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An Experiment That Has Proved Itself

Rollins College
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AN

EXPERIMENT

THAT HAS

PROVED ITSELF

ROLLINS COLLEGE + WINTER PARK + FLORIDA



THE SPIRIT OF ROLLINS

Even if Rollins College had never existed, Hamilton Holt would be internationally known as a famous editor and peace advocate. But for the past fifteen years he has been the inspiration of what is now known throughout the country as the Rollins Plan of Education.

Dr. Holt has built daringly upon what many educators considered uncertain foundations. That he has built well the following pages testify. Neither in the size of Rollins nor in the amount of its endowment can his achievement be measured. Rather it is in the keen, alert minds of the young men and women who today call Rollins their Alma Mater.

WHAT IS ROLLINS?

Rollins is one of several hundred American colleges—but it is far more than that.

Like many others, it was born of idealism; of the missionary zeal of Christian pioneers, fifty-five years ago.

Like many others, it reached the point — fifteen years ago — when it had to be reborn or die. Then Rollins found its new leader, Hamilton Holt, who had deep convictions about what education should do for boys and girls.

Dr. Holt resented the rigid system of lectures, recitations, and examinations, because they made the professor a mere oral textbook, a detective, a judge. He saw that students had been dealt with as a mass and pushed along in a lock-step which choked individuality and stifled creative thinking. Students had been led to work for credits and degrees, instead of learning to make full use of their minds.

So the new Rollins broke with tradition. It developed the "Conference Plan" whereby the professor came down from his pedestal and worked with his students while they studied — worked with them individually as a friend and guide. Active study replaced formal lectures; spirited discussion took the place of recitations; day by day observation replaced formal examinations. Students were encouraged to explore, to question, to think and to express their thoughts and apply them to life.

Rollins professors are chosen primarily for character, personality and teaching ability, not alone for fame in research; for their ability to inspire the students who work with (not under) them. Classes are kept small—not over twenty — to make possible a close, friendly relationship between professor and student and among the students themselves. For the same reason, twenty is the optimum number of students per dormitory.

The student has an eight-hour day at Rollins, with two-hour periods in each class. One of his periods is devoted to laboratory work, field trips, or to outdoor sports. Evenings are for leisure, which most students use constructively — for dramatics, music, debating, the arts, or individual study. “Cuts” from classes without reason are no more allowed than in business.

Three terms replace the usual half-year semesters. A slow-working student may need four terms to complete a course; a brilliant one may occasionally finish in two. The professor’s aim is not to “flunk” students but to enable them to succeed. Working shoulder to shoulder with them, the professor quickly sees if they begin to fall behind, and pulls them up.

Education at Rollins is measured not so much by time as by achievement. Instead of the customary four-year classes, there is a Lower Division, in which the student gets the fundamentals in science, the arts, and humanities, due to a system of integrated courses. When he is equipped to enter the Upper Division, he begins to specialize along the lines of his natural aims and aptitudes. Consequently, the typical Rollins graduate does far less floundering when he first gets out than do most holders of degrees. Under this “achievement” plan the average student graduates in four years.

At Rollins the student who can pay the full cost of his education does so. Under the “Unit Cost Plan” the estimated number of students is divided into the operating budget of the College; the resulting quotient is the charge covering tuition, board and all other fees. This year fifty-nine percent of the undergraduates are paying full tuition, and this figure is constantly growing. Thus the entire income from endowment is used for scholarships, awarded to students who require aid and who merit it on the basis of scholastic standing and character. Keen competition keeps the scholastic level high.

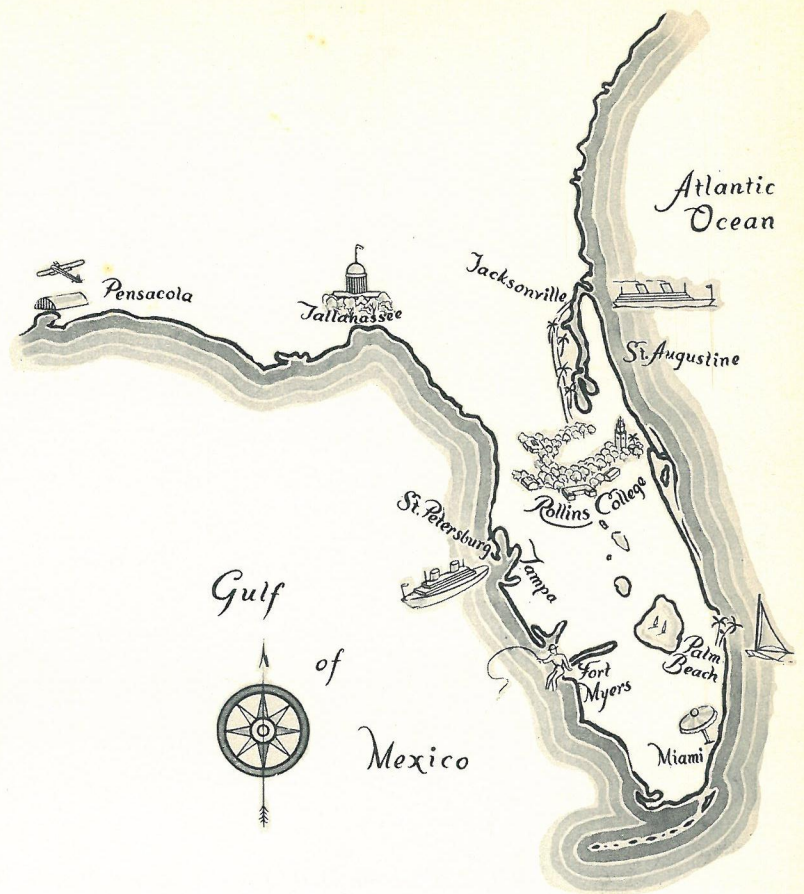
Lastly, Rollins is one college that definitely plans to remain small — not more than five hundred students. The physical plant is being built to care for that number. Rollins does not confuse greatness with bigness.

