

“KING JAMES:” JAMES EDWARD DICKEY (1864-1928),
EMORY COLLEGE PRESIDENT AND METHODIST BISHOP

by

THOMAS HAROLD JACKSON, JR.

(Under the Direction of Libby V. Morris and Thomas G. Dyer)

ABSTRACT

James Edward Dickey was the twelfth president of Emory College and the last to serve at its Oxford, Georgia campus before it was consolidated into Emory University. As were many of his predecessors, Dickey was an Emory alumnus and Methodist minister who came to the presidency with a background of teaching and preaching. A systematic administrator with a gift for fundraising, he served as president from 1902 to 1915, longer than any of his predecessors, and oversaw construction of a new science building, dormitory, gymnasium and a sanctuary for the campus church. An old-style southern orator noted for his eloquence and grandiose delivery, he preached conservative values leading to Christian salvation. Serving as pastor of prominent Georgia Methodist churches before and after his presidency, he was elected bishop of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South in 1922, serving until his death in 1928. As such, he campaigned vigorously against a proposal to unify the southern and northern branches of the Methodist Episcopal Church.

Key influences and factors in his life and career were his mentor and long-time colleague Warren A. Candler, also an Emory president and Methodist bishop; the transition of the Old South of his birth and its “Lost Cause” rhetoric to the New South of his maturity, as outlined by

Atticus G. Haygood and Henry W. Grady; the pervasive influence of race in the life of the church, college and society of Dickey's time; the Methodist Church and its commitment to higher education through the Wesleyan philosophy of melding knowledge with vital piety; and the coming of the Progressive Era and its resulting impact on higher education in general, and on Emory in particular, as it transformed from a small liberal arts college to a great research university.

INDEX WORDS: James Edward Dickey; Emory College; Methodist Episcopal Church, South; Warren A. Candler; Methodist unification; Andrew Sledd.

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DEDICATION

To my wife, Sharon B. Jackson, whose steadfast encouragement and support enabled me to persevere in bringing this project to completion.

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Nearly three decades after I completed my undergraduate degree at the University of Georgia, Professor Thomas G. Dyer encouraged me to pursue graduate work. Taking his advice to heart, I first completed a master's degree in public administration, and then was fortunate to be admitted into the doctoral program in higher education with Dr. Dyer as my major professor. Although he officially retired from the university when I was midstream through my program, he continued to guide my work through to its completion. I am forever grateful for his initial encouragement to begin the pursuit, and for his dedication to seeing me through.

Upon Dr. Dyer's retirement, Professor Libby V. Morris took up the role as my major professor, and I am grateful for her supportive guidance. She, along with my doctoral committee members Christopher C. Morphew and J. Douglas Toma, helped a college administrator well into his career achieve a significant goal – not only that of a doctoral degree, but of gaining breadth and depth of understanding of this academic enterprise which has been such an integral part of my life.

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PROLOGUE

James Edward Dickey, president of Emory College in Oxford, Georgia from 1902 to 1915, and later a bishop in the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, is representative of a sizable class of presidents of church-related colleges of his period, particularly those across the South. An ordained clergyman, he viewed his role as an educator to be symbiotic with his role as a minister – the two were inseparable parts of a whole. As a Methodist, he espoused the philosophy of the denomination's founder, John Wesley, that knowledge and vital piety – learning and holiness – should be combined. The reader who approaches this work from a strictly higher education perspective may be perplexed to find the narrative seemingly wandering off into the business and polity of the church, the two are so interwoven in the lives and minds of Dickey and his colleagues. For them, education of the heart and the mind became a seamless enterprise under the Methodist system of higher education. The college was a wholly-owned subsidiary of the church, producing graduating classes of young men who were bound for the ministry themselves in large proportions, or otherwise to be leaders in church and society.

Dickey was a son of the South, born just months before General William Tecumseh Sherman's March to the Sea swept through his Georgia hometown. Maturing to adulthood during the terrible backwash of the Civil War, he came to revere southern heroes such as Robert E. Lee and Jefferson Davis. Yet, as it did to many of his southern counterparts in higher education, this regional pride ultimately led him to become a champion of the New South as described by Atticus G. Haygood and Henry W. Grady.

Scion of the aristocratic Few family, among whose members stood a signer of the United States Constitution, Revolutionary War officers, Georgia legislators and owners of large

plantations, Dickey possessed an innate sense of leadership and an aristocratic air. Yet in his early life he bore financial hardships brought about by the premature death of his father, and as Emory president he – like many counterparts – struggled for years with balancing institutional revenues against expenditures in hand-to-mouth fashion.

Living in the South of his day meant dealing with the harshness of racial separation – a hard, brutal atmosphere that is difficult to comprehend from the context of today. In his time, lynchings, degradation and suppression of African-Americans across the South permeated day-to-day life. Key issues in Dickey’s career – the removal of a faculty member for penning a nationally-published essay on lynching, and arguments over accommodating Black members in the reunification of the southern and northern branches of the Methodist church – were founded in these racial attitudes of the period.

Dickey and his counterparts stood astride a time of major evolution in many of their institutions. The Emory College at which he arrived as a student in 1887 was a typically small, conservative church-affiliated college that had been wedded for decades to the classical curriculum of Greek and Latin. At the time of his death following long service as president and on the board of trustees, it had evolved into Emory University and stood well on its way to becoming the national research institution it is today. The means of this transition is marked at times by the brilliant foresight of the New South leadership circle in which Dickey stood, at others by fortuitous happenstance – such as the loss of Vanderbilt University by the Methodist church, an apparent calamity at the outset that resulted in the founding of both Emory and Southern Methodist universities. At yet other times, as happens in all our lives, matters advanced as the result of making day-to-day decisions through “satisficing” (as coined by Herman Simon) to the best solution available to meet the needs of the moment.

Key to an understanding of Dickey's motivation is an appreciation of his profound sense of duty growing out of his religious devotion to the teachings of Jesus Christ, expressed through the organization of the Methodist church. The influence of and Dickey's devotion to his mentor, Emory president and later Methodist bishop Warren A. Candler, can hardly be overestimated. His sense of duty to Candler and to the church caused Dickey a number of times over the years to accept assignments that he might have preferred to pass by. Despite a professed preference for the pastorate, Dickey would spend only seven years of his career exclusively in the pastorate, spending most of his career instead in other assignments in the classroom, or in the administration of college and church. At many points through Dickey's life, it was Candler who both facilitated his advancement and determined its direction, yielding a career in higher education and church administration that often wandered far from the life of a local church pastor that Dickey might have preferred.

That Dickey and Candler could be hard-nosed conservatives in some matters while expressing progressive educational ideals in others is paradoxical but also representative of the evolutionary times in which they lived. Understanding Dickey and his times opens a window on a critical period of transition of the old South to the new, and of higher education from the small, liberal arts college to the modern research university.

CHAPTER 1

CHILDHOOD THROUGH COLLEGE YEARS 1864-1891

The men of Emory College would come to call him “King James,” this classmate of theirs who, standing over six feet tall, towered over most of them in both stature and regard. Six years older than most in the class due to his late start in school, James Edward Dickey would join the faculty immediately upon graduation and would rise to the presidency of the college only fifteen years after his arrival as a freshman.

As president, he would serve as professor of mental and moral science – that is, teach the capstone course synthesizing the education of mind and heart as expressed in the Methodist philosophy. One of his students, Pierce Harris, who was to serve as pastor of Atlanta First Methodist Church from 1940 to 1964 and become a noted author and lecturer, remembered the course as Dickey “teaching Bible to the college boys,” but it was much more than that. As Harris recalled,

...[T]o all the boys, he is “King James” and he lives up to the description, every hour of every day. Over six feet tall, his hair grows down to his collar, and his Roman face reminds us all of a Roman senator. Next to Almighty God, King James speaks to us with the most authority about the Bible and the great truth it contains. “Young gentlemen,” he begins, “Our lesson today has to do with faith, and how faith reflects itself in the inimitable life of the Apostle Paul...”¹

“Shaking his head like a lion about to charge another jungle king,” Dickey would hold his class spellbound regaling them with the stories and lessons of the Bible, “a great, shaggy-headed saint”² who was to serve the longest presidency of Emory College to that time, move on to fill

¹ *The Atlanta Journal-Constitution*, “Those Boys Learned Something in His Bible Class Long Ago,” Feb. 11, 1962, column by Pierce Harris.

² *Ibid*; and Dempsey, Elam Franklin. *Life of Bishop Dickey*. Nashville: Publishing House of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, 1937, p. 18. Dempsey says Dickey idolized Dr. J. B. Hawthorne, pastor of the First Baptist Church of Atlanta during Dickey’s teen years and perhaps imitated him in later years. Hawthorne was a tall, imposing figure with black hair flowing down to his shoulders.

the pulpit in some of Georgia's most noted Methodist churches, and cap his career with election to the episcopacy, the highest office his church could bestow.

As he came into the world, the potential for such accomplishment certainly was apparent in his family heritage, but his immediate safety and security likely were foremost in his parents' minds. James Edward Dickey was born into the parsonage of the Methodist Church in Jeffersonville, Georgia in the most perilous of times – on May 11, 1864. The Civil War had come to Georgia in earnest that very week, with battles at Rocky Face and Dug Gap south of Chattanooga being fought for three days before his birth. That summer Atlanta would fall, and by year's end General William Tecumseh Sherman's March to the Sea would sweep through Jeffersonville en route to Savannah.

“At that time, his native State was shadowed by the clouds of battle fought in Georgia during the last dark year of the civil war,” wrote Dickey's mentor and champion, Bishop Warren A. Candler, in a 1928 memorial to his protégé. “[H]is birthplace was in the path swept by the tempest. Undismayed, his devoted parents served in the midst of the dreadful storm. From his birth, the infant son imbibed the spirit of their courageous fidelity.”³

By the time of James Edward Dickey's birth, his father, itinerant Methodist minister James Madison Dickey,⁴ was in his thirteenth appointment in fourteen years. Following the first

³ *Missionary Yearbook 1928*, published by the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, p. 159.

⁴ The Rev. James Madison Dickey, was of old Scotch-Irish stock tracing to the 1460s in Glasgow. The line emigrated to Northern Ireland about 1600 and thence to North Carolina in the 1750s before J.M. Dickey's grandfather moved to McMinn County, Tennessee in 1806 (from Dickey family papers held by the author, including copy of a letter to J. E. Dickey from his cousin, William W. Dickey, July 31, 1882). As Candler wrote in his memorial to Bishop Dickey, the elder Dickey was born in 1825, the son of pious Methodists whose “faith was rewarded by the conversion of their son while a mere boy.” J.M. Dickey was at an early age moved to preach, “but banishing the impression he lost his fervor and faith.” The spirit moved him again at a camp meeting in Walker County, Georgia, during which “he surrendered to duty and was greatly blessed,” records James Madison Dickey's conference memorial in the *Journal of the North Georgia Annual Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, 1878*, p. 25. Having moved to North Georgia in the 1840s, the elder Dickey was licensed to preach on September 21, 1849, received on trial by the Georgia Methodist Conference meeting at Marietta in January 1850, ordained deacon by Bishop James Osgood Andrew on December 28, 1851 and ordained elder by Bishop Robert Paine on May 16, 1854.

appointment to the Rome Circuit in 1850, he moved virtually every year, as was the custom in those times -- to the Marietta Circuit (1851), Telfair (1852), Dublin (1853), Oglethorpe Station (1854), Macon (1855), Savannah City Mission (1856), Louisville (1857), Dalton Station (1858), Asbury (1859), Wilkes (1860-61), Lexington (1862-63) and then to Jeffersonville.⁵

The Rev. James Madison Dickey married a young widow, Ann Elizabeth Thomas Evans, on May 24, 1859, in Richmond County. Her first husband, Augusta wholesale merchant John W. Evans, had died three years before at age 29, leaving young Ann a 21-year-old widow with a newborn daughter, Carrie Will. The child died in 1861 at age five, the same year James Madison and Ann Elizabeth had their first child together – a son, Frank. A second son was born in 1862 – William Few Dickey, named for Ann’s great-great-uncle who was a signer of the United States Constitution. The third son, James Edward, called “Eddie” in his childhood, came along in 1864. The eldest son, Frank, died the next year at age four.⁶

Through these family tragedies and the denouement of the war, the parents with their two remaining young sons continued regular moves from parsonage to parsonage, the appointments lengthening to two years at a post, and at times, three – Warrenton (1865-67), Greensboro (1868-70), Evans Chapel, Atlanta (1871-73), Gainesville (1874-75), Elberton (1876), and Calhoun Station (1877).⁷ From age eight until he was only 13, James Edward received the only formal education of his childhood in the public schools of Atlanta, Gainesville, Elberton and Calhoun.⁸

“The noble father of Bishop Dickey was on the effective list and was most effective,” Candler wrote.⁹ While there was but brief mention of the elder Rev. Dickey in a few select news clips of his time, they paint a picture of an engaged Methodist pastor. He is listed among the

⁵ *North Georgia Annual Conference Journal, 1878*, p. 25.

⁶ Dempsey, *Life of Bishop Dickey*, p. 8.

⁷ *Journal of the North Georgia Conference, 1878*.

⁸ Dempsey, *Life of Bishop Dickey*, p. 3

⁹ *Missionary Yearbook 1928*.

participants at the consecration of a Methodist Orphans' Home at Norcross in 1871, an occasion resplendent with elected officials and Methodist pastors, speeches, and a ceremony that was "pleasant and agreeable" and "brought out quite a number of our citizens."¹⁰

Besides his weekly preaching duties, the elder Dickey performed the requisite weddings and funerals for his parishioners. *The Atlanta Constitution* noted one such wedding, that of Wylie Teat, a printer, to Maggie Herinton at Evans Chapel church in July 1873. "There were three male and three female attendants, and everything passed off agreeably. The bride was 'lovely beyond compare'," the newspaper related.¹¹

At each annual meeting of the North Georgia Conference of the Methodist church, a memorial service is held for pastors who have died during the previous year. At the 1873 conference, as the memoir was read for the Rev. W. J. Parks, son of a Revolutionary War soldier who served in the hills of northeast Georgia, Rev. Dickey stood and "spoke of him as a father." A reporter noted that the service – though to remember only two deceased during that year – "was of unusual length," lasting for three hours.¹²

At the 1874 Annual Conference which met in Cartersville, J. M. Dickey was among a committee of five appointed to investigate "complaints" against the presiding elder (the chief administrative clergy member, or superintendent) of the Dalton District, Rev. R. W. Bigham. Such complaints were not particularly unusual in that time, and as often happened, the committee found them to be unsubstantiated.¹³

Over the next few years, the elder Dickey's health rapidly declined. The preacher with the "sparkling wit" and "cheerfulness" saw his "strong manly frame [become] so weak that often

¹⁰ *Atlanta Constitution*, "Consecration of Methodist Orphans' Home," April 27, 1871, p. 3.

¹¹ *Atlanta Constitution*, (no headline), July 11, 1873, p. 3.

¹² *Atlanta Constitution*, (no headline), Dec. 16, 1873, p. 3.

¹³ *Atlanta Constitution*, "North Georgia M.E. Conference," Dec. 5, 1874, p. 2.

he could remain out of bed only long enough to preach, and would have to lean on the pulpit for support.” His last appointment, to Calhoun Station in 1877, was “made in the hope that the climate of the home of his youth might restore his failing health.... Even then his preaching was with grace and power perhaps unsurpassed in his ministry.” But he gave up his appointment in mid-year, preaching his last sermon on the fourth Sunday of June, 1877, and retired to the Richmond County plantation of his wife’s family, the “Thomas Place,” where he died the next year.¹⁴ Ann was again a widow at age 43, with sons William Few, 16, and James Edward, 14.

The official conference memorial remembered James M. Dickey’s as a life

...more of sunshine than of shade. His wit was sparkling, his cheerfulness, amounting often to playfulness, lasted to the end, making him a joy to the Conference. His sympathies abounded – rejoicing with them that rejoiced, and weeping with them that wept. His tenderness of love for wife and children, never failing, grew more and more as he saw the joy of his presence would soon be denied them. His love for the brethren of the Conference was much like the love of Jonathan for David, and we who remain may well weep over our fallen brother. But, while his brethren were so near his heart, his work was nearer still. During his illness, he said: ‘I wish I could get the hardest work in the North Georgia Conference.’ It was a sad day to this heroic Christian soldier when sickness bade him leave the field of so many triumphs.¹⁵

When her husband’s illness forced his retirement, Ann returned with him to her family’s 5,000-acre home place located along Dean’s Bridge Road in Richmond County, at the time about two miles southwest of the corporate limits of Augusta. It was there in the year 1877-78, during the last year of his father’s life, that young Dickey helped work on the farm, rambled the grounds fishing and hunting, and beyond his father’s illness, lived a rather idyllic life for a boy. The large home of English architecture was two stories containing eight rooms with high ceilings and a traditional veranda. It faced north on a rise above the road, from which it was reached by a broad driveway. The land contained a one hundred-acre fishing lake, a sunken rose garden, and

¹⁴ *Ibid.*; *Journal of the North Georgia Conference, 1878*; Dickey family papers.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*

a carpeted lawn of bluegrass. While descriptions of the property do not detail how the family managed such a large acreage, it is likely that sharecroppers worked a farm of that size. Just a dozen years after the close of the Civil War, the family lived in a stately setting with a large house surrounded by abundant land.¹⁶

The Dickey family heritage was strong, but Ann's own family, the Thomases and Fews, stood among Georgia's leading citizens and wealthiest landowners, and were the apparent source of the family's large land-holdings during Dickey's childhood. Her great-grandfather, Benjamin Few, emigrated with his family from Maryland to North Carolina and then St. Paul's Parish (now Richmond County), Georgia, fighting as a colonel in the militia in the American Revolution, including battles at Savannah, Augusta and in the Carolinas. With his land grants from war service, he became one of Georgia's largest land-owners and served in the Georgia General Assembly. Benjamin's brothers were James Few, hanged by the British following the Battle of Alamance at age 25; William Few, Jr., who signed the United States Constitution for Georgia and was a founding trustee of the University of Georgia and a United States senator; and Ignatius Few, a major in the Revolutionary army who became a successful planter and merchant.¹⁷

¹⁶ Dempsey, *Life of Bishop Dickey*, pp. 7-8.

¹⁷The Ffews, as it was first spelled, were Quakers in England in the 1600s. Ancestor Richard Few immigrated with William Penn's company to found the Penn Colony in 1681. He purchased land in what is now central Philadelphia and additional land in what is now Chester, being listed by the Colony as a "First Purchaser." (See Florence Knight Fruth, *Some Descendents of Richard Few of Chester County, Pennsylvania and Allied Lines, 1682-1976*; Parsons, WV: McClain Printing Co., 1977, a self-published family history.) His grandson, William Few Sr., tried to grow tobacco in nearby Maryland, but was too far north with frosts wiping out three consecutive crops. In 1758, William moved his family to Orange County, North Carolina, settling in the back country with his wife, two daughters, and four sons who matured into noted careers of leadership. The eldest was Benjamin Few, whose son, Thomas, became father to Caroline Short Few, mother of Ann Elizabeth Thomas, James Edward Dickey's mother. The second brother, James, became involved with the Regulators movement and was hanged by the British following the Battle of Alamance in 1771 at age 25. In doing so he became, as historian George Bancroft called him, "the first martyr in the cause of American Independence." At his death, his angry and distraught father moved the family to Georgia. James' son William, one of twins born three months before the hanging, was great-grandfather of J. E. Dickey's cousin and contemporary, William Preston Few, president of Trinity College and founding president of Duke University. The third brother, William Few Jr. fought as his brother Benjamin's lieutenant colonel in the Revolution and became a delegate from Georgia to the Continental Congress at Philadelphia. With Abraham Baldwin, he was one of Georgia's two signers of the United States

And so merged into James Edward Dickey the strong leadership qualities of his Few family line and the pious Methodist background of his Dickey family. Even with this heritage, at the death of his father his immediate opportunities appeared somewhat bleak. His father had planned to send James Edward to Emory College and then to the University of Virginia, but the elder Dickey's protracted illness sapped the funds he had set aside for his sons' education. In January 1879, Ann moved with her two young sons to a home on Stonewall Street in southwest Atlanta next to Evans Chapel Methodist Church, which her late husband either had purchased or otherwise acquired as a gift or bequest from a member during their three-year pastorate there six years earlier. Two of her sisters, Emma and Sallie Thomas, soon moved into the house next door, so Dickey had three important women in his life nearby during this time of his life. The boys went to work to support the family, and without time for further formal schooling, studied at home in the evenings as they could. Working by day as a grocery store clerk, each night young James Edward would employ every spare moment reading the great works of the classic authors.¹⁸

Constitution and among the founding trustees of the University of Georgia. He sold land to Daniel Easley that was purchased by Gov. John Milledge for the university's campus. William Few later was appointed one of Georgia's first two U.S. Senators before becoming disenchanted with the south and slavery and moving to New York City, where he became a successful banker, state assemblyman and mayor. The youngest, Ignatius Few, fought in the Revolution under Captain William Candler, whose daughter he would marry after the war. The British captured Ignatius at Amelia Island and imprisoned him in the Castillo de San Marcos at St. Augustine, Florida. Later in the war he rose through the rank of captain to major, and after the war, returned to Columbia County, Georgia, where he became a successful planter and merchant. He married Mary Candler, of the Candler family which later would become synonymous with Emory College and the Coca-Cola Company. The youngest of Ignatius and Mary Candler Few's four children, Ignatius Alphonso Few, became founding president of Emory College. Mary Candler's brother, Daniel, became grandfather to brothers Asa Griggs Candler, founder of the Coca-Cola Company; Warren Akin Candler, Emory president and bishop of the Methodist Church; and John Slaughter Candler, noted jurist and Emory trustee. See also *Autobiography of Col. William Few of Georgia*, with foreword by Charles Colcock Jones, New York, 1881, in Few Collection, Hargrett Rare Books and Manuscripts Library, University of Georgia; Lewis Dale Carmen, M.D., articles in *Men of Mark in Georgia*, William J. Northen, ed., Atlanta: A.B. Caldwell, c. 1906; Kenneth Coleman and Charles Stephen Gurr, eds., *Dictionary of Georgia Biography*, Athens: UGA Press, 1983.

¹⁸ Dempsey, *Life of Bishop Dickey*, pp. 3-15.

Candler calls this a “heroic chapter in his life,” as Dickey was determined to support his mother and to secure the advantages of a college education even in the absence of his father’s support. “From this purpose neither sorrow nor adversity could cause him to waver,” Candler wrote.¹⁹

His best friend was his brother, close enough in age and appearance that some people thought them twins. William was active, not especially studious, and a rising young businessman in his own right, becoming a partner in a wholesale grocery firm at age 24. Edward was serious, quiet socially, and intellectual – some thought him aloof. He became a leader in the church youth group, which offered opportunities for dramatic performances and debating, at which he excelled, learning and reciting whole passages from Shakespeare that he carried with him the rest of his life.²⁰

He enjoyed speaking before groups. The story is told that Eddie was leading a Wednesday evening prayer meeting for the young men of Evans Chapel Church the night of August 31, 1886 when a tremendous earthquake hit Charleston, South Carolina, rattling Atlanta strongly enough to ring church bells. As the shaking subsided, young Dickey is reported to have facetiously remarked, “Well, this is my first effort in this direction, and, if such disturbances as this be the result, perhaps, it might be well to let it be the last.”²¹

Immediately upon the family’s move back to Atlanta, young Dickey had secured a position as a clerk in the grocery store of Thomas C. Mayson, a layman in the Evans Chapel Church who had been a good friend of Dickey’s father when he was pastor there. Mayson later recalled that young Dickey showed no sign of a future in the pulpit, although “he was faithfully in his place at church and when called upon did his part in a quiet and unobtrusive manner.”

¹⁹ Candler, in *Missionary Yearbook 1928*

²⁰ *Ibid.*, pp. 14-18.

²¹ *Ibid.*, pp. 20-21, quoting Mr. I. B. Lester of Turnerville, Ga.

Mayson recalled him as “absolutely pure in life and clean in speech and conversation. Even unseemly words, much less profane or foul ones, had no place in his vocabulary. He is one man of whom I have always felt that he lived an absolutely spotless life.”²²

Mayson’s son, James, became one of Dickey’s very best friends during those years, along with Ed Fletcher and his own brother, William. The four were inseparable and spent many happy hours involved in the debating and dramatic society organized by the Evans Chapel youth group. Young Mayson’s departure for Emory College split up the close group of friends. Going to college was something Dickey was not immediately in a position to do financially, as he was helping support his mother. Dickey more tragically lost the other two members of the foursome – Ed Fletcher and William Dickey – to death before he finally was able to leave for Emory himself in 1887.

From his position as a grocer’s assistant, Edward moved to a position as bookkeeper and confidential secretary with McBride and Co., wholesale crockery and glassware, a large store at the corner of Decatur and Pryor Streets in downtown Atlanta. He learned the affairs of business and management, budgeting and interpersonal relationships, each of which would serve him well in his future roles.²³

Likewise, he began his involvement in civic affairs. His name appears among a committee of nine young men who “sympathize with the objects of the Fulton County Confederate Veterans’ Association” and “are preparing to organize themselves into an association.” The young men hoped to be allowed to march in the procession to ceremonies surrounding the unveiling of a monument to Senator Benjamin Harvey Hill in Atlanta, on which

²² Dempsey, *Life of Bishop Dickey*, p. 18.

²³ *Ibid.*, pp. 19-20.

occasion the featured speaker was the former Confederate President Jefferson Davis.²⁴ From this mention, it is assumed that Dickey marched in the procession, which is noted in Davis biographies as one of the notable receptions accorded the former president as he appeared around the South in the year before his death.

Brother William, then age 24, experienced some business success, having become a partner in McCord-Wallace and Company, wholesale grocers. Tragically, on October 21, 1886, William died of typhoid fever. The family buried him beside his father, brother and half-sister at the Thomas Place in Richmond County. Edward and his mother were distraught to the point of repainting their Atlanta home and repapering the walls, but overcoming the memories of the place proved too great a task. H. Y. McCord bought out William's share of the grocery business.²⁵ That, with Edward's savings, allowed him and his mother to move to Oxford. He was determined "to carry his mother with him during his student life that she might have daily attentions at his hands," Candler wrote.²⁶

Thus, the family decided to pursue a drastic change in the wake of their tragedy, determining that it was time for Edward to go to college. It was not a traditional college entrance for young Dickey. Most freshmen at that time were sixteen or seventeen, but he arrived on the Emory campus already having passed his twenty-third birthday, and accompanied by his grieving mother.²⁷

Dickey arrived in Oxford in early summer 1887. The town was and is known due to its rich heritage of Methodist leadership, and the fact that many of those leaders are buried in the town cemetery, as the "Westminster of Methodism." "Forty miles east of Atlanta and one mile

²⁴ *Atlanta Constitution*, "Young Men to Organize," April 28, 1886, p. 5.

²⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 17

²⁶ Candler, in *Missionary Yearbook 1928*.

²⁷ *Ibid.*, pp. 17, 21-22.

from the Georgia Railroad, Oxford is proverbially healthy, and emphatically the student's home," espoused the college catalogue, which offered typically effusive claims:

The village is on a high granite ridge – with no possible local cause of sickness. Its literary, social and religious advantages combined are unexcelled. By special act of the Legislature, drinking and gambling saloons are excluded from the town and from within one mile of its corporate limits. The quiet seclusion of the place invites to study, and the surrounding and prevailing influences favor the formation of good habits and the development of a true manhood.²⁸

Emory College at the time was in what Roger L. Geiger calls "the Indian summer for multipurpose colleges, an interlude of relative tranquility although their season was nearly past." Such denominationally-based, locally-focused institutions were soon to face change already sweeping over other institutions across the nation, as sectarianism declined and the growth of large research universities began. The curriculum over the next few decades would undergo dramatic changes from classical regimentation to a much wider, student-centered selection of courses. Student life soon would enter a similar transition, with students increasingly controlling their selection of extracurricular activities.²⁹

In addition to being a denominational, locally-focused, multipurpose college, upon Dickey's arrival and throughout his time there Emory was distinctively southern. Regional influences of the lost Civil War permeated its life, as did the devastating economic deprivation in the backwash of that war, and hard racial divisions that understandably continued in southern society just twenty-four years after the Emancipation Proclamation. The late war impacted the families of most students; most knew economic deprivation; most carried typical southern white attitudes toward persons of other races. Unlike the colleges at Harvard, South Carolina or

²⁸ *Annual Catalogue of the Officers, Alumni and Students of Emory College, Oxford, Georgia, Session of 1887 and 1888*, Macon, Georgia: J. W. Burke & Co., p. 55; Manuscripts, Archives and Rare Books Library, Emory University.

²⁹ Geiger, Roger L., ed. *The American College in the Nineteenth Century*. Nashville: Vanderbilt University Press, 2000, pp. 264-265 and vii.

Virginia, Emory did not cater primarily to the children of the social elite. Instead, it was typically evangelical Protestant and denominational, serving first the children of Methodist ministers, and specifically establishing funds to assist the working poor to gain an education.³⁰

Nationally, the coming decade would mark the emergence of the American university, with the opening of Stanford University in 1891 and the University of Chicago the next year. It would be a quarter-century before Emory would gain university status in 1915. As Dickey arrived on campus in the late 1880s, he found a campus still reflective of the national mainstream, where the majority of students still attended denominational and single-gender colleges. By 1900, neither of these facts would remain true nationally and a turning-point to the university concept would be well underway. In the great sweep of this transition nationally, Emory reflected the character that Geiger attributes to such multipurpose colleges, instituting such innovations as non-classical degree courses, an engineering or technical course, and establishing a school of law. In doing so, Emory tracked many of its counterparts, making market-driven decisions to serve the needs of potential students within relatively meager financial bounds. Geiger calls such multipurpose colleges “the missing link in the evolution of American higher education.”³¹

Upon his arrival, Dickey’s first priorities were to secure a home for him and his mother and to stand for placement exams. Having found comfortable quarters in which he and his mother could start out, he used his savings, and the funds gained from the sale of his brother William’s share of the McCord grocery business, to secure a lot very near the campus and build a home in which he and his mother would live for the next decade. Perhaps they sold the home on

³⁰ See Geiger’s introduction, *The American College in the Nineteenth Century*, pp. 1-36.

³¹ Geiger, pp. 127-128.

Stonewall Street, as well, although we know that Anne's sisters, Emma and Sallie Thomas, continued to live in the adjacent Stonewall Street home for some years to come.³²

Dickey arrived on campus in time to attend summer school, which opened the first Wednesday in July 1887 and ran through September. Due to the large number of students who lacked preparation for college work, Emory and other schools instituted summer sessions in complement to the traditional academic calendar based on the agricultural cycles of planting and harvest. "This [summer] school affords the best opportunities to young men who need to bring up certain studies preparatory to entering College next Fall," stated the college catalogue. It added, in italics, "*This school is open to women as well as men.*" The cost was fifteen dollars for the term; five dollars per month.³³

As a largely self-taught young man who had enjoyed precious few years of formal schooling, Dickey apparently did extraordinarily well, being exempted from entry through the sub-freshman (a remedial entry) class and placed directly into the freshman class – which was destined to become the Emory class of 1891. To do so, according to the college catalogue, he had to stand examinations in "English Grammar, Arithmetic, Algebra (through Equations of the First Degree,) Caesar's Gallic Wars, Cicero's Orations, Goodwin's Greek Grammar, and Leighton's Greek Lessons, or the *equivalent* [italics are in the original] of these."³⁴

Dickey entered as one of 63 freshmen, who along with 68 sub-freshmen were the "new boys" on campus. Emory students in those years were quick to distinguish the "new boys" from the "old boys." Sophomores numbered 45, there were 33 each in the junior and senior classes, and another 29 in the technological class. Minus the 30 "counted twice," being in more than one

³² Dickey family records held by the author; and Dempsey, *Life of Bishop Dickey*. Dickey's aunt Emma Thomas was living in the home at 26 Stonewall Street at the time of her death in 1927, and her sister, Sallie Thomas, survived her.

³³ *Emory College Catalogue, 1887-1888*, p. 61.

³⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 32.

category, total enrollment as the 1887-88 school year opened was 241. The roster of freshmen listed each with his hometown and the name of his father under the heading “parent or guardian.” Of the 63 freshmen, Dickey was one of nine who listed “self” as the responsible party.³⁵

When classes for the fall term opened on October 12, 1887, Dickey thus embarked on a course of study in what was considered one of the premier institutions of higher education for men in Georgia at the time, along with the state-operated University of Georgia at Athens and Baptist-sponsored Mercer University in Macon. Emory College was in its fifty-first year, having been founded in 1836 under the leadership of President Ignatius A. Few, Dickey’s cousin through his mother’s family.

Isaac Stiles Hopkins, like his predecessors an ordained Methodist minister, was entering his last year as Emory president. He had brought a course of technological study to the school during his years on the faculty, and within the coming year would be named the first president of the State Technological Institute at Atlanta. Hopkins, according to the effusive Elam F. Dempsey, was “tall, well proportioned, of elastic step, with a large head well set upon the column of his neck – hair abundant, auburn, lustrous, somewhat curly, crowning a massive white dome-like brow, an aquiline nose, and well modeled chin and mouth...a handsome, richly gifted man, both graceful and vigorous, the beau ideal of the orator of the old South.”³⁶

Hopkins – an Emory alumnus, class of 1859 – held a medical degree from the Georgia Medical College of Augusta, and served a number of pastoral appointments in the North Georgia Conference of the Methodist Church before joining the Emory faculty. There he held an unusual number of positions, teaching first natural sciences, then Latin, followed by English, to which he

³⁵ *Ibid.*, pp. 27, 31.

³⁶ Dempsey, *Life of Bishop Dickey*, pp. 35-36.

added duties in tool-craft and design. Moving to the presidency in 1884, he then taught the traditional presidential course of mental and moral science, his fifth subject.³⁷

The board of trustees was chaired by Atticus G. Haygood, Hopkins' predecessor as Emory president, who remained on the faculty as "professor of evidences of Christianity." He had declined election as Methodist bishop in 1882 in order to remain as Emory president. But in 1883, he became an agent of the John F. Slater Fund, a Connecticut agency dedicated to the education of Black persons. The next year, Haygood resigned the Emory presidency to devote full time to his work with the Slater Fund. In his resignation, he reported that through his Slater connections, he had raised funds for Emory, too – a total of \$25,000 for construction of both the Georgia and Florida "helping halls," or residence halls, and to furnish the library in newly-constructed Seney Hall. The impressive, three-story brick building with its imposing clock tower, included faculty offices and classrooms, and serves even today as the main administration building on Emory's Oxford campus. It was built during Haygood's term through a \$50,000 gift from New York philanthropist George I. Seney, who had been impressed by a published copy of a Haygood sermon on the New South. Seney also gave \$75,000 to the college endowment fund and \$5,000 toward retiring college debt. As successful as he was in fundraising, Haygood experienced personal financial difficulties during his time as president and was a notoriously poor bookkeeper and financier. He underestimated the college debt when queried by Seney, or it might have been paid off altogether. Haygood ultimately was elected bishop in the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, in 1890.³⁸

Besides Stiles and Haygood, the faculty at the time of Dickey's arrival as a freshman consisted of twelve men. Rev. Morgan Callaway was vice president, holding the faculty position

³⁷ Bullock, Henry Morton, *A History of Emory University*. Nashville: Parthenon Press, 1936, p. 174.

³⁸ *Emory College Catalogue, 1887-1888*, pp. 9-10; Hauk, Gary S. *A Legacy of Heart and Mind: Emory Since 1836*. Atlanta: Bookhouse Group, Inc., 1999, p. 34; and Bullock, *A History of Emory University*, pp. 169-174.

of Bishop G. F. Pierce Professor of English Language and Literature. Dempsey recalled Callaway as a “gallant Confederate officer. From his courtly bearing, every student breathed in something of the high deportment of the old South.” In addition to being professor of mathematics, Rev. G. W. W. Stone was treasurer of the faculty.³⁹ Rev. John S. Moore held the position of professor of Latin language and literature, but was “equally at home in the field of mathematics.... A son of thunder in the pulpit, [he] failed not to preach the fear of punishment....” Henry A. Scomp, an ardent prohibitionist, was professor of Greek language and literature and author of *King Alcohol in the Realm of King Cotton*. Rev. Julius Magath was professor of modern languages and Hebrew. Magath was Jewish, a native of Poland who had converted to Christianity and become an ordained Methodist minister. Author of a textbook on the French verb, “His ardor for learning was only excelled by his zeal for the conversion of his fellow Hebrews....” Rev. Charles E. Dowman served as adjunct professor of languages. Himself a future president of Emory, Dowman also was Dickey’s future brother-in-law. His wife, the former Julia Robena Munroe of Quincy, Florida, often hosted in their home her sister, Mary Jessie Munroe, who would meet the student James Dickey and marry him the summer of his graduation. John F. Bonnell was secretary of the faculty and acting librarian in addition to his faculty post as Alfred H. Colquitt Professor of Natural Science. Professor Bonnell’s “mordant humor” gave “a peculiar charm to the work in his classroom – the savour of the Attic salt of a sane and pungent wit,” Dempsey recounted. The professor of vocal music was R. M. McIntosh, and H. H. Stone served as adjunct professor of mathematics. W. H. Siferd was professor of

³⁹ H. H. Stone would follow his father, George W. W. Stone, as treasurer of the institution well into its University years.

mechanical drawing, and the law department boasted two professors, James M. Pace and Capers Dickson. The position of professor of bookkeeping was vacant as the school year opened.⁴⁰

The president's salary was \$1,500 per year as of the fall of 1888. Full professors made \$1,200, and at least one adjunct professor made \$620 for the year. Enrollment in fall 1887 was 205 students.⁴¹

The campus of 1887 consisted of only a few buildings around a quadrangle, dominated on the south side by the stately Seney Hall with its prominent clock tower. Around the campus also stood the chapel; Few Hall and Phi Gamma Hall, homes to the literary societies; and two, small classroom buildings, history hall and language hall. Finally, were the two "helping halls," Marvin and Andrew Halls, known more commonly as "east" and "west" halls, which were relatively large houses where boys who needed financial aid could be housed while working their way through school. Most students, however, found room and board in the nearby Oxford community off campus.⁴² All these buildings but the helping halls still stand today, with Seney the dominating landmark of the 21st century campus.

The Emory College at which Dickey arrived in the fall of 1887 reflected the waning days of the classics as a centerpiece of college curriculum nationally. As Caroline Winterer wrote, "It is difficult for us to grasp how dazzled Americans were by the ancient Greeks and Romans...." From the founding of Harvard College in 1636 to the 1880s, the classics had been the core of college education in the United States, but their study was rapidly on the decline. New studies

⁴⁰*Emory College Catalogue, 1887-1888*, p. 10; Dempsey, *Life of Bishop Dickey*, pp. 38-40.

⁴¹*Emory College Board of Trustees Minutes*, June 23, 1888, Manuscripts, Archives, and Rare Book Library, Emory University.

⁴²*Emory College Catalogue, 1887-1888*, p. 53.

entered the curriculum, from sciences to technology, modern history to social sciences – pushing out the classics.⁴³

In addition to such national trends, at Emory the waning of the classics also may have been a practical matter. Due to economic hardship and an under-developed secondary school system in Georgia, many of Emory’s prospective students did not have the training necessary to succeed in the classics. In order to enroll those prospects, either remediation or an alternate course of study was necessary. Thus, Emory offered a classical course of study built on Greek and Latin, but also offered the alternative technological, or “scientific” course, which consisted of study in mathematics, English, logic, moral philosophy, natural philosophy, Bible and evidences of Christianity, chemistry, political economy, and the modern languages of French and German. In 1888, when the technological course was dropped following the departure of President Isaac Stiles Hopkins to found Georgia Tech, Hopkins’ successor president, Warren A. Candler, replaced it with a bachelor of philosophy degree that continued to give students the alternative to study the modern languages rather than classical Greek and Latin.⁴⁴

It would be another decade before Emory would venture to add elective courses to the curriculum. Not until the administration of Charles E. Dowman as president were actual electives added. In 1899 he proposed to the board a program of three electives, but only two were adopted.⁴⁵ Emory students, therefore, did not craft an individualized course of study from an array of curricular choices as their counterparts at Harvard were doing by this time. Instead, they chose from one of several degree objectives – the Bachelor of Science and English Literature for those taking the Scientific Course, and the Bachelor of Arts for those in the

⁴³ Winterer, Caroline. *The Culture of Classicism: Ancient Greece and Rome in American Intellectual Life, 1780-1910*. Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 2002, pp. 1-3, 101-107.

⁴⁴ Bullock, *A History of Emory University*, pp. 177-178.

⁴⁵ Hauk, *A Legacy of Heart and Mind...*, pp. 54-55.

Classical Course. A Master of Arts degree was available for those standing an A.M. examination upon completion of the Classical Course. A few studied for the Master of Accounts, which followed successful completion of the course in bookkeeping.⁴⁶

Nationally, the debate soon would rise over whether all such courses should be collapsed under a Bachelor of Arts degree, instead of reserving such degrees for those who had explicitly studied Greek and Latin. At a 1904 conference of the Association of American Universities, Harvard President Charles Eliot argued that “the same sort of power is developed in both courses, the same intellectual grasp is given, the same power of work.” Others, including University of Chicago Greek scholar Paul Shorey and Princeton University Latin professor Andrew Fleming West said the bachelor of arts should be preserved for those who had studied Greek, “the guardian of a noble and indispensable tradition.”⁴⁷

Even in 1887, as Dickey arrived on campus as a student, debate over elective study raged among student authors in the campus newspaper, *The Emory Phoenix*. Willie E. Vaughn wrote, “The elective course is against the constitution of the mind.” It is “no more conducive to thorough scholarship than is the planting of a few peas, potatoes and corn favorable to an abundant harvest.... The cry has come up from all the lands, ‘Give us an elective course, life is too short to grow full grown in all departments.’ Such a cry, if it finds a lodgment in our minds, is the ruin of our college course.”⁴⁸

In response, Lee T. Mann charged enemies of the elective course with an “unrelenting inconsistency.” Men need to focus their own course of study based on their own chosen course in life, he said: “The day in which the destiny of one man is determined by another has passed;

⁴⁶ *Emory College Catalogue, 1887-1888*, pp. 50-51.

⁴⁷ Winterer, *The Culture of Classicism*, pp. 106-107.

⁴⁸ *The Emory Phoenix*, March 1887; Manuscripts, Archives and Rare Books Library, Emory University. (Where page numbers are not indicated for *Phoenix* notes, it is because they were not printed or were illegible on the copies available).

and we are coming to a realization of the truth ‘that every man is the builder of his own fortune.’”⁴⁹

Dickey chose the classical course. The fall term of his freshman year, which ran from October through the end of December, he studied Greek, including Greek Testament, Greek prose composition, the geography of Greece, Greek grammar from a 511-page text by William Watson Goodwin, and Henry Anselm Scomp’s *Manual of Greek Pronunciation*. The Latin course was drawn from a text by the Roman historian Sallust, Thomas K. Arnold’s Latin prose composition (to page 43 for the fall term), Alexander S. Wilkins’ study of Roman antiquities, and a text by Joseph H. Allen and James B. Greenough on Latin grammar. The mathematics course followed Horatio Nelson Robinson’s *New University* text on algebra, and in English the students used John Seely Hart’s rhetoric text, with additional study in declamation, composition, epistolary and narrative, and the Bible.⁵⁰

In the spring term, which ran from January 2 through commencement on June 27, Dickey and his fellow freshmen would progress in their Greek studies to Diodorus, selections from Herodotus, Greek prose composition; Greek moods, tenses and grammar from Goodwin’s text; and Scomp’s *Manual of Pronunciation*. Their spring Latin studies comprised the *Aeneid*, Latin prosody, Latin prose composition (continuing in Arnold’s text to page 90), Henry George Liddell’s history of Rome, ancient geography, and Latin grammar texts from Allen and Greenough. They would conclude Robinson’s algebra and move into his text on geometry. English consisted of Hart’s rhetoric, Henry Sweet’s *Anglo-Saxon Primer*, plus continued work in declamation, composition, epistolary and narrative, and the Bible.⁵¹

⁴⁹ *The Emory Phoenix*, May 1887.

⁵⁰ *Emory College Catalogue, 1887-1888*, p. 34.

⁵¹ *Ibid.*

Through the subsequent three years, advanced studies included Greek mythology, the *Iliad*, Plato's *Timaeus*, and Sophocles' Greek drama. The Latin course advanced through Horace's Odes and Epodes, Satires and Epistles; Latin prose composition; *Cicero de Oratore*; and Tacitus's *Germania* and *Agricola*. In mathematics, the Emory student pursued geometry, plane geometry and analytical geometry, advancing to differential and integrated calculus, astronomy and civil engineering. The course of study included natural philosophy, logic, moral science, political economy, and parliamentary law. Even the classical course included four terms of instruction during the junior and senior years in the "modern languages" of German and French.⁵²

In each course, written examinations were to be given monthly, a practice which would change to quarterly examinations by the end of Dickey's time as an Emory student.

A new set of "Laws for Students and Penalties" took effect for Dickey's first term as a student, having been adopted by the trustees at their meeting on June 20, 1887 as part of the new "Statutes of Emory College." They required that a student pledge on his honor to abide by the rules and to govern himself with decorum, courtesy, kindness and consideration, "despising all paltry tricks upon citizens or servants, officers or students, as unworthy of cultivated gentlemen." A young man could be disqualified for honorable standing in the college by use of "profanity, gaming, Sabbath breaking, indecent or vulgar language or conduct, quarreling, fighting, malicious mischief, deceit, falsehood, fraud, dishonesty toward each other or towards tradesmen, licentiousness and like crimes...."⁵³

And, the Statutes continued:

⁵² *Ibid.*, pp. 35-36.

⁵³ "Statutes of Emory College, adopted by the Board of Trustees, June 20th, 1887," as printed in the *Annual Catalogue of the Officers, Alumni and Students of Emory College, Oxford, Georgia, Session of 1890-91*. Atlanta, Ga.: Constitution Publishing Co., pp. 55-56.

Students are prohibited from attending any hall, theatre, horse-race or cock-fight; from using intoxicating drinks; from playing cards, or at any game for stakes; from keeping fire-arms or any deadly weapon, a horse, a dog, or a servant; from engaging in anything forbidden by the Faculty; from associating with persons of known bad character; from visiting Covington or other near points beyond the limits of Oxford without permission of some member of the Faculty, or from visiting points more distant without written permission from parents or guardians and the permission of the President of the College; from visiting any place of ill-repute, or at which gaming is practiced, or intoxicating liquors are sold.⁵⁴

Students could not leave their rooms during assigned study hours, and in any case, had to be in their room by 10 p.m. nightly. Each had responsibility for the good condition and orderliness of their room. They attended morning and evening prayers as required on every class day, and two mandatory worship services on Sundays, morning and evening. The trustees and faculty specifically prohibited secret societies, as well as misconduct in the classroom, which would get one sent directly to the president. The statutes included an early version of “shared responsibility,” declaring that any combination of two or more students violating rules together “shall be considered an offense higher than isolated acts, and shall be punished accordingly.”⁵⁵

An offense against the statutes earned one a hearing before the faculty, where penalties could range progressively from private admonition through admonition before the faculty, admonition before the class, admonition before the college, suspension for a limited time, indefinite suspension, dismissal or expulsion. “When a student, by general neglect of college duties, shows want of principle, or a spirit of insubordination; or, from habitual idleness and inattention to duty, fails to maintain a fair standing in his class, if he cannot be reformed by kind admonition, the Faculty shall cause the facts in his case to be represented to his father or

⁵⁴ *Emory College Catalogue 1890-1891*, p. 56.

⁵⁵ *Ibid.*

guardian, with the request that he shall be privately withdrawn from the institution; and if not withdrawn, he may be dismissed,” stated the statutes.⁵⁶

Life on campus revolved around two key activities: twice-daily religious activities and the literary societies. Every college day, prayers were held morning and evening in the college chapel which all were required to attend. “The interest in these services has been greatly increased by the marked improvement of the singing the past two years,” expounded the college *Catalogue*, praising the hymnals, the keyboard and the artist: “The pews have been liberally supplied with suitable hymn-books, containing both words and music. One of the best chapel organs is used morning and evening, Miss Mamie Haygood, organist. The Chapel service is a pleasure and a blessing to all.”⁵⁷

The two literary societies, Few and Phi Gamma, dated from the same decade as the founding of Emory College. Each society had its own imposing building on the college quadrangle, and their libraries individually held as many volumes as the main college library. Each maintained a reading room with the prominent journals and reviews of the day, with files dating back to 1812. Each met weekly for discussion, training students in the art of speaking and debate. By far, the majority of Emory students joined one society or the other, providing an atmosphere ready-made for Dickey to thrive. By the beginning of his first spring term, he already had been chosen corresponding secretary of the Few Society, an unusual honor for a freshman, and achieved the distinction of being chosen to carry the Few banner at the head of the procession leading to the annual debate.⁵⁸

Similarly, Dickey found an area of strength in moot court competition, bringing his earliest mention in the campus newspaper, the *Phoenix*: “Moot Courts are on a boom this fall.

⁵⁶ *Emory College Catalogue 1890-1891*, pp. 56-57.

⁵⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 61.

⁵⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 58; and *The Emory Phoenix*, Feb. 1888, p. 13, and March 1888, p. 1.

Judge Gates is a model Judge and Solicitor J. L. Key is getting famous. J. E. Dickey and J. E. McRee are the leading attorneys.”⁵⁹

At the end of the fall term, Dickey stood tied for second mark in the class, as he and G. E. Nolan each posted a 9.2 (out of 10), behind J. S. Jenkins and Louis L. Brown, each of whom claimed first mark with a 9.3.⁶⁰

His social life apparently took on an early aura of excitement, as well, as he discovered Professor Dowman’s young sister-in-law, Jessie Munroe. “Mr. Dickey has found that the best means of exercising himself is walking,” the *Emory Phoenix* disclosed. “He chooses the route between the depot, or thereabouts, and Prof. Dowman’s.”⁶¹ Jessie was four years his junior, but was already a graduate of Wesleyan Female College, where she was a charter member of Alpha Delta Pi sorority.⁶²

Her frequent visits to Oxford brought Dickey much happiness, but his freshman year was not without considerable sadness, as well. As the *Phoenix* noted, “Mr. J. E. Dickey was called to Augusta recently to attend the burial of his grandmother.”⁶³ His maternal grandmother, Caroline Short Few Thomas, on whose plantation he had spent his early teen years hunting, fishing and swimming during the illness of his father, had died at the age of 83. He returned to the Thomas family cemetery on the old land in Richmond County, to see his grandmother laid to rest in the same plot where his late father, brothers and sister lay.

During Dickey’s freshman year, rumors abounded regarding the future of Emory’s President Hopkins. With the nearly simultaneous creation of Georgia Tech and the death of

⁵⁹ *The Emory Phoenix*, Dec. 1887.

⁶⁰ *The Emory Phoenix*, Jan. 1888, p. 6.

⁶¹ *The Emory Phoenix*, Feb. 1888, p. 14.

⁶² Dickey family records held by the author. For further information on Alpha Delta Pi, see doctoral thesis by Richard Mansfield Rose, *For our mutual benefit: antebellum Georgia college student organizations*, University of Georgia, 1984.

⁶³ *The Emory Phoenix*, March 1888, p. 5.

University of Georgia Chancellor Patrick H. Mell, Hopkins may have been considered a leading candidate to head either institution. It was fodder for a running feud underway between the *Phoenix* and its counterpart at the University of Georgia, the *University Reporter*. Each issue contained some biting remark about matters at the state university, which the Emory boys clearly viewed as their chief rival for supremacy in the state. At times, in mention of the rival student newspaper from Athens, its title was placed derisively in lower case and a smaller font. “Athens now wants our president, Dr. Hopkins, who seems to be in demand in several parts of the country. Wonder if they will swap us their little university reporter [*sic*] for him?” wrote the *Phoenix*.⁶⁴

“The innate littleness and maliciousness of the university reporter was shown up in its true light when it displayed its ignorance and petulant childishness [by saying] that Dr. Haygood gave up his position as President of the College because there was such a hard set of boys here in attendance, or because he might have preferred the negroes....,” wrote the *Phoenix*. Haygood, who played a role in founding the Methodist institution for Blacks at Augusta, Paine College, left the Emory presidency to pursue full-time the position of executive director of the Slater Fund, established by northern philanthropist John F. Slater to provide northern funds for southern schools for African-Americans.⁶⁵ “Emory may have a hard set of boys, but we say, emphatically, that there is not a boy who goes in and out of her halls that is ill-bred enough to venture such a remark on one who is so infinitely his superior,” the *Phoenix* concluded.⁶⁶ And further: “A Lucy Cobb girl was recently heard to say that the *University Reporter* was a sweet

⁶⁴ *Ibid.*

⁶⁵ Hauk, *A Legacy of Heart and Mind...*, p. 35.

⁶⁶ *The Emory Phoenix*, March 1888, p. 4.

little paper. We guess she made chewing gum of it and thus obtained its best and most appreciated flavor.”⁶⁷

The bluster may have sheltered a sense of jealousy in some respects. The *Phoenix* noted that the “Hon. Hoke Smith, of Atlanta, has guaranteed to the University of Georgia the sum of \$700, as the nucleus of a fund to build a gymnasium. Oxford ought to have a gymnasium.”⁶⁸ Indeed, when the Emory technological program and President Hopkins departed to the fledgling Georgia Tech in the coming year, the vacated building would be dedicated to a gymnasium program for the Emory boys. But it would be 25 years before Dickey, as president, would oversee the construction of the largest and finest college gymnasium in the South, perhaps acting on a seed planted as a student his freshman year.

That spring, in April 1888, Hopkins was chosen to head the new State Institute of Technology in Atlanta. Based on the work of a legislative committee established in 1883, the state had determined to build a technological school along the lines of the Worcester Free Institute in Worcester, Massachusetts. The existing civil engineering course would continue to be taught at the University of Georgia, which the *Atlanta Constitution* accused of having made only “feeble efforts” at teaching engineering, but professional courses in mechanical and mining engineering, building and architecture, chemistry and textiles would be at the new institute. The proposal was first defeated in the Georgia General Assembly in 1883, but a modified proposal was reintroduced and adopted in 1885.⁶⁹

In the interim, Hopkins had begun an experiment in technological and industrial education at Emory. Knowledgeable about national trends toward such courses, Hopkins viewed

⁶⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 5. The Lucy Cobb Institute was a female academy in Athens.

⁶⁸ *The Emory Phoenix*, Feb. 1888, p. 14..

⁶⁹ McMath, Robert C., Jr. *et al.* *Engineering the New South: Georgia Tech, 1885-1985*. Athens: The University of Georgia Press, 1985, pp. 18-21.

them as a replacement for the old apprentice system, with the difference that students of his time needed to understand complex machines, not just simple tools. His program became formalized as the “School of Technology” at Emory.⁷⁰

With the adoption of legislation creating the State Institute of Technology, boosters saw it as a potential economic boon to its host city, and politicians began campaigns to have it placed in their own areas, with the Peters Park site along North Avenue in Atlanta eventually being chosen over contending sites in Macon, Athens, Milledgeville, Covington and Penfield, the Greene County site that was originally home to Mercer University.⁷¹

The *Atlanta Constitution* reported that chemistry Professor Henry C. White of the University of Georgia was the likely choice to be president. However, UGA Chancellor Patrick Mell died in the interim, and White also was considered a strong choice to succeed him. White sent a message to the Tech Commission in March 1888, apparently declining to be considered as president at Tech. However, he subsequently was defeated for the Chancellor’s position at the University of Georgia by one vote in the trustees, losing to G. B. Strickler, a Presbyterian minister. When Strickler declined to accept, the UGA trustees turned to another minister, William E. Boggs. Five years later, White was named head of the land-grant college at the University of Georgia.⁷²

Meanwhile, the Emory president, Hopkins, was nominated as the first president of the Georgia Institute of Technology at the April meeting of the Tech Commission, and his formal acceptance was received at the May meeting.⁷³ The *Emory Phoenix* was effusive in its praise upon his departure: “Dear Doctor, wherever you may go, and whatever may be your field of

⁷⁰ *Ibid.*, pp. 22-23.

⁷¹ *Ibid.*, pp. 25-35.

⁷² *Ibid.*, pp. 39-44.

⁷³ *Ibid.*, pp. 44-45.

labor, remember that we give you the praise and honor of having done hard and faithful work at old Emory, and you have made friends that will last as long as eternity and that sticketh closer than a brother.”⁷⁴

The *Phoenix* jumped to propose that Hopkins’ successor be Emory vice president and professor Morgan Callaway: “While one of the finest preachers in the Methodist church, nearly all of his life has been given in the cause of education.”⁷⁵

The Emory trustees, however, boldly named the thirty-year-old Warren A. Candler as president. The former editor of the *Nashville Christian Advocate* became the youngest president in Emory history, having graduated only thirteen years earlier.⁷⁶ The *Phoenix* quickly changed its tune: “Ever since Dr. Hopkins made known his intentions to leave us, there has been a prevailing sentiment among the college boys for Warren A. Candler to be his successor. We are of them and with them, and have heard their sentiments.... We already love him, we are ready to honor, respect and obey him.”⁷⁷

In accepting the position, Candler doubted his abilities, but did not lack ambition. He had not sought the position – to do so in the context of the times would have been demeaning. Instead, as a Methodist preacher he determined that he had been “called” to the position. He asked friends for advice, prayed for divine guidance, and accepted the position at the urging of friends and colleagues and in response to his “divine call.” He took a significant pay cut from the \$2,500 per year the *Advocate* position paid, beginning as president at an annual salary of \$1,885. The trustees conferred upon him an honorary doctor of divinity degree, in addition to the honorary masters of arts degree they had bestowed a decade earlier. As was the case with

⁷⁴ *The Emory Phoenix*, June 1888, p. 4.

⁷⁵ *The Emory Phoenix*, April 1888.

⁷⁶ In 1902, Dickey would be chosen as president just eleven years after his graduation, but at age 38.

⁷⁷ *The Emory Phoenix*, June 1888, p. 4.

many of his faculty, his only earned degree was his baccalaureate, with the others being honorary.⁷⁸

Historian Michael Dennis counts Candler, along with Vanderbilt president James Kirkland, among the leading educational progressives who emerged from southern universities. Emory was a leader among southern schools that embraced the creed of southern progress, Dennis notes, but as a private school its denominational affiliation and financial security (relative to the public institutions of the day) allowed it to take a modified path from that of turning out technical experts ready to fit into the new industrial society.⁷⁹

Such southern progressives were forward-looking within the context of their times. Perhaps without consciously realizing they were doing so, they developed a philosophy that grafted the ideology of southern progressivism onto the framework of the New South creed.⁸⁰ They realized that the “old South” was dead and a “new South” must emerge, but took various paths to accomplish it. Candler continued to believe that the fundamental role of higher education was the moral education of the citizenry to assume roles of leadership. To this he added many progressive concepts, not the least of which was access to higher education for others than the wealthiest in society. Emory was a pioneer in providing financial assistance to many boys who otherwise could not afford to attend college – it was not a school limited to the elite of society. Candler was a leader in arguing for increased public support of grade-school education so as to lift up the masses – white and black alike, albeit separately. In doing so, he believed, the state could not afford to fund his perceived competitors in public higher education – they should stand on their own as the denominational schools had to do. And there may have

⁷⁸ Bauman, Mark K. *Warren Akin Candler: The Conservative as Idealist*. Metuchen, N.J.: The Scarecrow Press, Inc., 1981, pp. 61-63.

⁷⁹ Dennis, Michael. *Lessons in Progress: State Universities and Progressivism in the New South, 1880-1920*. Urbana and Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 2001; p. 3.

⁸⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 18.

been a practical aspect to his offering an alternative course of study that did not include Greek and Latin – not only did it place Emory among educational leaders, it was a practical reality that many of the poorer boys Emory was attracting did not have sufficient preparation in the classics to succeed if Greek and Latin were required.

Candler’s career spanned the eras of the old-time college president and of the new research university chancellor. During his days at Emory College, he fit the mold described by George P. Schmidt, serving not only as educator and teacher, but also as financier for the institution, disciplinarian, bearer of tradition, prophet of new ideals, patriot and active participant in the business of the democracy, religious leader and purveyor of morals. As did the leaders of most church-related institutions, he believed that education must include instruction in morality and religion, following specifically the Wesleyan doctrine that knowledge and vital piety must be combined as one.⁸¹ Candler’s systematic self-analysis, deep sense of responsibility and stern sense of duty were characteristic of college presidents of the nineteenth century.⁸²

One might imagine what a first meeting between the new President Candler and his soon-to-be protégé James Dickey may have been like. Candler had graduated from Emory at age seventeen; Dickey had entered at age 23. Only six years separated them in age – Dickey, still a freshman, turned 24 the month Candler was chosen as president; Candler himself was just 30. Dickey was an imposing figure – tall and slender, over six feet tall; Candler was notably short and rotund. Dempsey describes him as “low of stature, but there is a massiveness of head and body that leaves no one in doubt as to the weightiness of the personality of the man.”⁸³

Indeed, their lives and Emory’s were enmeshed in many ways even before this meeting. Emory in its early years was like a closely-held corporation, as a tightly-woven family web was

⁸¹ This is discussed in greater detail in the next chapter.

⁸² Schmidt, George P. *The Old Time College President*. New York: AMS Press, 1930.

⁸³ Dempsey, *Life of Bishop Dickey*, p. 37.

consistently at its center of power and control for a period of more than 100 years. The family was in the leadership ranks of Methodism in Georgia during a period in which the church was dedicated to building institutions of higher education, and was strongly involved in building and directing the two closely-related enterprises.

As described in detail earlier in this chapter, Dickey was related by blood or marriage to Candler and a number of his predecessors as president. Emory's founding president, Ignatius A. Few, was a first cousin three generations removed. Through the marriage of the elder Ignatius Few to Mary Candler, Dickey related to Warren Candler.⁸⁴ Dickey and Charles E. Dowman, then a faculty member and himself a future Emory president, respectively would marry sisters Mary Jessie Munroe and Julia Robena Munroe of Quincy, Florida.⁸⁵ Mrs. Dickey later submitted that her husband also was related to Presidents James R. Thomas (his mother's maiden name was Thomas) and Isaac Stiles Hopkins and perhaps three others, but those relationships are not made clear.⁸⁶

In addition to Emory, members of the Few family contributed to the founding of two other great Southern universities. Benjamin's brother, William Few Jr., was a founding trustee of the University of Georgia and was among the small group that chose the site of today's campus. He signed the United States Constitution and became one of Georgia's first two U.S. Senators. Another brother, James, was great-great-grandfather to William Preston Few, Dickey's contemporary and a fourth cousin, who in a 30-year presidency from 1910 to 1940

⁸⁴ As detailed earlier in this chapter, Ignatius A. Few's father, Ignatius Few, was brother to Dickey's great-great-grandfather, Benjamin Few. Mary Candler's brother, Daniel Candler, was grandfather to the noted brothers Warren, Asa and John Candler.

⁸⁵ Dickey family papers held by the author.

⁸⁶ Jessie Munroe Dickey to the Emory Library, 1938. James Edward Dickey Collection; Manuscripts, Archives and Rare Book Library, Emory University. The strong family connection continued beyond Dickey's presidency. Dickey remained a trustee until his death in 1928. His grandson, Robert M. Strickland, Jr. was chairman of the Emory University board of trustees for sixteen years, from 1979 until his death in 1994. See "Legacy: Few-Dickey-Munroe" in *Emory Magazine*, Vol. 76, No. 3, autumn 2000, which details the family connection of at least 27 alumni related by birth or marriage, among them four Emory presidents.

oversaw the transformation of Trinity College into Duke University.⁸⁷ Thus, Candler and Dickey had much in common and a natural affinity. Little would happen in the remainder of Dickey's career – both academic and in the church – that was not influenced, and often explicitly directed and approved, by Warren Candler.

Dickey's successful freshman year came to a conclusion with the annual commencement activities as Candler took office. At those ceremonies, Dickey was awarded the Bigham Medal, recognizing "the best essay written by any member of the freshman class," the only prize available to freshmen.⁸⁸

The 1888 commencement ceremony included a complete recitation of *Atlanta Constitution* editor Henry W. Grady's "New South" speech, first delivered December 22, 1886. In it, Grady famously declared, "There was a South of slavery and secession – that South is dead." Recitation of the speech was to become a staple of Emory commencements for the next several years.⁸⁹ It echoed the sermon preached six years earlier, at Thanksgiving 1880, by then-president of Emory Atticus G. Haygood, entitled "The New South: Gratitude, Amendment, Hope." It was Haygood's sermon that had drawn the attention of New York financier George I. Seney. Not only did Seney contribute greatly to Emory as a result, including funding the construction of Seney Hall, he printed ten thousand copies of Haygood's sermon to spread the message of the New South. Haygood was a staunch admirer of Grady, and likely was aware of Grady's previous writings on the New South – Grady had used the phrase as early as 1874 in an

⁸⁷ Dickey family papers.

⁸⁸ *Emory College Catalogue, 1888-1889*, p. 25.

⁸⁹ *The Emory Phoenix*, Oct. 1888, p. 6.

editorial in the *Atlanta Daily Herald*. While neither Grady nor Haygood originated the phrase – it was used by others before – they each played a notable role in popularizing it.⁹⁰

In his first annual report to the sponsoring Methodist conferences, Candler noted that the Methodist church-sponsored institutions of higher education in Georgia were graduating more than twice as many females each year – at Wesleyan Female College and LaGrange Female College – than they were males – at Emory College. He attributed this to a greater demand for education among women, as men could become economically viable by entering the workforce at an early age. While he supported state aid for separate black and white grade schools, Candler was a long-standing foe of public aid for colleges, seeing the state’s tuition-free public colleges as competition for tuition-driven, church-sponsored schools. Candler also decried federal aid to colleges serving Blacks, such as Clark University and the Atlanta University, such that “the negro colleges are overflowing with students.... Graduating, they can not practice law, medicine, and like professions, because their own people will not patronize them; hence, they preach or teach, most of them devoting themselves to the latter work. What must be the result of this state of things in twenty years if we do not educate more white boys, and more of them when educated do not devote themselves to teaching? What is our remedy? Quarrel with Northern benevolence for the negro? This would be as ineffectual as it would be dishonorable.”⁹¹

The answer to both questions, he said, was to raise endowment at church schools so as to make tuition free for all and to reduce the board for the poor. He cited a letter received from a student already on the Emory Loan Fund: “Many, many nights I have wet my pillow with my tears because I saw my youth going by with no chance for an education. I thank God light has come at last.” Such gifts also were needed, Candler asserted, to allow the cost of tuition and

⁹⁰ Gaston, Paul M. *The New South Creed: A Study in Southern Mythmaking*. New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1970, pp. 17-18 and 102-103.

⁹¹ *Ibid.*, pp. 51-52.

board to be brought to their true cost, and to bring the “half-paid faculty” to full pay. Likewise, he called on the state to extend the free public school year beyond the then-current level of three months a year, and to discontinue subsidizing the state university “whereby college tuition is made a present to a few people who are abundantly able to pay for it...” Utilizing state funds for public education “from the bottom up rather than from the top down” is a theme that Candler would continue to sound throughout his career.⁹²

In making such an argument, Candler was not alone. State colleges and universities famously clashed with sectarian schools across the nation in the nineteenth century. President James H. Thornwell of South Carolina College, who was a prominent clergyman in his own right, said in a letter to his governor asking for more funds that his institution, while undenominational, was not anti-Christian. A state university could appropriately mold character, and better than “a multitude of small sectarian establishments with little money and low standards.” Christian character would be assured by public pressure, he asserted. Similar rivalries arose in Michigan, where Methodists attacked the morals of the university with its far-reaching innovations; in Mississippi, where state university leadership asserted that its student body was more orderly and well-behaved than a Presbyterian school emphasizing Christian environment; in Indiana, Ohio and Tennessee.⁹³ Such arguments over the merits of church-related versus state-sponsored higher education would be a hallmark of Candler’s career.

Dickey entered the fall of 1888 as one of 49 Emory sophomores out of an enrollment of 226, including 58 freshmen and 64 sub-freshmen. Despite the relatively large lower classes, total enrollment declined by 15 from the prior year.⁹⁴ The *Phoenix* speculated that the drop in

⁹² *Ibid.*

⁹³ Schmidt, *The Old Time College President*, pp. 184-225.

⁹⁴ *Catalogue 1888-1889.*

enrollment might be blamed not only on the discontinuance of the school of technology, but also on “the epidemic in Florida and the great freshets in Georgia.”⁹⁵

“New President! New boys by the scores! New street car to Covington! New library room in Seney Hall!” cried the opening issue of the *Emory Phoenix* for the new year. The street car ran from the Methodist church in Oxford to the town square in Covington, and “the cars on this line are of the same make as those on the streets in Atlanta,” reported the student newspaper. Trustees chair Atticus Haygood noted other changes, including the departure of Professor Charles E. Dowman for a position as chair of the mathematics department at Wesleyan Female College, succeeded by the Rev. Lundy H. Harris, whom Dowman had succeeded when he arrived at Emory.⁹⁶

One wonders what Dowman’s departure for Macon meant for Dickey’s ability to visit with his future wife, Jessie. She still must have been able to visit Oxford from time to time, or there was some other who gained his interest in the interim, because according to the *Phoenix*, “Mr. J. E. Dickey was seen gesticulating wildly as he crossed the campus alone en route to see his best girl” during that fall term.⁹⁷

The *Phoenix* noted that President Candler “has bought and now occupies Professor Dowman’s former home.”⁹⁸ The problem of Emory presidents having to secure their own housing soon would be addressed through the generous gift of Judge Young L. G. Harris, a prominent Methodist from Athens, who purchased Bishop Key’s stately residence in Oxford and presented it to Emory College as a President’s Home. Construction of the home had been begun

⁹⁵ *The Emory Phoenix*, Jan. 1889, p. 4; Joining the class as a sophomore based on his excellent entrance exams was W. N. Ainsworth, son of Methodist minister J. T. Ainsworth of Cairo, Georgia, who like Dickey would eventually be elected a Methodist bishop.

⁹⁶ *The Emory Phoenix*, Oct. 1888, pp. 5-6.

⁹⁷ *The Emory Phoenix*, Dec. 1888.

⁹⁸ *The Emory Phoenix*, Oct. 1888, p. 5.

by Emory's first president, Ignatius A. Few, who sold it to his successor, Augustus B. Longstreet, who added rooms and added a front fence with granite posts and a gate. He was succeeded in the presidency and the ownership of the home by Bishop George F. Pierce, who also enlarged the dwelling. It then passed to college professor and vice president W. J. Sassnett, who sold it to the Rev. W. L. Parks, who added the second story and made the most substantial improvements to the property. President Atticus G. Haygood bought the property from the estate of Rev. Parks in 1875, further adding and improving the home before selling it to Bishop Key in 1887. President Candler, who had boarded in the home as a student, next assumed residence in the home as president under the college's ownership. In fact, it was estimated that as many as a thousand college boys had lived in the warm rooms of the home over the years.⁹⁹

As Dickey progressed through his college years, some of his fellow students, most of them at least seven years his junior, considered him to be unapproachable; some read him to be "proud and haughty." On one occasion, President Candler is reported to have asked Dickey the question, "Why don't you let the boys love you? They would do so if you would let them— in fact they want to love you." Dickey's reply was, "I don't care for their love, just so they respect me." His biographer and fellow preacher, Dempsey, said Dickey's demeanor "sweetened" and became more "gracious" after he determined to enter the ministry at the end of his senior year at Emory.¹⁰⁰

With Dickey's long-established seriousness and even aloofness, one imagines that even as a student he would have no sympathy for the shenanigans and foolishness of some of the

⁹⁹ *The Emory Phoenix*, Feb. 1889, p. 6. The procession of leaders at the Oxford campus has continued to occupy the house in an unbroken line until today, with Presidents Dowman and Dickey subsequently living there, and since the removal of the main campus to Atlanta in 1915, the deans of the Oxford campus have called it home. Even today, a unique feature of the house is that the stately front wings to the right and left of the main portico are detached from the main house. One literally has to go outdoors to move from the wings into the main building.

