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CHAPTER 2

FROM CONVOCATION TO CRISIS, 1885-1893

In 1892, the editor of the *Orange County Reporter*, wrote an article explaining why a liberal education conferred by Rollins College made an essential contribution to American society. The writer cogently summarized a common nineteenth-century Victorian sentiment. The true purpose of liberal education, the editor declared, was not to prepare students for a profession but to enlarge the "mind and character" of young people. Such an education provided future leaders of this nation with "a mind to understand difficult things, able to appreciate finest things; a character simple, pure and strong -- these are the results of [a liberal] education. It puts the youth on a high plane of thinking and of living".(1)

Rollins College was founded in the "Age of the College" when such views were taken quite seriously. By the late nineteenth century the term "college" encompassed the social, the academic and even the religious setting where students lived and studied. The "collegiate way" included a rigidly prescribed curriculum and special methods of teaching it, embraced the belief that these alone did not make a college. The college way of life also included "an adherence to the residential scheme of things," in a "quiet, rural setting," a dependence on dormitories and dining halls, and a sense of nurturing captured in the phrase *in loco parentis*. The college community was often referred to as a family because residential colleges literally served as parents to its young charges. Moreover, the college was seen as an ideal place for young people to experience a rite of passage from adolescence to adulthood. Dormitories, according to the "collegiate way," were more than places to sleep; they represented opportunities for young men (and in a few colleges, young women) to

share communal living, to learn virtues of common decency and to respect the well being of others. In this sense, the dining halls were appropriately called the "commons," a place where the collegiate family (including the president and many of the faculty) shared its meals. Permeating and undergirding the collegiate way, therefore, was an overprotective paternalism that made the college responsible for the total well-being of the students--their studies, their discipline, their problems, their successes.(2)

Perhaps the most striking characteristic of the collegiate way was its classical curriculum. Inherited from Europe and modified slightly to fit American conditions and needs, the classical curriculum became by mid-nineteenth century the keystone of a college education. As the editor of *Orange County Reporter* argued, the classical curriculum proposed to do more than impart knowledge. It sought also to build character and to produce a cultured, refined person. These goals could be achieved, it was argued, through studies in mathematics, Greek and Latin grammar and classical literature. These subjects had the added value, according to the proponents of the classical curriculum, of sharpening the students' mental faculties. The famous Yale Report of 1828 declared that these fields of study provided "the discipline and the furniture of the mind; expanding its power, and storing it with knowledge. A commanding object, therefore, in a collegiate course should be to call into daily and vigorous exercise the faculties of the student." In American colleges, natural philosophy (physics and chemistry) and natural history (geology and biology) were added later in the century. The senior course on moral philosophy, taught by the President, sought to draw together four years of learning.(3)

Recitation, a pedagogy that required students to memorize and then to recite passages from an assigned text, represented the standard teaching method. The philosophical

rationale behind this pedagogical method known as faculty psychology, argued that the mind was a muscle requiring daily exercise, that intellectual acumen came from training, habit, routine and hard work. As one contemporary stated it, recitation and study of the classics "improve the memory, strengthen the judgment, refine the taste, give discrimination and point to the discerning mind, [and] confers habits of attention, reasoning and analysis - - in short, they exercise and cultivate all the intellectual powers."(4)

In the first half of the nineteenth century such beliefs solidified into orthodoxy and became firmly cemented into the college curriculum. No reputable college would dare deviate from the norm historically set by Ivy League colleges. Yale particularly became a kind of universal model. When many colleges (including Rollins) advertised that they were built on the Yale model, they meant that they had reproduced Yale's classical curriculum and were emphasizing the recitation method. This imitative process valuably produced unity and continuity in American higher education that lasted throughout most of the nineteenth century. It also created a static institution in the midst of society undergoing dynamic change.

A society involved in the practical progress of modern industrialization, urbanization and professionalization had difficulty seeing the relevancy of the classical curriculum with its emphasis on ancient (dead) languages and literature and its rigidly prescribed courses. Practical American society began pressuring institutions of higher learning to offer courses, such as English, history, politics, and applied sciences, that seemed more related to real life. Emerging state universities responded to this pressure by offering a greater variety of courses and also granting a variety of degrees, from Bachelor of Science to Bachelor of Agriculture. Liberal arts colleges resisted these changes, but even such traditional

institutions as Yale, headed by conservative Noah Porter, conceded to a scientific course of study but placed it in a secondary position alongside the classical curriculum. In this way purists kept the BA degree unsullied. As usual, other colleges followed Yale's lead and began to diversify courses of study.(5)

President Hooker and the charter professors, therefore, inherited a course of study from which no respectable liberal arts college could deviate. A classical curriculum anchored the program, but founders also included some moderately bold responses the practical needs of a frontier conditions. The first prospectus proclaimed that, because Rollins College was dedicated to meeting "the great and diversified educational needs of Florida," its program of study would include four departments:

1. The Collegiate Department, with its course of highest standard in the ancient classics, in modern languages, in mathematics and physics.

2. The Preparatory Department, which must do important work for the present, at least, in fitting students for the college.

3. The Training Department for teachers, which will instruct those who would teach in public schools and elsewhere. To this end children will be received into this Department and placed under the instruction of Normal students.

