators of economic well-being still put the South well behind the rest of the nation, but the infusion of capital provided by the war, coupled with the mechanization and consolidation of agriculture that was already underway when the war began, had given the region's economic prospects an important boost. Increasing numbers of more affluent, skilled residents signalled the arrival of the long-awaited potential for the growth of rapid, technologically sophisticated industries as well as those drawn to expanding urban areas populated by enough consumers with money in their pockets to constitute truly attractive markets.[6]

The South's renewed economic vigor helped to spur urban growth. One of the more notable beneficiaries of the South's flourishing economy was Atlanta, Georgia's capital, located about 75 miles south of Rome and Berry College. Atlanta's extraordinarily rapid development after 1940 would dramatically influence Rome and the Berry Schools by helping to change the very circumstances upon which the schools's mission had been built. The Berry Schools' future would become linked more and more closely with both Rome and Atlanta, particularly as Atlanta-based businessmen and leaders such as John A. Sibley, Chairman of Berry's Board of Trustees and head of Atlanta Trust Company Bank, took over more of the guidance of Berry in the

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[5]Ibid, p. 52.

[6]Ibid, p. 53.

absence of a strong-willed leader. The final collapse of plantation agriculture due to the rise of federal farm programs and the shift from sharecropping to hired farm labor contributed to the growth of urban and suburban areas throughout the deep South and particularly in Georgia[7] Also, the demise of the mill-town would contribute to the shifting economic scene in the South. As Numan Bartley wrote, the result of these changes was that by "the 1950's the rapidly declining number of tenants and agricultural laborers and the spread of mechanized, capitalist farming had undermined the commitment to a paternalistic ideology,"[8] which had fueled Martha Berry and her schools, but which was growing outmoded during the forties and fifties.

Another by-product of shifting economic patterns, particularly urban growth, was an increase in white-collar jobs which usually required higher educational standards. In 1940, one in five Georgians worked in white-collar professions. By 1960, the number had increased to "well over one in three...."[9] Institutions like Berry would have to rethink their purpose and mission if they were going to continue to be worthwhile, competitive institutions, that could keep pace with the changing needs of the South.

Economic restructuring bred political reorganization as a new generation of Southern leaders, inheritors of Henry Grady's New South philosophy, struggled with outdated political practices, particularly Jim Crow segregation policies and election methods which favored the

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[7]Bartley, The Creation of Modern Georgia, p. 179.

[8]Ibid.

[9]Ibid, p. 181.

increasingly less influential rural counties. These reform-minded leaders, however, found themselves struggling against a conservative, entrenched core who feared that change would undermine the values and ethics upon which they felt the South had been built.[10] One can see Berry's dilemma of change vs. stasis mirrored in the debates which punctuated the political arena in Georgia during this era. Men like Eugene and Herman Talmadge boasted of their rural roots and disdained the urban dweller, thereby echoing a sentiment upon which the Berry Schools had relied. Capitalizing on racial fears and prejudice and appealing to rural voters (who were consistently declining in numbers), these men sought to keep a stranglehold on Georgia. Similarly, long-time supporters of Martha Berry would impede attempts at reforming the school, feeling their true purpose and meaning would be lost.

Other political and business leaders, eager for the South to continue to prosper, increasingly clashed with these old-line politicians. For example, they balked at the antiquated Georgia electoral system which balanced votes among the counties in such a way as to create a form of "pocket-borough." Post-World War II Southern liberals and business promoters argued for electoral reform because the existing system gave rural counties excessive input into the selection of state officials (such as the Talmadges) and the creation of state policies.[11] This urban/rural debate was symptomatic of the larger problem facing the South--modernization vs. tradition, a problem that would plague The Berry Schools

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[10]Ibid, pp. 180-183; Cobb, Industrialization, p. 103.

[11]Cobb, Selling, pp. 215-220.

following the death of Martha Berry.

Many of the local, state, and national political and business leaders who helped guide Southern growth believed that social changes were also necessary in order to fulfill their objective of modernizing the South. Civil Rights would of course be the most pressing issue facing the region during the twenty years following the war, but there would be other important cultural, institutional, and societal concerns which the South would have to address if it were to continue to attract business and industrial investment and in-migration of an affluent, educated population.[12] One way in which community leaders responded to the demands for a more modern South was to modify or abolish blue laws during the twenty years following World War II. Education topped the list of concerns for many Southerners and transplanted Southerners.

The Depression had done little to alleviate appalling educational conditions in the South, and perhaps had only worsened them. Between 1930 and 1950, the number of students enrolled in Southern elementary schools dropped from 7,128,000 to 6,950,000. The story for Georgia was not much better. During the 1929-30 school year between fifteen and twenty percent of northwest Georgia children age seven to fifteen did not attend school, and close to seventy-five percent of sixteen to twenty year olds did not attend. Inadequate school funding magnified educational deficiencies. The state of Georgia continued its practice of underfunding education, with some counties, including Floyd, receiving only $15 per teacher from

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[12]Ibid.

state sources.[13] There were, however, harbingers of the changes to come. In 1937, the Georgia General Assembly passed legislation guaranteeing a seven-month school term throughout the state and providing free textbooks for every first through eleventh grade student. Educational expenditures increased accordingly from $7,948,137.53 to $16,083,848.68 between 1936 and 1940.[14]

Calls for educational reform would echo even louder throughout the South during the forties and fifties, this time from the pragmatic, business-minded boosters intent upon reducing the anti-intellectual image of the South and attracting high wage and skill industries.[15] However, the same obstacle remained to educational reform which had persisted since the Civil War--little money for schools due to low taxes. Georgia's tax rates were among the lowest in the nation during the 1940's, with the typical Georgian paying approximately thirty-eight dollars in state taxes in 1949 (lowest in the nation that year). But this obstacle would be lessened because of the rise in national expenditures on education. Furthermore, many states were finally able to push through tax reform. In 1949, the Georgia legislature passed the Minimum Foundation program which required children to attend school for a minimum number of years. The adoption of a three percent sales tax in 1951 made this decree feasible. Georgia also switched from an eleven- to a twelve-grade system in 1947 and dramatically improved teachers' salaries, even significantly decreasing the gap between

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[13]Department of Agriculture, publication number 205, 1939, pp. 96-97, 112.

[14]Coleman, A History of Georgia, p. 325.

[15]Cobb, Selling, pp. 160-163.

white and black teachers' salaries.[16] Even the disparity in expenditures between metropolitan schools and rural schools declined, as Kenneth Coleman has noted.

> The result was a dramatically improved public school system, whether the improvement was measured in attractiveness of the building, educational level of the teachers, or per pupil expenditures of public funds. By 1960, the rural one-teacher schools had virtually disappeared, as Georgia children rode school buses to fewer but bigger schools.[17]

This turn of events obviously would have a significant impact on the Berry Schools, forever altering the conditions upon which they had been created. Rural adolescent boys and girls increasingly had better funded and more widely available high schools. Per-pupil expenditures in various states help illustrate this change. In 1940 the average Southern state spent a little over forty dollars per student; in Georgia the figure was $34.12, in Tennessee $37.77, in Alabama $30.55. By 1950, the average per-pupil expenditure had skyrocketed to $146.53, with Georgia, Alabama, and Tennessee each spending around $125.00 per student. The numbers continued to increase throughout the fifties and sixties, though less dramatically, considering inflation.[18] However, the South was spending more money on education than ever before and its school systems were expanding rapidly. Would private educational institutions, especially Berry with its special rural appeal, be able to survive now that local, state and national support for Southern education was at an all-time high?

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[16]Coleman, pp. 370-377.

[17]Ibid, p. 377.

[18]Cobb, Selling, p. 163.

Vocational education received special attention as Southern states began to create and fund vocational and technical schools which offered a wide variety of classes, such as welding, metalworking, and automotive repair.[19] The proliferation of these state and nationally subsidized, low-cost institutions further undermined the necessity and appeal of Berry.

These meaningful changes meant that educational institutions would have to reconsider policies and practices that were now becoming outmoded. Berry administrators, faced with the loss of their dynamic leader, not only would have to deal with internal differences and disputes, but would have to carefully balance these external changes which would forever alter the foundation upon which the school had been built.

The immediate problem, however, in 1942 was coping with the loss of Martha Berry. In a note addressed to the Board of Trustees to be opened after her death, Martha Berry helped touch off the future problems the school would face by restating the need for her school as an aid to rural children.

> There will always be a need to help poor boys and girls of the mountains and rural districts, and I implore the trustees, alumni and friends of Berry to maintain and carry on the work *in the spirit in which it was founded.*"[20]

Unfortunately, the next twenty years would prove Martha Berry wrong.

In her last communiqué, Berry also requested that M. Gordon Keown succeed her as the school's director. Keown's less than two years as director of the school proved to be a waiting time at Berry as the Board

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[19]Ibid, pp. 164-165.

[20]As quoted in Pendley, Sixty, pp. 16-17.

of Trustees began to address immediate and long-range concerns. Unfortunately, World War II minimized Keown's ability to do more than cope with day-to-day problems. Manpower shortages interfered with much school activity. Repairs and maintenance of buildings and equipment would have to be postponed, teachers and staff were being called to war or were leaving for higher paying jobs.[21] The attrition of employees would be especially problematical over the next fifteen to twenty years, and the school's Board of Trustees and administrators would have to upgrade faculty and staff salaries in order to attract the qualified personnel necessary for accreditation.[22]

The issue of accreditation aroused resentment among some elements of the Berry faculty and staff, as Evelyn Hoge Pendley has noted. "In certain groups a defensive attitude was arising which argued that Berry had a special mission to fulfill which accreditation would not necessarily benefit."[23] If Berry was going to survive, accreditation would be a must. But Berry traditionalists hindered the process with their perhaps misguided loyalty to Martha Berry's memory, thereby complicating the administrations of Berry's immediate successors. Employees such as industrial manager O. Wayne Skinner expressed "a feeling of aloneness in preserving some of the established policies of The Schools."[24] These

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[21]Ibid., pp. 18-23.