Rollins, then, has a goal that is attainable, an ideal that is realistic, and already a record of accomplishment that is impressive.

WHERE IS ROLLINS?

Rollins is situated in the very center of the orange uplands of north central Florida, easily accessible—by train, by road and by air — from all points in the North and the Middle West.

Rollins has grown far beyond the point of a sectional college. Today it draws seventy percent of its students from twenty-one of the northeastern and mid-Atlantic states. These students are attracted by Rollins' distinctive educational methods, its scholastic standing and ideals, its mild winter climate and its all year 'round outdoor life. Winter Park, the home of Rollins, is everything its name implies.



Lakes, woods, and luxuriant foliage make an ideal setting. The white tower of Rollins' Chapel indicates the situation of the campus.



ROLLINS' SETTING

Amid cypress trees festooned with delicate Spanish moss, spreading palms and exotic foliage, Rollins, in the words of her "Alma Mater" song, is "set like a gem amid the waters blue," on the shore of beautiful Lake Virginia. Instead of the forbidding severity of Gothic, Rollins architecture shows a strong Spanish Mediterranean influence and is thus admirably suited to its environment. All thirteen new buildings are comfortable, informal and highly pleasing to the eye. In the atmosphere there is a feeling of friendliness and comradeship which permeates even the classrooms.

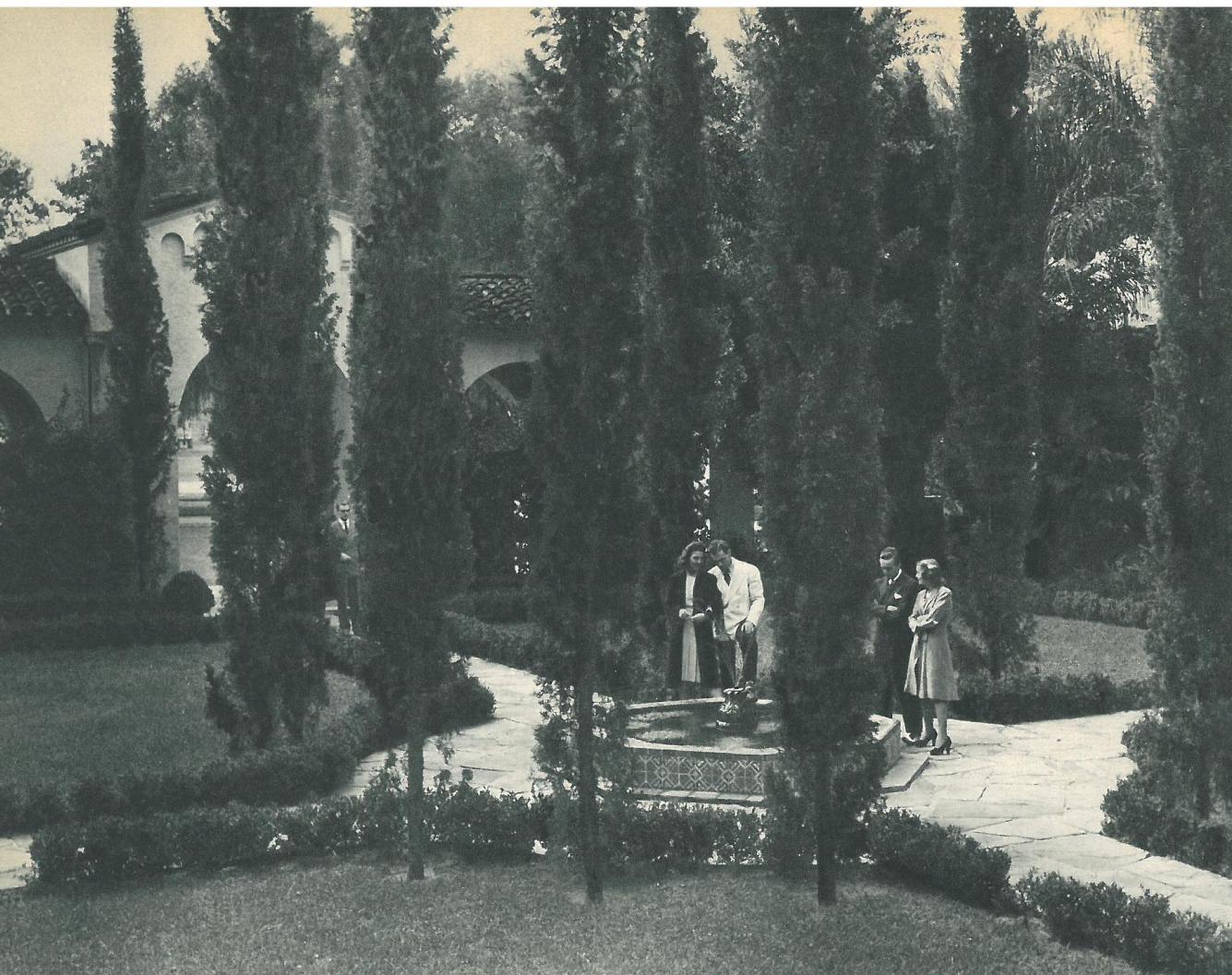
In such a setting the student finds it easy to take an active part in college activities, and to plunge into the adventure of acquiring an education.