4. The Industrial Training Department, in which the young ladies and gentlemen of other Departments can choose some useful line of practical industry and while the mind is cultivated can acquire knowledge and skill in the industrial arts.(6)

The Collegiate Department curriculum, drafted in longhand by classics professor, William Lloyd, provided for the prescribed classical curriculum. A "scientific" course of study resembled the classical curriculum in almost every respect, except for a slight reduction in ancient languages. In the freshman and sophomore years, students in this course of study could substitute an English history course, a history of the English language, and a history of civilization course in place of three Latin courses. Otherwise, the two programs were

precisely the same. They included three years of Latin, two of Greek, four of mathematics and one of Moral Philosophy. Thus, in an effort to achieve immediate respectability, the college advertised its curriculum as based "on the Yale Model."

In keeping with the standards of other liberal arts colleges, the Collegiate Department admissions requirements, were exceptionally high. Only a listing can do justice to the level of prior work required by students entering the collegiate department:(7)

Latin Grammar, Four Books of Caesar, Six Orations of Cicero, Six Books of Virgil's Aeneid, Jones' Latin Prose Composition, Translation of Latin at Sight, Three Books of Anabasis, Three Books of Homer's Iliad, Herodotus, Greek Prose Composition, Translation of Greek at Sight, Chardenal's 1st and 2nd Courses in French, Corneille's Le Cid and Victor Hugo's Hernani, Arithmetic, Metric System, Wentworth's Complete Algebra, Wentworth's Plane Geometry, Physical Geography, Elementary Rhetoric, United States History, Roman and Greek History, Life and Mythology, and Ancient and Modern Geography.

By reserving the bachelor degree solely for the collegiate department the college maintained the prestige of a liberal arts education. But it almost certainly guaranteed a low enrollment. With no high schools or private academies in the immediate area and with very few even in the state, not many students could meet such high requirements, and those who could very likely resided in the Northeast where many old established colleges were readily available. Such stringent requirements and prescribed courses created a serious dilemma: few local students could meet the requirements, but the college could not reduce those requisites to meet local needs for fear of being considered a substandard institution. The college attempted to resolve this problem in two ways: first, it attached a preparatory department to the college structure and frankly proclaimed that its purpose was to fit students for the liberal arts college; second, it made an appeal to northeastern students "who wanted to prepare for the college but whose health required them to spend "a considerable portion of the year in a more genial climate to pursue their studies, and at the same time confirm their health."

If this scheme had produced the desired results—it did not—Rollins might have become a college of convalescents.

The Preparatory Department's curriculum corresponded to the Collegiate Department's classical and scientific course of study. The College admitted students graduating from the preparatory school directly without further preparation. The preparatory curriculum stressed Latin and Greek grammar but also emphasized the essentials of English grammar with attention to composition and penmanship. In 1888, the college added an "Academic Department" to the preparatory school for those who were uninterested in further study or those who could not complete the classical or scientific course of study. The Academic Department curriculum contained no Latin or Greek but still included heavy doses of mathematics, science, English literature and history. In fact, it greatly resembled the curriculum that would emerge in the late 1890s when more colleges, including Rollins, abandoned the classical curriculum. (8)

Rollins made a pragmatic bow to local conditions by including a "normal" school and vocational courses. The Training (Teaching) Department allowed the college to broaden its purposes and meet the demand for teachers in the state. It also offered a primary or sub-preparatory education for students in the normal (education) school. Requirements for enrolling in the normal school were much less stringent than those of either the collegiate or preparatory department. Candidates were required only to pass an examination in reading, spelling, geography, United States history, language, arithmetic and elementary algebra. In addition, they had to present "satisfactory testimony as to moral character and general scholarship." The three-year program included "two recitations daily and constant drill in practical pedagogics." The department expected students to spend two hours each

day teaching primary classes under the direction of the Normal school principal. Upon completion of the Normal program, students received a certificate of graduation.

The Industrial Training Department was considered an appendage to the college. All students could take courses in the department, although no list of courses ever appeared. The By-laws even provided for a director, but no one ever held that position. In fact, by 1895, the department simply disappeared from college literature apparently without ever coming into existence.

In 1890, the college added the Music Department which, although in accord with a liberal arts program, nevertheless served somewhat the same purpose as the moribund industrial department: it gave students an opportunity to work on a BA degree and a professional certificate at the same time. The program, providing for instruction in piano, voice and music theory in groups and on an individual basis, was such a success that in 1896 the college turned it into a separate school and allowed it to offer a Bachelor of Music diploma(9)

For obvious reasons, the Board of Trustees set the cost of education at Rollins at the lowest possible level. The 1886 catalogue established rates for a twelve-week term as follows:

Tuition in Collegiate Department	\$18.00
Tuition in the Preparatory Department.....	\$12.00
Tuition in Training Department.....	\$9.00
Board.....	\$48.00
Furnished room, with lights.....	\$12.00

Each student was required to bring two pairs of sheets for a single bed, two pillowcases, two blankets, a comforter, towels and table napkins. The annual cost for a boarding college student totaled \$231 and for boarding preparatory and sub-preparatory students a trifle less.