[22]School catalogs between 1942-1957 listed a roster of the faculty and staff. On average, Berry lost one-fifth of its faculty and staff per year during those years. Pendley, Sixty, p. 18.

[23]Pendley, Sixty, p. 18.

[24]Report by O. Wayne Skinner to the Berry Board of Trustees, May 1943, unpublished manuscript, Berry College Archives, Mt. Berry, Georgia.

traditionalists feared the school would lose its special status and so were resistant to change.

Perhaps the most significant and telling development made during Keown's tenure was the drafting of two reports, one made in 1942 by Victor L. Butterfield, dean and later president of Wesleyan University in Connecticut, the other in 1943 by Philip Weltner, vice chairman of Berry's Board of Trustees. Butterfield's report identified the school's strengths and weaknesses and, most importantly, identified specific problem areas the school would have to address over the next ten to fifteen years. Some concerns were traditional ones at Berry. Butterfield, for example, noted student complaints about the incompatibility of their work with their classroom activities.[25]

Academic reform, though, proved to be the most important area of concern for Butterfield. While praising the devotion of students and faculty, he recognized that Berry's academic standing was below average when compared with liberal arts colleges of the North and West, and even with many in the South. Butterfield argued that for Berry to improve its academic standing and reputation (and thereby receive accreditation), it would have to establish a more permanent faculty and improve faculty morale. This could be accomplished by adopting many of the requirements necessary for S.A.C.S. accreditation--increased wages, tenure, a retirement plan, and insurance benefits. Furthermore, faculty should be allowed more direct input into the formulation of school policy and

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[25]Report by Victor L. Butterfield to Berry Board of Trustees, May 1943, unpublished manuscript, Berry College Archives, Mt. Berry, Georgia.

procedure.[26]

While Butterfield's report dealt broadly with the school as an institution, his academic suggestions seemed to be addressed toward the college primarily. Butterfield made no separate study of the high schools, but did address an issue which anticipated a dilemma they would have in the future; the high schools were getting a reputation for being reform schools. Indications are that by the late 1940's and early 1950's the boys' high school in particular was becoming a place to send "troubled" boys.[27] While this added role was not necessarily incompatible with Martha Berry's vision for the school, it did tarnish the school's reputation in the eyes of some. Furthermore, it was a reflection of the diminished need for the school. "Good" boys and girls found it increasingly easier to attend all twelve years of school close to home because of the state's educational reforms. It was becoming increasingly obvious as early as Butterfield's 1942 report that Berry officials would have to reevaluate the mission and purpose of the high schools.

In concluding his report, Butterfield noted the need for a strong leader to follow in the footsteps of Martha Berry and suggested that no current Berry employee seemed to fit the bill.[28] Perhaps without knowing it, Butterfield foreshadowed the division that arose among the school's employees and supporters as to what direction the Berry Schools should go and who was best suited to lead them there. With his report, Butterfield

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[26]Ibid.

[27]Based on comments from Alumni Survey, January 1990; Pendley, Sixty, pp. 27-35.

[28]Butterfield report, May 1943.

became a spokesman for the more reform-minded Berry supporters by arguing for change, progress, and fresh blood.

Philip Weltner's report echoed many of the observations and suggestions made by Butterfield, but Weltner was more pointed in his recommendations for change. Weltner argued that expanding educational opportunities meant that Berry students would likely decline in quality and ability--"culls" he called them.[29] Berry boys and girls traditionally had not been the dregs of society, had never been "poor white trash," but it appeared that they soon might become just that. Unless Berry made immediate changes, it would attract fewer and fewer donors and produce poorer work and graduates. Weltner's report accordingly became the clarion call around which reform-minded supporters of Berry rallied.[30]

Weltner's specific suggestions were radical, but they would eventually all be implemented by the early 1960's, with much disagreement and rancor. Among Weltner's suggestions was restructuring the school's administration by abolishing the title of director and replacing it with the title of president. In addition, he suggested establishing four major administrative offices: president, comptroller, dean of instruction, and director of operations. Weltner also recommended that the school should operate under a budget, that the schools' administrative structure be overhauled, that the work program be refurbished, and that faculty and staff be treated more professionally. The most radical of Weltner's recommendations, abolishing freshmen and sophomore classes at the high

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[29]Philip Weltner, Report to the Berry Board of Trustees, April 1943, unpublished manuscript, Berry College Archives, Mt. Berry, Georgia.

[30]Pendley, Sixty, p. 26.

school, was another early acknowledgment that the high schools were perhaps becoming passé.[31]

In his conclusion, Weltner conceded that disagreement would result from trying to make these changes:

> Perhaps the hardest test of all will come in facing the criticism of alumni, friends of discharged employees, and worst of all, the possible displeasure of old friends of Miss Martha Berry, who in the past have liberally given of their means. Time and again it will be dinned into your ears: "This is not the way Miss Berry would have wanted it."[32]

Weltner's predictions would come true for the first successor to Martha Berry, William Baird, who served as president of the Berry Schools for two brief but tumultuous years. Selected to head Berry under the new title of president, Baird came to Berry early in 1944 from Berea College in Kentucky. Baird seemed a natural choice to succeed Martha Berry, given his background at Berea, a school which shared a mission similar to Berry's. A native of Kentucky and graduate of Berea, Baird served Berea as a faculty member, head of the Agriculture Department, dean of the Foundation School, director of teacher training, and public relations officer.[33] Based on his experience and background, Baird should have been able to integrate himself into life at Berry, but for various reasons he did not.

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[31]Weltner, Report to the Board, April 1943.

[32]Ibid.

[33]Pendley, Sixty, pp. 27-29.

As Martha Berry's first recognized successor, Baird took on an enormous task. As president and school spokesman, he would be expected to interact with all manner of persons (faculty, staff, students, donors, the public) who came into contact with the schools. Baird's personal life hampered his ability to take on this responsibility, specifically because his wife's poor health forced her to remain in Kentucky.[34] In an environment such as Berry, where propriety and social amenities were highly regarded, Baird's capacity to socialize would be handicapped.

Baird's main difficulty in taking over the reins of Berry was in making himself liked and respected. He was undertaking an almost impossible task, replacing the beloved Martha Berry, and all of his actions and decisions would be publicly weighed against her legacy. In presenting a statement of his intentions before the Board of Trustees a few months after his selection, Baird did not shy away from the enormity and importance of his assignment. Baird stated his commitment to the work program and recommended that work supervisors deal with their charges as students, not employees.[35] Baird further recommended restructuring the academic programs into a School of Liberal Arts, a School of Agriculture, a School of Home Economics, and a School of Industrial Arts. Baird also suggested creating an Extension Department which would serve as a liaison between the school and the community, offering

> speakers for commencement exercises and other public occasions, agricultural information, vital contracts with teachers of agriculture and home economics in rural high schools, rural

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[34]Ibid.

[35]Minutes, Berry Board of Trustees meeting, September 1944, Berry College Archives, Mt. Berry, Georgia.

minister's conferences, and possibly traveling libraries.[36]

This was one of Baird's more radical suggestions, given the school's tendency toward isolation from the community, but it foreshadowed the steps Berry would take over the next ten years to integrate itself more into the community-at-large.

As one might imagine, Baird met resistance from some faculty, staff, and school boosters. During his two-year stint several faculty and staff members resigned or were dismissed.[37] Indicative of the obstacles Baird faced was the removal of Grady Hamrick as principal of the boys' high school. Hamrick was a graduate of Berry who, like many others, had devoted his life to the school. Baird, intent on upgrading the quality of the high school and achieving accreditation, viewed Hamrick as loyal but underqualified for the job, particularly since Hamrick's education and work experience had been exclusively at Berry. Hamrick, as principal and loyal friend of Martha Berry, represented a powerful obstacle to any reforms Baird might wish to make.[38] Hamrick's firing was approved by the Board of Trustees, thus representing one of the first expressions by the Board to support change and reform at Berry.

Baird's ability to lead the school was further hampered by a prevailing notion that he dealt with faculty and staff members in a brusque managerial manner. Many at Berry were critical of Baird for not easing himself into the situation. Instead they believed Baird to be

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[36]Ibid.

[37]Pendley, Sixty, pp.. 30-32.

[38]Byers, For the Glory, pp. 66-68.

overly critical and negative about the school and its supposedly outdated ways. Evelyn Hoge Pendley noted that

> [h]e was . . . terse and candid in letting it be known that he disapproved of much that had been accomplished at Berry in the past and considered The Schools a second-rate institution. He rapidly dismissed and replaced many of The Schools' employees, expressing his intention to take many more similar steps. . . . In various ways he displayed a definitely egotistical inclination.[39]

In such matters, it is always difficult to draw an accurate conclusion about what exactly happened. Baird most certainly ruffled feathers at Berry, but he also faced a biased faculty and staff who would weigh any new leader's actions against those of the beloved Martha Berry. Sixteen years after Baird left Berry, the memory of his tenure still evoked emotional reaction as evidenced by the officially sanctioned school administrative history in which Pendley described him as:

> potentially a good school administrator, [who] did not take time to learn the spirit and special heritage of The Schools. . . . (H)e failed to recognize the abilities of men who had helped build Berry and to whom he could have turned for certain types of guidance; he appeared too anxious to elevate himself by authority rather than by endearing himself to the hearts of his employees; he was in too great haste to accomplish the task set before him.[40]

Baird's difficulty in leading Berry was complicated by the growing involvement of the Board of Trustees in the operations of the school. In the past, Martha Berry had presented her wishes to the Board, which largely rubber stamped them. With Berry's death, the Trustees began to

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[39]Pendley, Sixty, p. 32.