The informality of Rollins is seen on the campus. Here may be found groups studying together or ardently continuing a discussion that started in the classroom. Under a tree there may be an entire class grouped around the professor.

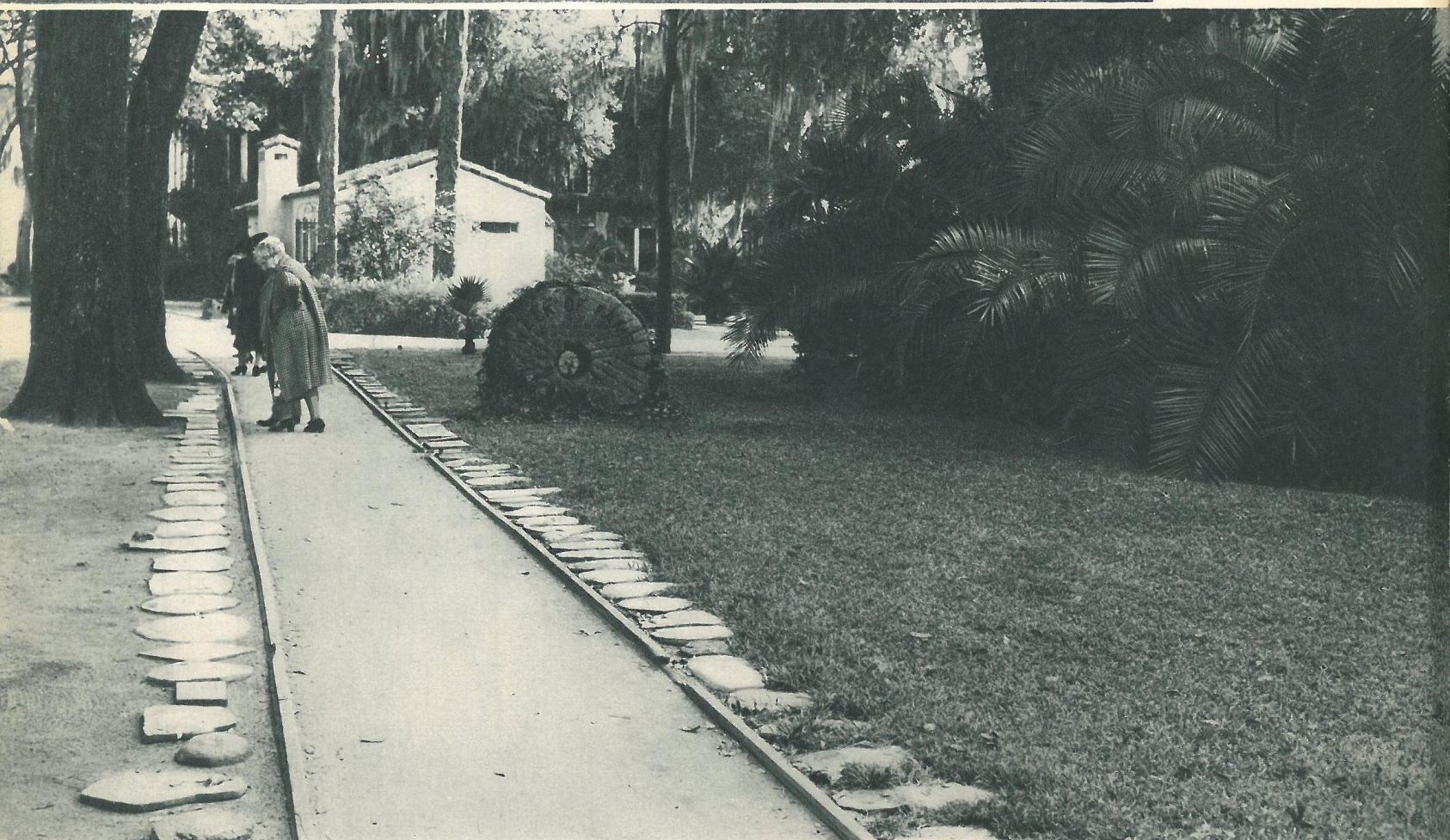




The Knowles Memorial Chapel, one of the most beautiful buildings in Florida, was designed by the noted ecclesiastical architect, Ralph Adams Cram. It was the gift of Mrs. Frances Knowles Warren as a memorial to her father, the chief founder of Rollins. "Chapel" is not compulsory at Rollins, but services on Sunday morning are often crowded to overflowing. Many winter residents of Winter Park go first to the Chapel services, then to their own churches.