Characteristic of colleges everywhere, these charges fell far below the cost of running the institution. The Trustees met the bulk of college expenses by private donations but these were almost never adequate. Under such conditions, the Trustees had two alternatives: they could charge the students the difference, or they could cut expenses. Given the problems of enrollment, the Board established tuition at the lowest possible level, and to make up the difference between income and costs, it offered charter faculty members salaries significantly lower than any of their contemporary professionals. From the over \$20,000 collected in student fees during the first year, less than one-fifth went to faculty salaries. Only President Hooker was paid as much as \$1,000 per year.(10)

Of the original sixty students, only two, Clara Louise Guild and Ida May Misseldine, entered the Collegiate Department. The others were enrolled in the preparatory and sub-preparatory departments. These enrollments are revealing because they indicate the great gap between the collegiate way and Florida's educational needs and resources. The Congregational Church had created a liberal arts college while the community urgently needed quality public schools. Not surprisingly then for almost four decades after the founding of the college the appendages prospered while the college barely limped along with only a few students. Ten years after its founding, the liberal arts college claimed a total of thirty-four students while the other departments reported 139. This ratio in 1895 was one of the highest in the college's first decade. Significantly, the preparatory departments carried the college during its infancy and years of growth until in the mid-1920s. (11)

The founders of the college believed that the institution would appeal to a national constituency, but in the first decade it remained primarily a local college. Students from outside the state enrolled; but the great majority listed their residences in Florida, and even

in this group most were from Central Florida.(12) Many were within walking distance of the college, but a significant number used the South Florida Railroad for transportation to and from classes. In September 1886, the college agreed to allow the railroad to build the "Dinkey Line" through the campus, along Lake Virginia. In return the company issued "school tickets" allowing children attending Rollins to ride at a reduced rate: under twelve miles, one-half cent per mile; over twelve miles, one cent per mile. The charge for a round-trip from Sanford on the South Florida Railroad was twenty-four cents, a reasonable rate, but riding the train made for a long day. It ran from Sanford to Orlando only twice a day, arriving in Orlando at 7:00 a.m. and leaving for Sanford for a return trip at 6:00 p.m. This schedule applied when it was on time, which, according to the students, was a rare occasion.(13)

By the end of March 1886, the contractors had finished Knowles Hall, the first classroom building, and Pinehurst, the girls' dormitory. Finally, the college was given a sense of substance and roots. The administration emphasized the "cottage" concept of boarding because it wanted to distinguish it from the large dormitory system of lodging becoming popular in the large universities. The cottage system, claimed the college brochure, provided students with the opportunity to develop strong characters and habits. A "house mother" or member of the faculty lived in the cottage in order to closely supervise students. "Social relations between ladies and gentlemen," the college literature emphasized, would be supervised by the matrons who would make certain that the "inmates" studied properly and engaged in "wholesome recreation." In essence, the college promised that the cottage system would provide a benevolent paternalism, one that would "surround the student with the influences of a cheerful, well-ordered Christian home."(14)

On March 9, 1886, the trustees dedicated Knowles Hall, a two-story structure containing classrooms for recitation, and a hall capable of seating three hundred people for chapel services, exhibitions and entertainments. Realizing the significance of the college's first structure, he and the trustees planned an elaborate ceremony. The Florida Superintendent of Schools, A.J. Russell, was invited to be the principal speaker. Dedication exercises included music, prayers and orations, followed by Russell's laudatory comments. President of the Rollins corporation Frederick Lyman again displayed his flair for dramatics. After formally presenting the keys of Knowles Hall to President Hooker, Lyman seized the occasion to seek sorely needed funds. The trustees, he said, had spent many hours puzzling how to finance a boys' dormitory and to furnish the girls' cottage with appropriate furniture. Lyman told the captive audience that just before the dedication ceremonies, he had been handed a note from Mr. Francis Knowles, stating that if sufficient funds were subscribed at this meeting to furnish the thirty-four rooms of the ladies' cottage at sixty dollars per room, Mr. Knowles promised he would finance the men's dormitory. Incredibly, the funds were raised within fifteen minutes. The audience then praised "God From Whom All Blessings Flow," but clearly Lyman's ingenuity played no small role.(15)

Knowles Hall immediately became the college landmark and center of campus activity. The large hall was used for recitations, assembly and daily chapel services. A large veranda served as a central gathering place for students between and after classes and also as the preferred backdrop of annual class pictures. But it was the two-story bell tower, which gave Knowles its greatest distinction. Purchased from Cincinnati in June 1886, the bell served as the college timepiece, awakening the students in the morning, sending them to bed at night, and in between marking their classes and mealtimes. One contemporary remembered it as

"the finest and most melodious toll bell ever bought." With a good east wind and a bright sunny day, Orlando residents could hear its peal five miles away.(16)

By the end of the first school year, two more buildings had been constructed on the campus: Lakeside Cottage, the men's dormitory finished in time for the 1886-1887 school year, and the Dining Hall, another a gift of Knowles. Until the completion of the dining hall, boarding students took their meals in two bedrooms beside a small lean-to kitchen attached to the South end of Pinehurst. The dining hall, described as a "bright and cheerful" place that allowed the former kitchen space to be used the college library.(17)