[40]Ibid.

expand their duties, particularly revising the school's mission. This trend had begun during Keown's administration as is evidenced by the Weltner report. In May, 1944, the Board asserted its authority by amending the school's bylaws, creating the office of president and defining its duties as follows:

> [T]he chief executive of the corporation shall be the President, who shall be elected annually by the Board of Trustees, and who shall be in charge of and responsible for the operations of The School, both in its fiscal and educational affairs. The President shall carry out the policies of the board and shall report annually or oftener to the board or the executive committee. He shall prepare for the approval of the budget committee a budget covering all estimated receipts and disbursements for the incoming year. He shall perform all duties customarily performed by the head of a college.[41]

The Board further extended its supervisory role over the schools by creating several subcommittees, among them the executive committee, the investment committee, the committee of education, the budget committee, and the committee on buildings and grounds. These subcommittees would soon undertake a full evaluation of the school and draft a series of recommendations that would play a great role in effecting future reform. Indicative of the board's expanding role was its decision that the executive committee meet bi-monthly or more often during the early portion of Baird's presidency.[42]

In July, 1945, the Board adopted the Statutes of the Berry Schools.[43]

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[41]Minutes, Berry Board of Trustee, May 1944, Berry College Archives, Mt. Berry, Georgia.

[42]Ibid.

[43]Minutes, Berry Board of Trustees, July 1945, Berry College Archives, Mt. Berry, Georgia.

Written by Philip Weltner, the Statutes reflected suggestions made in Weltner's 1943 report. The more notable changes implemented were the adoption of a school budget and the restructuring of the academic programs (based on a compromise between Weltner and Baird's suggestions). Furthermore, the work program was revamped, and the school year was expanded to nine months.[44]

At its 1945 meeting, the Board made several important changes reflective of the range of issues the school would face in a new era in which it was forced to reconcile its traditions with the future. The boys' everyday uniforms were changed from bib overalls to blue shirts and denim trousers, interscholastic sports were instituted, and teachers were requested to prepare course outlines and submit weekly lesson plans.[45] The various reforms made by the Board in 1945 were indicative of its new responsibility and influence. In the past such changes would have been made or not made according to the wishes of Martha Berry. Now the final decision on school matters rested firmly with the Board. Baird and subsequent Berry presidents would not have the degree of control that Martha Berry had. This lack of command would make the relationship between the president and the Board a potentially tense one.

Perhaps Baird was handicapped most by the fact he was an outsider, a suggestion made all the more plausible when one considers that the next Berry president was an in-house product. Baird's immediate successor, James Lindsay, had been hired by Baird in 1944 to serve as head of the

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[44]Ibid.

[45]Ibid; Pendley, Sixty, pp. 29-31.

department of education, a post he held for one year until being made principal of the boys' high school.[46] Although Lindsay had served only two years at Berry, he was a known commodity. In his brief tenure at the high school, he made himself a part of campus life and gained a reputation for being an affable, fair, and open-minded administrator. Lindsay's reputation on campus was enhanced by his wife, who taught in the education department. Faculty and staff spouses were expected to contribute to Berry's social milieu and, as Evelyn Hoge Pendley has noted, Lindsay's wife was "continually a great asset to him both socially and professionally."[47]

Lindsay, more fortunately than Baird, benefited from a wider range of support among the faculty and staff, possibly because he focused his attention chiefly on academic matters during his five-year tenure (1946-1951). Lindsay's background in the field of education led him to make a number of meaningful reforms which improved the status and treatment of Berry's faculty and staff. During Lindsay's tenure, faculty and staff housing conditions improved, staff members received social security benefits, and a faculty newsletter was started. Most notably, Lindsay pioneered the formation of a Faculty Council, a necessary reform if Berry were to become accredited. This new Faculty Council proved to be an important achievement.[48] During Martha Berry's tenure, many faculty were loyal to her and thus were willing to forego meaningful input into Berry's

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[46]Pendley, Sixty, pp. 35-36.

[47]Ibid, p. 36.

[48]Ibid., pp. 36-40.

operation. Now that she no longer led the school, faculty members would have to transfer their loyalties from an individual to an institution.

With a greater voice in the schools' affairs, particularly in academic matters, the faculty contributed greatly to guiding through many key reforms the school would make over the next fifteen years. During Lindsay's five-year stint as president, the Council drafted several reports recommending areas in need of attention and methods for improving those areas. Reforms made as a result of Faculty Council suggestions led Berry to integrate itself more into the educational life of the region. At the suggestion of the Faculty Council, the college arranged a student-teacher program with the State Board of Education and improved its home economics program by opening a nursery school for child care training. In addition, a reading improvement program was established between Berry and the Darlington School in Rome and an attempt was made to transform the Possum Trot community and school into a model training facility.[49]

Berry's willingness to establish ties with the local community was partially in response to the shifting public scene in Georgia, the South, and the United States. During Lindsay's tenure, Georgia added the twelfth grade to its public schools. This addition further weakened the existence of the boys' and girls' high schools, because more and more Georgia students would be able to receive a twelve-year diploma for free. Because of Georgia's expanded system, coupled with the state's adoption of the three percent sales tax in 1951, Berry would be forced to reevaluate the

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[49]Ibid; Compiled from various faculty handbooks, 1947-1956. Minutes, Faculty Council, March, 1949, Berry College Archives, Mt. Berry, Georgia.

school's mission in light of these reforms.[50]

Economic growth in the South was beginning to affect the Berry Schools. Inflation, coupled with the decline in enrollment and a decline in donations from old friends of Martha Berry, resulted in a reduction of revenues for the Berry Schools, not to mention a decline in the number and quality of applicants. The inefficiency of some of the school work programs, especially those that produced goods and equipment which were increasingly cheaper to buy, contributed to the need for economic replanning.[51] Berry was further handicapped financially by a neglected physical plant desperately in need of attention. Because of these and other developments, the gap between school expenditures and income grew wider and wider. As a way to solve these problems, the Board of Trustees implemented a new financial organization for the school.

In order to insure continued prosperity and to better cope with the more complex post-war economy, the Trustees, in 1948, adopted an amendment to the Statutes and Bylaws of the Berry Schools which created a separate financial division for the school.[52] This separate department would be headed by a business manager and director of finance who would have general supervision over the business, industrial, and financial affairs of the School. The nature of fiscal reform at Berry was suggestive of several shifts taking place in education and business. In an effort to

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[50]W.B. Stubbs, "Facts Suggested for Consideration of the Trustees with Reference to the Report of the Objectives Committee of the Board of Trustees," November 1948, Berry College Archives, Mt. Berry, Georgia.

[51]Ibid.

[52]Minutes, Berry Board of Trustees, November 1948, Berry College Archives, Mt. Berry, Georgia.

streamline management, thereby boosting efficiency and sustaining financial viability, many institutions throughout the country were experimenting with different kinds of organizational methods. Berry's Board of Trustees, which had continuously been flexing its muscles since 1942, overhauled the school's administrative structure with the hopes of streamlining operations, cutting costs, and increasing revenues.

Given the number of administrative changes at Berry since Martha Berry's death and recognizing the need to plan long range for Berry's survival, the Board began to further impose its will on the school. In making these financial reforms, the Board put the newly created budget officer and financial officer directly under their control. The president no longer directly supervised the school's financial activities. By its actions the Board created two separate spheres at Berry: academic and financial. Because of the increasingly complex regional and national fiscal climate, the school would have to revamp its economic operations, eventually creating a separate financial office.[53]

Berry's first business manager, Clarence Walker, enacted a number of reforms which would be useful in providing the school with a reliable source of income other than donations. Improvements were made in the work program and a five-year plan was instituted to expand the forestry program. This latter reform would provide Berry with a steady source of income and paved the way for Berry's property to be designated, in April 1948, as a game sanctuary by the Wildlife Service of the Fish and Game

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[53]Report of the Berry Board of Trustees, November 1948 and November 1951.

Commission.[54]

As a part of the Board and president Lindsay's remodeling efforts, several committees and programs were initiated for the purpose of formulating new policies and guidelines. Much of this work reflected the desire of school officials and supporters to maintain Berry's image and standing while making it better able to survive and prosper in a changing world. A 1947 conference held at the school resulted in the creation of a Berry policy designed to further integrate the school into the region. Among the issues debated at the conference were "How can the Berry Schools contribute to the Berry community, the State of Georgia, the region of the Southeast, and the United States?"[55]

Board of Trustees member Harcourt A. Morgan, former president of the University of Tennessee and a Tennessee Valley Authority Board member, was instrumental in helping to reshape the purposes and policies of the school. Based on Morgan's research and recommendations, the Board revised the Berry Schools' mission. The following partial excerpt from this revision reflects the new direction school ideology would take over the next twenty years:

> The Berry Schools is dedicated to serving youth and instilling principles of service in the hearts and minds of youth. Within the scope of its peculiar opportunities, which include valuable possibilities for understanding, using and integrating all resources of environment, including human and natural, the Schools proposes to exemplify ways of building a nobler civilization.[56]

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[54]Pendley, Sixty, pp. 43-46.

