

Today Is Day of Retrospection

This is an opportune day for Mercerians to take time out in honor of those who have made Mercer what it is today. Little do we consider the host of pioneers who have preceded us in time and made more sturdy the foundation on which we base our faith and our wisdom.

In memory of those early founders themselves, this special day is set aside and celebrated. But countless others who have followed them have added contributions which are not insignificant. The little band who braved the weather and the poverty of Penfield set off only the spark that has grown to be Mercer University. Step by step hundreds since the first group have added their bits to the school, until today among Mercer's thousands of alumni can be counted leaders in the spiritual, intellectual, political, business, and professional worlds.

As we pause to honor the host now departed, may we realize anew our own responsibility to the yet unborn whose future we may influence.



—Alumni office photo
SHOWN ABOVE IS the chapel at Penfield, Georgia, site of the founding of Mercer University.

Cluster Salutes 'Mercer Story'

The Cluster salutes the drama department and the music department for their presentation of "The Mercer Story" in chapel this morning. Dr. Thornton, who wrote and directed the pageant, has made the story attractive enough to cause us now to seek out for ourselves the many, many, little incidents which could not be included in her survey. Mercer history is interesting and we wish to know more of it.

We issue our thanks also to: the choir, under the direction of Dr. Rich; Mrs. Rich, who is to be at the organ; Dr. Johnston, the narrator; Mrs. Harry Smith, the costume chairman; Miss Needles, who assisted in the directing of the production; and the many students and faculty members who participated in the program. Although this paper is published three hours before the chapel program is to be given, we know from our regular attendance at rehearsals that this affair is a must for Mercer's calendar of "annuals."

C. C. LYNCH

On 'The Cluster'

A mystery to many of us is the origin of the name of The Mercer Cluster. Not long ago someone asked me to find out about it and tell you; hence, this column. Alvin Shackelford, who edited this paper two years ago, wrote something about the subject in his column. So from his column and



C. C. Lynch

from the first issue of the publication — dated October 14, 1920—I gleaned the following information, which should be of interest to us during Founders' Day.

The name was first used by Jesse Mercer himself as the title for a book of hymns and poems. The actual title was "Mercer's Cluster" or "The Cluster of Spiritual Songs, Divine Hymns, and Sacred Poems, being chiefly a collection, by Jesse Mercer, Minister of the Gospel, at Washington, Georgia."

When it was decided that the journalism department of Mercer University would publish a newspaper, the name of the founder's song book was used for an unknown reason. I believe that it might have been used partly because the paper was in reality a cluster of news about 14 schools and colleges supported by Georgia Baptists—not just Mercer itself. The schools were called the Mercer University System.

Each institution had its own paper staff to contribute news to the central board at Macon. This central group was in the Mercer school of journalism, which has turned out some of Georgia's most outstanding journalists, but which is now only a small department instead of a school.

The first managing editor was George M. Sparks, who was then already an alumnus of Mercer and an experienced journalist. The editor-in-chief was Lucien M. Hardy, presumably a student. For the first year and a fourth the size of the paper was four pages and the pages measured the same as most daily newspapers. The prestige of the publication seemed to be high, for it was regularly used by a large number of advertisers and letters of congratulations came from important personages. Following the first year and a fourth the page size was reduced to what it is today and the number of pages became six. Many now well-known men have helped publish the Cluster: Jack Tarver, now an official in Atlanta Newspapers, Inc.; Bert Struby, now editor of The Macon Telegraph; Eugene Cook, attorney general of Georgia; George M. Sparks, president of the Atlanta Division of the University of Georgia; and others.

Going back to "Mercer's Cluster," the hymnbook, we find that it contained some 677 songs and poems. Its page size was only 3 by 5 inches, and there were 516 pages. Near the end was an index of first lines and subjects. No authors were listed.

There were five editions, the fifth having an eleven page appendix containing 14 "new" songs such as "Alas, and Did My Savior Bleed." This edition came out in 1835, two years after the founding of Mercer Institute.

So the history of The Mercer Cluster goes back 35 years, but the name has survived for more than 115 years.