¹⁰⁰ Dempsey, *Life of Bishop Dickey*, pp. 49-50.

younger college boys. “Now, is it right that a class should go through college and keep two, three, or more members in it who are continually breaking college laws –such as playing poker, shooting pistols on the streets, getting ‘tight,’ cursing, swearing, and disturbing public worship – and never raise its voice in protest when such boys get 100 in their department?” asked the *Phoenix*. “It is all wrong, for there is an injustice done to the sober, hard-working students when all kinds of characters get perfect marks in department.... Many boys in college seem to think that there is a special code of laws for them, if not written out in full, they are handed down by tradition.... Many boys say and do things in college that they would not dare do or say any where else on earth – things which, if their mothers knew, would cause their hearts to bleed from wounds of grief and droop under a load of sorrows.”¹⁰¹

Likewise, President Candler had no use for such college student folly. “Nothing escapes his watchful eye,” observed the *Phoenix*. “He is quick and severe in his denunciation of folly and vice, and always ready to assist and encourage that which is right and manlike.”¹⁰²

Student behavior on campus must have been of some considerable concern, at least among the students themselves, because it was a topic the *Phoenix* addressed over successive issues, decrying boisterous boys’ “self-assertion, braggadocio and swagger. Loud talking and insulting personalities are mistaken for wit and readiness, irreverence for all things holy – for independence, scoffing at women and loose and slangy comments on girls – for knowledge of the world, disrespect for older and wiser men – for judgment and analytical acumen. Boys, who at home are quiet, refined and modest, soon assume a manner coarse, boorish, and absolutely

¹⁰¹ *The Emory Phoenix*, Nov. 1888, p. 4.

¹⁰² *The Emory Phoenix*, Jan. 1889, p. 4.

vulgar.” Emory boys should be “worthy of the grand old name of gentleman – that name that has been the title of nobility among the men of the South.”¹⁰³

The Atlanta Constitution nonetheless noted that “Emory is on a boom.... Emory College is improving under her new president in every way.” The correspondent, likely a faculty member, raised the controversial issue of intercollegiate athletics, which President Candler forthrightly opposed. Noting that “all the boys play football, and some of them are fine players,” the writer concluded that soon “we will be prepared to challenge and accept challenges from other colleges.”¹⁰⁴

Dickey, meanwhile, continued his application to more highly-minded student pursuits. He became one of six chosen to represent the Few Literary Society in the spring debate with Phi Gamma. He represented Few as a “champion debater” at commencement, the first sophomore ever to be so chosen. And finally, his peers chose him to represent the sophomore class as a speaker during “Sophomore Day” at commencement.¹⁰⁵

Whole days of orations, debates and other festivities surrounded commencement, with the sophomores and juniors having their own dedicated days to perform prior to the seniors’ actual day of commencement. Sophomore Day was held Monday, June 24 in 1889; followed by Junior Day on Tuesday, and commencement on Wednesday. Each was an all-day affair. The printed Sophomore Day program for that year indicates seven separate musical selections being performed, two prayers, fifteen student speeches, and an address by Rev. C. A. Evans of Augusta.¹⁰⁶

¹⁰³ *Ibid.*

¹⁰⁴ *Atlanta Constitution*, (no headline), Jan. 20, 1889, p. 19.

¹⁰⁵ *The Emory Phoenix*, Dec. 1888; Jan. 1889; and April 1889, p. 4.

¹⁰⁶ “*Sophomore Day, Emory College, June 24, 1889*,” printed program, Manuscripts, Archives, and Rare Books Library, Emory University.

Dickey acquitted himself well in this appearance, as was becoming his custom. His Sophomore Day speech “won the applause of the audience by a most pleasant delivery of the *Defence and Death of Othello*,” reported the *Phoenix*. “Mr. Dickey’s reputation as an elocutionist is well known in college and was well sustained by his success on this occasion.”¹⁰⁷

For the “Champion Debate,” Few and Phi Gamma squared off over the question, “That the bill known as the Blair Bill should be passed by the Congress of the United States.” The bill would provide for the distribution of federal educational funds to the states in proportion to the illiteracy rate in each. The distribution formula would have sent two-thirds of the \$15 million annually into the states of the old Confederacy. Despite that potential financial windfall, many white Southerners opposed it on the grounds of unconstitutionality, extravagance, higher taxes, and the fact that it would fund liberal arts education for African-Americans. Those in opposition felt that education of Blacks should be limited to “largely manual, industrial and agricultural, so as to be adapted to the real needs of the masses.”¹⁰⁸

In the Emory debate, L.L. Ransom, the affirmative speaker, “gave a very eloquent description of the evil results of illiteracy and an earnest appeal for education both among the white and colored races.” Dickey took the negative, and “had a very strong and convincing speech on the unconstitutionality of the bill.” Dickey and his Few team won the debate.¹⁰⁹ Also during the year-end festivities, Dickey accepted the First Stewart Prize Medal – awarded annually at commencement to the sophomore adjudged to have most excelled in declamation.¹¹⁰

¹⁰⁷ *The Emory Phoenix*, June 1889, p.1.

¹⁰⁸ Dennis, *Lessons in Progress*, p. 17, quoting Walter B. Hill, “Southern Education a National Responsibility,” *Southern Workman*, Feb. 1904.

¹⁰⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 2; and Going, Allen J. “The South and the Blair Education Bill.” *The Mississippi Valley Historical Review*, Vol. 44, No. 2 (Sept. 1957), p. 267.

¹¹⁰ *Emory College Catalogue, 1889-1890*, p. 25.

Again at that year's commencement, the *Phoenix* noted, "It is always necessary on these occasions to have Mr. Grady's speech on the New South. So, Mr. J. M. Kimbrough of Cataula, Ga., assumed that task and performed it well."¹¹¹

In his second annual report of the president, Candler noted the passing on August 30 of Professor George W. W. Stone, "after nearly a half century of faithful service in the school work of the church." The vacancy was filled by the election of Professor Mansfield T. Peed, "a gentleman of scholarship, piety, and aptness for teaching." Unlike the recent concerns expressed by student editors over their fellow students' behavior, Candler noted that "the discipline of the college is easy, the orderliness of the students almost perfect, and their habits of study unusually good." He urged the supporting conferences to help make Emory competitive with the best colleges in the land, a position it "cannot maintain...if it pays its professors less than \$2,000 a year.... How long can the church expect its college to be successful on such a basis?"¹¹² The average salary for college professors nationally was \$840 in 1901. The average salary at one hundred selected Northern schools was \$1,470 as of 1893.¹¹³ By these standards, Emory faculty were doing well, but Candler clearly wanted them to be among the very best.

As Dickey began his junior year the first Wednesday in October 1889, he was one of 42 juniors among a total enrollment of 233. Enrollment had increased a scant seven from the previous year, bolstered by a huge freshman class of 77. They were joined by 25 seniors, 43 sophomores, and 46 sub-freshmen.¹¹⁴

During this school year, Dickey first appeared on the board of directors of the Few Literary Society, and again was among the six chosen to represent Few at the fall debate against

¹¹¹ *The Emory Phoenix*, Vol. 3, No. 9, June 1889, p. 1.

¹¹² *Emory College Catalogue 1889-1890*, pp. 50-51.

¹¹³ Dennis, *Lessons in Progress*, p. 7.

¹¹⁴ *Emory College Catalogue 1889-1890*, p. 25.

Phi Gamma.¹¹⁵ “On Dec. 6,” the *Phoenix* noted, “the juniors presented Dr. [John F.] Bonnell with a box of cigars. Mr. Dickey made the presentation speech, and Dr. Bonnell replied in a happy talk.”¹¹⁶ In the spring, Dickey again was chosen to represent his class as a Champion Debater at commencement.¹¹⁷

Doubtless he was engaged in the issues of the day, which continued to include the battle between the state university and the church-related colleges. The *Phoenix* rose to the defense of the “friends of education,” supporters of church-related education who routinely criticized campus life at the University of Georgia. The *University Reporter* at the Athens campus found it necessary to advise its readers that “The enemies of the University – so-called friends of education – are so jealous that if a boy accidentally whistles too loud on the campus, some champion of educational interest bears the horrible news on eagle’s wings to petty politicians and they hurl it into the ears of the people – who in general are opposed to higher education – with telling effect.” The *Phoenix* concluded, “Our ‘wards’ at Athens take a liberal view of the motives and conduct of those gentlemen who, from time to time, have criticized certain objectionable features of ‘University’ life in Athens.”¹¹⁸

Adjacent signed editorials on the matter appeared in the January 1890 issue of the *Phoenix*. One urged the state to force the University of Georgia to charge tuition, while an opposing viewpoint supported passage of the “Felton Educational Bill,” which would appropriate \$35,000 a year to the state university. The former, by student James B. Clements, took the oft-stated position of President Candler that the state could not begin at the top of education and work downward, but instead should fund education from the bottom grades up, and by extension,

¹¹⁵ *The Emory Phoenix*, Oct. 1889, p. 1; and Nov. 1889, p. 1.

¹¹⁶ *The Emory Phoenix*, Jan. 1890, p. 5.

¹¹⁷ *The Emory Phoenix*, Feb. 1890, p. 5.

¹¹⁸ *The Emory Phoenix*, Oct. 1889, p. 2.

let higher education take care of itself. “It is not right for the state to make appropriations to the universities and branch colleges,” Clements wrote. To do so is to “impose a tax for the benefit of the favored few, which is not right.... The University should charge tuition. A student who can pay his board and other expenses can also pay tuition. Free tuition to the University is simply a donation to those who do not need it,” and as such creates “an unfair competition with private and church schools, many of which are its equal, if not its superior.”¹¹⁹

In the latter column, student L.A. McLaughlin wrote that the objective of the Felton Bill was to keep boys at home so that they would not have to go to the North or East for an education. He believed the money would serve individuals better in colleges than in grade schools, where it would “help the negro race, not benefiting whites at all.... A little learning is a dangerous thing.” McLaughlin asserted that Felton’s goal was to place the University on a higher plane, and have the church colleges be a stepping-stone to it. “With this bill defeated, the University goes on competing with our church Colleges as she has been doing for many years. Thus we see that many of the opponents of the bill, in defeating it, really defeated their own ends and purposes.”¹²⁰

Student newspapers of the day customarily exchanged papers with those of other campuses, and published reviews and commentary from and about one another. In doing so, the editors of the *Davidson Monthly* urged the *Phoenix* to “drop its enmity with the *University Reporter* of Athens.... Let us urge you, as those who see as others see you, to drop all your malicious rivalry for the University at Athens. A magnanimous and generous rivalry is

¹¹⁹ *The Emory Phoenix*, Jan. 1890, p. 1.

¹²⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 2.

calculated to do good and is commendable, but a back-biting spirit will only injure those who indulge in it.”¹²¹

Yet the debate continued relentlessly, urged on by President Candler himself, who in a column in the *Raleigh Christian Advocate*, reprinted in its entirety in the May issue of the *Phoenix* asked, “Is the Young Man Safe?” “I refer to the young man who is the son of a Methodist, but who is sent for his education to a State college, or other unreligious school, in preference to the institution of the church.” Candler asserted that a young man will grow mentally and physically at this time of his life, whether or not he is under good influences. “Can he not fall in with pious friends at a state school? He’ll not meet the sons of the most loyal Methodists, for they go to the church college. And sons of Baptists and Presbyterians will be at their denominations’ schools.... For the most part, he will find the sons of the worldly and lax members of the various churches, and the sons of the fashionable and avowedly anti-Christian classes.”¹²²

Apparently under the considerable influence of Candler, Dickey chose the topic for his address as a featured “Junior Day” speaker at commencement, speaking on the “Relation of Education to the State.” In doing so, he was “characteristically eloquent,” the *Phoenix* reported, and while his text is not available, one may be certain it tracked closely with the thoughts of President Candler on the matter. Dickey shared the dais with associate justice of the United States Supreme Court L.Q.C. Lamar, present to deliver the alumni address. Lamar, an 1845 Emory graduate, devoted his speech to reminiscences of his college days, bringing tears to the

¹²¹ *Ibid.*, p. 6.

¹²² *The Emory Phoenix*, May 1890, pp. 2-3, reprinted from the *Raleigh Christian Advocate*.

eyes of many in the audience with a talk “pronounced by many competent critics the grandest speech to which they had ever listened.”¹²³

While church versus state in higher education appears to have been a dominant issue of Dickey’s junior year, it was not the only matter on the mind of the students and administration. Student editors noted that the former technology building, intended to be equipped as a gymnasium, had stood idle for the past two years since President Hopkins’ departure, victim of “neglect” by the trustees and faculty, perhaps due to “the press of more important business.” So the boys of the college had joined with the local Y.M.C.A. to raise funds to equip it on their own, raising \$800 toward a goal of \$1,000. The *Phoenix* called on friends of the college to join the cause, as “It is seldom that students take such interest in equipping a college. They generally tear down as much as they can, but seldom build up anything, and we think this effort should be recognized....”¹²⁴

Candler, who recently had spent six weeks trying to raise six thousand dollars to repair campus buildings, yet was able to raise only two thousand dollars, took the occasion to scold the trustees, alumni and other supporters of the university. “What I have asked is but a pitiful matter when compared with that which colleges in other parts of the country are daily receiving. Harvard College is worth more than all Southern Methodist Colleges combined.... Begging for such a small sum is humiliating.... If a few schoolboys can raise one thousand dollars for a gymnasium without missing a recitation, what might not thirty prominent gentlemen, charged with the management of this great Church interest, with all Georgia and Florida before them, do

¹²³ “Junior Day, 1890” printed program. Manuscripts, Archives and Rare Books Library, Emory University; and *The Emory Phoenix*, July 1890, p. 2.

¹²⁴ *The Emory Phoenix*, March 1890, p. 4.

in a week, if their hearts were free to it?" But, he added, "I will not be understood as lecturing the Board..."¹²⁵

In most uncharacteristic fashion, in May the *Phoenix* found itself endorsing a proposal by the editors of the *University Reporter*. The UGA students were agitating for Monday instead of Saturday as a day off during the week of classes and studies. The *Phoenix* found this to be a good idea: "There is, no doubt, much Sabbath breaking among college boys for the sake of marks, and on account of disregard for God's laws, but there seems to be a greater cause of this, and a reason why the change should be made. On Friday evening, there is a relaxation of the whole system and not until Monday has it recovered its powers. This accounts for the difficulty one has in studying on Saturday. This want of preparation for Monday's recitations has become proverbial at Emory, and is known as 'Mondayishism.' The plan proposed is a good one; at any rate, it is worth a trial."¹²⁶

As commencement 1890 approached, the *Atlanta Constitution*, always full of boosterism toward colleges, published a glowing report on the accomplishments of the year at Emory, terming it "one of the most successful that Emory college has ever known." It noted the good health of the students: "only one death has occurred during the whole year." It outlined the enlargement of the library by five hundred volumes, the endowment increase by more than \$105,000, and fundraising underway to establish a professorial chair in memory of Professor G. W. W. Stone. The Y.M.C.A. had reached a membership of ninety, and with the help of the college had raised \$7,300 to equip the college gymnasium.¹²⁷

In addition to Justice Lamar, many other notable speakers filled the dais for commencement 1890. They included Bishops Oscar Penn Fitzgerald and Atticus G. Haygood,

¹²⁵ Hauk, *A Legacy of Heart and Mind*, p. 50.

¹²⁶ *The Emory Phoenix*, May 1890, p. 6.

¹²⁷ *Atlanta Constitution*, "Emory College, The Close of the Term at Hand," June 20, 1890, p. 3.

the latter of whom had missed but one commencement since 1856; noted evangelist Rev. Sam P. Jones; and Hoke Smith, owner of the Atlanta Journal, U.S. Secretary of the Interior during the just-completed first term of President Grover Cleveland, and future Georgia governor and U.S. senator.¹²⁸

As a student speaker, Dickey thus enjoyed being in the company of many well-known personages as he prepared to represent Few in the Champion Debate and the junior class in his Junior Day speech. The debate took place the evening of Sophomore Day, where “the declamation of the morning was not as good as the usual sophomore declamation here,” the *Constitution* noted. Things improved for the debate, which was “a good one and showed earnest thought and careful preparation on the part of all.” The question was, “Resolved, that the Western and Atlantic railroad should be sold.” Arguing the affirmative, C.R. Williams of Columbus asserted it was an injustice for a sovereign state to own such a property in competition with its private citizens, and had in fact retarded the building of railroads. Dickey, who seemed to thrive taking the negative, asserted that “the best prosperity of the state demanded the retention of the railroad.” Few again won the debate. “Of the debaters, Mr. Fort was the most argumentative, Mr. Dickey the most graceful, Mr. Williams the most earnest, Mr. Landrum the most finished, Mr. Kelley the most forceful, and Mr. Bradley the most impressive,” the *Constitution* reported.¹²⁹

During the summer months, President Candler was among those representing the North Georgia Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, at General Conference, the chief lawmaking body of the church, which met once every four years.¹³⁰ “Dr. Candler’s report from

¹²⁸ *Ibid.*

¹²⁹ *Atlanta Constitution*, “Emory College, Hon. L.Q.C. Lamar Present to Speak,” June 24, 1890, p. 6.

¹³⁰ The Methodist church was organized under a “connectional” system comprised of congregations bound together in districts and those joined into conferences. The local church would meet in Quarterly Conference four

the General Conference held at St. Louis was enthusiastic and instructive,” the *Phoenix* reported. Meanwhile, Dickey joined fellow student F.W. Clanton in representing the Emory chapter of Chi Phi fraternity at the Chi Phi convention held in Atlanta.¹³¹

Dickey’s senior year at Emory opened on October 1, 1890, the last time the college would delay the opening until the long-traditional first Wednesday in October, and would close with commencement day on June 24, 1891. Beginning the following year, the opening date and commencement each would be two weeks earlier in the year, moving to mid-September and early June, respectively.¹³² Dickey’s senior class comprised 33 students. Total enrollment had reached a record 255, including 64 sub-freshmen. President Candler noted it was the largest of any college in Georgia. “The church cannot reasonably expect greater results from the amount of investment made,” he wrote in his annual report.¹³³ Nationally, the majority of colleges remained similarly small in 1890. Among the largest that year, Harvard and Yale had 2,079 and 1,477 students, respectively. Over the next twenty years, there would be an explosion of college enrollment nationally, with six American universities achieving enrollments of more than five thousand by 1909.¹³⁴

In the fall term 1890, Dickey’s senior year coursework consisted of differential and integral calculus; chemistry; English literature, rhetoric, and essay; French; German; political economy; evidence of Christianity; and Bible, covering the Acts and the Epistles. His studies

times a year to conduct official business of the local congregation. Several dozen local churches comprised a district, which met in District Conferences semi-annually, and about a dozen districts comprised an Annual Conference, Dickey’s being the North Georgia Annual Conference, which met annually. While laity held membership in the local congregation, ordained ministers’ membership was held by the annual conference. The annual conferences at Dickey’s time came together in the General Conference, the chief lawmaking body of the church, which met every four years to amend the church *Discipline* and to elect bishops.

¹³¹ *The Emory Phoenix*, July 1890, p. 4.

¹³² *Emory College Catalogue 1889-1890*, p. 2.

¹³³ *Emory College Catalogue 1890-1891*, pp. 29, 58.

¹³⁴ Veysey, Laurence R. *The Emergence of the American University*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1965, pp. 234 and 339. The six were Columbia, Harvard, Chicago, Michigan, Pennsylvania, and Cornell.

would conclude in the spring term with integral calculus; trigonometry; astronomy; civil engineering; geology (taught from the *Compendium of Ecology* by Joseph LeConte); physiology of the human body; English language, speech and essay; French; German; mental philosophy, Parliamentary law from *Robert's Manual*; and Bible, concluding study of the Acts and the Epistles and closing out with the Revelation.¹³⁵

In April of 1890, Rev. W. P. Pattillo of Trinity Church, Atlanta, an Emory alumnus of the class of 1857, had proposed to President Candler that he would give \$25,000 on condition that it would be matched by \$25,000 each from the Board of Trustees, the alumni, and the Methodist conferences of Georgia and Florida. By fall, the trustees had pledged their amount, and the alumni had subscribed \$17,000 with prospects of making the goal. The church conferences had subscribed about half of the amount, and Candler asked that any amount not underwritten by the deadline of March 1, 1891 be apportioned in the respective conference budgets so that the challenge would be met. "If this \$100,000 is secured the College will have passed beyond its day of trial," he wrote.¹³⁶

As classes resumed for the new year, the *Emory Phoenix* found favor with the new system of quarterly examinations, as opposed to the prior system of monthly exams. "Whereas under the old regime a night or two's diligent study and skillful spotting insures a boy success in standing it, such a sailing under false colors may not now be ventured upon. The old 'cramming' process is almost done away with..."¹³⁷

As it had during Dickey's freshman year, debate continued to rage his senior year regarding the classical curriculum versus the elective system. "Shall we do away with the teaching of Latin and Greek?" asked the editors of the *Phoenix*. "It is true that hard and

¹³⁵ *Emory College Catalogue 1890-1891*, pp. 12-13.

¹³⁶ *Ibid.*, pp. 59-60.

¹³⁷ *The Emory Phoenix*, Oct. 1890, p. 4.

protracted work is prerequisite to a knowledge of Latin and Greek, and this fact doubtless hastens many of our 'reformers' to their adverse conclusions. We would class them with the easy-going crowd who write sweet-tinted essays against physical culture in college, and cavort much at the idea of teaching the Bible even as a science, and treat them en masse for imbecility." Not ones to write "sweet-tinted essays" themselves, the editors asserted, "Forever away with a college that incubates donothingness, thriftlessness and sickly femininity, whose commencement programs consist of German and hops, interspersed with literary exercises, where all the reproductive machinery of the human system is taught to work for the sustenance of a pair of attenuated legs and dancing feet, whose possessor's opposite extremity is far more in need of healthy development...."¹³⁸

It is not clear whether their intended target was a northern school such as Harvard, which by that time had moved to a course of study that was almost entirely elective for the students, or others that were increasingly migrating toward the model of the German research university. Perhaps the target was their old nemesis at the University of Georgia, the *University Reporter*. If so, they had a free shot. As is noted elsewhere in that issue of the *Phoenix*, the *Reporter* "exists no longer," changed to a monthly magazine.¹³⁹

As Dickey entered his final term as a college student, Candler continued his campaign against state funding for public higher education by making a speech on the subject before the Georgia General Assembly. "We have no fight to make against appropriations to the State's dependent schools, the University and the branch colleges," he said, "other than the objections which naturally and inevitably present themselves to a right-thinking mind. If the appropriations to common schools is [*sic*] sufficiently liberal to warrant an appropriation to higher education,

¹³⁸ *The Emory Phoenix*, Nov. 1890, pp. 4-5.

¹³⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 6.

well and good, let that appropriation be made.... We do not believe it to be her duty, however, to 'reach from the top downward.'"¹⁴⁰

Candler at the same time was being placed among those at the top of Georgia Methodism considered to be of "bishop timber" in the coming elections at General Conference. The *Southern Christian Advocate*, with a very strange description of Candler's physical appearance, included him among those qualified to be bishop. But what a terrible physical description of him accompanied the endorsement! "Did you ever see him? Did you ever put his begum [hat] on your own cranium through mistake? If you did, I will venture you had a diminishing idea of the dimension of that dome of thought, and to an outsider you were little Rennie with grandpa's hat on. Candler is a peculiar looking man, and to the phrenologist is a contradiction. His head is very large, and seems to repose on one side of his shoulder, though that may be in the seeming. If I should dare pronounce a criticism upon him, I should say that he is a man of very great intellectual power, but has an abnormal development." Praising Candler's support for church-based education, the *Advocate* wrote, "I have never heard so strong, clear and well-put arguments in favor of education by the church." But it continued with the back-handed compliments, by calling him an "overworked man," but that "it never occurs to him that he commits an error."¹⁴¹ Why a noted church periodical would foster such an unforgiving description of Candler's physical appearance is not apparent, nor is the reason the Emory student newspaper saw fit to republish it. Whether they did so with impunity is not evident, given Candler's personal sensitivity and the power he wielded over both organizations.

It is clear that in Dickey's senior year he was among Candler's favorites and among the top few of the star students on the campus. As the senior class of 1891 elected officers, Dickey

¹⁴⁰ *The Emory Phoenix*, Feb. 1891.

¹⁴¹ *The Southern Christian Advocate*, as quoted in *The Emory Phoenix*, Feb. 1891, pp. 4-5.

was chosen *dux*, a term used in ancient Rome to describe the highest official, or governor. It is the root for titles of nobility, such as the English *duke*, the French *duc*, or the Italian *doge*. The term survives today in schools of the former British Empire, where the student named *dux litterarum* is equivalent to the American valedictorian. As *dux*, Dickey would deliver the class address at the annual planting of the class tree, an address that was repeated at commencement.¹⁴² He was chosen both Chancellor and President of Few Literary Society, top positions usually held by two separate individuals.¹⁴³ He further was listed in a group of students involved in a “delightful dinner” at the President’s Home, involving seven young ladies (including Florence Candler, the president’s daughter) and eight young men, including Dickey and his fellow future bishop, W.N. Ainsworth.¹⁴⁴

The end-of-the-year ceremonies began in earnest with the annual Arbor Day observance on February 27, 1891, at which the class planted the traditional commemorative tree and Dickey, as the “dux,” delivered the class speech. After an opening prayer by President Candler, Dickey made his speech, followed by a speech in response to the class from Candler. Student W. L. Wright followed by giving the class history, W. P. Fleming read the class poem, W. N. Ainsworth delivered the class prophecy, there was a class song, a prayer led by class chaplain J. S. Jenkins, and a second class song, followed by the planting of the tree.¹⁴⁵

The *Phoenix* staff considered Dickey’s speech remarkable enough that they printed it in full, as they did Candler’s response, and the full history by Wright and prophecy by Ainsworth. Dickey opened his remarks with the customary expression of “the gratitude of the Class to the good people of Oxford for their loving care and watchful tenderness during the college

¹⁴² *The Emory Phoenix*, Dec. 1890.

¹⁴³ *The Emory Phoenix*, Jan. 1891, p. 1.

¹⁴⁴ *The Emory Phoenix*, Nov. 1890, p. 6.

¹⁴⁵ *The Emory Phoenix*, March 1891, p. 1.

residence.... The memory of your love, the tender association of your firesides, the example of your godly walk, and the sweet influence of your earnest prayers, shall follow us up the ascent, over the table lands and adown the mountain side, ever purifying our lives, ennobling our purposes and illumining our way, as a veritable beam from the heavenly Shekinah [Hebrew for the glory or radiance of God, usually in the feminine].”

But rather than following the custom that the dux should “proceed with prophetic vision to unveil the future, portraying scenes fraught with famine, pestilence and bloodshed, avoidable only by such sagacious state-craft as his [the dux’s] fertile brain alone could furnish,” Dickey chose instead to give the first major fundraising speech of what would be many during his career. “I shall speak upon the endowment of our college. Doubtless some of you think it strange that I should have selected this subject....” The speech, undoubtedly influenced by Candler, also carried a strong flavor of “New South” progressivism.

Addressing his classmates and other undergraduates as “future alumni,” he elaborated on the necessities of an endowment, the manner in which American colleges should be endowed, and the relation of the alumni to the endowment. There is a demand for college-educated men, he asserted, and college education pays. Taking up Candler’s mantle regarding state support of higher education, Dickey cited a recent article in the *University Magazine* of New York, which criticized those denominational colleges that “play upon the prejudice or fears of church members, and so to wheedle or scare them into keeping their sons and daughters out of the State universities and placing them into these small insufficiently equipped denominational institutions.” Reacting with contempt to the passage, Dickey said, “Old Emory, as one of the institutions referred to, may be insufficiently equipped, yet her sons can proudly boast and satisfactorily demonstrate that she is the best institution for the propagation of higher education

in her native State.” But, said Dickey, “she needs an endowment in order that this charge may be removed.”

As a matter of “defense and patriotism,” the Church, the alumni, and the South owe to posterity colleges and universities equal to any in the United States or the known world, Dickey said. “The battles that are to be fought hereafter are not to be with German, French, Northern and Southern bullets, but with German, French, Northern and Southern brains. It behooves each people to improve the facilities of intellectual warfare with more diligence than the implements of powder and ball.” He asserted that Germany and France already were more keenly attuned to this matter than the United States, and within the nation, the North more so than the South.

Maintenance of the faculty also required an endowment, he said. He noted that the German Prince Bismarck, after annexing the Alsace, turned first to assembling the brightest minds in the universities and appropriating funds to make them the best possible. In America, he said, the emphasis had been on “monumental stone and towering brick, leaving the faculties to subsist as best they may.” He noted the German practice of bringing in the very best thinkers in each field and placing them in endowed chairs, saying, “There this state of affairs has reached the highest perfection.”

Even as Leipsic’s [Leipzig’s] faculty had led their institution to eclipse the previous superiority of the university in Berlin, so had “the golden effulgence of old Emory’s glory” eclipsed the brightness of her sister institutions, based on the strength of her faculty. “This faculty has stood by the college, when, to my personal knowledge, they have been offered more lucrative positions.” Dickey waxed eloquent about faculty who had continued their duties while sick or injured, who had contributed their own funds and labor toward acquiring or constructing apparatus, “and a President who, when stricken by disease, and a loving people bade him rest

awhile from his labors, in the smiling face of Azreal [from Jewish mythology, an angel who separated the soul from the body at death], trembling and in broken accents, whispered, ‘The old college is good enough to die by.’”¹⁴⁶

Trusting that he had made the case that the college required an endowment, Dickey proceeded to ask how it might be acquired. He noted that colleges under a republican government had no princely patron such as the University of Naples, founded by Frederick II; the University of Scotland, founded by John Balliol, father of the king; the University of Orange, founded by Charles IV; or the University of Rostock, founded by Dukes John and Albert. “The philanthropic Senator from New Hampshire tried it [apparently referring to Daniel Webster and the *Dartmouth College* case], but the purity of American statesmanship prevented him, and I trust shall prevent every form that tends to the centralization of power in general government....”

Again picking up Candler’s theme, Dickey continued, “Then we must look to the States for educational support. Yes, for common schools, but not for higher education.” The States must do so for the benefit of the people, which he defined as the common people, not those benefited few who aspire to a college education. “It is suicidal on the part of the State and a crime in the face of men and angels to appropriate State funds for the support of higher education, while the cries of five hundred thousand of Georgia’s illiterate children damns her hopes and blights the prospects of her future glory,” Dickey asserted. “When every child of school age shall have easy access to common schools of sufficient term lengths, then, and not till then, should the State appropriate money for higher education.”

So, he concluded, private philanthropy was the appropriate means for endowing higher education. Citing Cornell, Harvard, Yale “and scores of other such institutions [that] stand as

¹⁴⁶ Candler had survived an attack of typhoid fever during the previous summer, and also suffered the death of two of his five children while he was president – sons Warren, Jr. and Emory. See Hauk, *A Legacy of Heart and Mind*, p. 50.

monuments of Northern faith in higher education,” Dickey said the South could do no less. Citing a Northern philanthropist who had recently died, leaving \$2.1 million in bequests spread over several institutions, he said, “Would to God that some of our Southern millionaires might wake up on that line.” But not only millionaires – general alumni were responsible for helping the Northern institutions succeed. The South is not too poor to participate in this matter of her own defense, Dickey asserted, employing the “Lost Cause” rhetoric of the day in an appeal to Southern patriotism.

When the constitution of our fathers was invaded and its most sacred principles trampled under foot, Southern manhood leaped into the arms of death with the wild delight of enchanted bridegrooms into the presence of delighted brides. For the honor of the South, and the advancement of her cause, a thousand hectacombs of lives were given; yet when peace has ‘spread her wings ‘ore hill and valley’ and a benignant Father, through our fields of golden grain and cotton snowy white, whispers, ‘all is well,’ we niggardly refuse to give of substance in order to cultivate those faculties that make us most like Him. We gave our best blood for the advancement of our Southland’s cause; we withhold our money from her intellectual defense. My countrymen! My countrymen! Has it come to this, that Southern gold is dearer than Southern blood? Great God, forbid. I appeal to you with all the ardor of my impassioned nature, rise in the majesty of generosity and blot out the foul stigma of the past.

Like many southerners of his time, Dickey had a framed portrait of Robert E. Lee on the wall at his home. To whip a crowd into a frenzy, a band only had to strike up the familiar chords of *Dixie*, or an orator to appeal to southern honor and the thousands of lost lives in the late war. In many of his speeches over his career, Dickey inserted such an appeal to southern honor and the patriotism of the Lost Cause, directing it as he did here to an appeal to build on that southern pride to create a better day in honor of those who had made such great sacrifices.

While acknowledging that he was touched by the tradition of the planting of a tree, Dickey challenged his class and each subsequent one to plant something more substantial – a donation or a pledge toward the college endowment. He proposed that this consist of a note from

each class member, “for such an amount as each see fit, bearing interest from date, and maturing five years from said arbor day, interest payable annually.”

“The truth is, that until within the last five years, not more than five thousand dollars have been contributed by the Alumni,” but since that time, he said, the classes have begun to unite. Reaching a peak of florid eloquence, Dickey continued,

In the history of old Emory, the night has been long and dark; for the most part ‘unstarred nights,’ but now when I look toward the east, I can see silver and amber and gold; and while I watch, there bursts upon my expectant vision the golden glories of an awakening day. Look up! ‘The white robed saints, in yonder’s world beyond the sun, have climbed the everlasting hills to watch the fortunes’ of old Emory’s cause; look! I can see Few and Longstreet and Means and Pierce and Smith, and Smith again, and Stone, and while I am speaking they are coming down the mountain sides, and now they are leaning over the golden battlements, shouting down the blue abyss, ‘on! on! ye white plumed heroes of the cross! Sound the tocsin for the fray! Shout the wacry! Lead the way!’

Turning to Candler, Dickey concluded, “Mr. President, the class of ’91 loves the old college.... The hallowed memories of her sacred halls shall ever be as dear to us as our infant prayers.” And with that, he announced that the class of ’91 would institute the practice he had just advocated of giving a class gift. “I am instructed to present this package, containing thirty-three notes, amounting to five thousand dollars. We bring this as the offering of our youth, and place it upon the altar of our love, while all around from devoted hearts there rises the rich incense of earnest prayers invoking the choicest blessings of our Heavenly Father upon the future of our Alma Mater.”¹⁴⁷

While it is not recorded, one might imagine there was a great standing ovation and perhaps a breathless moment of excitement and tears at this magnanimous gesture by the youthful members of the graduating class. Candler stood to respond, noting that “for 53 years the sons of our Alma Mater have given her little support,” but now “this generous act of yours

¹⁴⁷ *The Emory Phoenix*, March 1891, pp. 1-3.

marks, I am sure, an era in the history of Emory College.” Candler held those earlier alumni blameless, as they were caught up in the throes of the war and its aftermath. “But of late a better spirit has awaked, a spirit that reaches a notable result today; a result, I am sure, which proclaims a new era.” Candler likened the old college to Israel wandering in the wilderness for forty years, but “it has crossed the river today and comes up to possess the land.” And he proposed that it would be appropriate to direct the class gift toward completion of the chair in memory of the late Professor George W. W. Stone, in that this was the last class he ever taught. Noting that gifts to the chair to date placed it within \$5,000 of the \$25,000 goal, this class gift would push it over the top. Turning to Dickey, Candler concluded,

If those spirits of whom you spoke, sir, who are walking today amid the joys of the heavenly state, can know what we do, and if their joys can be increased by any deed of ours, how their hearts must be gladdened by this act of the class of 1891! They, like Caleb, wandered all through the wilderness, but unlike Caleb, they did not cross over. But do they not rejoice with us in this glad hour? This enduring monument which we complete today will speak eloquently of the fidelity of our dear old teacher’s life to all the generations to come. It is an honor to him and will be a blessing to posterity. God bless you, and bless the old college, the mother of us all! Her blessing is upon you as you lay this gift at her feet.¹⁴⁸

Dickey’s speech was a sophisticated offering for a college senior, even a mature one 26 years of age. Clearly he was familiar with the “New South” sermon of Atticus Haygood and of the recently-delivered “New South” speech of Henry W. Grady, and they influenced his thinking, as did the progressive approach to higher education embodied in his mentor, President Candler. His speech indicated a deep pride in Southern regionalism, but also was a call to action for the South to do as well in education as its peers have done in the North, and in Germany and France. The promise of the future was embodied in an appeal to Southern pride and unity – a classic tenet of New South progressives as they illuminated Southern shortcomings while trying not to

¹⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 3.

appear disloyal to Southern heritage. Dickey likely was not conscious that he was taking this approach, but it was ingrained in him from being a child of the Civil War and from the influences in his life, not the least of which was Candler.¹⁴⁹

After Dickey's speech and Candler's response were concluded, next on the Arbor Day program was W. L. Wright, the class historian, who proceeded to detail in his class history a few pithy remarks on each of the 33 members of the senior class. As each senior's name was called, his date of birth was given and commentary offered on his time at Oxford – not without some whimsy and humor. Of one: “It would be the quintessence of nonsense to reckon how long he has been here.” Of another who once “busted,” or missed class, most uncharacteristically: “His [President Candler's] never-failing perception soon told him that Lee was suffering from a temporary attack of ‘moon-shine hallucination.’ In one sweep of his mighty wand, the Doctor brushed away the cob-webs of fancy, and from that day till this, Lee has never ‘busted.’”

Wright offered no whimsy for Dickey, however, only honor and respect. He called Dickey “the Demosthenes of the class,” noting “in some respects, I dare say, his record is unsurpassed in the history of the college.... His talent lies in the magic of his burning eloquence.... Often have the walls of old mother Few stood in mute but proud admiration of her gifted son, as he poured forth, in strains as sweet as sirens ever sung, the convincing logic burning in his impassioned brain.” Wright recalled Dickey as the first sophomore in Emory history to be elected a Champion Debater. And he noted that Dickey had not yet decided what he will do in the way of a profession.

W. N. Ainsworth, the class prophet, projected forward 21 years, to 1912, relating details from an imagined meeting with each member of the class at that future date. He saw himself at that distant date riding a circuit of churches in South Georgia, when in fact, by then he would be

¹⁴⁹ Dennis, *Lessons in Progress*, pp. 14-15.

one of the more noted ministers of the South Georgia Conference and well on his way to being elected bishop in 1918.

Of Dickey, Ainsworth noted that in the projected 1912 meeting he “still possessed his stately dignity.” And on Dickey’s trying to decide a profession: “Conscientious in the minutest matters, he delayed, not wishing to cast his lot where his Maker might not have need of him. In the process of time, he hearkened to a divine call and enlisted with that vast host who reflect credit on their alma mater and do honor to their God. Intellectually endowed beyond the great majority of humanity, versed in all the learning of ancient and modern times, born an orator and having a heart that encompasses all mankind, he was pre-eminently fitted to direct the chiefest designs of our church.” The future bishop Ainsworth had presciently forecast that which the future bishop Dickey had not yet determined for himself.¹⁵⁰

Indeed, as June commencement approached, Dickey evidently struggled with the question of his call to the ministry. Shortly before graduation, he went to President Candler and poured out his heart. Candler’s advice is not recorded, but Dickey kept it to himself and spent a day in prayer and solitude contemplating the matter. That evening, when he and a roommate, Bascom Glenn, were studying, Glenn knew that something was troubling Dickey. “Why do you ask,” Dickey queried. Glenn replied, “Because all during this evening, you have been different from your usual self – softer, gentler and sweeter, both in spirit and manner.” So Dickey shared with Glenn his thoughts, and his decision to surrender to the call to preach as his life’s work. Dickey’s biographer, Dempsey, says the “sweetness” that developed with that decision was accompanied by a spirit that was calm, collected and self-contained, “ever after one of the notable characteristics of this remarkable man’s development.”¹⁵¹

¹⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, pp. 7-10.

¹⁵¹ Dempsey, *Life of Bishop Dickey*, pp. 49-52.

The coursework ended and final exams stood, the class was dismissed on May 23, 1891 to prepare for commencement, which was scheduled for June 10. Dickey stood as second honor behind John S. Jenkins in the class described as “perhaps the most intellectual class that has ever gone out from the walls of old Emory.”¹⁵²

Commencement week began on Friday evening, June 5, with the sub-freshmen presentations. Threatening storms held off as twelve boys gave speeches and medals were awarded. A similar program followed on Saturday, as the first “Freshman Day” was held. Previously, freshmen had not presented as part of commencement week. On Sunday, Bishop Atticus G. Haygood preached the morning service, his theme being unswerving devotion to duty as illustrated by the life of Saint Paul. At 3:30 p.m., a Rev. Bays of Rome preached on the necessary existence and eternal goodness of God. This was followed by the evening service, at which Dr. William D. Anderson of Atlanta addressed himself to the young preachers, preaching “plain, searching gospel truth.”¹⁵³

Monday was Sophomore Day, and the *Phoenix* noted “Georgia’s great and popular governor, W. J. Northen,” in attendance. After the sophomore speeches during the day, the evening was highlighted by the annual Few-Phi Gamma debate, that year on the subject, “Resolved, that Congress should pass a bill providing for the free and unlimited coinage of silver.” The question was won by the negative. The program closed with the award of medals by trustee John S. Candler. Dickey took the Timmons Medal, for best metaphysical essay by a member of the junior or senior class.¹⁵⁴

During the night, the town was awakened at 1 a.m. by shouts of “fire!” as the residence of Professor Scomp burned. He lost a library reported to be “among the most valuable in the state”

¹⁵² *Atlanta Constitution*, “Emory’s Senior Class,” May 26, 1891, p. 3.

¹⁵³ *The Emory Phoenix*, June 1891, p. 1.

¹⁵⁴ *Ibid.*

with many rare volumes, and manuscripts for several works being readied for publication. Though the house and furnishings were covered by insurance, the books and scholarly works were irreplaceable, and it was a serious blow.¹⁵⁵

The next day, Junior Day, was highlighted by orations on “subjects all fresh and their handling was masterly,” the day closing with the alumni address by Dr. Walker Lewis of Atlanta. Finally came commencement, or Senior Day, on June 10, “a day long to be remembered in the history of Emory College,” the *Constitution* observed. The weather was threatening, but the chapel was packed when Rev. Wardlaw opened the day’s festivities with prayer. Dickey took the podium as first speaker, delivering the salutatory entirely in Greek. “Judging from the smiles of recognition of many in the audience, [it was] appreciated and enjoyed,” wrote the *Constitution* correspondent. Speeches followed by W. N. Ainsworth on “Christ, the Ideal,” and by L. W. Branch eulogizing General William Booth of the Salvation Army. Dickey then returned to the podium to deliver the speech of the dux. “[T]hroughout his college career, [he] was noted for his chaste language and true eloquence. Today he sustained his well-deserved reputation, taking for his subject, ‘Monuments’,” the newspaper reported. It apparently was a revised version of his Arbor Day fundraising and “New South” speech. Jenkins, the valedictorian, won the Senior Speaker’s Medal for his valedictory address. The day-long ceremony closed with the president’s Baccalaureate address, the awarding of the degrees and honorary degrees, and the Literary Address before the societies.¹⁵⁶

With the closing of the commencement exercises of 1891, also closed James E. Dickey’s college career. The Board of Trustees, at its meeting held in conjunction with commencement, elected Dickey Adjunct Professor of Mental and Moral Science, meaning he would be assisting

¹⁵⁵ *Atlanta Constitution*, “Emory’s Annual Occasion,” June 10, 1891, p. 2.

¹⁵⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 2.

Candler come fall term in teaching the Moral Philosophy classes. Other newly-appointed professors were Tom Fort, professor of mathematics, and H. S. Bradley, Jr., adjunct professor of natural science. Each was an honor graduate of a recent class at Emory. Professor H. H. Stone was promoted to hold the George W. W. Stone Chair of Mathematics, recently endowed in memory of his late father. The trustees also learned that sufficient applications were in hand for the fall to assure that the 1890-91 enrollment would at least be equaled.¹⁵⁷

In its report on the commencement, the *Constitution* noted that Dickey was “the brainiest man in the class, the most popular man in college, and the recipient of the second honor.” It further noted, “He was recently licensed to preach, and has occupied the pastorate of the Methodist Church at Vineville, Ga.,” a small community just outside Macon.¹⁵⁸ A report from the *Macon Telegraph* that July, noted that “the young pastor of the Vineville Methodist church is winning golden opinions by his thoughtful and eloquent sermons to his congregation.” In a detailed report on Dickey’s sermon, the newspaper reported that he preached from the book of Numbers, chapter 10, verse 29, speaking on the text, “Come thou with us and we will do thee good, for the Lord has spoken good concerning Israel.” He addressed his comments to those who were friends of the Vineville congregation, but not of them, urging them to join.¹⁵⁹

Dickey thus set his course for the faculty and the pulpit – as a teacher and a preacher -- a path he would follow for the remainder of his days.

¹⁵⁷ *Emory College Board of Trustees Minutes*, June 5, 1891; *Atlanta Constitution*, “Emory Commencement,” June 12, 1891, p. 2.

¹⁵⁸ *Atlanta Constitution*, “Emory College,” June 6, 1891, p. 7.

¹⁵⁹ Dickey family records held by the author. A clipping from a *Macon Telegraph* undated except for July 1891, “Pleased with their Pastor,” found in a scrapbook of Julia Dickey Boyd.

CHAPTER 2

THE FACULTY AND THE PULPIT 1891-1902

Obscure among the many noteworthy and memorable hymns of Charles Wesley is “A Prayer for Children,” composed for and sung at the opening of the first Methodist school founded by Charles’ older brother, John – the Kingswood School. John Wesley, the founder of Methodism, established the school in line with his philosophy to bring together intellectual understanding and religious devotion.¹ In verse five, Charles expresses this philosophy adopted by his older brother and carried forward by his Methodist followers:

Unite the pair so long disjoined,
 Knowledge and vital piety;
 Learning and holiness combined,
 And truth and love, let all men see
 In those whom up to thee we give,
 Thine, wholly thine, to die and live.²

To “unite the pair so long disjoined – knowledge and vital piety” is the basis for the involvement of the Methodist church in higher education. From its very first General Conference – the Christmas Conference of December 24, 1784 in Baltimore, Maryland – the Methodists have invested in higher education. That first conference authorized establishment of Cokesbury College in Abingdon, Maryland.³

John and Charles Wesley grew up in an environment that combined religious formation into that of traditional education. The juncture of these two principles is drawn from the gospel scripture in Matthew 22:37: “Love the Lord with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind....” Under the guidance of this Wesleyan principle, Methodists have invested

¹ Lancaster, Sarah Heaner, *The Wesley Brothers on Knowledge and Vital Piety*, a chapter in Coyner, Michael J. et al, *A Year with John Wesley and Our Methodist Values*. Nashville: Methodist Publishing House Discipleship Resources, 2008, pp. 43-44.

² From *A Collection of Hymns by Charles Wesley*, retrieved May 15, 2008 from <http://www.ccel.org/w/Wesley/hymn/jwg04/jwg0473.html>

³ Today there are 123 colleges, universities and schools in America related to the United Methodist Church.

themselves in higher education as a means of spreading the gospel through spiritual growth, theological exploration, and moral development, all as core components of a liberal arts education. The two, knowledge and piety, are viewed as an inseparable unit – head and heart must be educated and trained together. Candler thus referred to “faithful service in the school work of the church” as if the two were part of one mission.⁴

Indeed, as Methodist theologian Paul Wesley Chilcote writes in general about Wesleyan theology, for the Methodist in higher education being a teacher or a preacher is not an either/or proposition, it is “both/and.” The Wesleys, he writes, argued that personal salvation must be held together through social action – faith *and* works. Knowledge and piety, like salt and pepper, he says, are not the same yet are complementary – they fit together appropriately. Like oil and vinegar, each is dependent upon the other to bring out the best. The Wesleys were “formidable scholars,” with John being a tutor at Oxford. The linkage between vital piety, the “warmed heart,” and sound learning was fundamental in their lives and in their theology, so that their laity might have well-developed skills and wisdom to face the challenges of everyday life.⁵

As Charles wrote in *Hymns* [1780], number 507:

Let us join (‘tis God commands),
 Let us join our hearts and hands;
 Still forget the things behind,
 Follow Christ in heart and mind;
 Plead we thus for faith alone,
 Faith which by our works is shown.

Indeed, the Methodist connectional system – conferences of churches organized under an episcopal leader – provided strength particularly suited to organizing and executing such an enterprise. The church organization provided financial, structural and moral support, but it also

⁴ *Emory College Catalogue 1888-1889*, pp. 50-51.

⁵ Chilcote, Paul Wesley. *Recapturing the Wesleys’ Vision: An Introduction to the Faith of John and Charles Wesley*. Downers Grove, Ill.: InterVarsity Press, 2004.

provided control to assure that Methodist principles were maintained. Methodist ministers were the presidents of such colleges, and often comprised a large percentage of the faculty. Students were often the sons of poor Methodist ministers and of Methodist laypersons. They spent hours per week in mandatory church services and in service to the community.⁶

Into this tradition, James E. Dickey was licensed to preach in the spring of 1891 about the same time he was elected to the faculty of Emory College as adjunct professor of mental and moral science. The former came in action of the Shiloh Methodist Church, located about four miles outside Oxford on the banks of the Yellow River,⁷ and the latter at the spring meeting of the Emory Board of Trustees.⁸ Thus he had set his course for a career on the faculty and in the pulpit -- teaching and preaching – two jobs in one, in perfect consonance with the Wesleyan tradition of knowledge and vital piety.

While he may have been involved in preaching at local churches in that first year, he did not have an official pastoral appointment. Records of the North Georgia Annual Conference held in November 1891 indicate he was accepted on trial at that conference, and his appointment for the coming year was to the faculty of Emory College, with no additional appointment to a pulpit.⁹

As he prepared to begin teaching in the fall of 1891, he had other, perhaps more important, matters on his mind. On September 8, 1891, at the Methodist Church in Quincy, Florida, Dickey married Mary Jessie Munroe, one of 22 children of William Munroe, who emigrated from Scotland as a child and grew to become a successful planter and merchant in the Florida panhandle town. William Munroe had six children by his first wife, Cornelia Mary

⁶ Schmidt, George P. *The Old Time College President*, p. 33.

⁷ Dempsey, *Life of Bishop Dickey*, p. 53.

⁸ *Emory College Board of Trustees Minutes*, June 5, 1891

⁹ Dempsey, pp. 68-69.

Freeman Fitzgerald, who died in 1856 at age 27. The next year, he married Julia Margaret Edmonds Welch, who bore him 16 children. Jessie was the tenth child of the second marriage. The eldest child of that marriage, Jessie's sister Julia Robena Munroe, married Charles Dowman in 1878 when he was pastor of the church at Quincy. After Dowman joined the Emory faculty, it was during Jessie's visits to her sister's home at Oxford that she met James Dickey.

The evening wedding – the processional began at 8:40 p.m. – was held before a crowded church and officiated by Emory President Warren A. Candler and the Rev. Dowman, the bride's brother-in-law, then pastor of a church in Savannah. According to a clipping, apparently from the Quincy newspaper, giving an account of the wedding: "As the fateful words were spoken pronouncing them man and wife, the 'Old Goose' from its iron throat [apparently referring to the church bell] pealed forth the customary salute announcing that two more young people had taken upon themselves the solemn obligations of married life." Following a reception at the bride's family residence, the couple departed for Oxford the following Thursday.

The newlyweds settled into the Oxford home that James already shared with his mother. According to family lore, it was not a comfortable arrangement. Ann Elizabeth Thomas Dickey, by then age 56, was a demanding woman who insisted that the young couple leave their bedroom door open and who often criticized the meals young Mrs. Dickey prepared for her new husband. Once, when he was sick in bed, Jessie brought him a tray with breakfast, only to see the elder Mrs. Dickey throw it in the trash, saying it would "kill him." She would continue to live in the house with them for the first five years of their marriage, until her death in 1896.¹⁰

When Emory College opened its 1891 fall term, Dickey was one of fifteen men who comprised the faculty, nine of whom had been on the faculty when Dickey arrived four years

¹⁰ Dickey/Munroe family records held by the author.

earlier as a freshman.¹¹ Five additional faculty colleagues had arrived since Dickey came as a student: President Candler, who was Lovick Pierce Professor of Mental and Moral Science and Biblical Literature; Mansfield T. Peed, professor of pure mathematics and astronomy; Lundy H. Harris, adjunct professor of ancient languages; Tomlinson Fort, adjunct professor of mathematics; and H. S. Bradley, Jr., adjunct professor of natural science. Seven of the fifteen faculty were clergy, including Candler, Callaway, Moore, Magath, Harris, Bradley, and Dickey.¹² Like Dickey, several were Emory alumni and had no earned graduate training – their masters and doctoral degrees were honorary, including those held by President Candler. Such faculty inbreeding was not particularly unusual for a small, liberal arts college of the day.¹³

Dickey's teaching schedule consisted of assisting Dr. Candler with freshman history class at 10 a.m. daily and teaching freshman rhetoric on his own at 3 p.m. daily. In the first term, freshman history covered ancient history from Fisher's *Outlines*, a universal history text written by Yale professor George Parks Fisher in 1885, and moved into medieval and modern history in the spring term. Freshman rhetoric, or English, included Clarke's *Practical Rhetoric*, composition, Irving's *Sketch Book*, *Pilgrim's Progress* and *Robinson Crusoe*, plus composition and declamation, with similar selections and reading the spring term.¹⁴

In the 1891 college *Catalogue*, the author – apparently President Candler – expressed concern over lack of preparation of many incoming students, particularly in the areas of

¹¹ Dickey took his place alongside his former professors Morgan Callaway, who remained as vice president and Bishop George F. Pierce Professor of English and Language Literature; John G. Bonnell, Alfred H. Colquitt Professor of Natural Science; H. A. Scomp, professor of Greek language and literature; John S. Moore, professor of Latin language and literature; Julius Magath, professor of modern languages and Hebrew; H.H. Stone, who had moved from adjunct professor in Dickey's first year to his current position of George W. W. Stone Professor of Applied Mathematics (the chair named for his father) and librarian; R. M. McIntosh, professor of vocal music; and the two law professors, James M. Pace and Capers Dickson.

¹² *Emory College Catalogue 1891-1892*.

¹³ The problems of such faculty inbreeding are discussed contemporaneously by Harvard President Charles Eliot in *University Administration*, Boston: Houghton Mifflin Co., 1908. See also Walter Crosby Eelis and Austin Carl Cleveland, "Faculty Inbreeding," 1935, reprinted in the *Journal of Higher Education*, Vol. 70, No. 5, September-October 1999.

¹⁴ *Emory College Catalogue 1891-1892*.

mathematics and English. “Too many students attempt to enter college with inadequate preparation upon these subjects, and bring embarrassment to themselves and difficulties to their instructors which might be avoided by more careful and systematic instruction while in training for a college course,” the *Catalogue* said. The year opened with 285 students on campus: 67 sub-freshmen, 68 freshmen, 59 sophomores, 56 juniors and 35 seniors.¹⁵ Salaries that year were \$2,250 for the president; \$1,800 for full professors; adjunct professors with sub-freshman classes received \$1,250; and other adjunct professors made \$700. Two janitors received \$130 each for the year.¹⁶

In that same *Catalogue*, Emory (again, under the apparent authorship of President Candler) took a stand in the ongoing national discussion of classical education versus the more modern trends in curriculum: “While Emory College recognizes fully the worth of scientific study and the value of the modern languages, it refuses to yield to an unwise popular clamor against the classics. No student can receive the degree of A.B. from this institution who has not satisfactorily completed the courses in Latin and Greek, as well as in English, and at least one of the modern languages. The literatures of the Hebrews, Greeks and Romans have entered vitally into our own civilization, and familiarity with them is reckoned as of the highest value by the authorities of this college.”¹⁷

The catalog statement defended a move to change degree requirements to de-emphasize Greek and Latin. That fall of 1892, full four-year courses of study leading to bachelor of science and bachelor of philosophy degrees were added, in addition to the traditional bachelor of arts.

¹⁵ *Emory College Catalogue 1891*, pp. 6, 53.

¹⁶ *Emory College Board of Trustees Minutes*, June 3, 1892, p. 250; and Bullock, *A History of Emory University*, p. 224.

¹⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 15.

The B.S. required no Greek or Latin, and the B.Ph. required no Greek.¹⁸ After one year of operation under the new plan, Professor Scomp protested that students in the B.S. and B.Ph. programs should not be eligible for class honors.¹⁹ He did not prevail. The next year, when the board unanimously upheld the course as proposed by President Candler, Professor Scomp resigned. Even though he suffered from failing eyesight, his greater concern was that he did not feel able to fit into the new scheme of things. The board assured Scomp of the high regard in which he was held.²⁰ The board further resolved that “the Trustees, fearing that the present course of study at Emory College may be much too crowded for the average students and believing that it should be adapted to suit the boy of average capacity, hereby request the President and faculty of the College to review and revise its present curriculum with a view to modifying the same.” But no further modifications were forthcoming.²¹

In his annual report to the sponsoring conferences of the church, President Candler reported that the \$100,000 challenge from layman W. P. Pattillo (mentioned in the previous chapter) was met, enabling the appointment of three additional faculty members. But Candler continued at some length to explain why the challenge did not allow the college to operate without charging tuition, and in fact, why that would not be advisable. Tuition, he reported, brought in \$21,000 a year, which to forego would be too great a drain on the endowment at the current returns on investment. Faculty salaries still were too low relative to competing institutions, he asserted, and the numbers of faculty needed to be increased. There is no direct indication which institutions Candler may have considered to be that competition. Emory faculty salaries certainly exceeded those of the University of Georgia, and only the brightest and

¹⁸ *Emory College Catalogue 1892*, p. 15; Bullock, *A History of Emory University*, p. 221.

¹⁹ *Emory College Trustees Minutes*, June 12, 1893, p. 298; Bullock, p. 221.

²⁰ *Emory College Trustees Minutes*, June 8, 1894, p. 315; June 9, 1894, p. 322; June 11, 1894, p. 324; Bullock, *A History of Emory University*, p. 221.

²¹ *Minutes*, June 11, 1894, p. 324; and Bullock, *A History of Emory University...*, p. 221.

wealthiest of students and faculty would be lost to Trinity College or the northeastern universities. Tuition must continue to be charged, Candler wrote, except that about twenty percent of the boys were “beneficiaries,” receiving free or reduced tuition from the Loan Fund based on need or on being the son of an itinerant minister. Candler asked the conferences to consider adding funding for the college endowment to the regular apportionments assessed upon the local churches in an amount equal to that for domestic missions.²²

Two years later, it became apparent that the Pattillo gift came up short some \$35,000 from being fulfilled, apparently due to depression in real estate values. Pattillo, who had been paying interest on the note along, proposed in 1895 to retire the pledge through a gift of properties he owned in Fort Worth, Texas. Candler went to Fort Worth to inspect the properties and, finding them to be as valued, moved their acceptance by the board of trustees, the transaction being completed in 1898. It was a sacrificial move by Pattillo to honor his pledge even in a time of financial reversal. The property eventually would prove to be much more valuable to Emory than the initial amount of Pattillo’s pledge.²³ By 1905, the trustees had realized \$34,000 cash from selling of lots, with the estimated remaining property pushing the total value of the gift past \$60,000.²⁴

In a column in the *Atlanta Constitution*, which may have been a paid display ad due to its unabashed boosterism, Mark A. Candler of the Emory class of 1889²⁵ wrote, “I was at Oxford last Sunday and was very much impressed by the changes that have taken place in the dear old institution since my graduation, two years ago.” Candler praised the enlargement of the course

²² *Ibid.*, pp. 79-80.

²³ *Emory College Trustees Minutes* of June 6, 1896; June 4, 1897; and June 3, 1898; and Bullock, *A History of Emory University*, p. 227.

²⁴ *Ibid.*, June 10, 1905; and Bullock, p. 238.

²⁵ Mark A. Candler appears as author of several historical articles in Atlanta media and publications over the next three decades. No relation to Warren Candler and family is apparent.

of study through the expanded bachelor of philosophy and the scientific course, yet quoted Emory's *Catalogue* statement on why the classics remain important. He declared Emory to be the "best school in the country for the preparation of young men in the basic college course." Citing a spirit of work and a spirit of rivalry in academic competition among the boys, he praised the array of student organizations through which Emory reflected the national campus tone of the 1890s, including seven fraternities, the two literary societies, and the campus newspaper, the *Phoenix*. "The college is on a boom...long may she live! And as the college whoop goes, I am for Emory for all time and under all circumstances. 'Rah! 'Rah! Zip! Boom! Emory! Emory!'"²⁶

As Dickey's first year on the faculty came to an end, Jessie gave birth to the couple's first child, Julia, on July 19, 1892 at their home in Oxford.²⁷ In a letter to the editor of the *Atlanta Constitution* that same week, Dickey praised an editorial that had appeared in the newspaper entitled, "A Sermon for the Times." "Would that all great dailies would copy that article and press home to the people of America the truth that there can be no lasting civilization save that which is founded upon the edicts of the Almighty," he wrote. "Such sentiments cannot but awaken the warmest heart throbs of appreciation in the bosoms of thousands of your subscribers...."²⁸

In August, at an old camp meeting tabernacle in DeKalb County, he delivered the main address for the annual interdenominational celebration of DeKalb Sunday Schools. A large

²⁶ *Atlanta Constitution*, "At the Colleges, An Old Student's Views of the Emory of Today," Oct. 12, 1891, p. 8.

²⁷ Julia Dickey would grow up to become the wife of Emory professor of Greek and Latin Clarence Eugene Boyd, but would die an untimely death at age 37, leaving Dr. Boyd with two young sons, ages 14 and 12.

²⁸ *Atlanta Constitution*, "A Sermon for the Times," July 15, 1892, p. 4.

crowd came from Atlanta, bringing their big dinner baskets and heartily enjoying a day in the woods with singing, preaching and dinner on the grounds.²⁹

As school again opened at Oxford in the third week of September 1892, Dickey taught 9 a.m. freshman history, 2 p.m. alternating classes of logic and ethics for juniors, and 3 p.m. freshman rhetoric. The college boasted an enrollment of 274. In his annual report, President Candler noted with gratitude that his request of the previous year had been granted that an apportionment be established by the conferences – that is, a budgeted amount charged proportionately to the local congregations. It was expected, he reported, to yield some \$4,500 to \$5,000 for the current year, which is “small – only about half the assessment for domestic missions,” but he nonetheless hoped it would be continued. He noted the college endowment stood at \$162,570 in securities and another \$44,306 in notes, which are “nearly all good, in two more years the bulk of them will have matured....” He forecast that the last of the college debt would be retired by the beginning of 1893.³⁰

Indeed, during Candler’s term of office the finances of the college improved considerably. He cleared the debt of \$5,000, raised \$93,000 in cash for the endowment, another \$4,000 for repairs and for the library, and another \$16,000 for a new building. Land values of the college’s property increased \$35,000, bringing the total endowment at the end of this term to \$213,955.³¹

At the session of the North Georgia Annual Conference in November 1892, the bishop appointed Dickey and J.S. Moore jointly to the Oxford charge, which consisted of the Oxford church and three smaller nearby churches – Salem, Shiloh and Mount Tabor. Dickey would

²⁹ *Atlanta Constitution*, “DeKalb Sunday Schools,” Aug. 5, 1892, p. 7.

³⁰ *Emory College Catalogue 1892-1893*.

³¹ *Emory College Trustees Minutes*, June 3, 1898, pp. 430, 440; and Bullock, *A History of Emory University*, p. 228.

come to say at several times over his career that he preferred the pulpit to the classroom, and in that first appointment, it is clear that he applied great energy to his pastoral duties.³²

Indeed, the Oxford pastorate was influential within the North Georgia Conference in that it was the church home for many future ministers during their time at Emory College. As pastor of that church connected to the campus, Dickey would preside over the spiritual life of the very faculty and students with whom he worked on a daily basis in the classroom. It was here that he found full expression of his dual role as both a teacher and a preacher – nurturing his students’ and colleagues’ hearts as well as their minds. Such arrangements were the norm at denominational colleges of the era. Many faculty members also served as pastors of nearby churches and ministered to the same community in which they taught. Some may have viewed their work in the churches as an extension of their college duties. For Dickey, the work in the college clearly was an extension of his dedication to the work of the church.

In very detailed Quarterly Conference reports, he expressed satisfaction that the four churches were active, each with Sunday Schools “led by efficient and consecrated men.” As if entering into a ledger, he reported:

No. of pupils at Oxford, 140, of teachers 21;
“ “ “ “ Salem, 70, “ “ 6;
“ “ “ “ Shiloh, 35, “ “ 4;
“ “ “ “ Mt. Tabor, 30, “ “ 4.

Dickey or Moore would spend one Sunday per month in each of the churches, with one of them preaching every Sunday in the Oxford church, the main church of the circuit. Emory students did “valuable service by teaching and singing in all these churches,” Dickey reported. Such service would be an integral part of their education under the Methodist philosophy of combining knowledge with vital piety. At the Oxford church, Dickey faced a typical problem of

³² Dempsey, *Life of Bishop Dickey*, p. 69; and *Quarterly Conference reports*, Oxford Circuit, 1892-1893, Dickey Collection, Manuscripts, Archives, and Rare Rooks Library, Emory University.

college towns even today – the comings and goings of students from the rolls made it hard to track actual results. Dickey lamented that the church roll at Oxford “has been much reduced both by transfer and ‘lost sight of’” during the present quarter. This he attributed to graduating students transferring their memberships elsewhere, or more troubling, they failed to transfer their memberships, and “allow[ed] their letters to remain so long that they are lost to sight.” He reported a detailed list of 24 such former members who had been dropped from the rolls, their whereabouts unknown. Three had moved their certificates, four had entered the ministry and were “on trial in the South Georgia Conference,” and only one had been admitted by certificate. Certainly as new students arrived on campus and determined to move their memberships to Oxford, these numbers would balance out. There had been one transfer out, and none in, at the country churches.

He reported the financial state of the church to be “hopeful,” noting the circuit already had paid this year “more than our assessment on the mission debt.” But “concerning the spiritual condition of the church, I feel more hesitation in speaking. The citizen membership of Oxford is much as it has been for the last five or six years and I presume very much as it was twenty years previous to that time. Public services are attended ‘as a matter of course,’ the ordinances of the church are generally observed, but for the most part, I fear that Christianity has become commonplace with us and spirituality a state little desired.”

Dickey noted that the college classes each held a weekly prayer meeting for their members, in addition to the weekly prayer meeting held for the full college. “These meetings are sources of great good to the body of students,” Dickey reported. These sessions were in addition to the regular Wednesday night church service, which was “well-attended by both citizens and students.” The Wednesday services conducted by President Candler “are, I think, productive of

better results than any services of the church,” Dickey wrote.³³ The student availing himself of all such offerings, as was expected, would attend two Sunday services, Wednesday night worship, and two prayers meetings each week! It is likely that Dickey attended most such services, as well.

By the May 1893 quarterly conference, Dickey reported he had organized a new church within the circuit, at Midway, at the request of parishioners and the community. The church was about “midway” between Oxford and Covington, barely a mile south from the Emory campus on the main road into Covington. Six Oxford members and eight Shiloh members were listed as transfers to Midway, among a total membership of 75. “The members of this church are exceedingly enthusiastic, upholding the preacher’s hands and doing all they can to make a good church. We are very desirous of having a suitable building for our congregation there and are now investigating to that end. The field is ample, the people willing and I see no reason for failure at Midway,” he wrote.

That particular report also told of a “short protracted service” at the Oxford church during which three young men were added to the church by profession of faith, two of them being baptized. A detailed ledger listed giving for the quarter to the poor \$43.10; cyclone sufferers \$24.37; mission debt \$58.30; incidental expenses \$62.86.

“My congregations have been steadily growing until now my Saturday meetings are fairly attended, and on Sabbath the churches are generally well filled,” Dickey reported. “I have as yet not had an opportunity to protract services at either of the country churches but hope to do so at each one this summer.”

By the August 1893 report, Dickey continued to lament, “The church at Oxford is not spiritually alive, that is, there is not much active manifestation. The members attend upon the

³³ *Ibid.*

ordinances of the church and generally speaking the outward lives of her members are morally correct.” But the Salem church, he notes, has been “greatly revived” following her camp-meeting season. “Feuds of long-standing among certain members were settled, and the membership generally stirred up.” Of nineteen new members, seventeen joined on profession of faith.

But the Shiloh church, he assessed, is “rather cold, the result, I think, of certain differences between leading members. I am rejoiced to state that these differences have been settled and harmony prevails among the brethren.” The new Midway church “is a game little church,” and had purchased a new organ. Its Sunday School had grown to 75 pupils under twelve teachers. Mount Tabor, like Salem and Shiloh, was “greatly revived” with long-standing feuds among the membership being settled. The summer of 1893 saw protracted services at Shiloh and Midway, “at which places there was no great demonstration, but in a quiet way good was done.”³⁴

Early in his career on the faculty, Dickey succeeded President Candler as treasurer of the Emory Loan Fund, a position he would hold and pursue diligently for twenty years. The Loan Fund had been organized in 1888, and built by subscriptions from individual supporters and the sponsoring annual conferences. By the time Dickey took charge, it had a corpus of some \$300,000 – an impressive sum in those days, equivalent to more than \$6 million in today’s

³⁴ *Ibid*; Dickey delighted in telling stories about those early days riding his circuit of churches around Oxford. Once at Midway, as a heavy rainfall fell outside as services were underway, the roof was leaking mightily, everywhere but near the pulpit where Dickey held forth. As he was mid-sentence, one lady in the congregation spoke up, “Here, let’s all get up toward the front and into the pulpit, because it is always so nice and dry up here where Brother Dickey is.” And on another occasion in one of the circuit churches, an old man who had the habit of responding aloud to any emphatic statement of the preacher continued to do so even though he had become hard of hearing, taking his cue from the preacher’s motions. Dickey was preaching on the importance of religion in the family, saying that children should mind their parents: “Now when I was a boy, my mother would sometimes tell me, ‘I’ll whip you,’ and she’d do it, too!” To which the old man responded loudly, “Lord, help us to believe it!” The congregation and its preacher were convulsed with laughter (Dempsey, *Life of Bishop Dickey*, pp. 71-72).

dollars – which yielded \$15,000 per year to assist students in attending Emory. A student would pay no interest until he ceased to be a student, at which time interest was five percent until his note matured. If he failed to make payment at maturity, interest increased to eight percent. For twenty years, Dickey wrote personal letters and made public pleas on behalf of the Loan Fund, often making the case that the fund primarily facilitated the education of “missionaries, preachers and teachers.” Each year, Dickey would travel to the various district conferences across Georgia and Florida, some twenty in all, to speak not only for the college, but specifically for the Loan Fund. The power of his speeches at these meetings was reflected in the offerings received -- he would leave each with one or two hundred dollars or more in pocket to add to the effort. He handled the bookkeeping and the awarding of individual applicants personally, investing many hours of service over the years.³⁵

One wonders how Dickey had time to attend to such administrative duties in addition to those of the classroom and the pulpit, but the subsequent school year saw him with the same teaching schedule as the prior year: 9 a.m. freshman history, 2 p.m. alternating junior logic and ethics, and 3 p.m. freshman rhetoric.³⁶ While some faculty spent their summers studying or teaching at other institutions of higher learning, there is no evidence that Dickey did so over his career. His speeches over the years indicate that he clearly was well-read both in matters of current events and in the literature of higher education administration, but an active pursuit of continuing education and scholarly activities is not apparent. His spare moments were given to fundraising and the church.

As Emory opened its fall term, enrollment showed a slight decline to 256, following the graduation of the largest senior class in school history. Candler noted in his annual report that

³⁵ Dempsey, *Life of Bishop Dickey*, pp. 58-64.

³⁶ *Emory College Catalogue 1893-1894*, p. 6.

enrollment had “remained nearly stationary for the last three years, though considerably above that of any male college in Georgia.” This does not appear to be out of line with trends nationally at the time. Hundreds of liberal arts colleges nationally still had less than 300 students as late as 1910, and an institution with several thousand students would be among the largest in the country – Columbia, at 6,232, was the largest in 1910. Attempts at nationwide data collection on college attendance earlier than that suffered from incomparability – how did each campus count students in new fields being added, in agricultural and technological courses, in normal schools? It does not appear that Emory’s fairly consistent enrollment in the upper 200s was unusual for the times.³⁷

In his annual report to the trustees, President Candler made the case for a new library building, noting that the school then owned some 10,000 volumes, many of them with a value of more than fifty dollars each, yet the library was housed on the third floor of Seney Hall. Candler told the trustees, “On the Campus there is no water supply adequate to extinguish a fire if it should break out at such a height. A new fire-proof building for the library is imperatively needed.” Fundraising already was underway for such a facility, led by a pledge of \$5,000 from trustee J. P. Williams of Savannah.

While Candler reported on bricks, mortar and finances, he found it equally important to report on the spiritual condition of the students and community. “The moral condition of the College was never better,” he informed the trustees. “The order and discipline are well nigh perfect. Gracious revivals have prevailed during the past year....” Candler continued, “It may well be doubted if there has ever been a session of the College since its foundation in 1836 during which there were no revival services and no conversions. This remarkable fact explains

³⁷ Thelin, *A History of American Higher Education*, Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 2004, pp. 95, 133.

the wide-spread influence of the College throughout the length and breadth of Southern Methodism.”³⁸

At the conclusion of that fall’s school term, Dickey also had concluded two years “on trial” in the North Georgia Conference, and thus was prepared to be admitted as a clergy member in full connection at the annual conference meeting in Gainesville the week passing from November into December, 1893. He was among seven young men in the entering class, and “seldom has a finer class been received,” the *Atlanta Constitution* reported. “It is a class of very rare young men.” As they stood before Bishop Haygood, he addressed them. “Do not measure your returns by statistical returns,” the bishop said. “Study the doctrines, discipline and polity of your church as long as you live. Be careful in your life. Even princely David sinned deeply and we must be warned. I have no interest in theory. A hair split is good for nothing. Take God’s statements and prove them in your life. Love cannot be put into formula. The only thing that concerns God in the universe is to make good men and women of us all. All else in the universe is to help this purpose.”