[55]Ibid.

[56]Harcourt A. Morgan, Report to the Berry Board of Trustees, January, 1948, Berry College Archives, Mt. Berry, Georgia.

Berry's new mission had a broader scope and was indicative of some school officials' ambition to mold the school into a modern and competitive institution. Most notably, these new guidelines deemphasized the rural focus of Berry, although the restrictive rural admissions policy would continue for another eight years.

Another report, drafted for the Board of Trustees in 1948 by W. B. Stubbs, executive director of the John Bulow Campbell Foundation, also noted the decline in rural population. Stubbs speculated that the need for rurally oriented schools would continue, yet he rightly recognized that the Berry's enrollment was continuing to decline. "The number of applications received from acceptable students in 1948 exceeded the number that could be admitted only in the group of boys seeking admission to the college freshman class."[57] Total enrollment at The Berry Schools had dropped from the all-time high of 1,252 in 1940, to 922 in 1947. Of particular concern to Stubbs was the deteriorating caliber of students applying to the high schools.

Poor student quality and declining admissions continued to be a vexing problem for the school throughout the late forties and early fifties. In a groundbreaking report drafted in the fall of 1950, the Board's policy committee suggested that the school's lack of accreditation was the main reason for declining admissions and standards.[58] Graduates were handicapped by this and so students often chose to leave Berry in

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[57]W.B. Stubbs, "Facts Suggested for Consideration of the Trustees with Reference to the Report of the Objectives Committee of the Board of Trustees," November 1948, Berry College Archives, Mt. Berry, Georgia.

[58]Policy Committee Report, Berry Board of Trustees, November 1950, Berry College Archives, Mt. Berry, Georgia.

order to complete their degree at an accredited institution. The committee recommended that the schools vigorously pursue accreditation from the Southern Association of Colleges and Secondary Schools. Knowing the conflict this issue raised, the Board couched its recommendation by suggesting that accreditation in and of itself should not be the goal, but that fulfilling the requirements necessary for accreditation would elevate the school's academic quality.[59]

The most notable component of the policy committee's 1950 report was the emphasis it placed on the college. In the future, funds budgeted for educational expenditures would be prioritized so that the college would receive special preference. Clearly the Board was beginning to recognize that the high schools were to play a less significant role in Berry's future. By 1951 the Board had introduced a proposal to merge the boys' and girls' high schools.[60]

In order to make Berry more inviting and to help reduce the number of students who left school before graduation, Dr. Lindsay instituted a number of reforms in student life, most notably creating the Inter-Society Council. Composed of the presidents of all recognized student organizations, this council was a forerunner of student government at Berry. Useful changes were also made in the work program which allowed students to receive academic credit for work.[61]

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[59]Ibid.

[60]Pendley, Sixty, pp. 40.

[61]Ibid., pp. 41-42.

Besides student policy changes and modifications to the schools' organization, Berry officials began to construct a public relations plan geared toward increasing the public and private donations made to the Berry Schools. Raising money had been Martha Berry's greatest talent and her death had greatly impaired the schools' ability to solicit funds. In order to counteract the loss of Miss Berry, school officials began a vigorous publicity campaign, with the alumni and local community organizations being especially targeted. Modern fundraising techniques would become a part of the newly emerging Berry.

President Lindsay's regime was untimely cut short with his sudden retirement in the spring of 1951 (he would die shortly thereafter). His successor, Samuel Cook, would serve as acting head from 1951-53. Cook's administration can rightly be called a waiting period, while the Board began the arduous task of finding a suitable replacement for Lindsay.[62] Despite the title "acting president," Cook proved to be an effective manager who tried as best he could to cope with mounting problems. Recognizing the diminishing need for the girls' high school, Cook recommended gradually eliminating it. Following his suggestion, the Board moved in February of 1953 to accept no more freshmen high school girls. Cook's administration also was confronted with declining college applications.[63]

Financial problems continued to mount. The second term of the 1952 school session had operated at a loss, which prompted the reduction to a

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[62]Pendley, Sixty, pp. 47-48.

[63]Ibid.

six-week summer term in 1953. Declining school revenues meant that faculty and staff salaries could not be raised enough to remain even moderately competitive. The result was an exodus of faculty and staff, among them Clarence Walker, who left to take a higher paying position at the Coca-Cola Company in Atlanta.[64]

The most significant development during Cook's tenure was the critical evaluation made of the school by J. M. Goddard, executive secretary of the Commission of Higher Education of the Southern Association of Colleges and Secondary Schools. Goddard explicitly outlined the changes Berry would have to make in order to receive accreditation. Discharging these recommendations immediately became the schools' objective. Chief among Goddard's suggestions were: 1) reducing the number of degrees and majors; 2) establishing higher grading standards; 3) encouraging faculty development and reeducation; 4) reducing faculty work load; 5) raising faculty salaries; 6) disclosing school finances more thoroughly; 7) upgrading the library; and 8) restructuring the school so that more administrative personnel reported to the president than to the board.[65]

By October 1953 a permanent president, Robert Lambert, had been chosen to relieve Cook. Lambert's selection as Berry president seems perplexing because of his lack of formal experience in higher education. Lambert's introduction to Berry was as a "pilgrim," one of those who

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[64]Ibid., pp. 49-50.

[65]J.M. Goddard, "Report on Berry's Accreditation Request," submitted to the Berry Board of Trustees, September 1952, Berry College Archives, Mt. Berry, Georgia.

followed Emily Vanderbilt Hammond's practice of bringing potential donors to the school for visits. A minister at the Calvary Episcopal Church in Cincinnati, Ohio, since 1931, Lambert's only knowledge of higher education came from his brief stint as trustee of the University of Cincinnati.[66] The Board's decision to hire Lambert seems motivated partially by a desire to solve the school's mounting financial problems. Based on his actions while president, Lambert also seems to have been selected to bring change, even if it meant stepping on people's toes.

Reminiscent of Baird, Lambert alienated Berry faculty and staff, partly because of his manner and partly because of the rift that continued to grow between old-line and new-line faculty and staff members. Older faculty and staff, many of whom were reaching retirement age, were ignored or pushed out early. Dr. Cook, who had returned to his duties as Dean of the College, found himself competing for authority with Robert E. Lee, who had been hired by Lambert in the fall of 1954 to become assistant dean of the college.[67] Exacerbating his unfriendly relationship with these more traditional employees was Lambert's social activity. Apparently forgetting or perhaps unaware of the social circles in which Martha Berry traveled, some faculty and staff criticized the Lamberts for being frivolous (as evidenced by their inauguration party) and with being more concerned about personal interests than the school. Berry alumni too became disenchanted with Lambert's leadership, accusing him of ignoring longstanding traditions and allowing students to ignore rules and

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[66]Pendley, Sixty, pp. 52-53.

[67]Ibid., pp. 68 and 72.

regulations.[68]

Lambert confronted more than just disenchanted faculty and alumni. The school's financial woes continued and enrollment continued to drop, reaching 753 by March 1955. Faculty/staff turnover remained high. The Board of Trustees underwent an important change as John A. Sibley stepped down as chairman and was replaced by William McChesney Martin, chairman of the Federal Reserve. Martin's selection as chair reflected a continuation in the shift that was taking place at Berry.[69] Financial viability and overhauling the college in order to achieve accreditation had become the Board's primary concerns. To that end, the Board's educational inventory committee, under the guidance of Philip Weltner, outlined areas that needed to be addressed in order to achieve accreditation. Most significantly, the committee recommended the reexamination of the school's policy of admitting students only from rural areas and suggested that the high schools be merged into one co-educational institution.[70]

The committee also suggested: 1) upgrading course offerings, 2) improving faculty quality, 3) increasing faculty input regarding curriculum decisions, 4) introducing a tenure system, 5) increasing faculty salaries so Berry could attract and keep personnel whose qualifications met S.A.C.S. requirements, 6) improving the library, 7)

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[68]Ibid; Alumni survey, June 1990.

[69]Report of the Berry Board of Trustees, March 1955, Berry College Archives, Mt. Berry, Georgia.

[70]Philip Weltner, Report of the Committee of Educators on Berry, March, 1954, unpublished manuscript, Berry College Archives, Mt. Berry, Georgia.

establishing faculty ranks, and 8) creating a dean of instruction.[71]

These various recommendations grew out of several detailed studies done throughout 1954. The subtext of these various reports is the need and desire to transform Berry into an accredited, modern liberal arts college. For example, Donald Agnew, in his study of the faculty, made several observations which reflect this trend. Agnew called for higher standards among the faculty, which could be achieved by not hiring too many Berry graduates and by encouraging professional development among the faculty.[72]

Further evidence of the shift of Berry away from its vocational roots is the overwhelming call throughout the various reports to hire faculty with Ph.D.'s, particularly to head divisions and departments. Also, these 1954 committee reports suggest various ways to revamp the general education requirements to put them more in line with the standardized curricula at accredited liberal arts colleges throughout the region. Among suggestions which reflect this shift in emphasis were expanding language offerings, increasing literature requirements, adding a philosophy component to the religion department, upgrading science offerings and facilities, and eliminating courses which were not required by the State Department of Education for certain majors. Particular emphasis was placed on transforming the education department into a more up-to-date program. Of final note was the Board's 1955 decision to close

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[71]Ibid.

