Paine's 100-year story

Continued from Page 2
and Paine was chartered in Richmond County on June 19, 1883. Despite a dangerously thin budget, classes began on Jan. 1, 1884, in rented rooms in the rear of the old Clausen building at 10th and Broad streets.

The institution's most serious crisis to date occurred on Nov. 27, 1884, when the 2-year-old Board of Trustees was handed resignations by President Callaway, its first president, George Williams Walker; and Trustee Warren Akin Candler.

Although no explanations of those events are available, records do show that in a meeting the following day, Callaway's and Walker's resignations were accepted. Walker then was elected president and Candler withdrew his resignation.

Instead of again working to avoid disaster, Paine's trustees in August 1885 were able to assure the school's success by accepting a $25,000 donation for an endowment provided by the Rev. Moses U. Payne, a local preacher in Missouri. Payne's prospects appeared even brighter as 1886 began — the trustees purchased property in the Woodlawn section of Augusta for $8,000 and began a financial drive to fund Paine's first real campus.

Another great crisis faced the young school in 1888 and its resolution was to have a lasting influence on the school's character. In May 1888, the Board of Trustees decided to elect Paine's first graduate, John Wesley Gilbert, to the school's faculty after the young teacher graduated from Brown University.

Professor C.H. Carlson Jr. strenuously objected, saying the decision was "revolutionary in the light of Southern custom." When President Walker persisted in his choice of Gilbert for the new faculty position, Carlson resigned.

Gilbert's appointment created a bi-racial faculty at Paine — a policy that has remained to this day. But Gilbert brought more than integration to Paine's faculty, according to Paine history Professor George E. Clary Jr., an expert on Paine's foundation.

The young black professor had been thoroughly tutored in Greek and Latin, first by President Walker and then by Brown University's faculty, and his classes paved the way for Paine's eventual elevation from a teaching school with a Normal department to college level.

"This was to be a college, and to be a college, you had to teach Greek and Latin," Clary said.

In its second decade, Paine prospered; in October 1887 the school began construction of its first permanent building — Haygood Memorial Hall — named for Atticus Greene Haygood, minister of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South; president of Emory College in Oxford, Ga.; and an outspoken editor in favor of the Paine cause — was finished in 1899. Although not yet furnished, Haygood Hall was the scene of the 1899 commencement exercises.

The building, which served as the center of Paine's academics and tradition for more than 70 years, suddenly burned on Aug. 3, 1963. "It almost destroyed the president, Dr. (E. Clayton) Calhoun," recalled Clary, who has been a Paine College history professor since 1962. "It happened when the school was totally closed (between terms) and there never was any arson suspected."

Losses from the blaze included all of the college's old course catalogues and a large collection of African artifacts brought back by missionaries. The old college chapel on the first floor of Haygood Hall also was a casualty of the fire.

Paine took 5th of its most significant academic leaps in 1913, when the school was chartered as "Paine College," and just over a quarter-century later, in 1931, the school was accredited by the Southern Association of Colleges and Secondary Schools.

The accreditation was the beginning of Paine's finest decade. The school celebrated its 50th anniversary in 1933 with the "Paine College Jubilee," launched in February of that year. The celebration began the five-year period now known as the "Golden Age of Achievement." Between 1933 and 1938, despite carrying its own burden of suffering during the Great Depression, morale was at its highest peak.

Paine adopted its College Ideal in 1934, the Paine College Hymn was written and an annual interracial student conference was begun on the campus.

"There was a spiritual uplift that was unbelievable in the 1930s," said Clary, who first visited the college during one of the early interracial conferences. But nearly 30 years would go by before the first black president would be appointed to lead Paine's bi-racial faculty. Dr. Lucius Holsey Pitts, a Paine graduate, earned the distinction of being his alma mater's first black president. He served from 1971 to 1974. It was Paine's second black president, however, who has had the most profound influence on the school in recent years. Dr. Julius S. Scott Jr. took the helm in 1974, and quickly began a campaign to take Paine College out from behind its walls into the mainstream of Augusta business and society.

Mayor Edward M. McIntyre last May said that Scott, recognizing Paine's depressed situation, brought new life to the school.

"He brought back Paine pride to this institution from the board of directors to the janitor," McIntyre said.

Less significant Paine milestones in recent years include:

• 1952 — Randall A. Carter Gymnasium is constructed.

• 1961 — Paine College is admitted to full membership in the Southern Association of Colleges and Secondary Schools.

School weather attacks

Continued from Page 2
white and black Methodist Episcopal churches to control the fund, and the decision to locate the proposed school in Augusta was made.

The school received its name, Paine Institute, on Nov. 1, 1882. The first president, Dr. Morgan Callaway, was elected in December 1882.

But the bright outlook in 1883 was soon darkened by what appeared to be an unintentional mistake by Paine's new president. In his farewell address at Emory College in Oxford, Ga., on Jan. 21, 1883, where he had been a student of the English department, Callaway — a white man — discussed at length how the school intended to work with the new black school. His address was printed in full in a Georgia weekly Methodist newspaper and it raised a storm of opposition.

The storm of attacks in articles and letters in the church press began in February and continued throughout 1883, despite an equally outspoken defense of the new school by several influential ministers. It delayed the beginning of classes by many months. Paine was chartered in Richmond County on June 19, 1883, and opened on Jan. 2, 1884.

"They didn't start out to do anything in the way of a pioneering adventure," Clary said. "They started out to meet a need of educating leaders for the church... That means preachers and teachers."

The groups' Southern origin and interracial character were notable features, said Clary, who as part of his research on Paine arranged a list of the most important Paine founders.

Bishop Lucia H. Holsey, who was born a slave and rose to become senior bishop of the C.M.E. Church, did more than anyone to help found Paine. Clary wrote. Holsey appealed to the General Conference of the M.E. Church to fund what would become Paine Institute.

Atticus Greene Haygood, a white M.E. minister and president of Emory College, wrote newspaper articles supporting the school.

George Williams Walker, also white, helped Paine develop during his work as its first teacher and second president.

Old Haygood Hall burns in 1968
Building served Paine College for nearly 70 years

THE GEORGIA RAILWAY

YOUR SMARTEST FINANCIAL MOVE IS TO AUGUSTA'S HOMETOWN BANK.