By 1887, four imposing buildings stood on the East side of the horseshoe shaped commons, and Rollins had indeed begun to resemble a permanent institution of higher education. In 1891, President Hooker, using funds gathered by his diligent effort, the college constructed another and larger women's hall, later called Cloverleaf. Although called a "cottage," Cloverleaf was an impressive three-story, ninety room, three-winged structure that resembled a large dormitory. Although it violated the cottage concept, Hooker and the trustees discovered that a single, large building was less expensive than several smaller ones. Men were now housed in Pinehurst, which, along with Lakeside, gave the college two male dormitories. Finally, with money donated by Frederick Lyman, the college constructed a gymnasium, placing it on the lake between Lakeside and the Dining Hall. Lyman Gymnasium contained a fifty-by-seventy exercise room and an inside gallery guarded by an ornately decorated balustrade. With the construction of Lyman Hall, the college completed its initial building phase. A graphic drawing in the 1892 catalogue, though somewhat misleading in its placement of the buildings on the campus, nevertheless correctly gave the feeling of permanence to the fledgling little college.(18)

Academic life in the early years at Rollins very much conformed to late Victorian views of education. As one of the early students later recalled, the misnomer "gay nineties" hardly described the "sober and sedate" life of college students.(19) Most teachers were remembered as "strong disciplinarians," not a surprising characterization for a pedagogy that assumed the mind had to be disciplined in order to absorb knowledge. Learning was considered a matter of hard work. Like physical training, academic endeavor required vigorous exertion that few would describe as pleasurable. Because recitation was seen as the most effective pedagogical method for exercising the mind, most Rollins professors almost invariably employed it in their classrooms. Recitation, Classicist L.A. Lloyd wrote in the college catalogue, "is an excellent discipline for the mental faculties," because it demands "accuracy in thinking." The study of Greek, declared Professor John Ford, who replaced Lloyd, gave students skill in forming "such mental habits as exact observation and generalization and will be of value to him in all intellectual work." The "topical method of recitation" was employed in history courses while literature would be "read and committed to memory."(20)

Science courses offered a welcome relief from the routine of recitation. The instructor Eva J. Root, required some recitation from textbooks in botany, zoology, physiology and astronomy, but she also encouraged "hands-on" work. These included dissection, work with manikins and charts. She had use of a microscope and a telescope, a gift to the college from George Rollins, the brother of Alonzo. As Professor Root noted in the catalogue, she always gave students "the advantages of practical work." One of Root's students later praised her for opening the "scientific world of plants and animals that most of us had known only superficially."(21)

Perhaps the most innovative practitioner the hands-on method was Dr. Thomas R. Baker, who came in 1891. Although retired from Pennsylvania State University, Baker at fifty-three was still an exciting teacher. But for its location (Baker came to Florida for his health), Rollins would not have attracted such an outstanding educator and scholar. Baker had published a science textbook and had an established national reputation as a teacher of the experimental method in the classroom. The object of the method, Baker wrote in the catalogue, was "not only to fix in the minds of pupils the facts that are presented them, but to teach them how to use this method to the best advantage." He introduced a course entitled "Practical Chemistry," designed to give students "a more practical knowledge of chemistry than can be gained by merely studying the theory of the subject." Despite Baker's innovative efforts, years would pass before the Rollins catalogue showed any significant changes in pedagogical methods.(22)

A central purpose of small nineteenth century colleges, serving as extensions of the prevailing Victorian concepts of family life, was socialization. An enormous amount of energy was expended closely regulating active young people's lives. The administration and faculty assumed full responsibility for developing students character as long as they remained at the institution. Thus, when Rollins established a rigid code of behavior for all students, it left no doubt about its socialization function: "The object of the school's discipline is to protect the student from temptations and bad habits, to secure the proper improvement in behavior and produce a well-ordered life. Those who cannot give a willing and cheerful assent to the regulations of the school should not seek admission to its privileges."(23)

In December 1885, the faculty published a detailed list of student regulations and conventions. Rules for religious observances headed the list. As one student observed:

“What the institution lacked in material means, it made up in religious fervor: faculty and students alike prayed without provocation.” With no exceptions, students were required to attend Sunday church services “at the church of their choice,” but actually in the early years their choices in Winter Park were limited to the Congregational, the Episcopal, and the Methodist churches. Students were also confined to their rooms on Sunday mornings for the purpose of studying Sunday school lessons. Daily morning devotionals were mandatory for all students.(24)

The faculty considered study-time a vital part of academic life, and they set study hours at any non-class time from 8:30 A.M. to 12 noon, from 1:30 P.M. to 4:30, and in the evening from 7:00 to 9:00. During these periods, they prohibited students from visiting each other’s rooms, although after nine o’clock in the evening, students were allowed thirty minutes for socializing before lights out at 10:00. Between study hours on Friday evenings, gentlemen were permitted to make calls in the parlor rooms of the ladies’ cottage for two hours, and were given the opportunity to escort young ladies to church on Sunday, provided they returned directly to the campus immediately afterward. After much debate, the faculty in 1889 agreed that both boys and girls might perform gymnastics in the same building. Otherwise, this Victorian generation anxiously attempted to subvert temptation by separating the sexes. Male students were convinced that the threat of temptation dictated dormitory policy as well. They reckoned that the Cloverleaf cottage was divisible by three: the college “put all the pretty girls on the third floor--out of reach of the boys, all the middling-looking girls on the second floor, and on the first floor it placed girls “whose faces protected them.”(25)