[72]Pendley, Sixty, pp. 59-61.

the girls' high school.[73]

It is clear that Lambert was very supportive of implementing these recommendations and indeed had been instrumental in helping coordinate and draft the various reports. However, like Baird's, Lambert's personal style apparently led him to continuously clash with inflexible faculty and staff unwilling to fix what they thought wasn't broken. By throwing his support behind assistant dean Lee instead of dean Cook, who had served at Berry for close to forty years, Lambert further alienated employees and friends of Berry. Although he tried to initiate changes necessary for accreditation, Lambert found himself being questioned and second-guessed. A decision by the Board of Trustees to overturn Lambert's firing of a school employee seems to have been the proverbial straw that broke the camel's back. Obviously angered at the indecisiveness at Berry and by what he perceived to be the incestuousness nature in which the school operated, Lambert unexpectedly resigned in June, 1955.[74]

Lambert's tenure had been short but rancorous, and his leaving was no less so. Although he publicly never explained his reasons for quitting, Lambert clearly was angered by the unwillingness of some to shed the past and make Berry over into an institution that could survive into the 1960's and beyond. Apparently still exasperated at his former colleagues, Lambert wrote a letter to the editor of the Rome News-Tribune in the spring of 1956, almost a year after he resigned, which sheds light on his attitudes toward the Berry Schools.

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[73]Report of the Berry Board of Trustees, March 1955, Berry College Archives, Mt. Berry, Georgia.

[74]Report of the Berry Board of Trustees, June 1955, Berry College Archives, Mt. Berry, Georgia.

> It seems necessary for me to speak out boldly in regard to the situation at The Berry Schools and College where, according to the newspapers, at least nine of the faculty members will not return next year. Naturally one asks, why this large turnover? I write because some of the students who are graduating this year would like to protest but have been threatened with reprisals: no diplomas. Unfortunately democracy is not practiced on the campus. The students have little to say about conditions. . . independent thinking is not encouraged. The students want and deserve accreditation. The key faculty members who are leaving have made a distinct contribution toward this end. . . . In addition they have made many friends in Rome and have scorned the isolationism sometimes demanded by the campus authorities. Perhaps it would be good for The Schools, the Trustees, and the Community to hear from the students who are so aroused.[75]

Board of Trustee's chair William McChesney Martin would serve as acting vice-president while a search was begun for a new president (although Samuel Cook would supervise the actual day-to-day activities at the school). Berry's new president would have to be a forceful yet diplomatic leader, capable of balancing the visions of the past with the demands of the future. He would have to be able to soothe hurt feelings and damaged egos. He would have to be able to put in place the various suggestions and recommendations necessary for accreditation. Most importantly, he would have to find a way to "sell" the school to potential students, potential faculty and staff, and potential donors. For private educational institutions like Berry, the dramatic shift taking place in the South's educational and economic conditions meant they would have to change or perish. Berry, faced with dwindling student enrollment, escalating costs, and declining revenues, desperately needed a leader who could successfully guide Berry into the coming decade.

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[75]Rome News-Tribune, June 19, 1955, p. 1.

CHAPTER 5

BERTRAND MODERNIZES BERRY

The fourteen years following Martha Berry's death had been a tumultuous, although not entirely unproductive, chapter in The Berry Schools' history. During those years, it had become quite apparent to Berry supporters and employees alike that the school would have to change or face the threat of extinction. Global, national and regional developments were transforming the educational playing field, while internal dissension only retarded efforts to reorganize the school. For Berry to endure and thrive, it would need a leader who could diplomatically guide the school out of its malaise and into a more successful future, as well as provide the stability and continuity that had been sorely lacking since Martha Berry's death. He or she would have to assuage fears among longtime Berry supporters that change would not spell an end to Martha Berry's vision. Many challenges and uncompleted projects awaited this new president, the most pressing being accreditation and financial security. But other issues would have to be addressed, among them improving student life, redesigning the work program, evaluating the high schools' viability, and reassessing Berry's traditional rural mission.

Some thought the school needed another Martha Berry; however, the South of 1956 was much different from the one from which Martha Berry had come. Her South was dominated by a stagnant, one-dimensional economy and ruled by paternalism, *noblesse oblige*, tradition, and rugged individualism. Berry certainly would benefit from having another

visionary leader, but realistically the school needed a chief executive knowledgeable about the increasingly complex, specialized world of professional education and attentive to changing conditions in the South. In John R. Bertrand, the Berry Schools found a leader who possessed these qualities and whose education, training, and background prepared him to modernize Berry.

Born in 1915, Bertrand spent his childhood in Texas, where his father was a moderately successful farmer. His father's sudden death in 1932 thrust the seventeen-year-old Bertrand into the position of family caretaker when he took over management of the family farm.[1] In 1936, Bertrand began attending Texas Technological College, eventually receiving his Bachelor's and Master's degrees in 1940 and 1941 respectively. After a brief stint as a naval captain in World War II, Bertrand went on to receive his Ph.D. in 1950 from Cornell University. Bertrand's personal and educational background placed him in the mold of many leaders of his generation. After World War II, Southern boosters increasingly advocated professionalizing the South, giving it more credentials, diversifying its population.[2]

Professionally, Bertrand's training was in agricultural education, and during his career he had taught at and been acting dean of the school of agriculture at Sam Houston Teachers College. Bertrand served as dean and professor of the Basic Division (General College) at the A. and M. College of Texas. Directly before coming to Berry, he served as dean and

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[1]Pendley, Sixty, p. 76.

[2]Cobb, Selling, pp. 64, 81-83.

director of the College of Agriculture at the University of Nevada, Reno.[3]

During his pre-Berry career, Bertrand had gained valuable leadership skills which would serve him well at Berry. Upon first arriving at Berry in late August, 1956, Bertrand diligently began integrating himself into life at the school and set about learning the school's history and traditions. Rather than trying to distance himself from Martha Berry's legacy, Bertrand sought out information about her. In the process, he ingratiated himself with powerful figures at the school, thereby gaining acceptance and support. Many faculty and staff became captivated by Bertrand's willingness to become a part of Berry and not just its supervisor.[4]

In early interactions with faculty and staff, Bertrand also stressed his desire for them to assist in the process of changing The Berry Schools and planning for their future.[5] These would not be idle comments, for Bertrand followed through on his goals and consistently turned to faculty and staff for suggestions and guidance. His inclusion of the faculty in school affairs and his attentiveness to their opinions and feelings brought Bertrand a firm base of support. Bertrand's acceptance by the faculty and staff was reinforced by his status as a family man.[6] With the exception of James Lindsay, Berry's leaders during the preceding fourteen years had been handicapped by their home lives. Bertrand would become

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[3]Pendley, Sixty, p. 77.

[4]Pendley, Sixty, pp. 77.

[5]John R. Bertrand, Excerpts from "The Berry Schools, Past, Present, and Future," address given September 3, 1956, Berry College Archives.

[6]Pendley, Sixty, p. 79.

known as a gracious man who professed strong Christian values, and his wife, Annabel, would quickly become a respected and admired campus figure as well.[7]

Further helping to solidify Bertrand's support was the clear sense of purpose and vision he brought to the job. In his first address to a general meeting of all employees, entitled "The Berry Schools, Past, Present and Future," Bertrand gave the first clear indication of his desire to keep Martha Berry alive in the hearts and minds of Berry employees and alumni. Throughout the speech, he referred to Berry's unique qualities, making special note of the work program and the spiritual life. In explaining why he and his wife had decided to come to Berry, Bertrand said he found the school "unique and not just another institution."[8] By praising Martha Berry's vision and actions and paying homage to her reputation, Bertrand allayed fears that the school's past would be jettisoned in favor of modernizing changes.

But during his speech, Bertrand also wisely managed to separate himself and his aspirations from Martha Berry by noting the tremendous changes that had taken place in the South since World War II, and acknowledging how those changes had altered the criteria upon which educational institutions operated. Berry would not be served by "clinging to the status quo."[9] His stated objectives for the schools built upon this principle. He pushed for the development of a more well-defined

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[7]Ibid.

[8]Bertrand, "Past, Present and Future."

[9]Ibid.

organizational structure for the administration. He advocated increasing endowment funds in order to raise faculty salaries, thereby attracting the more qualified personnel necessary for accreditation. But Bertrand made it clear the most important and pressing issue, the one which the school needed to "bend all efforts toward," was immediate accreditation by S.A.C.S.[10]

Testimony to Bertrand's popularity and acceptance was his immediate success in fulfilling many of his stated objectives. This early success would not have been possible had the Board of Trustees not endorsed his recommendations for change. Berry trustees consistently threw their support to Bertrand. Board chairman Martin put tremendous trust and responsibility in Bertrand's hands. In a February, 1958 letter to Bertrand, Martin wrote:

> I was very much encouraged with the progress being made at the School and I am confident you have the full support of all the members of the Board. . . . You are in the last stages, I think, of cleaning up a very difficult situation, and I am certain that by 1960 all this will be behind us.[11]

Martin and the Board had brought Bertrand to Berry to "clean up" a "difficult situation," obviously referring to the chaotic and unproductive period since 1942. Bertrand knew what his charge was from the Board and effectively fulfilled it.

Much of Bertrand's success should be attributed to Martin's presence as Board chairman. It was Martin who apprised Bertrand of the

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[10]Ibid; Pendley, Sixty, pp. 78-79.