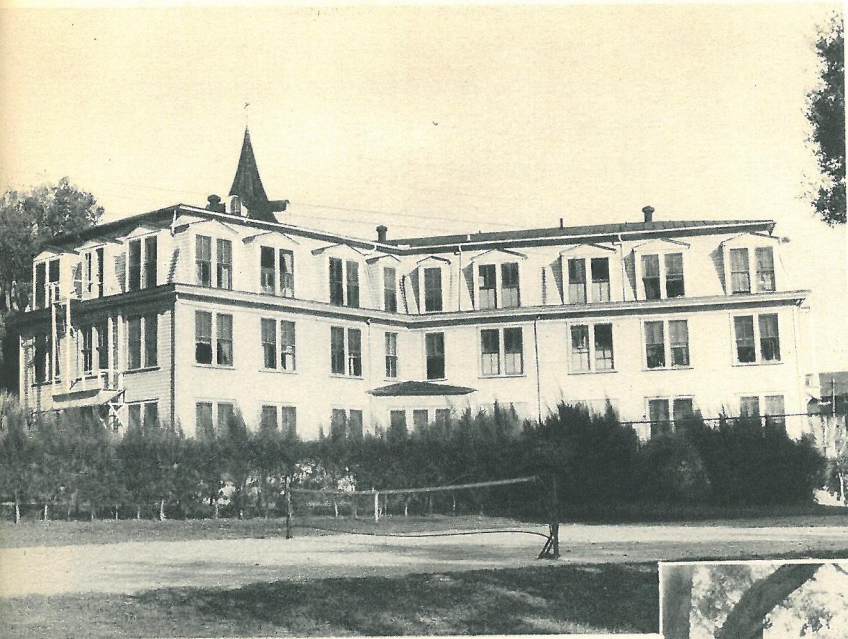


A quiet haven, which attracts numbers of visitors as well as students, is the Chapel Garden, with its Old World atmosphere.



From all over the world Dr. Holt has collected stepping stones associated with the great people of the earth, from the early Egyptian and Mayan civilizations to modern times. Lining several of the paths on one side of the campus, they constitute a "Walk of Fame." The collection today contains about 600 stones.

THREE PERIODS OF ARCHITECTURE



"Clover Leaf" provides living quarters for all first year girls. Obsolete though it is, many a girl looks back on her days there with pleasurable memories.

Much of a Rollins student's thorough work in the sciences is done in Knowles Hall. This building represents the "middle period" in the college's development.



Rollins has a definite pattern of physical development. On this page is seen the progress Rollins has made architecturally during the last fifteen years. The original structures are of wood, all of which must be replaced as soon as possible. Then came brick buildings, of which there are only three. The thirteen buildings erected so far during Dr. Holt's regime, under the supervision of one of Florida's most distinguished architects, harmonize ideally with their sub-tropical surroundings.

Fox Hall, an excellent example of Rollins' modern architecture, has all the charm and informality of the home of a well-to-do family. It is one of the most attractive dormitories for girls.

WHERE ROLLINS STUDENTS LIVE



Member of "the Rollins family" is a title of which all are proud, from Dr. Holt to the youngest first year student. Boys and girls mingle freely in the classrooms and on the campus. There are literally dozens of such informal spots as this, all of which have a home atmosphere instead of that usually associated with a college.

Rollins, like most colleges, attracts a number of day students (approximately twenty-five percent this year), but virtually all other undergraduates live on the campus. Below on this page are shown the first of the dormitories built according to Dr. Holt's plan, as well as the newest. There are four men's and five women's dormitories like these, each designed to house approximately twenty students. To accommodate the overflow, older buildings must now be used for living quarters; but it is typical of Rollins that most of the funds so far contributed by donors have been utilized on behalf of the students — for living quarters and scholarships.



Strong Hall, made possible by the discerning philanthropy of Mrs. Henry Alvah Strong of Washington, D. C., is the latest dormitory unit. It is a charming Spanish villa, with patio and outside dance floor.

Rollins Hall is the original unit of the new buildings erected under Dr. Holt's regime. Wide porches, covered arcades and a general air of home-like comfort are characteristic of these units. Rollins Hall houses twenty-four students.



HELPING STUDENTS



Woolson House, where English seminars are held, is, in fact, an attractively furnished living room—in a separate building.



In the Business Administration course there frequently are hot discussions among the students who meet with Dr. Melcher.



History—to most students a mass of names and dates—is a lively, interesting subject at Rollins thanks to the “Conference Plan.”

As these views in typical classrooms show, a pleasing camaraderie characterizes the meetings of student and professor. Students are known to the professor by their first names. Classes assemble around a table and discuss with natural freedom the subject they are exploring. No professor at Rollins is counted worth his salt unless he can stimulate eager inquiry and discussion.

Students are encouraged to evolve their own opinions. If they do not agree with the text book or the professor, they have ample opportunity to express their views. This makes for individual thinking; it trains the mind to perform its real function.

Interest is sustained by covering fewer subjects with more frequent classes in each subject. There is thus less chance to forget between classes. Two hour periods — one usually for study



Rollins is known for the high standard of its scientific work. The “Conference Plan” here amounts to the usual laboratory method.



Students acquire a thorough knowledge of the modern languages by working shoulder to shoulder with the professor.

USE THEIR MINDS

and research — enable the professor to give individualized intelligent help over the rough spots.