Several "vices" were absolutely forbidden. Alcohol was the greatest of all these evils. Students were prohibited from possessing or using liquor either on campus or in the vicinity. The college faced an early moral dilemma on this matter after Winter Park Company built the Seminole Hotel. The hostelry sold liquor, and the college held stock in the company. One trustee persistently pointed out this moral inconsistency until finally the trustees corrected the problem: they retired the complaining trustee.(26) Other vices received almost equal attention. The College prohibited the use of tobacco "on campus, on the streets, or in the vicinity" of the college. After long debate, the faculty decided to prohibit card playing on the grounds that it was a "sedentary game unsuitable for students and tending toward immorality." It further forbade other acts including loitering at the railway station on Sunday, throwing water on beds, stealing, keeping firearms, using profanity and keeping a dirty room.(27)

The college issued demerits for an infraction of these rules and weighed them according to the seriousness of the transgression. Absence from Sunday services and from class drew two demerits each; from Sunday school, study hours and for tardiness, one demerit each. Eight demerits in one term resulted in a reprimand; twelve, a letter to the parents; and fifteen demerits led to dismissal. Most students, accustomed to this stern discipline at home, rarely rebelled. Although all these rules and regulations succeeded in small ways, they achieved much less success in large matters. Young people who ordinarily would have lived under the watchful eyes of parents now sought a limited kind of freedom in college despite the faculty's intentions. They discovered innumerable way of breaking institutional rules. At almost every faculty meeting one or more recalcitrant student appeared to explain some violation, the most common being the use of profanity in some form. Faculty minutes abound

with notations: "dismissed on account of licentious talk." Many infractions, of course, went undetected. Frederick Lewton, later a prominent botanist in the United States Agriculture Department and curator of textiles in the Smithsonian Institution, recalled how one night he slipped out of his room in order to observe the constellation Leo, visible only after 1:00 A.M. He burst to share his observances with someone but held it all inside for fear of receiving demerits for breaking the ten o'clock curfew.(28)

Innumerable infractions occurred because undoubtedly the regulations were too confining for irrepressibly energetic youth. Such was the case of Rex Beach, later to become a popular novelist and one of Rollins's most famous and loyal alumni. Beach, a genuine free spirit, refused to be bound by restrictive Victorian mores. Much more interested in athletics than academics, he took a much more casual approach to academic life than Victorian academicians were willing to accept. Beach, who viewed college as a place for good companionship and fun, regarded regulations not as restrictions but as challenges. One Sunday, Beech and four other boys were seen sailing on Lake Virginia, violating the colleges prohibition against frivolous activity on the Sabbath. They were brought before the faculty for explanation and later "personally admonished" by the President. Ten o'clock curfew was also a challenge for Beach. As he readily admitted, most buildings did not offer many escape routes: "It took a trapeze performer to get out [of Pinehurst] and a post-graduate course in porch climbing to get back in." The athletic Beach apparently managed the feat quite often, because in March 1893, he was suspended "for open defiance" of the curfew rule. Two weeks later, after a letter of apology, the faculty allowed him to return. Despite such leniencies, Beach never graduated. In fact, he posed a mystery to the Victorian faculty who

thought he lacked the qualities of a serious scholar. Most doubted that he would ever amount to much, and later expressed surprise that Beach could write novels. (29)

To manage and to instruct these sometimes unruly youngsters, the college hired an unusually talented group of educators. Because the remote little college could hardly expect to attract noted teachers, Hooker used the institution's favorable environment as an inducement for securing qualified teachers. Few of the early instructors came to the area specifically to teach at Rollins. Almost all were already in Florida for reasons unrelated to teaching. Nathan Barrows, a Phi Beta Kappa graduate of Western Reserve, had been a physician for years in Cleveland when he decided to embark upon a new career in citrus, and therefore, he had been living in Orange City before the founding of Rollins. As the college's most outstanding charter faculty member, the tall, powerfully built doctor with white hair and a full, flowing white beard made an impressive appearance. Even at middle age, he was an active, energetic man, a great proponent of physical exercise and a lover of nature. Free hours found him walking for miles in the woods or rowing long distances on the chain of lakes. He rowed across Lake Virginia to Rollins each day. In addition to teaching mathematics, Barrows also served on the Board of Trustees. He was the only person ever to hold a position on the faculty and on the Board at the same time.(30)

The other original faculty members--Louise Abbott, William Lloyd, and Annie Morton--were in retirement in Florida when Hooker hired them. As with so many Victorians, Morton had come south with the forlorn hope that warmer weather would help cure a chronic illness. She died of cancer only six years after she arrived at Rollins. In the second term of the first year Lewis Austin, a former classmate of Dr. Hooker, joined the faculty to teach Greek and Latin. After a short time he gave up teaching to travel in Italy and Greece. During the second

year, the college added instructors in natural science, English literature, music, art as well as two Normal school instructors, for a total of thirteen. Two of these appointments proved fortuitous. John H. Ford, a Phi Beta Kappa graduate of Oberlin, replaced Lloyd as professor of Greek. Ford, whose wife was the sister of Illinois Peter Altgeld (a progressive Illinois governor), had sought the warmer climate of Florida in the hope of relieving what he thought was tuberculosis. Because he lived on campus in a home directly behind Knowles Hall, Ford assumed an unusually active role in the college's community life, entertaining students and even holding classes on his front porch. Later he would serve twice as interim president.(31)