[11]Unpublished letter from William McChesney Martin to John R. Bertrand, Febraury 17, 1956. Berry College Archives.

difficulties Berry had faced, and he particularly helped Bertrand to understand the Berry tradition. "There is a great opportunity for someone who has the patience to build on the solid foundation which is there rather than trying to reconstitute the foundation before building." [12] As Chairman of the Federal Reserve Bank and long-time national business leader, Martin regularly kept abreast of changes and modifications in the world of finance and business. He knew that if Berry were to endure, it would need to be reorganized into an institution that would be useful and competitive through the 20th century and beyond. Martin and many other trustees willingly gave Bertrand their steadfast backing in order to pull Berry out of its downward spiral.[13]

During the first two years of his administration, Bertrand orchestrated a remarkable number of changes and improvements. Unquestionably, Bertrand's most meaningful accomplishment was receiving accreditation for the school from the Southern Association of Colleges and Secondary Schools in December, 1957.[14] Instrumental in helping the school become accredited were several reforms made between 1956 and 1957. A tenure policy for faculty was enacted, the school's fiscal year was changed from a January-December cycle to a July-June cycle, and an additional $10,000, above the money already allotted to meet SACS

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[12]Unpublished letter from William McChesney Martin to John R. Bertrand, March 2, 1956, Berry College Archives.

[13]Ibid; Pendley, Sixty, p. 84.

[14]"Berry College Receives Accreditation by SACS," Rome News-Tribune, December 8, 1957.

requirements, was allocated for upgrading the library holdings.[15]

Many of these changes resulted from recommendations made prior to Bertrand's presidency, thus it would be unfair to say he accomplished these reforms alone; the ground for accreditation had been prepared by previous administrations. Nonetheless, Betrand guided them to fruition by blending support from all quarters. At a chapel convocation to celebrate the awarding of accreditation, Bertrand set the tone for his future objectives, noting:

> Educational institutions today cannot live in yesterday's world. While being loyal to their traditions, schools must keep abreast of--no, must be in the vanguard, so as to give sound direction to--rapidly changing times.[16]

Bertrand saw accreditation as only one step in the process of transforming the school into a well-respected liberal arts institution, a goal which engendered some disapproval, particularly mong alumni.[17]

While accreditation was a monumental achievement, it was only one of many during the early years of Bertrand's productive administration. Chief among his accomplishments was reevaluating the school's policies and procedures. As part of this ongoing effort, Bertrand oversaw the reorganiztion of Berry's administrative procedures. Noteworthy changes included the addition of a dean of students, an office of information, a vice-president, and a director of development. Furthermore, the Bylaws

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[15]Pendley, Sixty, pp. 86 and 91.

[16]John Bertrand, untitled convocation address, December 6, 1957, Berry College Archives.

[17]Pendley, Sixty, pp. 95-96.

were amended to more explicitly define the responsibilities of the president, as well as expand the scope of his power.[18] Bertrand was even given the authority to make salary adjustments, provided he remain within the budget. Administrative changes would periodically be made throughout Bertrand's tenure, and common threads linked these administrative reforms. Of primary importance to Bertrand and the Board was expanding the professional credentials of administrators, as well as streamlining administrative operations with an eye toward modernity and fiscal responsibility. To that end, the school began a leave-of-absence program for staff who wished to upgrade their skill and training.[19]

Besides revising the school's administrative procedures, Bertrand, along with the faculty and staff, began remodeling the school's admission policies, slowly moving toward the unstated goal of abolishing the rural requirement for admission. At his first Board meeting in November, 1956, Betrand identified the principal considerations for admission to The Berry Schools as 1) a definite financial handicap, 2) earnestness of purpose, 3) a willingness to work, and 4) a capacity for both spiritual and academic growth.[20] It was recognized that preference in admission should be given to qualified applicants from rural areas, but by deemphasizing the rural requirement Bertrand and the Board were moving the Berry away from its historically restrictive admissions policy. The next year the

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[18]Report of the Berry Board of Trustees, November 1956; Report of the Berry Board of Trustees, June 1957.

[19]Ibid.

[20]Report of the Berry Board of Trustees, November 1956, Berry College Archives.

Board went even further, authorizing the admission of "very carefully selected" foreign exchange students.[21]

It had generally become an accepted fact that were the schools to do more than merely survive, school leaders would have to upgrade standards, attract more capable students, and rethink student policies. This latter issue was one Bertrand undertook with great care. A heavily regulated student life had always been a central feature of the Berry tradition, but the changing social norms meant these traditions were becoming obsolete. Yet changes in student life would not be easily accepted by alumni and supporters of Berry who clung to these customs, viewing them as one of the few tangible reminders of Martha Berry's world. School officials themselves would step lightly around the issue of changing student life for fear that it might disrupt the school's patronage and image. However, they were also well aware of the need to modernize student life or lose out to other institutions willing to abandon old-fashioned regulations and policies.[22]

The debate over reforming student life became complicated, as a number of Berry employees and supporters suggested that the schools should exploit their reputation, even while transforming Berry into an institution of the future. Since her death, alumni and friends had sought ways to memorialize Martha Berry, thereby helping to keep the school in the public's eye.[23] Rather than ignore or downplay these efforts, Bertrand

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[21]Report of the Berry Board of Trustees, November 1957, Berry College Archives. Pendley, Sixty, pp. 87-90.

[22]Pendley, Sixty, pp. 97-99.

[23]Alumni Survey, June 1990; Pendley, Sixty, pp. 98-100.

and the Board of Trustees supported and encouraged them. At its November 1956 meeting, the Trustees endorsed Bertrand's recommendation that special markers be placed on U.S. Highway 27 to commemorate it as the Martha Berry Highway. It was also suggested that a proposal be drafted requesting the U.S. Postal Service recognize Martha Berry with a special stamp and that the possibility of opening of a Southern Highlands museum at Berry be explored.[24]

The special focus placed by school leaders on Berry's history gradually became part of a coordinated effort to capitalize on the school's reputation and legacy. Former and current school officials and friends assisted Inez Henry and Harnett Kane as they wrote what would become a bestselling biography of Martha Berry, Miracle in the Mountains. Administrators and trustees devised plans for perpetuating the school's heritage. Bertrand created the position of director of information to help publicize the schools and act as an intermediary between Berry and the public.[25]

Efforts such as these to venerate the memory of the schools' founder smoothed over hurt feelings among Berry alumni and friends, but not entirely. Henceforth, President Bertrand would have to consider the wishes and desires of what was becoming an ever more powerful alumni lobby, particularly when it came to matters of school tradition. Following the death of Martha Berry, donations from outside the South declined. Without her connections and charisma, the schools found it

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[24]Report of the Berry Board of Trustees, November 1956.

[25]Pendley, Sixty, p. 108.

necessary to focus fundraising efforts on the alumni. This trend produced alumni who were not afraid to disagree with Bertrand and the Board, particularly when it came to the modifications in school policy. Indicative of the more powerful alumni lobby was the inclusion of the alumni president as a full voting member of the Board of Trustees.[26]

Bertrand devised an ingenious method for allowing the alumni to voice their concerns. During the 1958 spring semester, Bertrand appointed a joint committee of alumni and students to investigate student regulations.[27] By including student members on this committee, Bertrand made a giant step toward providing students with a greater say-so over their lives at Berry and pacified student displeasure over the haphazardly enforced and sorely outdated Berry code of behavior.

This committee was guided in its investigations by recent events at Berry. Since Martha Berry's death and the end of World War II, the average age of Berry students (both high school and college) had increased, and this put greater pressure on school regulations. Particularly outmoded were the rules regarding smoking, dating, leaving campus, wearing uniforms, and attending mandatory chapel services.[28] The inconsistency in leadership between 1942 and 1956 had bred inconsistency in the enforcement of student policy. During Cook's tenure as president, as well as during Martin's interim presidency, Cook gained a reputation for overlooking minor conduct violations. By the time of Bertrand's

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[26]Alumni survey; Pendley, Sixty, pp. 121-122.

[27]"Report of Joint Alumni and Student Committee On Student Regulations," May 18, 1958, Berry College Archives.

[28]Ibid., Pendley, Sixty, pp. 96-99.

arrival students were openly ignoring uniform regulations and not attending mandatory chapel.[29]

Mindful of Berry traditions and the danger of alienating Berry alumni and friends, Bertrand both attempted to impose a greater uniformity to policy enforcement and ease some of the restrictions. In a July, 1957 announcement, he very specifically detailed where and how male and female students could interact with each other, going so far as to designate certain areas "on bounds" and "out-of-bounds" for male-female student conduct.[30] Such a policy was not new at Berry, but Bertrand's statement was designed more to send the message that student contact policy would not be ignored. But Bertrand also, by easing up a bit on some restrictions, such as the time and location of student parties, proved he was willing to change to meet the times.[31]

Following on the heels of Bertrand's charge, the joint alumni student committee laid the groundwork for overhauling Berry's student life regulations. Among the more notable changes made by the committee included developing a student government organization for the college and easing the women's dress code.[32] But despite these few changes, students were still required to wear uniforms, were still restricted in their ability to leave campus, and still could not use cars.

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[29]John R. Bertrand, "Education is Our Business," Report to the Berry Board of Trustees, October 1957.

[30]Campus memorandum from John R. Bertrand, July 1957, Berry College Archives.

[31]Ibid.

[32]Report of Joint Alumni and Student Committee, 1957, Berry College Archives.