That same annual conference conducted election of delegates to the 1894 Southern Methodist General Conference. Candler was the second clergy delegate chosen of eight elected, behind delegation chairman W. D. Anderson. It was traditional that the first clergy delegate elected would be considered the annual conference nominee for bishop.³⁹ Candler would have to wait another four years.⁴⁰

Another feature of the 1893 annual conference was that Dickey, for the first time of many in his career, encountered Mrs. Rebecca Latimer Felton, Methodist lay-woman and wife of

³⁸ *Emory College Catalogue 1893-1894*, pp. 43, 79-80.

³⁹ ...and remains so today.

⁴⁰ *Atlanta Constitution*, “Preachers at Work, The North Georgia Conference Holds Interesting Sessions,” Dec. 2, 1893, p. 2.

Georgia legislator W. H. Felton. She already was notorious for her poison-pen and often racist diatribes in the Atlanta newspapers. While one would be hard-pressed to find preachers more evangelical than Candler and Dickey, Mrs. Felton thought them to be part of the hide-bound old order of the church, because they would not accept the work of evangelist and North Georgia Conference clergyman Sam P. Jones as being worthy to stand on its own unless he took an appointment to a pulpit like everyone else. Jones, who lived from 1847 to 1906, was noted for drawing large crowds when he spoke. At his death, it was said that Jones had spoken to more Americans than anyone who had ever lived. Some of his expressions are now common-place, such as “The road to hell is paved with good intentions.” He held complete mastery over his packed houses with talks trademarked by dry humor and tear-jerking stories. Elmer T. Clark, editor of *World Outlook*, called Jones “the greatest evangelist of his generation.” During Emory’s 1947 observance of the centennial of Jones’ birth, which was marked by establishment of the “Sam Jones Lectureship on Evangelism” at the theology school, then-dean of the Candler School of Theology H. B. Trimble described how Jones’ “ease on the platform, his exceptionally resonant voice with wonderful carrying power, his lustrous black eyes, a philosopher-humorist, a deep and passionate desire to help men brought tens of thousands of people into the churches and contributed to the purity of the moral life of the nation.”⁴¹

Nonetheless, Bishop Haygood had ruled that “the Methodist church has no place in her organized arrangements for evangelists,” and that Jones must accept a new appointment rather than being agent for the Orphans’ Home, his previous appointment for which the four-year time limit had expired. Mrs. Felton fired off a hot letter to the *Atlanta Constitution*, decrying Haygood’s “astonishing statement.” She moved to the attack against other members of the

⁴¹ Holcomb, Walt. *Sam Jones: Celebrating the Centennial Year of the Birth of Sam Jones*. Nashville: Parthenon Press, 1947, pp. 7-10; Minnix, Kathleen. *Laughter in the Amen Corner: The Life of Evangelist Sam Jones*. Athens: The University of Georgia Press, 1993, p. ix.

conference whom she alleged had appointments other than pulpits: “Your correspondent will only ask why does the conference ‘continue’ Dr. Hopkins, the president of Georgia’s Technological school in Atlanta, if this rule is so strict? Why does it recognize W. A. Candler, M. Calloway [sic], Julius Magath, H. S. Bradley and J. E. Dickey as part of the ‘organized arrangements’ of the Methodist church?” And on she went with a list including Dr. Haygood traveling for the “Sister [apparently intending Slater] Fund Society,” W. M. Hayes traveling for the Paine Institute at Augusta, and Leonard Rush “traveling through the conference so far as his strength will permit to aid in revival meetings.”

“What’s the matter now that Bishop Haygood draws a tight line on Brother Sam, and allows these preachers to do exactly what their pecuniary interests demand under the protection of the North Georgia Conference?” she asked. Accusing the Methodist church of having “settled down into formality and do-nothingness” while the evangelists “kindle a fresh fire in the hearts of the common people,” Felton noted Sam Jones had been a good Methodist, but, “It may be Providential that Bishop Haygood thrust him out to do better work with fewer hindrances.” Haygood, she said, “would do well to remember that the Methodist church should be careful to retain its friends, and only fight its enemies.”⁴²

Over the years, the enmity between Felton and Candler would reach a very public fever pitch, as her legislator husband sponsored bills to increase state taxpayer support for the University of Georgia, and after Candler expelled their son from Emory for being a “vagabond and drunkard.”⁴³

⁴² *Atlanta Constitution*, “Mrs. Felton and the Evangelists; She Makes a Caustic Comment on a Conference Decree.” Dec. 10, 1893, p. 9.

⁴³ Talmadge, John E. *Rebecca Latimer Felton: Nine Stormy Decades*. Athens: University of Georgia Press, 1960; Matthews, Terry L. “The Voice of a Prophet: Andrew Sledd Revisited.” *Journal of Southern Religion*, Vol. 6, Dec. 2003.

As the new year of 1894 dawned, the Dickeys celebrated the happy occasion of the birth of their second child, Annie, at Jessie's family home in Quincy, Florida, on January 11. It is presumed that Dickey made the trip to Quincy to be with his wife and new daughter, but no record confirms that.⁴⁴

Dickey continued to be engrossed in the work of his five churches. His quarterly report in January 1894 noted that Sunday School for children remained healthy at all the churches, "but the older members of the church seem not to realize their duty with respect to this important branch of our church. I join with [the Sunday School superintendents] in urging the heads of families to come with their children to Sabbath School."

As to the spiritual condition of the church membership, "We have some deeply pious and spiritually minded members in all of the churches, but many who are worldly and indifferent. Some, I fear, have little regard for their church vows." Attendance had fallen off during the cold months, he noted. It is "as though deep piety were indigenous to warmer climate.... Many seem to feel that duty only requires them to be active during the summer." As winter turned to summer, Dickey noted attendance improving. "While none of our schools go into 'winter quarters,' yet the bad roads and wintry weather always diminishes the number of attendants."

A resolution at the July 1894 quarterly conference noted the passing of "our beloved friend and late P.E. [Presiding Elder] Rev. Wm. D. Anderson." Anderson had only months earlier led the North Georgia delegation to the 1894 General Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, having been elected one position ahead of Candler.

In his October report, Dickey noted that a number of country families had taken to attending whichever of the churches was holding preaching on a given Sunday. Attendance at

⁴⁴ Dickey family records held by the author. Annie would grow up to marry Henry H. Jones, graduate in the Emory class of 1911, who would become a noted minister in the North Georgia Conference.

Oxford had greatly increased with the opening of the fall term of the college. Revivals were held at all the churches except Oxford, where the revival was held the prior spring. Few were taken in as new members, but there was a “deepening of the work of Grace in many hearts,” Dickey reported. The people of Mt. Tabor built a new church structure during the last quarter, he further wrote, replacing “a very old, incommodious, inferior structure. The work is the labor of their own hands.... Very soon we hope to see the church thoroughly furnished and everything paid.”⁴⁵

As the school year 1894-95 opened on the Emory campus, Dickey continued as adjunct professor of mental and moral science, and maintained his usual busy schedule of teaching: 9:10 a.m. freshman history; 11 a.m. freshman rhetoric; 2 p.m. junior logic and moral philosophy. For Dickey, being “adjunct” did not mean he taught part-time, only that he was filling the mental and moral science post in lieu of the president’s usual role. He continued teaching three or four class sections for the next several years and in 1895 took on the added duties of co-directing the library with Professor H. S. Bradley.⁴⁶

Earlier in the year, President Candler had established a committee, with himself as a member, to explore his desire to found a school for the training of preachers. The committee reported to the trustees that they had arranged for such a course of study at a cost of \$800 – so low because most teaching would be by existing faculty, with occasional guest speakers such as Bishop Haygood and Dr. E. E. Hoss. As part of this new course, Dickey taught a 10 a.m. class on church history which alternated with homiletics. The school was “not designed to be a theological seminary” but a training course for young men planning to become ministers, so that they might have special preparation before entering upon the regular conference course. The

⁴⁵ Quarterly Conference reports, Oxford Circuit, 1894. Manuscripts, Archives and Rare Books Library, Emory University.

⁴⁶ *Emory College Catalogue 1895-1896*; *Atlanta Constitution*, “Preparing for the Zodiac,” Feb. 20, 1896, p. 8.

school provided directed instruction in Bible, logic, rhetoric, mental and moral philosophy, homiletics, church history, systematic theology, and an introductory study of Greek and Hebrew. Only three students enrolled in the course of study its first term, and it apparently did not succeed, as it was dropped upon Candler's departure in 1898.⁴⁷

By the 1894 term, Dickey had become treasurer of the alumni association, and undertook to lead the organization in endowing a professorship. It would not be a classic endowment, but instead, an annual contribution of \$5 per alumnus that would fund a faculty position. "Let every old student and graduate of the college send [Dickey] \$5 at once for the good cause, and above all let them all come up to the support of the college and stand by it to the end. Let the boys in every city and town form clubs and go to work for the college and renew the dear associations of college life," wrote an un-named "alumnus from middle Georgia" in the Atlanta newspaper.⁴⁸ Under the leadership of Judge H. E. W. Palmer, the alumni association was incorporated in 1895, and undertook support of the alumni professorship with "increased zeal."⁴⁹

When the North Georgia Annual Conference next met at Elberton in late November 1895, Dickey and H.E. "Wynn" Joiner were appointed to Oxford and Midway.⁵⁰ That spring, after only five years in the appointed pastorate, Dickey celebrated the landmark of dedicating the second church structure built under his leadership, a new brick church for Midway, situated on the main road between Covington and Oxford. President Warren A. Candler preached to "a very large crowd" at dedication ceremonies held March 16, 1896. Candler's topic was "the Church of the Living God," based on a verse in the first chapter of Ephesians. Meanwhile, a protracted

⁴⁷ *Emory College Catalogue 1894-1895; Emory College Catalogue 1899-1900; Bullock, A History of Emory University*, p. 222.

⁴⁸ *Atlanta Constitution*, "Emory College, the Alumni to Endow the 'Alumni Professorship'," June 15, 1895, p. 7.

⁴⁹ Bullock, *A History of Emory University...*, p. 224.

⁵⁰ *Atlanta Constitution*, "Their New Fields, Appointments by North Georgia Conference of Preachers for Next Year." Nov. 26, 1895, p. 3.

revival service got underway at the Oxford church. The *Constitution* noted that “Oxford’s revivals always leave their imprint upon the religious life of the state, and the results of this one will be watched with great interest by people all over this part of the country.”⁵¹

During that spring term, the Dickeys also celebrated the arrival of their third child, Mary Jessie, born February 9, 1896 at Oxford.⁵² And as the 1895-96 school year drew to a close, President Candler traveled to Wesleyan College to deliver the “mission address” at Wesleyan commencement, where his daughter, Florence, was first honor graduate.⁵³

When the Emory trustees met at commencement 1896, they learned the year just completed was “the most prosperous one in the history of the institution.” Enrollment had reached a record 304, securing Emory’s place as the largest college for men in the state. President Candler reported on a number of bequests received during the year, including \$15,000 from the estate of the late Young L. G. Harris of Athens, but that was being contested and was entangled in court. Candler reported that the alumni campaign led by Dickey to add to the endowment for an alumni professorship had been liberally subscribed. Before the trustees, and in the annual *Catalogue*, Candler praised the alumni for the establishment of the new chair and the addition of \$50,000 to the college’s permanent endowment over the previous seven years. Indeed, Dickey became the beneficiary of his own efforts in the campaign, as the trustees named him the first occupant of the Alumni Professorship of History and Political Economy, promoting him to full professor on Candler’s recommendation. His former work as adjunct professor of mental and moral science was to be taken by C. C. Jarrell, an 1894 Emory alumnus, who also

⁵¹ *Atlanta Constitution*, “Dedication of a Church,” March 18, 1896, p. 9.

⁵² Dickey family records held by the author. Mary Jessie Dickey would grow up to become the wife of Atlanta business and civic leader Robert M. Strickland, Sr., and they would become the parents of Robert M. Strickland, Jr., president of SunTrust Bank and chairman of the Emory University board of trustees from 1979 to 1994.

⁵³ *Atlanta Constitution*, “Emory Speakers’ Places,” May 23, 1896, p. 3.

took over Dickey's former class of homiletics in the theological class. This allowed Dickey to teach three class sections rather than four that school year: 9:10 a.m. freshman history, 10 a.m. junior history, and 2 p.m. sophomore history.⁵⁴

Dickey's reputation as a fundraiser continued to grow during his decade on the Emory faculty. Never shy when it came to asking for money, he challenged colleagues across the state to provide financial support for his old friend and classmate William J. Callahan, who then was serving as a missionary to Japan. Having heard from Callahan of towns in his region needing Christian preachers, Dickey wrote in a letter published in the *Wesleyan Christian Advocate* on July 22, 1896 that "one hundred dollars will keep a native preacher and his wife in the field for one year." Dickey put out the call under the heading, "Wanted – Nine Men," each of whom would contribute to this cause. "Who will join me in this investment? I want nine men to send me ten dollars each, which, with mine, will make Callahan happy by filling the charge in question for twelve months." The nine men were found, reported the August 12 edition of the *Advocate*. Dickey wrote that "immediate and warm responses" had come from only one call, which is "a matter of great gratification." He listed the name of each man who had sent ten dollars, and promised to forward any additional monies received to Callahan in Japan, as well.⁵⁵

On July 30, 1896, Dickey's mother, Ann Elizabeth Thomas Dickey, died. She had lived with him virtually every day of his life up to that point – from childhood through the illness and death of his father when he was 14, through his years as a young businessman in Atlanta, coming to Oxford with him for his belated entrance as a college freshman, and continuing to live with him and his new wife through the first five years of their marriage. Dempsey describes her as "a

⁵⁴ *Emory College Catalogue 1896-1897*, pp. 2, 33-34; Bullock, *A History of Emory University*, pp. 223-224; *Atlanta Constitution*, "Emory Prosperous, the Annual Meeting of the Board of Trustees at Oxford," June 6, 1896, p. 3.

⁵⁵ *Wesleyan Christian Advocate*, July 22, 1896 and Aug. 12, 1896.

most devout and consistent Christian woman,” and relates that after she and her youngest son were left alone in the world, “mother and son were drawn together in ties most tender and exquisite.”⁵⁶ About the time of his mother’s death, and perhaps because he chose once again to relocate following the loss of a beloved family member, he built a two-story frame home, “unusually warm and comfortable.” It was surrounded by an attractive fence. Dempsey noted that the home still stood in Oxford at his writing in 1928.⁵⁷

Dickey’s duties as a pastor continued unabated, including both weddings and funerals. On November 5, 1896, when he performed the wedding of Irene Everitt to Edward L. Osborn at the home of the bride’s father in Covington.⁵⁸ Undoubtedly many opportunities to preside at weddings not only of church members but also of former students presented themselves to Dickey during his years on the faculty. There also were many funerals, notable among them that of Mrs. Georgia Ficklen Callaway in November 1897. She was the wife of long-time faculty member Dr. Morgan A. Callaway. President Candler conducted the funeral service in the Oxford church the afternoon of November 7, assisted by Dr. John S. Moore and Rev. Lundy H. Harris. Dickey was among six professors who served as pallbearers. The faculty and students of the college “attended in a body to pay a last tribute of respect to the dead and to show their sympathy for the bereaved husband.”⁵⁹

When the North Georgia Annual Conference met in Dalton at the end of November into early December 1896, along with his appointment to the Emory College faculty, Dickey also was appointed to Midway Church alone, the growing little church he had founded and built

⁵⁶ Even though both her husbands were buried in the Thomas family plot on the old plantation in Richmond County, Dickey chose to bury his mother in the Oxford cemetery. Her monument has weathered badly, such that her date of death appears to be 1890 and has been incorrectly reported as such by some, including Dempsey in *Life of Bishop Dickey*. But it is indeed 1896. The tall, obelisk monument reads: “Ann Elizabeth Dickey, wife of Rev. James M. Dickey, faithful wife and mother.”

⁵⁷ Dempsey, *Life of Bishop Dickey*, pp. 86-87.

⁵⁸ *Atlanta Constitution*, “Social News in Covington,” Nov. 5, 1896, p. 5.

⁵⁹ *Atlanta Constitution*, “Mrs. Callaway’s Funeral. Sermon at Oxford Yesterday.” Nov. 8, 1897, p. 3.

apparently then requiring a fulltime pastor. O.C. Simmons and W.A. Candler were appointed to Oxford.⁶⁰

Over the years Dickey increasingly came into demand as a public speaker. In the period of one week in May, 1897, he preached the commencement sermons at the Elberton Collegiate Institute and at the Lithonia Institute.⁶¹ His “eloquent address” at the LaGrange District Conference that year raised one hundred dollars for Emory’s proposed library building. As Dempsey reported, “It was often remarked, ‘That Jim Dickey has piled up more money and more bricks and mortar for Emory College than any other man connected with its history.’”⁶²

Of one of his 1897 speeches, that given at the annual alumni ceremony, I. E. Shumate of Dalton said, “It was literary in character. Its English was faultless and its rhetorical finish above criticism. The speaker’s voice was musical and well modulated, and his oratory captivating. His address was thoroughly prepared and evidenced extensive and accurate information upon the subject discussed. If, perchance, the live discussion of live issues by the first speaker aroused antagonism in the minds of any of his hearers, the polished rhetoric and superb oratory of the second speaker [Dickey] caused them to be quickly forgotten.”⁶³

With the coming of the fall term of 1897, the faculty of 16 men included a new professor of Latin language and literature. Andrew Sledd was a Virginia native, Harvard educated, who came to the faculty at the invitation of President Candler, even boarding in the president’s home. In subsequent years, through his demeanor in faculty meetings and his writings in the popular journals, Sledd would come to be known as an uncompromising personality, even quite a bit

⁶⁰ *Atlanta Constitution*, “Appointments are Read Out, Where the Ministers of the North Georgia Conference Go,” Dec. 1, 1896, p. 1.

⁶¹ *Atlanta Constitution*, “Commencement at Elberton,” May 21, 1897, p. 2; “Lithonia Institute to Close,” May 28, 1897, p. 2.

⁶² Dempsey, *Life of Bishop Dickey*, p. 76.

⁶³ Dempsey, pp. 87-88, quoting I.E. Shumate of Dalton, Ga.

bullheaded. As such, Sledd initially did not hit it off with Candler personally, but living in his home had occasion to fall in love with Candler's beloved daughter, Florence. They soon would be married. Sledd would later write, "[A]s my wife, [she] has made abundant compensation for the toil and burden and humiliation of my service in the school."⁶⁴ A fateful train ride Sledd would take in 1899, during which he witnessed a lynching, would lead to an important chapter in both his and Dickey's lives, which will be dealt with in the next chapter.⁶⁵

Sledd's training surpassed that of most of his new colleagues on the Emory faculty, a fact he did not fail to analyze.

From an educational standpoint," he wrote in 1905, "I found the institution in much the same condition as the majority of its kind. Nearly all of the faculty were ministers. Few, if any of them had had any university training; most of them were inefficient teachers and big with the pretence of 'Gentlemen of erudition.'

He decried that the president and at least five professors were "all regular ministers in the Southern Methodist Church; and most of the professors were graduates of Emory College, or some institution of like grade, with little or no additional training or experience."

Sledd's observations, while bitingly critical, were on mark for Emory and any number of institutions of its type during the period. Faculty inbreeding (hiring of alumni into faculty positions without further training elsewhere) was common practice. Promotions, such as Dickey's recent elevation to full professor, appeared to be based on no more than longevity and strength of service. Scholarship was not a requirement, although a number of Emory faculty spent their summers teaching or pursuing further studies on notable campuses.

University training had apparently received little consideration in the matter of appointments. (A fact which was reflected in the corollary fact that few of the alumni of the institution ever prosecuted their studies in higher

⁶⁴ Sledd, Andrew. Unpublished autobiography, 1905. Department of Special Collections, George A. Smathers Libraries, University of Florida, p. 49.

⁶⁵ Reed, Ralph Jr., "Emory College and the Sledd Affair: A Case Study in Southern Honor and Racial Attitudes," *The Georgia Historical Quarterly*, 72 (Fall 1988): 467; Matthews, "The Voice of a Prophet...."

institutions),” Sledd further wrote. “All this is one of the most tragic facts connected with a faculty of this sort. Men without vision; without ideals, cannot be expected to open the eyes of their pupils, or stir in them those ideals which make so potent for higher achievement.... The faculty of Emory was a poor faculty, and any influence of the institution for sound learning was grossly impaired if not destroyed.⁶⁶

As brutal as his analysis was, Sledd acknowledged that Emory was not unlike other denominational colleges of its day, and in fact, he noted, was ranked among the best of them in the public mind. But there is little wonder that a faculty member holding such opinions, and often willing to express them openly while being only age 28, would grate against both colleagues and administration over time, particularly when the president is one’s own father-in-law.

Nonetheless, Sledd joined Dickey and the other faculty as a colleague as the 1897-98 year opened. Dickey’s teaching schedule that year included 9:10 a.m. freshman history, 10 a.m. junior history on alternating days with Professor Sledd’s Latin, and 2 p.m. sophomore history.⁶⁷

President Candler began the year with a determined fight against the students’ use of cigarettes. “The persistent and extended use of tobacco by students fully acquainted with its damaging effects and influence is one of those strange and inexplicable inconsistencies peculiar to rational beings,” wrote the *Phoenix* of the campaign. “We hail with delight any movement of reform in this direction.” Dickey himself was a cigar smoker. His grandchildren who remember him recall most vividly that he always smelled of cigars. Despite Candler’s campaign against the use of tobacco, which extended over the years to efforts to prohibit ministers of the North

⁶⁶ Sledd autobiography, pp. 50-51. See also Sledd’s description of the first time he visited a Latin class taught by his predecessor. “There was never a spark of inspiration, nor glint of genius, nor touch of humor, save that pathetic humor which the whole situation presented; and I left with a sense of tremendous humiliation and depression....”, p. 54.

⁶⁷ *Emory College Catalogue 1897-1898*.

Georgia Conference from smoking – although many did – it was a practice Dickey apparently never abandoned.⁶⁸

The North Georgia Annual Conference met in 1897 at Athens First Methodist Church, and four years having passed, the time again had arrived for the election of delegates to the General Conference. Clergy delegates chose Warren Candler at the head of the clerical delegation, placing him as the conference's nominee for bishop. With no small irony, lay delegates selected the evangelist Sam Jones, now a lay member of the conference, to lead the lay delegation. Jones addressed the conference twice – first, in a sermon to a packed house on Thanksgiving afternoon, and finally in a farewell talk on the last day of the conference. In that farewell, he said, “I want to say to the preachers in this conference that I still feel that I am a member. I love you, brethren, and want you to pray for me.... Let's help each other. We can talk each other up or down. But let's never try another preacher in the papers.” Candler responded by offering a resolution that “we have had great pleasure in the attendance of Rev. S. P. Jones upon the present session of the conference, and that we shall be happy to have him with us as often as it may be convenient for him to come.”⁶⁹

Dickey was appointed to a three-member committee to examine the character of the Rev. C. C. Carey, whose presiding elder had no complaint against him but whose “character was arrested” by Dr. Walker Lewis. After two days of study, the committee reported that a trial was not necessary.⁷⁰

The conference heard a report on the condition of Emory, including that enrollment had reached a record 307 and construction of the new library building was nearing completion.

⁶⁸ *The Emory Phoenix*, Nov. 1897, p. 50.

⁶⁹ *Atlanta Constitution*, “Ministers are Still at Work, North Georgia Conference Has a Busy Day in Athens.” Nov. 28, 1897, p. 2.

⁷⁰ *Atlanta Constitution*, “All the Accused Were Vindicated.” Nov. 30, 1897, p. 4.

Candler, “in Athens as he was, swept the decks in stating to the evident indorsement [*sic*] of the Conference the position of the church on the matter” of public funding of education. University of Georgia Chancellor William E. Boggs was introduced to the conference and brought words of good will with a welcome to Athens and his campus.⁷¹ A resolution to split the North Georgia Conference into two conferences was laid on the table in a very close vote. When appointments were read, Dickey was returned to Midway; Candler and Simmons to Oxford.⁷²

As the spring term of 1898 progressed, Professor Sledd organized a Latin Club for the boys. Their adopted motto was from Horace: “Qui miscuit utile dulci.” [who mixes the useful and agreeable]. Later in the term, Professor Sledd was called to Virginia, to the bedside of his mother, as she passed away.⁷³

The *Phoenix*, accepting that athletics was a “minor feature” at Emory, nonetheless noted that “she was the first college in the South to have a relay race; has developed basketball more than any other, and now comes forward with a pentathlon contest.”⁷⁴ Over the years, discussion of whether Emory should expand opportunities in athletic competition for its students would be a recurring issue.

A series of lectures underwritten by a gift of \$550 from Dr. W. F. Quillian was inaugurated by Bishop Charles B. Galloway, who chose as his topic “The Influence of Christianity on the American Commonwealth.” He delivered five lectures on Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday, Friday and Sunday nights, March 22-27, 1898, covering the influences of religion on civil government, the early colonists, the nation as a whole, and on American education. It had been intended that the lecture series not commence until the corpus reached

⁷¹ *The Emory Phoenix*, Dec. 1897, p. 98; *Atlanta Constitution*, previous citations from Nov. 28 and Nov. 30, 1897.

⁷² *Atlanta Constitution*, “Ministers Named by Conference,” Dec. 1, 1897, p. 4.

⁷³ *The Emory Phoenix*, Feb. 1898, p. 187; and April 1898, p. 290.

⁷⁴ *The Emory Phoenix*, Feb. 1898, p. 187.

\$3,000. But it began earlier than anticipated upon receipt of an additional gift from Marvin C. Quillian bringing the fund to \$1,000, and a gift of \$500 – his first recorded gift to Emory – by Asa G. Candler, President Candler’s brother who would become Emory’s great patron and chair of its board of trustees. Following the final presentation on Sunday, Dickey expressed the thanks of the campus community to Bishop Galloway, to whom the audience gave a standing ovation. The week was filled with additional lectures each day at noon in the chapel by E. E. Hoss, editor of the *Nashville Christian Advocate* and a future bishop, addressing young preachers, and each morning President Candler lectured the senior class on the epistles of Saint Paul. It seems that for all the lectures, one would hardly have had time to go to class and study, but the *Phoenix* said “Emory is to be congratulated” on these fine offerings for its students and community.⁷⁵

At the General Conference meeting in Baltimore in spring 1898 to which Candler led the North Georgia delegation, he clearly was a prime candidate to be elected as bishop, although he had disavowed interest at every turn, as was expected of those who would be candidates. Open pursuit of high office was considered unseemly among the clergy, but Candler’s election was no surprise. When his train from the General Conference arrived at the Oxford station, three hundred Emory students were there to welcome him. They unhitched the horses from his wagon and pulled it to Oxford themselves.⁷⁶

“To this topic we come with fear and trembling,” wrote the *Phoenix* in addressing the realization that Candler would depart and Emory would have a new president. “The wonderful love and personal supervision which he has exercised upon and over *us boys – his boys* – would make a story at which the angels would be delighted, and the hearts of men would gain fresh

⁷⁵ *Emory College Catalogue 1900*, p. 35; Bullock, *A History of Emory University*, p. 222-223; and *The Emory Phoenix*, April 1898, p. 291.

⁷⁶ Hauk, *A Legacy of Heart and Mind*, p. 51.

inspiration and new confidence in the capacity of man for good. Such a life makes us proud that we are of the race of men and sons of God.”

To succeed Candler, the trustees chose an 1873 alumnus, former faculty member and Dickey’s brother-in-law, Charles Dowman, who earlier had departed Emory for the Wesleyan faculty. At the time of his election to the presidency, Dowman was pastor of Saint Luke’s Methodist Church in Columbus, where he was in the process of building a new sanctuary. “Mother England has given us our new president,” wrote the *Phoenix* of the Kent-born Emory alumnus. “Old Emory proudly claims him as one of her most distinguished sons, having sent him forth with first honor.... [We] shall find it one of the chief sources of our delight to sit at his feet and learn and, as far as lies in the power of a set of college boys lend every aid and assistance to him in the direction of beloved Old Emory.”⁷⁷

Dickey entered upon the fall term of 1898 under a new president with a student body that had ballooned to 329, but teaching on the same schedule of classes. He was chair (indeed, he was the entire department) of Constitutional History and Political Economy. The course description in the *Catalogue* outlines “the purpose of this department, besides devoting special attention to the philosophy of history, is to inform the pupil concerning the origin, nature, development and ends of government; also to fully acquaint him with the governments of the United States, of England and the Continent.” The freshman year in this department was devoted to the study of general history, “so that the pupil may become acquainted with the origin and development of the country whose government he is to study.” The sophomore and junior years were devoted exclusively to the study of Constitutional history. And students in political economy discussed and studied principles of economics and national economic questions.⁷⁸

⁷⁷ *The Emory Phoenix*, June 1898, pp. 3, 6.

⁷⁸ *Emory College Catalogue 1898-1899*.

The following spring, as was customary, the senior class traveled to Atlanta to have its class portrait taken. It is not clear as to how many of his years on the faculty Dickey was chosen to accompany them on this trip, but it fell to him to accompany the class of 1899. Such an invitation usually implied that the professor was a favorite of the class – selection to accompany them was considered an honor. “In this case, that was emphatically true,” wrote Dempsey, “as this writer well knows, for he is a member of the class of 1899. From us he commanded romantic affection, for at this time, he was thirty-five years of age, handsome as a prince, with a deportment that was the poetry of good manners, and of a spirit rarely companionable and adaptable. It was with pride that we introduced him as our chosen sponsor upon this occasion.” The trip usually consisted of a day of sightseeing in Atlanta and a large banquet with speeches in the evening, often at a local hotel. In spring 1899, class member Asa G. “Buddie” Candler hosted the group, and “spread a sumptuous banquet in honor of his classmates and friends,” surely underwritten by his father, Emory trustee Asa Griggs Candler. “None enjoyed more than Professor Dickey this occasion and he particularly delighted in the hospitality of Mr. Candler’s home,” Dempsey reported.⁷⁹

The Dickeys welcomed into the world their fourth child and fourth daughter, Claire, on May 24, 1899.⁸⁰

When the North Georgia Annual Conference met in November 1898 at Augusta, Dickey gave up his pastoral appointment, being named only to the Emory College faculty. He was succeeded at Midway by E.A. Gray.⁸¹ Apparently struggling with being unable to carry the duties of both a pastor and a faculty member, he chose to devote the following school year to the

⁷⁹ *Atlanta Constitution*, “McKenzie Goes to Memphis,” March 31, 1899, p. 3; Dempsey, *Life of Bishop Dickey*, p. 88.

⁸⁰ Dickey family records held by the author. Claire Dickey would grow up to marry J. Frank Carreker, a traffic operations supervisor with Southern Bell, Georgia Tech graduate and deacon at Emory Baptist Church.

⁸¹ *Atlanta Constitution*, “Pulpits Filled by Conference,” Nov. 30, 1898, p. 2.

faculty side. But after a year's trial, the next year he reached the opposite conclusion, determining to leave the faculty and go into the pulpit fulltime. The reasoning for his decision is not directly stated. Perhaps the coming of his brother-in-law as college president influenced him. Perhaps the year spent on the faculty alone helped him realize that it was the pulpit he preferred if a choice was required. At several times over the years he had expressed his preference for the pulpit over the faculty. When the Emory fall term opened for 1899, he was listed on the faculty as "resigned" and teaching for the fall term only. Edgar H. Johnson was shown as professor-elect, with B. W. Arnold, Jr. as "acting alumni professor of history and political economy." Johnson, who was in the class of 1891 with Dickey, would spend the coming school term at the University of Chicago acquainting himself with the university methods of teaching history. He already had secured a "minor doctorate"⁸² in political economy at Johns Hopkins. Arnold, also of Johns Hopkins, was to fill the chair in the interim upon Dickey's departure at the end of fall semester and until Johnson returned the following fall. When the North Georgia Annual Conference met in the newly constructed sanctuary at LaGrange First Methodist Church in December 1899, Dickey was appointed as pastor of Grace Methodist Church in Atlanta. It would mark the first time since 1887 that he would not be directly associated with Emory College as a student or faculty member.⁸³

Dickey spent part of the fall campaigning for the "Twentieth Century Fund," an effort by Southern Methodists to raise funds to support the denomination's colleges. With Bishop Candler, who also by then was president of the Emory Board of Trustees, and Emory President

⁸² "Minor doctorate" is how some schools, particularly in Europe, referred to a doctor of philosophy degree; a "major doctorate" would be one in science or medicine.

⁸³ *Emory College Catalogue 1899-1900*; *Atlanta Constitution*, "Atlanta Gets Next Conference of the North Georgia Methodists," Dec. 5, 1899, p. 3; "Sketch of Rev. J. E. Dickey," Dec. 24, 1899, p. 3.

Dowman, Dickey and Professor Stiles Bradley traveled the state raising money. On September 18, the four were in four respective pulpits in Augusta as part of the campaign.⁸⁴

Emory began the fall of 1899 as it had most of the other falls during which Dickey had been associated with it – with full ranks of students participating in entrance exams, fraternity activities, and chapel services. The new Candler Hall, a handsome stone building to house the new library, graced the southeast corner of the campus. Dickey was not the only faculty member to have departed. Professor Charles C. Jarrell left the chair of mental and moral science to enter theology school at Vanderbilt. He was succeeded by R. Douglass Ragin, Emory’s first honor graduate of the class of 1899. In addition, just as school was opening in September, Professor W. A. Trantz, chair of English language and literature, unexpectedly died.⁸⁵

At the annual conference in LaGrange, the one at which Dickey was appointed pastor at Grace Church, that last meeting of the 19th Century still grappled with remnants of the great war that so dominated the century. The conference endorsed the claim of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, against the United States government for damages inflicted on church property during the Civil War. Through its action, the North Georgia Conference agreed that the claim was “just and equitable,” but that the means which church agents used to procure favorable action by the U.S. Senate were not. “The same were wholly unwarranted by any rule of right and should be emphatically repudiated by the next general conference and such other action taken by the same as will free the church from all suspicion of any complicity in the wrongful acts of said agent,” said a conference resolution. The conference further took action to “heartily commend” the action of its representative on the book committee, W. P. Lovejoy, for withdrawing from that committee in protest of their endorsement of the actions of the church

⁸⁴ *Atlanta Constitution*, “Twentieth Century Fund,” Sept. 18, 1899, p. 3.

⁸⁵ *Atlanta Constitution*, “Emory Starts Off With Full Ranks,” Sept. 21, 1899, p. 3.

agents in this matter. Apparently determining they had not worded the resolution strongly enough, the next day they changed it to “heartily indorse” the action of Dr. Lovejoy.⁸⁶

In December 1899, Dickey dove into the active life of an Atlanta pastor. Grace Church, a newer congregation in a growing northeastern part of the city, already was considered one of Atlanta’s leading churches. “He has filled his pulpit two Sundays and has captured the congregation by his eloquent, scholarly and spiritual discourse. Few pulpit speakers have been received with as much enthusiasm,” reported the *Atlanta Constitution* on Christmas Eve, 1899. The Grace Sunday School performed a grand Christmas Eve service entitled “Bethlehem Chimes,” complete with choir and full orchestra, composed of members of the Fifth Regiment Band.⁸⁷

That same edition of the *Constitution* carried a “Sketch of Rev. J. E. Dickey, who resigned from faculty of Emory College and comes to Grace Church, Atlanta, as its pastor.” It was an extensive biography, detailing Dickey’s student years at Oxford, his appointment to the faculty upon graduation, and his marriage to Jessie Munroe, sister-in-law of President Charles Dowman. The newspaper related, “While in college he was set upon becoming a lawyer, having as his idea that the sublimest thing on earth, the acme of human joy, would be to stand before the tribunal of justice and plead the cause of humanity.” The article noted that “it was in his college days that were seen the first intimations of that wonderful power of speech with which he today thrills his audiences.”

The story remembered his days in the halls of the Emory debating societies, where “he showed forth in all the might of his eloquence, and on many a forensic battle field towered in his supremacy above his opponents. So unusual and magnificent were his powers that in his

⁸⁶ *Atlanta Constitution*, “Atlanta Gets Next Conference of North Georgia Methodists,” Dec. 5, 1899, p. 3.

⁸⁷ *Atlanta Constitution*, “In the Realm of Religion,” Dec. 24, 1899, p. 14.

sophomore year he was elected on the champion debate at commencement, an event happening but once since in college history.” The newspaper biography continued, “But when the summons came to him to enter upon the work of saving the souls of men by their regeneration, rather than their bodies by their defense, he threw himself fully into his calling with a zeal unquenchable.”

The *Constitution* feature story noted and praised Dickey’s work at Midway Church, and his work raising money for the College Loan Fund, “absolutely refusing any compensation for his services in this department, and much of his time during the vacation months has been spent in this cause.” Further, the article continued, “he is a man of commanding appearance and magnetic bearing, and has already proved his power in the pulpit. Oxford and Emory regret to give him and his family up.”⁸⁸

The *Phoenix* early in 1900 noted that “Since the holidays our students have missed a familiar face from the Chapel, and an inspiring voice from Language Hall.... Probably no one teacher had so completely woven himself into the fiber of Emory’s life as Prof. Jas. E. Dickey. His presence in the classroom and his voice in the shaping of college affairs were always uplifting and inspiring.” And the student newspaper continued, “Not only as an instructor in the institution, but also as a leader in placing the needs and advantages of Emory before the public, he was the most powerful. Being an alumnus of our college, the regret for his resignation was increased all the more.... It is needless to say that here he has already begun his ministerial work with the same zeal and success which has characterized his work at Emory. The best wishes of all for an abundant success follow him to his new field of labor.”⁸⁹

⁸⁸ *Atlanta Constitution*, “Sketch of Rev. J. E. Dickey,” Dec. 24, 1899, p. 3.

⁸⁹ *The Emory Phoenix*, quoted in Dempsey, *Life of Bishop Dickey*, pp. 91-92.

Dickey's schedule serving one of Atlanta's largest churches required not only ministry but also civic involvement. The *Atlanta Constitution* of the day is replete with mentions of his public appearances. Realizing that only a fraction of his many meetings, speeches and other appearances would be memorialized in newspaper mentions, one concludes that he kept a packed schedule.

As first priority, he preached two services every Sunday at Grace Church – morning and evening. To that, add events such as the “Week of Prayer” program at the Atlanta Y.M.C.A. the week of January 7, 1900, at which Dickey delivered the Thursday address on the subject of “families and schools.” His message was “that the sacredness and vital importance of the family may be universally recognized.”⁹⁰

As pastor of one of Atlanta's most prominent churches, he also found himself increasingly in demand for weddings and funerals, often of notable personages. The second week of January, 1900, for example, Dickey and General C. A. Evans presided at the funeral of Captain John N. Murphey of Columbus at the graveside in Oakland Cemetery. The body of the former Confederate military officer was met at the train station by Georgia's governor, chief justice and attorney general among many other dignitaries, for a distinguished funeral cortege to Oakland.⁹¹

Civic involvement also was an important part of being an Atlanta pastor. Following a big rally at Second Baptist Church on the first Sunday in February, all the major churches of Atlanta held special services that evening marking the anniversary observance of the local Y.M.C.A. Dickey's presiding over such a service at Grace was noted by the *Constitution*.⁹²

⁹⁰ *Atlanta Constitution*, “Week of Prayer Programme,” Jan. 7, 1900, p. 16.

⁹¹ *Atlanta Constitution*, “Capt. Murphey Laid to Rest,” Jan. 18, 1900, p. 3.

⁹² *Atlanta Constitution*, “Y.M.C.A. Will Hold Special Meetings,” Feb. 3, 1900, p. 12.

At the graduation ceremony of Atlanta's Boys' High School that spring, Dickey's part on the program started with the invocation. The ceremony may have reminded him of the many such programs in which he participated at Oxford, as the graduates staged a full-blown mock trial complete with judge, prisoner, victim, attorneys, court clerks, a sheriff, bailiff, policemen, six witnesses for each side and a jury of twelve. The trial itself was interspersed with two musical selections, and following the jury's verdict came the valedictory address and delivery of diplomas before Dickey could bring the benediction.⁹³

The Methodist churches of Atlanta hosted the Southern Epworth League convention that July. The organization was the Methodist youth fellowship of that day, and some five thousand young delegates descended upon the city. Welcomes were to be extended to them by Governor Allen D. Candler on behalf of the state, Atlanta City Councilman James L. Mayson on behalf of the city, and Dickey on behalf of the churches of Atlanta. Governor Candler, however, was ill and unable to attend, so his place was taken by Bishop Warren A. Candler, who reminded the young people of Methodism's place in Georgia history, and the fact that one in four Georgians was Methodist. The *Constitution* termed Dickey's welcome a "finished and greatly appreciated" address "on behalf of the ten thousand Methodists in Atlanta." He noted that the others on the program had made welcomes as "representatives of Caesar," but that he brought welcome on behalf of "the kingdom not of this earth," which the Epworth League stood for. Bishop Candler delivered the keynote address on the subject, "Methodism and Education." Among other noted speakers were the Governor-elect of Alabama W. J. Samford, and General John B. Gordon, who spoke on "The Last Days of the Confederacy."⁹⁴ The schedule of such events was full and

⁹³ *Atlanta Constitution*, "High School Boys to Get Diplomas," June 1, 1900, p. 5.

⁹⁴ *Atlanta Constitution*, "Epworth Leaguers Meet Here for Conference Next Wednesday," July 22, 1900, p. 7; "Epworth Leaguers Open Their Conference; Eloquent Addresses of Welcome Delivered," July 26, 1900, p. 7.

varied. There was a weekly meeting of Methodist ministers of the city to attend, as well. At one such meeting, Dickey led the program on the topic, “How Best to Unite the Denominations of the City in Christian Work.”⁹⁵

No one’s record can stand forever, and at Oxford’s commencement in spring 1900, Oscar L. Wozencraft, the leader of the Few Literary Society Champion Debate team, was labeled by the *Constitution* as “the best debater Emory has ever had.” The report noted that it was Wozencraft’s second year to be in the debate, his first being as a sophomore – “quite a distinction..., being the only man, except Rev. James E. Dickey, who has ever received this honor in his sophomore year.” Dickey was listed among alumni present for commencement activities, and at the June meeting of the board of trustees in conjunction with commencement, was elected to a three-year term as the alumni representative on the board.⁹⁶

At Grace Church, Dickey returned to his church-building ways. Many members had discussed informally among themselves the need for an expanded structure to serve the growing congregation, but few suspected immediate action might be at hand when about fifty members of the 700-member congregation received personal invitations from Dickey to meet at his house on a Monday night in August, 1900. “Light refreshments were served and no intimation of anything of a business nature was given until later in the evening, when Mr. Dickey asked that his guests accompany him to the church, which is next door to the parsonage,” the *Constitution* reported. Once the entourage arrived at the church, Dickey outlined the congregation’s growing needs, stated that the time was ripe for action, and that he had found he could secure a lot at the corner of Boulevard and Houston Streets for the purpose of a new church sanctuary. The group

⁹⁵ *Atlanta Constitution*, “Funeral of Miss Julia Hill,” Oct. 8, 1900, p. 7; “Methodist Ministers Meet,” Oct. 9, 1900, p. 7.

⁹⁶ *Atlanta Constitution*, “Three Speakers in the Emory Champion Debate,” June 12, 1900, p. 3; “Is a Great Week at Emory College,” June 12, 1900, p. 3; *Emory College Catalogue 1900-1901*, p. 6.

determined by acclamation to accept the proposal and to raise the money not only to secure the lot, but to build a \$25,000 church on it. The *Constitution*'s report noted that Dickey "has had charge of the church only since last December. In that short time his splendid leadership and excellent executive ability have been largely responsible for the rapid growth. It will be principally due to his enthusiasm that the new building will be built."⁹⁷

The next month, Dickey was invited to the New York City borough of Brooklyn to speak. The *Constitution* carried an extensive report reprinted from the *Brooklyn Eagle* regarding Dickey's appearance there. The joint congregations of the Clinton Avenue Congregational Church and the LaFayette Avenue Presbyterian Church heard Dickey preach to "exceedingly large" crowds at two services during the day. The New York newspaper described Dickey as the "Henry Ward Beecher of the South...., a man of about forty years, tall and graceful, with a smooth face and looking more like a poet than a preacher, and with features bearing the stamp of intellectuality. That he was a born and bred southerner he gave evidence of by his manner, and he had the softness of dialect which lent a charm to his diction.... He copies no one in his style, and his memory for apt quotations, poetical and otherwise, is one of the greatest charms of his sermons." The reporter found illustrations drawn from Dickey's personal experiences to be "intensely interesting."

Though each sermon was an hour long and the heat was intense, "when he concluded, he was apparently as fresh as when he began." Noting that Dickey "looked somewhat like Mr. [William Jennings] Bryan, the candidate for the presidency," the report continued that he spoke without manuscript or notes on the subject from Isaiah, "Eat yet that which is good, and let your soul delight itself in fatness." He spoke of war in Europe in 1648, a war between the sections

⁹⁷ *Atlanta Constitution*, "Methodists Will Build New Church. Grace Church to Have a \$25,000 Building." Aug. 8, 1900, p. 5.

that cemented a great commonwealth and allowed all to worship as they saw fit. Likewise, the American war between the sections was fought “to clear the sky and make brothers in truth of all.” Mankind has a longing to be satisfied, Dickey continued, but money cannot satisfy him. Only what God gives can satisfy. We need to look for books and sculpture and painting that lift up, not those that lower, he said. “God pity the people who prefer the Apollo Belvedere or the Venus de Medici to the statue or picture of some grand old saint.”⁹⁸

The appearance made such an impression on the Congregationalists that they called Dickey to be their pastor, an offer which he declined. “In the case of many a rising minister, this would have been an irresistible temptation,” Dempsey reported, “and would likely have proved for the one accepting, the truth of the cynical saying of nearby New York City, that, it would have proved the ‘grave of his small-town reputation.’ But those who knew the penetrating judgment and solid Christian purpose of J. E. Dickey expected nothing else than a polite but positive negative to this flattering proposition.”⁹⁹

When the North Georgia Conference convened in Atlanta in November 1900, a key topic for consideration was whether applicants to enter the ministry of the Methodist Episcopal Church should be required to have a higher education. Two applicants, after being passed by the examination committee, were rejected by the admissions committee for having an insufficient education. Debate ensued on the floor of the conference, the chair of the examination committee arguing that the action had the effect of setting the precedent of requiring a collegiate education for someone to be admitted to the ministry. The action of the admissions committee was upheld, and the precedent was set.

⁹⁸*Atlanta Constitution*, “Brooklyn Hears Mr. Dickey,” Sept. 2, 1900, p. A-7

⁹⁹Dempsey, *Life of Bishop Dickey*, pp. 95-96.

Dickey was mentioned prominently in newspaper coverage of the same conference as being a candidate to be transferred to Atlanta First Church, succeeding Rev. Walker Lewis. But in the end, he was reappointed for a second year at Grace.¹⁰⁰

He remained in demand as a speaker, preaching the annual missionary sermon as part of commencement week at Wesleyan College in May 1901, and was among several preachers who delivered sermons during the commencement the following week at Young Harris College, preaching “with marked force and with great usefulness.”¹⁰¹ The week after that, he was at commencement at Emory College, attending the annual meeting of the board of trustees in the new Candler Hall, where it was noted that enrollment for the fall would be down to 259, a considerable drop over the past two years.¹⁰² And in mid-June, he delivered the commencement sermon at Gordon Institute in Barnesville.¹⁰³

Dickey’s concern grew during this period over a decline in the number of candidates entering the Methodist ministry – a number insufficient to replace those reaching retirement age. In a May 1901 article in the *Wesleyan Christian Advocate* on the topic, “Has the Number of the Methodist Ministry Diminished? If so, Why, and What Is the Remedy?”, Dickey listed the gains and losses of each year from 1893 to 1899. In his typical ledger style he reached a bottom line that 1,406 preachers had left the general church while 1,006 had joined it, making a loss of 400. He blamed part of the decrease on an 1895 change in the rules, removing authority to grant license to preach from the quarterly conference of the local church to the district conference. He noted that the numbers increased through 1894, and began a decrease in 1895. Dickey’s

¹⁰⁰ *Atlanta Constitution*, “Conference Demands Higher Education Among Applicants for the Ministry,” Nov. 23, 1900, p. 5.

¹⁰¹ *Atlanta Constitution*, “Commencement at Wesleyan,” May 27, 1901, p. 2; “Young L.G. Harris College,” June 2, 1901, p. 6.

¹⁰² *Emory College Board of Trustees Minutes*, June 7, 1901; *Emory College Catalogue 1901-1902*.

¹⁰³ *Atlanta Constitution*, “Gordon Institute Closing,” June 19, 1901, p. 2.

emphasis was not that this authority had been moved from the local to the district level, but that the number of opportunities for a young man to enter the ministry each year had been reduced from four meetings to one, and that one – the district conference – was often difficult for a college student to attend. “The home conference convenes while they are at college and the college conference convenes while they are at home,” he wrote.

Dickey further concluded that tightening of educational standards and the method of examination for new preachers had contributed to the decline in numbers. “I heartily approve a proper educational qualification on the part of the applicant, but a great mistake can be made in the matter of examination. It is not wise to appoint teachers on committees of examination, unless they are men of unusually good sense, for often they will expect technical knowledge, where only general information should be required. The tendency is an increasing standard.” Beyond such numerical and procedural factors, Dickey blamed, as his third point, “the secular spirit in the church and the consequent loss of spiritual power.... Many persons have impulses toward the Christian life, who never follow the Master.” The answer, he asserted, was more emphasis on revival.

The church needed to take specific steps to correct the decline in the numbers of new ministers, he wrote. “As remedial for the threatening peril, I would advocate: 1. A thorough revival of religion among our people. 2. A return to the law, authorizing the quarterly conference to license preachers, but not to lower the standard of education required. 3. A judicious, but not technical examination for applicants.”¹⁰⁴

The importance of the Epworth League in training the church’s young people drew Dickey’s attention in a similarly passionate column in the *Advocate* of August 14, 1901. He noted that colleges that once emphasized spiritual training of youth now were specializing into

¹⁰⁴ *Wesleyan Christian Advocate*, May 8, 1901; and Dempsey, *Life of Bishop Dickey*, pp. 97-102.

fields of agriculture, technology, literary, philosophical, scientific and aesthetic training. Their catalogues “find their way into myriad homes, inviting the youth of our land to their portals.” While rejoicing in the advantages such an education might afford, Dickey asserted that it made spiritual training in the church, particularly that afforded through the Epworth League, all the more important. “Let us not imagine that our League was organized to train our young people to talk, literary societies were far better suited for that, but to train them in all godliness, and then if the heart prompts, let the mouth speak.... When the love of Christ constrains, fear of men should never restrain.”¹⁰⁵

From the pulpit at Grace, one of Dickey’s favorite sermon topics remained the value of Christian education. He urged his people first to educate their children, and where possible, to do so by sending them to the Methodist colleges. At the opening of the fall term of 1901, twelve young men and women from his congregation were enrolled in either Emory or Wesleyan. “What if all of our pastors had wrought as faithfully in our charges?” editorialized the *Wesleyan Christian Advocate*. “Our colleges would all be crowded more than they are, and our people would be compelled to provide better equipment for them.”¹⁰⁶

On September 6, 1901, President of the United States William McKinley was shot by a deranged anarchist while standing in a receiving line at the Buffalo Pan-American Exposition. He died on Saturday, September 14, and many churches held memorial services and heard memorial sermons the next day. On Tuesday, September 17, the denominations of Atlanta united to hold a joint memorial service at Trinity Methodist Church near the State Capitol building. Rev. R. J. Bigham presided, and Dickey’s role was to read the scripture lesson.

¹⁰⁵ *Wesleyan Christian Advocate*, Aug. 14, 1901, cited in Dempsey, *Life of Bishop Dickey*, pp. 103-105.

¹⁰⁶ *Wesleyan Christian Advocate*, cited in Dempsey, pp. 93-94.

Dickey made a bit of Atlanta history on November 4 when, as the *Atlanta Constitution* reported, “for the first time perhaps in the history of [Atlanta city] council the meeting of that body was opened with prayer.” Having Alderman Kilpatrick, and Councilmen Terry and Garrett as members at Grace Church, Dickey was invited to give the inaugural prayer after the council adopted a resolution two weeks earlier establishing the practice. Different ministers of the city were to be invited to subsequent meetings to offer prayer at the opening of each session. “Dr. Dickey’s prayer was an eloquent and earnest invocation, in which he asked the blessing of the Almighty on the members of council,” the *Constitution* reported.¹⁰⁷

The North Georgia Annual Conference held its 1901 meeting at Rome, and Dickey was reappointed for a third year at Grace Methodist Church. Rev. H. S. Bradley, vice president of Emory College, resigned that post to accept appointment as pastor of Trinity Church in downtown Atlanta. Dr. Alonzo Monk, of Knoxville, Tennessee, was appointed to the Merritts Avenue church with the charge to establish a large, new Methodist church to be known as the Peachtree Road church.¹⁰⁸

Emory’s President Charles Dowman addressed the conference, saying the school had a “crying need” for a new science hall. He reported that Captain J. P. Williams, an Emory trustee from Savannah, had offered \$15,000 toward the project on the condition that his gift was matched. Gifts of \$7,000 toward that match had been secured to date. As the *Constitution* reported, Bishop Galloway “arose and electrified the assembly with one of his eloquent appeals,” and in half an hour the conference had pledged to raise another \$5,000. Dr. Dowman responded that he “had no fear now” that the new science hall would be built.¹⁰⁹

¹⁰⁷ *Atlanta Constitution*, “Councilmen Hear Prayer at Opening of Session,” Nov. 5, 1901, p. 8.

¹⁰⁸ *Atlanta Constitution*, “New Ministers Will Come Here,” Nov. 26, 1901, p. 1.

¹⁰⁹ *Atlanta Constitution*, “Pastors Are Told Tasks of New Year,” Nov. 26, 1901, p. 1.

At their regular meeting the following week, the city's Methodist ministers elected R. J. Bigham president and Dickey as secretary for the new year. In Bigham's absence, Dickey presided over a meeting of devotional exercise and farewell messages and best wishes for pastors who had been assigned to charges elsewhere. Little did either know that, due to intervening events, they would not get to serve out those terms.¹¹⁰

In fact, the first half of the year 1902 was replete with interesting, but routine, matters in the life of an Atlanta church pastor. The portraits of "six famous Georgians" were unveiled in February to much ceremony at Boys High School. The large assembly hall at the school "was crowded to its utmost capacity" as speakers addressed the lives of each of the honorees: Warren A. Candler, Crawford W. Long, T. R. R. Cobb, Walter B. Hill, G. Gunby Jordan, and Jesse Mercer. Dickey, of course, was the designee to give the speech on Candler, and a student gave an address on each of the honorees, as well. The addition of the six portraits brought to 23 the number of such Georgians honored in the gallery at Boys High.¹¹¹

Cornerstone-laying ceremonies for the new Westminster Presbyterian Church at the corner of Forrest Avenue and the Boulevard were held on March 3, 1902. Dickey and Rev. J. J. Bennett represented other denominations as guests, joining in the program with the Presbyterian Ministers Association of Atlanta. The cornerstone, of marble quarried at Tate, Georgia, was inscribed, "Christ Himself being the chief corner stone." Among a program of hymns, scripture reading and historical narrative, Dickey was invited to deliver a prayer.¹¹²

Later that month, Dickey joined in revival services being conducted at Atlanta's First Methodist Church. "Much interest is manifested in the revival," and "large congregations are

¹¹⁰ *Atlanta Constitution*, "Short Items of General Interest," Dec. 10, 1901, p. 3.

¹¹¹ *Atlanta Constitution*, "Portraits Unveiled, Eloquent Addresses Heard at Boys High," Feb. 1, 1902, p. 5.

¹¹² *Atlanta Constitution*, "Corner Stone to be Laid Today," March 3, 1902, p. 8; "Corner Stone Exercises," March 4, 1902, p. 8.

attending the different services,” the *Constitution* reported. The pastor, C. W. Byrd, invited other area ministers to bring messages, including J. P. McFerrin of Birmingham, who preached the evening service on March 18, after Dickey preached at the morning service that day. A 3:30 p.m. service was conducted daily especially for mothers and children.¹¹³

On April 24, three boards of the North Georgia Conference met at Trinity Church, including the board of missions, of which Dickey was president. Bishop Candler attended the meeting and called for the conference to send a missionary to Cuba. On behalf of his district, the Atlanta District superintendent R. J. Bigham pledged the \$300 necessary on the spot.¹¹⁴

Dickey had the pleasure the next month of performing the wedding of his wife’s niece, Claire Dowman, to James Park Hanner, Jr. of Franklin, Tennessee, who had occupied the chair of modern languages at Emory College since the previous September. The ceremony took place in the home of the bride’s parents, the President’s Home at Emory College. “A brilliant assemblage of people from all over the state, with the entire senior class at Emory College, witnessed the ceremony...,” reported the wedding notice in the *Constitution*. “She is a notably beautiful young woman. She has visited throughout the state and wherever she has gone she has made hosts of friends.” The groom “has already won his way to the hearts of the entire student body.” The couple was to live in the President’s Home with her parents.¹¹⁵

Later in May, Dickey preached the commencement sermon at the Piedmont Institute in Rockmart. The school, in its twelfth year of operating a grammar school and high school, held three days of commencement exercises, complete with a champion debate.¹¹⁶

¹¹³ *Atlanta Constitution*, “Short Items Concerning Men and Public Affairs,” March 19, 1902, p. 6.

¹¹⁴ *Atlanta Constitution*, “Methodists Hold Meetings,” April 24, 1902, p. 8.

¹¹⁵ *Atlanta Constitution*, “A Unique Occasion,” May 2, 1902, p. 9.

¹¹⁶ *Atlanta Constitution*, “Piedmont Institute Closes,” May 25, 1902, p. 6.

During the meeting of the 1902 General Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, at Dallas on the last day of May, the Atlanta District presiding elder, R. J. Bigham, was appointed to the position of senior agent of the Methodist Publishing House at Nashville. Significantly, the move created a mid-year vacancy in one of the key positions of North Georgia Methodism. Dickey served on a three-man committee to draft a resolution marking Bigham's departure. "Whereas," they wrote, "by this action we lose one of the most efficient and capable workers in the organization and development of our work, much to the sorrow and regret of each and all of his coworkers in the Atlanta District, nevertheless we appreciate the fact that at this time more than any other the responsibilities of the business management of the publishing house calls for a man of sterling qualities, high executive ability, clear business insight, and knowledge of business methods and requirements of the day...." Their loss was the greater church's gain, the resolution said. His fellow ministers were honored that one of their own had achieved this high appointment, and they all pledged their support in Bigham's new endeavor.¹¹⁷

Bigham's departure left a gaping hole at the top of the appointment list in the conference, which Candler and his fellow bishops would have to fill. A mid-year shift in appointments, particularly at so elevated a position in the conference hierarchy, could start a domino effect through the conference as a series of promotions and new appointments to fill the resulting series of vacancies was made necessary, occurring at a time other than that reserved for general appointment-making.

The Emory College trustees, many of whom would be involved in the discussions precipitated by the Bigham appointment, came to their regular annual meeting at Oxford the following week. In his annual report, President Dowman noted that the year just closed was "pleasant and in many respects satisfactory," though enrollment "has not been so large as we

¹¹⁷ *Atlanta Constitution*, "His Departure Regretted," May 31, 1902, p. 12.

could wish.” Smaller enrollment meant “the financial condition is not so good as is to be desired, but nearly up to last year.”

Dowman noted that the health of the students had been good through the year, except for one case of scarlet fever which resulted in the death of William Watson Knox of the sophomore class, “one of our best and most popular students.” Dowman expressed thankfulness that prompt action to isolate the case had avoided its spread to others. While smallpox had been in neighboring towns, including Covington, no cases were reported in Oxford.

“With rare exceptions, the order and deportment of the students have been remarkably good,” Dowman reported, with the major exception being the case of Dozier Alderman, a sub-freshman “who attempted to shoot his teacher when about to administer punishment.” Dowman was away at General Conference when the incident occurred, but the faculty took prompt action to expel Alderman, and his case soon was to go before the Newton County grand jury. “This instance illustrates the theory I have held for some time, that the kind of discipline required for a training school is different from that needed in a college, and that the two systems cannot be successfully operated in the same organization,” Dowman said.

The president reported the college had experienced a spirit of revival during the year, and several young men had “experienced the call of God to the gospel ministry, and some have offered themselves for missionary service.” Professor H. S. Bradley resigned the professorship of biology in order to enter the pastorate “for which he was so admirably fitted....” Dowman concluded, “[It] illustrates the fact that with our limited resources and meager salaries, we cannot hold our most efficient men except at the cost of personal sacrifice.”

Dowman reported that the debt on Candler Hall had been reduced to \$900 and the endowment on the Quillian Lectureship had been increased to more than \$2,500. “Our generous

friend who proposed to pay the last \$1,000 on these demands still stands ready to carry out his promise,” wrote Dowman, who admitted that other pressing business had kept him from concluding the proposition. Part of that pressing work apparently included fundraising and planning for the new science building, which would be named Pierce Science Hall in honor of Lovick Pierce and George Foster Pierce, who devoted their lives to Methodism and Emory College. Cornerstone-laying ceremonies were scheduled as part of the present commencement. Dowman noted that additional faculty would be required with completion of the new building, as well as renovation of the vacated science department space.

Dowman further reported that the Helping Halls had been renovated in the past year by borrowing from the endowment fund. He noted that management of those halls had been “unsatisfactory for several years and all but one of the halls have broken down this session” as they were unable to compete with cheap boarding houses off campus. He suggested the solution was to enter the dormitory and dining hall business. On other campuses, dormitories and dining halls were successfully offering cheaper and more satisfactory arrangements for the students. The trustees viewed the proposal favorably and took it under study.

The student body had raised \$300 to purchase two acres at the southeast corner of the campus, and a “public-spirited townsman” had contributed an adjacent one-fourth acre, to be graded for an athletic field. “The students expect that the Trustees will set apart this property for the purpose for which it was purchased,” Dowman reported.

The trustees’ busy agenda also included approving an honorary Doctor of Literature degree for Georgia author Joel Chandler Harris, considering new courses of study, and approving a faculty recommendation that the law department be discontinued, “as it is thought that the institution should confine itself strictly to college work.” The law chair was a favored project of

Bishop Candler, and the chair itself was occupied by his brother, John S. Candler. The faculty proposal to discontinue the teaching of law was authored by Professor Andrew Sledd, Candler's son-in-law, who some years later wrote that the institution "maintained a fake law school whose total faculty consisted of one incompetent and inconspicuous so-called judge.... After four years I succeeded in getting a motion through the faculty to request the trustees do away with this discreditable sham."¹¹⁸

That the modernist Sledd was able to get such a resolution through both the traditionalist Emory faculty and its board of trustees is remarkable. Apparently his criticisms, as strident as they may have been, struck a chord with those who realized that modernization of the curriculum was important and inevitable if Emory was to be considered prominently among academic institutions. After a substitute motion was defeated 9 to 12 that would have delayed consideration for a year while study was made on whether to move the law department to Atlanta, the original motion was adopted to be effective at the end of the coming academic year. The action did not hold through implementation, however. The law school would be re-established during Dickey's coming presidency.¹¹⁹

Likewise, Sledd that spring propounded another matter of principle, blocking a faculty vote to grant an honorary doctor of divinity degree to Dickey. Such a degree may have been proposed by Candler as he prepared for the succession of the college presidency, but the actual motion to grant it was made in the faculty by President Dowman. Noting that Dowman and Dickey had married sisters, Sledd reported that "discussion of the question was attended with natural embarrassment, but I felt something needed to be said." Asking on what basis the degree was proposed, Sledd allowed that "If it is on the basis of scholarship, Mr. Dickey does not

¹¹⁸ Sledd autobiography, p. 71.

¹¹⁹ *Emory College Board of Trustees Minutes*, June 6, 7, 9 and 10, 1902.

deserve it. We know that he is not a scholar; if on the basis of distinguished achievement, we might fairly ask what he has done. For my part, I believe that the degree and all other degrees should be represented by distinct and intellectual attainments along certain lines, and I do not feel, with all due respect to yourself, that Mr. Dickey deserves this honor.” After further pro and con discussion, the matter was dropped without a faculty vote, so that no degree was granted. Dickey later received an honorary doctor of divinity degree from Kentucky Wesleyan College, granted by that institution’s board of trustees meeting on May 27, 1903.¹²⁰

And in an action that may have surprised some, the trustees approved a resolution from the faculty, authored again by the activist Sledd, that permission be given for Emory “to enter into annual field-day contests with the other institutions of the state,” a move that Candler would decry at several points over subsequent years. The debate was apparently considerable, and the vote was 14 to 8, with Dickey and Asa Candler among those on the negative side. It was an early foray into intercollegiate athletics from which Emory would famously shy in the future. In all these matters from the conduct and quality of classes to the granting of honorary degrees to questions of intercollegiate athletics, Sledd later opined that Emory College was “by no means unique, but rather typical of situations which prevailed and still prevail in the majority of our colleges, both denominational and otherwise in the Southern states. I think in some particulars Emory College was, and is worse than others, in other parts it certainly was better.”¹²¹

At the trustees meeting, Dowman further reported on behalf of a committee which he chaired, including Dickey and three other trustees, which recommended the system of naming four honor graduates in the senior class be discontinued in favor of recognizing graduates as

¹²⁰ Sledd autobiography, pp. 69-70; Matthews, “The Voice of a Prophet...;” Reed, “Emory College and the Sledd Affair...,” p. 484; *Atlanta Constitution*, “President Dickey Honored,” May 28, 1903, p. 2.

¹²¹ *Emory College Board of Trustees Minutes*, meetings of June 6, 7, 9, and 10, 1902; Sledd autobiography, pp. 66-67 and 71-72.

“summa cum laude” with a grade of 9.8 or above, “magna cum laude” from 9.5 to 9.8, and “cum laude” from 9.0 to 9.5. He also recommended that commencement be shortened by a day to four days, by combining the Freshman and Sophomore Days into one.

Dickey, as chair of the committee on revision of statutes, presented proposed changes regarding how a special meeting of the board might be called (“at any time at any place in Georgia by its President” on seven days written notice by mail to each member of the board), and forfeiting trustee membership for any member who missed two consecutive annual meetings without written excuse, which must be passed upon by the board as “good and sufficient.”

Conferral of the honorary degree on Georgia author Joel Chandler Harris highlighted the commencement ceremony later that week. President Dowman said he was proud that Emory had so honored such an illustrious son of Georgia. Dickey, called upon to make the report of the trustees to the assembled crowd, highlighted the move to shorten future commencements by a day, consideration of the trustees to establish a dining hall, the election of professors, and the excellent condition of college finances. Commencement closed with the traditional baccalaureate address by the president and conferring of degrees. Dowman’s address was described as “the most masterly and eloquent ever heard in the historic halls of Emory.” He expressed his particular attachment to the senior class of 1902, which had entered as freshmen the year he became president.¹²²

During the summer, Bishop Warren Candler faced the need to fill the vacancy in the position of presiding elder of the Atlanta District, created by the earlier appointment of the current presiding elder, R. J. Bigham, to head the Methodist Publishing House. Candler apparently used the month of June 1902 to ponder his options, consult with fellow bishops and others in the conference, and perhaps to take the temperature of those who were potential

¹²² *Atlanta Constitution*, “Farewell Said to Alma Mater,” June 12, 1902, p. 4.

candidates. On June 29, news broke out of Oxford that Candler's choice to take the position was the Emory President Charles Dowman, and that the likely candidate to succeed him at Emory was his brother-in-law, James E. Dickey, the pastor of Atlanta's Grace Methodist Church.

Dickey told the *Constitution* for its June 29th edition that as a member of the Emory board of trustees he had not received notice of Dowman's resignation and that, as to his succeeding Dowman, "he had received no intimation to that effect. He stated that he loved the itinerancy better than school work, and that he had already refused the presidency which had been offered him of three other colleges. He did not state what he would do in the event Dowman did resign and he was elected to succeed him."¹²³

"Dr. Dowman has very acceptably filled the presidential chair of the college for the past four years," the *Constitution* reported, "succeeding Bishop Candler in 1898. He has done much toward the upbuilding of the college. He is loved and respected by every man of the student body and when they learn of his resignation it will doubtless be with great regret."¹²⁴

The next day, Dowman confirmed to the *Constitution* that he would tender his resignation "within a few days" to accept the appointment as Atlanta District presiding elder. Dowman said "he got the consent of his mind to leave the college and resume his ministerial duties only after an earnest appeal from Bishop Candler to take up the work of the Atlanta district. He stated that he was by no means tired of college work, though it had been extremely trying upon him physically, but he felt that this call to again take up the regular duties of a minister was a providential one, and that his heart, like that of all ministers, naturally turned to the work which was dearest to him."¹²⁵

¹²³ *Atlanta Constitution*, "Dowman Will Leave Emory. He Will Soon Become Presiding Elder of the Atlanta District. Rev. J. E. Dickey of Grace Church May Succeed Him," June 29, 1902, p. 7.

¹²⁴ *Ibid.*

¹²⁵ *Atlanta Constitution*, "Dr. C. E. Dowman is Appointed," June 30, 1902, p. 7.

Professor Andrew Sledd later would assert that Dowman “was forced out of office under guise.” Sledd believed Dowman’s “eminently profitable” administration was characterized by “unusual brilliancy, liberality and progress,” but that he was forced from office “by some in authority who could not sympathize with the liberality of his views and the progressiveness of his policy...”¹²⁶ Sledd’s comments, written in hindsight in a 1905 unpublished autobiography, appear to be aimed directly at his father-in-law, Bishop Candler, as well as the Emory trustees.

Indeed, Sledd’s allegation may be supported by the fact that Dowman’s letter of resignation was addressed to the board of trustees dated June 30, 1902 and written on letterhead of “James E. Dickey, Pastor of Grace M.E. Church, South, 332 Houston Street.” Perhaps Dickey and Dowman, brothers-in-law, were simply discussing the matter in Dickey’s office when Dowman reached the conclusion to depart. But more in keeping with Sledd’s assertion, perhaps Dickey and Dowman met jointly in Dickey’s office with Bishop Candler, at such time as Dowman determined to write his letter to resign. It was “to take effect as soon as my successor is elected and accepts the position.” Dowman wrote, “I shall ever value the confidence placed in me” by the calling to this office. “My love for the college led me to accept the position and my love and best services shall ever be given to the institution.”¹²⁷

J. P. Williams, president of the board of trustees, wrote a letter the same date to trustees secretary H. H. Stone calling for a special meeting of the board on July 8 at 11 a.m. “at such place as you may designate” for the purpose of acting on the resignation and providing for a successor in case the resignation is accepted.¹²⁸

¹²⁶ Sledd autobiography, p. 80.

¹²⁷ Letter, Dowman to the Board of Trustees of Emory College, June 30, 1902, James E. Dickey Collection, Manuscripts, Archives, and Rare Books Library, Emory University.

¹²⁸ J. P. Williams to H. H. Stone, June 30, 1902, James E. Dickey Collection, Manuscripts, Archives, and Rare Books Library, Emory University.

Although the *Constitution* had in its first report stated that Dickey was the most likely choice as successor, it filled the intervening days with speculation about other possible candidates, among them Rev. H. S. Bradley, pastor of Atlanta's Trinity Methodist Church; W. L. Weber, professor of English on the Emory faculty; DuPont Guerry, a University of Georgia graduate and noted prohibitionist from Macon, who stated he would not accept were the job to be offered; and Lawton B. Evans, superintendent of the public schools in Augusta. The latter two names were floated amid speculation the board would for the first time choose a layman rather than a member of the clergy to head the Methodist institution. Citing unnamed sources, the newspaper said, "They spoke of the fact that the tendencies of the times were toward the placing at the head of institutions of learning Christian laymen, men who had had experience in the affairs of the world and who possessed business qualifications. They spoke of the fact that the University of Georgia had at the present time its first layman chancellor, and the same is true of Mercer. Princeton university recently broke its record for ministers by electing Woodrow Wilson as president of that institution." The newspaper also speculated that Rev. Lundy Harris, pastor of the church at College Park and former professor of Greek at Emory, would be the likely successor to Dickey at Grace church. The newspaper even went so far as to report, "Several prominent members of the church in speaking of the matter yesterday gave it as their opinion the Rev. Mr. Dickey would not accept were he elected...." But by the morning set for the trustees to meet, the *Constitution* was through speculating, and reported "[I]t is practically certain that the Rev. James E. Dickey, pastor of Grace church, Atlanta, will be chosen president of the college, as was stated by The Constitution two weeks ago."¹²⁹

¹²⁹ *Atlanta Constitution*, "Guerry May Be President," July 4, 1902, p. 7; "As Successor to Dickey, Rev. Lundy Harris is Mentioned for Grace Church Pastor," July 6, 1902, p. 7; "Layman May Be President," July 8, 1902, p. 9.