In the sciences Rollins has done particularly outstanding work. Pre-medical, pre-engineering, as well as pre-law courses are praised for their excellence by graduate schools.

At Rollins, the period of final “exams” does not hang over the student’s head, or tempt him to defer work till the end of the term. There are frequent informal tests, some oral, some written, but since classes are small, the instructor is able to keep constantly in touch with each student’s work. By careful selection of incoming students and by close watch and personal encouragement, there is little need of the “guillotine,” which in many colleges is the disheartening outcome of the first year.



Dr. Holt frequently entertains students informally in his home — an example of the spirit of Rollins



In mathematics students work out their own problems, of course, but at Rollins they do most of them in class where the professor can explain the tough ones. Some students work slowly, others rapidly.

DEVELOPING THE STUDENT'S PERSONALITY

Rollins responds ably to Dean Swift's toast — "May you live every day of your life!" The college policy is to encourage everyone to take part in extra curricular activities as a means of developing natural aptitudes and personality. Many a Rollins student has thus "found" himself. This does not detract in any way from the college's main purpose — to turn out young men and women who are well grounded in the sciences or in the humanities — and who have enjoyed the process along the way.

Rollins' weekly newspaper compares favorably with some city newspapers. In addition, the students issue monthly an excellent literary magazine, which has attracted wide attention.



Dean Enyart often holds informal supper parties at his lake-front open air grill, preceded by a class discussion of the day's problems. Sometimes parents attend, if they are visiting in town.



In the chapel exercises on Sunday mornings, students take active part in the service, reading the Scriptural lesson and singing the anthem. In fact, they do everything except preach the sermon and pronounce the benediction. There is keen competition among them for these privileges. The Rollins Chapel Choir, of sixty mixed voices, goes on tour each season and fills the churches wherever it sings. To be accepted as a member of the Rollins Choir is a coveted honor.



Equality of the sexes in and out of the classroom is a cardinal principle at Rollins. This year the enrollment shows exactly the same number of each. The association is normal, wholesome, happy.

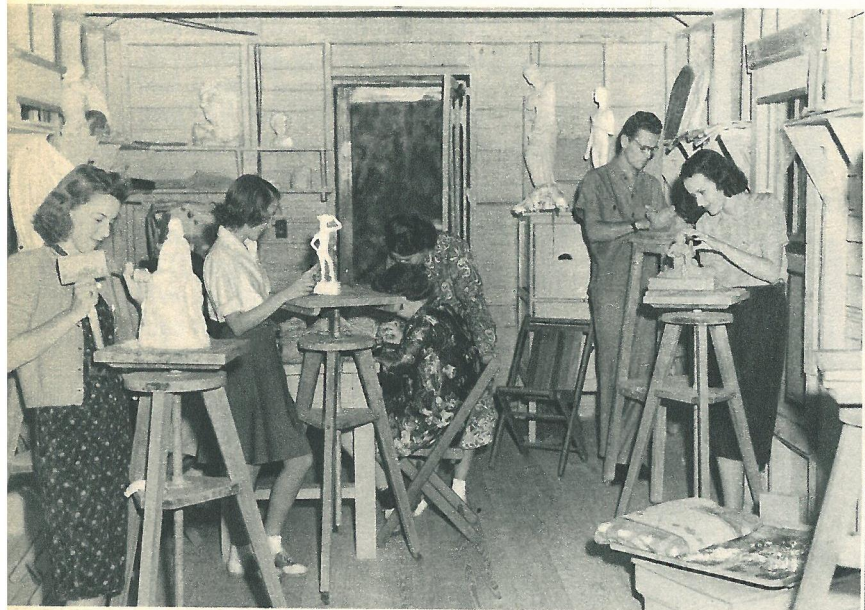


Just by chance, a group of students gathered in a corner of the Commons one day to sing some of the old, old songs. This informal group now meets every day.

SPECIAL COURSES AT ROLLINS



Mural painting is taught, and the students get practice decorating the walls of the "Beanery."



Modelling in clay and casting in the sculpture class. Students usually create their own compositions.



Painting, design, illustration, costume design, the history of art, past and present, are all taught.



Frequent informal recitals are an important feature of music training. The Conservatory of Music takes an active part in Florida's musical activities. There is the Chapel Choir, the annual Bach Festival, the college mixed octette, the student ensembles, the Madrigal Singers, the College Band, the State Inter-scholastic Music Festival and the Symphony Orchestra of Central Florida.

In addition to the standard college courses, Rollins offers many opportunities for specialized study. The college is noted for its encouragement of creative work in short story writing, poetry, painting, music, debate, drama and sculpture. This, it is believed, is not only invaluable to those whose aptitudes are thus developed but it also widens the human interests and capacity for enjoyment of those students who are going into science, law, teaching, business, and the arts.

These two pages visualize a few of the special courses offered by Rollins. If those of the older generation will think back to their own college days, they will realize what progressivism in education today really means.

With one of the finest flying fields in the South at its very doors and with modern Government equipment for both groundwork and flying, Rollins this year is giving instruction in the art and science of aeronautics under the auspices of the Civil Aeronautics Authority. Rollins seems destined to become one of the South's most air-minded institutions.



Interpretive dancing at Rollins is considered one of the Expressive Arts.