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NANCY YATES

Are First Things First?

Twenty-five Mercer students will be "practice teaching" this quarter. Maybe it's time we started being "practice students" as well.

A student made this statement the other day: "Let's not study. Study interferes too much with everything else I have to do." Though the remark was made principally in jest, it is the seeming attitude of a great many people on college campuses today. Study is simply the means to a passing grade.

Yet study is, or should be, our principal reason for being at college. Our activities are stimulating. Our associations are enriching. Our experiences on the campus are beneficial. And yet, without study as the foundation, all the meaning of the university crumbles.

Study is a responsibility. It is morally wrong for a person to give most of his time and attention to anything else if he really believes that study is his main reason for being here.

There are two prevailing attitudes toward study. One student says he can study outside of class without being attentive or even attendant in class and learn just as much as otherwise. Another student says he scarcely studies at all outside class but gets all his information from class lectures. Both are wrong if adhered to separately.

Our professors have a great deal to offer us in wisdom and long experience. Most of our problems have at one time been theirs, and by now most of these professors have arrived at satisfactory conclusions to the problems. We cannot disregard the importance of our daily class instruction.

On the other hand, class instruction alone is not enough. It should be supplemented with concentrated review of the material and with parallel reading. A student must not be totally dependent on the instructor, for in many cases the instructor's knowledge itself is second-hand.

The main reason study now is so important is that the college years are probably the only period for intensive study granted to most of us. Of course we can't expect to learn enough facts in college to live on the remainder of our lives, but if we ever plan to achieve a know-

ledge of our selves, now is the time to begin developing it. Now we are actually just learning how to study. These four years are a preliminary to long years of adding to our knowledge until perhaps we arrive at the distant goal of personal completion.

Each man, I feel, is obligated—if he is true to himself—to strive toward this goal, to recognize the basic questions of life and to seek answers to them.

Acceptance of responsibility is difficult especially when that responsibility itself is difficult. The best ways that we as college young people have of meeting this obligation and responsibility are, I believe, through earnest study of what the great thinkers have said, constant attention to wise professors, and honest observation from our own experience.

On this 122nd anniversary of the founding of Mercer University, what could be more appropriate than for us as students sincerely to practice our studentship, to accept the responsibility of study, and thus to further the ideals on which Mercer was built?

The Mercer Cluster

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(These are only those who assisted with this issue. At the beginning of the quarter the staff is being revamped.)

Member, Associated Collegiate Press

An Open Letter To The Students From The Editor

Dear fellow students:

It is with humble gratitude that I speak of my appreciation for the decisive stamp of approval for my editorial policies that you expressed in Tuesday's chapel vote on the proposed Board of Publications. The statement was made that only in a system where the editor is elected by popular vote can the editorial policy of newspapers be strictly expressive of the wishes of the student body. The rousing cheer after the statement and the large vote later were indications to me that my actions in the past two quarters were heartily approved by the student body, for I was elected by a majority vote. I interpreted it as such, and I thank you for it.

However, I feel that in giving me a vote of confidence, many students who did not understand the amendment defeated what they were actually in favor of. Several students who voted against the measure have since told me they thought that anybody could run of their own accord in elections. Of course, it is true, anybody may enter the race. But no record is given of an independent candidate's winning a race. There are two small groups who select all party candidates for campus elections. The students must then choose between the TWO. Certainly, it is true that under the proposed amendment a small group would select the officials, but this group is ELECTED DIRECTLY BY YOU (WHERE AS THE PARTY CAUCUSES ARE NOT REPRESENTING A MAJORITY GROUP ON THE CAMPUS) and ANYONE MAY APPLY FOR THE PUBLICATIONS JOBS (WHEREAS AT PRESENT THE CANDIDATES MUST ONLY WAIT TO BE ASKED TO RUN). I hope you will give this a lot of thought. Perhaps someone who opposed the amendment will call for its re-presentation to you, and you can approve it—at least improve the present situation.

Again, thanks a lot for your confidence.

Your editor,
C. C. LYNCH, JR.