The trustees assembled the morning of July 8, 1902 in the lecture room at Atlanta First Methodist Church, with vice president W. P. Patillo presiding in the absence of board president J. P. Williams. The board received Dowman's resignation and adopted a motion to accept. On motion to elect a professor of mental and moral science, which is tantamount to the election of the president, the vote was J. E. Dickey 18, J. W. Akin 3, and one each for R. J. Bigham, H. S. Bradley, C. Denny, and L. B. Evans. The next vote taken was to elect a president, and the vote was unanimous for Dickey. As a trustee, Dickey was present at the meeting and accepted in a speech, the contents of which were not recorded. The trustees also adopted a resolution honoring President Dowman, which was presented by a committee chaired by Asa G. Candler. It paid tribute to the "high character of his service" and noted that "we part with him with profound regret." He was wished "the greatest possible happiness and usefulness" in his new field. Bishop Candler moved that \$300 be allocated to assist President Dickey in moving his family to Oxford and to purchase furniture for the President's Home. The members present provided \$240 in personal funds to the cause.¹³⁰

The next day's *Constitution* did not have the details of the discussion and vote, recounting only the trustees' unanimous action. The report noted that "Mr. Dickey is a forceful and eloquent speaker. He is regarded as one of the strongest men in the southern Methodist church today and has been unusually successful in all his work up to this time. The election as president of Emory is considered the highest honor that can be bestowed by the Methodist church in Georgia. It has come to be considered a stepping stone to the episcopacy, as three of the most prominent bishops the southern Methodist church has ever had – Bishop George F. Pierce, Bishop A. G. Haygood and Bishop W. A. Candler – were at the head of the college before their election as bishops." The connection illustrates the ultimate expression of the

¹³⁰ *Emory College Board of Trustees Minutes*, July 8, 1902.

Wesleyan philosophy of merging knowledge with vital piety. The top position in one of the church's leading institutions of higher education was considered to be direct preparation for the top position in the church itself.

Dickey told the newspaper, "I shall, of course, give my utmost efforts to the work and shall do all in my power to promote the interests of the college. I am sure that in this work I shall have the sympathy and hearty cooperation of the alumni who have so often proved themselves loyal in the past and with their help I shall endeavor to carry on the work which has been so ably performed by my illustrious predecessors." The newspaper added, "It is understood that Mr. Dickey would have preferred to remain in the pastorate, but has accepted...as he believes that it is his duty to the college and to the school."¹³¹

Dickey came to the presidency "in the prime of life, only a little above thirty-eight years of age," noted the *Wesleyan Christian Advocate* in an editorial. "[He] has a fine, robust physique, is a cultured, strong and graceful speaker and preacher, and has had experience as an educator," the *Advocate* added. "Although he comes to the presidency of his alma mater within the shortest time after his graduation of any president ever called to the presidency of the college, it is safe to say, that no one has ever entered upon the administration of the college as its chief with a more thorough and detailed knowledge of every feature of the college work."¹³²

Dickey would remain as pastor at Grace until September 1, while simultaneously beginning his duties at Emory. He was to attend district conferences around the state on behalf of Emory, and when other business required his absence from the Grace pulpit, it would be filled by Bishop Candler and Atlanta's new presiding elder, Charles Dowman. "The members of Grace church regret exceedingly to give up Rev. Mr. Dickey and it was at their request that

¹³¹ *Atlanta Constitution*, "Dickey Put at Head of Emory, Atlanta Pastor is Elected President of the Methodist College," July 9, 1902, p. 7.

¹³² *Wesleyan Christian Advocate*, July 16, 1902, p. 1.

Bishop Candler deferred the appointment of his successor until Sept. 1,” the *Constitution* reported. “It may be that no appointment will be made of a successor until the annual conference in November.”¹³³

So Dickey embarked upon the presidency of his alma mater. His term would come to be longer than that served by any of his predecessors. But his would be a rocky start, and his prayer for sympathy and cooperation from the Emory community would come to be sorely tested in only a matter of days.

¹³³ *Atlanta Constitution*, “Dr. Dickey Remains Pastor,” July 10, 1902, p. 9.

CHAPTER 3

AN IMMEDIATE CRISIS FOR THE NEW PRESIDENT:

THE CASE OF ANDREW SLEDD

At age 38, on July 8, 1902, James Edward Dickey became the twelfth president of Emory College. The star product of Emory's class of 1891 became the seventh in a series of Emory alumni to hold the office, following Luther M. Smith (class of 1848), Osborn L. Smith (class of 1842), Atticus G. Haygood (1859), Isaac S. Hopkins (1859), Warren A. Candler (1875) and Charles E. Dowman (1873).¹

As outlined in the previous chapters, Dickey could claim more than an alumni kinship; he was related by blood or marriage to a number of his predecessors, including Ignatius A. Few; his mentor, colleague, friend and confidant, Warren A. Candler;² his brother-in-law, Charles E. Dowman; and perhaps even Presidents James R. Thomas (his mother's maiden name was Thomas), Isaac Stiles Hopkins and others.³ His Few relatives were among the founders of not only Emory, but also the University of Georgia and Duke University.⁴

But even with a host of relatives providing a strong pedigree for the position, with a sterling record as student and faculty member, as a star in the pulpits and leadership of the North Georgia Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, as the hand-picked candidate of the Candler brothers⁵ and with former Emory president Warren Candler, now Dickey's bishop in the church, as mentor and confidant, Dickey could not be prepared for what would come to be known as "the Sledd Affair," a crisis that would wash over the institution without warning in the

¹ <http://emoryhistory.emory.edu/people/index.html>, retrieved March 19, 2006.

² As detailed in chapter one, Ignatius A. Few's father, Ignatius Few, was brother to Dickey's great-great-grandfather, Benjamin Few. Mary Candler's brother, Daniel Candler, was grandfather to the noted brothers Warren, Asa and John Candler.

³ Jessie Munroe Dickey to the Emory Library, 1938. James Edward Dickey Collection; Manuscripts, Archives and Rare Book Library, Emory University.

⁴ Dickey family papers held by the author. See chapter two.

⁵ Matthews, "The Voice of a Prophet...."

first weeks of his presidency, nor could those around him. It would sorely test many of those relationships.

The foundations of the crisis were in the making for a number of years. The elements, not yet apparent to the participants, soon would coalesce in a storm of controversy. They included: the horrific racial climate in the South of the day; the populist capitalization on that climate by the likes of Rebecca Latimer Felton, whose poison pen diatribes in the state's papers were fueled by personal animosities, including her continuing upset that her son was expelled from Emory by President Candler as an alleged "vagabond and drunkard;"⁶ the coming of the Harvard-educated Virginian, Andrew Sledd, to the Emory faculty in 1897 as professor of Latin; Sledd's boarding in the home of President Candler, and despite not hitting it off with Candler personally, falling in love with and marrying Candler's beloved daughter;⁷ and Sledd's modernist and judgmental attitude toward the traditionalists at Emory, which he expressed through criticism of the South's deficits in education and culture, leading a faculty vote to discontinue Candler's prized law department, and blocking a faculty vote to grant an honorary doctor of divinity degree to Dickey just four months before Dickey would become president.⁸

The precipitating event to which all the foregoing added froth was the happenstance of Sledd's being on a train bound for Covington in 1899 – a train which stopped near Palmetto, Georgia, so the passengers could view (and some participate in) the lynching of Sam Hose, an

⁶ *Ibid.*

⁷ Reed, in "Emory College and the Sledd Affair . . .," relies upon many of the same original letters and college records as others who have examined this issue but interprets them differently, arriving at unique conclusions that Dickey was ill-prepared to handle the crisis, that he and Candler were in "icy silence" for years following the Sledd Affair, and that the scandal cost the college financially. These differing interpretations will become evident as this chapter unfolds.

⁸ *Ibid.*, and Matthews, "The Voice of a Prophet . . ."

African-American.⁹ Subsequently, Sledd determined to write for national publication an essay regarding the incident, even though the publication trailed the actual event by some three years.¹⁰

Even to historians proficient in the period, the racial attitudes and atmosphere of Georgia at the dawn of the 20th Century are almost beyond comprehension in their ferocity and base meanness. Any discussion of race began with the assumption on both sides of the argument, liberal and conservative, that Blacks were an inferior race. To virtually the entire white populace, co-mingling of the races in public accommodations was unthinkable and in sexual relations or marriage was abhorrent.

Historian W. Fitzhugh Brundage chronicled nearly five hundred lynchings in the Deep South during the period 1880-1930, arguing they were a perverse means of maintaining the racial hierarchy and white honor. Like Wilbur J. Cash, he cites white aversion to any legal authority “beyond the barest minimum essential to the existence of the social organism.”¹¹ White women were “enshrined on a pedestal” and defense of their virtue, “especially against sexual aggression by black men, was at the heart of southern honor.” Blacks were racially stereotyped as inferior and dishonorable, which “gave whites license to punish blacks ruthlessly without suffering attacks of conscience.”¹²

Law officers maintained minimal forces, routinely calling for posses or aid from the state authorities when demands exceeded their resources. Such posses at times could become mobs,

⁹ For further scholarship on the lynching of Sam Hose, see Brundage, W. Fitzhugh, *Lynching in the New South: Georgia and Virginia, 1880-1930*. Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1993; and Grem, Darren E., “Sam Jones, Sam Hose, and the Theology of Racial Violence,” *Georgia Historical Quarterly*, Spring 2006, Vol. 90, Issue 1, pp. 35-61.

¹⁰ Reed, “Emory College and the Sledd Affair....”

¹¹ Cash, W. J. *The Mind of the South*. New York: Knopf, 1941, pp. 35, 87-89.

¹² Brundage, *Lynching in the New South...*, pp. 4-5.

fueled by the racial atmosphere and moonshine, thus combining “the fellowship of a hunt with the honor of serving the alleged needs of the community.”¹³

It was an atmosphere revealed in and fed by Rebecca Latimer Felton, wife of Methodist minister, former Georgia legislator and U.S. Congressman Dr. William H. Felton. She thrived in this arena, building a reputation as a firebrand spokesperson for the populist view. She openly defended lynching in her campaign against “the black beast...the Negro rapist,” most famously so in an 1897 address to the State Agricultural Society at Tybee Island: “If it takes lynching to protect woman’s dearest possession from the drunken, ravaging human beasts, then I say lynch a thousand a week if necessary.”¹⁴ Later, writing in the *Atlanta Journal*, she expanded those remarks “to advocate dispensing with a legal trial, even when it was possible, for a proved Negro rapist. It was an unwritten law in Georgia, she declared, that he must die without benefit of clergy, judge, or jury.”¹⁵

Almost as famously, Mrs. Felton for years carried on a very public clash with Emory President, and later Methodist Bishop, Warren A. Candler. Perhaps it was rooted in her son’s dismissal from college by Candler, as some have alleged, for she was known to keep lists of enemies and their perceived egregious acts toward her. Her battles with Candler were public, notable, and covered a period of decades over a wide range of issues. A staunch prohibitionist, she clashed with Candler over whether the Women’s Christian Temperance Union was appropriately involved in politics. Felton was a progressive on women’s suffrage; Candler opposed it, centering his argument on the point that women should be spared the travails of

¹³ Brundage, *Lynching in the New South...*, pp. 33-34.

¹⁴ *The Atlanta Journal*, Aug. 12, 1897; Brundage, p. 198.

¹⁵ Talmadge, John E. *Rebecca Latimer Felton: Nine Stormy Decades*. Athens: University of Georgia Press, 1960, p. 115.

political battle.¹⁶ Felton's husband, a trustee of the University of Georgia, joined his wife in a raging battle with Candler, he on the floor of the legislature and she in the pages of the state's newspapers, over public versus denominational colleges, as Candler repeatedly sought ways to garner for the private schools taxes from the state coffers and tuition breaks as the public university had. Editor Harry Hodgson dedicated the 1893 edition of the University of Georgia yearbook, the *Pandora*, to Mrs. Felton. It contained a political cartoon famously depicting Mrs. Felton with "the fat Bishop" across her knee delivering a whipping.¹⁷

Likewise, Felton publicly jostled with Candler over issues in the Methodist church to which they both belonged, she declaring in print that "the bishops were ruling with tyrannical power, giving the best appointments to their toadies and punishing their enemies with small-salaried pastorates in rural areas." They even took on one another over whether the notorious Wall Street robber baron Jay Gould had gone to Hell, as Candler proffered he was now in "a new abode not as comfortable as his earthly one had been." Mrs. Felton "was curious to know if John D. Rockefeller was going to the same place" as he was richer than Gould, but had given money to church colleges.¹⁸ As late as 1924, the two were still publicly feuding, this time over her allegation that some preachers were members of the Ku Klux Klan.¹⁹

Felton was not alone in this rabid racism in the public forum. For more than a decade beginning in 1893, *Atlanta Constitution* columnist Bill Arp regularly supported lynching: "As for

¹⁶ Dickey shared Candler's view on this point. In an undated Baccalaureate address he said, "I beg you, therefore, as you take your part in the governmental affairs of our nation, that you refrain from any action that will thrust woman into the political maelstrom where man's regard for her will be destroyed." Dickey, James E., "The Value of True Estimates," undated Baccalaureate address, James Edward Dickey Collection; Manuscripts, Archives and Rare Book Library, Emory University, box 1, folder 7.

¹⁷ Talmadge, *Rebecca Latimer Felton...*, p. 110.

¹⁸ Talmadge, *Rebecca Latimer Felton...*, pp. 102-3, 109-11, 119-20, 136.

¹⁹ W.A. Candler to Felton, Oct. 1, 1924. W.A. Candler Collection, Manuscripts, Archives and Rare Book Library, Emory University. For more scholarship on the running conflict between Felton and Candler, see Bauman, Mark K. *Warren Akin Candler, the conservative as idealist*. Metuchen, N.J.: Scarecrow Press, 1981, pp. 72-74.

lynching, I repeat what I have said before, let the good work go on. Lynch em! Hang em! Shoot em! Burn em!”²⁰ Rural newspaper editors were even more in the camp of the racial extremists. The editor of the *Crawfordville Advocate-Democrat* wrote in 1903, “What’s the use of forever apologizing for doing something that is necessary and proper?”²¹

Into this social atmosphere arrived Andrew Sledd to Georgia in January 1898. The Virginian, a graduate of Randolph-Macon College, completed a master’s degree in Latin at Harvard University the previous year. He wrote to Candler seeking a teaching position, but took one first at Vanderbilt University, accepting it on the condition that he could leave should the Emory position become available. He was at Vanderbilt for only one school term before accepting Candler’s offer of a position as professor of Latin at Emory and also to live in the Candler’s home as a boarder. Candler was cool to Sledd personally, perhaps because of the younger man’s attitude toward the state of Emory affairs, and as time passed, also perhaps because of the budding relationship with Candler’s daughter, Florence. Despite the bishop’s opposition, Andrew Sledd and Florence Candler married in March 1899.²²

It was not that Sledd was a “Yankee,” come South to teach southerners the errors of their ways. Indeed, he was a Virginian, born as were many of his colleagues just after the Civil War. He grew up in the traditions of the white South, receiving his early education under W. Gordon McCobe of Petersburg, Virginia, a “firely unconquored [*sic*] captain in the armies of the lost cause.” The same strongly southern influences surrounded his college days at Randolph-Macon College in Ashland, Virginia.²³ After stints as a schoolmaster, first in Mississippi and then in Arkansas, Sledd attended Harvard for a graduate degree. There, he was shocked to witness white

²⁰ *Atlanta Constitution*, Nov. 2, 1902.

²¹ Cited in Brundage, *Lynching in the New South...*, p. 199.

²² Sledd, Andrew. Unpublished autobiography, pp. 40-41; Matthews, “The Voice of a Prophet...;” Reed, “Emory College and the Sledd Affair...”.

²³ Sledd autobiography, pp. 2-3.

students fraternizing with Blacks, sitting at the same dinner table, and walking across campus together. For much of the first year, he remained “shocked and horrified” at witnessing such things, based on his southern upbringing and experience. However, his attitude began to change. “I entered the university with very distinct Southern sentiments on all the negro questions, and [experienced] a gradual breaking down of certain of my then views which was taking place, not only without my consent and approval, but even without my knowledge.... I went to Harvard a Southerner and left an American.”²⁴

Sledd later would characterize Emory as “a fairly good school, but intensely narrow-minded and provincial....” Candler, who hired him to the faculty, was “a man of conspicuous gifts and native ability, but without the training and breadth of liberality of view that would come from a larger and more liberal culture. Still, he was exceedingly able and far-seeing, and in his administration the college had greatly prospered, chiefly, however in a material sense. For the president’s personal lack of scholarship or acquaintance with scholarly men and the very narrow sectarianism of his views and those of his constituents naturally militated against a larger culture and a higher life.”²⁵

As discussed in the previous chapter, Sledd proceeded to take on any cause that did not fit his precise view of the way the world of Emory should run. Sledd criticized and moved to abolish the Emory law department, which the president and trustees admitted was only one faculty member with three students, but it was President Candler’s pet project and the sole faculty member was his brother, Judge and Emory trustee John S. Candler. Notwithstanding the authority and influence of Warren and John Candler in their own rights, their brother Asa G. Candler, was chairman of the trustees’ finance committee and the school’s major benefactor. In

²⁴ Sledd autobiography, pp. 35-36.

²⁵ Sledd autobiography, p. 48.

the face of such authority, Sledd had the temerity to term Emory's law program a "fake" department with a "total faculty...of one in-competent and inconspicuous so-called judge," and succeeded in having the faculty abolish the law department.²⁶

Even given the powerful Candler brothers arrayed as they were, Sledd continued his impolitic actions. His timing was either impeccably poor, or more likely, in his principled mind he was oblivious to or uncaring of the consequences. His next target was the practice of awarding honorary degrees. Sledd argued that they should not be awarded solely for patronage or fundraising and "should be justified by some distinguished attainments in the line represented by the degree." In the spring of 1902, he determined to target the proposed honorary Doctor of Divinity degree being considered by the faculty for James E. Dickey, a member of the board of trustees since the previous year. Dickey, clearly a favorite of the Clanders, was being positioned to succeed to the Emory presidency, apparently unbeknownst to Sledd. Initially, Sledd alone among the faculty opposed the degree nomination, but the faculty reversed ground based on his arguments and did not approve the degree. Within four months, Dickey would be president and at loggerheads with Sledd.²⁷

At age 21, Sledd had taken a position as a schoolteacher in the small Mississippi town of Durant. On his first day in town, as he sat at the dinner table in the house where he was to board, the eldest son of the family – a person about Sledd's own age – related with lurid excitement the fact that the town sheriff had "just killed a nigger." The lawman reportedly had been trying to arrest the man, when the suspect attacked the sheriff with an ax – and was shot

²⁶ Sledd autobiography, pp. 66-67.

²⁷ Matthews, "The Voice of a Prophet...."

through the heart. Sledd knew well the prevailing southern attitudes toward Blacks, “but an awful tragedy of this sort had never come quite so close before,” he wrote in his autobiography.²⁸

In that same town, he experienced rampant fear among the white population of a black insurrection to be led by a militant Black preacher seeking revenge for the killing of a compatriot, such that armed posses served nightly as guards against such an uprising. “I did not expect such a thing nearly thirty years after Appomattox,” he wrote. The posse eventually confronted the preacher, who fired first according to Sledd’s account, after which the posse shot his body “into an unrecognized mass to make sure that he could never come to life again.”²⁹

Add to this background the critical incident witnessed by Sledd in April, 1899. On April 12, Coweta County farmer Alfred Crandall was alleged to have been brutally murdered by Sam Hose, an African-American, or (lower-case) “negro,” as the media and polite society called persons of his race in those days.³⁰ Mrs. Crandall reported the brutality of the murder and alleged that Hose raped her beside the body of her dead husband. The authorities offered large rewards for his capture and the newspapers fanned the flames, leading to a vigilante mentality of mobs seeking to bring him to justice. Posses formed from communities in several surrounding counties. The *Atlanta Constitution* reported that the nearby community of Woodbury “is practically deserted. Every man and boy able to carry a gun and help in the chase has left home determined to assist in the capture.”³¹

Newspapers reported sensational and lurid details – some of them almost certainly fabricated – that Crandall had been peaceably eating supper in his home when Hose sneaked up behind him and bashed his skull with an axe, followed by additional blows to finish the job. He

²⁸ Sledd autobiography, pp. 3-4.

²⁹ Sledd autobiography, pp. 6-9.

³⁰ Although media reports and scholarly accounts refer to the accused as “Sam Hose,” the name is a pseudonym for Samuel Wilkes. Grem, citing Wells-Barnett, Ida B., *Lynch Laws in Georgia*, Chicago, 1899, p. 13.

³¹ *Atlanta Constitution*, April 16, 1899; Brundage, *Lynching in the New South...*, p. 34.

robbed the house, the newspapers alleged, dragging Mrs. Crandall with him with a pistol to her head, snatching the eight-month-old baby from her arms and throwing it to the floor, inflicting injuries it would not likely survive. He raped the helpless wife twice beside the body of her dead husband, and, as a correspondent reported to Rebecca Latimer Felton, "...*stripped* her person of every thread and vestige of clothing, there keeping her till time enough had passed to permit him to accomplish his fiendish offense twice more and again." Further, "he was inflicted with loathsome 'Sxxxxxxxs' [*sic* – to stand for syphilis] for which *Mr. Crandall was having him treated* [Felton's italics]." ³²

That the newspapers exaggerated, even fabricated wholesale, the facts of the Crandall murder is likely. Within two months of the case, the Reverend Reverdy C. Ranson, leader of a group of Black anti-lynching activists in Chicago, hired a private detective to investigate. His report, widely published in white newspapers of the north and black newspapers of the south, was that Hose was not the "burly black brute" portrayed in the press, but five feet eight inches tall, weighing 140 pounds. The detective's version was that Hose asked Crandall for money to visit his ill mother, Crandall refused, and the two men exchanged harsh words. The next day, as Hose was chopping wood, Crandall resumed the argument to the point of drawing a gun on Hose and threatening to kill him. Hose threw his axe at his employer in self-defense, the detective reported, hitting him in the head and killing him instantly, leading Hose to flee in fear. ³³

As a week went by without Hose's capture, the *Atlanta Constitution* ran columns from prominent citizens suggesting ways to put a stop to such brutal crimes. Rebecca Latimer Felton, whom her biographer, John E. Talmadge wryly deems "something of an authority on the

³² Wells B. Whitmore to Rebecca Latimer Felton, April 25, 1900, Rebecca Latimer Felton Papers, Hargrett Rare Books and Manuscripts Library, the University of Georgia, cited in Brundage, *Lynching in the New South*, p. 83. The italics are in the original.

³³ Brundage, pp. 82-83. Brundage refers to the employer as "Cranford" throughout, but all other sources cited have him as "Crandall."

subject,” repeated and embellished her now-standard answer: “...lynch the black fiends by the thousands until the Negro understood that there was a standard punishment for rape and he could not escape it. She urged Horse’s [sic] pursuers to forget the reward offered for his capture and to shoot him on sight as they would a mad dog....”³⁴

Ten days after the murder, on April 22, Hose was captured and jailed in Newnan. The next morning, a mob took him from the jail to the countryside, where “he was emasculated and then burned alive. When the fire subsided, men pulled grisly souvenirs from the coals.”³⁵

As this grotesque scene unfolded, the train bearing Professor Andrew Sledd of Emory College happened past and stopped, the passengers being given the opportunity to step from the train to view the horrible sight, or even participate, as they wished. Sledd, moved to write his thoughts precipitated by the brutal lynching, at first could not find a publisher. He sent the article to an editor at the New York *Independent* identified only as a “Dr. Waugh,” receiving a lengthy personal letter rejecting the manuscript. Of the letter, Sledd said, “It is interesting to observe that of all his criticisms [were] at the first half of the article, which arraigned the northern attitude toward the black man, as I understand it; while he has nothing but cordial commendations for the latter part of the article arraigning the southern attitude and treatment of the negro.” Sledd submitted his account to the *Southern Methodist Review* of Nashville, “which publisher had uniformly accepted my contributions before that time,” but which rejected it without courtesy of a reply. Sledd continued to shop the piece, finally finding acceptance from Bliss Perry, editor of the *Atlantic Monthly* of Boston, a national journal. The article ran in the

³⁴ Talmadge, *Rebecca Latimer Felton...*, p. 116.

³⁵ *Ibid.*

July 1902 issue, which appeared the last week of June, less than two weeks before Dickey took office as Emory president.³⁶

Under the title, “The Negro: Another View,” Sledd undertook to add to the public discussion of “the negro problem in the South,” criticizing previous works as both sectional and partisan. He asserted that “Northern writers, with practically no knowledge or experience of actual conditions, have theorized to meet a condition that they did not understand.... Southern writers, on the contrary, remembering the negro as the slave, consider him and his rights from a position of proud and contemptuous superiority, and would deal with him on the ante-bellum basis of his servile state.”³⁷

The North, with many things in this southern treatment of the negro justly open to impeachment, by a general indictment at once weakens its own case and fortifies the evils it seeks to overthrow. The South, in answer to what is unjust in the charge of the North, recalls former days, persuades herself of the righteousness of her cause, and continually recommits herself to an antiquated and unsound policy.³⁸

Noting that “such partisan and sectional discussion cannot fail to be alike bitter and unfruitful,” Sledd said the South regarded the issue as a local matter, and “has refused to receive any light upon it from outside sources; and has met any suggestions and offers of outside help with a surly invitation to ‘mind your own business.’ The North, on the other hand...has approached it from the side of preformed theories, rather than of actual facts; in a spirit of tearful or indignant sentimentality, rather than of calm, unbiased reason; and has therefore proposed remedies that must, in the very nature of things, be at once undesirable and impossible. As is usual in such cases, the truth lies between the two extremes.”³⁹

³⁶ Sledd autobiography, p. 75; Matthews, “The Voice of a Prophet...;” Reed, “Emory College and the Sledd Affair....”

³⁷ Sledd, Andrew. “The Negro – Another View.” *Atlantic Monthly*, July 1902, p. 65.

³⁸ *Ibid.*

³⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 65..

Like a hot poker in the eye of his Southern neighbors who bristled at any hint of outside interference, Sledd continued: “The South has no right to take offense at any well-meant and kindly effort to relieve the situation.” He decried those on both sides who offer opinion while ignorant of the facts, and then proceeded to lay out his two fundamental assumptions: “(1) The negro belongs to an inferior race... (2) But the negro has inalienable rights.” And then, expounding on the “general tacit attitude and feeling of the average southern community toward the negro...”⁴⁰

He is either nothing more than the beast that perishes, unnoticed and uncared for so long as he goes quietly about his menial toil (as a young man recently said to the writer, ‘The farmer regards his nigger in the same light as his mule,’ but this puts the matter far too favorably for the negro); or if he happen to offend, he is punished as a beast with a curse or a kick, and with tortures that even the beast is spared.... And his rights of person, property, and sanctity of home, -- who ever heard of the ‘rights’ of a ‘nigger’?⁴¹

Sledd asserted that he was not speaking of the “utterly worthless and depraved,” of which there were many in both races, but noted that the black man could not expect a white man to tip his hat to him while passing on the street, or to share a restaurant or a train car with him, or to sit in the same section of a church before “the maker of the black man as well as of the white, and invoke the Christ, who died for black and white alike.... The black man, *because of his blackness* [Sledd’s emphasis], is put in this lowest place....”⁴²

In the last decade of the last [19th] century, Sledd continued, “more men met their death by violence at the hands of lynchers than were executed by due process of law,” that “seventy to eighty percent” occur in the South, that “three quarters of those thus done to death are negroes,” and that “the lynching penalty does not attend any single particular crime...but murder, rape, arson, barn-burning, theft, -- or suspicion of any of these, -- may and do furnish the ground for

⁴⁰ *Ibid.*

⁴¹ *Ibid.*, pp. 66-67.

⁴² *Ibid.*, p. 68.

mob violence.... These facts,” Sledd noted, “are bitterly controverted in the section which they most concern.”⁴³

Sledd asserted further, likely to the astonishment and disgust of the readers of the *Atlantic Monthly*, that noted officials and newspapers of the South had defended lynching as deserved punishment for the crime of violent rape. He argued that most lynchings were not connected to violent rape and that most lynchings were not in immediate retribution by the offended husband, father or brother but were separated in time from the initial crime, and thus became acts of calculated mob violence. Sledd offered the standard explanation of the time, one which ignored completely the complicity of the leadership class of the day: “Our lynchings are the work of our lower and lowest classes. What these classes are is hardly comprehensible to one who has not lived among them and dealt with them.”⁴⁴

Lynchers styled themselves “custodians of the law,” Sledd said, but in fact were violators themselves:

There may be some maudlin talk about the ‘dreadful crime,’ about ‘upholding the majesty of the law,’ about ‘teaching the niggers a lesson;’ yet the lyncher is but little concerned with the crime, less with the law. As for ‘teaching the niggers a lesson,’ that catch phrase of the lynching mob betrays its whole attitude and temper.⁴⁵

Sledd moved next in his article to describe the lynching scene he had witnessed. His readers likely were already well aware of the details, as it had been reported widely in the regional and national press. “The burning of Sam Hose took place on a Sabbath day. One of our enterprising railroads ran two special trains to the scene. And two train-loads of men and *boys* [Sledd’s emphasis], crowding from cow-catcher to the tops of the coaches, were found to go to see the indescribable and sickening torture and writhing of a fellow human being. And souvenirs

⁴³ *Ibid.*

⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 69.

⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 70.

of such scenes are sought, -- knee caps, and finger bones, and bloody ears. It is the purest savagery....”⁴⁶

Sledd indirectly highlighted the complicity of the leadership class by questioning whether “a Southern community would either permit a black mob to lynch a white man whether merely suspected or known as guilty of his crime, or that a white mob would lynch one of its own color for any crime against a black?... If the negro criminal may be burned at the stake with the usual accompaniments of fiendish cruelty, a white man guilty of the same crime deserves, and should suffer, the same penalty. There is nothing in a white skin, *or a black* [Sledd’s emphasis], to nullify this. And yet to the average Southern white man this manifestly just view seems both disloyal and absurd.”⁴⁷

That Sledd’s writings would be appalling to the Northern audience is obvious, and that they would be read in the South as, in his own words, “disloyal and absurd,” and even incendiary and seditious, is a given. But the *Atlantic Monthly* was a Boston publication, neither well-read nor well-respected by most in the South, so it took a while for word of the publication to spread and for the reaction to set in.

The week of the article’s publication at the end of June 1902 was the same week of the unexpected resignation of Emory president Charles E. Dowman to accept a mid-year appointment by Bishop Warren A. Candler to the post of president elder of the Atlanta district of the Methodist church. The annual meeting of the Emory board of trustees during the first week of June had carried no indication that a presidential change was imminent, except that all present knew of the recent vacancy in the post of presiding elder of the Atlanta District precipitated by

⁴⁶ *Ibid.*

⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 71.

the election at the just-completed General Conference of R. J. Bigham as director of the Methodist Publishing House.⁴⁸

Five days after Dowman's letter of resignation and the call of a meeting of the Emory board to be set for the following week, on July 5, 1902, J. W. Renfroe, a former treasurer of the state of Georgia, wrote Rebecca Latimer Felton to make her aware of the *Atlantic Monthly* article and the fact that it was written by professor Andrew Sledd of Emory College, but Mrs. Felton took no apparent action.⁴⁹ In another three days, on July 8, the Emory board of trustees met at Atlanta First Methodist Church, accepting Dowman's resignation and electing Dickey his successor.⁵⁰ And another three days after that, on July 11, the *Atlanta Constitution* finally tackled the Sledd article, publishing a highly critical editorial. With no direct evidence as to how the newspaper learned of the article, but knowing how such things work even today and having read of Mrs. Felton's record to that point, one would not be surprised to learn that she or Renfroe or one of their allies had prompted them to it.

Not revealing that Sledd was on the Emory faculty, the *Constitution* editorial concluded that, "The southern negro problem has not to do with how God fashioned him and classified him, nor why through all the ages he has, except when nursed and assisted by other races, kept himself on the lowest dead level of human inertia.... He has had thirty-seven years of absolute freedom in which to show his capacity to take care of himself and prove his right to better things than he has as the results of his liberty."⁵¹

The *Constitution* continued with the old but popular argument that if they don't like it here, they can leave: "What complaint has the negro to make against the southern people that he

⁴⁸ *Emory College Board of Trustees Minutes*, June 6, 1902.

⁴⁹ J. W. Renfroe to Rebecca Latimer Felton, July 5, 1902. Rebecca Felton Papers, Special Collections, University of Georgia.

⁵⁰ *Emory College Board of Trustees Minutes*, July 8, 1902.

⁵¹ *The Atlanta Constitution*, "Another Light that Falls," July 11, 1902, p. 6.

could not have remedied within forty-eight hours, in any instance, by taking a train to the elysian fields north of the Potomac and the Ohio? Migration from a land of oppression, cruelties and denial of human rights has always been available to the negro since 1865. He has suffered from no embargo upon his movements in that behalf.”⁵²

Southerners had not denied the Black man the right to live and make himself a home, the editorialist continued, noting that in Illinois and Indiana and Kansas, local residents took up arms to keep immigrant Blacks from landing in their communities.

There is not a negro of sobriety and industry in the south today who cannot have profitable work if willing to take it. But they are mobbed and shot for seeking work in Illinois! And as for the complaint of Mr. Sledd and the Boston cult that the negro must ride in second class cars and eat in negro restaurants apart from the whites, we do not accept responsibility for those things. Any northern man who wants to open a restaurant on the bi-colored plan can doubtless obtain a license for the same by paying the cash at the counter of the city clerk of Atlanta, and then get what customers he can. We have free trade in such matters down here and people are free to sell or refuse to sell their wares to whom they please. We may also remark that most of our railway lines are now owned and controlled by investors and managers who live in the east and north. There is no law, in Georgia at least, to prevent the railway owners from giving the colored people as fine cars as can be turned out from the Pullman or Wilmington factories. The question of what fashion of car the railway will furnish is not a matter of legal compulsion. The only requirement public sentiment makes is the legal separation of the races and that is done for most wholesome reasons that benefit both races. In view of these plain facts, we cannot see that Mr. Sledd has illuminated the race problem in any sense. He has only helped to encourage an old form of northern fool-osophy!⁵³

The *Constitution's* vitriolic commentary did not immediately stir its readership to action, nor did the regional or national press take up the cause early on. Another two-plus weeks passed, until on July 29, another state government official, Madison Bell, the executive secretary of the Georgia Commission on Statuary Hall, wrote to Rebecca Felton urging her to weigh in,

⁵² *Ibid.*

⁵³ *Ibid.*

saying she was “the best qualified person to present the facts of this discussion to the Northern people.”⁵⁴

Felton came through. She unloaded all guns at Sledd, the son-in-law of her old foe, Bishop Candler, in a diatribe published in the *Constitution* on Sunday, August 3. Not satisfied with what she would print in the pages of the newspaper, she additionally purchased a card insert for issues slated for delivery in the Covington-Oxford community, “informing them that the writer of ‘The Negro: Another View’ was the same Andrew Sledd of their community,”⁵⁵ while disingenuously over-protesting in her column that “I am unfortunate in one respect, because I do not know where Mr. Andrew Sledd comes from, or what profession he follows, or where he lives, but the statements he sets forth in the *Atlantic Monthly* go to show that no more unfriendly writer to the southern people has ever printed a line in a northern magazine. I am, however, comforted in not being acquainted with Mr. Sledd, or his whereabouts or his profession, because the loathing that his article has inspired to my mind has in no wise been the result of any individual dislike or acquaintance with the writer.”⁵⁶ Perhaps Felton was at least half-truthful that her individual dislike was not with the writer – indeed, it was with his father-in-law.

Mrs. Felton continued: “But if it should transpire that Mr. Sledd lives in the south, he should be politely compelled to make his assertions good or go to another part of the country – for his health’s sake – his room will certainly be better than his company.” Taking exception to Sledd’s assertion that the south dehumanized the Black race, Felton countered, “That statement is not true in Georgia. For a third of a century the white people, the taxpayers of this state, have raised an immense sum of money every year to educate the negro, not to dehumanize him. The state is educating negro teachers in a college near Savannah to teach their own race. The state

⁵⁴ Madison Bell to Rebecca Felton, July 29, 1902, Felton papers, UGA Special Collections.

⁵⁵ Matthews, “The Voice of a Prophet....”

⁵⁶ *The Atlanta Constitution*, “The Negro as Discussed by Mr. Andrew Sledd,” Aug. 3, 1902, p. B4.

employs about three thousand negro teachers annually to teach the youth of their own color in the schools of the country. Let Mr. Andrew Sledd point out the place, the spot, where the ‘intelligent and candid white men’ of the south carry on the dehumanizing process.”⁵⁷

Felton took particular offense to Sledd’s notion that Blacks in the south were treated as no more than “a beast, with a curse and a kick, and with tortures that even a beast is spared.” She retorted, “This is the sort of ‘rot’ that Mr. Andrew Sledd has vomited into the columns of the *Atlantic Monthly*. Perhaps he means to describe a convict camp, but why does he not call it a convict camp?” And as to Sledd’s description of the lack of respect shown even “a good negro, well educated, courteous, God-fearing,” Felton labeled Sledd’s assertion slander. “He is either blind or a willful prevaricator. Any man can take a stand on any day on any prominent street, in any city or town in Georgia, and give the lie to that statement. It is the habit and the custom of all well-raised white men and women in Georgia to return a respectful salutation when a negro is polite in his manners.”⁵⁸

And in response to Sledd’s description of the lynching of Sam Hose, Felton returned to her long-standing justification of lynching:

This white man (I presume his color will pass, as he calls this ‘our’ section) has not a single word to say of the fiendish murder of a father and husband, of the outrage inflicted on an agonized wife and mother, who was blood covered beside the body of her dead husband, or of the little girls who witnessed the horrible sights, and his logic is only here applied to condemn the white men who put the beast to death! Every man in Georgia should read this outrageous indictment of southern manhood and then dismiss the writer of it! Only today I read a circular letter that is flooding negro homes, in which it is stated that Sam Hose never entered the house or touched the woman, and only defended himself in the yard when brutally attacked by the husband. That story is being told all over this union, when we know eye witnesses found that dead body where it was struck down by the black beast in the dining room, and that poor woman herself told the story of his killing and what she suffered at the hands of his murderer. Now that Andrew Sledd (may God spare me the sight of this maligner of his own

⁵⁷ *Ibid.*

⁵⁸ *Ibid.*

color, and perhaps of his own section) has printed his views of southern white men in a Boston magazine, the world outside will be ready to malign the suffering wife still further. And it is to such people, such writers as Andrew Sledd, whose thrift possibly keeps pace with fawning, that we may trace the vindictive hatred of those who procure their information from such sources.⁵⁹

Felton's final solution for Sledd was to run him out of town on the proverbial rail: "Pass that Mr. Sledd on to the place where he may be needed, for if left to a vote in Georgia (after reading his defense of negro fiends in the columns of the *Atlantic Monthly*), the slanderer would be made to retire, and he may yet be thankful to get off without an extra application of tar and feathers."⁶⁰

And her further argument was that lynching was not a solely southern phenomenon, and besides, Sledd was paid to write the article: "Why did he not notice the negro porter who outraged a white woman in Colorado and was burned by white men, not southerners? Why did he not allude to the Leavenworth black beast that was burned alive in Kansas? Why did he not review the rage of white men in Akron, Ohio, when a negro beast was skillfully spirited away from the fagot? Southern men were not there to do it. Why did this sniveler single out Sam Hose and fling his sneers on Georgia except for the lucre that the *Atlantic Monthly* hands over for such defamation of the southern people? Because he was paid for it!" ... Pass him on! Keep him moving! He does not belong in this part of the country. It is bad enough to be taxed to death to educate negroes and defend one's home from criminal assault, from arson and burglary, but it is simply atrocious to fatten or feed a creature who stoops to the defamation of the southern people only to find access to liberal checks in a partisan magazine."⁶¹

Rather than being disgusted by Felton's diatribe, the Georgia public of summer 1902 was moved to action. With the flames of public passion fanned daily by the competing Atlanta

⁵⁹ *Ibid.*

⁶⁰ *Ibid.*

⁶¹ *Ibid.*

newspapers, the *Journal* and the *Constitution*, lurid stories of “the Sledd Affair” and his article on “the negro question” appeared every day consecutively from August 3 through 13 in the Atlanta papers and others around the state. In response, the public was ready to grab the tar and feathers as Mrs. Felton suggested and run Professor Sledd out of the state post haste.

Sledd was horrified by “Mrs. Felton’s grossly and intemperate tirade and libel....” He later wrote that the experience and others led him to believe “that an expression of unorthodoxy (meaning any difference in opinion from the prevailing opinion in the South) on the negro question is sufficient to jeopardize a man’s career, if not his life.”⁶² Yet in his characteristically uncompromising style, he attempted a response by granting an interview to a former student, who was Sledd’s fraternity brother and an Emory graduate, by then an *Atlanta Journal* reporter. According to Sledd’s version of the interview, the reporter had not read the *Atlantic Monthly* article and asked Sledd to recount it. In Sledd’s doing so, the reporter made it appear that Sledd was reiterating the premise that had so outraged the public: “I do believe I state a general fact when I say that the negro is treated lower than a brute in the South. I believe the average white man in the south would no sooner kill a negro than a forty dollar mule.”⁶³ This interview, and one published the next day in the *Constitution*, seemed to cause Sledd more difficulty with President Dickey and the trustees than the original article itself.⁶⁴

The *Constitution* pounded away. The front-page on Tuesday, August 5, carried a six-by-nine-inch stand-alone photo of “Professor Andrew Sledd of Emory College, whose article on the negro question has caused him to be roundly censured.” Inside the paper, on page six, an article carried the customarily lengthy headline: “Indignation at Covington; Professor Sledd’s Article in

⁶² Sledd autobiography, p. 76.

⁶³ Sledd autobiography, pp. 77-78; *The Atlanta Journal*, Aug. 4, 1902.

⁶⁴ Reed, “Emory College and the Sledd Affair...,” p. 479.

Atlantic Monthly the Cause; Sledd Has Been Popular; Mrs. Felton's Criticism Called Citizens' Attention to Article, and Many Agree With Her."⁶⁵

Asserting that Mrs. Felton's criticism of professor Sledd "came almost as a thunderclap to the citizens of Covington," the *Constitution* disingenuously noted that few were aware of Sledd's "astonishing" ideas published in the *Atlantic Monthly* article until reading of it in Mrs. Felton's *Constitution* column. "Professor Sledd has always been very popular here and his best friends were not aware of his antagonistic ideas against the south, his home, and the southern people," the newspaper said. Someone identified by the *Constitution* only as "one of the Emory professors" attempted to defend Sledd as having been misconstrued by Felton, but the newspaper countered that "Professor Sledd still holds that the contents of his article are true, and this, of course, overrides the misconstruction idea." Continuing with its editorial within a news story, the *Constitution* said, "The people of Covington are indignant at this attack on the south, and especially as the article was brought home to Georgia in the reference to the lynching of Sam Hose. Most of the citizens agree with Mrs. Felton, while some think that Professor Sledd has some explanations to make."⁶⁶

The *Constitution* characterized Sledd as being "known as a man of strong opinions and of fearlessness in expressing them. The comments that have been made concerning his article in the *Atlantic Monthly* seem to have had little effect on him. To a representative of the *Constitution* he stated yesterday: 'Yes, I wrote the article and I have nothing to retract or explain concerning it. Those who have seen fit to criticize me have been careful to select passages which, when read without the context, make a very different impression from that conveyed by the article as a whole. I have spent my entire life in the south and the statements made in my

⁶⁵ *The Atlanta Constitution*, "Indignation at Covington," Aug. 5, 1902, pp. 1, 6.

⁶⁶ *Ibid.*

article are from observations. I have certain opinions on this subject and I can see no reason why I did not have the right to set them down.”⁶⁷

The newspaper noted that Sledd was a Virginian by birth, a descendant of Revolutionary War soldiers, and the son of a Methodist minister. Sledd was popular with his students, some of whom differed with his position but still came to his defense as “an honest and sincere man who had been unjustly criticized for expressing his opinions.”⁶⁸

As the *Constitution* continued its daily pot-stirring, it sought out Atlanta’s leading Black clergy for comment. By tradition built on years of intimidation, they were careful in their statements. Bishop Henry M. Turner called Sledd a “humanitarian.” R. D. Stinson, identified by the newspaper as “collecting commissioner” for Morris Brown College, “stated that he believes the article has done harm to the negro race and that it was inopportune written.” Bishop J. W. Gaines “preferred not to give any opinion.”⁶⁹

Sledd, meanwhile, began receiving letters on both sides of the issue. He reported that those from the north were “generally commendatory,” as were the newspaper clippings from northern papers. Some northern writers took a calm and rational approach, he said, while others “were inclined to make a martyr of me, and to be as intemperate in their commendation as the majority of those of the south were in their abuse.” Almost without exception, the southern comment Sledd received, both in letters and in the press, was “harshly critical and unfair,” he said. Those few southern editors who insisted upon a right of free speech “were drowned in the midst of uproar and denunciation and of intemperate abuse.”⁷⁰

⁶⁷ *Ibid.*

⁶⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 6.

⁶⁹ *The Atlanta Constitution*, “Leaders of the Race Differ in Their Views,” Aug. 6, 1902, p. 7.

⁷⁰ Sledd autobiography, pp. 78-79.

In Covington on the evening of August 5, white youths (there is no evidence that they were Emory students) dragged through the streets and then burned on the town square an effigy depicting Sledd hugging a Black man. Citizens of Covington disclaimed any part in the street action, but circulated a petition of thanks to be presented to Mrs. Felton. Sledd was emphatic that those responsible were not his students: “[W]hile not a few students would have differed with me in the points at issue, they were in general and in the large majority well-disposed toward me personally to put this indignity upon me even had the college been in session at that time, which was not the case.” He continued, “Several of my students, in fact, wrote me affectionate and touching letters with reference to the matter.”⁷¹

The *Constitution* reported: “There has been much talk of Professor Sledd’s being requested to resign, while some have stated that he would in all probability leave the school voluntarily in such a position that his remaining on the faculty of the college would hurt its standing throughout the state.”⁷²

In the first five days following the publication of Mrs. Felton’s column on August 3, seventeen trustees contacted President Dickey unanimously calling for Sledd’s departure. As Dickey later told Bishop Candler, “Prior to Prof. Sledd’s resignation, I had received information from seventeen trustees to the effect that, in their opinion, Mr. Sledd’s continued relation to the College would be hurtful to it. Six or seven of these gentlemen stated that if they had sons of college age that they would not send them to Emory while he held a professorship. Numerous letters came from different sections of the state affirming the same position on the part of the writers. As you know, none were more violent in this determination than your two brothers, Mr. A.G. and Judge Jno S.” The matter clearly was directly grievous for the Candler family, causing

⁷¹ *Ibid.*, pp. 83-84.

⁷² *The Atlanta Constitution*, “Bad Boys Burn Sledd in Effigy,” Aug. 7, 1902, p. 4.

Warren to choose between loyalty to his daughter, and therefore his son-in-law, over his long-standing relationship with his two brothers.

And Dickey continued, “The Pres. of the Board of Trustees wrote to me several times and telegraphed once expressing the view that Mr. Sledd’s continued relation to the College would be hurtful to it. Indeed he went so far as to write to each member of the Board, asking for opinions as to whether or not the Board should be called together for action in the premises. I did not seek to obtain the views of these gentlemen, but, as guardians of the institution, they communicated with me. These men were located in different sections of the state and therefore did not represent a particular section, but reflected the general opinion. Among these men were numbered your best friends as well as the best friends of the College. Not a single trustee was heard from antagonizing the opinion stated above. When I was asked therefore as to my opinion concerning Mr. Sledd’s remaining at Emory, I could not arrive at any other conclusion than that his stay would be hurtful to the college. He did what in my opinion was the best thing for himself and the best thing for the College.”⁷³

Sledd clearly did not like nor respect Dickey. He wrote three years later in his unpublished autobiography that Dickey “was a man of amazing ignorance and the intensest bigotry, but he made up for these defects by great pompousness and pretense of manner and of discourse and by an authorodixy [*sic*] of religious opinion which would be ludicrous if it were not so pitiable.”⁷⁴

Sledd acknowledged that the problem was one that had confronted other college presidents, “and received the same solution which Mr. Dickey found for his, namely, what to do

⁷³ Dickey to W. A. Candler, Dec. 1, 1902. W. A. Candler Collection, box 11.

⁷⁴ Sledd autobiography, p. 81.

with a professor who was at least supposed to hold views out of those in harmony with those in the constitution of the college....⁷⁵

His view of Dickey, written in the hindsight of what in his mind was a great wrong, clearly was colored by his similar view of the Emory faculty and administration in general. Sledd gave no quarter for those faculty, including Dickey, who came to their positions from the ministry, referring to them alternately as “incompetent” or “not a scholar.” Dickey’s aristocratic airs and tendency to pontificate from an orthodox religious view certainly rubbed up against Sledd’s judgmental nature. Their personalities were aligned for a clash.

Dickey met with Sledd in his office on the Oxford campus on August 7, when, Sledd reports, “I called at his office to see him about some other matters.” The two walked from Dickey’s office in Seney Hall, across the campus and down the street toward the President’s house. The only account of that meeting comes from Sledd’s unpublished autobiography, in which he reports that he asked Dickey if he had read the article. Dickey had not, he said, and Sledd retorted, “Then it does not seem to me that you have any basis for an opinion.” Dickey replied, “The truth of the article is not involved. My ignorance of it is not the question. The press and the people of the state are railing at you; and members of the Board are approaching me upon the subject.” In addition to Dickey’s own statements that the trustees who contacted him unanimously expressed concern that Sledd’s continued presence “would be hurtful to the college,” Sledd’s own account gives evidence that Dickey and the trustees acted not because of *what* Sledd said – not because he dared raise the issue of race in the South -- but because of the *public criticism* being heaped upon Emory because of his comments. Sledd’s autobiography relates that he asked if Dickey sought his resignation. “I tell it to you as a matter of information, leaving the course of action in your own hands.” Sledd told Dickey, according to his own report,

⁷⁵ *Ibid.*

“I want to tell you right now that I will not resign and your Board will have to take formal action to put me out, and if they do I shall have a few things to say.” Sledd wrote that he did not then understand that he did not have standing to address the board on the matter and would not necessarily have opportunity to be heard on the question.

Sledd argued that others on the faculty had faults – “that Bradley preaches Unitarianism in a Methodist college,” and that “Bonelson is, and has for years, been totally incompetent to fill his chair” and nothing is said to either. He further told Dickey, “You know that some of your men are not above suspicion in moral lines, and nothing is said to them. They are retained and honored, and I have worked here for five years diligently, faithfully, and successfully; I have preached righteousness, and lived righteousness, and now for the supposition of a heresy which you have not done me the justice to verify by a half-hour’s perusal of the article, I am called upon to take my wife and my little one and go out in disgrace.”

And Sledd continued, “I want you to understand that I won’t stand that without a protest and a fight; and if I cannot be heard before the Board I shall be heard throughout the state. I have the facts and you know them; and I shall not tolerate such an injustice.” As the two separated, Dickey informed Sledd he would call at his home that evening for his decision.

After discussion with his wife, the Sleds determined “that it would not be in keeping with common dignity and appropriate for me to go into the fight which I had proposed and declared to the president; and that the best thing for me was that I should quietly tender my resignation.” Andrew apparently was swayed by Florence’s concern that her family – the Candler – who were arrayed in several positions around the issue, not be further drawn into the fray. President Dickey called at the home that evening after tea and the three of them had further discussion. Dickey informed Sledd that he had just received a wire from the president of the

board of trustees, asking, "Has Sledd resigned?" Dickey said this was indicative of the sentiment of the board, and, Sledd recounted, "If he were me his attitude would be to 'stand from under, and give up the place.'" Sledd responded that he had reached the same conclusion, but did not know how he would meet his obligations, to which Dickey gave his assurances that the board would be willing to vote for Sledd a considerable portion of his salary for the year. The next morning, Sledd delivered a letter of resignation through English professor W. L. Weber.⁷⁶

Dickey released Sledd's resignation letter to the papers the same day, along with his own written statement: "In justice to Professor Sledd, I submit the full text of his letter to me. His reference to September 15 as the date at which his resignation shall take effect grows out of the fact, I presume, that he is now engaged in preparing pupils for the fall term, and it would be manifestly unfair to drop them at this date. His resignation will go to the executive committee of the board of trustees for action."⁷⁷

The *Constitution* printed Sledd's resignation letter in full, and it was duly recorded in the minutes of the Emory Board of Trustees executive committee meeting of August 12:

Oxford, Ga. Aug. 8, 1902

Rev. Jas. E. Dickey
 Prest. Emory College
 Atlanta, Ga.

My dear Mr. Dickey,-

You have of course observed the bitter attacks that have been made upon me in certain of the newspapers in consequence of an article of mine upon the negro question. These attacks seem to me to be quite unjust, and my critics have by no means fairly represented my sentiments or my attitude either to this particular question or to our common section. This I presume you know.

It seems to me likely, however, from the attitude that the newspapers and certain of the public have taken in the matter, that our College may suffer some harm, or at least be temporarily embarrassed, by continuing to maintain upon its Faculty a man who is even supposed to entertain such sentiments as have been attributed to me. I am of course responsible for my own utterances; and I am ready to bear anything in the line of misrepresentation or of loss that my

⁷⁶ Sledd autobiography, pp. 84-88. Also, Warren Candler to Dickey, January 5, 1903. W.A. Candler Collection.

⁷⁷ *The Atlanta Constitution*, "To Protect Emory, Sledd Will Leave," Aug. 9, 1902, p. 1.

utterances may bring upon me. But Emory College is in no sense responsible for anything that I may say or think and it does not seem to me either just or wise to call upon the institution to assume responsibility or suffer loss for utterances that it may not, and doubtless does not endorse.

In view of these facts, it has seemed to me best to tender to you my resignation as Prof. of Latin in Emory College. As to the time such resignation shall go into effect, I should suggest the middle of September, but leave that entirely in your discretion. Permit me to add an expression of my very high esteem, and believe me

Very sincerely yours
Andrew Sledd⁷⁸

On August 8, the *Atlanta Journal* declined to publish another submission on the matter from Rebecca Felton.⁷⁹ The *Constitution* continued to pursue the story for several more days, reporting on August 10 that “Trustees Have Taken No Action. Resignation of Prof. Sledd Has Not Been Considered. Committee to Meet Soon. The Emory Professor’s Resignation Will Probably Be Accepted. Article on Negro Question in Atlantic Monthly Cause of Trouble.”⁸⁰ The assertion of the headline was, of course, disingenuous, in that the *Atlantic Monthly* article caused no trouble at all until it got a jump-start from Rebecca Latimer Felton, at least two state officials, and the *Constitution* itself.

On August 11, the *Constitution* for the first time reprinted from the *Atlantic Monthly* the entire article, “The Negro: Another View.” On August 12, a page seven story previewed the meeting of the executive committee under the headline: “Committee is to Meet Today. Will Consider Resignation of Professor Sledd of Emory College. Generally Believed It Will Be Accepted. Statement from President Williams Encourages This Belief – Members of Committee Refuse to Discuss Matter for Publication.”⁸¹ In that same paper, an “about town” commentary column called “The Passing Throng” revealed for the first time to the general public the

⁷⁸ *Ibid.*, and *Emory College Board of Trustees Executive Committee Minutes*, Aug. 12, 1902, contained within the *Emory College Board of Trustees Minutes*, annual meeting, June 6, 1903.

⁷⁹ John S. Cohen, editor, *The Atlanta Journal*, to Felton, Aug. 8, 1902. Felton papers.

⁸⁰ *The Atlanta Constitution*, “Trustees Have Taken No Action,” Aug. 10, 1902, p. 4.

⁸¹ *The Atlanta Constitution*, “Committee is to Meet Today,” Aug. 12, 1902, p. 7.

relationship between Sledd and Warren Candler. In the sixth item among seven short sections, it reads: “Professor Andrew Sledd, of Emory college, who has recently resigned the chair of Latin language and literature in that institution on account of severe criticisms of his article in the July issue of *The Atlantic Monthly* on the negro question, was in Atlanta yesterday at the home of his father in law, Bishop Warren A. Candler. To a representative of the *Constitution*, Professor Sledd stated yesterday that he knows nothing as to his plans for the future and that he will not form any until the executive committee of the board of trustees has acted on his resignation. This afternoon he returns to Oxford, where he is now conducting the summer school and has a large number of boys under his instruction.”⁸²

The evening before the executive committee met to act on the resignation, Candler sent a handwritten note by “special delivery boy” to Dickey’s home, suggesting “as a trustee of the college” that the executive committee delay acting on the resignation until the full board meeting in November. Dickey would later imply, though no record exists, that the note also contained the suggestion that Sledd be granted a severance package. Knowing that he already had discussed such a severance package with Sledd, Dickey tore the note up, “fearing that someone else might chance to read it and obtain a false impression.” Candler later would express to Dickey that his feelings had been hurt by Dickey’s decision not to respond to that note.⁸³

The next day, as the newspapers dutifully reported, the executive committee met: “Sledd Is To Leave Emory. Resignation of Latin Professor Accepted by Executive Committee. Action of Committee is Final and Ends Affair. Resignation Was Caused by Article on Negro Question – Nothing Known as to Who Will Be Appointed to Succeed Professor Sledd.” After reporting the meeting, the article closed with this editorial comment: “The action of the executive

⁸² *The Atlanta Constitution*, “The Passing Throng,” Aug. 12, 1902, p. 6.

⁸³ Dickey to W.A. Candler, Nov. 26, 1902. W.A. Candler Collection, box 11.

committee in accepting the resignation of Professor Sledd was expected. It is final and will doubtless bring to a close the discussion of this unfortunate affair, which has caused Professor Sledd to give up his position and Emory college to lose one of the best men on its faculty.”⁸⁴

That same week, Sledd received a letter from Antioch College in Ohio, offering him the presidency of the institution. Sledd declined on the grounds that he was needed “in my own section and with my own people,” that he was not sufficiently prepared to teach history and philosophy, which duty the Antioch president carried, and that he did not want to give his critics the satisfaction of seeing him move to be with “the Negro lovers of the North.”⁸⁵

Candler and Dickey spoke by telephone the evening after the committee met. In a later letter to his mentor, Dickey recounted the conversation as one of warmth and support: “I remember that you bade me not to be depressed, saying that God was not dead, and then, in a spirit of humor, adding that every time lightning struck, a mule was not killed.”⁸⁶ In apparently its last word on the subject, the *Constitution*'s society column of August 17 carried this notice: “Oxford, Ga. – Bishop Warren A. Candler, Jr., of Atlanta, was the guest of his son-in-law, Professor Andrew Sledd, on Thursday.”⁸⁷

Indeed, if the crisis strained the relationship of Candler with Dickey, the furor had drawn the bishop and his son-in-law closer to one another. Through it, Candler found a new respect for his daughter's husband. He was hurt and bitter at the treatment Sledd had received and at the mistakes he believed had been made by the board which included his brother and his protégé, Dickey. He was embarrassed for Emory College as reaction began from national media and his contemporaries in the clergy and the episcopacy across the country.

⁸⁴ *The Atlanta Constitution*, “Sledd is to Leave Emory,” Aug. 13, 1902, p. 7.

⁸⁵ Sledd autobiography, pp. 88-89.

⁸⁶ Dickey to Candler, Nov. 26, 1902, W. A. Candler Collection, box 11.

⁸⁷ *The Atlanta Constitution*, “Oxford, Ga.,” Aug. 17, 1902, p. C3.

“My dear Mr. President,” wrote M.W. Yarbrough from Gainesville, Georgia to Bishop Candler on August 11th, “You have been on my mind, & heart, too, much since the new century set in but not because it is a new century. We are together in this new century furor as we are in much else.... As to the Prof. Sledd matter, it touches you nowhere and you will touch it nowhere. ‘Speech is silver; silence is golden’ – very ‘golden’ in such matters. Let it rest...”[Yarbrough’s emphasis].⁸⁸

Candler did let it rest – publicly. He most uncharacteristically held his tongue in the public press. But privately, he expressed to friends and colleagues expressions of his bitterness and deep depression at the wrong he felt had been done to him and his son-in-law, but at the root of his hurt was the effect on his beloved daughter, Foncie. He wrote many letters seeking work for Sledd. In each, rather than defend Sledd’s position, Candler asserted that Sledd’s position had been misrepresented and that he did not hold the beliefs attributed to him. This may have been wishful thinking on Candler’s part, as Sledd more than once in the media defended and restated his position. This letter from Candler to his close friend and colleague John C. Kilgo, president of Trinity College, was typical:

My dear John: You may have seen something of a sensation Old Mrs. Felton and the Atlanta paper have stirred up about my son-in-law, Prof. Andrew Sledd. Old Mrs. Felton as you know has borne me a grudge for years. Prof. Sledd no more holds the sentiments they charge upon him than do you or I. But he is a manly fellow who was unwilling that Emory College should be made to share in the injury done him so has resigned his place at Emory College. I enclose you a copy of his resignation – the manliness of which you will appreciate. I have talked with him fully, he spending two days at my house this week on my invitation -- and I know directly from his lips, as I knew from the first, that he no more holds the sentiments these sensation-mongers attribute to him than do you or I. He is an unusually accurate scholar.... He has rare gifts as a teacher. Emory never had so good a professor of Latin and he teaches Greek equally well. He is a thorough-going Methodist – an able preacher in fact – a local preacher. The Executive Committee of Emory College has made a great mistake in accepting his resignation but of course I could not seek to prevent their folly. It would have

⁸⁸ M.W. Yarbrough to Warren A. Candler, Aug. 11, 1902. W.A. Candler Collection, box 2.

been construed as nepotism. The Committee and President were rattled and they will regret it. But now do you know a proper opening for such a man? If so, let me know. I am Yours affectionately, W.A. Candler.⁸⁹

Kilgo responded the next day, "I am pained to see our Methodist colleges, one after another, yield to this crowd of freedom haters. Now old Emory, the home of Pierce, Haygood and Candler falls down before this set, and surrenders forever the old College into their hands. It is enough to make the Angels weep. Trinity stands alone now in this conflict, and the struggle deepens.... The time has come for our Bishops to speak out, for preachers are surrendering to this herd in ways they never dream of. You cannot sit still and see the hands of your college bound in such a manner. Where are Emory's sons? Are they all dead? Are they willing to see this herd sit down in the chairs once filled by royal men? I tremble for your new president, if he commits his destiny to the popularity he may get among this crowd."⁹⁰

Sledd, meanwhile, determined to submit further response to the *Constitution*, but Candler talked him out of it in an August 15 telephone conversation. Bliss Perry, the *Atlantic Monthly* editor who formerly had been on faculty at Williams and at Princeton, contacted Sledd seeking to examine the article's aftermath in a subsequent edition, but Sledd urged him "not to give any undue prominence to the matter in the *Atlantic*....I do not wish to pose as a martyr, or make any capital out of all this disagreeable experience."⁹¹

The Rev. James W. Lee, a noted Methodist pastor in Cedartown and Atlanta, forwarded to Sledd and Candler a packet of clippings from New York newspapers, *The Tribune* and *The*

⁸⁹ W.A. Candler to John C. Kilgo, Aug. 13, 1902. W.A. Candler Collection, box 11.

⁹⁰ J. C. Kilgo to W.A. Candler, Aug. 14, 1902, Trinity College papers, quoted in Porter, Earl W. *Trinity and Duke, 1892-1924: Foundations of Duke University*. Durham: Duke University Press, 1964, full text pp. 100-101. Sledd and Emory were not alone in such a crisis. Kilgo's direct knowledge of the Sledd case informed him less than a year later as he faced his own incident at Trinity, known as the "Bassett Affair," in which a faculty member, John S. Bassett, with the "provocative edge of his pen" tested the limits of as yet unestablished rules of academic freedom, causing public embarrassment to the institution. See Porter, pp. 137-139.

⁹¹ Andrew Sledd to W.A. Candler, Aug. 16, 1902. W.A. Candler Collection, box 11.

Evening Post, and from the *Boston Transcript*. To the bishop he wrote, “Are you seeing the comments and the editorials of the Northern press on Professor Sledd’s ‘crime’ in writing the article for the *Atlantic Monthly*, and the comments on Emory’s trustees in accepting his resignation?... They are very severe.” And to Sledd: “It was a bad day for Emory College when the board of trustees accepted your resignation.”⁹²

By all indications, Dickey determined to set the incident behind him and the college and move on, almost as if ignoring it would make it go away. S. B. Bigham, a Methodist pastor in Mississippi, wrote Candler seeking a hearing for Sledd before the full board of trustees, but noted the only alternatives to obtain such a hearing seemed to be a letter to the trustees’ president or even a letter printed in the public press, “or otherwise – except through Dickey....Dickey is inaccessible to me now. He is evidently sensitive of his administrationship, and repels approach.”⁹³

In a letter to Candler, Sledd took umbrage at Bigham’s suggestion, noting that “he [Dickey] had all the facts, and if he did not lay them before the Committee it was his fault, not mine....” He told his father-in-law that Bigham’s was a “hardly veiled suggestion that my ‘explanation’ pass over into the nature of a retraction of the offensive parts of the article.” The college was embarrassed and realized it had made a mistake by acting “hastily and unjustly,” Sledd asserted, but “[i]t is unwilling, however, to come out openly and frankly and ask me to remain; but, as it left me to bear all the odium and abuse, so now it wishes me to ‘make a statement’ that shall partake of the nature of a retraction in order that I may come and say to me

⁹² James W. Lee to W.A. Candler, Aug. 23, 1902, and James W. Lee to Andrew Sledd, Aug. 23, 1902, W.A. Candler Collection, box 11. The clippings were forwarded to the Rev. Lee by his son, Ivy Lee, who studied under Dickey at Emory from 1894-’96 before transferring to Princeton. The younger Lee went on to become known as “the father of public relations practice” and was personal public relations advisor to John D. Rockefeller and many of America’s most prominent business firms. Ivy Lee Collection, Princeton University Library, see Web site viewed April 22, 2006: http://infoshare1.princeton.edu/libraries/firestone/rbsc/finding_aids/lee.html#series15.

⁹³ S.B. Bigham to W.A. Candler, Aug. 24, 1902. W.A. Candler Collection, box 11.

‘In view of your statement and apology, we request you to reconsider your resignation.’ That is, leave me to bear the burden and the blame before, and put me in the wrong at the last;- that the College, that has done the wrong may come out with pretentious righteousness, while I, who have been wronged, may stand in the College’s place and bear all the burden before the world.⁹⁴

Dickey, however, showed no inclination to discuss, much less reopen, the case.

Responding to a letter from trustee W. C. Lovett, who also was editor of the *Wesleyan Christian Advocate*, Dickey wrote (and this is the entirety of the letter): “Your letter concerning the action of the Executive Committee received. In reply I will say that personally I do not approve of reopening the matter. I am, Affectionately yours, James E. Dickey.”⁹⁵ Lovett informed Candler of the response, noting that his letter to Dickey had been written in Candler’s presence, and enclosing for Candler’s information “his somewhat laconic reply.”⁹⁶ It is revealing that Candler apparently persuaded Lovett to write the letter to Dickey, apparently trying to generate pressure on the president through other means than direct contact. It also is worth noting that although Lovett was active behind the scenes in this regard, his *Advocate*, the official news publication of Georgia Methodism, never mentioned the Sledd case.⁹⁷

Dickey’s first correspondence with Candler following the explosion of the Sledd affair was either blithely ignorant of the furor or incredibly hard-nosed toward it, as his attitude was all business and no Sledd. He informed the bishop that the Quillian Lectureship lacked less than \$200 to be fully funded at \$3,000, and informed Candler he would nominate him to deliver the next series of lectures, in “March or April as it may suit your convenience. I hope very much

⁹⁴ Andrew Sledd to W.A. Candler, Aug. 27, 1902. W.A. Candler Collection, box 11.

⁹⁵ Dickey to W.C. Lovett, Aug. 30, 1902. W.A. Candler Collection, box 11.

⁹⁶ W.C. Lovett to W.A. Candler, Sept. 1, 1902. W.A. Candler Collection, box 11.

⁹⁷ Warnock, Henry Y. “Andrew Sledd, Southern Methodists, and the Negro: A Case History.” *The Journal of Southern History*, Vol. 31, No. 3 (Aug. 1965), 251-271.

that you will undertake this work for us, as I am quite sure that no one could be selected for this service who could perform it with so much delight and profit to us and to our constituency.”

Dickey informed Candler of an anonymous fundraising prospect, and “By the way, would you consent to appoint Fletcher Walton to Oxford & Midway with the understanding that he would assist me somewhat in my work? The half station would pay him \$750.00 and parsonage. I would raise \$500.00 for him among my friends. His services would not cost the College anything.... The people of Athens also, I am informed, want him. Chancellor Hill having expressed himself to the effect that Walton is one of the most choice preachers to whom he ever listened.... If I could have Fletcher with me here, so as to lighten my class work a little, I could be more effective in my labors for the College.” With a bit more news about the progress on raising money for the new science hall and for the Lowe fund, and the prospects for fall enrollment of 100 boys, the letter closed, “Hoping to hear from you in the matter of the Lectures and of the appointment, I am affectionately yours, James E. Dickey.”⁹⁸

In fact, throughout the several months of the crisis, Dickey was apparently dogged in his determination to maintain a regular schedule and to move the business of the college forward. The day after his election as president, he attended a meeting of the Young Harris College trustees at Atlanta’s Trinity Church.⁹⁹ Just two days later, Mrs. Felton’s first letter exposing the Sledd essay appeared in the *Constitution*. The next week, the Atlanta District Conference was held at Epworth Church, with Dickey preaching the opening sermon on the subject, “The Need of the Spiritual in an Age of Materialism,” Candler preaching on Thursday and Friday nights, and Dowman presiding.¹⁰⁰ Dickey arrived in Oxford on July 17 to begin the transfer of

⁹⁸ Dickey to W.A. Candler, Aug. 27, 1902. W.A. Candler Collection, box 11.

⁹⁹ *Atlanta Constitution*, “Young Harris Trustees,” July 9, 1902, p. 9.

¹⁰⁰ *Atlanta Constitution*, “Conference Next Week, Methodist Preachers and Laymen to Gather at Epworth Church,” July 18, 1902, p. 7; “District Conference Opens,” July 24, 1902, p. 7.

leadership from Dowman, “and the new president will be entirely in charge within the next few days.” He was to move his family into the President’s Home within the next two weeks.¹⁰¹

That same week, Dickey was in LaGrange for the District Conference there, preaching an “earnest, thoughtful, eloquent and spiritual” sermon. A collection taken for Emory yielded \$160.¹⁰² The last week of July, he was in the town of Sparks, in Berrien County, to speak at the laying of a cornerstone at Sparks Collegiate Institute. A free barbecue was a feature of the day.¹⁰³ And even on the two Sundays leading up to Sledd’s resignation, Dickey was in the pulpit at Grace Church, preaching and leading both the morning and evening worship services each day.¹⁰⁴

On August 13, two days after Sledd’s resignation, Candler named Rev. John S. Jenkins of Springfield, Missouri to succeed Dickey as pastor of Grace Church, effective September 1. A “Georgia boy,” Jenkins had served churches in the Georgia towns of Washington, Tallapoosa and Sparta before moving to Missouri.¹⁰⁵ So, despite the upheaval of the previous two months, regular work had continued apace, work that in many cases required Candler and Dickey to continue their traditional consultation and cooperation.

In a called meeting September 3, the executive committee acted upon Dickey’s agreement with Sledd that he be paid \$1,000 severance, Sledd’s entire salary for the academic year. Apparently unaware Dickey already had agreed to do this, the Emory faculty met August 14 and urged such a payment. The executive committee also appointed Professor M. H. Arnold,

¹⁰¹ *Atlanta Constitution*, “Dickey Takes Charge as President of Emory,” July 18, 1902, p. 3.

¹⁰² *Atlanta Constitution*, “Brilliant Addresses at LaGrange Conference,” July 18, 1902, p. 6.

¹⁰³ *Atlanta Constitution*, “Masons Lay Corner Stones,” July 30, 1902, p. 4.

¹⁰⁴ *Atlanta Constitution*, “In The Realm of Religion,” Aug. 3, 1902, p. 12 and Aug. 10, 1902, p. 1.