Students must have parental approval to take aviation. They get thorough groundwork training before being permitted to fly.



OUTDOOR LIFE AT ROLLINS

On the campus bordering Lake Virginia there stands a wooden structure, which has all the esthetic beauty of an ice-house or a fish-canning establishment. This is the "gym," and it is nearly always deserted! Physical exercise plays an

Water sports play a vital role at Rollins. Lake Virginia is large enough, yet a safe place to learn the fascinating art of sailing.



The dry, mild Florida days are ideal for tennis. The courts are busy most of the time, since study schedules are "staggered."



important part in the life of the Rollins student, but, because of the climate, virtually all sports are out of doors.

Rollins does well in the standard college sports, but it is more concerned with those that can be enjoyed by men and

Last year Rollins fencers defeated all teams they met except West Point and Annapolis.

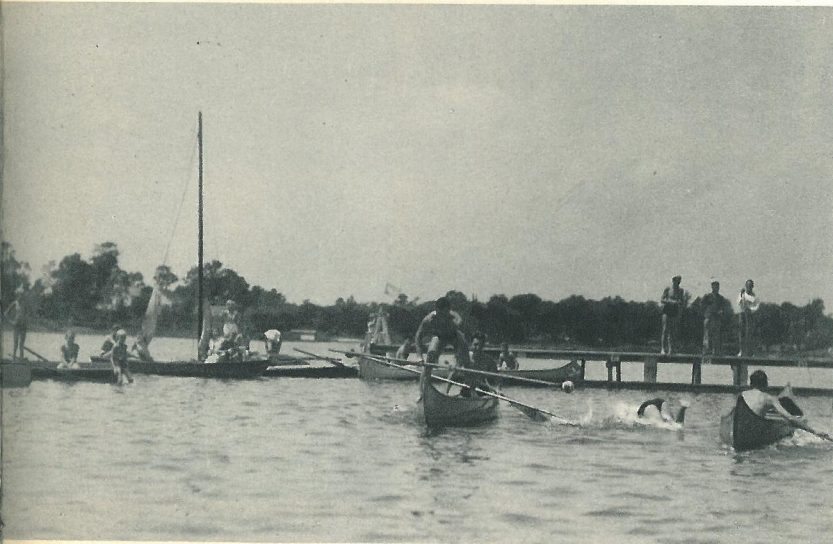


Every student must learn how to swim. A dip in the lake is one of the finest ways to begin or end a hard day of study.



women after they graduate. Large numbers of the students participate in swimming, canoeing, sailing, rowing, tennis, golf, archery and riding. Here are sports for all tastes and all grades of proficiency.

The college owns a large number of canoes, and canoe races and tilting contests arouse keen rivalry.



Weekend camping trips to the site of a prehistoric Indian camp in the jungle on Wakiwa River are popular with the students.

Two features at Rollins are rarely found elsewhere — a college owned island on a branch of the St. John's River for weekend camps, and a salt-water bathing pavillion on the Atlantic Ocean.

Instruction in horseback riding is available to students, but such activities are the relaxation from study—not a substitute for it.



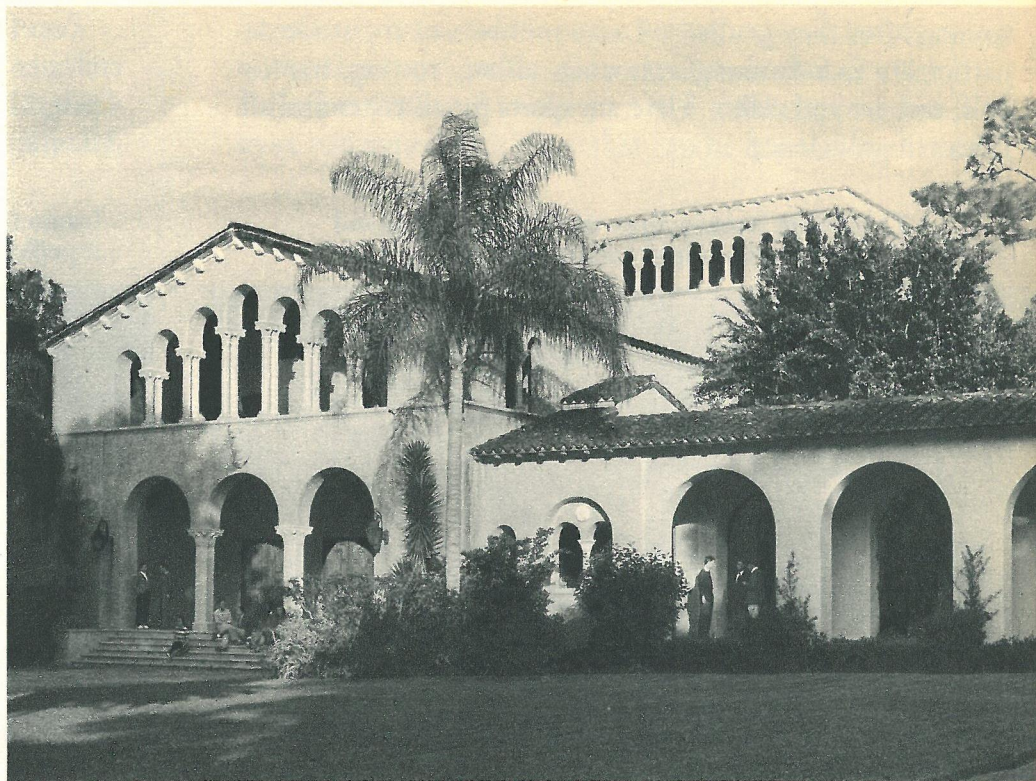
The Varsity eight has made an enviable name for itself in intercollegiate races, and there are both men's and girls' four-oared crews.