Eva J. Root also joined the faculty in the second year as the college's first instructor in natural science. Root, a perfect example of the versatility demanded of college teachers, served first as principal of the sub-preparatory department. After two years, the college hired her to teach botany, zoology, biology and comparative anatomy in the preparatory department as well as physiology and astronomy in the college. In addition, she taught French in both the preparatory and collegiate departments. As a part of her responsibilities, she was matron for Pinehurst after it became a boys cottage. (32)

Two PhDs came to the faculty in 1890 and 1891. The first, Dr. Carl Hartman, a native of Germany hired to teach German and Spanish, proved a disaster. A few weeks after school opened in 1890, Hooker admitted that Hartman was "an unfortunate appointment." He possessed an acerbic, thoroughly disagreeable disposition that immediately upset faculty harmony and school routine. Hartman alienated most of the college community, in particular several members of the faculty, whose lives, according to Hooker, "were beyond reproach." His harsh and even violent manner brought on several serious incidents. The climax came at the end of the year when, during an argument with two male students, Hartman pushed

both down the stairs of Knowles Hall, slightly injuring one. At the faculty meeting convened to discuss the matter, the irate professor lashed out at everyone, including Hooker. He was not asked to return the following year.(33)

Hartman's dismissal opened the way for the appointment of one of the early college's legendary professors, Dr. Thomas Rakestraw Baker, PhD from University of Goettingen. Baker provided freshness to the study science and, by employing what he called the "natural method." He breathed new life into the teaching of German. The students, he wrote in the catalogue, would spend more time "in reading German than in studying the technicalities of grammar." Baker who remained at the college for over two decades, proved a scholarly inspiration for the college. His impressive shock of white hair and Lincolnesque beard gave him a deceptively sober manner. In the classroom or in student groups his wit, his infectious sense of humor and willingness to try new methods brought unusual vitality into the traditionally somber, sometimes lifeless, Victorian educational process. (34)

The leader and animating influence for this band of pioneer educators was President Hooker, who, from the beginning, became deeply involved in both the academic and the administrative aspects of the college. Although somewhat stiff in appearance—his dress invariably included a black Prince Albert coat, white tie and silk hat—the kindness of Hooker's voice and eyes softened an otherwise formal exterior bearing. He had the appearance, one student remembered, of "an other-worldly religious leader, almost a living beatitude." Many spoke of Hooker's gentleness, his love for all living things. The family cat became so attached to him that each morning the pet followed him down Interlachen as he walked from the Congregational parsonage to the college. By example and by direction he infused a spirit of dedicated service into the early college community. He loved working with

students, making ministerial visits, promoting prayer groups, counseling those with problems, even at times taking into his own large family students who found it difficult to adjust to life away from home. His letter book is filled with notes to parents assuring them that their children were doing well. "Your son is homesick," he wrote in a typical letter, "but is getting over it. Stand by the authority of the school in your letters and we shall be able to help you make your son a noble man."(35)

Without deans or assistants to help deal with the countless administrative matters, the president relied on the faculty to help manage the college. Academic decisions, such as requirements, courses, teaching loads, as well as student affairs--everything from dormitory regulations to granting permission for special student activities--fell within direct faculty responsibilities. Through weekly committee meetings the faculty ruled on such varied matters as course schedules, demerit assignments and commencement programs, student dismissals, and absences. By 1887, the little democratic faculty meetings had apparently become quite lively, forcing the president to invoke new rules of order. He allotted faculty members three minutes each to make his or her case until everyone had been heard. Yet, except for the Hartman affair, little dissension among the faculty developed during Hooker's presidency.(36)

Hooker's most troublesome problem was not administering the college but finding funds to keep the educational endeavor functioning properly. In this area, he relied on the Board of Trustees, particularly the executive committee. Frederick Lyman provided much of the financial leadership in the early years. Because most of its assets were in land and stocks and most of its initial cash went into buildings, the first academic year found the college in debt. Lyman borrowed over \$2,500 in his own name during the summer of 1886 and told

Hooker that the college needed \$4,000 more before it opened in October 1886. "I do not like to do this," Lyman wrote Hooker. "I do not feel that I should be expected to, but I cannot see the work stop as it would otherwise."⁽³⁶⁾ In October 1886, Lyman borrowed \$4,000 from his cousin, which he thought would carry the college until it could sell some of its orange grove property, but even so, during the fall term the college drifted further into debt, probably as much as \$8,000. The executive committee sold the college-owned orange grove in Palatka (donated originally by Alonzo Rollins), but that provided only temporary relief. Within a year, Hooker was again without money to pay college expenses. Lyman, who was in New England at the time, borrowed a sum from a New York bank but (unnecessarily) warned Hooker to be cautious with expenditures: "I do not know where we can get another dollar."⁽³⁷⁾

Despite Lyman's pessimism the college did receive sufficient funds to stay afloat. Professor John Ford agreed, for a small stipend, to raise money in the state during the summer months, and Hooker went north each summer for the same purpose. Periodic grants from the Congregational Educational Society totaling more than \$74,000 proved to be the margin between survival and collapse.