¹⁰⁵ *Atlanta Constitution*, “Jenkins Named as Pastor,” Aug. 13, 1902, p. 8.

a Virginian with degrees from Washington and Lee who most recently was at Johns Hopkins, to succeed Sledd in the Latin chair as a temporary appointment to finish the academic year.¹⁰⁶

Candler continued his correspondence with colleagues, seeking a position for Sledd at a number of institutions across the north and west, but Sledd determined to return to Yale to complete his doctorate, apparently underwritten financially by his father-in-law. He wrote from New Haven: “I cannot tell you how much I appreciate your kindness in this matter, or what your attitude and service means to me. I trust that I may be able in some way at some time to show you that I am not heedless of the service that you are doing me. If it suits your convenience, you may just deposit the money to my credit at Third National.”¹⁰⁷

Candler was prone to periods of depression and self-doubt and he often required reassurance and praise from colleagues. His biographer reports that Candler would grow moody, would “sulk around the house,” and had “periodic episodes of self-flagellation.” While virtually assured of election to the episcopacy at the 1898 General Conference, his letters home still reflected loneliness and despair.¹⁰⁸ Over the years on several occasions, he would think “after all I have done” for them and the institution, they don’t appreciate me. He would proffer a resignation from the presidency or from a board submitting that he was unworthy for the position. Of course, these resignations were never meant to be accepted. Candler would be unanimously re-elected amidst great assurances that he was much loved and the man for the job.¹⁰⁹ The Sledd affair touched many of Candler’s closest personal relationships – his daughter and son-in-law, his brothers, his protégé, the church and college so dear to him. It would have

¹⁰⁶ *Emory College Board of Trustees Executive Committee Minutes*, Sept. 3, 1902, contained within the *Emory College Board of Trustees Minutes*, annual meeting of June 6, 1903; *The Atlanta Constitution*, “Arnold Will Succeed Sledd,” Sept. 6, 1902, p. 7.

¹⁰⁷ Andrew Sledd to W.A. Candler, Oct. 7, 1902. W.A. Candler Collection, box 11.

¹⁰⁸ Bauman, Mark K. *Warren Akin Candler: Conservative Amidst Change*. Dissertation. Emory University Department of History, 1975, p. 54.

¹⁰⁹ Bauman, *Warren Akin Candler...*, 1981 (note 21).

been trying on anyone, but in particular, given Candler's temperament, the emotional effect on the bishop was deep.

His colleagues were aware of the effect the incident would have on Candler. While they may not have been sympathetic to Sledd's position, many were sympathetic to the bishop's. Presiding Elder M.J. Cofer of the LaGrange District of the church wrote to the bishop, "Personally, I am not acquainted with Prof. Sledd, never saw him, so it is with many people in Ga., but we know his wife and her father and we know that but for what he did and suffered for Emory College, that College would have no place today in Ga. as a first class educational place. Therefore, for the sake of his wife and her father, many men who think and who know something of how Emory College has been sustained and kept alive by your sweat and love have no sympathy with the great ado made about Prof. Sledd's article, even tho it be a mixture of wisdom and folly. That dare not justify what has been said and done, somehow I rebel at the idea of your first born leaving her native state, after what her father has done for this state and the church in here borders. I am sure I voice the sentiments of many of your friends and acquaintances, who have said nothing, because some things are too sacred to be spoken about. If writing this is a blunder, put it down to my lack of judgment and forget it."¹¹⁰

The news traveled even around the world. Bishop Charles B. Galloway, writing to Candler on October 23 from his mission post in Shanghai, China, closed a detailed report on his successes and trials in the mission field with a personal note: "I see unsatisfactory notices in the papers about Prof. Sledd and a vacancy at Emory, and have feared you were troubled on account of the dear daughter's going away. I hope all will be well. What concerns my noble friend touches my heart, and I have, in thought, been much in your home."¹¹¹

¹¹⁰ M.J. Cofer to W.A. Candler, (undated except for) 1902. W.A. Candler Collection, box 11.

¹¹¹ Galloway to W. A. Candler, Oct. 23, 1902, W. A. Candler Collection, box 11.

Only seven years in age separated Dickey from Candler. The two had been close since that day in the spring of 1898 that the 23-year-old freshman walked into the office of the new 30-year-old president. Under Candler's close tutelage, Dickey rocketed from freshman to president in fifteen years. All that Dickey knew about issues of politics and administration in the government, the church and the college, he had learned at Candler's knee. He shared Candler's views on virtually every major issue of the day. It truly was a mentor-protégé relationship, and the Sledd affair had placed it under great strain.

In a six-week period from the end of November 1902 through early January 1903, Candler and Dickey finally reached a point where they could examine and attempt to move beyond the recent furor that had complicated their longstanding relationship. A bit of gossip prompted an exchange of three long letters each, sorting out the story, what happened and why, what fault lay where. It started when Mrs. Candler told the wife of Professor Weber that Candler still carried hurt that Dickey had treated him discourteously by not replying to his note sent by special delivery messenger the night before the executive committee met in August. Professor Weber relayed the news to Dickey, "knowing that I would gladly do what I could to relieve the situation," Dickey wrote to Candler. He recounted how the delivery person left without waiting for a reply; how Dickey previously had told Candler that a severance package for Sledd was in the works, and so he destroyed Candler's note suggesting such a severance package rather than have posterity read it and misunderstand. "I would have answered that had I thought that you expected an answer. I beg to assure you that no discourtesy was intended, and if offence was given, I trust that this statement will be an apology sufficient to atone. No man ever entertained a more affectionate regard for you than I, and I could not purposely be discourteous to you. Hoping that this letter will remove whatever unpleasant impressions may be in your mind

concerning this matter, and claiming the privilege of subscribing myself your friend, I am truly, James E. Dickey.”¹¹²

Candler wrote his response much as a father taking a beloved child behind the woodshed: “My Dear Dickey: I am sorry my wife said anything about the matter. But as it is, [I must] be candid. I thought & think you [responded] to my suggestion inconsiderately. I have apologized for it to myself on the ground that a sensation was spinning on you at the outset of your administration and you lost your accustomed sobriety of judgement. I did not and do not think you have any disposition to be offensive to me. But I thought and think the college could have been saved injury if you had not acted so precipitously and with such persistence in pushing Sledd out.”¹¹³

The letter reflected the depth of Candler’s hurt through one of his “after all I have done” moods:

It has not so pained me to feel that after all I have spent on the college in both money and effort, and after all my self-sacrifice on its behalf – self-sacrifice in which my little girl and all my children shared – that the president of the college should at the bidding a small sensation raised by my most malignant enemy and by the worst enemy of the college, banish my child from her native state. But I have suffered in silence and do suffer yet – the fewest number knowing how keenly. Moreover, I have felt the college has taken a step, and at your suggestion, that hurts it now and will hurt it more. It stood grandly when President Haygood was under greater fire and when as President the institution must share his fate as can not be in the case of a professor. It retreats hastily before an inconsiderable story about a professor and in running to cover expatriates my child. It put her in a pitiless storm at a mere sprinkle on itself and a few flashes of lightning. I can not think such a curse was worthy of the institution nor right. The adjustment of a little salary – an act of base justice in any event – does not offset the injury of the cause.¹¹⁴

But Candler professed his ongoing love for the college and for Dickey. Clearly he was hurt, but he was not bitter. “I have kept silent and propose to do so. I have solicited funds for

¹¹² Dickey to W.A. Candler, Nov. 26, 1902. W.A. Candler Collection, box 11.

¹¹³ W.A. Candler to Dickey, Nov. 28, 1902. W.A. Candler Collection, box 11.

¹¹⁴ *Ibid.*

the college since and have done all I can to serve its interests.... This incident has tied my hands for some services I might render. I believe a wrong has been done to appease a mob and that as a matter of (flawed) policy grave injury has accrued to the institution. But as I have indicated, I did not believe you meant to wound me or treat me with discourtesy. In an hour of excitement you acted hastily. That is all of it. I have no unkind feeling of course about it. I have loved you long and love you still. But I deplore beyond all expression what I conceive to be a blunder out of all keeping with your usual courage and wisdom. I did all I could to prevent it, but related as I was to the college and to the professor I could not say more than I did. It was due all parties and all interests that at that moment I should have spoken with caution and reserve. Had you been the center of the attack I should have been heard from in the public prints and on the platform. I write this in full that you may not misunderstand me. To you I say far more than I have said to others, though scores of our preachers (including several of the bishops) and not a few of our most prominent laymen have spoken and written to me (without provocation from me and often without reply) in the most emphatic terms of condemnation of the course taken. As to myself, it is simply a part of that Providence of my life by which I enter into the fellowship of my Lord's sufferings. Having spoken plainly and candidly, I prefer never to discuss it again. I am Yours affectionately, W.A. Candler."¹¹⁵

Knowing Candler would be on business in Thomasville, Ga., Dickey dispatched a response to him there, thanking him for his "frank statement," and relating to him the reaction of the seventeen trustees who sought Sledd's ouster, and the determined opposition of Candler's own two brothers, Asa and John. "Not a single trustee was heard from antagonizing the opinion stated above. When I was asked therefore as to my opinion concerning Mr. Sledd's remaining at Emory, I could not arrive at any other conclusion than that his stay would be hurtful to the

¹¹⁵ *Ibid.*

college.” He continued by noting that the full board of trustees had ratified the action of the executive committee without dissent.¹¹⁶

Dickey – guided by the teachings of the church and his sense of duty – above all else wanted to do the right thing, and being placed in a position that cost him Candler’s approval was a personal hurt. “You say that I did not exercise my usual wisdom and courage. I may not have been wise or foreseeing, I lament my limitations on both counts, but with the information as I had and with such strength of mind as I could command, I felt forced to give the opinion expressed.... I mention these facts with pain, but as some justification of my judgement. Now as to the lack of courage in this matter, my friend, you much mistake me. I do not know how it is with other men, but with me, it requires more courage to wound one faithful heart than to face a whole battalion of foes and critics. I feared that you would be wounded, I too suffered keenly, but related to the College as I was, my action was such as it would have been had the Junior Sub-Fresh Professor been involved instead of one of the most cultured members of the Faculty and the son-in-law of perhaps my most valued friend. I fear many things Bishop, but I fear mostly, I trust, to do wrong. It seems to be the fate of the man who stands here to wound those whom he loves and, in turn, to be wounded by them. I am afraid to say that I have entered into the fellowship of His sufferings but I am sure that I have entered into the fellowship of yours. I appreciate your love. Love me all you can. Affectionately yours, James E. Dickey.”¹¹⁷

The bishop, delayed by his travels and an illness that put him to bed upon his return to Atlanta, was unswayed by Dickey’s arguments. He responded two weeks later that “My letter contained my view of the matter which is not changed by your account.” He again blamed Dickey for acting in haste during the clamor created by Candler’s enemies, and for not giving

¹¹⁶ *Ibid.*

¹¹⁷ Dickey to W.A. Candler, Dec. 1, 1902. W.A. Candler Collection, box 11.

Sledd a chance to defend himself before the board. “[T]he action of the Executive Committee was taken on imperfect information and in deference to your wishes. Subsequently when some of them wished the case reopened you opposed such action. I ought not therefore to wonder that you made no reply to my note and rejected in silence and with hasty consideration – if it was considered at all – my suggestion. Your motives I do not question, but your judgement was both erroneous and harsh. You let the enemies of the College lynch a capable professor and banish my child from Georgia. But I do not care to pursue the matter.... The whole transaction is a bad chapter in the history of the College – quite out of line with all its heroic traditions. I am Yours affectionately, W.A. Candler.”¹¹⁸

Dickey, clearly smarting from Candler’s chastisement, used the Christmas break to gather information to bolster the case that he did not act alone. He wrote to executive committee chairman General C. A. Evans asking whether the committee acted “on imperfect information and in deference to my wishes.” Evans replied, “I am surprised to learn that any one has so misrepresented your attitude in the Prof. Sledd matter as to say that you in any form instigated the call of the Ex. Comm. to act on the case he made. I was requested by the President of the Board of Trustees and by several trustees to call the Ex. Comm. together on account of the difficulty of getting at that time a quorum of the Board. I called the Ex. Committee together after having this advice. The Committee was assembled twice and I was at both meetings. The meeting was not called in deference to your wishes. Action was not taken on imperfect information but on careful and considerate investigation with full interchange of views. After the lapse of some months the Trustees sanctioned the action of the Executive Committee. The

¹¹⁸ W.A. Candler to Dickey, Dec. 13, 1902. W.A. Candler Collection, box 11.

North Ga. & the South Ga. Conferences have since then been in session without uttering a word of remonstrance.”¹¹⁹

Dickey forwarded to Candler his exchange with Gen. Evans, saying “that I am willing to assume and bear all responsibility that properly belongs to me, but that I prefer not to be misrepresented.... I admit that when a member of the Ex. Com. suggested reopening the case that I did not approve. The member of committee who thus approached me had not doubt in his mind about the propriety of the action taken, but inasmuch as some prominent men had criticized the committee, he wished the full Board of Trustees to assist him in bearing the responsibility. He believed that the full Board would have acted just as the Ex. Com. did. The Board of Trustees were practically unanimous in the opinion that Prof. Sledd’s continued relation to the College would be hurtful to it.... My regard for you as a friend of nearly fifteen years prompts this letter. I am glad that you keep my motive good. I trust that you will let no man impugn it.”¹²⁰

In the last recorded word between the two on the matter, Candler remained unmoved from his position that he and his son-in-law were wronged and that Emory had made a grievous mistake. Candler restated his version of the affair from the beginning: that a month elapsed between publication of Sledd’s article and the first comment from any officer of the college or trustee, and then only prompted by the *Constitution* article by “a malignant enemy of mine.” Sledd’s August 5 interview attempting to correct the record was “perverted” by the *Journal* reporter who betrayed Sledd’s confidence. Dickey pressured Sledd to resign while refusing to hear his plea for a chance to explain the interview, which had given more offense than the original article. Candler asserted that his special delivery note to Dickey was written as a trustee

¹¹⁹ Dickey to Gen. C. A. Evans, Dec. 15, 1902; Evans to Dickey, Dec. 18, 1902. W.A. Candler Collection, box 11.

¹²⁰ Dickey to W.A. Candler, Jan. 2, 1903. W.A. Candler Collection, box 11.

of the College suggesting a course of action -- that the committee postpone the matter for the consideration of the Board at its November meeting – but that Dickey did not reply. Candler continued,

On the 12th inst. the Committee met. One member (-- there being only 3 present, a bare quorum --) said “Mr. President, you are on the bridge. What do you think we should do?” To which you replied, “The resignation should be accepted.” Thereupon it was done. When the people had had time to get the article and read it a reaction set up. By Aug. 29, it was so strong one of the three who accepted the resignation wrote you suggesting the reopening of the case. He and one other having meanwhile heard for the first time of Sledd’s offer of an explanation which was never mentioned in the Committee and of which Gen. Evans for ought I know has no knowledge yet. To that you laconically replied, ‘In reply I will say personally I do not approve of reopening the matter.’¹²¹

Candler said he was aware of a member of the executive committee who was not present at the meeting expressing disapproval of the haste and that the resignation was accepted. At least one Trustee wanted the matter postponed, Candler asserted, adding “I doubt not there are others of the same mind. Of course at the meeting in November they approved, there was nothing else to do. If I had been present I would have so voted because if the action were not now approved great harm would come & no good. Had I been in the Executive Committee, with no more knowledge than the Committee & with your manifest desire to get rid of the man, I would have voted as they did. It was no time to change presidents & it was folly to retain a professor whose resignation the president had in effect demanded & which he said he thought should be accepted. As to the failure of the conferences to remonstrate, a great mistake will be made if that silence is interpreted as approval. To some who spoke to me of action, I urged that no action be taken, as I also kept out of print since who was eager to rethink the matter. I have reason to believe if a motion of disapproval had been made at North Ga. Conference, it would have carried by a large

¹²¹ W.A. Candler to Dickey, Jan. 5, 1903. W. A. Candler Collection, box 11.

majority. Letters in my possession (not of my seeking at all) very many & very strong from both preachers & laymen justify this opinion.”¹²²

Candler closed the last letter on the matter to Dickey by reiterating the personal hurt he had suffered:

But enough. It is done now & can not be changed – though done in haste & panic. There is nothing left for the Board of Trustees to do but formally approve the act & go along, saying as little as possible about it. The college is injured & the less said the better. Injustice was done Sledd & cruelty was inflicted on me to appease a mob. If it could have done the college any good I would gladly endure my pain for I know how to suffer for the college. But the college was not helped but hurt. In that injury I had no part. I have said all I could say & do with propriety to avert that injury. I failed because your mind was made up – a thing I did not know when I wrote you for I did not then know the part you had borne in procuring Sledd’s resignation. Had I known it, I would not have exposed myself to the humiliation which has arisen from my note to you. My hands, tied as they are, will do what they can for the college and for your administration. [Torn section missing a few words]you may never have ...or the pain I carry. But will you, if one of your little girls is ever involved in a similar situation as was mine, with no more occasion for it than was in Prof. Sledd’s article, no clamor whether from within the Board or without shall silence me. Before they drive her from her house and banish her from her native state the mob will hear from me let them howl as they may. Now spare me any further discussion of this matter. Let it die & pass not a public thought for the sake of the college, if not for mine. My pain is my own and need concern no one else. With best wishes for the New Year, I am Yours affectionately, W.A. Candler.¹²³

At least one previous writer on the Sledd Affair has concluded that the matter grievously damaged the relationship between Candler and Dickey, writing that “an icy silence separated Dickey and Candler for years to come.”¹²⁴ The evidence is to the contrary. In their letters, neither man went away mad – they came through it with pain and hurt, such as family members caught up in a serious misunderstanding. But clearly they continued to be colleagues and even warm, dear friends. They sat in numerous meetings of Emory College and University boards of trustees on which they both served together for the next 26 years. For 31 consecutive years,

¹²² *Ibid.*

¹²³ W.A. Candler to Dickey, Jan. 5, 1903. W. A. Candler Collection, box 11.

¹²⁴ Reed, “Emory College and the Sledd Affair...,” p. 485

Candler's position first as Emory president, then as bishop of Georgia and on the Emory board made him Dickey's immediate supervisor continuously from his joining the Emory faculty in 1891 to Dickey's election as bishop himself in 1922. Throughout the period, Dickey continued to receive plum assignments, remaining in the presidency for thirteen years, longer than any of his predecessors including Candler, before being appointed by the bishop as pastor of the largest church in the conference – Atlanta First Methodist. Upon his subsequent election as bishop, Dickey became a close ally of Candler's in the conservative wing of the Council of Bishops. Candler was of such power and authority during those years that it is clear Dickey could not have achieved those leading positions without Candler's support.

Perhaps more telling is the personal closeness the two men and their families maintained. Candler officiated at the weddings of Dickey's two eldest daughters – Julia's marriage to Emory Professor of Greek C.E. Boyd at the old Oxford church in 1914, and Annie's marriage to the Rev. Henry H. Jones of Emory's class of 1911 on March 29, 1916, in the newly constructed Allen Memorial Methodist Church on Emory's Oxford campus. Annie would later recall to family members with some disgust that the diminutive bishop, over whom she towered, pronounced the couple husband and wife, leaning up to kiss her on the cheek before her new husband had the chance.¹²⁵

In later years, the men had homes just three doors apart on North Decatur Road across the street from Emory's Druid Hills campus, Dickey at 1627 North Decatur and Candler at 1653. Indeed, Candler wrote a glowing memorial of Dickey upon the younger man's unexpected death in 1928, as well as the foreword to Elam F. Dempsey's tribute, *The Life of Bishop Dickey*. Candler's words carried no hint of any remnant enmity from the Sledd affair: "In no work to which he was appointed by his Church did he disappoint the confidence reposed in him or fall

¹²⁵ Dickey family papers.

below the lofty level of fidelity and effectiveness expected of him. From his youth to the end of his high career on earth his purposes and plans were well considered and deliberately pursued to their accomplishment with unwavering resoluteness and unfaltering conscientiousness. No fitful impulsiveness marred his life and labors, and no distracting ambitions diverted him from the path of duty in which he determined to walk.... He was removed the furthest possible from sensationalism or anything akin to it. He met all events with uniform calmness and discharged all duties with unvarying fidelity. Hence his life was not marked by striking incidents and surprising effects....”¹²⁶

Likewise, Ralph Reed, Jr. concludes there was a negative financial impact -- that “exactly how much the Sledd affair cost Emory in lost donations is a matter of speculation, but the amount was probably substantial,” an assertion upon which Henry Y. Warnock stands without challenge.¹²⁷ But Emory was like many Southern colleges of its day – in constant financial difficulty, usually running a deficit, and often dependent on the generosity of individual trustees, particularly Asa G. Candler, to help meet its financial obligations. The trustees’ minutes reveal that this was the case for years before and after the Sledd affair, and no evidence is apparent that the financial condition was any worse after the incident than before.

Another general conclusion reached by several who have written on this matter is that it was a unique product of the racial attitudes of the turn-of-the-century south. Yes, Bishop Candler was “an avowed and unabashed racist,”¹²⁸ and by extension, so was his man Dickey, as were most other whites in the South of the day. W. J. Cash, in his landmark *The Mind of the South*, counts Sledd among “a growing handful of men” on Southern campuses who from the late

¹²⁶ Dempsey, *Life of Bishop Dickey*, pp. xi-xii.

¹²⁷ Reed, “Emory College and the Sledd Affair...,” p. 483; Warnock, Henry Y., “Andrew Sledd, Southern Methodists, and the Negro: A Case History.” *The Journal of Southern History*, Vol. 31, No. 3 (Aug. 1965), 251-271.

¹²⁸ Bauman, *Warren Akin Candler...*, 1975 dissertation, p. 317.

1890s turned “directly to examining and criticizing the South.” Cash notes the growing tendency at most schools “to back them up in it, or at least to maintain their right to their heresies.” But the Emory faculty, “Perhaps intimidated by the uproar of the press against him...silently acquiesced.”¹²⁹

C. Vann Woodward deals with Sledd, albeit briefly, in his standard *Origins of the New South*, but those directly involved in the case might have disagreed with Woodward’s characterization of Sledd’s *Atlantic Monthly* article as “innocuous.” Woodward praises Trinity College for preserving the position of Professor John Spencer Bassett in a similar case and criticizes Emory for its “unfortunate example.”¹³⁰

Indeed, Sledd’s position on “the negro question” was the *proximate* cause of the upheaval at Emory, but the root issue was a question of institutional public relations – the matter of an outspoken faculty member bringing embarrassment to the institution and being dealt with as a result. Sledd himself acknowledged as much in his autobiography.¹³¹

Emory was not alone in experiencing an incident negative to institutional public relations. Several other institutions recorded similar incidents during the years surrounding Emory’s Sledd affair. The Bassett affair at Trinity was one such case. It occurred the year following the Sledd case, in October 1903, at another Methodist college in the south, and again involving a statement on race. Bassett published an article in the *South Atlantic Quarterly* pronouncing, among other things, that Booker T. Washington was the second-ranking citizen of the nineteenth-century south, second only to Robert E. Lee. As Sledd was to Emory, Bassett was arguably the Trinity faculty’s strongest scholar. In fact, Bassett specialized in the history of African-Americans

¹²⁹ Cash, W. J. *The Mind of the South*. New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1941, p. 323.

¹³⁰ Woodward, C. Vann. *Origins of the New South, 1877-1913*. Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1971.

¹³¹ Sledd autobiography, p. 81.

through slavery and since the Civil War. He knew well the work of former Emory President Atticus G. Haygood, who in 1881 had urged Christian charity toward Blacks through educational and economic opportunities, drawing considerable personal criticism. Bassett was editor of the *Quarterly*, and his regular columns were often on “the negro question,” and often took to task the public press, particularly the *News and Observer* of Raleigh. So when Bassett in his article opined that a small group of Blacks had made “remarkable progress” and were no longer content with an inferior place in society, the *News and Observer* pounced, much like the *Constitution* did in the Sledd case. Booker T. Washington was an example of such an extraordinary Black person, Bassett asserted, and a Southern leader of great import. “Prof. Bassett says Negro Will Win Equality,” trumpeted the newspaper’s headlines. “Southern Leaders Slandered.”¹³²

The difference in the Bassett case was the reaction of Trinity officials. Perhaps Kilgo and his administration had been enlightened by the Sledd affair. As Kilgo directly corresponded with his close friend Candler over the Sledd matter, now Candler wrote the chairman of Trinity’s board of trustees. He disagreed with some of Bassett’s positions, but called him “a capable man and a clean man.” Candler believed “it would be injurious to the college and to our Southern Church and section if for such a consideration his relations with Trinity College were severed.” He urged the Trinity trustees to make it clear that “our faculties do not hold office at the will of irritable and inflammatory people who too easily join in any hue and cry that may be raised.”¹³³

Trinity College at first remained silent while the *News and Observer* railed, even attacking the school’s connection to the “tobacco magnates,” the Duke family. The paper suggested that President Kilgo might be replaced and ran a list of addresses for Trinity trustees, “for the convenience of the readers.” Kilgo held back and gave Bassett an opportunity to

¹³² Porter, *Trinity and Duke*, pp. 96-121.

¹³³ Bauman, *Warren Akin Candler...*, 1981, p. 158, citing Warren Candler letter to “My Dear Brother Southgate,” November 30, 1903, Kilgo papers, Duke Special Collections.

“clarify” his statements. Bassett did so in the next *Quarterly*, saying his “equality” of the races meant in economic opportunity, not social equality; and that Booker T. Washington’s “greatness” was in overcoming great handicaps. He said the interpretations of his prior article had been “extreme.”¹³⁴

Bassett did not submit a resignation, but wrote to the trustees: “I wish to assure the Board that should they decide to request my resignation I shall not hesitate to comply with their wishes.” The clarifications of his second article and the tendered offer of resignation were astute, requiring an action on the part of the board if Bassett was to be forced out and leaving Kilgo room to offer support. In fact, he was able to turn trustee Ben Duke from his original position against the letter to one of supporting academic freedom for faculty members, including Bassett. By the time the full board met on December 1, 1903, they were able to state that Bassett did not advocate social equality of the races and reiterate their confidence in Kilgo. In doing so, the college officially disagreed with what Bassett had written and defended his right to write it.¹³⁵

Candler was in a position to give Kilgo cover while the Trinity trustees met. The annual conference was meeting in North Carolina with Candler in the chair as presiding bishop at the same time Trinity’s board was in session. When he learned that resolutions condemning Bassett had been prepared for introduction at the annual conference, he urged those responsible to pursue a petition, instead, which would avoid “open and acrimonious debate.” Those pushing the petition were unable to prepare it in time for consideration before the conference adjourned.¹³⁶

¹³⁴ Porter, *Trinity and Duke*, pp. 122-125.

¹³⁵ *Ibid.*

¹³⁶ Bauman, *Warren Akin Candler...*, 1981, pp. 158-159. Porter, *Trinity and Duke*, p. 127, note 74, citing the *Raleigh News & Observer*, January 12, 1904.

Scholars have argued whether the Duke family's change of position came as a reaction to attacks on the institution.¹³⁷ If so, then they reacted much the same way the Emory trustees did – not basing their decision on race, but doing what they thought necessary to protect the institution from outside attack – with a very different outcome.

“The forced departure of college professors was a common occurrence by no means peculiar to the South,” Warnock notes, as have others. Referencing both Bassett and Sledd, he says their “predicament could just as easily have been precipitated by ideas unrelated to the problem of race relations.”¹³⁸

Laurence R. Veysey, in *The Emergence of the American University*, asserts that there was a larger, umbrella concern governing such matters -- unfavorable publicity -- which he postulates was a chief concern of college administrators at the turn of the last century. “...The university had little room for troublemakers in its midst,” he writes. “By 1900 the publicity-conscious administrator found himself generally in charge of the new American university.”¹³⁹ Veysey cites numerous cases of trouble-making faculty being shown the door for creating ill will and bad publicity for their institutions. The “new order of academic freedom” had not yet established itself over the “older order of academic respectability.... University executives, who were then often guiding their institutions through the most crucial stages of rapid development, reacted to public unrest with a heightened cautiousness.”¹⁴⁰

Veysey recites a litany of such cases: Richard T. Ely at the University of Wisconsin in 1894, Edward W. Bemis at the University of Chicago in 1895, the Andrews case at Brown in 1897 (involving a president rather than a professor), the Herron case at Iowa (Grinnell) College,

¹³⁷ Porter, *Trinity and Duke*, pp. 126-139.

¹³⁸ Warnock, “Andrew Sledd, Southern Methodists, and the Negro...,” p. 264.

¹³⁹ Veysey, Laurence R., *The Emergence of the American University*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1965, p. 382.

¹⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 385.

and the Edward A. Ross dismissal at Stanford in 1900. In each, “The administrator, exalting bland tolerance as a virtue, was forced to behave intolerantly toward the propagation of certain ideas, whereas the militant professor, tenaciously defending a platform for his most sharp-edged convictions, had to assume the unlikely role of the advocate of live-and-let-live. These incongruities may seem less important if one located the center of the dispute over academic freedom not in the realm of abstract reason but rather in that of institutional authority and hierarchy.”¹⁴¹

At Stanford, Ross – like Sledd and Bassett one of the more accomplished faculty members -- had the temerity to take public positions on issues in conflict with the expressed views of the institution’s co-founder and sole trustee, Mrs. Leland Stanford. In particular, two of his speeches in the spring of 1900 -- one opposing Asian immigration and another failing to strongly oppose municipal ownership of public utilities -- aligned Ross with radical positions held by the unions of the day in opposition to industrial and railroad magnates such as Mrs. Stanford’s late husband. Mrs. Stanford directed President David Starr Jordan to dismiss Ross immediately. Although the president liked Ross and attempted to buy an extension for him while he could find a new job, Mrs. Stanford became incensed and forced Jordan to remove him. Ross called a press conference and made public statements bringing more embarrassment to the institution and alienating the president who had tried to support him.¹⁴²

Trustees of the era “did not see any significant difference between a large corporation and a large university,” according to Baldrige *et al*, who offer a further list of faculty dismissals during this period, “especially significant because in most instances the faculty were fired for advocating theories or positions which offended certain trustees.” In addition to the Ross at

¹⁴¹ *Ibid.*, p. 386.

¹⁴² *Ibid.*, p. 400-404.

Stanford and Ely at Wisconsin, Baldrige cites further the cases of Henry C. Adams at Cornell for a pro-labor speech; George Steel, president of Lawrence College, for leanings toward free trade and greenbacks; and Docent Hourwich at the University of Chicago for participation in a Populist convention.¹⁴³

Sledd himself addresses this attitude in his autobiography, regarding not the *Atlantic Monthly* article, but another “elaborate” paper on illiteracy in the South which he had prepared and read before the Emory faculty. Walking home from the presentation, a faculty colleague urged him not to publish it, “as it will be telling tales on us that are not to our credit.” Sledd says it is a southern characteristic to apply “only that truth which is agreeable to the section.... A man who is possessed of a spirit of love of truth and who has hardihood to declare it is not apt, but certain, to have to undergo persecution in the South,” although he acknowledged it is also true in other sections of the nation. In 1902 Sledd self-published a similar paper on the shortcomings of the Southern Methodist college in general, and sent copies to every member of the General Conference of the church. He had hoped to influence educational legislation, “but the effort was regarded as an impertinence, and totally failed to improve the conditions.”¹⁴⁴

In those early days of the Progressive Era, the concept of academic freedom was just emerging. The concept of a faculty member as an employee who serves at the pleasure of the employer still held sway, and embarrassing one’s president, trustees and institution clearly bought a quick ticket out the door at any number of institutions. Even in Southern schools like Emory and Trinity, where race was the hot-button issue that set off their respective frays, the underlying cause for the faculty members’ landing on the hot seat was their violation of the institutional image. Emory provides us with further evidence of this in its historical treatment of

¹⁴³ Baldrige, J. Victor; Curtis, David V.; Ecker, George; and Riley, Gary L. *Policy Making and Effective Leadership*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, Inc., 1978, pp. 254-255.

¹⁴⁴ Sledd autobiography, pp. 73-74.

the Sledd affair. In Dempsey's *Life of Bishop Dickey*, the name Sledd does not appear. For a century, the Emory party line remained that Sledd had resigned. In Bullock's centennial history of Emory College and University, published in 1936, the Sledd affair is granted one page. But even in that slight treatment, Bullock arrived at a fundamental conclusion as he reported that Sledd "resigned in the summer of 1902 *to protect the College from the antagonism* [emphasis added] which had been aroused by an article of his on the race question...".¹⁴⁵

Candler undertook a series of articles over the years condemning lynching. An early one appeared in the *Atlanta Constitution* on September 9, 1903, under the headline, "Must put down the mob or be put down by it." In an accompanying editorial, the *Constitution* supported Candler's argument that lynching no longer was being employed as punishment for rape alone, and society could not "condone the action of lynchers in overthrowing the law and taking unto themselves the right to judge and punish for one crime, [lest] they demand wider latitude and greater power." The newspaper agreed with Candler that "Lynching is no cure for any evil; it is in itself an evil that is working grave harm to our American civilization...."¹⁴⁶

Not until a 2002 exhibit of lynching photographs came to the Emory campus did the school take the opportunity to acknowledge the Sledd scandal. Emory marked the one hundredth anniversary of the affair with an exhibition at Pitts Theology Library entitled *Protesting Racial Violence: Andrew Sledd, Warren Akin Candler, and Lynching Controversies in Early Twentieth-Century Georgia*. The exhibit of photographs, letters, newspaper clippings, and other original materials, explored the larger "conversation" about lynching among white and African-American scholars and the faith community in Atlanta in the early 20th century, primarily being based on

¹⁴⁵ Bullock, *History of Emory University*, p. 240; Dempsey, *Life of Bishop Dickey*; Warnock, "Andrew Sledd, Southern Methodists, and the Negro...".

¹⁴⁶ *Atlanta Constitution*, "Must Put Down the Mob or Be Put Down By It," by Bishop Warren A Candler, Sept. 9, 1903, pp. 5, 6.

Candler's later writings condemning lynching. The keynote address was delivered by Professor Emeritus James Hinton Sledd of the University of Texas, Andrew Sledd's son born in Atlanta in 1914, a 1936 Emory graduate and Rhodes Scholar who died in 2003.¹⁴⁷

And what of the elder Sledd? The *Augusta Chronicle* suggested that had he held his position rather than resigning so abruptly "he might have discovered that there was no necessity for his resignation, and had the Northern press held its hands for a brief period, it might have been recognized that Sledd was not being overwhelmed by a flood of abuse."¹⁴⁸ Indeed, as vituperative as the Atlanta newspapers had been during the crisis, their attention only covered eleven days from Rebecca Felton's first letter on Aug. 3 to their last major article on Aug. 13.

Nonetheless, Sledd departed for Yale in September and completed work on his Ph.D. in nine months. He then returned South, joining the faculty of Southern University in Alabama in 1904 (which he termed "a university in name only")¹⁴⁹, moving shortly to become the first president of the University of Florida from 1904 to 1909, first at Lake City then at the new campus in Gainesville. In 1909, a dispute with the Florida trustees over admission requirements led to his forced resignation. Some report he adamantly held admission standards at levels stricter than the average Floridian could attain; others that the concern was over academic eligibility of athletes. Regardless, the ire of the state's politicians was raised, and he resigned. In sympathy with his plight, the entire Board of Trustees submitted their resignations, as well. After a brief stint as pastor of the First Methodist Church of Jacksonville, Sledd returned to

¹⁴⁷ Emory University media advisory, Jan. 18, 2001, retrieved Sept. 29, 2008 at <http://www.emory.edu/WELCOME/journcontents/releases/MLKmediaadvisory.html>; and a review of the exhibit and program by Daryl White, *The Public Historian*, Vol. 25, No. 1 (Winter, 2003), pp. 123-125.

¹⁴⁸ Warnock, "Andrew Sledd, Southern Methodists, and the Negro..." p. 270, citing an *Augusta Chronicle* article quoted in the *Literary Digest*, XXV (Sept. 13, 1902), p. 308.

¹⁴⁹ Sledd autobiography, p. 105.

Southern University, this time as president, often working without pay as the college could not meet payroll.¹⁵⁰

In 1914, when his wife's uncle, Asa G. Candler, gave \$1 million to transform Emory College to Emory University and build a new campus in the Druid Hills section of Atlanta, with his father-in-law Bishop Warren A. Candler as the new chancellor, Sledd joined the faculty as Professor of Greek and New Testament in the new School of Theology, Candler's first hire. For the next 25 years, he wielded significant influence in training a generation of Methodist preachers, inculcating in them a philosophy of racial tolerance and justice. Sledd's long tenure as one of the nation's most respected scholars in his field continued until his death in 1939. The late Bishop Kenneth Goodson, who was Methodist Bishop in Alabama when a 1963 church bombing in Birmingham killed four Black children, recalls that the small, brave core of his ministers who helped calm the situation by courageously attending an interracial memorial service were "almost to a man, students of Andrew Sledd."¹⁵¹

¹⁵⁰ Andrew Sledd to W.A. Candler, Dec. 20, 1906; June 18, 1907, Sledd Collection; Reed, "Emory College and the Sledd Affair," pp. 490-491; Barnett, Albert Edward, *Andrew Sledd: His Life and Work*, 18-page pamphlet, Duke University library, 1956(?).

¹⁵¹ W.A. Candler to Andrew Sledd, July 17, 1914, Sledd Collection; Bullock, *History of Emory University*, p. 356; Reed, "Emory College and the Sledd Affair..." p. 491; Matthews, "The Voice of a Prophet..." pp. 12-13.

CHAPTER 4

EMORY COLLEGE PRESIDENT (PART ONE), 1902-1909

After so tumultuous a first half-year in office, it is remarkable that Dickey managed to steady the ship and embark upon a longer tenure in office than any of the eleven Emory presidents who preceded him. Even through the height of the Sledd Affair, his apparent dogged determination to be about the work of the college set the course for the coming thirteen years as president. He maintained a full and regular schedule during the first weeks and months in office, as the crisis broke around him.

The day after election as president, he attended a meeting of the Young Harris College trustees at Atlanta's Trinity Church.¹ Even as the Sledd affair surfaced in the next week, the Atlanta District Conference was held at Epworth Church, with Dickey preaching the opening sermon, Candler preaching on Thursday and Friday nights, and Dowman presiding.² Dickey arrived in Oxford on July 17 to begin the transfer of leadership from Dowman, and moved his family into the President's home in mid-August.³

Still in July, Dickey preached at the LaGrange District Conference, and accomplished some early fundraising by taking a collection of \$160 for the support of Emory.⁴ The last week of the month, he was featured speaker at the cornerstone-laying ceremony at Sparks Collegiate Institute in Berrien County.⁵ On the two Sundays leading up to Sledd's resignation on August 11, Dickey was in the pulpit at Grace Church, preaching and leading both the morning and

¹ *Atlanta Constitution*, "Young Harris Trustees," July 9, 1902, p. 9.

² *Atlanta Constitution*, "Conference Next Week, Methodist Preachers and Laymen to Gather at Epworth Church," July 18, 1902, p. 7; *Atlanta Constitution*, "District Conference Opens," July 24, 1902, p. 7.

³ *Atlanta Constitution*, "Dickey Takes Charge as President of Emory," July 18, 1902, p. 3; *Atlanta Constitution*, Oxford social notes, Aug. 24, 1902, p. C5.

⁴ *Atlanta Constitution*, "Brilliant Addresses at LaGrange Conference," July 18, 1902, p. 6.

⁵ *Atlanta Constitution*, "Masons Lay Corner Stones," July 30, 1902, p. 4.

evening worship services each day.⁶ On August 13, Candler named Rev. John S. Jenkins of Springfield, Missouri to succeed Dickey as pastor of Grace Church, effective September 1.⁷

On August 27 – just ten days after the *Atlanta Constitution* published its final installment in the series of stories on the Sledd matter – Dickey wrote Candler with a report full of business matters and no mention of Sledd. He told Candler that the Quillian Lectureship was within \$200 of being fully funded at \$3,000. He notified the bishop he would nominate him to deliver the next series in the Quillian lectureship. Dickey informed Candler of an anonymous fundraising prospect. He requested that Fletcher Walton be appointed as pastor at Oxford and Midway so as to assist Dickey in his work, noting that Walton was desired by the church at Athens, as well. He provided an update on fundraising progress for the new science hall and for the Lowe fund, and the prospects for fall enrollment.⁸

Business required Candler and Dickey to continue their traditional consultation and cooperation. Dickey maintained the support of the trustees throughout the transition and early upheaval. And even Candler acknowledged that “It was no time to change presidents,” and professed his continued devotion to Dickey.⁹ An exchange of private, personal correspondence between the two transpired through the fall and into January as the parties attempted to resolve their competing understandings of what had happened – but in public, Emory, Candler and Dickey seemed determined to move past the Sledd Affair as cleanly and rapidly as possible.

The faculty at the opening of Dickey’s presidency consisted of fourteen men – five of whom would remain on the faculty throughout his thirteen years in office. The five were John F. Bonnell, who held a master’s from Emory and a Ph.D. from Southern University, as Alfred H.

⁶ *Atlanta Constitution*, “In The Realm of Religion,” Aug. 3, 1902, p. 12 and Aug. 10, 1902, p. 1.

⁷ *Atlanta Constitution*, “Jenkins Named as Pastor,” August 13, 1902, p. 8.

⁸ Dickey to W.A. Candler, Aug. 27, 1902. W.A. Candler Collection, box 11, Manuscript, Archives, and Rare Book Library, Emory University.

⁹ W. A. Candler to Dickey, Jan. 3, 1903. W.A. Candler Collection, box 11.

Colquitt Professor of Natural Science; James P. Hanner, Jr., a Vanderbilt alumnus who married President Dowman's daughter, Claire, and served as professor of modern languages; Edgar H. Johnson, who graduated Emory with a bachelor of science degree and earned a master's of science at the University of Chicago, as Alumni Professor of History and Political Economy (Johnson was on leave for further study at Harvard during Dickey's first year as president); Mansfield T. Peed, who held a master of arts degree from Randolph-Macon College, was professor of pure mathematics and astronomy; and E. K. Turner, professor of Latin language and literature, who came during the year to succeed Andrew Sledd. In the interim, M. H. Arnold, a Washington and Lee graduate, filled the Latin position.

The remainder of the faculty included Harry H. Stone, the George W. W. Stone Professor of Applied Mathematics; Charles W. Pepler, a Johns Hopkins Ph.D., who was George I. Seney Professor of Greek Language and Literature; William L. Weber, with a master's degree from Wofford College, the Bishop George F. Pierce Professor of English Language and Literature; Enoch M. Banks, an Emory alumnus who filled Johnson's post in history and political economy while Johnson took leave to study at Harvard; Stewart R. Roberts, an Emory graduate who was professor of biology and spent Dickey's first year on leave at the University of Chicago; Frederick N. Duncan of Indiana University, who filled Roberts' position during the year; F. C. Brown, who held a bachelor's from the University of Nashville and a master's degree from the University of Chicago, as adjunct professor of languages and director of the gymnasium; Emory alumnus T. H. Wade as adjunct professor of mathematics; and Capers Dickson, in his last year as professor of law before the department was to be discontinued.¹⁰

"The whole student body misses the high-toned gentleman and Christian scholar who has filled the Latin chair so ably for the past five years, Prof. Sledd," said the first edition of the

¹⁰ *Emory College Catalogue 1902-1903*, p. 7.

Phoenix for the fall term, “but we find in Dr. Arnold [the interim] a worthy successor.” The student paper, citing other newcomers to the faculty, noted that “Prof. Banks...is already very popular among the boys,” and “Prof. Duncan...is one of the most magnetic men it has been our pleasure to meet in quite a while. His lectures show a scholarly mind well filled with useful knowledge.”¹¹

E. K. Turner, Sledd’s permanent successor, carried academic credentials stronger than most of his faculty colleagues. An 1890 graduate of Southern University in Greensboro, Alabama, he tutored there for two more years after his graduation, receiving a master of arts degree. He followed this with study at Vanderbilt University, for which he earned a master of arts while completing the resident work for a doctor of philosophy. Then, as a faculty member on leave from Southern, he traveled and studied for two years in Italy and Greece, attending the universities of Halle-Wittenberg, Leipzig and Berlin, where he completed his Ph.D. He spent time on an archaeological excursion through Italy, led by the head of the German Archeological Institute at Athens, Greece. He returned to Southern for two years, and lectured at the University of Mississippi before being elected to the Emory faculty. His arrival raised the stature of the Emory faculty considerably.¹²

The *Phoenix* opened the fall term by paying tribute to the departed President Dowman and welcoming President Dickey. Of Dowman it said, “His work in the class room always displayed deep research and broad knowledge, his executive duties were always discharged with a fearless, and yet tender spirit, his associations with the boys were cordial and sincere. His broad intellectual achievements, his noble spirit, his deep piety, and his fatherly disposition

¹¹ *The Emory Phoenix*, October 1902, p. 25.

¹² *The Emory Phoenix*, Oct. 1903, p. 23; *Atlanta Constitution*, “Learned Alabama Scholar Fills Emory Latin Chair,” Sept. 13, 1903, p. B2.

endeared him to every boy under his control.... May his work in the pastorate be successful and his old age filled with happiness.”¹³

Dickey was “no stranger” and “needs no words of commendation at our hands,” said the *Phoenix* in its welcome. “We are assured that the trustees could have made no wiser selection....” Recounting his “fidelity to duty and broad scholarship” as a student, his involvement in Chi Phi fraternity, the Few Society and debate, and his time as a professor, during which “he completely won the boys,” the student paper wished for the new president “the most successful administration in Emory’s history.”¹⁴

Dickey continued diligently to pursue both teaching and preaching. As president, he was Lovick Pierce Professor of Mental and Moral Science, teaching the capstone course to seniors. He often occupied a pulpit somewhere in North Georgia, at times more than once a week. On October 19, for example, he preached both the morning and evenings services at Atlanta’s First Methodist Church. Taking his text for the evening from Psalms 84, verse 11 – “The Lord God is a sun” – Dickey preached that God is the life of the world and the light of the world, but that it is mankind’s attitude toward God that determines the effectiveness of that light on one’s soul. Dickey’s preaching apparently was effective, as three new members joined the church at the conclusion of the sermon.¹⁵ Likewise, Dickey continued his civic involvements in the Atlanta community, attending the Atlanta Methodist Ministers’ Association meeting, where he reported on the successful start of Emory’s new academic year. Such occasions provided convenient opportunities for his increasing role as institutional ambassador and public relations advocate.¹⁶

¹³ *The Emory Phoenix*, Oct. 1902, pp. 24-25.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 25.

¹⁵ *The Atlanta Constitution*, “Interesting Sermons Heard Yesterday,” Oct. 20, 1902, p. 6.

¹⁶ *The Atlanta Constitution*, “Short Items of Local Interest,” Sept. 29, 1902, p. 6.

Even as a preacher and teacher, Dickey also had the systematic mind of a modern administrator. He methodically set goals and pursued them with dispatch and efficiency. During his first year as president, he set six goals for himself, most of which were achieved or in progress during the first five years in office. He sought first to pay the \$1,000 in debt remaining on the Candler Library, which was accomplished early in his first year by a contribution from Asa G. Candler. Two major construction projects were on his agenda: to finance and build the new Pierce Science Hall, and to build and equip a gymnasium. He sought to collect loans outstanding to the Student Loan Fund so that more students could be served, pledged to push enrollment past 300 from its present level of 238, and campaigned to build a larger endowment.¹⁷

In addition to meeting the Candler Library debt, in his first year the Quillian Lectureship Fund was completed, the Student Loan Fund increased to carry thirty students – five more than before, and faculty salaries were the highest yet, \$1,480 for a full professor. Construction of Pierce Science Hall was well underway, with \$18,000 of the \$30,000 needed for its completion already in hand. Under the management of Professor W. L. Weber, a new dining hall was in operation, which the *Phoenix* reported to be “working admirably” and “popular throughout the student body.” Noting these accomplishments, the *Phoenix* said, “Emory is to be congratulated upon having as a president not only a good man, a profound teacher, and a great preacher, but also an able financier.”¹⁸

These examples of Emory’s success and future goals became Dickey’s focus in speeches as he traveled about the state. In particular, he enumerated them in a report to the North Georgia

¹⁷ *Emory College Trustees Minutes*, June 7, 1907, p. 220; Bullock, *A History of Emory University*, pp. 236-237; *The Atlanta Constitution*, “North Georgia Conference Meets,” Nov. 20, 1902, p. 1.

¹⁸ *Emory College Trustees Minutes*, June 6, 1903, p. 59; Bullock, *A History of Emory University*, p. 237; *The Emory Phoenix*, Nov. 1902, pp. 73-74; *The Emory Phoenix*, April 1903, p. 317; *Atlanta Constitution*, “Meeting Place of Conference Not Settled,” Nov. 25, 1902, p. 4.

Conference meeting that year at Atlanta First Methodist Church – the speech garnering front-page coverage in the *Atlanta Constitution*, and to a meeting of the Emory College Board of Trustees held at Atlanta’s Trinity Methodist Church in conjunction with the meeting of annual conference.¹⁹ In acting as the institution’s chief public relations spokesman and fundraiser, Dickey’s administration was becoming emblematic of a modern college presidency.

The last week of November 1902, the State School Commissioner G. R. Glenn convened a meeting in his office to discuss common admission requirements for the state’s leading colleges. Chancellor Walter B. Hill represented the University of Georgia, as did President P. D. Pollock on behalf of Mercer University and Dickey for Emory. Faculty members M. T. Peed and W. L. Weber of Emory also attended, as did William Heard Kilpatrick of Mercer. In the meeting, with Dickey presiding, the group adopted a resolution ending the practice of granting entrance to the three schools’ freshman classes by certificate from certain recognized preparatory schools. Henceforth, all applicants for admission would be required to stand examination. The resolution was pending ratification by the faculties of the three institutions. The group resolved to hold annual meetings to further discuss common admission requirements.²⁰ The experiment apparently would be short-lived. By 1906, admission by certificate from selected institutions again was listed in the college catalogue.²¹

These and other leading educators of Georgia met rather frequently. A group known as the Schoolmasters’ Club met annually, and held a two-day meeting in Athens in January, 1903. Attendees included Dickey, Pollock and Hill of the state’s three leading institutions, accompanied by University of Georgia professor David C. Barrow, along with representatives of

¹⁹ *The Atlanta Constitution*, “North Georgia Conference Meets,” Nov. 20, 1902, p. 1; *Emory College Trustees Minutes*, Nov. 20, 1902.

²⁰ *Atlanta Constitution*, “Must Stand Examinations,” Nov. 30, 1902, p. 2.

²¹ *Catalogue of Emory College, 1906-1907*, p. 15.

the State Normal School, and the city schools of Athens, Atlanta, Macon, Savannah, Augusta, Columbus and Hawkinsville. They toured educational institutions in Athens and discussed “many important educational questions,” the *Constitution* reported.²²

The students honored Dickey that November, as the Few Society dedicated portraits of Emory and Few Society alumni Dickey and W. A. Keener, who then served as a judge on the Supreme Court of New York. G. W. Killian spoke in dedication of Dickey’s picture, and Professor W. L. Weber on behalf of Judge Keener.²³

The social life of a college president often mixes business with pleasure, and such was the case as President and Mrs. Dickey hosted the faculty and their wives in the President’s home on the evening of November 28, 1902. The guests played a contest, guessing the titles of books, which were represented in unique drawings on cards. Professor Bonnell took the gentleman’s prize, while Mrs. Peed took top prize for the ladies.²⁴

In January, the *Phoenix* called the coming abolition of the law department a mistake. “The college is sure to lose patronage by abolishing this department,” said the student paper. “We sincerely hope that the trustees will reconsider their action and provide for a better course in the future.”²⁵

The *Phoenix* also addressed the discipline of the college – particularly compulsory attendance at gym and at church – placing these among the “dark clouds” of the college for the new boys. Those who had been on campus as much as a year, however, realized the discipline actually had a “silver lining” – gym for good health and “great aid to our physical man,” and church to keep students from “spending a greater part of Saturday night in festive mirth and

²² *Atlanta Constitution*, “Schoolmasters’ Club Meets,” Jan. 27, 1903, p. 12.

²³ *The Emory Phoenix*, Dec. 1902, p. 135.

²⁴ *The Emory Phoenix*, Dec. 1902, p. 136.

²⁵ *The Emory Phoenix*, Jan. 1903, p. 183.

indulging ourselves” by sleeping all day Sunday. Noting that “many a man has been touched for good while attending a service to which he was compelled to go,” the paper in a separate story outlined the sermon preached by President Dickey at the Oxford church on the first Sunday in February. Preaching from Isaiah 16:11, he urged his audience always to keep before them the main purpose of the gospel – the salvation of souls.

A collection at the close of the service raised \$550 toward the purchase of Professor H. S. Bradley’s residence to be used as a new church parsonage. Purchase of the residence for the amount of \$2,000 was completed in the spring, with the pastor’s family occupying the residence the next July.²⁶ In a letter to the *Wesleyan Christian Advocate*, Dickey attested to the “popularity and efficiency” of the Oxford pastor, G. W. Duval, and reported the purchase of the parsonage. Saying “there is not a more attractive and comfortable [home] in the village,” Dickey’s purpose in writing was to “let the conference know that we intend to take care of our pastor, and when the four-year limit is out with Brother Duval, we shall be as glad to make comfortable and happy the next one.” Further boosting Oxford as “having one of the best parsonage properties in the conference,” he closed with, “All hats off to Brother Duval.”²⁷

When he was in the congregation and not the pulpit at the Oxford church, Dickey followed the tradition of sitting in the “President’s Pew,” the front row to the preacher’s left. His family sat elsewhere in the congregation, but from that vantage point, the president could see not only the preacher but also the entire congregation. His presence was not only as an example, but as a watchful eye.²⁸

Dickey’s organization and progress during the first year as president, and his apparent success at promoting his goals and accomplishments, created an atmosphere that was quite

²⁶ *The Emory Phoenix*, Feb. 1903, pp. 237, 239; and April 1903, pp. 347-348.

²⁷ *Wesleyan Christian Advocate*, cited in Dempsey, *Life of Bishop Dickey*, pp. 115-116.

²⁸ Dempsey, *Life of Bishop Dickey*, pp. 116-117.

boosteristic. As the first academic year under his leadership drew near a close, the *Phoenix* recounted the several accomplishments: the retired debt on Candler Hall, the funding for the Quillian Lectureship, the increased Student Loan Fund, the new parsonage, the success of the new dining hall, the nearing completion of Pierce Science Hall, and increased faculty salaries. To these they added mention of a \$5,000 bequest received from Colonel W. A. Hemphill of Atlanta, improvements to the literary society halls of Few and Phi Gamma at a cost of some \$1,000, and a campaign to secure back dues from alumni and to organize an Atlanta alumni chapter. Of the campus mood, the paper proclaimed, “We all seem to have caught the spirit of the Pierces, Candler, Haygoods and the host of those gone before, and every nerve tingles.... Our president grows in favor and has the love and respect of our entire student body. No man has ever done as much for Emory, we believe, in so short a time.”²⁹ Indeed, Dickey’s status with the students seemed rapidly on the rise. The class historian for 1903 wrote, “Who can ever forget the fiery eloquence of King Dickey the First?”³⁰

His eloquence coupled with his position in the presidency kept Dickey in continual demand for public appearances and service on various boards and agencies. He was keynote speaker or preacher at numerous events over the early years of his presidency: preaching at the annual Atlanta District Conference at Park Street Methodist Church;³¹ a revival at the Old Salem Campground, and appearances at district conferences across the state.³² Even while president at Emory, Dickey continued as a trustee at another Methodist institution in the state, Young Harris College, whose president, J. A. Sharp, eventually would move to the Oxford campus.³³

²⁹ *The Emory Phoenix*, April 1903, pp. 347-348.

³⁰ *The Emory Phoenix*, May 1903, p. 383.

³¹ *Atlanta Constitution*, “Good Reports on Church Work,” May 14, 1903, p. 12.

³² *Atlanta Constitution*, “It Meets at Conyers Today,” July 16, 1903, p. 2; “At Old Salem Campground,” Aug. 11, 1903, p. 2;

³³ *Atlanta Constitution*, “Trustees Plan Dormitory,” May 30, 1903, p. 3.

Similarly, his position placed him in demand to preside over notable funerals. He returned to Grace church to preside at the funeral of Captain John A. Miller in May 1903. The *Constitution* described the funeral as “one of the largest in Atlanta in a number of years,” noting that numbers of people were turned away from the standing-room only crowd.³⁴

As the spring semester 1903 drew toward a conclusion, Bishop E. R. Hendrix delivered the Quillian Lecture Series, speaking for five consecutive nights, Monday through Friday, April 20-24 at 8 p.m. nightly, on the topic “The Personality of the Holy Ghost.” These were supplemented by addresses at noon daily by former presidents Dowman and Hopkins, and Revs. W. W. Pinson and H. M. Hamill. Pinson spoke on the intriguing subject: “Wickedness in Knee Pants.” Perhaps fifty Methodist preachers came to campus to join the students in the audience for the week. One of them (identified only as “W.C.L.”) wrote a lengthy column for the *Wesleyan Christian Advocate*, recalling the “halcyon” days on campus and noting the changes of recent years: homes in which he boarded were gone, “eaten by flames;” trees trimmed and undergrowth taken away, well-laid walks and driveways placed across the campus, and the around the new Seney and Pierce Halls sown with seed. The writer noted that the “boys” of the earlier days were now the leaders of the church – Candler, Dowman, Bigham and others. And of the lectures themselves, he had high praise, concluding, “President Dickey has brought us under obligations for the rich feast he provided.”³⁵ Indeed, by the following spring, publication of Bishop Hendrix’s remarks would enter a second printing due to their popularity.³⁶

The 1903 commencement – the first of Dickey’s presidency – featured as noted speakers Judge Emory Speer of the U.S. District Court in Macon; Rev. J. M. Buckley, editor of the *New York Christian Advocate*; W. M. Slaton, principal of Atlanta’s Boys High School; and

³⁴ *Atlanta Constitution*, “Funeral of Captain Miller,” May 15, 1903, p. 2.

³⁵ *Wesleyan Christian Advocate*, April 30, 1903, p. 6.

³⁶ *Atlanta Constitution*, “President Dickey Makes Report on Emory College,” Nov. 24, 1904, p. 11.

Dickey with the traditional baccalaureate address delivered by the president. A special train from Atlanta brought some 400 guests, and an estimated additional 400 arrived by other means, the *Constitution* reported. Buckley preached on the book of Job, and spent nearly a half-hour setting up the sermon, describing that the book has five distinct acts. In a style described by its *Phoenix* reviewer as both “earnest” and “pleasing,” he injected humor with illustrations of men who had used words indiscriminately while trying to appear learned, and instead, made themselves appear “ridiculous in the extreme.”

Speer spoke to a crowd estimated by the *Constitution* at 1,500, which packed every aisle and door of the Oxford church with several hundred being turned away, unable to get within hearing distance. Speer’s stirring oration on “The Life and Character of Robert E. Lee” was “intense in its patriotism and unbiased in his statements,” wrote the *Constitution’s* correspondent, who may not have been without bias in his own review of the occasion. The student newspaper, the *Phoenix*, reported that Speer’s speech caused old soldiers who had worn the grey uniform to jump to their feet before the talk was concluded, and at its end to rush to the stage and “passionately seize the hand in congratulations to him who had paid so loving a tribute to the South’s most honored, most beloved and greatest hero.”

Again glorifying the Lost Cause, Dickey wrote of Speer’s speech in a letter to the *Constitution* published on June 12, “As he speaks, the young cavaliers of the sixties live over again in the presence of the audience. One can almost see the glitter of their blades, hear the bugle notes which call to battle, and witness the triumphant charge of the south’s immortals as, again and again, they wrest victory from the hands of death.”

By the time Dickey took the stage for the baccalaureate, entitled “The Purple Thread in the Tunic,” the *Phoenix* reported his audience already was “somewhat wearied by the long

exercises...., yet he held their attention to the highest tension from first to last”. The *Phoenix* reprinted the text of the address in full, as did the *Wesleyan Christian Advocate* of August 6, 1903 and Dickey biographer Elam F. Dempsey in his *Life of Bishop Dickey*, indicating its high standing among the many addresses of his career. Noting that the reading of it could not match the experience of those who heard Dickey deliver it in person, the *Phoenix* in the typically florid description of the day said, “[A]t times his outbursts of eloquence, together with his impressive manner of gesticulation, so stirred our hearts and impressed our minds that we were completely lost to our surroundings as we followed him in the mighty sweep of his thought and drank in the beauty of the language with which that thought was clothed.”³⁷

Dickey typically used extensive reference to Greek literature, and to Shakespeare, tying the lessons learned in them to the tenets of Judeo-Christian thought. The title refers to a conversation between the Greeks Florus and Agrippinus, as related by Epictetus. Dickey opened the address by relating the tale: Florus intended to participate in a spectacular drama production for Nero, while Agrippinus determined he would not, telling his colleague: “You consider yourself to be one thread of those which are in the Tunic. Well, then, it was fitting for you to take care how you should be like the rest of men, just as the thread has no desire to be anything superior to other threads. But I wish to be purple – that small part which is bright and makes all the rest appear graceful and beautiful.”

“My appeal to you then, gentlemen, this morning” said Dickey in this first baccalaureate address, “is this: Be not threads in the tunic of life, but like that flower of the stoic state, be purple threads in the social fabric, increasing its beauty, dignity, and worth.” Kings of the past have fallen, he said, citing Caesar, “One after another despots have been despoiled of their

³⁷ *The Emory Phoenix*, June 1903, pp. 446-447; *Atlanta Constitution*, “Cheers Given for Speer, Lee and for the Confederate Army,” June 10, 1903, p. 5; “Speer to Speak on Lee Tonight,” June 12, 1903, p. 4.

power, but tyranny still lives.” The tyranny of the current day, he said, was custom, “and no imperial person ever ruled with more absolute sway than does this invisible sovereign.” Like the caste system of India, custom once established is difficult to overcome, he said. To overcome entrenched custom takes fearless souls such as those willing to move westward across the seas searching for new habits and new aspirations.

Yet other customs are worthy to be maintained, Dickey continued, such as the traditional Southern regard for the character of women. He expressed fear that this custom was in peril: “The modesty and purity of our womanhood, therefore, becomes a matter of supreme import, and should be guarded as our chief treasure.” One of the most threatening evils imperiling the civilization, he said, “is the seemingly unconscious tendency on the part of our people to break down the barrier between the sexes. Let that be but once broken down, so that men will esteem women simply as female animals, and the floodgates of pollution will be opened upon us, delivering such a torrent as swept Rome from her proud pre-eminence. My heart grows faint as I see indications of this leveling process.”

In a theme Dickey would repeat throughout his career, he decried those who would move women into roles in government and commerce. “Economic conditions in the South have changed, thereby forcing many of our young women into the busy marts of trade,” he said. “It is painful to me beyond expression to see a woman thus thrust out into the world. She then becomes a competitor with man, and, if both do not take heed, the courtly respect for womanhood is lost.” And further: “As for the mannish woman, with short hair, standing collar, shirt front, cutaway coat, etc., etc., I cry out with reverent disgust, from all such may the good Lord deliver us!”

Dickey subscribed to a southern culture described by Frederick Rudolph as “a romantically cultivated concept of chivalry that had transformed southern womanhood into a symbol of sectional culture....”³⁸ Under this line of thinking, Dickey could justify higher education for women – albeit at separate institutions. Dickey sent his own daughters to Wesleyan College, which had been founded in 1836 as one of the nation’s earliest women’s colleges. Conservative groups, particularly in the South, traditionally opposed to higher education for women, at times chose to found such single-gender institutions to impart traditional cultural and religious values rather than have their young women go to a Northern college.³⁹ Yet Dickey would vote numerous times against admitting women to programs at Emory, even after it expanded in later years to a university. Such continued to be the norm in the South (and New England) well after the barriers of co-education had fallen in other sections of the country, the trend in that direction being pioneered by Oberlin College, Cornell University, and primarily state universities and colleges in the Midwest and West.⁴⁰ At the University of Georgia, for example, co-education would not arrive until World War I, despite forceful arguments through the early 1900s by Rebecca Latimer Felton in support of legislation introduced by her husband in the Georgia General Assembly.⁴¹ Dickey opposed women’s suffrage both in the public arena and in the church, and eventually would cost himself an almost-certain election as bishop through his actions opposing the right of women to the vote of the laity in church conference matters.

³⁸ Rudolph, Frederick. *The American College and University, A History*. Athens: University of Georgia Press, 1990, pp. 315-316.

³⁹ Thelin, *A History of American Higher Education*, pp. 55, 83-84.

⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, pp. 97-98.

⁴¹ Dyer, Thomas G. *The University of Georgia: A Bicentennial History, 1785-1985*. Athens: University of Georgia Press, 1985, pp. 170-171.

In concluding his baccalaureate address, Dickey called upon his first class of graduates to become the “purple thread in the tunic,” to take high positions in the church and the state, where they should “let no man induce you, in the name of any cause, to depart one hair’s breadth from the mark of principle.... Better, a thousand times better, to be buried in the widest and deepest sea of oblivion, than to reach the most desired haven by trimming one’s sails to catch a favoring breeze.... Aye, the purple thread stands for royalty, conviction, and unconquered will.”⁴²

At its annual meeting held in Candler Hall in conjunction with commencement, the college board of trustees heard Dickey’s first annual report to the trustees as president. He recounted actively canvassing the state in the interest of the college, attending every District Conference he could, and filling many preaching and speaking opportunities. He outlined the situation as he found it upon arrival, the goals for the year he had established as a result, and the accomplishment of each. He announced Pierce Science Hall completed at a cost of \$28,000, paid for in full. “It affords me unspeakable pleasure to present this beautiful building to you entirely unencumbered,” he added. Dickey reported the college “out of debt and in a flourishing condition.”⁴³

In what was becoming his characteristic management style, Dickey proceeded to lay out needs and goals for the coming year, chief among them being equipment for Pierce Science Hall, including water, heat, furniture and apparatus. He proposed enlargement of the scientific department, including division of the chair of chemistry and physics, because Emory graduates attempting to enter Johns Hopkins School of Medicine were being forced to take a chemistry course before admission.

⁴² Dickey, James E. “The Purple Thread in the Tunic.” Baccalaureate address delivered June 1903. Dickey Collection. Manuscript, Archives, and Rare Book Library, Emory University; Reprinted in Dempsey, *The Life of Bishop Dickey*, pp. 273-287.

⁴³ *Emory College Trustees Minutes*, June 6, 1903; *The Emory Phoenix*, June 1903, p. 449; *Atlanta Constitution*, “New Chair for Emory College,” May 22, 1903, p. 7.

The demands of the presidency were such that he could no longer devote the required time to teaching, Dickey reported, suggesting that this was a burden not only on himself but on teachers in other departments who had to cover his work in the classroom. In particular, he noted that the state university “has put a [fundraising] canvasser in the field,” making it imperative that he have greater freedom to represent the college before the people of the state. Therefore, he proposed an associate professor of mental and moral science be hired.

Dickey also proposed a promotion to associate professor for F. C. Brown in view of his newly-acquired degree from the University of Chicago, noting that his current salary of \$750 per year was less than some new Emory graduates were obtaining in their first positions out of school. The increased costs, he said, could be covered by shifting the taxes on the Texas property from the income on those lands to the conference apportionments, and by the Hemphill bequest. “If the salaries of the faculty were to be reduced by these recommendations, I would not make them,” he added.

Dickey further noted, “We are greatly in need of a building adapted to the use of a gymnasium, but I will not at this time press this need.” He would formerly propose such a program the following year. Respectfully urging passage of all his proposals, Dickey said, “At this juncture we cannot hesitate. It is not a time for faint-heartedness. Let no trustee of Emory College doubt as to her future. The blessings of Almighty God have been upon her for nearly three-fourths of a century, and if we are faithful to our duty, we shall yet realize our fondest hopes for her future.”⁴⁴

His report included a routine but detailed financial accounting, presented with finance committee chairman Asa G. Candler, president of the Coca-Cola Company and Bishop Warren Candler’s brother. The report covered both the equipment funds and the endowment account,

⁴⁴ *Emory College Trustees Minutes*, June 6, 1903.

which showed more than half the gifts received by Emory during the year -- \$14,024 of a total of \$23,801 – came from Asa Candler himself. Expenditures from the fund included \$16,156 in investments with Asa Candler, leaving \$3,993 on hand in the endowment account. The college's investments included the property in Texas (covering 188 city lots), two city lots and another eleven unimproved acres in Atlanta, and improved, rent-producing real estate in Atlanta ranging from residences to boarding houses, to a store building at 51-53 Whitehall Street downtown valued at \$123,000. Additional stocks and bonds, much of it in railroad stocks, were valued at \$16,800. The ledger included another \$51,861 in unsecured notes from individuals, in the form of pledges to the endowment, on which interest was being paid.

In the operating ledger, income for the year totaled \$25,960, including \$11,089 from the general endowment and \$8,499 in tuition. Thus nearly half of operating income was derived from endowment – a healthy proportion – with another third coming from tuition. Expenditures were \$19,450 – all but a thousand dollars going to salaries – meaning 95 percent of expenditures were in personnel costs. Dickey's salary his first year was \$1,850, and the board raised it to \$2,000 for the coming year, while also raising the salaries of full professors to \$1,500.⁴⁵

Even with the positive ledger balance, cash flow in the operating budget apparently was a problem. In July and again in September 1903, finance chairman Asa Candler loaned \$600 and \$800 respectively to enable treasurer H. H. Stone to meet the payroll. In making the July loan, he wrote to Stone, "The President of the Board has been anxious to place our finances on such footing as that salaries could be paid promptly each month just as is done in other business enterprises. Whether we will be able to do this I am not quite sure."⁴⁶

⁴⁵ *Ibid.*

⁴⁶ Asa Candler to Stone, July 5, 1903 and Sept. 5, 1903. Collection MSS1, box 5. Manuscripts, Archives and Rare Book Library, Emory University.

While not included in Dickey's recorded recommendations, the trustees moved to re-establish the law school which was to have expired at the close of the current semester. Technically, the board rescinded the action of June 7, 1902 to discontinue the law school, so in effect the law school never was closed. The trustee minutes stand customarily void of elaboration, but with the program's main opponent Sledd having departed, and Dickey in control under the oversight of Candler, and with students clamoring for the program to continue, it was not a surprising development.

Acting on Dickey's proposals, the trustees divided the chair of chemistry and physics, previously combined under Professor Bonnell, with Bonnell to teach physics and Duncan chemistry. The trustees also agreed to hire an additional faculty member to teach mental and moral philosophy, relieving President Dickey of classroom duties so that he "may give his time more fully to representing the college," indicating his growing role as an ambassador and public relations front-man for the institution. The trustees allocated additional funds to further equip the new and successful dining hall.⁴⁷ The board further adopted a proposal to grant free tuition to the sons of all teachers in Methodist church-related schools that do the same for children of Emory faculty.⁴⁸

The board also revised and considered – but did not adopt – a resolution drafted by former Georgia Governor W. J. Northen, addressed to the trustees of the University of Georgia, but to be transmitted only if the trustees of Mercer University adopted a similar resolution. Noting that "In our state we have three institutions of higher learning, holding nearly the same rank and occupying in somewhat similar way the same field – the University of Georgia, Emory College and Mercer University," the resolution from the two denominational colleges asked the

⁴⁷ *Emory College Trustees Minutes*, June 6, 1903.

⁴⁸ *Ibid.*

UGA trustees begin charging tuition, as the University of Virginia and other state universities had begun to do. The resolution read, “We ask no more than that there shall be just and equitable relationships and conditions between our several institutions occupying a common field and having in such a large measure common interests and aims. We sincerely feel that at present there is somewhat lacking along this line.” However, action on the resolution was deferred to the Monday session of the board, at which time the matter was withdrawn “on account of diversity of opinion on the board.”⁴⁹

About the same time as the Emory trustees’ meeting, the board of trustees of Kentucky Wesleyan College met, granting an honorary doctor of divinity degree upon Dickey at their meeting in Winchester, Kentucky on May 27, 1903.⁵⁰ It would replace the honorary degree proposed for Dickey a year earlier by his predecessor, Charles Dowman and supported by Bishop Candler, only to be blocked by a faculty vote led by Andrew Sledd.

During the summer of 1903, Dickey secured for the new Pierce Science Hall a collection of marine invertebrate specimens prepared by the Smithsonian Institution, which sent prepared collections to select colleges around the country. The catalogued exhibit, said to contain examples of marine life from both the Atlantic and Pacific shores, was placed into display cases in the biology department of the new building.⁵¹

The faculty scattered widely for the summer, a number of them pursuing extended study. For this, they earned the praise of the students in the *Phoenix*: “Our faculty is a progressive faculty; they are studious and keep thoroughly abreast with the times.” English professor W. L. Weber taught in the summer school at the University of Georgia. Greek professor C. W. Pepler pursued further study at Johns Hopkins, his alma mater. Edward K.