DEVELOPING THE DRAMATIC INSTINCT

College theatricals, generally speaking, are not simply amateur—they are amateurish. But at Rollins dramatics are a serious study and the poise and self-assurance the student acquires thereby will serve him well in later life. Some go directly into professional work.

Not only does Rollins have one of the most attractive and completely equipped college theatres right on the campus, but it has the Fred Stone Laboratory Theatre, built with funds raised by the famous actor and a student cast when they toured Florida last year playing "Lightnin'."

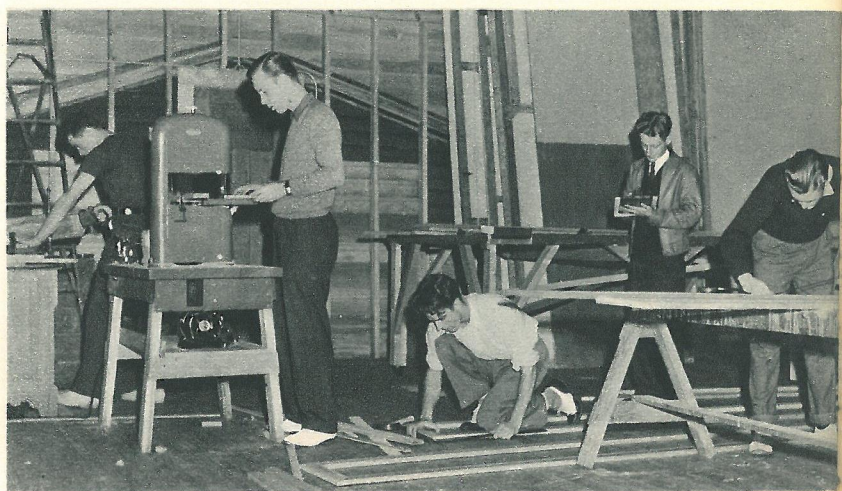


Given in 1932 by Mrs. Edward W. Bok, the Annie Russell Theatre is a professional playhouse in every respect. Here are presented every year student plays, lectures, concerts and recitals. Its fine sound projection equipment was the gift of Harry M. Warner.



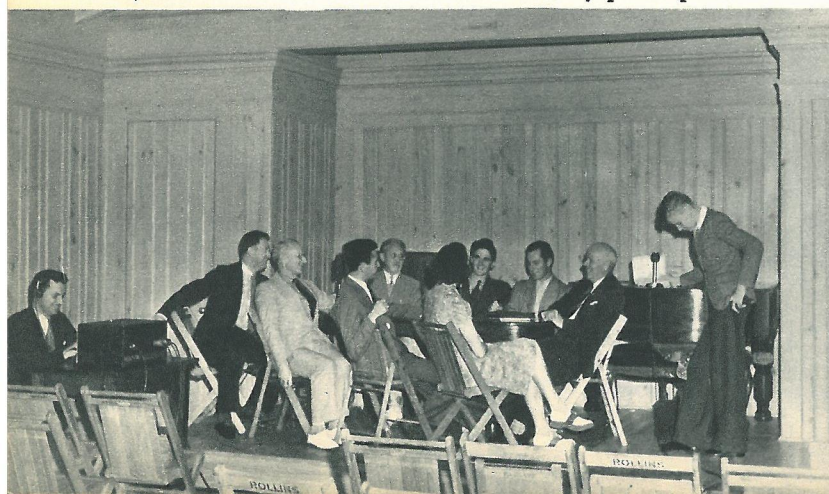
Rehearsing for "The Fool," the first student play of the 1939-1940 season.

Rollins' broadcast every Monday evening from the Dyer Memorial Building is a round table discussion of current subjects in which both students and faculty participate.



The construction of scenery and stage settings is taught as a special course.

Fred Stone's visit to Rollins last year, and his enthusiasm for the work the students were doing, resulted in the building of this laboratory theatre.



AN EXPERIMENT THAT HAS PROVED ITSELF

When President Holt took charge at Rollins, his innovations were eyed with misgivings as "the Rollins experiment." He frankly conceded it was an experiment, but the record of fifteen years has provided ample vindication of the principles and methods he championed.

Most teachers at Rollins have shown the patience and restraint, the insight and human sympathy to make them effective under the Conference Plan. Most students have the energy and ambition, the self-discipline and social sense to use wisely the liberty accorded them.

From parents, from students and alumni, from heads of leading preparatory schools sending students to Rollins and from professional schools to which Rollins graduates have gone, there has come an impressive body of appreciative testimony regarding the success of the Rollins Plan.

PARENTS' AND STUDENTS' COMMENTS

The president of a large industrial firm in Ohio says:

"It affords me pleasure to testify to the effectiveness of the teaching and training processes used at Rollins. The contribution made to the development of my oldest son has already led to the sending of his younger brother to you."