Student life was not the only issue which hindered Berry's renovation. While Berry had maintained a long tradition of producing and creating most of its food and equipment, the viability of many production departments had declined dramatically. In fact, many programs, such as the dairy, the bakery, the store, and the pig farm, were costing the school money, despite negligible labor costs.[33] People inside and outside the school began to recognize the inevitable, that these programs would have to be seriously modified or abandoned--a prospect that could create disagreement among the alumni. In order to investigate these money-losing programs, the Board, in the fall of 1957, retained George Kavanaugh, comptroller of the University of Kentucky, as a consultant to study the schools' business affairs. In his report to the Board, Kavanaugh noted the high costs of maintaining these programs and recommended that the schools revise or abandon them.[34]

Echoing Kavanuagh's report was E.W. Moise, long-time Berry trustee and president of the Campbell Foundation. In a report, Moise noted the inefficiency and outmoded nature of many of Berry's traditional business procedures and policies:

> In determining what would be best for Berry students the fact should be borne in mind that farming has undergone a great revolution and can now best be carried on by far fewer people than in the past. . . . Is the farm conducted for educational purposes or for some other purpose? Clearly that other purpose

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[33]Report of the Berry Board of Trustees, October 1957, Berry College Archives. Report of the Berry Board of Trustees, March 1958, Berry College Archives.

[34]Report of the Berry Board of Trustees, April, 1958, Berry College Archives.

cannot be profit.[35]

These reports only reinforced what was becoming obvious; times were changing and socioeconomic pressures were rendering many aspects of Berry's operations obsolete. Yet these changes also afforded the schoosl new opportunities to expand and grow by capitalizing on these changes. The Board, President Bertrand, faculty, staff, and some alumni recognized that now was the crucial time for the schools--make changes or continue losing money, make changes or continue losing quality students, make changes or face an uncertain future and possible extinction.

Remarkable among the suggestions made during this period of reexamination was the recommendation to allow qualified day students from the Rome area to be admitted, "thereby performing a needed educational service."[36] As part of Berry's modernizing efforts, it was reaching out to the community and the region. Martha Berry's charisma could not keep the schools afloat or viable. The long-standing animosity of many Romans toward Berry would have to be eased. Bertrand held out the first olive branch when he suggested and the Board approved the first-ever sale of Berry land to the city of Rome--for the purposes of constructing a suburban subdivision (another indicator of the changing times).[37]

In pursuing financial stability, the board and Bertrand focused more and more attention on financial development. Personal philanthropy as a

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[35]Ibid.

[36]Report of the Berry Board of Trustees, February 1958, Berry College Archives.

[37]Pendley, Sixty, p. 91.

way of life was dying out. Individual donors who had been Martha Berry's bread and butter were aging or had already died. The schools' operating costs were growing and would only continue to do so, not to mention the financial drain resulting from the schools' industrial and work program. Raising money had always been a top priority at Berry, as at any non-profit institution; however, the methodology of fund raising had to change along with the schools as a whole.[38]

The office of the Director of Development became a permanent position at Berry. The Development Office was charged with selling the schools to donors, a challenge considering Berry's success at fundraising had always been dependent upon its reputation as an institution for the poor. The truly indigant had never attended Berry in any significant numbers, but the changes Bertrand was suggesting made it appear to many as if Berry would be turned into an elite institution which the poor and unfortunate would be unable to attend. This was a fear echoed consistently by alumni and Berry supporters.[39] If it were to be successful, the Development Office would have to develop a dualistic strategy of promoting Berry as a traditional yet modern institution.

In many ways, Bertrand orchestrated a quiet revolution at Berry in the late 1950's and early 1960's. He provided leadership and inspiration while the schools' faculty and staff keenly explored every aspect of

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[38]John R. Bertrand, "Problems Provide Opportunities for Berry," Report before the Berry Board of Trustees, May 1958, Berry College Archives. G.E. Mattison, "A Report of Public Relations and Fund Raising Possibilities at Berry," Report to the Berry Board of Trustees, December 1958, Berry College Archives.

[39]Pendley, Sixty, pp. 100-101, 121-122.

school life, drafting page after page of recommendations. Bertrand and his supporters mapped out a new agenda for the college, one which they hoped would place it in the vanguard of small southern (even national) liberal arts institutions.[40]

With most revolutions, there are identifiable moments which act as signposts of the enormous changes taking place. One such signpost at Berry was president Bertrand's groundbreaking report to the Board of Trustees in December, 1958, entitled "Berry Looks Toward the Future." Aware as always of how radically the world around Berry was changing, Bertrand highlighted the challenges and pressures confronting the schools and stressed his committment to making Berry an outstanding institution.[41]

> Today we face the problem of increasing the financial resources necessary for the support of the entire institutition, and we face the need for adjusting the academic and work programs so that we may more fully prepare Berry students for a life of service in this dynamic atomic age. . . . (W)e are . . . weighted down with financial losses on our auxiliary and industrial enterprises. It is necessary, both for educational and financial reasons, for us to concentrate our resources on doing well the things we attempt to do. . . . By using wisely the advantages which Berry now has. . . Berry can within the next few years become one of the most sought-after and one of the most admired quality insitutions in the country. . . . (T)he adoption of the recommendations which are here made will assist in attaining that goal. Through the execution of these recommendations, within as little as five years, Berry can make great strides toward this accomplishment.[42]

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[40]Several faculty and staff committees drafted proposals and recommendations between 1957 and 1960. The most influential proposals were made by committees headed by E.V. Hollis, G.E. Mattison, Samuel Cook, and Milton McDonald.

[41]John R. Bertrand, "Berry Looks Toward the Future," Report to the Berry Board of Trustees, December 1958, Berry College Archives.

[42]Ibid.

This report became a blueprint for change and delineated a five-year plan for remaking the Berry School's into a model liberal-arts college made unique and special by its history and its traditions. But there were obstacles--the outdated admissions policy (at the heart of the Berry mission), the financial problems, the lack of funds, the cumbersome administrative procedures, low salaries, and the antinquated industrial department. To help overcome these obstacles, Bertrand listed twenty-eight recommendations subdivided into eight areas, of which the most heavily emphasized were finances, admissions, and work programs. If approved and once implemented, these changes would represent a real revolution at Berry.[43]

Throughout the report Bertrand consistently stressed profitability and practicality. If some program or policy was costing too much money and had no justifiable reason for existence, then it should be changed or dropped. Dormitories, food services and laundry services would become self-supporting. Eventually, the laundry would be closed, as would other "industrial enterprises which" did not "yield their cost of operation." Bertrand also downplayed the suggestion of some to reopen the girls high school and the elementary school, instead putting emphasis on the finacial stability of the college and the boys high school.[44]

Bertrand and his supporters knew that financial viability could be stimulated greatly if Berry would take advantage of the greater monies now available from the federal government. To that end Bertrand suggested

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[43]Ibid.

[44]Ibid. "1958 Report of Consultants to President John R. Bertrand," unpublished manuscript, Berry College Archives.

that "Berry participate with the federal government in carrying out the provisions of the National Defense Education Act of 1958, and that students be encouraged to use these loan funds as a means of gaining their educational opportunity."[45] As part of the shift toward making students take a greater monetary responsibility for their educational expenses, Bertrand recommended that "tuition charges be fixed on the basis of expected enrollment and costs."[46]

Despite its usefulness in literally and spiritually building Berry, the work program had become a money pit which increasingly generated student resentment.[47] Bertrand's report reflected this shift as he made radical suggestions for modifying the work program. Work for work's sake would be abandoned. Students should be assigned to jobs which were necessary for maintaining the school. The amount of work students were to perform was reduced to six hours per week with the very radical option of students working off-campus. Bertrand also included his earlier recommendation of accepting day students, who would pay their tuition in cash. Furthermore, student labor would be compensated in cash based on an hourly wage. Bertrand also recommended the adoption of a cooperative work program with local businesses.[48]

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[45]Ibid.

[46]Ibid.

[47]Report of the Berry Board of Trustees, November 1957. Report ofthe Berry Board of Trustees, December 1958, Berry College Archives, Mt. Berry, Georgia.

[48]Bertrand, "Berry Looks Toward the Future."

Academically, the school should, Bertrand suggested, streamline its programs and upgrade its admissions standards. Student applicants would be accepted, not based on where they lived or their financial need, but because of their "previous academic achievement and college board examinations." Academic excellence now would be one of Berry's primary objectives. This goal could be advanced by upgrading the quality of the faculty. To that end, Bertrand recommended that faculty salaries be increased and that faculty be allowed to live-off campus.[49]

The revolution which Bertrand and his foreward-looking supporters were suggesting generated much hostility, mostly from alumni, but also from some Board members and older faculty and staff. Intense disagreement followed the submission of Bertrand's December 1958 report, particualarly in regard to those recommendations pertaining to admission standards, the work program, and the schools' industrial enterprises.[50] Bertrand had the open support of chairman Martin, but he would have to win over old-time Berry supporters and alumni.

To help clear up disagreements and to help sell his agenda of change, Bertrand took the offensive. He issued a special report on February 28, 1959 in which he tried to assuage fear that Berry was abandoning its past principles and pursuing change for change's sake.

> In the president's judgement, the adoption of the recommendations of December 6 would result in putting an institution, with an illustrious heritage and great potential, on the road to further achievement. These recommendations. . . would . . . result in Berry's

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[49]Ibid.

[50]Report of the Berry Board of Trustees, February 1958; Pendley, Sixty, pp. 121-122.

> continuing to operate under the fundamental principles set forth by its founder.[51]

To help sell his bold plan, Bertrand went to the source of discontent, confronting the alumni at various meetings throughout the spring of 1959. Bertrand's public relations efforts proved successful when the alumni association, at its May 1959 meeting, endorsed Bertrand's proposals.[52]

Bertrand's greatest obstacle proved to be from former Board of Trustees chair John Sibley. In a special report made to the Board on August 3, 1959, Sibley challenged Bertrand's assertion that the industrial programs were losing money, instead arguing that the work program should remain intact.[53] In general, Sibley's report reflected the fears and apprehensions of those who felt Bertrand's recommendations were too radical and would undermine the special mission and purpose of Berry.