⁴⁹ *Ibid.*

⁵⁰ *Atlanta Constitution*, “President Dickey Honored,” May 28, 1903, p. 2.

⁵¹ *Atlanta Constitution*, “A Valuable Contribution,” July 16, 1903, p. 2.

Turner, the new Latin professor, continued his lectures at the University of Mississippi through the summer. Edgar H. Johnson of economics and history graduated with a master of arts degree from Harvard University in June. John F. Bonnell, professor of physics, also spent the summer at Harvard, and Stewart R. Roberts would return to Oxford in the fall having completed his fifteen-month leave of absence to study at the University of Chicago. They would be joined by Frederick N. Duncan of Indiana University, the new chemistry professor; Rembert G. Smith, of Emory's class of 1897, who would relieve Dickey as an associate professor of mental and moral science; and two members of the Covington bar, William T. Stone, Emory class of 1883, and J. W. Rogers, an 1878 Emory graduate. Stone and Rogers joined Capers Dickson on the re-established law faculty. Sadly, Stone would not finish the first year, dying on February 19, 1904.⁵²

The student editors of the *Phoenix* opened the 1903-04 school year with praise for President Dickey: "He is a good financier, a born executive, one who makes friends wherever he goes and is able to hold them, one with a giant intellect, a strong personality, is big-hearted, of a jovial nature, friendly and kind, and last, but not least, a thorough Christian gentleman."⁵³

An unusual train trip to preach in Dublin, Georgia, earned Dickey a mention in the *Atlanta Constitution* in September. He and the pastor of the church where he was to speak, George W. Mathews of Dublin Methodist Church, found themselves on the same Central Railroad train, delayed at Gordon, Georgia, due to a wreck on the line. They arrived at Tennille after their connecting train had departed. Although ministers at the time traditionally rode trains for free, faced with the prospect of spending the night in Tennille and the even-less-pleasing prospect of having to break the Sabbath by riding a train on Sunday morning to reach Dublin in

⁵² *Atlanta Constitution*, "Emory to Open Wednesday," Sept. 14, 1903, p. 5; *Emory College Catalogue, 1903-04*, p. 10; *The Emory Phoenix*, Nov. 1903, pp. 60-61.

⁵³ *The Emory Phoenix*, Nov. 1903, p. 60.

time, the two chartered a special train from Tennille to Dublin on Saturday night. The railroad gave them a cut rate -- \$10 each. The newspaper noted that the “two well-known Methodist ministers showed their faith by works in a not ordinary manner.”⁵⁴

Dickey’s family faced difficult times during the year. His wife, Jessie, gave birth to the couple’s fifth child, Edna, on July 10, and then became seriously ill in late July, spending more than a week in St. Joseph’s Infirmary with a reported case of appendicitis. Little Edna lived only four months, dying November 7 after an unspecified three-week illness. She was buried in the Oxford cemetery beside Dickey’s mother. A committee of student leaders – one from each class of the college – prepared a resolution of sympathy from the student body, “that we, individually and as a body, extend to our president and his family our heart-felt sympathy, assuring them that at this time our love and tenderest wishes go out to them.”⁵⁵

The week following Edna’s death, Dickey traveled to Griffin for the North Georgia Annual Conference. Delegates often stayed in the homes of local church members when attending conference – Dickey was guest of Colonel James D. Boyd. As chair of the mission board, of which Asa G. Candler was treasurer, Dickey arrived at conference two days early and conducted meetings of that board at the local Presbyterian Church. Dickey’s report to the conference on the condition of Emory College was “carefully prepared and very interesting” and “showed up well,” the *Constitution* correspondent reported. In it, Dickey enumerated the major talking points of the successes and goals of Emory for the year: the debt on Candler Hall paid, Pierce Science Hall completed and debt-free with funds allocated for equipment, enrollment of 254, thirty students on the loan fund, the dining hall being expanded, and a new chair of

⁵⁴ *Atlanta Constitution*, “Hired Special; Kept Sabbath,” Sept. 30, 1903, p. 2.

⁵⁵ *Atlanta Constitution*, “Social Items,” July 30, 1903, p. 8; “Social Items,” Aug. 7, 1903, p. 8; “Edna Dickey, Oxford, Ga.,” Nov. 8, 1903, p. 6; *The Emory Phoenix*, Dec. 1903, p. 101.

chemistry formed. Dickey advocated “systematic and scientific” physical exercise for students, but reiterated his stance that Emory should remain out of intercollegiate football and baseball.

Although eloquent in his plea for increased funding for Emory from the conference budget for the coming year, Dickey’s appeal did not prevail. The original budget proposal would have allocated \$950 each to Emory and Wesleyan, \$700 to LaGrange Female College, \$500 to Young Harris, \$300 to Piedmont and \$100 to Reinhardt. A substitute motion from the floor passed on a vote of 167 to 32, reducing Emory and Wesleyan’s appropriations to \$750 each, while increasing Piedmont to \$400 and Reinhardt to \$200. Apparently the conference thought the institutions perceived as well-to-do could spare a bit of their generous funding in favor of the smaller, less-well-funded colleges. While speaking in a friendly manner of Emory and Wesleyan, the maker of the substitute motion, M. J. Cofer said, “Let us economize on coconut custard and loaf sugar and not upon salt and meal.”⁵⁶ The following week, Dickey traveled to Sandersville to speak on behalf of Emory College before the South Georgia Annual Conference.⁵⁷

The *Phoenix* opened the new year of 1904 with a discussion of the advantages and disadvantages of intercollegiate football. In an essay, sophomore J. C. Adams asserted that the most ardent detractors often have never seen a game, while those who have participated are its greatest supporters, but he admitted that football was not without its evils. Players do get hurt, gambling does take place, and – citing the declining numbers of students receiving distinctions at Auburn University since the institution of football – it can detract from the academics of the student body, the student writer asserted. But football has its strengths, Adams said, in that “it teaches [one] to keep a cool head in moments of difficulty..., football furnishes exercise..., and

⁵⁶ *Atlanta Constitution*, “Methodist Host Now at Griffin,” Nov. 18, 1903, p. A3; “Great Day with the Methodists,” Nov. 19, 1903, p. 2; “To New Homes Preachers Go for Next Year,” Nov. 24, 1903, p. 1.

⁵⁷ *Atlanta Constitution*, “Full Day’s Work for Conference,” Nov. 28, 1903, p. 3.

football is a moral help to the student.” To the latter point, Adams argued that “there are men in every class who are super-abundantly supplied with animal life,” and if not provided an outlet through football, they will express this “animal life” through “tearing down gates, signs, fences, defacing buildings, and many other things that no one but a college-boy would think of.”

Concluding that there are more people hurt from toy pistols and Fourth of July noisemakers than from football, Adams asserted, “It does seem that this game fills a place in the schools and colleges that nothing else can.” Dickey, Candler and the board of trustees would not be persuaded on this point in any of their lifetimes.⁵⁸

The National Educational Association met in Atlanta in February, and Dickey hosted on the campus two Emory alumni who had gone on to head their respective state school systems – W. B. Merritt of Georgia and State School Commissioner Isaac W. Hill of Alabama, who had been named to his post in 1902. Dickey assembled the student body in the college chapel for an address by the two men, who with their wives enjoyed being guests in the Dickey home and touring the campus.⁵⁹

Dickey’s long-standing desire to hold protracted revival services on the campus provided a highlight of the spring. Dr. Charles W. Byrd of Atlanta preached nightly for the first week, after which Rev. G. W. Duvall and President Dickey continued holding services for another two weeks. The *Phoenix* described Byrd as “a whole-souled preacher of the gospel,” and noted that “much good was accomplished” during the three weeks of services.⁶⁰

⁵⁸ *The Emory Phoenix*, “Football has its place in colleges?” Jan. 1904, pp. 126-128.

⁵⁹ *Atlanta Constitution*, “Hill and Merritt at Emory,” Feb. 27, 1904, p. 3; *The Emory Phoenix*, “Superintendents Merritt and Hill,” March 1904, p. 215; and Owen, Thomas McAdory and Marie Bankhead Owen, *History of Alabama and Dictionary of Alabama Biography*. Chicago: The S. J. Clarke Publishing Co., 1921, p. 522.

⁶⁰ *The Emory Phoenix*, “Protracted Services,” March 1904, p. 215.

In April, the second annual debate between Emory and Trinity College saw Emory avenge the previous year's defeat. Emory took the negative on the question, "*Resolved*, That it would be for the best interest of the people of the United States to substitute for the present high protective tariff a tariff for revenue only." Arguing that a tariff for revenue only would be virtual free trade, thus removing necessary protection for home industries, the Emory team won over the panel of judges, which included Chancellor Walter B. Hill of the University of Georgia, *Atlanta Constitution* editor Clark Howell, and Atlanta attorney H. T. Dorsey.⁶¹

Expanding the evangelical horizons of the church was on Dickey's mind that spring. For more than a generation, the Methodist Episcopal Church South had centered its evangelical and missionary work in China and Japan, and the time had come for that work to be expanded to evangelizing the Jews, Dickey wrote in an extended column in the *Wesleyan Christian Advocate*. He wrote in support of recent actions of both the North and South Georgia Annual Conferences to begin a missionary movement among the Hebrews, and to inform Georgia Methodists of the effort. Even though "our religion, nay, while our Christianity came to us through the Jews..., do we not as Christians continue to cherish the antipathy of our fathers for the Jew?" he wrote, calling this a "senseless prejudice." Saying that Methodist evangelical efforts had been strangely neglectful of attention to the Jewish people due to "unreasonable prejudice," he continued, "A people distinguished for so many virtues and antedating in civilization the majority of the Aryan race should challenge our admiration, if they did not evoke our love.... Shall not we, too, hear this cry of the broken-hearted Jew as it comes sobbing to us across the chasm of twenty centuries?"⁶²

⁶¹ *The Emory Phoenix*, "Emory-Trinity Debate," April 1904, pp. 244-245.

⁶² *Wesleyan Christian Advocate*, "Our Hebrew Mission," March 10, 1904.

As the school year came to a conclusion, the editors of the *Phoenix* noted that “It is with no little pride that we turn a retrospective eye on the work done by our present President during his administration of less than two years.” Recounting the list of goals and accomplishments Dickey himself had carried to audiences throughout the state, the *Phoenix* predicted “greater things in store,” including “a handsomely equipped gymnasium” and an increased endowment for the school.⁶³ Perhaps the young editors had been discussing with the president his future intentions, because at the annual meeting of the trustees in connection with commencement, Dickey proposed launching a campaign to increase the endowment to \$500,000, an amount which he felt was the minimum on which the college should attempt to operate. “It is needless for me to remind the Board that our income is entirely inadequate to meet the legitimate expenses of the institution,” he reported.

Dickey also stated that the school’s ongoing experiment with compulsory exercise classes, instituted in 1899, had been very beneficial, and proposed a new gymnasium be constructed to replace the athletic facilities in the old technology shop. “The President of the College heartily agrees with the Board in its unwavering opposition to intercollegiate athletics,” Dickey said, “but he feels that every effort should be made by the authorities of the College to afford healthful development for the physical man.” He projected that such a facility would not only serve current students but would attract new ones. Construction and equipment of a new gymnasium would require some ten-to-twelve thousand dollars, Dickey estimated.

Other plans approved by the trustees had been carried into effect, Dickey reported, including furnishing Pierce Science Hall, equipping it with modern apparatus, heating it with steam and lighting it with gas. A new waterworks system was connected to Pierce, the chemistry building and the gymnasium. The chemistry building had been converted and equipped for

⁶³ *The Emory Phoenix*, “Signs of Progress at Emory,” May 1904, pp. 269-270.

chemistry instruction from the former science hall. An expansion to the dining hall increased its capacity to 125 persons. The Student Loan Fund added another eight students – making a total of 38 on assistance – and had increased its corpus during the year, Dickey reported. “The faculty was never stronger, the equipment of the College never so good as now,” he said. The re-established law department had enrolled only three students in the year just completed, however.⁶⁴

Commencement 1904 again proved an elaborate affair, running from Saturday, June 4 through Wednesday, June 8. The program included a gymnasium exhibition, apparently for the benefit of the trustees. Rev. W. F. McDowell of New York, secretary of education of the Methodist Episcopal Church, preached the commencement sermon. Few and Phi Gamma staged the annual champion debate, while there were declamation contests among freshmen and sophomores, and an oratorical contest among eight members of the junior class. Fraternities and other class organizations held elaborate banquets, State School Commissioner W. B. Merritt delivered the alumni address, and H. M. Hamill of Nashville, Tennessee, the literary address. Finally, on Wednesday, eight seniors delivered their original orations and President Dickey closed with the traditional baccalaureate address before conferring degrees on the 39 members of the graduating class.⁶⁵

Dickey marked the Fourth of July by sharing the dais at the Oak Hill Community celebration in Newton County with several prominent speakers from around the state, including John M. Slaton, an Atlanta attorney who at the time was state representative from Fulton

⁶⁴ *Emory College Trustees Minutes*, June 4, 1904.

⁶⁵ *Atlanta Constitution*, “Emory to Hear Brilliant Men,” March 6, 1904, p. 7; “Speakers Places Given to Emory’s Students,” May 29, 1904, p. 4.

County.⁶⁶ Other speakers included prominent Atlanta attorneys and state legislators Madison Bell, an Emory alumnus, and William Schley Howard. Actually held on Saturday, July 2, the observance featured dinner on the grounds and a singing contest among all the Sunday Schools of the county.⁶⁷

The next week, President and Mrs. Dickey traveled to St. Louis to participate in the 1904 World's Fair, returning to Oxford on Wednesday, July 13.⁶⁸ Upon his return, he immediately was off to LaGrange for the annual meeting of the District Conference there. Dickey joined Wesleyan College President Dupont Guerry in addressing the 150 delegates in attendance.⁶⁹

The Emory College fall term of 1904 opened with 267 students on roll, including 41 sub-freshmen, 67 freshmen, 71 sophomores, 38 juniors and 32 seniors. There were 16 others in "selected courses not leading to a degree," two graduate students and one law student. This was an increase in total enrollment of nine students over the previous year.⁷⁰

While the annual financial reports continued to show a positive balance, cash flow problems continued that fall. Finance chairman Asa Candler wrote to treasurer H. H. Stone on at least two occasions discussing payment, and holding, of bills. "I am holding some large repair bills that I have had to incur here putting the Atlanta properties in shape so as to keep them rented," Candler wrote on September 17. "I feared that you were not able to pay them at present." And on October 6, Candler informed Stone that he had paid Atlanta city taxes of \$87.74 for the year on Atlanta properties owned by the Emory trustees, except for taxes of \$942.84 on the store at 51-53 Whitehall Street occupied by Bass Dry Goods Co., which would be

⁶⁶ Slaton would go on to become speaker of the Georgia House in 1906 and would serve two terms as governor, in 1911-12 and 1913-15.

⁶⁷ *Atlanta Constitution*, "To Celebrate Saturday," June 30, 1904, p. 2.

⁶⁸ *Atlanta Constitution*, "Emory College, Oxford, Ga.," July 3, 1904, p. A5 and July 10, 1904, p. B6.

⁶⁹ *Atlanta Constitution*, "Methodists Will Meet," July 18, 1904, p. 3.

⁷⁰ *Catalogue of Emory College, 1904-1905*, p. 49.

passed through to the renter. Candler added, “Supposing that you are not prepared to pay this and other items of expense, I am holding same here for the present. How are your cash receipts as compared to expenses?”⁷¹

Nonetheless, President Dickey again painted a glowing report on the college’s progress in his annual report to the North Georgia Conference, which met that November in Marietta. Quoting finance chairman Asa Candler, Dickey noted the available assets of the endowment had grown over the past year by several thousand dollars, with the college plant improved, the curriculum enriched, and the corps of teachers enlarged. He spoke with pride of the equipping of Pierce Science Hall, noting that on the board’s approved budget of \$10,000, in fact \$12,000 had been spent on equipment, with all but \$2,500 raised to date.

Addressing the physical education needs of the student body, Dickey noted that college authorities “continue to withstand the unthinking clamor for intercollegiate games, believing that such indulgence is demoralizing to the student body and subversive of the best intellectual development....” Nonetheless, a student’s mind and soul should be housed in a sound body, he stated – thus, the college’s physical education requirement and need for a new gymnasium. He advanced to the conference his vision of a \$12,000 building to be heated by steam, furnished with hot and cold baths, and supplying ample space for dressing room and athletic drill, noting that he already had received subscriptions of \$1,000 toward the project and had mailed a letter to every pastor in Georgia asking congregations to support the cause.

Maintaining faculty salaries remained a challenge, Dickey said, with two key faculty members choosing to remain on staff for the year despite offers from other schools that were \$500 greater than their current salaries at Emory. “How soon we may lose them, or others, we

⁷¹ Asa Candler to Stone, Sept. 17, 1904 and Oct. 6, 1904, Collection MSS1, box 5. Manuscript, Archives, and Rare Book Library, Emory University.

do not know,” he said. Dickey informed the conference that the moral tone of the student body remained good, and returning to his core Wesleyan philosophy, assured them that “the administration feels keenly the responsibility which devolves upon a Christian college, and earnestly solicits the prayers of the church for this part of our Zion.”⁷²

The conference passed by majority vote a resolution opposing the use of tobacco by ministers, but the vote was not unanimous and many ministers voted against. Dickey’s position on the matter is not recorded, but he remained a regular cigar-smoker.⁷³

Dr. James M. Buckley delivered the Quillian Lectureship for spring 1905, preaching nightly for a week in April and at the regular Sunday church service. Buckley was a noted conservative leader of the northern Methodist Episcopal Church, and Dickey’s ability to attract him to the Emory campus may be indicative of a growing position of influence for Dickey among the national Methodist conservative wing. Many students professed new-found religion and some joined the church following an extended revival in April and May led by Rev. G. W. Yarbrough, R. G. Smith and President Dickey.⁷⁴

By the time of the spring meeting of the board of trustees in connection with commencement, Dickey had made concrete progress toward his goal of a new gymnasium for the campus. He reported subscriptions totaling \$10,000, including pledges from board members J. P. Williams, Asa G. Candler, George Winship, and F. F. Bullard. However, the construction cost estimate for the project had ballooned to \$20,000. With the subscriptions already in hand,

⁷² *Atlanta Constitution*, “President Dickey Makes Report on Emory College,” Nov. 24, 1904, p. 11.

⁷³ *Atlanta Constitution*, “Methodist Preachers Given Marching Orders,” Nov. 29, 1904, p. 1.

⁷⁴ *New York Times*, “Leaders in Methodism, the General Conference Which Will Meet in Cleveland,” April 5, 1896, p. 28; *Atlanta Constitution*, “President Dickey Makes Report on Emory College,” Nov. 24, 1904, p. 11; and “Oxford Revival Closes,” May 4, 1905, p. 7.

the trustees agreed to approve the project, appointing a building committee of Williams, Patillo, Winship, Asa Candler and Dickey to proceed with the work.⁷⁵

Two bishops of the church headlined the speakers at commencement 1905: William Fraser McDowell of Chicago delivered the Sunday sermon. He was elected bishop of the northern Methodist Episcopal Church in 1904 after serving the previous decade as president of the University of Denver. Bishop Charles B. Galloway gave the annual literary address, this year on the subject, “L. Q. C. Lamar,” speaking of the noted 1845 Emory graduate under whom Galloway had studied, and who rose to associate justice of the United States Supreme Court. Noted Atlanta preacher Charles W. Byrd also delivered a sermon as part of the traditional program including student debates and orations.⁷⁶

Of Dickey’s thirteen baccalaureate addresses as president, his June 14 address to the class of 1905, entitled “The Economy of Unselfishness,” is one of seven for which a complete text has survived and like many of them, it revolved around a theme of selfless service to others.⁷⁷ Political economy, he posited, was known as a “soulless science” in that it made a science of the consumption of wealth and of personal selfishness. But the true economist, Dickey said, would have the ultimate purpose “so to produce and so to distribute wealth that the naked shall be clothed, the hungry fed, and the homeless housed.” Economics thus practiced can become “nobly altruistic,” Dickey told his young charges, “and he who labors effectively in this department of learning is truly a benefactor.”

⁷⁵ *Emory College Board of Trustees Minutes*, June 10, 1905 and June 13, 1905; Bullock, *A History of Emory University*, p. 237; and *Atlanta Constitution*, “Emory to Build Big Gymnasium,” June 28, 1905, p. 4.

⁷⁶ *Atlanta Constitution*, “Notable Talks Will Be Heard,” June 12, 1905, p. 3; and “Bishop Galloway at Emory College,” June 14, 1905, p. 4.

⁷⁷ While several of the texts have survived, not all can be connected with the year in which they were delivered. Two of the manuscripts are written in Dickey’s own hand in a Blue Horse school notebook pad.

In this speech, Dickey spoke extensively on Darwinian evolution in the animal kingdom, seemingly accepting the premise except as it applies to humans: “[A]lthough we may disclaim any adherence to the theory of Evolution as it relates to man, as I do, yet we cannot but recognise the less bloody, but nevertheless fierce struggle for supremacy which has gone on among the constituents of the human race.” Dickey recalled some of the great struggles through the history of civilization, bringing them forward to the day’s clashes among business titans: “Our country today stands terrified in the presence of the avarice of corporations,” he said. “Oil Trusts, Beef Trusts, Sugar Trusts, Wheat Trusts, Coal Trusts, are already upon us, and we live in hourly expectation of every other sort of trust that can control a commodity. Well may we thank a beneficent Providence that air is still granted independently of corporate power.” Such had become “the competing pigmies of selfishness grown into the colossi of greed,” he added. Decrying such corporate greed as specifically un-Christian, Dickey continued, “I would this morning, young gentlemen, cry out against the sin of selfishness.” While that may be the way of the world in the animal kingdom, he said, “let me assure you that in the realm of man, the fittest to survive is he who, in forgetfulness of self, puts forth all effort in unselfish service. And yet, the man who thus labors, cannot escape his reward, for there is an economic gain in unselfishness.”

Expanding on his theme, Dickey asserted that the scientist who approaches his research with an eye to benefiting his fellow man has the more keen vision than the one who seeks only to glorify himself. The farmer who loves and conserves the soil rather than just tilling it to get out of it what he can, the teacher who hopes to contribute to society rather than to enrich himself, the lawyer seeking to help mankind rather than only entering the profession because it is through to be lucrative, the physician who seeks to alleviate suffering rather than pursue avarice – each

exhibits unselfish love, which is the secret of that man's success. Moving finally to those among his charges called to the ministry, Dickey likewise said, "the man who enters the pulpit for emolument of any kind is unworthy to become an expounder of the Holy Word. The curse of God is upon him who would make merchandise of a spiritual office."

He recalled heroes of history who had unselfishly given of themselves for the public good – the literally legendary Swiss hero Arnold of Winkelreid, purported to have led the Swiss against would-be conquerors from Austria; Robert E. Lee who chose to end his career serving the people as president of Washington University while "forbidding the use of his name where its mesmeric power might have brought to him unfabled fortune;" and Jefferson Davis, who "chose to bear the reproach of the Confederacy."

Moving into sermon cadence, Dickey ended with his prime example of unselfish sacrifice, Jesus Christ, who "humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross." Exhorting the graduates to "be content to serve where, to the greatest extent, you can promote the general good," he closed:

If you will respond to this fervent admonition of your Alma Mater, as you go forth from her loving tuition, you will be compassed about with a 'great cloud of witnesses.' The mighty spirits of the unselfish dead will attend you; the angels of the covenant will encamp around you; and best of all, please God, at the end of your journey, you shall 'hear a voice from heaven, as the voice of many waters, and as the voice of a great thunder' and you shall hear 'the voice of harpers harping with their harps,' and there shall burst upon your vision 'the Holy City, the New Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband,' and 'God shall wipe away all tears from your eyes, and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain; for the former things shall have passed away.'⁷⁸

Dickey's lesson was that through advancing others rather than oneself, a person can achieve a heavenly reward. The graduates of 1905 left the campus having received a full dose of

⁷⁸ Dickey, James E. "The Economy of Unselfishness," Baccalaureate Address 1905. Dickey collection, box 1; Manuscript, Archives, and Rare Book Library, Emory University.

the Wesleys' "knowledge joined with vital piety" at the hands of their preacher-teacher president.

Later that same week, Dickey's attention returned to the more mundane aspects of a college presidency, as he reacted strongly to a report in the *Atlanta Constitution* that an intercollegiate baseball game had been played between Emory's team and a team fielded by a group in Washington, Georgia. "Permit me to say that Emory college has no base ball team in the field," he wrote in terse response to the *Constitution* story. "Some of the young men mentioned in the report attended Emory last term; some of them I've never heard of before. None of them, however, are in any sense Emory's representatives as base ball players." The article, which the *Constitution's* regular Emory correspondent disavowed, went on to say that the Emory victory over the Washington team "would enhance the chances for inter-collegiate athletics at Emory." Dickey set the record straight that it "will not in any-wise affect the views of the administration or board of control." He emphasize that local athletics were enjoyed by students on the Emory campus, but "none need come to us indulging the hope of taking part in inter-collegiate games."⁷⁹

The students arriving on campus need "the restraining strength of Christian influence and tradition," Dickey wrote in another venue that same summer. In a column appearing in the *Wesleyan Christian Advocate*, he espoused "The Necessity for Denominational Colleges." Denominational colleges exist not so that the church as an institution shall dominate the state, he said, but to cultivate minds and "harness them to the machinery of the Kingdom." And most of all, the church needs an educated ministry, "as the great masses of the people are being lifted up intellectually through the beneficent operations of the public schools. The pulpit must not only

⁷⁹ *Atlanta Constitution*, "President Dickey on Athletics," June 19, 1905, p. 4.

keep pace, but must go in front.” These, he concluded, are just a few of the reasons why denominational colleges should be supported.⁸⁰

Dickey again was paired with Dr. Charles Byrd of Atlanta as the two preached at the Augusta District Conference held in Sparta the first week of August. Byrd took his text from Micah: “Walk humbly with thy God.” Dickey preached on Matthew: “On this rock I shall build my church and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.” The *Constitution* correspondent relating the event said that Dickey, “naturally a most eloquent man, held his audience in full sway and the whole house was touched by the profound significance of his words. A great spiritual demonstration followed his sermon and the people of Sparta offered resolutions of gratitude.”⁸¹

As the fall term opened on September 20, 1905, Dickey continued to exert efforts toward raising funds for and planning construction of the new gymnasium. In a speech to the student body in October, he estimated cost of the project to be now \$25,000, providing “one of the most up-to-date buildings of its kind in the south.” Pledges to date included \$1,100 from the student body of the previous year, and the “new boys” immediately pledged an additional several hundred dollars upon hearing the president’s plea. Professor F. Clyde Brown, physical education director, had traveled to many large eastern colleges to gain ideas that would help in the design of the facility. With a construction firm chosen and a contract let, work was to begin within the month.⁸²

President Dickey determined that a protracted revival meeting like those held previously only in the spring was necessary during the fall term, as well, for the spiritual welfare of the

⁸⁰ *Wesleyan Christian Advocate*, “The Necessity for Denominational Colleges,” July 13, 1905.

⁸¹ *Atlanta Constitution*, “Conference on at Sparta,” Aug. 2, 1905, p. 2.

⁸² *Atlanta Constitution*, “Gymnasium Will Be Big One,” Oct. 5, 1905, p. 6.

students. With the church pastor, Dickey staged such a revival nightly in the church and daily in his own lecture hall. Students and citizens of the town attended in great numbers.⁸³

For extended periods during the year, Dickey would be home alone (except for the student boarders) while his wife and children traveled. Jessie Dickey would take extended trips in both winter and summer to visit her relatives, primarily her mother, Julia Munroe, in Quincy, Florida. She and the couples' children were gone from Oxford for a month in January and February, 1906, along with her niece, Julia Dowman Hanner – daughter of former President Dowman and wife of Professor J. P. Hanner -- and the Hanners' son. Upon Jessie's return in late February, the Dickeys hosted the full faculty and their spouses in an "at home" party at the president's house.⁸⁴ At other times during the year, the Dickey house would overflow with relatives and guests. During virtually every summer of their marriage, the Dickeys had as their house-guest Jessie's sister, Bessie Munroe Davidson, whom the family knew as "Aunt Bebbie." In turn for the winter months spent by Mrs. Dickey with her mother and sister, Bebbie would come to be with Jessie in the summer. The two, along with the Dickeys' four daughters, kept up an active social life – hosting lawn parties, attending church and camp meetings, and socializing with the women and girls of Oxford.⁸⁵ The *Emory Phoenix* noted that Dickey's daughters were students such as befitted a college president's daughters. Julia won the medal the previous school year for best ninth-grade average at Palmer Institute, while Annie won the same medal for the eighth grade.⁸⁶ And Dickey's youngest child was fodder for the *Phoenix*, as well, as it told the story three-year-old Edward driving his Shetland pony across campus and encountering

⁸³ *Atlanta Constitution*, "Oxford Revival Meetings," Oct. 13, 1905, p. 2

⁸⁴ *Atlanta Constitution*, "Oxford, Ga.," Feb. 25, 1906, p. D8.

⁸⁵ *Atlanta Constitution*, "Oxford, Ga.," Aug. 16, 1908, p. D7. Following their husbands' deaths, Jessie and Bessie lived together the remainder of their lives, spending half the year at Jessie's home in Atlanta and the other half at Bebbie's in Quincy, until their deaths in 1960 and 1961, respectively.

⁸⁶ *The Emory Phoenix*, October 1908, p. 24.

Professor Melton. “Edward, I’ll give you four hickory nuts for your pony,” Melton offered. “No, sir,” little Edward replied, “he don’t eat hickory nuts, he eats grass.”⁸⁷

A light-hearted tale concerned two boarders in the Dickey household and a number of jugs of rare old wine kept on the pantry shelves “for medicinal purposes.” As the *Phoenix* told the tale, “King Dickey...went to get a drop which his physician had prescribed, [but] he discovered the jugs almost empty. When he told Trammell and Rumble about it, the latter laughed knowingly, while the former blushed guiltily.” The reader could draw his own conclusions, the newspaper said, “but Trammell could tell something about that wine.”⁸⁸

Another light-hearted tale concerned the church choir, which apparently needed courage to sing in front of Emory’s sometimes stern and exacting president. A correspondent noted, “He likes to join with his congregations in singing good, old-fashioned, familiar hymns, provided they are sung to the good, old-fashioned familiar tunes.” So when the Oxford church choir on one Sunday pitched an old familiar hymn to a new, unfamiliar “new-fangled tune, full of runs that can’t be followed by the ordinary singer of hymns,” the president failed to appreciate the performance. As the organ ground out strains “that sounded like the prelude to a grand opera,” the choir tried unsuccessfully to sing along, the congregation just giggled, and Dickey just sat down – until he could stand it no more. He closed his hymnal, sprang to his feet, silenced the cacophony, and opened up a singing school. He asked for another tune. “This time you could tell it was church music,” the correspondent reported, “but the choir did the singing [while] the president shook his head and endured it patiently....” Having just led the singing for hundreds of ladies at the state D.A.R. convention, he knew he could lead his home congregation. He called for one he was certain that everyone, even the organist and choir, could handle: “Rock of Ages.”

⁸⁷ *The Emory Phoenix*, Nov. 1908, p. 47.

⁸⁸ *The Emory Phoenix*, April 1910, pp. 270-271.

The congregation enthusiastically sang the hymn through. The singing lesson concluded, Dickey finally could stand to preach. It was a “characteristic, magnificent sermon.”⁸⁹

The entire campus took a holiday from classes on March 8, 1906 to observe the sixty-ninth anniversary of the Phi Gamma literary society and to hear the keynote address by Dickey’s classmate from 1891, the Rev. W. N. Ainsworth, now pastor of Wesley Monumental Methodist Church in Savannah. Ainsworth spoke on “The New Birth of the Nation,” asserting that in the Spanish-American War the United States had found new birth, for never before had the world beheld a nation fighting unselfishly for the freedom of another nation.⁹⁰

The state’s leadership in government and education gathered in Athens on April 9 for a memorial service to the late University of Georgia Chancellor Walter B. Hill, who had died the previous December at age fifty-four from pneumonia and exhaustion. Hill – a noted Methodist layman – and Dickey had numerous interactions during the time that their terms of office coincided. From Hill’s inauguration in 1899, he had exhibited diplomatic skills and an understanding of denominational education that lowered the temperature of the church versus state debates in higher education. As a result, Emory College – undoubtedly with Candler’s and Dickey’s blessing – had awarded Hill an honorary degree. He served on the Methodist conference temperance committee, which drew him favor among Baptist prohibitionists, as did his cooperative efforts with Mercer.⁹¹ Following a morning processional of the UGA student body from the Chapel to Hill’s grave in Oconee Hill Cemetery, where they covered his resting place with flowers, at 4 p.m. an impressive array of the state’s leadership convened in the university Chapel to remember the late chancellor. Presiding was Nathaniel E. Harris, Hill’s former law partner and a state legislator who had sponsored and championed the bill creating the

⁸⁹ *Atlanta Constitution*, “Choir Had Awful Time Trying to Suit Dr. James E. Dickey,” Jan. 4, 1910, p. 3.

⁹⁰ *Atlanta Constitution*, “69th Natal Day of Phi Gamma,” March 9, 1906, p. 3.

⁹¹ Dyer, *The University of Georgia: A Bicentennial History, 1785-1985*, pp. 153-154, 162.

Georgia Institute of Technology.⁹² Professors David C. Barrow and W. H. Boccock spoke of Hill's relationship to the university. Enoch H. Callaway of Augusta spoke on behalf of the board of trustees, followed by Governor Joseph M. Terrell on behalf of the state. Supreme Court Justice Andrew J. Cobb recounted Hill's law career and his relationship to the bar. Representing the denominational colleges were President Charles Lee Smith of Mercer and President Dickey. The former president of both Emory and Georgia Tech, Isaac Stiles Hopkins, then serving as pastor of Hill's home church, Athens First Methodist, concluded the observance by recounting Hill's deep involvement in the Methodist church at-large and his local church.⁹³

For the first time, Dickey received prominent mention as a candidate for bishop when the General Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, met in Birmingham in 1906 for its quadrennial session. His name stood alongside those of Atlanta District Presiding Elder H. H. Eakes; Rev. James W. Lee, pastor of Trinity church in Atlanta; and Dickey's brother-in-law and former Emory president Charles E. Dowman, then pastor of Atlanta First Methodist Church. However, none of the three bishops elected that year were from the North Georgia Conference.⁹⁴

Dickey made an impassioned plea that fall, at the behest of Bishop Candler, to raise funds to support Korean national and Emory alumnus T. H. Yun, who had renounced his family's inheritance to become a Christian missionary. In a column in the *Wesleyan Christian Advocate*, Dickey likened his former student to the rich young ruler in the gospel of Mark, whom Jesus required to sell his treasure and give it to the poor in order to be able to inherit the kingdom of God. Yun, Dickey reported, was born into a Korean family of wealth and station, and under strict Korean rules of primogeniture, would inherit and operate his father's considerable estate. Candler, reunited with Yun in Korea, found him lamenting that his inheritance would keep him

⁹² Harris would be elected governor in 1915.

⁹³ *Atlanta Constitution*, "Memory of Hill is Kept Green," April 10, 1906, p. 3.

⁹⁴ *Atlanta Constitution*, "Georgians Mentioned as Probable Bishops," May 3, 1906, p. 2.

from pursuing his chosen work as a Christian missionary. Candler, through Dickey, called upon “all Georgia Methodists, among whom Mr. Yun lived during his stay in America,” to contribute \$1,000 each toward a home and support for him. Citing Yun’s noble character and rich endowments, Dickey added, “Let it not be said that he who has left houses and lands for the sake of the kingdom shall be homeless, while the children of God have enough and to spare.”⁹⁵

In 1908, Dickey led Emory to confer an honorary degree upon Yun, who had become a prominent Christian missionary noted in many countries by the time he visited the Oxford campus again in spring 1910 while on a speaking tour. Staying at the Dickey home on his Oxford visit, he returned to favorite haunts from his college days and spoke to the assembled students. Instead of his traditional mission speech, delivered in several other Georgia cities during the week, he spoke more informally of his own life, sharing stories not previously told. Declaring, “The best part of my life has been guided and directed under the providence of God, by Emory men,” Yun expressed the hope that an educational system such as existed in America would be established in his native Korea.⁹⁶

The annual trustees meeting in connection with commencement 1907 re-elected Asa G. Candler as its chairman and heard a report on difficulties Emory had in applying for financial support from the General Education Board. As early as 1905, and more intently during 1906 and 1907, Dickey’s fundraising eye turned toward the recently-established board funded by the John D. Rockefeller Foundation. Founded in 1902 and chartered by Congress in 1903, the board established goals of promoting practical farming through demonstration farms, establishing public high schools in the southern U.S., promoting higher education, and creating schools for African-Americans. Although two female schools in Georgia – Agnes Scott and Wesleyan –

⁹⁵ *Wesleyan Christian Advocate*, “The Rich Young Man Kneeling at the Feet of Jesus,” Nov. 29, 1906; and Dempsey, *Life of Bishop Dickey*, pp. 132-136.

⁹⁶ *Atlanta Constitution*, “Dr. Yun Pays High Tribute to His Georgia Alma Mater,” April 3, 1910, p. C8.

each were successful in gaining grants of \$100,000, and another \$32,333 went to Mercer in the early years of the GEB, Emory was not included.⁹⁷ Dickey sought conditional gifts from the board to stimulate private endowment giving. The Board steadfastly declined to consider funding Emory on the grounds that the campus was located in a village.⁹⁸ In fall of 1908, Dickey even hosted Wallace Buttrick, secretary of the General Education Board, on the Emory campus and as a guest in the Dickey home as part of a tour of leading Southern institutions. But despite these efforts, Emory did not receive GEB funds as long as the campus was in Oxford, as the visit apparently could not persuade the GEB to waive its rule regarding the location of schools.⁹⁹

The Emory board unanimously passed a resolution introduced by Bishop Cardin, “that steps be taken at the earliest possible day to erect on the Campus a Chapel to be called the ‘Allen Memorial Chapel’ so constructed as to furnish a church for the officers and students of the College and the people of Oxford, and containing also a hall for the annual commencement exercises.” It would be a memorial to Young J. Allen, Georgia native, 1858 Emory graduate, and long-time Methodist missionary to China who had died May 30, 1907 in Shanghai. Bishop Candler, speaking at a memorial for Allen as part of the 1907 commencement, said, “It ought to be a grand structure, in keeping with the lofty life of the great men whose name it will bear.... Let this noble structure be built speedily. Lay deep and strong its foundations, and let its towers quickly rise until its capstone is brought forth amid the acclamations of the thousands who loved him, crying, ‘Grace, grace unto it.’”¹⁰⁰ Dickey wrote letters to many colleagues across the church during the coming year seeking pledges and statements of support for the project, which

⁹⁷ General Education Board, *The General Education Board: An Account of Its Activities, 1902-1914*. New York: General Education Board, 1915, p. 156.

⁹⁸ *Emory College Trustees Minutes*, June 7, 1907; and Bullock, *A History of Emory University*, p. 238.

⁹⁹ *Atlanta Constitution*, “Work Begins at Emory,” Sept. 19, 1908, p. 6.

¹⁰⁰ Dempsey, *Life of Bishop Dickey*, pp. 131-132.

would mean not only a new church for the Oxford congregation but also a large, commodious auditorium in which to hold campus assemblies.¹⁰¹ In numerous speeches and in appearances at church services around the state, he urged congregations to support the campaign for the Allen Memorial Church. On one such occasion in September 1908 at the Oxford church, parishioners and students present contributed and pledged \$1,500, a substantial sum for so small a group. Contributions from Methodist congregations across the state and the south rapidly accumulated so that Dickey could begin making plans for construction to start by spring of 1909.¹⁰²

Key speakers for commencement 1907 included Bishop Candler and LaGrange District presiding elder S. B. Robins, who respectively delivered the morning and evening commencement sermons. Trinity College President J. C. Kilgo delivered the annual literary address, and Luther Z. Rosser, Emory class of 1878, the alumni address. Dickey closed the five days of ceremonies with the traditional baccalaureate address before the forty-eight seniors, to that time the largest graduating class in Emory history.¹⁰³

The baccalaureate address of 1907 is one of those for which we have been unable to associate a title and text. Of the thirteen baccalaureate addresses Dickey delivered during his presidency, the full texts of seven survive. Five of these can be associated with the specific year in which they were delivered: “The Purple Thread in the Tunic,” 1903; “The Economy of Unselfishness,” 1905; “The Call of the World,” 1908; “Success,” 1913; and “The Altruism of Egoism,” 1915. Dickey entitled his 1909 baccalaureate address “The Monotony of Life,” but no text is available.

The texts for two others survive, but have no dates attached. They are entitled, respectively, “Introspection,” and “The Value of True Estimates.” In the former, Dickey urged

¹⁰¹ Dickey to Bishop Charles B. Galloway, Jackson, Miss., July 9, 1907, Dickey Collection, box 1, folder 1.

¹⁰² *Atlanta Constitution*, “Pres. Dickey Made Appeal,” Sept. 29, 1908, p. 5.

¹⁰³ *Atlanta Constitution*, “Emory Commencement Program,” May 5, 1907, p. E5.

his graduate audience to build intellectual power by developing the ability of self-examination. The church, he said, needed self-examination to best determine how to win more converts, as did the college, to finally attain a day of self-sufficiency. Likewise, the individual, he said, needed to practice the development of the mind by forming a practice of ongoing intellectual activity. In the latter of the undated baccalaureate addresses, Dickey compared the necessity of true measures in commerce and engineering to those used in taking the measure of a man. The measure of a man calling himself Christian, he concluded, is to be truly a follower of Jesus Christ in all things. This latter address may have been delivered at the commencement of 1914, in that one passage mentions “Germans at the front.”¹⁰⁴

Dickey’s baccalaureate addresses followed a general pattern. Each exhibited a grasp of the great sweep of history with very specific examples from antiquity up through current events of his day, and included further examples illustrating a moral lesson of self-achievement through service to others. He often decried those things that he perceived as going awry in the world – among them war, corporate avarice, and inappropriate relations between the sexes. As a common theme, he urged his student charges to self-realization and self-fulfillment through unselfishly making a difference in the world. In urging them to put others before self, Dickey traditionally concluded with a Biblical text and a quasi-sermon rising to florid eloquence that some might say reached the level of pontification. Dickey often ended these addresses by painting the vision of the student-listener achieving his goal of being accepted into the kingdom of God in heaven at the conclusion of his time on earth.

Such outreach through service to others was fundamental to the work of the church in the mind of Dickey and his colleagues. All seven bishops of the Methodist Episcopal Church,

¹⁰⁴ Dickey, James E. “Introspection,” and “The Value of True Estimates,” undated Emory College baccalaureate addresses, Dickey Collection, box 1, Manuscript, Archives, and Rare Book Library, Emory University.

South, convened in Atlanta on June 16, 1907 to inaugurate a large fundraising drive for the support of Wesley Memorial Enterprises – a coordinated church program to include a hospital, nurses' home, boarding houses for young women and for young men, reading rooms, editorial offices for the *Wesleyan Christian Advocate*, a gymnasium and baths, and a roof garden for the “proper surroundings and environment” for holding entertainment. The ambitious program grew out of the concerns of Warren and Asa Candler over the 1902 decision of Atlanta First Methodist Church to move from its downtown location to a site at the northern city limits of Atlanta along Peachtree Street.¹⁰⁵ Fearing a vacuum in the city's religious life, Bishop Candler proposed a large, central city church connected to an extensive program of local missions. Asa Candler, a member of the executive committee of Wesley Memorial Enterprises, pledged \$50,000 to the project if his fellow Methodists would raise \$150,000.

The seven bishops, along with President Kilgo of Trinity College and President Dickey of Emory College, were assigned respectively to preach at nine major Atlanta area churches that Sunday morning. A mass meeting at 4 p.m. that afternoon at Wesley Memorial church – which stood adjacent to the proposed site at the corner of Edgewood Avenue and Courtland Streets in downtown Atlanta – would kick off the campaign. In his sermon at Grace church, Bishop Candler described the plans to provide a house of worship in Atlanta's central business district, a place for strangers to stay, a home for young Christian men and women, and a hospital to treat the ill. He succeeded in raising \$5,000. At Trinity Church, Bishop Charles B. Galloway drew a \$10,000 contribution from a single individual, George Winship. The other speakers realized similar successes at their posts, but by day's end, it was apparent that the project was \$25,000 short. Hearing the news at the afternoon program, Asa Candler informed Bishop Galloway that

¹⁰⁵ Atlanta First Methodist moved from its former site, where today's Candler Building stands at Woodruff Park, to the lot it occupies today at the intersection of Peachtree Street and Ralph McGill Boulevard.

he would increase his contribution to \$75,000, and the announcement to the crowd brought gasps followed by cheers, during which the congregation spontaneously broke into singing, “Praise God From Whom All Blessings Flow.”¹⁰⁶

Dickey’s sermon that day at College Park church, based on John 3:16, was reported in detail in the *Wesleyan Christian Advocate* the following week. He asked, “How could God love the sinner” such as to give the gift of his only son, and what influence should this love should have on the lives of Christians? And many other questions followed: “Why did God make the plan of salvation? Why the three years of self-sacrificing ministry? Why the cross on Calvary?” And as the Biblical King David asked, “What is man that thou art mindful of him?” Alluding to contemporary findings of modern science, Dickey reminded his listeners that David thought himself small while believing there were only six thousand stars above, when Lord Kelvin had recently estimated a thousand million heavenly bodies based on revelations with more powerful telescopes. “Someone has said that size does not count,” he continued, yet scientists discovered the planet Neptune by noting variations in the orbit of Uranus around the sun. “The speck of gray matter in the brain of man who made the discovery was greater than the attraction of the planet,” Dickey said. God loves sinful man for his possibilities, he continued – because “He saw in man that which was worth dying for.” Lives should be influenced by high ideals, he asserted, and such a high ideal was the Wesley Memorial project being supported that day. “It gives to each one called upon to help the opportunity to respond to Christ’s confidence in us,” he said.¹⁰⁷

In late summer, 1907, President Dickey traveled to Old Point Comfort, Virginia, to attend a meeting of the education commission of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South. The ten-

¹⁰⁶ Kemp, Kathryn W. *God’s capitalist: Asa Candler of Coca-Cola*, Macon, Ga.: Mercer University Press, 2002, pp. 115-118; *Atlanta Constitution*, “Seven Bishops Will Be Heard,” June 8, 1907, p. 3; “Leaders of Methodism Launch Big Enterprise in City This Morning,” June 16, 1907, p. C1; “Seven Bishops Fill Pulpits of Methodists,” June 17, 1907, p. 6.

¹⁰⁷ Dempsey, *Life of Bishop Dickey*, pp. 136-137.

member commission fixed standards for Methodist institutions of higher education and preparatory schools across the south. William Preston Few, a faculty member at Trinity College and Dickey's cousin, also served on the commission.¹⁰⁸

At Emory, the fall term for 1907 opened with convocation on September 18, with an opening prayer by former President Charles Dowman and a personal welcome to the students by President Dickey. He noted a large percentage of returning older students and a healthy number of new students, indicating an increasing enrollment. F. F. Farmer of the Emory class of 1902 began his duties as adjunct professor of mathematics and assistant in the sub-freshman department, succeeding Douglas Rumble, who had departed for study at Harvard. The associate professor of mental and moral science, R. G. Smith, would temporarily fill the English chair vacated by the departure of W. L. Weber, until the arrival later in the year of B. A. Wise, an 1897 graduate of Randolph-Macon College. Wise, who earned his doctorate from Johns Hopkins University, most recently had been on the faculty of Millsaps College in Mississippi. Newton County school commissioner A. H. Foster temporarily would fill the vacancy created by the departure of T. C. Brown, associate professor of English and principal of the sub-freshman department. And Latin professor E. K. Turner would temporarily fill Brown's position as gymnasium director. Turner had previous experience in the Vanderbilt gymnasium and had worked in Y.M.C.A. athletic halls.¹⁰⁹

In an assembly on the first day of class, September 20, Dickey regaled the students with stories of his boyhood and college days. He urged them to begin the year right: "The devil never started a greater falsehood than 'a bad beginning makes a good ending.' You will be

¹⁰⁸ *Atlanta Constitution*, "President Dickey Attending," Aug. 25, 1907, p. B3. William Preston Few would become president of Trinity College in 1910, and in 1924 would continue as founding president of its successor institution, Duke University, serving until his death in 1940.

¹⁰⁹ *Atlanta Constitution*, "Emory College Begins Term," Sept. 19, 1907, p. 7; "Will Fill Chair of English," Sept. 28, 1907, p. 5.

remembered in after years just as the boys knew you in college. However much you may wish to gain classroom and college distinctions, conduct yourselves as you wish to be remembered, always having in mind that the boys will remember how you got the place.” Dickey assured the young men, “In this little college world of ours in which we have together our joys and sorrows, I ask of you that you conduct yourselves as Christian gentlemen.” At a separate session in Dickey’s lecture hall late in the afternoon including only the “new boys,” he personally outlined for them the college rules and continued the Emory tradition of having each sign the matriculation book.¹¹⁰

The president they dubbed “King James” indeed had a softer side that emerges in numerous stories told by alumni. One otherwise unidentified student who went on to be a Southern college professor recalled shortly after Dickey’s death that he came to Oxford as a green country boy. As his train stopped in Atlanta en route from his home to the campus for the first time, he lingered too long enjoying the sights of the city, and caught the last train out for Covington that night. Arriving after the street car and hacks had stopped running for the evening, he walked the two miles from the Covington station to the Oxford campus and asked a passerby how he might find President Dickey. “Not realizing at all, in my then ignorance of the conventions, that I was asking anything unusual or receiving remarkable kindness,” the man later recalled, he marched up to the door of the president’s house, inquired for Dr. Dickey, and asked his help in finding a room for the night and a more permanent boarding place. Good naturedly and with no sense of imposition, Dickey put on his hat and walked the young man through the night to the other end of the town, to the home of a family who provided room and board. Then, the professor recounted in his later years, “he left me, with perfect ease and naturalness, at that

¹¹⁰ *Atlanta Constitution*, “Students Join Fraternities,” Sept. 21, 1907, p. 2. Among the incoming freshmen in fall 1907 was Henry H. Jones, Dickey’s future son-in-law, who would go on to be a noted minister in the North Georgia Conference. Jones was in school 1906-07 as a sub-freshman.

late hour of the night to wend his way home – doubtless with a secret smile of his own at my expense.”¹¹¹

The same student remembered another day well into his college career, when he found himself standing outside the president’s office door “blubbing,” overwhelmed by emotions, homesickness, and a complexity of problems. Hearing the commotion, President Dickey emerged from his office, took the young man by the elbow and carried him back inside, into a closet of a room within the office. There, the man wrote in his later years, “he put his arm around my shoulder and patted me on the back as though I were a baby, saying, ‘There now, don’t let it make you unhappy – it will be all right.’ We turned and walked out without another word said, but that one manifestation of discerning sympathy eased my distress and sent me out better furnished to play the man than any sermon to which I ever listened.”¹¹²

The Reverend J. O. J. Taylor, a former missionary in Siberia and member of the South Georgia Conference, remembered in later years being a student under Dickey and rooming in his home, becoming very close to him. He remembered Dickey writing stacks of letters – mailing some 200 to 300 at a time seeking funds for Emory College. One night, the president sent for Taylor and his roommate, Jack Jones, asking their help in finishing a particularly important stack of letters for the endowment. The three of them worked until 2:30 in the morning addressing and sealing letters. Taylor remembers that it was not unusual for Dickey to work such hours on many nights, “and I feel sure that it was some of the work which he did at that time that shortened his life. He threw his whole soul into the matter. This is an illustration of his zeal, and a somewhat reckless throwing of himself into his work.”¹¹³

¹¹¹ Dempsey, *Life of Bishop Dickey*, pp. 139-140.

¹¹² *Ibid.*, pp. 140-141.

¹¹³ *Ibid.*, pp. 141-142.

Dickey could be “tender-hearted as a woman” in dealing with the boys, yet “firm as iron” when necessary, Taylor recalled. “One day he rushed from his office, tears streaming down his face,” Taylor wrote. A student’s father had been accidentally killed, and Dickey must inform him. “Go get me some of his friends – his fraternity mates – somebody real close to him, get them quick,” Dickey said. When the boys returned with several fraternity brothers including the young man who had suffered the loss, “the boy himself hardly felt the pangs of sorrow more than did Dr. Dickey,” Taylor remembered.¹¹⁴

Dickey also faced the dread of any college president – dealing with the deaths of students. Taylor recalled that during his own time on campus, two boys died with pneumonia – Curtis Holt and Willis Palmer. “When Palmer died, I called Mrs. Dickey on the phone and told her,” Taylor wrote. “She never replied to me. There was a sob and several efforts to speak in answer to the message – then she placed the receiver back in place, still unable to speak.”¹¹⁵ In another instance, Dickey was grieved to receive a telegram on February 25, 1909, informing him of the death of Sidney C. Morgan, a member of the senior class who had left three days earlier for his home in Egypt, Georgia, due to illness. The 26-year-old was a member of the Few Literary Society and played on the senior football squad.¹¹⁶

A highlight of the fall term 1907 was the appearance on campus of former Confederate general and Methodist preacher Clement A. Evans. The former Georgia state senator took part in many of the Civil War’s most famous battles, and led his own “Evans’ Brigade” at Gettysburg, continuing his command until the final surrender at Appomattox. A personal friend of fellow generals J.E.B. Stuart, Stonewall Jackson and Robert E. Lee, after the war he entered the Methodist ministry, serving appointments in the North Georgia Conference for twenty-five

¹¹⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 142

¹¹⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 143.

¹¹⁶ *Atlanta Constitution*, “Mortuary – S. C. Morgan, Egypt, Ga.,” Feb. 26, 1909, p. 4.

years, including four years as pastor of Atlanta First Methodist church. The entire Emory student body and many Oxford townspeople packed the Oxford church to hear Gen. Evans preach the morning of November 3, 1907, on the subject from John's gospel, "What sayeth thou of thyself?" Dickey, in his introduction of the general, related the wish he had heard Evans express that he be remembered for his connection to the church more than anything else. Evans confirmed it to the crowd, "If I were merely ambitious, that is the highest ambition I could desire to attain."¹¹⁷

The North Georgia Annual Conference for 1907 met at Sam Jones Memorial Methodist Church in Cartersville. Dickey arrived in town November 19 to conduct meetings of the board of mission which he chaired and to prepare to deliver both the mission report and the report on Emory College. Reports of the conference noted the recent passing of evangelist Sam Jones for whom the church was named, and the continued presence in Cartersville and at the conference of Rev. William H. Felton, preacher and state legislator who preached the first sermon in the Cartersville Methodist Church, and his wife, Rebecca Latimer Felton, "who has won fame throughout the south as a lecturer and writer," the *Constitution* reported. The newspaper also highlighted Cartersville as the home of Southern newspaper columnist, author, writer and lecturer "Bill Arp" Smith.¹¹⁸ The unusually quiet session saw no trials for misconduct and no challenges of members' character. The greatest sensation again in 1907 was on the question of tobacco use by members of the conference. "It is a well known fact that a large percentage of the ministers of the North Georgia Conference are users of tobacco, and an effort to curtail the use of the weed will doubtless bring about a storm of protest," the *Constitution* reported. A proposal to

¹¹⁷ *Atlanta Constitution*, "General Evans at Oxford," Nov. 4, 1907, p. 8; *New York Times*, "Gen. Clement A. Evans Dead," July 3, 1911.

¹¹⁸ See Chapter Four regarding Mrs. Felton's and Bill Arp's notorious support for lynching at the time of the Andrew Sledd Affair.

split the conference into three parts was vigorously opposed and soundly defeated. Retired minister J. A. Reynolds of Conyers chided his younger colleagues for attending baseball games: “For God’s sake,” he cried dramatically, “let us stop this baseball business!” Citing an unnamed “Atlanta minister” who had attended a game, stamped on his hat on the floor and “whooped himself hoarse,” he declared himself “forever against such sporty proclivities.”¹¹⁹

In more serious business, Dickey as chairman and Asa Candler as treasurer of the board of missions reported \$43,344 raised from the various churches for foreign and domestic missions during the year, an amount \$2,425 more than appropriations required. Following a moving tribute to the late Methodist layman, Sen. John W. Akin, his widow announced a \$5,000 gift to the Emory College library, in recognition of the late senator’s love for literature. Dickey expressed appreciation both personally and on behalf of the college for the “magnanimous trust” Mrs. Akin had placed in making this gift in memory of her husband, who was the first speaker of the Georgia house following the Civil War and later an unsuccessful candidate for governor.¹²⁰

In his report on Emory College, Dickey recounted the plans to build a new church on the campus as a memorial to Young J. Allen, long-time Methodist missionary to China. As Dickey informed the group he already had gifts of \$5,000 and \$1,000 each for the purpose, respectively given by Asa G. Candler and George Winship, other ministers pledged some \$6,300 from the floor of the conference. They included Rev. T. A. Seals, a retired minister who rose to offer his gold-headed cane, given to him by members of his church and valued at \$50. Dickey replied he

¹¹⁹ *Atlanta Constitution*, “Great Meeting of Methodists,” Nov. 20, 1907, p. 5; “Cartersville Filled by Army of Methodists,” Nov. 21, 1907, p. 3.

¹²⁰ *Ibid.*, Nov. 20, 1907, p. 5; *Atlanta Constitution*, “\$100,000 for Missions Raised by Methodists,” Nov. 23, 1907, p. 1.

appreciated the gesture but could not accept the cane, returning it to Seals, upon which two laymen pledged \$25 each on Seals' behalf.¹²¹

As was customary, at the close of the North Georgia Conference, Dickey traveled to the site of the South Georgia Conference, which held its 1907 session the following week in Brunswick. His report on Emory College showed "gratifying results at the dear old alma mater of many of the ministers and laymen," the *Constitution* reported. During his visit, Dickey preached the Sunday evening service at the Brunswick First Methodist Church.¹²²

The spring term of 1908 opened at Oxford with almost the entire faculty being ill. The *Constitution* reported a virtual sick call of the college leadership: President Dickey was "confined to his rooms with the grip" for most of a week. English professor B. A. Wise was "seriously ill and not improving rapidly." Greek professor Charles W. Pepler missed several days of class due to illness. Mathematics professor M. T. Peed was "not able to leave his room." John S. Moore's condition was serious and he seemed to be improving slowly. Sub-freshman director F. F. Farmer had continued with class while running a slight fever. Assistant librarian Paul F. White, "suffering from a severely bruised knee," apparently did not contract the same malady as his colleagues.¹²³

At a spring chapel session, Dickey announced to the student body that a friend of the college had purchased an acre of land adjoining the athletic field, donating it for construction of a quarter-mile track and grounds for intramural football and baseball. The students wildly applauded the announcement, but the president declined to reveal the name of the benefactor.

¹²¹ *Atlanta Constitution*, "\$13,000 Given for Memorial by Methodists," Nov. 24, 1907, p. A3.

¹²² *Atlanta Constitution*, "Quitman Wins Next Meeting," Nov. 30, 1907, p. 2.

¹²³ *Atlanta Constitution*, "Sickness Among Faculty," Jan. 16, 1908, p. 7.

Athletic director E. K. Turner, however, told the *Atlanta Constitution* that the donor was Dickey himself.¹²⁴

As the trustees met at commencement 1908, Dickey reported enrollment at 265, with 100 prospective students already assured for the coming fall. He reported that barriers between various factions within the student body had fallen in recent years, and he credited the senior leadership with creating a more harmonious student body. “There has been a more thorough fellowship among the students than at any time during my administration,” Dickey told the trustees.

The necessary curriculum adjustments had been made to keep Emory in class A of Southern Methodist colleges, in keeping with changes adopted by the church’s educational committee – of which Dickey was a member – the previous year. In the first year of fundraising for the Young J. Allen Memorial church to be built on the Oxford campus, \$24,000 had been received in cash and subscriptions. Dickey announced the departure of one of the more accomplished members of the faculty, English professor Boyd A. Wise, a Ph.D. from Johns Hopkins, for a position teaching Latin and German at the State Agricultural and Mechanical College of Oklahoma at Stillwater.¹²⁵

The Dickey home became a focus of activity each commencement. That year, in addition to the boarders already sharing the home with the six-member family, Miss Alice Irby of Blackstone, Virginia was a house guest, as were Mrs. John W. Akin and daughters of Cartersville. Additionally, the Dickeys entertained the board of trustees and their wives with a reception at the home on Saturday evening of commencement week.¹²⁶ Other Oxford homes

¹²⁴ *Atlanta Constitution*, “Acre of Land Given Emory,” June 3, 1908, p. 16.

¹²⁵ *Emory College Board of Trustees Minutes*, June 5, 1908; *Atlanta Constitution*, “Emory Begins Commencement,” June 6, 1908, p. 4.

¹²⁶ *Atlanta Constitution*, “Brilliant Social Side of Emory Commencement,” June 7, 1908, p. D8.

filled with numerous guests for commencement, as well, including alumni and the many young ladies who converged on the events for the chance to interact with the young men of the campus. Daughters of faculty and staff who had been away at college made it a point to return home in time for the commencement festivities, and many of the students invited their sisters to campus for the events and to meet their classmates. Among many, Miss Laurie Jones of Atlanta visited her brother, Emory freshman Henry H. Jones, for the festivities.¹²⁷

Bishop Seth Ward of Houston, Texas, preached the commencement sermon in the Oxford church to a standing-room only house estimated at 1,500. Selecting as his text Mark 10:42-45, Ward inspired the graduates and their supporters on the topic, “the greatness of service.” Rev. T. G. Lang, secretary of education of the South Georgia Conference, delivered the evening sermon, again to a large congregation.¹²⁸ At the commencement ceremony on June 10, Dickey conferred degrees on twenty-nine graduates, and four honorary degrees: doctor of divinity degrees for Rev. J. S. French of Atlanta and Rev. Kogor Usaki of Japan; and doctor of laws degrees on Chancellor David Barrow of the University of Georgia and alumnus T. H. Yun of Korea.¹²⁹

The text of Dickey’s 1908 baccalaureate address, “The Call of the World,” is another of the several full texts of his speeches that survives, and follows his established pattern of laying out lessons from history, then from contemporary society, and finally a closing section of sermonizing. He established the premise that “In every age of the world there have been manifold voices calling men to their several activities, yet in each there has been some voice, like that of Caesar’s soothsayer, sounding shriller than the rest, and to that voice the spirit of the age has responded.” During ancient and medieval periods this was primarily the call of conquest, he

¹²⁷ *Ibid.* Note: Laurie Jones graduated from Salem College in Winston-Salem, North Carolina, and spent the rest of her life on faculty there as a piano teacher. She never married. (Jones family records held by the author).

¹²⁸ *Atlanta Constitution*, “Emory Hears Bishop Ward,” June 8, 1908, p. 8.

¹²⁹ *Atlanta Constitution*, “Diplomas are Given at Emory,” June 11, 1908, p. 3.

said – physical supremacy, manifest brute strength: “It was, if you please, the bulls of Bashan bruising the cedars of Lebanon merely to show the quality of horns.” With great flourish, he recounted some of the landmark movements of history, from the rise of Babylon and then its fall to Persia, followed by the sweep of Alexander the Great across Southern Europe, “crossing the Hellespont and after subduing Phoenicia, Egypt, Bactria, India and Persia wept that there were no more worlds to conquer.” But “the Macedonian kings surrendered to the cohorts of Rome,” followed by the Barbarians, Charlemagne, and through his descendants conquering the north of Europe, leading to the modern states. Dickey characterized Napoleon’s spirit as “belonging to the period of Alexander and Caesar – the air of conquest was native to him.” Interestingly, Dickey acknowledged that the sweep of history he discussed was generally that of the western world, and such conquests were occurring in other parts of the world at the same times.

From “warring for metes and boundaries,” he recounted, people moved to “warring persistently for self-government,” including the American colonists overcoming King George III. Quoting eloquently, and certainly dramatically, from the American Declaration of Independence, Dickey moved on to cite the Reform Bills of 1832, 1867 and 1885, “and today English men everywhere breathe the untainted air of freedom,” he said. With considerable detail, he outlined the “Reign of Terror” leading to the French Revolution, and the move to limited monarchies in Germany, Austria-Hungary, Sweden and Norway, noting that Spain and Portugal “remain restless under less liberal rule, and the throne of the Russias is tottering to its fall.” Such struggles would continue worldwide, Dickey added, “until all government is ‘of the people, for the people, and by the people.’”

Although two great world wars lay just ahead but beyond his view, from the perspective of 1908 Dickey perceived that “the call to conquest as a lust for battle is growing fainter as the

years recede. The peace of the world is not apt to be broken merely to hear a victor's song. Such outbreaks, if at all, will be local and spasmodic." Yet another "call of the world" was emerging in his mind – "It is the voice of Mammon as represented in the commercial activities of men and nations." Like soldiers of antiquity and people seeking constitutional freedoms, the people of his day were compelled by the thought of increased material gains, he asserted. Dickey cited the president of Syracuse University, James Roscoe Day – who had been elected a Methodist bishop in 1904 only to decline the election to remain as Syracuse president. Day wrote that while society continued as did the ancients to create great beauty and art, society's physical achievements and inventions – such as the telegraph and telephone – had become its metaphysics and poem.

Discussing at length the debates of the day over tariffs, the "hectacombs of lives and millions of treasure being exhausted in cutting the Panama Canal," and other commercial enterprises of the nations of the world, Dickey asked, "And for what? In order that we may make more stuff and grow richer a little more rapidly." Ranging widely around the world, he discussed Germany's Kaiser Wilhelm, discounting those who characterized him as the "young war lord" and asserting instead, "it will be discovered that his battles are economic rather than sanguinary." And of England and her far-flung colonies, "The sun never setting upon her possessions constantly witnesses the operation of economic laws which mean gain to the mother country." And of Japan: "It was the commercial spirit that caused Japan to seize the sovereignty of Korea, and the same spirit inspires her today as she contemplates the subjugation of China and looks with covetous eyes towards the Philippines."

Commercialism also infected the educational world, he said, evidenced in the "growing disposition to minify [his word – in context, minimize] the humanities and to magnify the

sciences in behalf of utility, though the character of that utility is by no means agreed upon by its partisans.” Relying heavily on the writings of Herbert Spencer, Dickey discussed those aspects of human life which he considered most important – the uses in things surrounding humankind in the world beyond their power to bring money. And at considerable length, he discussed the works of other educational philosophers: Harvard professor of German art and culture Kuno Francke, former president of the American Association for the Advancement of Science Calvin M. Woodward, and others who came down on the side of the study of science over the study of the humanities. He quoted Francke, “that to demand a thorough knowledge of Greek and Latin grammar, Greek and Roman history is intellectual tyranny.” And he cited Woodward, who contended that those doing the constructive and distributive work of the world should not be mere ciphers, but should be equipped intellectually for the work, including an understanding of the sciences behind it. For the people, this would mean social justice, and for the state, economic and commercial benefit.

“That this commercial idea has strong hold upon the academic forces of today is manifest when we consider the multiplied and multiplying technological and agricultural schools throughout the wide borders of our land,” Dickey continued. Their matriculants view them as “infallible means to the end of an immediate and remunerative employment, but we should not forget that oftentimes it diverts the pupil from a more generous culture which culminates in a nobler development of intellectual life.”

Such was causing institutions of higher education to break with the relation and spirit of their founders, Dickey asserted, “while others are tugging at their bonds hoping to gather a few crumbs that fall from the rich man’s table, and still others are raising their entrance requirements beyond the preparation of their constituency because of a monetary influence.” This potent “Call

of the World” leads, he said, to “the classics being subverted, the fidelity of institutional life being destroyed, and academic conditions being disregarded....” Institutions of higher learning must conserve the government, propagate a sound educational system, and maintain an unpolluted religion in the face of such commercialism, Dickey asserted. In particular, he charged the next generation of college graduates, such as those he addressed on that day, with the task.

Dickey’s conservative fear in a rapidly changing world was that core values were being lost, and unacceptable compromises in those core values being made in the name of advancement. “It is not my purpose to proclaim against the development of our resources. I rejoice in all of the real prosperity that comes to our people. Indeed, I would admonish you to take part in the wondrous activities of our age, but with this special observance [the underline is his] – that you do not subvert high things to low things.” And he urged the graduates to remain rooted in what he viewed as the ultimate core value, to hear the other voice that he perceived still calling through the age of commercialism – the voice of God through Christ. “His call is not to accumulate for self, but to administer for the many. He invites you to become a co-laborer with him for the betterment of men, with the promise that your labor shall not be in vain. The pomp and power and beauty of this world shall fade and fail, God and his Kingdom alone shall endure.” And Dickey concluded:

If your hands turn to commerce rather than to literature, put your money in to foundations that are in line with the purposes of God, else dying your treasure shall perish with you. Bestow your wealth upon orphanages, asylums, hospitals, Christian Colleges and Universities and the activities of your lives shall be projected into the limitless future, conserving those cherished interests that animated you while living.... Young Gentlemen: If you can do nothing more, plant a tree so that the shadow of its friendly boughs, symbolical of your purposes, may offer to those who come after you a retreat from the heat and burden of the day. Be still, and listen. Hear the still small voice as it calls you to service, a service that shall lay hold on the eternities. Respond to it, and some

day, when all the clamoring voices of conquest, of government, and of commerce shall have been hushed, aye, when the voice of love itself is still, out of the unbroken silence you shall hear in tenderest cadences: 'Well done, thou good and faithful servant; enter thou into the joy of thy lord.' And that will be enough.¹³⁰

Just before commencement, in May the third annual educational conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, met in Atlanta, setting the stage for a major endowment campaign at Emory College. Resolving that "From the birth of Methodism down to this present hour, the educational work of the church has been her right arm of power," and that such educational institutions should be maintained "at such a point of efficiency that we can train our children under positively Christian influences..." the conference declared "it to be the unwavering purpose of the Methodist Episcopal church, south, to furnish academic, collegiate and university training, which shall have as its aim to develop physical, mental and spiritual powers to the highest possible point, and to bring all these developed powers into captivity to Christ, that our children may do their work in life in right relation, both to God and to humanity, and thus work together with God to bring in the Master's kingdom." In response, Methodist people should give their "sympathy, prayers and money to maintain, equip and endow our institutions so that they will be able to give to our children all the advantages that are necessary to develop their God-given powers."

Dickey was presiding officer of the conference, which concluded with a powerful address by Bishop Candler, who brought his audience to tears amid shouts of "amen" and "bless the Lord," saying, "there is no hope for the country in the matter of education except in the education which centers about the Lord Jesus Christ." Outlining three types of education – that dominated by the state, that fostered by individuals under a controlling board "responsible to no one," and that founded and nurtured by the church – Candler asserted that church-sponsored

¹³⁰ Dickey, James E. "The Call of the World." Emory College Baccalaureate address delivered June 10, 1908. Dickey Special Collections, box 1. Manuscript, Archives, and Rare Book Library, Emory University.

education was the highest ideal because it was based on a “moral element,” but that a state-controlled institution was preferable to one under a private board. “The church cannot get along without the college, and the college cannot get along without an endowment,” Candler continued. Using Emory College as an example, Candler said it needed \$25,000 added to its endowment for every 20-man increase in the size of the student body. “I plead not for the sake of the college, but in behalf of civilization and Christianization,” he said. If called upon to destroy the literature of Milton, Plato and the rest, or to destroy these words from the gospel of John – “Let not your heart be troubled, ye believe in God, believe also in Me” – Candler said he would “turn loose all of the literature of the world and hold on to the comforting words of the Lord.” Lamenting that state schools could not teach adequately about Martin Luther, John Calvin, John Knox and John Wesley, Candler said to leave them out meant history could not be taught in matters essential to a successful education.

W. M. Ainsworth, president of the South Georgia Conference board of education, echoed Candler’s words, but went further – urging that the boards of trustees of Methodist colleges be elected in the open at annual conference instead of the customary self-perpetuation of boards such as Emory’s. Others spoke on the importance of educating Blacks, of Christian education in overseas missions such as China and Japan, and of educational deficits in the home mission fields such as Texas. Young Harris College President J. A. Sharp lamented the dearth of teachers available for rural schools, and the appalling ignorance of the mountain people. Yet he condemned acceptance of funds from northern capitalists, saying the south should carry on the work with its own “consecrated hands and funds.”¹³¹ All this was building toward an endowment campaign for Emory College.

¹³¹ *Atlanta Constitution*, “Great Meeting of Educators Comes to an End,” May 22, 1908, p. 1.