Thus, President Hooker discovered early what a succession of presidents would come to realize—funding and administering a little rural provincial college would be no easy task. Each day, month, and year brought a new crisis. Some problems were self-inflicted others were beyond his control. Perceptive students such as Rex Beach saw clearly the financial conditions of the college. In his recollections, he wrote: "Florida was pretty poor, many a family went without everything except bare necessities in order to give their sons and daughters an opportunity to better themselves. Rollins itself was starving. There was no

running water in any dormitory, a hot bath was unheard of. The teachers were under- paid and no president ever succeeded in wangling enough money out of philanthropic sources to make both ends meet." (38)

Trouble on the Board of Trustees exacerbated the college's problems. For some time dissension had been brewing between the ministers, led by Sullivan Gale, and the businessmen, headed by Lyman, However grateful for Lyman's and his colleagues' contribution to the college, the ministers were not happy with their methods in two respects. They deplored the use of the college in the Winter Park Company's land development schemes, and they decried the college's advertising brochure as lacking in dignity. At the February 1887 meeting, the ministers secured an assurance from the executive committee that "the newspaper advertising of the college {would} be confined to a simple statement in regard to the college."(39)

At the commencement trustee meeting in 1888, the ministers brought the matter to a head. After two lengthy discussions, Lyman and two other trustees resigned from the board. These resignations opened the way for a new set of by-laws that combined the two offices of President of the Corporation and President of the Faculty into one office: President of the College. The trustees named Hooker to the new office. Bruised feelings notwithstanding, Lyman departed with no animosity, issuing a characteristically generous statement: "Having the interest of the college at heart," he noted in his statement of resignation, "and thinking that those interests may be advanced at this time by such actions, I hereby tender my resignation as President of the Corporation."(40) Lyman moved to California shortly afterward, but he continued his loyal support of the college. In February 1890, he contributed funds for the construction of a gymnasium, completed the following year. The college had

no truer friend than Frederick Lyman. More than any single person he was responsible for its founding and with indefatigable effort he guided the college through its first few years. The gift of the gymnasium after he left showed the real character of the man.(41)

If the internal political struggle of these early years had little financial repercussions, two natural catastrophes had immediate effect. In 1887 and again in 1888, yellow fever epidemics ravaged the state of Florida. The dreaded disease, its cause not yet discovered struck both Key West and Tampa in May 1887. Although the epidemic never reached Central Florida, people viewed it as a threatening plague and left the state in large numbers. Enrollment at Rollins dropped, though only moderately. But the following year a more serious outbreak occurred in Jacksonville, debarkation port for Northerners arriving in Florida. Authorities citing over five thousand cases and four hundred deaths, quarantined the city, and halted travel and in or out of the area. The college sent out ten thousand brochures claiming "no locality was more healthful than Winter Park," but under the circumstances the words sounded hollow. In September, the college postponed its 1888 opening until October. Doomsayers on the Board of Trustees predicted the end.(42)

Nevertheless, the college did open, albeit with reduced enrollment. During the year registration for 1889-1890 academic year showed an encouraging increase, leading Hooker to project even more registrations than the college could accommodate with its two dormitories. Reluctant to turn away qualified students, the trustees agreed to the expensive practice of housing the overflow of students off-campus. Then to meet what appeared to be a dramatic increase in college enrollments, they voted to construct a new dormitory, a fateful decision because construction began as the nation's declining economy became the depression of 1893. The trustees had counted heavily on local money but they soon learned

that frontier communities feel the effects of an economic downturn more quickly than other areas. They found it almost impossible to borrow funds locally.(43)

Banks in the Northeast provided some money, but not sufficient enough to pull the college out of what Hooker called its "hard place." The president pleaded unsuccessfully with the Congregational Educational Society for a loan and desperately tried to sell another college grove, but to no avail.(44) By July 1891, the college was so deeply in debt that it could not complete construction on the new dormitory. Hooker gloomily wrote to a friend: "The college treasury is empty of funds for ordinary running expenses. We are spending heavily for buildings and furniture, and we shall have all we can do this summer to open the college."(45)

The college did open in 1891 but its financial situation worsened. Hooker became more despondent. Florida was a poor country, he wrote to a colleague, where most of the people just kept their heads above water and could not be solicited for another subscription. "It is a critical time with us," he wrote, but with stubborn optimism he continued: "the darkest hour is before the morning and faith and success are apt to go together." Eventually even his sanguine homilies could not sustain him. In December, he told a friend that the "burdens of the college in its present stage of growth are so heavy that I sometimes regret that I did not resign the College Presidency instead of the Pastorate."(46) At the February 1892 trustee meeting, Hooker submitted his resignation. College building had overtaxed his strength. The restored health he sought in Florida was failing again. The trustees accepted his resignation with "thankfulness to Divine Providence for the invaluable service he had rendered the college as one of its chief founders and its first president."(47)