One parent put it this way:

"Life at Rollins has meant a great deal to R., developing character which has made him outstanding in his work this summer."

Another says:

"We realize how much J. has improved. A timid, retiring girl has been changed into a young woman of poise and self-reliance. She has found herself."

One of the students explains why this is true:

"In most other colleges the student slavishly follows a textbook and hopes, by cramming, to get some knowledge of what may be asked in exams. Here we have no final exams; it is the work we do throughout the course that counts."

Another student has this to say:

"If anybody thinks it's easy to make the grade here, he's all wrong. No boy or girl can expect to attain top marks if he doesn't study outside the required study periods. I'm working harder here than at my former college, and so are many others I know."

THE ALUMNI POINT OF VIEW

Here are a few comments from alumni that are enlightening:

One says:

"Rollins training places a man in a position of advantage over the general mass of other college graduates, even though his technical and specialized education may not have been as advanced. He is better prepared for his position in society, because he has had the benefit of individual training."

A successful lawyer writes:

"Compared with other colleges and their graduates, the Rollins graduate is not a standardized product of the machine age of education, but possessed of and equipped with the tools to search out the truth and certainty of the most complex original problems that life presents."

A Broadway actress writes:

"Rollins gave me the finest preparation for the theatre I could have received anywhere in the country. After my four years at Rollins I came home rich in the intimate friendship and contact with at least one hundred people I had known at college. My companions who had gone to larger colleges had stuck with the ten or twelve people they had known or met on entrance, and their contacts had never broadened."

An alumnus at a graduate school says:

"Rollins gave me a training which has proved an excellent basis for graduate school study."

WHAT LEADING HEADMASTERS SAY

From Headmasters of leading preparatory schools come comments that show the value of Rollins' methods. Here are a few:

From Massachusetts:

"The students whom we have sent to Rollins have come back with real ideas about their future, definitely committed to a sphere in life which they have discovered through their college explorations."

From New Hampshire:

"The boys whom we have sent to Rollins have been enthusiastic about the methods of teaching which are in line with what I consider to be the best progressive methods."

From Connecticut:

"To me the great value of Rollins to those of our students who have gone there has been the remarkable ability of the College to inspire a feeling of self-confidence and self-reliance in every boy. The result has been a very marked development of the boy's complete personality."

From Ohio:

"One boy with whom I checked particularly on the intellectual accomplishment pleased me very much. He had a fine stimulus there and was well informed and developed keenness and enthusiasm for life and its activities."

From New Jersey:

"Boys whose ability is quite adequate for college work in certain fields but deficient in others sometimes suffer because most colleges arbitrarily impose uniform requirements on all candidates for admission. Rollins has certainly been a pioneer in the effort to put college training on an individual basis."

From Pennsylvania:

"Students of this academy who have gone to Rollins have benefited greatly by their experiences. The opportunity to follow their own bent, under expert guidance and instruction, has appealed to the best in them. The result has been marked growth individually in the formation of the proper attitudes toward life and in the development of effective personality."

From Illinois:

"It has been my impression that the boys we have sent to Rollins have exhibited a social wholesome naturalness that bodes well for them as citizens of this country. They have developed, unusually, in the field of original, independent and courageous thinking."

ROLLINS METHODS ADOPTED ELSEWHERE

Finally there is a real vindication of Rollins through the adoption of its methods by other institutions. Today there are several widely recognized colleges working along similar lines. The trend toward individualized education has become unmistakable. There is a broader acceptance of the Rollins view that experience at college is not merely preparation for life; it is life itself.

Throughout these fifteen years Rollins has held a steady course. It has declined to be frightened by criticism or misunderstanding. The road has not been a smooth one. The financial struggle has been severe. Physical facilities and equipment are still inadequate. Endowment for scholarships is far too limited. But weight of influence and authority is swinging to Rollins' side. The future looks bright, not only for Rollins but for the educational ideals which it is steadfastly seeking to uphold.

DEDICATION

To the following men and women and to their loyal contemporaries, steadfast friends of Rollins College, the foregoing pages are dedicated. Their unselfish devotion and heroic sacrifices for the Rollins of yesterday built the Rollins of today and made possible the Rollins of tomorrow.

THOMAS R. BAKER

WILLIAM FREMONT BLACKMAN

EDWARD H. BREWER

ANDREW CARNEGIE

JOHN J. CARTY

LORING A. CHASE

WILLIAM C. COMSTOCK

WILLIAM A. COURSEN

LUCY A. CROSS

F. KINGSBURY CURTIS

LOUIS F. DOMMERICH

T. COLEMAN DUPONT

CAROLINE A. FOX

ELBERT H. GARY

JOHN G. GEHRING

THEODORE C. HOLLANDER

EDWARD P. HOOKER

W. H. HOOVER

HARVEY D. KITCHEL

FRANCIS B. KNOWLES

FREDERICK W. LYMAN

CHARLES H. MORSE

OLIVER C. MORSE

D. K. PEARSONS

CORNELIUS A. PUGSLEY

ALONZO W. ROLLINS

E. W. ROLLINS

GEORGE A. ROLLINS

SUSAN A. ROLLINS

ANNIE RUSSELL

EVALINE LAMSON SMITH

GEORGE MORGAN WARD

H. H. WESTINGHOUSE

J. H. WHITEMORE