Dickey's hopes for that endowment campaign were realized when the board of trustees held a special session on July 1, 1908 at the Wesley Memorial Church in Atlanta, authorized a campaign committee and set a goal to increase the endowment to \$500,000 from its current level of \$200,000. On motion of trustee and former president Dowman,¹³² Dickey became chair of a campaign committee consisting of Asa G. Candler, George Winship, W. P. Pattillo, L. B. Robeson, W. C. Lovett, and J. T. Daves. Asa Candler pledged \$50,000 at the meeting, George Winship \$10,000, another \$1,000 each from Dickey and from L. G. Council of Americus, with eleven other trustees adding a total of \$4,000 in pledges. The Alumni Association's campaign to raise \$30,000 to endow a chair of history was included as part of the plan, so some \$96,000 of the \$300,000 necessary had been pledged on the first day. With only eighteen of the thirty-nine trustees being present, others soon would add to the total. Through the coming two years, Dickey would focus on the campaign, acting not only as chairman but as secretary. Garnett W. Quillian, initially appointed as secretary to manage the campaign's affairs from an office in the Candler Building, resigned October 1 to return to medical school. Typical of Dickey's efforts was an appearance that fall in his former pulpit at Grace church to preach the morning worship service and issue a plea for help with the Emory endowment campaign. After his sermon on the text, "Create within me a clean heart, O God, and renew a right spirit within me," a collection among the packed house yielded \$3,500 for the endowment. In spring 1909, a collection following his April 20 sermon at Savannah's Wesley Monumental Church raised \$4,150, the largest amount yet from a single event. Dickey said he was "especially encouraged by the magnificent response." But despite the rapid success at obtaining pledges, collecting payments

¹³² Dowman held the distinction of serving on the Emory College Board of Trustees in four different capacities over the years, representing successively the Alumni Association, the Florida Conference, the South Georgia Conference, and the North Georgia Conference.

proved to be more difficult. Five years later, less than half of the total pledged would be collected.¹³³

A letter from Asa Candler to his brother, Warren, regarding this campaign indicates that Dickey may have been among those over-estimating Asa Candler's capacity at the time. "Alas, how some do magnify this poor, wiggling worm," he told his brother. A conversation with Dickey prompted his concern – the Emory president had asked for a \$100,000 contribution to the endowment campaign, arguing that such a generous lead gift would "spur others to follow." Candler told his brother he did not have the cash available at the time, having recently completed construction of the Candler Building in downtown Atlanta and entered the banking business, as well. Although he had an estimated personal net worth of \$700,000, only about \$5,000 was available in cash, he said. Being in the position of having to refuse to make the donation at the time, but not wishing to air his financial matters in public, he sought his brother's advice: "Except you, my friends too often are very envious. Don't talk of this letter except to God." Warren's response is not clear, but Asa pledged \$50,000 to the campaign, and his gifts to Emory over the years would surpass that amount many times over.¹³⁴

Emory College opened the fall term of 1908 with a record enrollment of 270 and a record number of Atlanta boys in attendance. There were 35 seniors, 40 juniors, 57 sophomores, 70 freshmen, 16 students taking courses not leading to degree, 47 sub-freshmen, two graduate students and three unclassified. The new J. P. Williams gymnasium was in full operation by fall 1908 – the catalogue bragged that it was "66 by 106 feet, three stories, heated by steam, lighted by electricity, and furnished with hot and cold baths." It boasted a dressing room with steel

¹³³ *Emory College Board of Trustees Minutes*, July 1, 1908; June 4, 1909; and June 7, 1915; Bullock, *A History of Emory University*, p. 238; *Atlanta Constitution*, "Dickey Raises \$3,500 for Fund," Oct. 5, 1908, p. 2; "\$100,000 is Pledged for Emory Endowment," July 2, 1908, p. 1; "\$4,150 for Emory Raised at Savannah," April 21, 1909, p. 11.

¹³⁴ Kemp, *God's Philanthropist: Asa Candler of Coca-Cola*, p. 118.

lockers and combination locks, enough for each student to have his own. The final cost of construction totaled \$27,500.

W. F. Melton joined the faculty as professor of English, while Nolan A. Goodyear, Emory class of 1904, was named adjunct professor of languages and director of the gymnasium. Goodyear had experience as a teacher for four years, including as principal of Oxford's Palmer Institute and at Waycross High School, and before that, as a newspaper reporter. He had studied the previous summer at Harvard, taking courses in physical culture to prepare him for the work. Before classes opened for the school year, on September 2 Dickey presided over Goodyear's wedding to Marie Lane Evans, a music teacher from Oxford.¹³⁵ Also joining the Emory staff that fall as assistant librarian was Bonnell H. Stone, who had graduated in the spring and left for Gainesville to enter the peach-growing business. He returned to campus at Dickey's behest, following in the footsteps of his father, Harry H. Stone, professor of mathematics and the college treasurer, and his late grandfather, George W. W. Stone, long-time professor of mathematics and college treasurer – each of whom had left after graduation to enter farming, only to be lured back to the staff in the ensuing fall by the college president.¹³⁶

As the fall 1908 term opened, Dickey welcomed the students in a convocation ceremony that packed the college chapel. After his brother-in-law, Charles E. Dowman, then presiding elder of the Oxford District of the Methodist church, opened the ceremony with prayer, Dickey launched into what was becoming his typical greeting to a new class of young men. In what was described as “an inspiring heart-to-heart talk,” he extended a hearty welcome to the students on behalf of the faculty and of the citizens of Oxford. He thanked the alumni observers for their

¹³⁵ *Catalogue of Emory College 1908-1909*, pp. 39, 53; *Atlanta Constitution*, “Emory Expects Big Attendance,” Sept. 13, 1908, p. A5. Goodyear would spend the remainder of his career on the faculty of Romance languages at Emory College and Emory University, retiring in 1942 and dying in 1945.

¹³⁶ *Atlanta Constitution*, “3 Generations Serve as Teachers at Emory,” Sept. 13, 1908, p. 6.

diligent support for the endowment campaign to support the students, noting that pledges had reached \$103,000 (only \$7,000 more than that pledged the day the trustees approved the campaign). And he recalled the Oxford of his youth – of his days as a student there – and compared it to the growing campus of the day with its new gymnasium, which reference brought resounding applause. He reported that a lot adjacent to the north side of the campus had been purchased for construction of the Young J. Allen Memorial church, with work to begin within a year.

Dickey urged the students to join in promotion of the college, suggesting that they form an “Emory 400 ’09 Club” along the lines of a similar student organization then in place at the University of Georgia. The proposal met with the students’ hearty approval. “Let the motto of the Greater Emory Club be four hundred students at Emory in ’09,” the *Phoenix* editorialized. “Our friends at the University of Georgia are rejoicing at the harmony that exists in that institution. The students of Emory wish to join them in expressing the same sentiments. The organizational meeting of the club was held in January 1909 in the college chapel, “with Emory spirit thoroughly aroused over the prospects of active, personal work for the college,” the *Constitution* reported.¹³⁷ An early project of the club was to publish the next edition of the Emory *Bulletin*, mailed to friends, alumni and prospective students. They did so in February 1909, featuring a frontispiece picturing the new Allen Memorial church, President Dickey’s annual report, and student-written articles on the goals of the club, morals, and athletics on campus.¹³⁸

Among the students Dickey welcomed at that fall convocation was Robert Winship Woodruff, whose father, Ernest Woodruff, was president of the Trust Company of Georgia and

¹³⁷ *Atlanta Constitution*, “Many Students Throng Emory,” Sept. 17, 1908, p. 8; “Greater Emory Club,” Jan. 13, 1909, p. 5; *The Emory Phoenix*, “Greater Emory Club,” December 1908, p. 70.

¹³⁸ *Atlanta Constitution*, “Emory Bulletin is Out,” Feb. 25, 1909, p. 6.

one of the state's wealthiest men. Robert proved not to be a good student. Emory historian Gary Hauk suggests this may have been because Woodruff was dyslexic. The younger Woodruff complained to his father that the dorm room ceiling leaked, that his eyes ached from reading, and that he did not have enough money. By December, President Dickey would write his father that Robert should sit out the following term. That Dickey would write such a letter to so influential an individual testifies both to Dickey's sternness of principle and to the apparent hopelessness of young Robert's situation. Robert's heart lay in the business world, and he moved quickly after leaving Emory, rising rapidly from a laborer's position in a pipe foundry, finding his strength in sales, and by 1922 was vice president of White Motor Company in Ohio. His father, who headed a syndicate that bought the Coca-Cola Company from Asa G. Candler's children in 1919, prevailed upon Robert to become its president in 1923. The Woodruff legacy with Emory from that point forward is legendary and is well-chronicled elsewhere. It culminates in the 1979 gift by Robert and his brother, George, of \$105 million in Coca-Cola stock in the transfer to Emory of the Emily and Ernest Woodruff Fund – the largest gift to an American institution of higher education to that date. Asked in the 1980s by Emory President James T. Laney if he had ever thought what might have happened had he stayed in school at Emory, Woodruff replied, “Yes, I think it would have slowed me down about four years.”¹³⁹

As Woodruff entered school in the fall of 1908, students debated a newly-adopted version of “no-pass, no-play” for intramural sports. In order to play on his class team, a sophomore must have completed eleven credit hours toward graduation, a junior twenty-four hours, and a senior, forty hours. “This system has been the direct cause of more men making up back work than any measure ever taken even by the college authorities,” the *Phoenix* observed. The plan made special students – those taking courses not leading to a degree – ineligible to

¹³⁹ Hauk, *A Legacy of Heart and Mind*, pp. 150-157.

participate, “students among whose ranks is some of the best athletic material in college.” A fault with the system, the *Phoenix* asserted, was that it was up to each team’s own captain and coach to enforce the rule, and the junior class was “deliberately” violating the rule while enforcing it against other classes. “Gentlemen, you should at least have cast the beam out of your own eye before casting out the mote of another’s,” the *Phoenix* said in calling for the junior class to forfeit their games. A note in a subsequent issue of the *Phoenix* reported that Dr. Duncan, coach of the junior team, took exception to the word “deliberately” in connection with the violation, so the *Phoenix* withdrew its allegation that the action was deliberate. The junior class, nonetheless, was required to forfeit the games in question.¹⁴⁰

By the time the North Georgia Annual Conference met in November 1908 at Gainesville First Methodist Church, Dickey could report \$125,000 subscribed toward the Emory endowment campaign, and sufficient funds on hand to begin construction of the Allen Memorial church. The *Constitution* noted that the funds for the church project had been raised in little more than a year, “no easy task” and a result of the “earnest and untiring efforts on the part of Dr. Dickey.” With architectural drawings complete under the direction of the building committee – Bishop Candler and trustees Asa Candler, W. P. Pattillo, and George Winship – the beginning of construction awaited only the end of winter weather. As a featured speaker, Dickey shared the conference platform with President John C. Kilgo of Trinity College and Bishop E. Embree Hoss of Nashville, Tennessee.¹⁴¹

The following week, Dickey was in Quitman at the South Georgia Annual Conference. He reported strong enrollment at Emory College, and good health and work among the students.

¹⁴⁰ *The Emory Phoenix*, “The Unit System,” November 1908, p. 53; “A Correction,” December 1908, p. 86.

¹⁴¹ *Atlanta Constitution*, “Some Prominent Methodists and Churches Where the Conference Will Meet,” Nov. 1, 1908, p. A11; “Young J. Allen Memorial to be Handsome Edifice,” Nov. 15, 1908, p. A5; “Laymen to Raise All Assessments,” Nov. 21, 1908, p. 0_1.

He reported the progress toward the Allen Memorial church plans, urging those with outstanding pledges to redeem them promptly. Noting that he had called for a \$500,000 endowment campaign for the college since his first year in office, Dickey expressed appreciation to the trustees for allowing such a campaign to proceed in the year just past, and urged his South Georgia colleagues to continue to support it.¹⁴²

A highlight of the year for Emory students was the appearance of the President-elect of the United States, William Howard Taft, during a whistle-stop tour of the South. En route from Augusta to Atlanta on January 15, 1909, Taft's train stopped at Thomson, Crawfordville, Union Point, Greensboro, and Madison, where more than one thousand people turned out. But the biggest ovation came at the Covington station, where a tremendous crowd, including virtually every Emory student and many townspeople, thronged to hear Taft's words. "The face of Judge Taft fairly beamed as [the Emory students] sang their college song, winding up with a yell which concluded with 'T-a-f-t, T-a-f-t, T-a-f-t,'" the *Constitution* reported.

Sharing the train platform with Taft, Emory alumnus Boykin Wright of Augusta formally introduced the president-elect to the Emory students, recounting a number of Emory alumni well-known to Taft. Telling the students that their presence made him wistful for his own college days – "when your character is in the formative state and somebody else is paying the bills" – Taft reminded them that "at no time in your life will you have the friends to whom you have the same feelings as you have to each other today." He paid particular praise to Emory alumnus and U. S. Supreme Court Justice L. Q. C. Lamar, "whom it was my great good fortune to know and to know well. As a young man struggling onward, and needing sympathy, he gave it to me. When an older man reaches down to help you up, if you have the spirit of manhood and a spark of gratitude in you, you never forget it." To the rapt audience, he continued, "As I look

¹⁴² *Atlanta Constitution*, "Sunday Enjoyed by Methodists," Dec. 7, 1908, p. 8.

into your faces, I see the hope of Georgia, and I see before me embryo senators and governors and presidents of the United States. And all of you, perhaps, by that time will be Republicans – I don't know.”

At the conclusion of Taft's speech, President Dickey presented the President-elect with an Emory pennant, which he accepted amid a deafening cheer. As the train pulled from the station, Taft stood on the back platform waving his Emory pennant to the great delight of the Emory boys until the train went out of sight.¹⁴³ That evening in Atlanta, hundreds of civic leaders attended a banquet in Taft's honor at the Auditorium-Armory, including Dickey and Asa, Asa Jr., Charles, John and Warren Candler.¹⁴⁴

Construction on the campus' new athletic field began in February. Located on land behind Candler Hall that was donated by Dickey, the two-acre plot would include a quarter-mile lap cinder running track, with separate grounds for football and baseball – “the baseball grounds to be modeled on the plan of the famous turtle-back diamond at Memphis, Tenn.,” the *Constitution* reported. The facility added to Emory's existing inventory of a football and baseball field, and quarter-mile and mile-long tracks. In addition, funds were to be provided by the athletic association to build six tennis courts on adjacent property, with their construction to begin soon. With this work, “Emory's athletic grounds will be classed among the best in the South,” the newspaper said.¹⁴⁵ The expanded facilities opened with great ceremony for the annual field day on April 12, played out before a large crowd of spectators including out-of-town visitors. President Dickey inaugurated the field day by firing the starting gun for runners in the first event.¹⁴⁶

¹⁴³ *Atlanta Constitution*, “Flowers and Applause Greet President-elect on Trip Through State,” Jan. 16, 1909, p. 4.

¹⁴⁴ *Atlanta Constitution*, “List of Guests at Banquet Given to President-elect,” Jan. 16, 1909, p. 5.

¹⁴⁵ *Atlanta Constitution*, “Fine Athletic Field Started at Emory,” Feb. 20, 1909, p. 4.

¹⁴⁶ *Atlanta Constitution*, “Seniors Win First in Field Day Games,” April 13, 1909, p. 11.

The long-fought issue of gaining tax-exempt status for private college endowments was again addressed in the *Phoenix* that spring. “It is not our purpose to make an attack on state colleges,” said the student newspaper. “We believe that the state should give all possible support to education. We glory in the fact that the University of Georgia, which includes all the state schools, is doing great work.” But, the student writer argued, Emory and Mercer were doing just as much public service as the state university – even moreso, because they were doing so without taxpayer support. The \$1,600 in taxes paid by Emory each year could be put to better purpose, the article continued, and the effect of such taxation was to deplete the income of one institution to support the other. Such an exemption would require legislative action and ratification by the state’s voters, they noted, but such could be accomplished if the many influential alumni of Emory and Mercer would unite in the common cause.¹⁴⁷

A flurry of rumors in March resulted in the Macon newspaper reporting that the Rev. T. D. Ellis, pastor of the Mulberry Street Methodist Church in Macon, would be named Emory president to succeed Dickey. Asa G. Candler, as president of the board of trustees, moved quickly and somewhat angrily to squelch the rumor, terming it without foundation or fact, instead of using, as he said, “a shorter and uglier word.” Praising Dickey’s work in the conduct of the college and raising of the endowment, Candler said, “We have only recently elected him for a term of four years, and I am anxious to re-elect him, about three years hence, for another term.” The report did both men an injustice, Candler concluded.¹⁴⁸

Work began on the construction of Young J. Allen Memorial Church adjacent to the campus on May 20, with the formal cornerstone-laying a highlight of commencement ceremonies the following month. Dr. George W. Yarbrough of Rome, a close friend of Allen’s,

¹⁴⁷ *The Emory Phoenix*, “Taxation of College Endowments,” March 1909, p. 182.

¹⁴⁸ *Atlanta Constitution*, “No Change for Emory, Says Asa G. Candler,” March 13, 1909, p. 6.

delivered the June 8 keynote address in tribute to Allen's missionary work: "Our loving memorial church will fail of its sublimest purpose if we become indifferent to the fact that our religious life at home is conditioned on our increasing devotion to the salvation of the heathen world." He recalled how Allen had been offered a great sum of money to accept a position in the Chinese government, but chose instead to carry on his missionary work, which he did "not for money, but for Christ." A large crowd watched as the cornerstone was dedicated, containing a photograph of Allen; a copy of his poem, "Emory, Dear Emory" written in Shanghai; copies of speeches and books by Allen; copies of resolutions and the *Wesleyan Christian Advocate* report on the decision to dedicate the facility to Allen; and copies of the church Discipline, the Bible, and the college catalogue.¹⁴⁹ The distinguished guest list included President J. H. McCoy of Birmingham College and President Lincoln Hulley of Stetson University. More than 500 alumni and guests enjoyed barbecue on the grounds.¹⁵⁰

Two athletic events highlighted commencement week for the graduating class. The seniors won a baseball game against the faculty by a score of 18-5, with professors Stone, Duncan, Johnson, Turner, Hanner, Smith, Shingler, Goodyear and Pepler each playing "stellar ball," according to the campus correspondent for the *Constitution*. President Dickey anticipated participating, but could not because of the board of trustees meeting, the newspaper reported.¹⁵¹ For the first time, the annual athletic exhibition took place in the new J. P. Williams gymnasium, with the hall being crowded to its capacity. Students provided an exhibition of Indian clubs, barbell, dumbbell, wand, mat, apparatus work and pyramid building.¹⁵²

¹⁴⁹ *Atlanta Constitution*, "Cornerstone Laid at Emory," June 9, 1909, p. 2.

¹⁵⁰ *Atlanta Constitution*, "Emory Prepares for Commencement," May 25, 1909, p. 9.

¹⁵¹ *Atlanta Constitution*, "Senior Nine Downs Emory Faculty Team," June 6, 1909, p. B5.

¹⁵² *Atlanta Constitution*, "Emory Trustees Elect Officers," June 6, 1909, p. 8.

At the trustees meeting, Dickey reported \$175,000 raised toward the endowment campaign in just eleven months. The trustees adopted a resolution of appreciation for his “untiring labors,” and pledged their “hearty cooperation” to bring the work to conclusion by securing the additional \$125,000 in pledges to meet the goal. The trustees voted to shorten commencement by one day beginning the following year. They granted a leave of absence to professor of history and political economy Edgar H. Johnson for a year’s study at the University of Chicago. He would be replaced in the interim by Douglas Rumble, Emory class of 1904, who recently had completed advanced studies at Harvard. The trustees named Walter S. Bryan of the present graduating class as tutor for English and sub-freshmen. Student S. Elliott Jenkins, president of the Greater Emory Club, asked the trustees’ support in the club’s summer campaign, and received voluntary contributions from the trustees greatly exceeding his request.¹⁵³

J. H. McCoy, the Birmingham college president, delivered the annual commencement sermon, and the evening address was by S. P. Wiggins, pastor of the First Methodist church of Jackson, Georgia. For the fourth consecutive year, the Few Society won the annual debate over Phi Gamma, successfully defending the negative on the question, “Resolved, that the fifteenth amendment should be repealed.” For the last time, Dickey presided over a graduation ceremony in the historic old Oxford church – the ceremonies would move to the new Allen Memorial church the following year. His baccalaureate address, for which no text survives, was entitled, “The Monotony of Life and How to Make It Worth Living.” In addition to degrees conferred upon the record thirty-three graduates, Dickey awarded four honorary degrees: Doctor of divinity degrees for Rev. Fletcher Walton of Atlanta, Rev. Ed F. Cook of Nashville, Tennessee,

¹⁵³ *Ibid.*

and Rev. L. C. Branscomb of Birmingham, Alabama; and a doctor of laws upon Judge W. L. Chambers of Washington, D.C., who delivered the annual alumni address.¹⁵⁴

Work moved rapidly through the summer and coming year on the Allen Memorial church project – the building would be occupied at the commencement of 1910, one year from its groundbreaking. Dickey closely monitored the progress and was in constant contact with board chairman Asa Candler over the work. Their correspondence reflects meticulous attention to detail: “I suggest that the progress of this work should govern entirely the amount to be paid Mr. Everett [the project architect] from time to time,” Candler wrote in response to a Dickey inquiry. “If it should be finished in less time than he thinks, then it will be safe to pay him about in the proportion you suggest, but if for any reason the work does not satisfactorily progress, then his bill for \$100.00 per month ought not to be paid. In this instance, I think it is safe to remit him \$100.00.”¹⁵⁵

Emory College classes reached a record enrollment of 313 in the fall of 1909: 36 seniors, 43 juniors, 77 sophomores, 82 freshmen, 37 special students, 36 sub-freshmen, and three graduate students.¹⁵⁶ In his traditional convocation welcome in the college chapel, President Dickey complimented the returning students for their exemplary conduct the previous year, saying such greatly helped him in raising funds for the endowment. The campaign total then stood, he said, at \$220,000 – with a remarkable \$50,000 pledged since June. “I know that Emory college is just on the verge of a great forward movement, and if you, young gentlemen, relieve me of the anxiety of my administration this year as did the student body of last session, we will have the needed \$300,000 to make our endowment a half-million by June,” he said. He also

¹⁵⁴ *Atlanta Constitution*, “Closing Exercises Held at Emory,” June 10, 1909, p. 0_2.

¹⁵⁵ Asa Candler to Dickey, July 7, 1909. Collection MSS1, box 5. Manuscript, Archives, and Rare Book Library, Emory University.

¹⁵⁶ *Catalogue of Emory College 1909-1910*, p. 50.

elaborated on the several building projects recently completed and construction of the Allen Memorial church then underway.¹⁵⁷

Again Dickey's name arose as a potential bishop when that fall, on September 20, 1909, Bishop Seth Ward died at age 51 while on a trip to Japan inspecting mission programs there. He thus became the fifth of the Southern Methodist church's thirteen bishops to die since the 1906 General Conference, the others being Bishops J. J. Tigert, Coke Smith, W. W. Duncan and C. B. Galloway. Ward, of Houston, Texas, was a newly-elected bishop, chosen in 1906. He had become well-known in the church by presiding over Methodist efforts to rebuild churches and community in Galveston following the great hurricane of 1901. He quickly had endeared himself to the North Georgia Conference, assigned to preside over its annual sessions in 1906 and 1907, and had been Emory's commencement speaker in 1908. With four of the eight remaining bishops elderly or ill, the church found itself in a crisis, with only four active bishops remaining to preside over some fifty annual conferences until the 1910 General Conference could meet in Asheville to elect successors. Dickey's name inevitably arose in speculation about potential episcopal candidates, but the list was long and included such names as Trinity College President John C. Kilgo, *The Christian Advocate* editor G. B. Winton, and Vanderbilt University theology dean W. F. Tillett. For his part, Dickey expressed the "personal bereavement" felt by the student body and citizens of Oxford due to their close association with Bishop Ward, praising Ward's "genial spirits and Christian courtesy."¹⁵⁸

¹⁵⁷ *Atlanta Constitution*, "Emory Starts Its 74th Session," Sept. 16, 1909, p. 3.

¹⁵⁸ *Atlanta Constitution*, "Death Calls Bishop Ward," Sept. 21, 1909, p. 8.

CHAPTER 5

EMORY COLLEGE PRESIDENT (PART TWO), 1909-1915

In October 1909, an Emory tradition that survives to this day began with “Dooley’s Letter” in the *Emory Phoenix*. Dooley purported to be a skeleton who wandered campus embodying the spirit of Emory – observing and commenting on campus life under cloak of anonymity. He had been foreshadowed ten years earlier in a *Phoenix* article headed, “Reflections of the Skeleton.” In that October 1899 essay, the skeleton in the science room lamented the return of students to campus after the summer break: “For three months I have had a rest up here among these silent specimens, pickled bull-frogs, canned quadrupeds and other reptilian vertebrates, but now these college boys are back again and I am miserable.” In the article signed with the initials “C. A. W.” – apparently Charles Anderson Weaver, a senior in the class of 1900 – the as yet unnamed skeleton revealed that he lived in New York when alive, but expressed uncertainty now of doing any good in the world, “because there is no element of love or work in my life.” Sophomores singing “Hello, My Baby” left him to bemoan, “I am real glad I am dead, since people have begun to sing such songs.”¹

Ten years hence the skeleton returned to the *Phoenix* pages, introducing himself – “My name is Dooley” – and distancing himself from the earlier version that hailed from New York: “I am the only original, authentic, and genuine Dooley. All others are false.” He claimed to be the son of a wealthy Virginia planter, born at the time of the American Revolution, remembering the sweet songs of his mother, the gardens where he played and the fields where he ran. Recalling days of college, cadet and campaign, he told of coming to Georgia to a well-earned retirement, visiting and keeping up with Emory “ever since she was in the nursery.” Drinking

¹ *The Emory Phoenix*, October 1899, pp. 14-15; Bullock, *A History of Emory University*, p. 271; Hauk, *A Legacy of Heart and Mind*, p. 105.

heavily in his old age, Dooley claimed to have landed in a hospital for inebriates in Atlanta, where he died, and “the house surgeon saved me for a skeleton. After much trouble he secured for me this position on the faculty at Emory. I like the position very much.” Claiming close affiliation with the faculty and much in common with them, Dooley said, “‘Ferdie’ Duncan [Frederick N. Duncan, professor of biology] is my co-worker and my most intimate friend, and together we preside over the destinies of our department.”

In the first of many stories he would relate about Emory college life over the coming century – some true, some elaborations, some ribald and others whimsical – Dooley told of a night when college boys speaking in low whispers (one with the manner of speech of South Carolinians and the others as Georgia Crackers) spirited him out of his lecture room and placed him in the chapel, where the skeleton was “given a commanding position directly over the president’s chair, and suspended gracefully from the ceiling.” He whiled away the night with reminiscences, watched the sunrise through the windows, and realized from their stares and grins as the boys arrived for chapel that the “new boy” to whom they referred was himself. Next he observed the entering faculty, smiling even more broadly at the sight than did the boys. His story continued,

But lo, a stir of expectancy was visible at the doors, and in a moment the tall, majestic figure of the President crossed the threshold of the house of prayer. No smile lit up the grim severity of his austere countenance. He cast a withering look of scorn at me, as if I were guilty of some grave misdemeanor. Then with step stately and defiant, he passed to his accustomed seat, just under my swinging form.

After a hymn (“I usually sing bass,” said Dooley), prayer and announcements,

...how warm the atmosphere began to grow. With eagle glance ‘King James’ surveyed the audience, took the text...and then literally flayed the boys and faculty alive for laughing at me. For awhile I thought he resented the frivolous way I had been treated and I felt like applauding him, but I soon discovered that he was enraged at my presence in the chapel. Oh, it was so warm. I felt like

Dives did in Hades for I was directly over the spontaneous combustion. I had expected the President to say courteously, ‘Mr. Dooley, we are glad to welcome you among us.’ I asked for bread but I got a stone. I looked for a welcome but I got it where the chicken got the axe. When the conflagration was over, I was again left alone; but soon afterwards some of our brethren in black came and politely escorted me back to my usual place of abode.

So unpleasant was the experience, wrote Dooley – “One solitary visit made me feel unwelcome” – that “never again” would he attend chapel. Promising to become a regular contributor to the *Phoenix*, Dooley closed with a line that he has used over the century since: “Presidents may come and presidents may go; professors may come and professors may go; students may come and students may go; but Dooley goes on forever.”²

The *Phoenix*, apparently feeling a level of familiarity and comfort with Dickey’s position at the helm, routinely referred to his authority, his sternness, but also to his wry demeanor toward the boys. One ditty addressed to the sub-freshmen read:

Sub, be nimble, Sub, be slick,
File your excuse for being sick,
Or King Dickey will catch onto your trick,
And send you home on the double-quick.³

And in a subsequent issue, Dooley returned to the *Phoenix* with a letter headed, “There’s a man named Dickey over there.” Declaring himself “for many years...a close student of the life and character of the dignified figure who for almost a decade has been standing at the helm, guiding Emory’s progress with unerring hand,” Dooley declared his subject to be “a fully equipped ecclesiastical, psychological, and physiological laboratory....” The anonymous pen of Dooley labeled the president without mercy: “In some respects, James Edward is the biggest man on the faculty; in others he is the smallest. He is broad yet narrow, long yet short, magnanimous yet petty, liberal yet selfish.” Noting his “fondness for the dramatic,” particularly

² *The Emory Phoenix*, October 1909, pp. 13-16. For a more complete summary of the history of the Dooley tradition at Emory until today, see Hauk, *A Legacy of Heart and Mind*, pp. 104-109.

³ *The Emory Phoenix*, December 1909, p. 28.

his frequent quoting from Shakespeare, Dooley remembers the young Dickey, who “was always quoting, quoting, quoting.” Dr. Morgan Callaway, Dooley continued, “once remarked that if Dickey did not stop quoting Shakespeare he would seriously consider ruling the study of the author out of the English course.”

During Dickey’s years as a professor, Dooley professed to have “often sat in his classes and drank in the ornate flow from his fountain-like vocabulary.” He recalled classic “pulpit debates” between Professors H. S. Bradley and Dickey, in which Bradley one Sunday “would prove that the whale could not swallow Jonah, and the next Dickey would demonstrate that Jonah could swallow the whale.” The combat between Hector and Achilles was a sideshow in comparison, he said. The differences between the two remained unsettled, according to Dooley, “for ever and anon at the present time King James launches a thunderbolt of invective at Bradley’s devoted head.”

With its college president “seldom surpassed in executive ability,” the institution had shown marked progress under his leadership, continued the anonymous author in Dooley’s name. He should receive high acclaim for his work on the endowment, “and if it were not for the lack of a few very essential qualities, his popularity would know no bounds.” Among those shortcomings: “An utter destitution of sympathy for a college joke.... It must be that a sense of humor is wanting in his make-up.” He smiles seldom, and then only painfully, Dooley observed, “as if it were hard even for a moment to lay off the cloak of dignity. Fun must be funny; and what tickles the fancy of three hundred boys and a faculty ought to provoke a smile from the president.... His influence would be greatly widened among the students if he could enjoy their jokes.”

Dooley also criticized Dickey's "unsympathetic attitude toward college athletics." Noting that athletics are necessary to develop the physical powers, Dooley argued, "If King James had indulged in athletics when he was in his teens he would not now need padding to make his shoulders broad and properly proportioned." Dickey's appearance was found to be, nonetheless, "dignified," but "Why does Dickey wear his hair long? A man with long hair in the twentieth century is commonly said to be a poet, a musician, or a fool," yet quickly declaring that Dickey was none of these. Citing the common belief that the only people favoring women's suffrage were long-haired men and short-haired women, the *Phoenix* concluded Dickey did not fit that bill: "[T]he female ballot has no more pronounced enemy in Oxford." Dooley concluded Dickey wore long hair because he had "a brow like Plato, but the rear of his cranium shows no development...a luxuriance of hair covers this lack of development." Concluding that the president nonetheless had many virtues, Dooley wrote that "he is an Israelite indeed in which there is no guile. He is a mix of great power in the pulpit, and of much ability in the class-room. He is full of faith, a citizen of high ideals, and an orator renowned."⁴

While we have no record of Dickey's reaction to such close-to-the-edge musings by an anonymous student writer, perhaps Dickey found it well that the boys confined to writing from vivid imaginations such shenanigans as hanging skeletons from the rafters and critiquing the president, as he continued to concentrate heavily on fundraising. Preaching at Cordele Methodist Church in October, he raised \$3,500. Colleagues recruited for the effort fanned out across other congregations of the Cordele District – Professor Robert G. Smith at Hawkinsville, Rev. W. H. LaPrade, Jr. at Unadilla, Rev. W. L. Wright at Ocilla, and others at Oglethorpe, Perry and Rochelle. In all, they raised \$14,155 in the one-day effort.⁵ A similar campaign across the

⁴ *The Emory Phoenix*, "Dooley's Letter," January 1910, pp. 137-138.

⁵ *Atlanta Constitution*, "\$14,155 Raised in Cordele Dist.," Oct. 16, 1909, p. 7.

Griffin District on another Sunday in October raised \$5,715. Dickey preached at Griffin First Methodist and others covered Barnesville, Forsyth, Thomaston, Senoia, Hampton and Culloden. With pledges already in hand and others not reported at the time of the summary, the Griffin District's contributions were expected to surpass \$10,000.⁶ Individual contributions from alumni and others continued to arrive, as well. Ivy Lee of New York City, who studied under Dickey at Emory from 1894-'96 before transferring to Princeton and going on to become personal public relations advisor to John D. Rockefeller,⁷ sent a personal check for \$1,000. Lee further contributed two prizes of \$25 in gold to be awarded to the members of the class of 1910 who wrote the best essay on a political or economic subject and who delivered the best individual speech at the annual debate.⁸

Duties other than fundraising continued to fill Dickey's schedule, too. On November 12, he was in Brunswick delivering a keynote address to the state meeting of the Daughters of the American Revolution.⁹ And in December, he was among a trainload of seventy Georgians appointed by the governor to represent the state at the annual convention of the National Association for the Promotion of Industrial Education. Those joining Dickey for the three-day conference in Milwaukee included University of Georgia Chancellor David C. Barrow and many other college presidents and civic leaders from across the state.¹⁰

Among a wide variety of topics, the *Phoenix* that fall addressed "the perilous influx of undesirable immigration." In a lengthy essay, student C. Vernon Elliott concluded, "Let us therefore, with patriotic inspiration and zeal, fix our determination for restriction [of uncontrolled

⁶ *Atlanta Constitution*, "Over \$5,000 Given to Emory Fund," Oct. 1, 1909, p. 2.

⁷ Ivy Lee Collection, Princeton University Library, see Web site viewed April 22, 2006:
http://infoshare1.princeton.edu/libraries/firestone/rbsc/finding_aids/lee.html#series15.

⁸ *Atlanta Constitution*, "Ivy Lee Gives \$1,000 to Emory Endowment," July 17, 1909, p. 6.

⁹ *Atlanta Constitution*, "Brunswick Will Entertain D.A.R.," Oct. 24, 1909, p. A12.

¹⁰ *Atlanta Constitution*, "Delegates Named by Gov. Brown," Nov. 3, 1909, p. 11.

immigration], as such poverty-stricken, unemployed, charity-depending, illiterate, lunatic, diseased and morally-debased people coming into our country absolutely ignorant of language, laws and customs; with their ignominious teaching, vice, treachery and anarchy, and offering no solution to any of our problems, but presenting one with themselves, emphatically, can not compute to that that fosters peace and prosperity; but as the test of time has demonstrated, they are an impediment in the way of conservative government, and detrimental to the progress of our civilization.”¹¹ There is no indication whether Elliot’s fellow students shared his strong anti-immigration views, and Dickey’s extant speeches do not indicate a position on the matter.

As to the wholesome life of the campus -- Dickey that year sent four boys home after finding they had cheated on examinations. “The extermination of such evils is in the hands of the faculty,” said the editors of the *Phoenix*, who nonetheless were somewhat surprised at the enforcement, saying the campus atmosphere allowed many of the rules to be winked upon by both students and faculty. Students required to attend church twice each Sunday self-reported that attendance, the *Phoenix* noted, with no confirmation by anyone in authority. One boy went to church only three times all fall term, the newspaper asserted, and “Four other boys have recently changed their boarding place for the reason that their landlady kept insisting upon their going to church.”

Cheating was not the only problem faced by Dickey and the faculty of the college. The students were not allowed to have guns, but there had been so much shooting around town at night that “the president has been compelled to call the attention of the boys to this fact.” And although gambling was prohibited, one boy claimed to have made enough to cover his fall expenses, while another had lost so much he had to sell his watch to pay his board. Yet another rule reportedly winked upon was that against traveling to Atlanta without permission. “One

¹¹ *The Emory Phoenix*, “The Perilous Influx of Undesirable Immigration,” Nov. 1909, pp. 6-8.

young man, with blond hair, trying to dodge a professor on a train from Atlanta, found that a professor is mighty hard to dodge when he wants to see,” said the *Phoenix*. “The professor just laughed at him.” And as to the practice of “jacking,” or cheating on class work and exams, one student professed to have copied the Ten Commandments for a test, but could not bring himself to copy, “Thou shalt not steal,” so took a nine for the grade. And, the newspaper related, “Some of our B.S. men fear that the B.S. degree is going to lose ground as the result of a few men doing the work for the whole class in graphics.”

So, the editors of the newspaper expressed no small surprise that President Dickey sent four boys home for breaking the rules by cheating on an exam: “Those boys went away branded as being dishonest and as thieves, the worst boys in college, while they leave full-fledged brothers in every class.” Yet, they noted, “Did the President not tell them last fall, when a boy was reported for the same offense, that if any one should ever come before the faculty again for cheating on an examination that the penalty would be expulsion?” Like the little girl promised a punishment the “next time” she disobeyed her mother, the “next time” had come. Trusting that the faculty must not have known about the others, or they would have acted on them, too, the *Phoenix* urged the cooperation of the student body “to assure that such evils shall go”...and that “no guilty one may escape.” Surely Dickey’s actions, and their classmates’ pointed commentary, would make every Emory boy contemplate his role in such matters.¹²

In addition to vices such as cheating, gambling, and firing guns – the sordid state of Southern race relations continued to infect the lives of the Emory men in 1910. In a *Phoenix* commentary, George P. Shingler, Jr., professor of chemistry – expressing sentiments likely shared by many of his colleagues and students – discussed that “the greatest menace to white supremacy is not negro domination. That has never been remotely possible. The white man is

¹² *The Emory Phoenix*, “As We See It,” February 1910, pp. 177-178.

too shrewd, too intellectual to allow an untutored dependen [sic] to oustrip him for control of politics.” No, he asserted, the greatest threat was lack of sanitary dwellings for the servant class who daily left their “wretched hovels” to enter the kitchens of white families as cooks and housekeepers. “They bring with them disease germs on their clothing,” he wrote, potentially contaminating food and the surroundings. He further lamented that such servants would take a family’s laundry back to their homes of squalor, leaving it lying in “the accumulated filth of dark corners” until returned to the owner. It could be argued, Shingler wrote, that “the greatest difficulty lying in the way of race’s progress is its immorality,” in which “loose marriage obligations tend to undermine the very safeguard of the substantial development in other lines.” And citing Booker T. Washington on the availability of work opportunities for the Black men in a newly industrial south, Shingler continued, “The need for industrial training is a necessity.” He concurred with former Dartmouth President William Jewett Tucker’s statement, “I believe with a growing conviction that the salvation of the negro in this country lies with the exceptional men of the race.” White men should offer help to those Black leaders, Shingler added, “The South is capable of handling her own problems to the everlasting glory of her manhood and statesmanship, by lending her warm sympathies and her sane efforts to a struggling race in her midst.”¹³ That such could be authored by a member of the faculty and published as learned commentary in a student newspaper of a leading Southern college is testimony to the state of race relations at the opening of the last century.¹⁴

Despite such troubling issues on the campus, Dickey’s focus continued to be on fundraising for the endowment campaign. When the North Georgia Annual Conference for 1909 convened in Atlanta’s St. Paul church on November 17, Dickey’s annual report on the state of

¹³ *The Emory Phoenix*, “Our Relationship to the Negroes – A Southerner’s View,” February 1910, pp. 178-179.

¹⁴ Shingler would continue on the Emory faculty through the spring of 1918, when he left to take a position with the Red Cross Society.

Emory College reported that \$250,000 of the current \$300,000 endowment campaign had been raised. He likewise reported substantial progress on the construction of the Young J. Allen Memorial Church on the campus, announcing a dedication date for June 7, 1910, during the annual commencement exercises. Significantly, that session of the annual conference again elected Dickey as one of North Georgia's seven clergy delegates to the upcoming 1910 General Conference in Asheville, North Carolina, placing him among those most prominently mentioned as candidates for the episcopacy. The *Atlanta Constitution's* extensive coverage of the North Georgia sessions carried a photograph of the Emory president, labeling him "a prominent figure at the conference."¹⁵

The following week at the South Georgia Conference, Dickey acknowledged the considerable help given by ministers toward the Emory endowment campaign, making it possible to raise \$250,000 to that date and to predict the goal would be surpassed by the coming June 1. The success of the campaign "means \$500,000 for one of the noblest foundations within the borders of the state," Dickey said. "To reach the half-million mark for Emory's endowment has been the dream of the friends of the college for a generation. We have to be faithful to our trust in this matter for only a few short months, and this dream will have been realized." Dickey added that the extra funds "come none too soon," as the faculty was stretched to its limits. "The lower classes have been divided and subdivided," he said, "until some of the professors are devoting three hours to a class when they should be required to devote only one." The completion of the campaign would mean more teachers and better equipment, he added, "and we

¹⁵ *Atlanta Constitution*, "Methodists to Meet in Conference Today," Nov. 17, 1909, p. 3; "First Session of Conference at St. Paul's," Nov. 18, 1909, p. 1; "Bishop Gives Sound Counsel to Ministers," Nov. 20, 1909, p. 1; "Much Business is Disposed of by Conference," Nov. 21, 1909, p. A6.

trust, more pupils brought under the wholesome influence which pervades the college life at Oxford. Let the friends of Christian education thank God and take courage.”¹⁶

Changes in many pastorates following the meetings of the two annual conferences slowed progress in the endowment campaign, but the drive began to pick up in February with the addition of another \$8,355 to the total. Dickey secured \$1,350 of that during a preaching service at Eatonton, while Professor Rembert G. Smith garnered another \$950 while speaking in Madison. Another \$2,500 was collected during one weekend in April: \$1,000 when Dickey preached at the Cairo Methodist Church, the rest from colleagues speaking in Calhoun, Carrollton and Pelham. Another weekend in April he spent in Washington, Georgia. Dickey remained confident of reaching the \$300,000 total by June.¹⁷

Emory students joined in support of the endowment campaign, as well. Following a chapel service on April 21, the student body reconvened of its own accord, “without any solicitation whatever from outside their own ranks,” it was reported, and pledged \$5,514 to the endowment fund, pushing the grand total pledged by students over the two-year period beyond \$10,000. Their action took President Dickey by surprise, and he spoke feelingly of their love for alma mater and expression of loyalty. With the student contributions, the campaign stood within \$25,000 of its goal. The next week, Dickey convened a meeting of prominent Atlantans to map a strategy for the conclusion. A committee of twenty-five, headed by Luther Z. Rosser and including Asa G. Candler, assembled to canvass the city, while a subcommittee, under L. B. Robeson, concentrated on Emory alumni, fifteen percent of whom lived in Atlanta at the time, their goal being to complete the campaign within the week.¹⁸ On April 30, Dickey declared

¹⁶ *Atlanta Constitution*, “Conference Receives Encouraging Reports,” Dec. 5, 1909, p. B6.

¹⁷ *Atlanta Constitution*, “Emory Endowment Gets \$8,355 More,” Feb. 12, 1910, p. 5; “\$2,500 is Raised for Emory Fund,” April 2, 1910, p. 3; “Dr. Dickey in Washington,” April 17, 1910, p. A5.

¹⁸ *Atlanta Constitution*, “\$25,000 Needed for Emory Fund,” April 24, 1910, p. B4.

success. With \$25,000 in Atlanta pledges in hand and alumni still at work to raise further gifts, the campaign stood at \$300,000. Pledges to the campaign had been subscribed in five annual installments with the first due on June 1, 1910. If paid in full, the pledges would push the endowment to the half-million dollar mark.¹⁹ “Dr. James E. Dickey finished raising his \$300,000 for the endowment April the 30th,” reported the *Phoenix*. “Three cheers for him.”²⁰ However, when the five-year notes reached maturity in 1915, only half the money would have been paid.²¹

The timing of the completion of the much-publicized endowment campaign the week before the 1910 General Conference opened in Asheville, North Carolina, raised Dickey’s profile among delegates as an episcopal candidate. As the first clergy elected by North Georgia, Dickey would lead the delegation to the three-week assembly of the church’s supreme lawmaking body. He and Wesleyan College President W. N. Ainsworth, elected in the first position from the South Georgia Conference and another prominent candidate for bishop, served on the influential episcopacy committee, which governed assignments for bishops and determined the number of bishops to be elected at the current session. “The Georgia delegation, however, is not inclined to make any effort to press her claims, preferring only to allow the office to seek the man,” reported Rev. W. A. Brooks, a clergy member of the delegation. Indeed, there was no formal “Georgia delegation,” although the North and South Georgia Conferences traditionally worked closely together.

The tone of the conference turned somewhat negative, as virtually every major proposal brought before it went down to defeat: the rights of the laity vote for women, changing the name of the church to drop the word “South,” doing away with the four-year limit for pastoral

¹⁹ *Atlanta Constitution*, “Emory College Fund Complete,” May 1, 1910, p. 19.

²⁰ *The Emory Phoenix*, May 1910, pp. 331-332.

²¹ Bullock, *A History of Emory University*, p. 238.

appointments, diminishing the frequency of the sacraments, limiting the powers and length of service of the bishops – all received votes of “non-concurrence.” The *Atlanta Constitution* reported, “The conservative element of the conference, which is opposed to unnecessary mutations, is clearly in the ascendancy.”

However, on the question of who controlled Vanderbilt University, the ascendancy of the conservative element was much in question. A floor fight had been predicted over the relationship of the church to Vanderbilt, where Chancellor W. D. Kirkland led revision of the charter to give more authority to the resident trustees, taking away power previously held by the bishops of the church. Kirkland sought thus to be able to accept large donations from philanthropic foundations and educational commissions, a course opposed by conservative elements in the church not caring to give any authority or control over to organizations such as the Carnegie or Rockefeller foundations.

The fight over Vanderbilt’s direction had been brewing since as early as 1901, when Bishop Candler moved that Vanderbilt give preference to the hiring of Methodists as professors, all else being equal. Elijah H. Hoss, later bishop in Nashville, but early on the editor of the *Christian Advocate*, used the paper to criticize Vanderbilt’s intercollegiate athletics, fraternities, and officially sanctioned dances. More liberal groups within Southern Methodism who sought early reunification with the northern church had nearly gained control of Vanderbilt. Conservative traditionalists among the Southern bishops saw Vanderbilt moving away from their evangelical, revivalist ways, particularly in the acceptance of grants from northern robber barons

such as Andrew Carnegie, an agnostic. The battles ebbed and flowed, reaching a peak of conflict each four years with the coming of the General Conference.²²

As a floor battle loomed at the 1910 General Conference in Asheville, both sides of the question stood ready with speeches to defend their positions, but the matter somewhat surprisingly did not come to the floor as a separate item. Instead, delegates adopted the report of the committee on education by a large majority and without discussion. That report held to the position that the college of bishops of the M.E. Church, South constituted a board of common law visitors of the university, and that the general conference retained the right to select the trustees of Vanderbilt University. It further authorized the bishops to defend the matter in court if challenged. The action laid the assertion of church control squarely at the feet of the Vanderbilt board, and led the conservative element to believe it had won victory in the question of whether the church continued to own and control Vanderbilt. The general conference proceeded to elect three trustees to fill vacancies on the Vanderbilt board, which countered by selecting its own three persons to fill the posts, refusing to seat the church-appointed trustees. The conservative bishops first sought a temporary injunction blocking the seating of the trustees appointed by the board, and then filed suit. The conflict would take another four years to resolve, but eventually would change the course not only of Vanderbilt, but of Emory College.

In the other business of General Conference, the episcopal committee announced that seven bishops would be elected. First to be chosen was Collins Denny, a pastor in the Baltimore Conference, followed by John C. Kilgo, president of Trinity College. As the balloting continued, Dickey and Ainsworth each continued to run well, at times gaining close to the required sixty percent of the votes, but could not gain sufficient ballots to be chosen. Indeed, Georgia delegates

²² For a thorough analysis of the struggle for control of Vanderbilt University, see "The Bishop's War," chapter 8 in Paul K. Conkin's *Gone with the Ivy: A Biography of Vanderbilt University*, Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 1985, pp. 149-184.

thought Ainsworth might be chosen on the next ballot, but his age – younger than 40 – and the fact that he had been president at Wesleyan for just a year, worked against him. Instead, the delegates next selected William B. Murrah, president of Millsaps College in Mississippi, followed by Walter R. Lambuth, a missionary in China, the son of Methodist missionaries there. The three remaining slots went to Richard G. Waterhouse, for seventeen years the president of Emory and Henry College; Edwin Dubose Mouzon, professor of theology at Southwestern College in Texas; and James Henry McCoy, president of Birmingham College.²³

The seven vacancies for bishop having been filled, balloting then moved to the prominent position of secretary of the general board of education. On the first ballot, the incumbent, J. D. Hammond, received 108 votes to 92 for Dickey, with another 100 votes scattered among other candidates. But on the second ballot, Dickey ran first with 130 votes to Hammond's 101. Finally, on the third ballot, Dickey received the necessary percentage with 177 votes, as Hammond fell to 59. Emory College had expected it might have to replace its president if he were elected bishop, but his election as general secretary was unexpected. Speculation immediately ensued among the delegation as to a successor at Emory – the name of T. D. Ellis, pastor of Savannah's Wesley Monumental Church, was prominent among names mentioned. By the end of the same day, however, reports surfaced that Dickey contemplated declining the position to stay at Emory.²⁴

Dickey apparently held his own counsel regarding his future course, waiting for the Emory board of trustees to convene sixteen days later for their annual meeting in connection

²³ *Atlanta Constitution*, "General Conference of Methodists Will Meet at Asheville, N.C., May 4," April 24, 1910, p. D20; "Atlantans Leave for Conference," May 2, 1910, p. 5; "Delegation from Georgia Prominent at Asheville," May 6, 1910, p. 13; "Georgia Delegates Placed on Important Committees at Asheville Conference," May 7, 1910, p. 6; "Ainsworth and Dickey Probable for Bishopric," May 15, 1910, p. C4; "Hard Fighting for Bishops," May 16, 1910, p. 3; "Georgia Delegations Loyal to Ainsworth and Dickey," May 18, 1910, p. 5; "Church Control of Vanderbilt," May 19, 1910, p. 2.

²⁴ *Atlanta Constitution*, "Dr. J. E. Dickey is Elected Sec. Education Board," May 19, 1910, p. 2; "Dickey May Not Accept," May 19, 1910, p. 2.

with commencement. He promised board president Asa G. Candler that no decision would be finalized until Dickey could meet with the Emory board. First, he traveled to Nashville to meet with members of the general education board, and even discussed locating his office in Atlanta were he to accept the position. To reports in Nashville that he had thus accepted the office, Dickey said, "I have no announcement for the press. I have promised Mr. Candler not to decide finally until I have seen the trustees."²⁵

Back in Oxford, significant numbers of faculty and of students petitioned Dickey to remain as president. Alumni returning for commencement also expressed their desires that he not depart. But when the trustees convened in Oxford on June 3, Dickey reported his inclination to accept the general board position. In response, the trustees formed a committee chaired by Bishop Warren A. Candler to urge Dickey to remain as Emory president. When the trustees reconvened on June 4, Bishop Candler reported that Dickey had authorized the committee to report to the board that he had decided to accept their unanimous election as president. In a resolution, the board recorded "its great satisfaction" at Dickey's decision. "The condition and needs of the institution at this time are such that we feel his retirement from its presidency would have been a calamity to it, and his continuance in the office will secure for it the greatest prosperity," the resolution stated. Apparently authored by Bishop Candler, the resolution indicated the persuasive argument he had employed to retain Dickey: "[W]e believe that all the providential indications point to Emory College as the place at which he is now most needed by the church and where he can best promote the interests of the Kingdom of God." The board further expressed "high appreciation" for the service he had rendered to date and pledged "for the future its continued support in the great work to which he is so manifestly called, and which

²⁵ *Atlanta Constitution*, "Say Dickey May Decline Place," May 21, 1910, p. 5; "Dr. Dickey Will Announce His Decision to Trustees," June 3, 1910, p. 9.

is so vital to the welfare of the great interests of church and State which Emory College serves.”²⁶ The trustees elected Dickey to a three-year term as president, and also voted him a \$1,000 per year salary increase. Regarding Dickey’s decision to stay in his position, board chairman Asa G. Candler waxed particularly eloquent:

What music of earth can soothe and inspire like the divine approval – what power can lead and protect like that of Him who stands by the man who labors in self-sacrifice for the people among whom he has been providentially placed, and for whom he has been called to toil? What treasure can any voyager bring from afar more valuable than that which such a Christian college as Emory brings to such a land as ours? Let President Dickey and his faculty stand bravely by Emory, and let us, as trustees of the glory of its past and its promises for the future, stand with them, making the dear old college the greatest and most useful institution in all the land, for the Christian education of the youths, not only of Georgia, but of the states of our whole country and beyond.²⁷

Dickey’s report to the trustees otherwise recounted a prosperous year just concluding at the college. He outlined a number of faculty changes. Professor Edgar H. Johnson would return for the fall to teach history and economics following his leave of absence at the University of Chicago. Douglas Rumble, who filled Johnson’s post in the interim, would become associate professor of mathematics, having recently done post-graduate work in mathematics at Harvard. Professor Rembert G. Smith, after seven years as associate professor of mental and moral science, would leave the faculty to return to the pastorate. Professor F. F. Farmer, head of the sub-freshman department, would depart to accept a teaching position in science and mathematics at Hawkinsville High School. He would be succeeded by Nolan A. Goodyear, whose vacated position as adjunct professor of languages was filled by Paul E. Bryan, a 1907 Emory graduate. And Professor Walter S. Bryan was granted a one-year leave of absence after being selected as a Rhodes Scholar in Oxford, England for the coming year.

²⁶ *Emory College Board of Trustees minutes*, June 4, 1910; *Atlanta Constitution*, “Dickey Remains Head of Emory,” June 4, 1910, p. 1.

²⁷ *Emory College Board of Trustees minutes*, June 4, 1910.

In addition to the salary increase for the president, the trustees granted \$300 increases to professors and \$200 for adjunct professors. The treasurer's report indicated that the trustees had encroached on the endowment by \$40,000, with the warning that such actions decreased endowment income.

Board president Asa G. Candler said that "For the first time since it was founded, the college has adequate buildings for its work," with the completion in the past decade of Candler Hall (the library), the Pierce Science Hall, the J. P. Williams Gymnasium, and the new Young J. Allen Memorial Church to be dedicated at the present commencement. Candler noted that the campaign to raise Emory's endowment to a half-million dollars, though successful, still "seems small...when compared with the large endowments of institutions in other sections of our country." Nonetheless, he deemed it a positive development: "In truth, in this quiet place, separated from unwholesome distractions and free from the deteriorating effects of excessive wealth, this honored institution will render service to the country which is quite impossible at more opulent and worldly centers of learning." He urged his fellow trustees to "rightly manage the resources now at our command" so that the endowment could surpass one million dollars within the next few years. Apparently referring to recent debate at other institutions over accepting funding from outside foundations, Candler noted, "Best of all, Emory College is under no obligation for what it has, in fact or in prospect, to any person or corporation not in perfect accord with its spirit and its aims.... It has never been allured by gold to deflect in the slightest degree from the mission set before it, and now such a temptation will have less power than ever before."²⁸

Every living former president of Emory College returned to the campus for the dedication June 6 of the Young J. Allen Memorial Church, completed in thirteen months at a cost of

²⁸ *Ibid.*

\$30,000. Bishop Candler delivered the commencement sermon and presided over the dedication. The imposing building of yellow brick, with its soaring dome, was trimmed on the exterior in marble and on the interior in mahogany. As part of the dedication, Candler led a ceremony unveiling marble tablets in the vestibule – one to Young J. Allen, the missionary alumnus in whose name the church was erected, and another to I. E. Shumate of Dalton, who first suggested the idea of memorializing Allen in this way.²⁹

Later that summer, Dickey preached a Sunday service at St. Mark's church in Atlanta, substituting for pastor S. R. Belk, who had just returned from a two-month sojourn in Europe. Reporting a splendid trip, Belk nonetheless said, "The more I saw of Europe, the better I liked America." He found Europe to be far behind America in many respects: "They are doing things over there now like we did them fifty years ago."³⁰ In his sermon, Dickey urged his hearers not to be "intellectual prudes" by refusing to accept the mystery of the gospel simply because it could not be explained within the limitations of the human mind. He praised women who are modest, and men who are virtuous, saying, "A man does not have to drink and stain his breath with foul oaths to be considered a man; the purity which once was considered a shame is now a badge of honor." Praising the modern scientific accomplishments of the day, Dickey warned, "It has come to the point...where men want to analyze and comprehend everything, but he who wants to repudiate all that his mind cannot compass is foolish." He lamented that many of the day took the attitude, "Because we cannot run the mystery of the Incarnation through our own little crucibles and retorts, we don't believe it." He used as examples many of the scientific inventions of the day, the mechanics of which the user might not understand but which he used

²⁹ *Atlanta Constitution*, "Bishop Candler to Deliver Sermon to Emory Graduates," June 5, 1910, p. C7.

³⁰ *Atlanta Constitution*, "Dr. S. R. Belk is Home from European Trip," July 31, 1910, p. C8.

nonetheless, concluding, “I don’t understand the plan myself, but I believe in it and am not ashamed of it.”³¹

One such machine that Dickey might not have understood came to town that summer – the first car on campus. Owned by Professor W. F. Melton and his son, Quimby, it served a good purpose – “giving the blacksmith something to do,” the *Phoenix* noted. Joking that the car did not move fast enough and was so loud in doing so that it did not require a horn, the student paper reported that it took from one to three hours to run from the Palmer Institute to the cemetery and back, a distance of only a few blocks. It reportedly took one hour’s repair to bring Professor Melton and son to class, which Quimby then had to cut in order to get the car in repair to take them home. Campus wags were merciless toward the Meltons’ contraption. As it passed the post office, one was heard to say, “Boys, go and get the mules and we will go after him.” And another pair, hearing a loud roar while sitting in church, exclaimed that the Meltons’ car must be coming. “No, that’s not making enough racket,” as what they heard was a freight train passing.³²

As the 1910-11 school year opened that fall, the *Phoenix* noted that a number of Oxford girls were away at college, including Misses Julia and Annie Dickey, the eldest two of the president’s four daughters, who were at Wesleyan. “My dear little Nance,” Dickey wrote to his daughter Annie that October, “I suspect that you think I have forgotten you again. Well, I haven’t. I think of you and Julia all through the day and every night. I am so glad that you and she are down there together. I feel so much better about you both knowing that you are together, looking after each other. You seem to be having a pretty good time these days, even if you do have to work hard. It affords me much satisfaction to know that you are pretty well prepared for

³¹ *Atlanta Constitution*, “A Spirit of False Pride Church of Church for Ages,” Aug. 1, 1910, p. 5.

³² *The Emory Phoenix*, “The Machine,” May 1910, p. 333.

the work that you are doing. When one is not prepared, their entire college course is a nightmare to them. I know from experience, as there were ten years taken out of my school days between the start and finish. I hope that the girls will not be too hard on you when you are initiated. I am certainly sorry that the girls did not take Mary [probably Mary Starr, another Oxford girl attending Wesleyan] into the society. They certainly do not know her well for she is a sweet little girl. I hope that you Oxford girls may yet be able to show them their mistake. You, I know, will think just as much of her and continue to go with her just as if she were a member. Find out what Julia wants for Christmas. A month of time has gone and the other months will soon fly by but none too soon for us in Oxford. Enclosed find a dollar for pin money. It is getting dark so I must stop for this time. I will write to Julia in the morning. Your affectionate Papa.”³³

Also that fall, following the elevation of John C. Kilgo to bishop, Trinity College selected as its new president William Preston Few, a member of the Trinity faculty and Dickey’s distant cousin. Few’s ancestor, James Few – hanged by the British following the Battle of Alamance – was brother to Dickey’s ancestor, Benjamin Few, a Revolutionary War colonel. The Emory faculty chose Dickey to represent them at Few’s inauguration in Durham on November 7, 1910.³⁴ Kilgo presided over the annual session of the North Georgia Conference which met later that month at Athens First Methodist Church. For the ninth consecutive year, the annual conference appointed Dickey as Emory’s president.³⁵

At the annual session of the South Georgia Conference the following week in Columbus, Dickey and Ainsworth, of Emory and Wesleyan respectively, were drawn to the same side in a

³³ James E. Dickey to Annie Dickey, Oct. 13, 1910, Dickey family papers held by the author.

³⁴ *The Emory Phoenix*, “Local Department,” November 1910, p. 45; and Fruth, *Some Descendants of Richard Few....*

³⁵ *Atlanta Constitution*, “Bishop Reads Appointments,” Nov. 22, 1910, p. 1.

heated debate on the conference floor over a proposed increase in the educational assessment to the individual churches. Some argued that the recently completed endowment funds at the two schools indicated they did not need additional funding from the conference, but the majority came down on the side of increasing the appropriations to the schools. Emory and Wesleyan each received \$2,721 in the adopted budget; Andrew Female College and South Georgia College \$2,118 each; and Sparks Institute received \$828.³⁶

If the skeleton Dooley can be believed as a reliable source, President Dickey created some controversy that fall by discouraging students from traveling to Atlanta to hear a speech by former President of the United States Theodore Roosevelt. “In speaking some days before Roosevelt delivered his great speech in Atlanta,” wrote Dooley, “he [Dickey] said that it was altogether unnecessary to go to hear Teddy. To look at his picture and read his speech, said he, is just as good as to be present in Atlanta.” Dooley declared this to be a great principle that would solve the problem of church attendance at Emory. “Let the King himself and Weary Willie [Allen Memorial pastor William H. LaPrade] have their sermons typewritten and their pictures put at the top of each discourse. By handing copies around among the boys, the necessity of attending church would be eliminated.”³⁷

From time to time, students continued to lobby for intercollegiate athletics, but not the traditional targets of football and baseball. Hatton Towson took a new tack in a *Phoenix* column, proposing that Emory join in the annual Atlanta intercollegiate tennis tournament. Better than football or baseball, a tennis tournament would allow development of more players and not just a few, he argued. Asking, “with due respect...is it right that a ban should be placed on a thing simply and solely for the reason that it is generally associated with the word ‘inter-collegiate?’”

³⁶ *Atlanta Constitution*, “Bishop Reads Appointments,” Dec. 6, 1910, p. 4.

³⁷ *The Emory Phoenix*, “Dooley’s Letter,” December 1910, p. 84.

Others were more agitated, the *Phoenix* reported, particularly those Emory students who had witnessed the year's Georgia versus Georgia Tech football game in Atlanta: "All who saw the game came back full of howls and clamor and rumors of rebellion and intercollegiate athletics."³⁸

Even the skeleton Dooley made comment on the subject of intercollegiate athletics, referring to the influence wielded over the trustees and Dickey on the matter by Bishop Warren A. Candler and his brother, the board of trustees chairman Asa G. Candler: "Why these powers, too sane on most subjects, should, taking their cue from the power behind the King, the real hand that wields the scepter and has the reins of government, stretching over the vast expanse of forty-one miles, clasped tight – why these powers, I say, should put a ban upon the perfection of our physical side and striking an average by the comparison of it with other university men of our state, does seem causeless."³⁹ The *Phoenix* generally supported administration policies, but this poorly veiled reference to the Candlers and their relationship with "King James" Dickey may have been among several articles that broke the accepted decorum. On two occasions – once in 1910 and again in 1911 – the editors were called before the faculty for having overstepped their bounds.⁴⁰

By the fall of 1912, the Emory student government established a new student newspaper, the *Emory Weekly*, to cover local and social news and athletics, leaving the *Phoenix*, operated by the literary societies, to its original purpose as a literary journal. The change had been sought by editors of the *Phoenix* for at least two years. Another publication appeared briefly on the campus during the previous year, the *Whompus*, which amounted to a political scandal sheet spreading

³⁸ *The Emory Phoenix*, "A Serial," January-February 1911, p. 145; "The Inter-Collegiate Debate," April 1911, p. 191.

³⁹ *The Emory Phoenix*, "The Dooley Letter," January-February 1911, p. 148.

⁴⁰ *Faculty minutes*, March 11, 1910 and March 17, 1911, cited in Bullock, *A History of Emory University*, p. 270.

uncomplimentary stories about campus student leaders. Other publications during the period including the campus yearbook, which traveled under a series of names: the *Zodiac*, beginning in 1893; the *Eranos* in 1907; the *Oxonian* in 1908, the *Comet* in 1910, and finally in 1911, the *Emory Campus*.⁴¹

As the class of 1911 approached its graduation, class historian H. H. Howell observed Oxford to be a peculiar town. “Its government is that of an absolute Monarchy with no power of recall, and the people have no voice in the government,” he wrote in the class history. “The King, an august, long-haired, dignified personage rules in state over this town and all who would live here in peace must secure his favor. There are various ways of finding favor, but the way that is most successful is that employed by Pug [a reference to a faculty member], Weary Willie [pastor LaPrade], and Henry Jones [a member of the class of 1911 who dated and eventually would marry Dickey’s daughter, Annie], namely, boot-licking.” Howell seemed to go particularly hard on Jones, Dickey’s future son-in-law: “Henry Half-headed Jones has consistently bootlicked all those who hold the reins of power from the time he was found eating grass in the President’s yard as a Sub,” he wrote, “...until now he has developed a Kingly countenance. He bootlicks the King morning, noon, and night and bootlicked Miss Mansfield [Mansfield T. Peed, professor of geometry] till he was given a rise in Annie lit and since then hasn’t spoken a word to that worthy with even an ‘aha.’” The reference is to Jones’ difficult time completing the required analytical geometry course. Jones told the story of standing the exam in that course three times before finally passing, upon which he threw the textbook out the back door never to be seen again.⁴²

⁴¹ Bullock, *A History of Emory University*, pp. 272-273; *Atlanta Constitution*, “Emory Establishes Weekly Newspaper,” Oct. 6, 1912, p. B5.

⁴² *The Emory Phoenix*, “Nineteen Eleven in the Past,” June 1911, pp. 240-248.

As commencement 1911 arrived, the Emory board of trustees began to implement the goals outlined in the original plans for the endowment campaign concluded a year earlier. A key goal for Bishop Candler had been to add a department of theology to the curriculum. At its meeting that spring, the board determined that a sufficient amount had been collected to date to initiate the plan. “The purpose of this Department is to enable young men preparing for the ministry who are candidates for degrees to take the courses offered as electives in the Junior and Senior years,” stated the catalogue, “and to help others who can only spend one or two years in college to make better preparation for their life-work.” With the intention of expanding the faculty and course offerings as funds became available, the trustees named to the faculty position Charles E. Dowman, the former Emory president who most recently had been presiding elder of the Oxford District, effective in June 1911.⁴³

Classes opened in fall 1911 with a considerable decline in enrollment from recent years, to 259. There were 34 seniors, 56 juniors, 36 sophomores, 57 freshmen, 42 special students, four graduate students, and 30 sub-freshmen. Thirty of the juniors and seniors registered for classes in the new theological department.⁴⁴

Among the “new boys” in that fall’s class was Marvin Franklin, who already served a pastoral appointment near Athens and commuted there from his Oxford boarding house. There, at a place called Captain Smith’s, he shared rooms with a sophomore, Arthur J. Moore. Both men would go on to be elected bishops – Moore in 1930 and Franklin in 1948. They followed by just a few years Clare Purcell, an Emory graduate of 1908, who was elected bishop in 1938. Dickey’s presidency, therefore, produced not only an abundance of new ministers, but also at least three Methodist bishops. Another member of that fall’s class was Spessard Holland, who

⁴³ *Catalogue of Emory College 1910-1911*, p. 19.

⁴⁴ *Catalogue of Emory College 1911-1912*, p. 55.

would become a United States Senator from Florida. Franklin later remembered arriving on the Emory campus, a bit concerned about how he would feel in Dickey's presence. "The warmth of my welcome from Dr. Dickey removed my misgivings," he reported. He recalled Dickey's frequent and stirring talks in the chapel. "He was called 'King James,'" Franklin said, "because he commanded the respect of everybody."⁴⁵

Early in the academic year, from October 14 – 17, Dickey traveled to Toronto, Canada as a delegate from the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, to the Fourth Ecumenical Methodist Conference. The meeting of some five hundred representatives from all the worldwide branches of Methodism was held in Toronto's Metropolitan Methodist Church.⁴⁶

During the course of the academic year 1911-'12, Asa Candler sought advice from his brother, Bishop Warren Candler, as together they more deeply considered what they discerned to be God's intentions for the ways Asa should use his money. Some few days after the brothers discussed the matter over a January dinner, Warren sent Asa a letter enclosing a "Memoranda of Principles About Making and Using Money." "I could advise more definitely," he told his brother, "if I knew what amount you proposed to set apart this year for benevolent purposes, and what is your productive estate." But Warren stated in general terms some principles that would guide Asa for years to come. Citing Deuteronomy 8:18, Warren told his brother, "the ability to make money is a gift of God, just as any other sort of talent; and it must be consecrated to the service of God." Money, Warren said, is to be distributed to three general objects: family, business and benevolent causes – family "according to the will of God," business "to the end that he may serve Him by making money;" and benevolent causes "for the up-building of the kingdom of God." One's children should be raised to be fruitful servants of God, he said. One's

⁴⁵ *The Emory Alumnus*, March 1960, pp. 26-27.

⁴⁶ *1928 Missionary Yearbook*, in Dempsey Collection MSS451, box 4, Manuscript, Archives, and Rare Book Library, Emory University.

business is a means to an end and “should be mastered, and must not be allowed to master him who pursues it.” As to benevolence, “God appoints a business man to his work as truly as He leads a preacher to his field of labour....” That man, therefore, “should do that which God has appointed to him as duty, and not that which others can, will, and ought to do.”

Warren proceeded to list specific applications of those principles in Asa’s life: “It is better to finish the work you have begun than to take hold of other enterprises until those already begun have been carried to completion....” He told his brother that Inman Park Church did not need him – it was a project others “can, ought, and will do.” Wesley Memorial Church was cared for in a bequest and the debt could be carried until the bequest was realized, he said. But Asa’s money could be used to great advantage in enlarging the hospital and adding a girl’s lodging house to Wesley Memorial Enterprises. Emory College needed a modern dormitory and more endowment for the theological department, Warren said. Finally, he suggested that Asa give as much as \$1,000 to the proposed Druid Hills Church building, as it “is vitally related to John’s [their brother] salvation, and, it may be, to the salvation of his family,” and would fill John with enthusiasm. “You ought not to give more; for John himself ought to give more,” Warren wrote, “and once he gets his enthusiasm kindled, he will do it, although he thinks now that he has done all he can do. His heart needs expanding and his vision of things religious extended.”

Warren estimated these tasks – “enough for a season” – would require \$500,000, “but if you get \$10,000,000 for Coca Cola, or hold it as worth \$10,000,000 (and if it is not worth \$10,000,000 to you, it should be sold to men who want it at that price) you can afford to put that much in them.” Having distinguished himself in making money, Asa should distinguish himself in using it wisely on a similarly grand scale, Warren said. He urged his brother to put his estate

in shape, work on recovering his health, direct his benevolent enterprises, and to travel – “See something of Europe; go on one trip to Mexico; take a journey through Palestine,” he urged. He further discussed each of Asa’s children and how he might assure them of positions in the bank, or Coca Cola or elsewhere, suggesting that each have a trust estate as Vanderbilt did for his sons and daughters. A postscript dealt with Candler College in Cuba, into which Asa had put some money and already proposed to put more. “It ought to become the Christian lighthouse of the Spanish-speaking West Indies and for Central America,” Warren concluded.⁴⁷ Asa Candler clearly had great love for, and respect and confidence in, his brother Warren. Asa pondered Warren’s advice over the coming years, and often turned to him for counsel as his own fortune and his benevolences grew exponentially.

The next month, the Candlers moved forward with their missionary efforts in Cuba by staging a one-day fundraising campaign in the Methodist pulpits of Atlanta. The efforts would support a new church in Havana to be located four miles from Candler College. Speakers filled thirty-one pulpits – Dickey was at Inman Park Church – raising \$15,000 toward the \$40,000 necessary to complete the project.⁴⁸

By fall of the year, the new sanctuary for Druid Hill Methodist Church – which the Candler brothers had discussed in their private correspondence earlier in the year – was complete. Construction and furnishings cost \$25,000, including significant contributions from both Asa and John Candler – John chaired the building committee. Warren Candler preached the morning service on dedication Sunday, while Dickey preached the evening service for the new

⁴⁷ Warren B. Candler to Asa G. Candler, January 13, 1912, Collection MSS1, Box 5, Manuscript, Archives and Rare Book Library, Emory University.