NOTES

1. November 10, 1892.
2. Frederick Rudolph, *The American College and University* (New York, 1962), 88.
3. *Ibid*, 108-109.
4. For a good discussion of the classical curriculum see Frederick Rudolph, *Curriculum: A History of American Undergraduate Study* (1977). For an analysis of the Yale Report see Jack C. Lane, "The Yale Report of 1828 and Liberal Education," *History of Education Journal*, (27) Fall 1987, 325-338.
5. Rudolph, *Curriculum*, 68-73.
6. Rollins College Catalogue, 1885. (Hereinafter cited as Catalogue).
7. *Ibid*.
8. *Ibid.*, 1888.
9. *Ibid.*, 1890, 1896.
10. Trustee Minutes, 1887.
11. Catalog, 1895.
12. Other places included Alabama, Illinois, Indiana, Kentucky, Massachusetts, Minnesota, Wisconsin, New York, Ohio, South Carolina, Vermont, Virginia. Catalog, 1890.
13. Trustee Minutes, 1886; *South Florida Sentinel*, September, 15, 1885; Walter Howe, "Recollections," Manuscript, Rollins Archives.
14. Catalogue, 1891.
15. I have reconstructed the ceremony from *Orange County Reporter*, November 11, 1886; *Chase Scrapbook*, Rollins Library; "Address" by William O'Neal, 1935, Rollins Archives.
16. Elizabeth Hooker, "Edward Hooker," Manuscript, Rollins Archives; Frederick Lewton, "Autobiography," Manuscript, Rollins Archives
17. Lewton, "Autobiography."
18. Trustee Minutes, 1889, 1890, 1891; Catalog, 1893.

19. Lois Parker Meyers, "Recollections," Manuscript, Rollins Archives.

20. Catalogue, 1892.

21. Lewton, Autobiography."

22. Catalogue, 1892. Baker was also quite active in the Winter Park community. An article in the January 4, 1917 issue of the *Winter Park Post* made the following announcement: "Dr Thomas Baker, for many years Professor of Natural Science at Rollins College, will succeed William Chase Temple as Mayor of Winter Park. Dr. Baker was made sole nominee for this office when one of their largest bodies of voters ever assembled in Winter Park took a standing vote at the caucus held in the Town Hall."

The famous temple orange, a hybrid of the tangerine and orange, was named for Baker's mayoral predecessor. The parent tree stood in an orange off Temple Grove Circle.

23. Jencks and Reisman, *Academic Revolution*, 28; Catalog, 1894.

24. Faculty Minutes, 1886. Rollins Archives; Hooker to Martha Weld July 19, 1891. Hooker Papers. Rollins Archives. Rex Beach, *Personal Exposures*, 19 (1940)

25. Henry Mowbray, "Recollections," Manuscript. Rollins Archives; Faculty Minutes, 1889.

26. Trustee Minutes, May, 1889.

27. Faculty Minutes, 1890.

28. Ibid., 1889; Lewton, "Autobiography."

Other than Rex Beach, Frederick Lewton was perhaps the college's most successful early graduate. After finishing at Rollins in 1890, he studied chemistry at Drexel University. He later taught chemistry there and published works on the composition of resins. Later he worked as a botanist for the US Department of Agriculture and as curator of Textiles at the National Museum. He returned to Rollins in 1954 and served as the library's archivist where he collected over 80,00 pieces for the library. He also left behind a valuable account of his experiences as a Rollins student.

29. Rex Beach, "Recollections," Manuscript, Rollins Archives; Faculty Minutes, 1890; Emma Root Van Buskirk, "An Appreciation of Miss Eva Root," *Alumni Record* (June, 1931).

30. For a description and evaluation of the charter faculty see Lewton "Autobiography"; *Chase Scrapbook*; Thomas Baker, "Twenty Years at Rollins" Manuscript, Rollins Archives

31. Chase to Lyman, November 7, 1885, *Chase Scrapbook*; Trustee Minutes, February, 1893.
32. Van Buskirk, "Eva Root". Archives
33. Hooker to E.K. Forte, October 17, 1890. Hooker Papers; Faculty Minutes, December 1890.
34. Mary Blackman Wallace, "Recollections," Manuscript, Rollins Archives; Baker, "Twenty Years".
35. For example see Hooker to E. V. October 15, 1889. Hooker Papers.
36. Faculty Minutes, October 1887.
37. Lyman to Hooker, October 7, 1886; December 7, 1887; For early financial problems see Lyman to Alonzo Rollins, October 5, 1886; and Hooker to Lyman, September 10, 1886. Hooker Papers.
38. Trustee Minutes, February and May 1888. Beach, *Exposures*, 20.
39. *Ibid.*, February 1889' O'Neal, "Recollections," Manuscript, Rollins Archives.
40. *Ibid.*, May 1889.
41. *Ibid.*, May 1890.
42. O'Neal, "Recollections"; *Orange County Reporter*, September 21, 1888; *Lochmede*, September 1888; Faculty Minutes, October 1888. The outbreak of the yellow fever virus reached epidemic proportions in Jacksonville in 1888. Because its river port was only debarkation point, the epidemic paralyzed the interior as well.
43. Hooker to C.M. Hutchins, December 18, 1891. Hooker Papers.
44. Hooker to Reverend Maile, October 28, 1891.
45. Hooker to Katy Beck, July 24, 1891.
46. *Ibid.*, December 5, 1891.
47. Trustee Minutes, February 7, 1892.
Over the years Rollins Archivists have collected many fascinating recollections from former students. For a summary of some of these see Darla Moore, "Where to Find the Freshest Memoires," <http://wp.me/p3fXva-uq>.