Destiny, however, was on Bertrand's side. Sibley's recommendations were duly noted by the Board and some of Bertrand's suggestions made at the August 3 meeting were not immediately implemented. But of the thirty-eight recommendations submitted by Bertrand in a revised edition of his December 1958 report, twenty were approved by the Board and to be "implemented as expeditiously as possible."[54] Industrial and agricultural programs were to be eliminated, students would be accepted from throughout

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[51]John R. Bertrand, "Special Report of the President," February 28, 1959, Berry College Archives.

[52]Pendley, Sixty, pp. 125-126; Berry Alumni Quarterly, April 1959, Berry College Archives.

[53]Report of the Berry Board of Trustees, August 1959, Berry College Archives.

[54]Ibid.

the nation, school operations would be carried out on a cash basis, and academic standards would be strengthened. Quality faculty would be recruited and presented with a policy for advancement, as well as given the opportunity to live off-campus. The board also rejected the reestablishment of an elementary school or a girls' high school until the college and the boys' high school had become financially viable.[55]

Despite these concessions, the Board still remained divided about how far change should go at Berry, and this grew irksome to Bertrand and his backers as the board continued throughout the 1959-60 and 1960-61 academic years to postpone action on Bertrand's as-yet-unapproved recommendations. Frustrated by the trustees' delaying tactics (which had been encouraged by the greater leverage of the alumni and John Sibley), Bertrand confronted them at the May 4, 1961 Board meeting. In a report titled "Summing Up," Bertrand bluntly presented his case for change at Berry and addressed the Board's inconsistency in allowing him to implement his recommendations.[56] To help bolster his argument, Bertrand quoted liberally from Philip Weltner's 1943 report, particularly those sections which stressed Berry's need to adapt to changing circumstances. Bertrand also subtly pointed out how inconsistency at Berry had led to the school's current difficulties.

> Berry has had a succession of short-term chief administrative officers since the 1943 report (Weltner's). Turn-over of various members of Berry's administrative staff has resulted in little or no continuity of action. Also, in general the many studies and reports have merely produced recommendations

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[55]Ibid.

[56]John R. Bertrand, "Summing Up," Report to the Berry Board of Trustees, May 1961, Berry College Archives.

not approved by the board.[57]

Bertrand closed his report by quoting from a paper, presented by Hurst R. Anderson at the January 1961 meeting of the Association of American Colleges, which nicely recapitulated the need to look toward the future.[58]

Bertrand's strategy paid off, as the executive committee of the Board unanimously approved every policy recommendation Bertrand had presented to the Board in October 1960. Chief among these policies were: 1) the establishment of a financial aid program, including scholarships based on need and academic achievement, 2) formalization of the six-hour-per-week work experience, with the additional option that students could work full-time in the summer to fulfill their work requirements, 3) establishment of a minimum wage rate for student work, 4) admission of qualified day students, 5) admission of married students, and 6) dismissal of students who had worked full-time for at least four years from the work requirement.[59]

Undoubtedly Bertrand's appeal to the Board in May 1961 was bolstered by a racial incident which had erupted at the school earlier that April. The Civil Rights Movement had been gaining momentum throughout the South, as demands for integration increased after the landmark 1954 Supreme Court decision *Brown vs. Board of Education of Topeka, Kansas.* Tensions rose as news of civil disobedience by civil rights workers in Montgomery,

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[57]Ibid.

[58]Ibid.

[59]Report of the Berry Board of Trustees, May 1961, Berry College Archives.

Greensboro, Nashville, and Atlanta spread throughout the country. As Bertrand had consistently noted, Berry was not immune to the world around it and would have to deal with integration and race relations. Racial discord reached Berry during the spring of 1961 when the Ku Klux Klan began circulating a letter charging that Berry was integrating. Rumors even spread that Martin Luther King, Jr. had visited the campus.[60]

In actuality, Berry students, at the behest of religion professor William Hoyt, had exchanged tape recordings with students from several Atlanta area black colleges. There had also been some discussion of having the Atlanta college students visit Berry (a suggestion that was postponed indefinitely). A group of about 25 to 40 segregationist students marched in protest to Dr. Hoyt's house.[61] Bertrand, in an attempt to bring calm back to the school, made an influential speech before a convocation of students, faculty, and staff. He reiterated that Berry was a Christian institution where tolerance and understanding should and would prevail over prejudice and violence.[62]

This disturbance only reiterated what Bertrand had been noting during the previous four years, Berry's survival depended upon its ability to adapt to the rapidly changing world. The racial incident strengthened Bertrand's appeal for reform and hastened the Board members decision to grant him full approval for his recommendations. In the struggle to

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[60]Pendley, Sixty, pp. 149-150; "Events in Berry College's Race Relations since 1959," Report to the Berry Board of Trustees, June 1961, Berry College Archives.

[61]Ibid.

[62]Pendley, Sixty, 150.

modernize Berry, Bertrand had won a crucial victory, which empowered him and Berry's faculty and staff to completely remake the school over the next several years.

By the end of the 1960's, Berry little resembled its former self. The Board of Trustees adopted a nondiscrimination policy and accepted its first African American student in 1965 (although the school did not aggressively seek black applicants). Student life too underwent change as restrictions were gradually, but continuously relaxed. The college adopted a visitation policy, abandoned the dress code, dropped mandatory chapel, instituted a student government organization, and allowed students to have cars on campus.[63]

The Boys' High School became the Berry Academy, which school officials promoted as a private, boarding prepatory school for teenaged boys and girls. Both Berry College and Berry Academy discontinued the mandatory work program and replaced it with an optional student employee program. Supporters of modernization also worked to upgrade the college's academic reputation by aggressively recruiting and hiring more Ph.D.'s, by updating the curriculum, and by gradually raising admissions standards. By 1967, the Berry College Catalog and Berry College brochures and pamphlets described the school as a liberal arts school.[64]

Berry no longer even physically resembled its earlier incarnation, as construction began on a new administration building, a new men's dormitory at the college, and a new student center. The school even

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[63]Compiled from various school catalogs, 1961-1970, Berry College Archives; Pendley, Sixty, pp. 165-167.

[64]Ibid.

abandoned its former main entrance, the Gate of Opportunity, instead building a more modern entrance which emptied onto the front of Hermann Hall, the new administration building.

The revolution was now complete. Bertrand and his backers had remade Berry into an institution which academically and administratively resembled numerous other private, liberal arts colleges throughout the country. Change came at a high price however, as Berry abandoned its uniqueness in order to conform to the standards now universally being imposed within the world of higher education. What had begun as one woman's dream of helping the underprivileged receive an education had now been transformed into a modern institution, with gleaming new buildings, updated coursework, and sophisticated computer assisted business practices. But if Berry's transformation were judged in terms of financial viability, better qualified faculty, streamlined administrtive procedures, and increased student enrollment, then the transformation was a success.

CONCLUSION

The reforms which Bertrand and Berry's faculty and staff implemented during the late-1950's and 1960's indeed did transform the school into a viable institution. By the late-1970's, Berry College was listed by U.S. News and World Reports as one of the ten-best small liberal arts colleges in the South. Even with the changes, school administrators worked to keep the legacy of Martha Berry alive, even if they had abandoned some of her policies and practices. School catalogues and admissions brochures over the past twenty years touted Berry's missionary past and its work ethic. Despite having abandoned the mandatory work program, school officials created the position of Dean of Work in the early 1980's, partly to play upon its past. But the emphasis on Berry's history served more to raise money than to attract indigent students. In fact, by the early 1980's Berry was attracting a considerable percentage of its student body from suburban areas, especially Atlanta.

Berry College's successful transformation into a highly-respected liberal arts institution did not mean, however, that Berry was free of controversy. During the last six years of his presidency, Bertrand found himself at odds with many of the college's faculty members, who questioned his decisions and explored such controversial subjects as collective bargaining. Ironically, the more talented and capable faculty Bertrand had lured to Berry sometimes became his adversaries.

John Bertrand retired in 1979 and was replaced by Berry Board of Trustees member Gloria M. Shatto. Shatto's major reform took place in 1983, when she closed the Berry Academy. Shatto cited the declining

demand for what had become an expensive private boarding school. Furthermore, Shatto noted that the Academy had been operating at a loss, thus hurting the college's financial viability. Shortly after closing the Academy, Shatto and the Board leased the former Academy grounds to the Atlanta-based Chick-fil-a Company (a decision some argued would have appalled Martha Berry).

Despite the changes Berry continues to make, it still exists as an institution which must meet the demands of its environment. By scrutinizing the history and evolution of Berry, it is evident that the schools policies, procedures, and mission do not exist in a vacuum. Instead, the Berry schools have responded to external economic and social forces in such a way that today it still remains a viable institution.

By exploring such schools as Berry, scholars might come to better understand ways in which an educational institution shapes and is shaped by societal shifts. Historians interested in understanding how the South evolved from an economically stagnant region into a thriving success story, should explore more closely the story of Southern education. Why did some schools like Kentucky's Berea College and Alice Lloyd College, continue to thrive, while others like Georgia's former Tift College close? How did the survivors manage to stay afloat? In what ways did they respond to the dramatic changes which took place in the post-World War II South? Berry's evolution sheds some light on these questions, but by no means offers a complete picture. The unique character of Berry may never have been exactly duplicated by other schools and it is ultimately that character, as embodied in the ideals of Martha Berry, that keeps Berry an institution with a unique heritage today.

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