⁴⁸ *Atlanta Constitution*, “Methodist Rally to Raise \$15,000,” Feb. 9, 1913, p. 8.

structure, located on Seminole at Blue Ridge Avenues in the Druid Hills section.⁴⁹ The sanctuary seated 450 people and featured a \$2,000 Hall organ, half the cost of which had been paid by Andrew Carnegie. Begun jointly by the First and Grace churches as the Copenhill neighborhood mission in 1899, the congregation took the name Druid Hills in 1910 to reflect their location in the burgeoning northeast Atlanta development.⁵⁰

The next month, another church with close ties to Dickey – Grace Methodist Church – held dedication services for the new sanctuary Dickey proposed they build during his last year as their pastor. Although the building – located at Boulevard and Highland Avenue⁵¹ – had been occupied for six years, dedication services were not appropriate until the debt was paid. Bishop John C. Kilgo preached the dedication service, with special revival services each night of the preceding week. Dickey preached the Tuesday night service. Construction cost totaled \$60,000 and membership by the time of dedication had grown to 1,200.⁵²

At the spring 1912 meeting of the Emory board of trustees, Dickey made a second attempt to resign the presidency. Just two years after his previous attempt to leave to accept the position of secretary of the general board of education of the church, he sent this brief letter to the secretary of the Emory trustees at their meeting June 10: “Mr. Chairman and Gentlemen of the Board of Trustees: I hereby tender my resignation as President of Emory College. (signed) James E. Dickey.” The trustees resolved “That we decline to accept this resignation of Dr. Dickey and we do hereby assure him of our confidence in him, and his administration and we pledge him our most hearty support in the administration of the affairs of the College.” The trustees’ minutes, news accounts from the day, nor Dickey’s personal correspondence reveal

⁴⁹ The church later would move to its present-day location a block away, the intersection of Ponce de Leon Avenue and Briarcliff Road.

⁵⁰ *Atlanta Constitution*, “\$25,000 Church Opens Sunday,” Sept. 5, 1912, p. 5.

⁵¹ The church later would move to its present-day location at 458 Ponce de Leon Avenue near Highland Avenue.

⁵² *Atlanta Constitution*, “All Debts Paid by Grace Church,” Oct. 7, 1912, p. 10.

with certainty his motivation.⁵³ A possible, but unconfirmed, impetus may lie in the minutes of the June 12 session, at which the trustees received a motion to allow Emory to take part in intercollegiate athletics. The question lost by only two votes. Dickey had threatened in the past to resign if ever the trustees approved intercollegiate athletics. Whether that issue was indeed behind his actions is not known.⁵⁴

The trustees met again in July in a special meeting at which the board determined to build a new, modern dormitory to be known as the “Atticus G. Haygood Dormitory,” at a maximum cost of \$50,000. The board agreed to finance construction of the building, which they projected to be completed in a year, through a long-term loan. The three-story brick building would be 186 feet long, heated with steam and lighted by electricity, with a housing capacity of 126 residents. To be built along the most modern concept of a college residence hall, it would be divided into four-room suites, each room with a porcelain sink with hot and cold water and each suite sharing two shower-baths and one toilet. The building would be served by its own modern sewage disposal plant. Construction was to be completed by the opening of the 1913 school year.⁵⁵

At the North Georgia Annual Conference meeting of 1912 in Carrollton, the status of the Methodist institutions of higher education in Georgia once again caused debate. The education report caused a lively discussion over whether all the church colleges controlled by the conference should be brought under a coordinating board. After considerable debate, delegates tabled the matter.⁵⁶ The South Georgia Conference in Savannah the next week agreed to take over operation of the former Presbyterian Institute at Blackshear as a Methodist college, but

⁵³ *Emory College Board of Trustees Minutes*, June 10, 1912.

⁵⁴ *Atlanta Constitution*, “Emory Seniors Given Diplomas,” June 13, 1912, p. 4.

⁵⁵ Bullock, *A History of Emory University*, p. 239; and *Emory College Board of Trustees Minutes*, July 10, 1912; *Catalogue of Emory College 1912-1913*, pp. 41-42.

⁵⁶ *Atlanta Constitution*, “Preachers Get Assignments,” Nov. 26, 1912, p. 2.

without financial obligation. A building, library and apparatus, two dormitories and sixteen acres of land transferred to the Methodists under the arrangement, Methodist pastor W. A. Huckabee was appointed president, and the pulpits of the conference would be opened to him for the purpose of securing financial aid. Lengthy and heated discussion surrounded a proposal that certain church institutions in the future issue only diplomas instead of conferring degrees. Delegates defeated the proposal, based on a plan to require the various educational institutions of the conference to coordinate their courses of study. In other business, Dickey delivered his annual report on the status of Emory College, and joined several speakers assigned to fill the pulpits of Savannah-area Presbyterian, Baptist, Lutheran and Christian churches that Sunday. The conference program featured a mid-day adjournment on November 30 for a train ride to Tybee Island, where all enjoyed a superb oyster roast.⁵⁷

Two months later, in February, presidents of all the Methodist colleges controlled by the South Georgia Conference convened in Cordele. While the details of their agenda are not available, the concerns of both annual conferences for better coordination of the educational program across campuses surely were at the front of their minds. Rev. T. D. Ellis of Savannah, president of the conference board of education, convened the meeting attended by Dickey and the presidents of six other colleges and institutes.⁵⁸

On February 8, Dickey accompanied the large 1913 graduating class of forty-seven men and the other Greek lettermen on the annual trip to Atlanta, culminating in the annual senior banquet at the Kimball House. Student speakers provided hearty toasts to members of the class and enjoyed a great time of fellowship. It was the first time in several years the president had been able to make the trip, and Dickey enjoyed the evening as if he were one of the Emory boys

⁵⁷ *Atlanta Constitution*, "School Planned for Blackshear," Dec. 1, 1912, p. 10; "1913 Charges are Announced," Dec. 3, 1912, p. 3.

⁵⁸ *Atlanta Constitution*, "Cordele Will Play Host to College Presidents," Feb. 2, 1913, p. B4.

again. A trip to an Atlanta photographer's studio highlighted the outing – for the making of the senior class photo. The boys posed in as many striking, “collegy” ways as possible before gathering at Five Points to enjoy the passing throng of Atlanta ladies and their interaction with some real college men.⁵⁹

Accustomed to traveling about Georgia with regularity, that spring Dickey's fundraising prowess led to a similar tour around the state of Oklahoma. He accompanied Bishop E. D. Mouzon on a campaign across the recently-admitted state to raise funds for the endowment of Oklahoma Wesleyan College.⁶⁰

As he prepared for the coming commencement at Emory, Dickey first turned his attention to the graduation of daughter Annie from Wesleyan College with the class of 1913. President and Mrs. Dickey, accompanied by a large party of Oxford residents, attended the Macon ceremonies the last week of May. Two Chinese members of Annie's graduating class would become women of note on the world stage as wives of two successive leaders of Nationalist China. Chung-ling Soong became the future Madame Sun Yat Sen, and May-ling Soong became Madame Chiang Kai-Shek.⁶¹

The question of intercollegiate athletics – defeated in the trustees by only two votes the previous year – loomed an even hotter topic as the trustees meeting of 1913 approached. After choosing J. E. McRee as their chairman and Thomas W. Connally as secretary, a group of alumni supporting the matter chose Lauren Foreman from among their membership to bring their petition before the trustees. Claiming “hundreds” of Emory alumni supported them – even nine

⁵⁹ *Atlanta Constitution*, “Emory Men Here for Annual Feed,” Feb. 9, 1913, p. 5.

⁶⁰ *Atlanta Constitution*, “Oxford, Ga.,” April 27, 1913, p. C9.

⁶¹ Dickey family records held by the author; *Atlanta Constitution*, “Oxford, Ga.,” May 25, 1913, p. B9; “Oxford, Ga.,” June 1, 1913, p. B7.

out of ten according to one report – the group began a telephone campaign to generate a large turnout of supporters of intercollegiate athletics at the annual alumni day.⁶²

A student committee of like mind informed the press it intended to install a dictagraph machine in the trustees meeting if they would not open it to the public, so as to publish the proceedings. Sophomore Cranston “Fuzzy” Williams, publicity chair for the student group and son of the publisher of the *Greensboro (Ga.) Record-Herald*, Jim Williams, already carried the reputation as the general “live wire” of the student body. Associate editor of the *Emory Weekly* the previous year and its upcoming managing editor, Williams was well-known in Georgia journalism circles and knew how to stir up the press on the matter.⁶³

As the trustees convened on June 9, the first order of business was re-election of the president for a three-year term, which carried by a unanimous vote. Dickey’s threats to resign if ever intercollegiate athletics came to pass at Emory were well-known, so both proponents and opponents thought his re-election may well signal the issue was again lost. Considerable debate and argument followed as to whether the meeting should be opened to advocates for the issue, with the decision that the student body and alumni who favored the question would be allotted one hour to make their case. As the agenda item came up at the next morning’s meeting, Lauren Foreman, backed by a large crowd of alumni, spoke on behalf of the alumni group, followed by J. E. Matthews, president of the student body. He asserted that a recent mass meeting of the students supported his position unanimously.

The speakers alleged lagging attendance at the college could be blamed on the lack of intercollegiate sports – the next day’s *Constitution* elaborated that “attendance has dropped from over 300 to slightly over 200 within the past few years” – a report that brought a strong,

⁶² *Atlanta Constitution*, “Foreman to Address Trustees of Emory,” June 6, 1913, p. 14.

⁶³ *Atlanta Constitution*, “Emory Boys Threaten to Use Dictagraph on Trustee Meeting,” June 8, 1913, p. A5.

published rebuke from President Dickey. Giving the enrollments for the last six years, respectively, as 265, 270, 313, 297, 259 and 267, Dickey wrote, "The foregoing statement, I presume will cover your 'last few years....' There has not been any time 'within the last few years' when the enrollment has been 'slightly over 200.' It is hard to understand, therefore, how there can be but one of two explanations; namely, either stupidity or malice." Publishing Dickey's response, the *Constitution* noted that the error apparently came from an editor misunderstanding the reporter over a long distance telephone. But in a subsequent letter, the *Constitution's* correspondent, English professor W. F. Melton, said he referenced attendance near the end of the school year, not the reported annual enrollment, and stood by his figure.

Nonetheless, the trustees considered two resolutions on intercollegiate athletics. The first would have authorized the faculty "to grant to the students nine games of inter-collegiate baseball during the year, and whatever tennis, basketball and track meets in their judgment are proper and can be rightly arranged." Under the resolution, the athletic committee of the faculty was "to have strict charge of all athletics, and a Professor to accompany the team on each trip." The trustees defeated the first resolution by a one-vote margin.

A second resolution, seeking to put an end to the matter, resolved that the trustees would hereafter receive no more petitions on the subject from either students or trustees. The board defeated that proposal on a vote of 14-10, assuring the debate would continue. Supporters pledged to go over the trustees' heads by taking the question to the North and South Georgia and Florida conferences, which controlled Emory on behalf of the Methodist church.⁶⁴

⁶⁴ *Emory College Board of Trustees Minutes*, June 10, 1913; *Atlanta Constitution*, "Emory Pleads Today for College Sports," June 10, 1913, p. 3; "Intercollege Sports Banned by One Vote," June 11, 1913, p. 1; "Enrollment of 259 the Lowest at Emory Within Last Few Years," June 15, 1913, p. 13; "Melton Replies to Dr. Dickey's Charge of 'Stupidity or Malice'," June 22, 1913, p. A3.

Among faculty changes considered by the trustees, Clarence E. Boyd of the Florida State College for Women at Tallahassee came as the new professor of Greek, succeeding A. G. Sanders. A Wofford College graduate, he earned a Ph.D. from the University of Wisconsin.⁶⁵ History chair F. N. Duncan submitted his resignation to accept a similar position in Texas.⁶⁶ In an unusual move, the trustees accepted a member of a Baptist church as a new member of the board – Thomas W. Connally of Atlanta, an appointee of the alumni board and a leader in the move to establish intercollegiate athletics on campus. Trustees policy allowed only Methodists to be members of the Emory board, except in the case of the three alumni-appointed positions.⁶⁷ The board acted favorably on an alumni association suggestion that the college needed a student recruiter in the field, similar to the position held by Joseph Stewart at the University of Georgia. While the trustees agreed with the proposal, they appropriated no funds and identified no candidate. Upon the trustees' approval, Dickey conferred two honorary degrees at commencement: a doctor of laws upon Nat E. Harris of Macon, and a doctor of divinity for Hoyt M. Dobbs of Kansas City.

The theme of Dickey's 1913 baccalaureate address, "Success," stood on the work of Thomas Carlyle entitled, "On Heroes, Hero Worship and the Heroic in History," and returned to many familiar themes of previous addresses – the ills of modern society, self-sacrifice in unselfish service to others, the grand heroes of the Lost Cause, and a final sermon in closing. Carlyle, Dickey related, made sincerity the basis of heroism, provided it had a fixed background of faith in high things. This he coupled with Webster's definition of "a great and illustrious person." And so he asked, "What is it that makes men great or illustrious in the eyes of this

⁶⁵ Boyd would marry Dickey's oldest daughter, Julia, but her untimely death in 1930 would leave him with their two young sons, ages 12 and 14. He would remain as professor of Greek at Emory College and University for the balance of his career.

⁶⁶ *Atlanta Constitution*, "Emory Pleads Today for College Sports," June 10, 1913, p. 3.

⁶⁷ *Atlanta Constitution*, "Intercollege Sports Banned by One Vote," June 11, 1913, p. 1.

generation? ... The world today cries: Be great, achieve greatness, succeed [his underline] and though the recital of your deeds may be so foul as to make vultures vomit, yet your name shall go sounding down the ages untarnished and undiminished by shame.” This is not to decry success, he asserted, but to decry making success our god. The drive to achieve success should not cause a man to confuse his moral values, he asserted.

Dickey feared that the world of that day forgot courage, honor, chastity, and sincerity and replaced them with cowardice, shame, sensuality, duplicity and hate in the drive for individual success. “High virtues do not constitute a man a hero in the eyes of the public unless success crowns his efforts,” Dickey added, “and the absence of them does not deprive him of the world’s homage if he but succeeds.” As an example, he pointed to Richard III – a success, yet a scoundrel, murderer and thief. Quoting an unnamed author, he continued in the Lost Cause language familiar from his previous speeches, “In 1776, successful rebellion was called patriotism; while in 1865 unsuccessful patriotism was branded rebellion.” Therefore, Washington – the successful rebel – received a monument “loftier than St. Peter’s,” while Jefferson Davis – the unsuccessful patriot – “was branded the arch-traitor of the ages.”

Dickey reiterated his often-repeated theme that “the true hero is an unselfish servant.” Echoing Bishop Candler’s letter to his brother, Asa [we do not know if Dickey actually saw that letter, but he and Candler likely discussed the concept], Dickey said, “[A] man can be a hero in the way of marts of trade, if the motives which inspire his efforts are unselfish. If he strives to accumulate in order to dispense, to serve, to minister, to the general good...making money in order that he may have some part in making men and women happier and better.” The most unselfish sacrifice is that which sorrows in its service, he continued, citing those who must choose love versus love, as did the soldiers of the Confederacy.

In his usual manner, Dickey concluded with a sermon, noting that the most unselfish, most sacrificial servant of all was Jesus Christ. Dickey said, “He humbled himself and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross.... He left the acclamation of angels to endure the jeers of sinful men.” And he concluded:

“Young gentlemen: I commend to you this Highest Heroism. Be not blinded by the god success. Follow in the footsteps of the master. Cherish divine ideals, and whether or not the world metes to you its praise is of little consequence; for, if faithful, within a few short years, somewhere beyond the stars, at God’s right hand, sun-crowned and glorified, you shall be greeted as heaven’s hero.”⁶⁸

As Dickey and Emory entered upon the opening of classes for fall 1913 – his twelfth and next-to-last year in the presidency – the college showed the distinct mark of his long years of service. The *Bulletin*, which he likely wrote himself, expressed this educational philosophy: “Emory is distinctly a Christian institution. While the spirit of it is in no sense sectarian, in that it does not seek to make Methodists of pupils who have been reared in the atmosphere of other denominations, yet it does seek to surround them with an atmosphere that is pervaded with the spirit of Christianity.” Describing a faculty “not captious in spirit” and “wholly free from martinetism,” nonetheless students must pass the course work to advance to the next class, he wrote. “The recognized position accorded our graduates throughout the country and the tributes paid to them as students in the leading universities of the North and East constrains us to maintain the high degree of excellence that is now required,” the *Bulletin* continued.

Bragging on the physical education program, particularly the new gymnasium, the *Bulletin* said, “All local college games are heartily encouraged by the faculty; but no intercollegiate games are permitted, as they are believed to be hurtful to the morals and to the academic efficiency of the student body.” As to housing – students had for years lodged in the

⁶⁸ Dickey, James E. “Success.” Baccalaureate address delivered June 11, 1913. Handwritten manuscript, in Dickey’s own hand, on 27 pages of a “Big Chief school tablet.” Dickey collection, box 1. Manuscript, Archives, and Rare Book Library, Emory University.

homes of Oxford residents, said the *Bulletin*, “but with the more general use of steam-heat, electricity and waterworks, which conveniences have not been operative except in a most limited way in Oxford, we have felt that these comforts should be provided for our students,” thus the new dormitory to open that fall would “make Oxford the ideal home for the student.” A room in Haygood Hall cost a student \$6.50 per month, payable in advance, for one of the eighteen corner rooms or the six extra large rooms, or \$5.50 per month for one of the other thirty-nine rooms.⁶⁹

The college *Catalogue* of 1913-'14 yields some insight into the sternness of Dickey's demeanor in the disciplinary statement, under “A Word to Parents and Guardians:” “When any student, from habitual idleness or inattention to duty, is found flagging in his work, the cause is kindly inquired into, and if, after suitable attempts to reform him, he is incorrigible, the President will write to his parent or guardian, inform him of the fact, and request his withdrawal without notoriety or disgrace.”⁷⁰

As fall turned to winter, the North Georgia Annual Conference meeting in Elberton again elected Dickey a clergy delegate to general conference on the first ballot. Dickey ran second among three receiving the necessary majority on the first clergy ballot, with W. H. Dubose of Atlanta garnering 153 votes to Dickey's 148, and 125 for President J. A. Sharp of Young Harris College. Lay members of the annual conference elected Asa G. Candler at the head of the laity delegation to general conference. On a sharply divided vote of 74-72, delegates supported a resolution from the annual conference to the general conference opposing granting laity rights to women. Despite the narrowness of the vote, the measure went forward to the larger church as the will of North Georgia. Another stormy debate arose over a proposal to limit the service of any individual as a presiding elder to four consecutive years, a proposed memorial to general

⁶⁹ *Emory College Bulletin*, July 1913.

⁷⁰ *Catalogue of Emory College 1913-1914*, p. 36.

conference authored by Emory professor Rembert G. Smith. His concern was that presiding elders of the several districts in the North Georgia Conference came together as the bishop's cabinet, and thus recommended to the bishop the annual assignments of pastors to the various pulpits. Those speaking in favor of the resolution asserted that presiding elders remaining in office longer than four years would "build up an ecclesiastical machine and unduly promote some men." By a vote of 5-4, the measure cleared the committee on memorials to the general conference, chaired by Asa G. Candler, who took the floor to speak against it. One correspondent characterized the ensuing debate as "the stormiest experienced in over fifteen years. At times Bishop Collins Denny was thoroughly unable to maintain order, and utmost confusion continued for nearly an hour." When finally put to a vote of the full house, the question prevailed 149-88, sending it to the general conference as a petition from the North Georgia Annual Conference.⁷¹

While the North Georgia Conference apparently did not act on the question of intercollegiate athletics at Emory College, the South Georgia Conference meeting the next week in Macon adopted a resolution condemning such programs and endorsing the action of the Emory trustees to continue to ban such competition. By a vote of 162-52, the South Georgians also continued their stance to keep the name of the church as it was rather than to support the proposed change to "the Methodist Episcopal Church in America." Proponents of the measure believed dropping the word "South" would better reflect the more global nature the southern church was attaining. A resolution passed unanimously to issue \$100,000 in bonds to retire debt at four educational institutions of the South Georgia Conference: Andrew, Warthen and South

⁷¹ *Atlanta Constitution*, "Delegates Named by Methodists," Nov. 23, 1913, p. A2.

Georgia colleges, and the Sparks Collegiate Institute. The bonds would be retired by an increase in the educational fund apportionments to the churches.⁷²

Although he spent much of his time in church organization and conferences, at several times over the years Dickey expressed concern that the organizational business and structure of the church would override its core mission of reaching souls for Jesus Christ. At a homecoming service at Atlanta's Walker Street Methodist Church, for example, Dickey called for sympathy between the pulpit and the pew. "Let the preacher feel the heart-throb of the congregation, and if there is any preaching in him, the congregation will get it," he said. Many organizations within the Methodist church were doing good work, he told the congregation, yet "There is a great danger of organizing the church to death."⁷³

Isaac Stiles Hopkins, Emory's president from 1884-1888, who left that post to become the founding president of Georgia Tech, and ultimately became a fulltime pastor in the Methodist Church, died February 3, 1914. A large crowd of his many past associations gathered at the graveside in Oxford for his burial service on February 5, including current and former trustees of the college and many parishioners from his former church appointments. A large contingent of faculty, virtually the entire student body, and many townspeople met the funeral train at the Covington station. An entire car of the train was devoted to the numerous floral offerings. President Dickey and former President Dowman joined Atlanta pastor W. F. Glenn in presiding at the service.⁷⁴

As the 1914 General Conference to be held in Oklahoma City approached, the dispute between the Methodist Episcopal Church, South and the board of trustees of Vanderbilt University, by then more than a decade old, came to a breaking point. In the initial suit filed by

⁷² *Atlanta Constitution*, "Methodists Not to Change Name," Nov. 29, 1913, p. 9.

⁷³ *Atlanta Constitution*, "Dr. James Dickey Preaches Homecoming Sermon," March 27, 1911, p. 4.

⁷⁴ *Atlanta Constitution*, "Dr. Isaac Hopkins Laid to Rest in Grave at Oxford," Feb. 6, 1914, p. 12.

the conservative bishops following the 1910 General Conference, the Davidson County (Tennessee) Chancery Court ruled in favor of the church, a finding the Vanderbilt trustees appealed to the Tennessee Supreme Court.

Upset by the assertion of the General Conference of 1910 that it had the right to appoint three members to the Vanderbilt board – a right that board reserved to itself – Vanderbilt's Chancellor James Kirkland led his board in their appeal, seeking not only to limit the General Conference's election authority, but to remove its veto power over Vanderbilt's own appointments.

Before the Supreme Court ruled, philanthropist Andrew Carnegie intervened with an offer of one million dollars to Vanderbilt's medical department, provided the new school of medicine to be created had a seven-member governing board separate from that of Vanderbilt, and only after the question of denominational control was settled by the courts. "I do not believe it is wise for any sect to control educational institutions such as universities, whether the organization be a Methodist Conference or a Presbyterian Assembly, or a Catholic Order," Carnegie wrote. Bishop Elijah E. Hoss of Nashville, who had led the court fight for the bishops, strongly attacked Carnegie, as did Candler and others. Carnegie's stipulation proved his intention to undermine church control of higher education, Candler believed. He and his colleagues viewed the actions as part of a calculated plan by godless, Northern industrialists to overthrow the church's influence in higher education. "Uncle Warren's wrath knew no bounds" in the matter, wrote his nephew Charles Howard Candler. Given the timing of Carnegie's offer and his conditions, the conservative bishops suspected they were victim of a backroom deal engineered with Carnegie by Kirkland. The bold strike at the heart of a major, southern Methodist university particularly galled them, given remaining sensitivities in the aftermath of

the Civil War. Candler would outline these beliefs in a pamphlet: *Dangerous Donations or Degrading Doles, Or a Vast Scheme for Capturing and Controlling the Colleges and Universities of the Country.*⁷⁵

On March 21, 1914, in a ruling that the bishops of the church viewed as disastrous for their position, the Supreme Court reversed the Chancery Court, holding that the three trustees selected by the church were not entitled to the posts. But rather than directly confirming the position of the Vanderbilt Board of Trust and Chancellor Kirkland, the Supreme Court further ruled that the three trustees appointed by the Vanderbilt board were subject to confirmation by the General Conference, or by the General Board of Education, to which the Conference had delegated such actions. The court ruled that since they had not yet been rejected – or even ruled upon – by the Methodist Conference, they should be seated. The ruling clearly left the church with a significant role in governing Vanderbilt – the right to approve or reject Vanderbilt’s own nominations for trustees – but it infuriated the Methodist leadership to no longer wield absolute control.⁷⁶

Some leaders in the denomination blustered that the Methodists should pull out of Nashville, the effective headquarters city of the church. H. M. Hamill of Nashville, superintendent of Sunday School teacher training, threatened that the Methodist Publishing House, the board of missions, and “every other Methodist enterprise located in Nashville would be picked up bodily and moved to Atlanta.” Bishop Hoss suggested instead that the church would withdraw from Vanderbilt and establish a new university with assured legal controls at some other denominational college in the south. Emory College received prominent mention in

⁷⁵ Moon, *An Uncommon Place*, pp. 10-12; Hauk, *A Legacy of Heart and Mind*, p. 61; Bullock, *A History of Emory University*, p. 283; Conkin, *Gone with the Ivy: A Biography of Vanderbilt University*, p. 207; Charles Howard Candler, *Asa Griggs Candler*, Atlanta: Emory University, 1950, p. 389.

⁷⁶ Moon, *An Uncommon Place...*, p. 11; Hauk, *A Legacy of Heart and Mind...*, p. 61; Bullock, *A History of Emory University*, pp. 283-284.

this regard. Rev. Thomas M. Elliott, a correspondent for the *Atlanta Constitution* at General Conference, wrote, “Should it be determined to make Emory college a great Methodist university, the plan will receive unanimous support from the Atlantic to the Pacific. That will mean the making of Atlanta the educational center of forty-nine conferences, and the building of one of the country’s best equipped universities. It will mean the bringing of from 2,500 to 3,000 young men to Georgia from every other state for educational advantages.”⁷⁷

With the court’s rulings fresh on their minds, Dickey and the North Georgia delegation made their way to Oklahoma City for the opening session of General Conference at St. Luke’s Church on May 6. The question of how to deal with the court defeat over Vanderbilt shared a crowded agenda. H. M. DuBose and Dickey, the first two elected clergy from Georgia, again would be prominently considered for election as a bishop during the session. And they traveled with instructions from North Georgia on several sticky questions: laity rights for women, limiting the terms of presiding elders, and whether to drop the word “south” from the name of the church.⁷⁸ These latter matters were quickly dispatched. The General Conference declined to approve the North Georgia petition to limit the terms of presiding elders. Even after four years of debate and a vote in every annual conference, General Conference delegates tabled the question of changing the church name, and decided not to resubmit the matter to the conferences for further discussion. And the question of episcopal elections became moot when the episcopal committee recommended no elections for the current quadrennium, determining the present number of bishops sufficient to carry out the work of the church. Some delegates sought to amend the report so as to provide for the election of two new bishops, but the motion was defeated.

⁷⁷ *Atlanta Constitution*, “General Conference of Methodists To Be One of Unusual Importance,” April 19, 1914, p.

4.

⁷⁸ *Ibid.*

In debating the question of laity rights for women, the conference allowed two women to participate in the debate – one for each side of the question. Belle Bennett noted, “Our church and the colored church are the only ones that have not granted these rights,” and took exception to statements by others that “only old maids and childless women wanted laity rights for personal ambition,” calling such statements cruel and puerile. Taking the negative, Mrs. T. B. King of Memphis said, “We do not want to be emancipated, for we are not in a position that requires emancipation. We have all the rights we want.” The conference defeated the proposal to grant laity rights to women on a vote of 171-105.⁷⁹

The same General Conference also took up a proposal on church unification – an issue that would dominate church politics for the next quarter-century and in which Dickey would remain heavily involved for the balance of his career. Delegates approved tentative plans for unification of the three branches of Methodism: the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, the Methodist Episcopal Church (the so-called “Northern” church), and the Protestant Methodist Church. Under the tentative outline, the combined church would be the Methodist Episcopal Church in America, with one faith, one ritual, and one general conference, subdivided into four geographically-based jurisdictional conferences. Under the tentative proposal, Black members would be welcome to join any of the jurisdictions, but the Colored Methodist Episcopal Church also could continue independently, maintaining fraternal relations with the new organization. Despite the “tentative” approval, there was no final adoption of a plan. Instead, delegates charged the joint commission that presented the proposal to continue its work over the coming four years to work out further details.⁸⁰

⁷⁹ *Atlanta Constitution*, “Methodists Deny Rights to Women,” May 20, 1914, p. 2.

⁸⁰ *Atlanta Constitution*, “For the Unification of Methodist Bodies,” May 22, 1914, p. 11.

But the Vanderbilt question would dominate the session. On Saturday, May 16, 1914, a majority report cleared committee providing for complete severance from Vanderbilt, and passed on a floor vote of 154-131. Even many of those voting against did so only because they wished to exact revenge by retaining confirmation authority over the board as the court had ruled. But on the following Monday, Georgia delegate N. E. Harris offered a motion to reconsider the complete severance. The conference approved reconsideration, after which it voted to establish an Educational Commission. The delegates then voted to cut off all church funds for Vanderbilt – including those for the Biblical (theology) Department – charged that the commission oversee the transfer back to the annual conferences of whatever rights they may have in Vanderbilt, and that it proceed with the founding of two universities to be fully owned and controlled by the church. In doing so, the General Conference resolved:

We express the belief that there should be east of the Mississippi River one such institution, and one such institution west of the Mississippi River; and in this connection, we express our pleasure at the establishment, by the membership of our Church in the State of Texas, of Southern Methodist University, situated and located in the city of Dallas, in said State, and commend such institution to the commission for its consideration.⁸¹

The Educational Commission comprised four bishops (Warren A. Candler, chairman; John C. Kilgo; W. B. Murrah; and James H. McCoy), four clergy (none of whom were from North Georgia), and eight laymen, including Asa G. Candler, who was named treasurer, and longtime Candler family associate William D. Thomson, general counsel for the Coca-Cola Company.⁸²

⁸¹ “Journal of the Seventeenth General Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South: May 6-23,” Nashville: Publishing House of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, 1914, pp. 232-235; Bullock, *A History of Emory University*, pp. 283-284; Conkin, *Gone with the Ivy*, p. 184; Moon, *An Uncommon Place*, p. 11.

⁸² Bullock, *A History of Emory University*, p. 284; Moon, *An Uncommon Place...*, pp. 11-12.

Warren Candler's influence and resolve in the wake of the loss of Vanderbilt cannot be underestimated. He was extraordinarily well-positioned to drive the process – wielding enormous power within the church, sitting as chairman of the Emory College board of trustees, assuming the chairmanship of the Educational Commission that would oversee the next steps, and having the deep philosophical and financial support of his brother. With Asa, and Asa's attorney and close confidant, Thomson, on the commission along with a chorus of sympathetic colleagues, Warren Candler moved rapidly. With the question of the western university already settled by the General Conference endorsement of Southern Methodist University, the Commission's real work was to determine a location for the school in the east. Warren and Asa Candler apparently already had mapped a plan to bring that university to Georgia.⁸³

Meeting in early June, the Emory College trustees elected attorney Thomson to their board. Candler offered resolutions of overture to the Educational Commission, which the trustees adopted, declaring “that the authorities of Emory College stand ready to do whatever they can in furtherance of the work which has been committed to said Commission.”⁸⁴

Whether there was ever any real question that the new university would come to Georgia is not clear, but other institutions and other cities made overtures to the Educational Commission, which met in Birmingham on June 17. There they enjoyed dinner and a tour of the city hosted by the Chamber of Commerce, which the next week announced a campaign to raise a million dollars by subscription, and to provide one hundred acres of land, to lure the university. “There is nothing Birmingham could attach to her already magnificent resources which would so materially, morally and spiritually benefit her as the Methodist University,” said Birmingham

⁸³ Candler, Charles Howard, *Asa Griggs Candler*, pp. 390-393; Moon, *An Uncommon Place...*, p. 13.

⁸⁴ *Emory College Board of Trustees Minutes*, June 8, 1914; Bullock, *A History of Emory University*, pp. 284-285.

banker Webb W. Crawford, a member of the chamber's committee.⁸⁵ At the Birmingham meeting, the commission also received an overture from American University in Washington, D.C., and heard a formal presentation from Bishop Mouzon on behalf of Southern Methodist University as the western site.⁸⁶

Others suggested Trinity College as an appropriate location for the new university, South Carolina lined up behind Rock Hill, and many other Southern towns offered to host the new institution. In the end, Birmingham seemed the only truly viable competitor, but Atlanta was favored by most and had the backing of the Candler.⁸⁷ The Atlanta Chamber of Commerce on July 14 formally offered \$500,000 to Candler and the commission, "in the event that you decide to establish at Atlanta the proposed Methodist University of the Southeast."⁸⁸

The matter was settled at the Educational Commission's meeting on July 16, with the reading of what has come to be known as "the million dollar letter" from Asa Candler. Dated that same date, it was addressed to "Bishop Warren A. Candler, Chairman of Educational Commission," and began, "My dear brother."

Writing that he felt "[i]mpelled by a deep sense of duty to God and an earnest desire to do good to my fellow men," Asa noted that "God has blessed me far beyond by deserts..." but that "I do not possess by a vast deal what some extravagantly imagine and confidently affirm..." Asserting that education "which sharpens and strengthens the mental faculties without at the same time invigorating the moral powers and inspiring the religious life is a curse rather than a blessing to men..." he declared that such education was properly offered through institutions

⁸⁵ Unlabeled news clipping, apparently from the *Birmingham News*, June 30, 1914, in M.E. Church South Educational Commission Collection, box 1; Manuscript, Archives, and Rare Book Library, Emory University.

⁸⁶ Bullock, *A History of Emory University*, p. 285.

⁸⁷ Moon, *An Uncommon Place...*, p. 16.

⁸⁸ Mell R. Wilkinson (Atlanta Chamber of Commerce President) to Bishop Candler, July 14, 1914, M.E. Church South Educational Commission Collection, box 1, Manuscript, Archives, and Rare Book Library, Emory University.

owned and controlled by churches. “I desire that whatever I am able to invest in the work of education shall be administered by the church with a definite and continuous religious purpose,” he continued.

To this end, as far as education can accomplish it, I offer to the Educational Commission of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, charged by the General Conference with the duty of establishing an institution of university grade east of the Mississippi River, the sum of one million (\$1,000,000) dollars, for the endowment of such an institution, the plans and methods of which are to be definitely directed to the advancement of sound learning and pure religion. To the end that the institution may be secured to the Church beyond the possibility of alienation at any time in the future, I will accompany my contribution with a deed of gift explicitly so providing.

And he continued, “I fully appreciate that \$1,000,000 is insufficient to establish and maintain the university.... [T]he faith, the love, the zeal and the prayers of good people must supply the force to do that which money without these cannot accomplish.”⁸⁹

The Commission minutes record the reaction of the membership: “The presence of God seemed to overshadow the Commission; faith and hope were quickened as by the power and light of inspiration, and the Commission gave thanks to God in prayer, led by Bishop Kilgo.” At the close of the prayer, another gift of \$25,000 from commission member T. T. Fishburne of Roanoke, Virginia, was announced. The commissioners moved in rapid succession to name Atlanta as the site of the new university and unanimously chose Bishop Candler as its first chancellor. They further formally voted to select Southern Methodist University at Dallas as the site for the university west of the Mississippi River. The executive committee of Bishops Candler and Kilgo, Asa Candler, and attorneys W. D. Thomson and G. T. Fitzhugh, was

⁸⁹ Asa G. Cander to Warren A. Candler, July 16, 1914, Warren Candler Collection, box 5, Manuscript, Archives, and Rare Book Library, Emory University; also published as Asa Griggs Candler, “*For the blessing of man and the glory of God*”: a letter from Asa Griggs Candler, July 16, 1914, Atlanta: Emory University (Higgins-McArthur Co.), 1951.

authorized to proceed to organize the new institution. The commission further designated Emory College to be the new university's liberal arts division.⁹⁰

Asa Candler subsequently donated seventy-five acres in the Druid Hills area of DeKalb County, Georgia, for the new campus, and buildings were under construction there within a year. Even before that, in September 1914, the School of Theology opened in the Wesley Memorial Building in downtown Atlanta, built in 1907 by the M.E. Church, South with the considerable backing of the Candlers.⁹¹

Prior to the decision of the commission, there were numerous Emory alumni who believed the new university should be located at Oxford. Even Asa Candler's gift of one million dollars did not specify Atlanta as the site of the new university, but his subsequent gift of land determined it. Considerable discussion ensued as to how Emory College might best serve as the undergraduate college of the new university. Again, the loyalty of many alumni to the "Old College" led them to suggest that undergraduate programs remain on the Emory campus in Oxford, with only graduate programs being offered at the university at the Druid Hills campus. Warren Candler initially agreed that the identity of old Emory needed to be protected and preserved, but he eventually came down on the side of a plan proposed by the North Georgia Conference Board of Education, that "[t]he plant at Oxford should be used for a great academy like Lawrenceville, New Jersey or Phillips Exeter.... A divided institution, parts at Oxford and the rest here (Atlanta) would not so appeal."⁹²

⁹⁰ *Minutes of the Educational Commission of the M.E. Church, South*, July 16, 1914; Bullock, *A History of Emory University*, p. 288.

⁹¹ Hauk, *A Legacy of Heart and Mind*, p. 62.

⁹² Letter signed by Charles O. Jones, chairman, and all the members of the Board of Education, North Georgia Conference, to Bishop Warren A. Candler, June 10, 1914, Warren Candler Collection, box 24, folder 8, Manuscripts, Archives, and Rare Book Library, Emory University; Moon, *An Uncommon Place...*, pp. 17-18.

President Dickey's position in these decisions was not as a leader of the team, but rather as a team player. As a member of the North Georgia delegation to the General Conference that decided the Vanderbilt question and established the Educational Commission, he was squarely in Candler's corner. But as a long-standing traditionalist and one of those so deeply loyal to the old college at Oxford, he likely held sympathies with those concerned about the long-term effects on the Oxford campus – particularly the idea of moving the undergraduate program to Atlanta and turning Oxford into an academy. Or, due to his undying loyalty to Bishop Candler – his long-time mentor – Dickey may have shared his views that Atlanta was where the viable future lay. Dickey, as did Candler, may have been able to set aside his long-held beliefs on the benefits of a rural setting for higher education, and concluded that, “If the University had gone anywhere else than Atlanta, Emory would have been hurt.”⁹³ Nonetheless, there never was any doubt at that moment or at any point throughout Dickey's career that he was a loyal member of Candler's team.

Dickey was present as the Emory College trustees met on August 5 and adopted a resolution acknowledging that “it is desirable that the name of the said University shall be Emory University, so as to preserve and conserve the assets, history and traditions of Emory College and enlarge its field of usefulness to the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, and at the same time promote the success of the new University....” They resolved to cooperate with the Educational Commission “to the end that said Emory College may be incorporated into the University and become the proposed College of said University.... And they resolved further, “[W]e propose to said Commission that the charter of the ‘Trustees of Emory College’ be amended so as to carry out said purpose of making Emory College the college of said Emory

⁹³ Warren Candler to Rev. J. W. Malone, July 20, 1914, Warren Candler Collection, box 25, folder 1, Manuscripts, Archives, and Rare Book Library, Emory University; Moon, *An Uncommon Place...*, pp. 19-20.

University and insuring to the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, the perpetual ownership and control thereof.”⁹⁴

Whatever his personal views, in this meeting and in ongoing correspondence, Dickey was involved in the detailed discussions of how to effect the incorporation of Emory College into the university. As to which entity would award future degrees, Dickey pointed out in a letter to attorney William Thomson that “Emory remains a distinct corporation, operating under her own charter” [Dickey’s underline]. He compared the new arrangement to that at Howard and Columbia Universities, which were outgrowths of Howard and Columbia Colleges. “I hope that the name and relation of the University to Emory College, in all of its details, may soon be made public, as the people generally are much concerned about the matter,” he wrote. Apparently answering Thomson’s inquiry as to the location of records – “Prof. Stone has charge of all the old records,” wrote Dickey – he added a postscript: “I want to talk with you about this matter before long. I have in mind a plan, if it is legal. I shall see the Bishop at the same time.”⁹⁵ The nature of Dickey’s plan and whether it is reflected in what finally was adopted is not available from the record.

Educational Commission member G. T. Fitzhugh wrote to his fellow attorney, Thomson, “The character of the relation which Emory College is to have toward the University – whether one of co-ordination or of organic union – should be definitely determined before the means of creating this relation are considered. I was under the impression,” he continued, “that the resolutions adopted by the Board of Trustees of Emory contemplated organic union. If so, this

⁹⁴ *Emory College Board of Trustees Minutes*, Aug. 5, 1914.

⁹⁵ Dickey to William D. Thomson, Aug. 8, 1914, Collection MSS475, box 1, Manuscript, Archives, and Rare Book Library, Emory University.

cannot, in my humble opinion, be best accomplished by providing that Emory shall continue to retain her separate corporate identity.”⁹⁶

Thomson, in reply, said, “I have conferred with a number of the Alumni of the College and I think it is undoubtedly wise for us at this time to leave the corporate existence of the College intact.” Noting that the matter had to go before the three annual conferences that fall, “[I]f we should propose to abolish the corporate existence of the College, it is the general impression here that we would encounter opposition in one or more of the Conferences.” That could leave “some feeling of bitterness,” he added, noting that “We want everything to be done unanimously if possible....” Thomson called the separate corporate existence of the College “more a legal fiction than a practical working entity” which in years to come could be perfected by further amendment “without doing violence to the opinion of anyone who might now raise objection.”⁹⁷

Dickey, meanwhile, remained busy with both the life of the college and that of his family. He oversaw the opening of the 1914-'15 academic year while also attending to the August wedding of his eldest daughter, Julia, to Clarence E. Boyd, Emory's professor of Greek. The wedding took place in the President's House at Oxford, with Bishop Candler presiding. “The drawing room, parlor and reception hall were thrown together and were artistically decorated....” reported the social column of the *Atlanta Constitution*. All three of Julia's sisters were in the wedding – Claire as maid of honor, and Jessie and Annie as bridesmaids.⁹⁸

In November and December, Dickey attended each of the sessions of the North and South Georgia and Florida annual conferences, with all agreeing to the merger of Emory College with

⁹⁶ G. T. Fitzhugh to William D. Thomson, Aug. 27, 1914, Collection MSS475, box 1, Manuscript, Archives, and Rare Book Library, Emory University.

⁹⁷ Thomson to Fitzhugh, Aug. 29, 1914, Collection MSS475, box 1, Manuscript, Archives, and Rare Book Library, Emory University.

⁹⁸ *Atlanta Constitution*, “Wedding of Miss Dickey and Dr. Clarence Boyd,” Aug. 30, 1914, p. C4.

Emory University.⁹⁹ At each, Dickey outlined the proposed future relations of the college to the university, and proposed that the conferences approve an amendment to the Emory College charter allowing it to become affiliated with the new university. Under the plan, Emory College would be the unit in which literary, scientific and philosophic branches of study were taught. In each conference, the report with its proposals was referred to committee, reported out, and adopted, apparently unanimously.¹⁰⁰

Two days after Dickey's report to the North Georgia Conference, and just prior to the committee's action on it being brought to the floor, Bishop Candler took the podium with a rousing address about the prospects of the new institution:

Nothing was ever more frequently stolen in America, except chickens, than colleges and universities. The issue before us today is education by church or education by irresponsible institutions. As for me, I would prefer the state university to the educational work being done by a board of northerners who intermeddle with our affairs. Methodism is in the educational work and here to stay. They have tried to read us out, but we won't be read out.... This is the most important movement of my life, and it brings to us an opportunity that we are bound to take advantage of.

Following Candler's speech, Dickey again took the floor with the report of the education committee on his proposals from two days earlier, and the conference unanimously adopted the plan to merge Emory College into Emory University.¹⁰¹ In March 1915, Newton County Superior Court granted the Emory College Trustees an amendment to their charter, permitting the college to associate itself with the university, but providing that no funds of the college could be diverted to any other part of the university.¹⁰²

Later that month, on March 31, the Educational Commission met in its newly-chartered capacity as the trustees of Emory University, electing Asa Candler as president, J. C. Kilgo as

⁹⁹ *Atlanta Constitution*, "Emory College Notes," Dec. 20, 1914, p. C5.

¹⁰⁰ *Atlanta Constitution*, "Germany Rapped by Bishop Denny," Nov. 19, 1914, p. 3.

¹⁰¹ *Atlanta Constitution*, "Candler Speaks on University," Nov. 21, 1914, p. 1.

¹⁰² Bullock, *A History of Emory University*, p. 290.

vice-president, and William D. Thomson as secretary. The new trustees accepted the offer of the Druid Hills property, and as provided in their new charter, elected a completely new Board of Trustees of Emory College from among their own membership. Dickey reported to the trustees of the new university that Emory College had an active, income-producing endowment of some \$300,000 on which eight percent income had been realized in the previous year. A large portion of the some \$200,000 in outstanding, uncollected subscriptions to the endowment remained collectible, he told the trustees. He reported an “unusually small” enrollment for the current year at 215. It is not addressed in the minutes, but perhaps uncertainty on the part of prospective students about the future of the institution was a contributing factor to the low enrollment for that year, as it would rebound strongly the following year. Tuition received for the year totaled \$9,000, Dickey reported, with free tuition given to ministers and the sons of ministers. Income included \$1,500 appropriated by the North Georgia Conference and \$900 from the South Georgia Conference. The outstanding debt on the construction of Haygood dormitory stood at \$67,000 at an interest rate of six percent. Given the income and the debt payment, the college faced an operating deficit of some \$6,500 for the year, Dickey reported. Nonetheless, he recommended salaries of full professors be raised to \$2,100 per year and that another professor be added to the Modern Languages Department.

In response to Dickey’s report, the trustees voted to appropriate \$12,000 in university funds to the college for the coming year. They further resolved “to provide as rapidly as possible an increase in the annual income of the Collegiate Department” to not less than \$60,000 per year. Regardless of whether Dickey experienced mixed feelings about the rapid changes coming upon his beloved “Old Emory,” surely he was relieved that the days of hand-to-mouth financial management appeared to be at an end. The next day, on April 1, 1915, the outgoing and

incoming boards of Emory College met at Wesley Memorial Church for the formal transition of authority.¹⁰³

Having moved so rapidly with decisions regarding the establishment of two new universities, the Educational Commission had yet to deal with its charge to return to the annual conferences their interest in Vanderbilt University. In a ten-page legal brief in November 1914, attorney Andrew J. Cobb of Athens advised Warren Candler that there were no other actions the church could successfully bring against Vanderbilt in any other court. Acting on his advice, the Commission, in February 1915, determined to inform the conferences that there were no transferable rights in Vanderbilt and that the matter was closed. Anticipating the success of both Southern Methodist and Emory universities, the Commission stated this conclusion “leads us almost to believe that the ‘Vanderbilt case,’ which first seemed to involve injury to the Church, now under Providence, redounds to its benefit.”¹⁰⁴

In his report to the June 1915 meeting of the Emory College Board of Trustees, Dickey said “that faculty and students approve and applaud the action of the Commission in taking over Emory College as the School of Liberal Arts for Emory University. We feel that a great and effectual door has been opened; and we join most heartily with other departments of the University in consecrating our lives as co-laborers with the Lord.”¹⁰⁵ With Emory College now wholly subsumed under the new Emory University, and with Bishop Candler firmly in place as chancellor of the larger enterprise, Dickey determined the time was right to leave the presidency.

¹⁰³ *Emory University Board of Trustees Minutes*, March 31, 1915; Bullock, *A History of Emory University*, pp. 291-292.

¹⁰⁴ Andrew J. Cobb to Warren A. Candler, Nov. 11, 1914, Collection MSS475, box 1, Manuscript, Archives, and Rare Book Library, Emory University; *Educational Commission Minutes*, Feb. 20, 1915; Bullock, *A History of Emory University*, pp. 290-291.

¹⁰⁵ *Emory College Board of Trustees Minutes*, June 7, 1915.

Candler requested that Dickey stay as president of Emory College, but Dickey responded otherwise in a letter to Candler on April 12, 1915:

For this expression of confidence I beg to thank you most heartily, for, as I have said to you before, I cherish your confidence and affection among my dearest possessions. When I was called to the Presidency of Emory College thirteen years ago, I knew that there were few fit men who were available for the position. I realized full well my inefficiency and shrank from the responsibilities of the position: however, I was led to believe that I might render some small service in adding to the financial strength of the institution and hoped that I might hold the College close to the heart of the Church. The reasons that moved me to accept the Presidency of Emory do not obtain at this time. The College has been incorporated into a great University which bears its name and which will undoubtedly provide for its financial needs. At the head of this University stands a man, seasoned in matters educational, whose name is the synonym of efficiency in all worthy endeavor, and whose crowning glory is his fidelity to the Church. Under these circumstances, I feel that I may be permitted to return to the regular work of an itinerant preacher from which I turned aside thirteen years ago to meet what was at that time a seeming emergency.

My chief regret in leaving the College is the fact that I have not been a more efficient servant of the institution, and my greatest joy is that I have been permitted to have some small part in guiding it into the consummation of such hopes as its dearest friends dared hardly cherish.

After a prayerful consideration of the subject involved, I feel led to tender my resignation as President of the College. I would be glad to remain in the position I now occupy until I receive an appointment during the next session of the North Georgia Conference, if this can be done without detriment to the institution, otherwise, this resignation will take effect in June.

Permit me again to express my deep personal affection for you, and my great appreciation of the service that you are rendering the Church. My heart will always follow with pride the fortunes of Emory University, and it shall continue to have my unstinted cooperation.

Praying God's blessings upon you and upon all with which you have to do, I am

Sincerely yours,
(signed) James E. Dickey¹⁰⁶

It was Dickey's third resignation of his long tenure, and this time, the trustees regretfully accepted. They resolved that his thirteen years of service had brought "many changes for the betterment of the college, and its usefulness to the church...., the endowment fund has been increased more than \$300,000 through his efforts, a well-equipped gymnasium, a magnificent

¹⁰⁶ *Ibid.*

dormitory, a science hall, the Allen Memorial chapel, and other improvements have been completed under his direction..., and his administration has maintained the high standard of the College and has established it on the present prosperous basis and in general favor with the church.” While not questioning his high motives in resigning, “we most heartily regret his withdrawal...in view of the present larger outlook and promise of its greater usefulness in the future.” Declaring a “great debt of obligation to him” and expressing interest in his future career, “our prayers [are] that a good Providence may guide him into a yet larger field of usefulness in the service of the Church.”

The board asked Dickey to remain in the presidency until December 1, 1915, with Chancellor Candler requesting that during that time he give particular attention to collecting endowment notes. In its meeting the next day, June 8, also at Oxford, the board of trustees of Emory University voted to confer the degree doctor of laws upon Dickey. And at the annual commencement exercises later that week, Candler read the board’s resolution of appreciation to Dickey to the assembled crowd.¹⁰⁷

At that same meeting of the Emory College board, Dickey proposed a restructuring of the sub-freshman department with a separate faculty, its classes and faculty to be housed entirely in Seney Hall. Under his proposal, all sub-freshmen would be required to live in Haygood Hall where they would be under the supervision of Principal R. C. Mizelle, who would have a rent-free room there. Professor Haywood J. Pearce, Jr. was named assistant principal, and Joe Fagan and Robert Blackshear were employed as tutors. Chancellor Candler further proposed that the new department be known as “Emory University Academy.”¹⁰⁸ The formation of the Academy portended the future of the Oxford campus. Emory College would continue to operate at Oxford

¹⁰⁷ *Ibid*; and *Emory University Board of Trustees Minutes*, June 8, 1915.

¹⁰⁸ *Emory College Board of Trustees Minutes*, June 7, 1915.

as the school of liberal arts of Emory University for another four years. Not until the university trustees met in spring 1918 did Candler report to the board that a decision had been made to move the school to the Druid Hills campus. The move would be effective fall term 1919, leaving only the Emory University Academy to continue at the historic Oxford campus.¹⁰⁹

Dickey closed his thirteenth and final commencement ceremony as president of Emory College with a baccalaureate address on a familiar theme, “The Altruism of Egoism, or the highest service to others in consonance with the noblest development of the individual.” In it, he contrasted that egotism “that is self-centered, around which the universe revolves,” with a more altruistic egoism “so sublime that subjectively all things receive added dignity and value because of their relation to it.” Care for self, so that one may care for others, he told his charges, quoting Polonius from Shakespeare: “This above all – to thine own self be true; And it must follow, as the night the day, thou canst not then be false to any man.” Not only can you not be false to any man, Dickey said, “thou canst not but be a blessing to all thy race.” The stronger the egoism – self-development – the more equipped one will be to serve others, he said.

An untrained laborer or an untrained architect can be a menace to public safety, Dickey asserted, but those who fit themselves well for service to others are a friend and benefactor to society. The same, he said in lengthy sections of the address concerning each, goes for lawyers, and physicians, and ministers of grace. In concert with the Wesleys’ teaching of joining of heart and mind, Dickey said the well-equipped minister of the gospel attains his ends “by intellectual as well as spiritual processes. Here are opportunities for the highest Altruism, but they can be availed of only by the holiest Egoism.... The time spent in preparation of head and heart is time saved in the annals of the eternities.” The young preacher “who feels that a lost world cannot wait on his preparation” should consider Moses, who for forty years toiled in the courts of the

¹⁰⁹ *Emory University Board of Trustees Minutes*, June 8, 1918; Moon, *An Uncommon Place...*, p. 21.

Egyptians followed by another forty years wandering in the wilderness before reaching his zenith of power. “The motto of my subject,” he said to the young graduates, “is: Get Ready, Get Ready, Get Ready [underlines are Dickey’s], concluding, “The greatest possibilities of service are locked up in the preparation for service.”¹¹⁰

As the future paths of both Emory College and Emory University became more apparent, the convocation opening the fall 1915 term at Oxford saw a student body “considerably larger” than in recent years, with the students coming from a wider region. Chancellor Candler addressed the assembled students in the Allen Memorial auditorium, along with Dean W. S. Elkin of the School of Medicine and President Dickey. It marked the opening term for the medical school in Atlanta; the theology school – now named the Candler School of Theology – had opened in fall of the previous year. It also was the first year for the Emory University Academy – the former sub-freshman department, now configured to prepare students for entry into the school of liberal arts – Emory College.¹¹¹ Indeed, enrollment in the Academy was such that Dickey had to seek the board’s permission to move professors Fagan and Blackshear, previously employed as part-time tutors, to full-time faculty members. Their pay was increased to \$50 per month.¹¹²

Also at that meeting, the board’s executive committee granted authority to install a wireless telegraph at Seney Hall, “provided that it would not injure the building or affect the insurance and was not in conflict with any Federal statutes.”¹¹³ Perhaps it met the need for a more direct line to the new home base in Atlanta. Indeed, Dickey often was in Atlanta for

¹¹⁰ Dickey, James E. “The Altruism of Egoism.” Emory College Baccalaureate address delivered June 1915. Dickey Collection, box 1. Manuscript, Archives, and Rare Book Library, Emory University.

¹¹¹ *Atlanta Constitution*, “Emory Open on Sept. 15,” Sept. 11, 1915, p. 12; “Big Year Expected at Emory College,” Sept. 15, 1915, p. 9.

¹¹² *Emory University Board of Trustees Executive Committee Minutes*, Oct. 15, 1915.

¹¹³ *Ibid.*

university-related events. He shared the October 15 program with Bishops Candler and Kilgo, for example, in the dedication of a bust of Atlanta physician Robert Battey, to be displayed in the new Emory University library.¹¹⁴ Jessie Dickey, the president's wife, also found her duties calling her to Atlanta more often. She and Mrs. Warren Candler were among the hostesses for a November 5 reception at St. Mark's Church for Emory University faculty wives. Guests included the Candler's daughter, Florence Candler Sledd, whose husband, Andrew Sledd – by then the former University of Florida president – had been Chancellor Candler's first hire for the new School of Theology.¹¹⁵

At the 1915 meeting of the North Georgia Annual Conference held in Rome, the announcement came November 15 that Dickey would be assigned as pastor of First Methodist Church of Atlanta, the most prominent church in the state and his first pastoral appointment in more than a decade.¹¹⁶ He would preach his first sermon there on November 28.¹¹⁷

The week following conference, Dickey received a letter from Henry H. Jones of the Emory class of 1911, who had graduated with a divinity degree from Vanderbilt University in 1914, and since had served as pastor of the Oakhurst-East End charge in Atlanta. "Dear Doctor," Jones wrote, "My trip to Oxford this week was with the fixed purpose of talking over with you a matter which is of vital concern to me. Not having a chance to see you alone, I now take this first opportunity to bring the matter before you." And Jones continued, "It is concerning Annie and myself. I have loved her for a long time and at present love her with my whole heart. Doctor, I want to marry her. She has honored me by consenting provided you do not object. My greatest effort in life will be to make her happy. Loving her as I do and having her assurance

¹¹⁴ *Atlanta Constitution*, "Impressive Ceremonies Mark the Presentation of Bust of Dr. Battey," Oct. 16, 1915, p. 5.

¹¹⁵ *Atlanta Constitution*, "Reception to Wives of Emory Faculty," Nov. 6, 1915, p. 8; Bullock, p. 356.

¹¹⁶ *Atlanta Constitution*, "Dr. A. M. Hughlett Returns as District Presiding Elder," Nov. 16, 1915, p. 9.

¹¹⁷ *Atlanta Constitution*, "At First Methodist," Nov. 21, 1915, p. A1.

that my love is returned, I am sure we will be happy together and her constant companionship will be an inspiration to me in my life work.” Jones continued his plea, “If hard work and application can produce a living for her you can rest assured that this will be given. Awaiting an early [Jones’ underline] reply and with personal regards, I am, Yours, Henry H. Jones, 102 E. Merritt Ave.”

Dickey’s reply to his future son-in-law, obviously in the affirmative, is not available. But he forwarded it to Annie first for her review, with this terse note written across the bottom of Henry’s letter to him: “Dear Annie, If you approve the enclosed letter, mail same. Papa.” Annie obviously approved and mailed the letter – she and Henry were married the next March in Oxford’s Allen Memorial Church, Bishop Candler presiding.¹¹⁸

Dickey hosted William Jennings Bryan later that week, as he had the opportunity to escort the noted orator between train stations in Covington. Bryan, who had been the unsuccessful nominee of the Democratic Party for U. S. President in 1896, 1900 and 1908, changed trains from the Georgia Railway station to the Central Railway station, where he addressed an assembled throng of Emory students. The greeting party consisted of Professor J. P. Hanner, who drove the car that carried Bryan, Dickey, Emory faculty members Goodrich C. White and W. F. Melton, and Dickey’s daughter, Claire. At the Central station, Bryan told the Emory students of his “hearty sympathy with the educational work that has a church organization back of it,” and that he was not in sympathy with efforts to de-denominationalize church colleges and universities. “Failure in life,” he said, “comes from not being properly adjusted to the Infinite and things that are eternal.” And success, he declared, “comes to the man who finds God’s will concerning him and tries to do it.” Discussing America as a peacekeeper among the nations of the world, he compared a prepared nation “to an individual who totes a pistol.” The

¹¹⁸ Jones to Dickey, Nov. 19, 1915, family papers held by the author.

Atlanta Constitution reported, “It was evident in the upturned faces of a big majority of the young men listeners that they could not agree with the great speaker on this point.”¹¹⁹

On Tuesday evening, November 30, the night before his final day in office as president, Dickey and his family were the dinner guests of Professor and Mrs. Mansfield T. Peed, at which all the members of the faculty and their wives paid a surprise visit and presented the Dickeyes with a silver pitcher. With a “brief, elegant speech,” Professor Edgar H. Johnson made the presentation.

On Dickey’s last day as president, December 1, the faculty and student body assembled in the college chapel to bid him farewell. In a speech, Chancellor Candler noted that Dickey had filled the office longer than it was held by any of his predecessors and had raised more money for the institution than any person. Candler, who had been authorized by the university trustees executive committee to take charge of Emory College upon Dickey’s departure and to appoint faculty to assist him as he deemed necessary, announced to the assembled faculty and staff that Professor Johnson would succeed Dickey as president until the trustees could confirm or make a different appointment the following June. In practice, Johnson was only briefly referred to as “president,” and by early spring all references in correspondence, trustees minutes and news reports named him as “dean” of the college. The trustees in June did confirm Johnson’s appointment, officially changing the title to dean to make it parallel to the other deans of Emory University colleges. Johnson would hold the post until Emory College moved to the Atlanta campus in 1919. Like Dickey a member of the Emory class of 1891, Johnson had studied at Johns Hopkins for two years and earned an M.S. degree from the University of Chicago in 1899, an M.A. degree from Harvard University in 1903, and a Ph.D. from the University of Chicago in 1910. Emory’s professor of history and political economy, he had also been vice president for a

¹¹⁹ *Atlanta Constitution*, “Emory Student Body Hear Great Commoner,” Nov. 23, 1915, p. 5.

number of years. Depending on the definition of the position he held, the appointment would make Johnson the first layman to be president in Emory College history. Candler also announced that theology professor Elam F. Dempsey would assume Dickey's former duties as fiscal agent, custodian of the loan fund, and would teach the classes Dickey formerly taught.

On behalf of the full student body, Charles Candler made a speech in presenting Dickey with a loving cup, and Dickey feelingly responded in a speech to the students. Three days later, on December 4, Dr. and Mrs. Dickey, accompanied by daughters Annie, Jessie and Claire and son Edward, and some 300 young men – virtually the entire Emory College student body – made their way in a procession to the Covington train station for the family's departure to Atlanta. The students gave hearty yells to their departing president, and bid him an affectionate adieu.¹²⁰

¹²⁰ *Atlanta Constitution*, "Dr. Johnson Named Acting President of Emory College," Dec. 2, 1915, p. 7; "300 Emory Students Bid Dr. Dickey Adieu," Dec. 5, 1915, p. A2; *Emory College Board of Trustees Minutes*, June 10, 1916; Bullock, *A History of Emory University*, p. 294.

CHAPTER SIX

THE PULPIT TO THE EPISCOPACY, 1915-1928

When James E. Dickey arrived as its pastor in November 1915, Atlanta First Methodist Episcopal Church, South, stood as the premier congregation in the North Georgia Annual Conference – not just in terms of being the largest and best-funded, but also due to the historic and continuing influence of its members in the affairs of city and state.

Beginning in 1845 in a log cabin built on the town lot bounded by Peachtree, Pryor and Houston Streets, it grew to a larger frame building known as Wesley Chapel Church, which with its historic bell survived the destruction that swept Atlanta during the Civil War, although its records were burned. In 1870, rechristening itself as First Methodist Episcopal Church, South, on the same site the congregation constructed an imposing Gothic sanctuary that seated one thousand worshippers, with a 120-foot tall steeple and two additional 90-foot spires.

But in just more than three decades, determined to escape the din of the growing city surrounding it and to move nearer the new residential areas then occupied by its members, and over the strenuous objections of Bishop Warren A. Candler and Presiding Elder R. W. Bigham, Atlanta First Methodist determined in 1902 to relocate to a site in the Victorian neighborhoods along Peachtree Road at the city's burgeoning northern limits. They built another imposing Gothic stone cathedral – the building that survives today. Ironically, the church sold its downtown building and property to the bishop's brother, Asa G. Candler, who demolished the 32-year-old sanctuary, replacing it with the Candler Building, Atlanta's first skyscraper and headquarters for Asa Candler's new Coca-Cola Company and his banking interests. The cornerstone of the new \$161,000 sanctuary at 360 Peachtree Street was laid April 18, 1903, and

the congregation soon occupied the imposing structure of Stone Mountain granite, complete with the original, historic bell in the steeple.

The membership list over the years included many of Atlanta's and Georgia's most prominent citizens – governors, mayors, judges and attorneys, the civic leaders who made Atlanta grow. The former Confederate general Clement Anselm Evans served the church as pastor from 1880 to 1883. Among his parishioners was Georgia Governor Alfred H. Colquitt, who later succeeded another member, Benjamin Harvey Hill, in the United States Senate. The editor of the *Atlanta Constitution*, Henry W. Grady, served on the Board of Stewards. He spoke from the pulpit giving his personal profession of faith just weeks before making his famous “New South” speech on December 21, 1886, before the New England Society of New York. Leading Atlanta businessman Joseph Winship, followed by his sons Robert and George, and then George's descendants, appear on the church's membership rolls continuously from the 1850s. One of Dickey's predecessors in that pastorate – Henry Clay Morrison (1887-1890) – had been elected bishop in 1898, and the man Dickey succeeded in the pulpit, Horace M. DuBose (1913-1915), would be elected bishop at the next General Conference.¹

It was a given, many thought, that Dickey likewise would be elected bishop in 1918. That year likely was the outer horizon in his own mind and the minds of those in the congregation and the conference as the time of his appointment to Atlanta First church in 1915.

Dickey's first meeting with the board of stewards “left a conviction in the minds of the Brethren that we had a Methodist Preacher called of God to preach the Gospel,” secretary Robert Lee Avary recorded in the minutes. “From the model story of his busy life, we note on this page the sphere of his activities for our information and encouragement,” proceeding to cite his years

¹ <http://www.atlantafumc.net>, retrieved Aug. 1, 2008; *Atlanta Constitution*, “Steady Growth Marks 82 Years of First Methodist Church,” Nov. 3, 1929, p. 12.

in the Emory faculty, the pastorate at Grace Church and thirteen years as Emory College president. “He now comes to us before the prime of his life is reached, fully prepared by culture and equipped by religious experience, to do the work of a Methodist Preacher.”²

Indeed, Dickey appeared a good match for Atlanta First Church, both the church and the man being noted for their judicious conservatism. Despite his years in higher education faculty and administration, fundraising travels and service on church boards and agencies, Dickey was happiest in the pastorate. The schedule afforded him regular hours for study and comprehensive reading. Atlanta First, in addition to housing many of the civic and church leaders with whom Dickey was accustomed to work, also was church home to a number of his boyhood friends, and contained a large group of younger men whom he had known when they were his Emory students. All his children would be in or near Atlanta, and it promised to be a happy period of his life.³

Dickey’s first Quarterly Conference report showed 1,307 members, and in his usual judicious manner, he offered a somewhat reserved judgment on the state of the church. “I am unable to make a satisfactory statement concerning the general state of the church at First Church,” he wrote. “This is difficult to do at any time and concerning any church, but particularly so, where the pastorate is new and the membership large. I am constrained to believe, however, that there are members of First Church who really love the church as an organization; and some who are deeply interested in the affairs of the Kingdom as represented by the church. This latter class is, I fear, by no means so large as the former, but I am devoutly praying that it may become coincident with the entire membership.”⁴

² *Board of Stewards Minutes*, Nov. 22, 1915, Archives of Atlanta First United Methodist Church.

³ Dempsey, *Life of Bishop Dickey*, pp. 158-160.

⁴ *Minutes, First Quarterly Conference of Atlanta First Methodist Episcopal Church, South*, Feb. 14, 1916, Archives of Atlanta First United Methodist Church.

While the Dickey family moved into a parsonage rented by the church, at Oxford the vacant President's house – not occupied by Acting Dean Edgar Johnson, who had his own home – was pressed into unusual service following a fire which destroyed Marvin Hall, the Emory College dining hall. Professor J. G. Stipe and his family lived in the building, supervising some twenty young men who also were residents there. Following the fire, all were temporarily housed in the President's house until a more permanent location could be secured.⁵ Having been elected an alumni trustee of the Emory College board upon his departure from the presidency, Dickey regularly attended meetings of both the Emory College and University boards. He dealt not only with the Marvin Hall fire but with ongoing Emory issues as he continued an active involvement in Emory affairs over his years in the Atlanta First pastorate.

Dickey and the family returned to Oxford at the end of March for the wedding of his daughter, Annie, to Henry H. Jones. Bishop Candler performed the ceremony in the Allen Memorial Church. Annie's story of the wedding has been passed down in family lore: the diminutive Bishop, over whom Annie towered, leaned up to kiss the bride before the groom had a chance, and it did not please her! Annie and Henry moved to the parsonage of Moreland Methodist Church, where Henry then was serving the Moreland-Luthersville charge. It still kept her relatively near her parents in Atlanta, as was her sister, Julia, married to Professor C. E. Boyd and still living at Oxford. The other three children still lived with their parents, keeping the family circle comfortably gathered – and they visited often.⁶

Weddings and funerals are staples of a pastor's life. Among many prominent funerals over which Dickey presided during his time at Atlanta First, two of the earliest also were among the most prominent. George Winship, the 81-year-old patriarch of the church and an active civic

⁵ *Atlanta Constitution*, "Students Work Hard in Flames and Smoke As Fire Destroys Marvin Hall at Emory," Feb. 27, 1916, p. 7.

⁶ Family records held by the author.

leader who had served more than twenty-five years as an Emory College trustee, died in early April at his home in Sarasota, Florida. He had been associated with the church since its earliest days as Wesley Chapel, a trustee for more than forty years, and for many years prior to his death, the trustee chairman. Bishop Candler joined Dickey in the Atlanta First sanctuary in leading the service for the Civil War veteran, whom the board of stewards' memoriam called "the first layman of the church." "True he was old school, but some of us love the old school best," it said. Asa Candler and long-time Emory trustee H. E. W. Palmer were among the pallbearers.⁷ The next week, Benjamin Baker Crew, one of the North Georgia Conference's most prominent laymen and an Atlanta civic leader, as well, also died. He had been a news publisher during the Civil War, moving his presses southward from Chattanooga through Georgia ahead of the advancing Union army, and later became a successful Atlanta businessman, selling office supplies and musical instruments.⁸

Also during his pastorate, Dickey participated in the funeral of Professor J. P. Hanner at Oxford, widower of Mrs. Dickey's niece, Julia Dowman. Bishop Candler conducted the funeral service at Allen Memorial Church, assisted by Dickey and Elam F. Dempsey. "Professor Hanner was one of the most popular members of the Emory faculty," the *Constitution* reported.⁹ Dickey also preached the funeral of General A. J. West, a Confederate leader and prominent Atlanta citizen who had been a member of Atlanta First Methodist for more than fifty years. The "Old Guard" of the Confederacy, in full military uniforms and led by the Wedermeyer band, provided

⁷ Memoriam to George Winship in Minute book of the Board of Stewards; Memoriam to George Winship in the *Minutes of the Second Quarterly Conference*, May 8, 1916; *Atlanta Constitution*, "Funeral of Winship in Atlanta Thursday," April 12, 1916, p. 9; "Funeral of Winship at 11 This Morning," April 13, 1916, p. 5.

⁸ *Atlanta Constitution*, "Benjamin Baker Crew, Leading Citizen, Dies," April 20, 1916, p. 2.

⁹ *Atlanta Constitution*, "Prof. Hanner of Emory, Is Buried at Oxford," Aug. 30, 1917, p. 3.

the escort from the residence to the graveside at Oakland Cemetery, where they fired a gun salute and played “Taps.”¹⁰

On a brighter note, Dickey returned to Oxford for the wedding of Annie Sue Bonnell, daughter of forty-year Emory faculty member John F. Bonnell, to Lieutenant Heyward J. Pearce of Gainesville, an Emory alumnus and son of President H. J. Pearce of Brenau College. The wedding was in the Allen Memorial Church.¹¹

As the June 1916 commencement ceremonies at Emory approached, Dickey returned to Oxford for the annual meeting of the trustees of both Emory College and Emory University. The trustees heard reports on fundraising efforts to construct new buildings on the Druid Hills campus, and that enrollment then stood at 631, including 244 in the School of Liberal Arts (Emory College), 238 in the School of Medicine, 93 in the School of Theology, and 56 in the University Academy. Dickey drafted a memorial to George Winship to be adopted by a joint session of the college and university boards, noting that “he not only gave to Emory College great financial aid, and dying left a legacy to its support, but gave to that institution also the richer dower of his love and service...and contributed both of his fortune and his influence to the establishment of Emory University....”¹²

In mid-July, Dickey rushed to Quincy, Florida, to join his family at the bedside of his son, Edward, who became ill with typhoid fever. Mrs. Dickey frequently spent extended periods with her family in Quincy, taking the children with her when possible. Edward was slow to improve, and although he recovered completely, Dickey missed five consecutive Sundays from the pulpit of his church. W. J. Young, of the faculty of the Candler School of Theology at

¹⁰ *Atlanta Constitution*, “Gen. West Will Rest in Oakland Saturday,” Oct. 12, 1917, p. 5.

¹¹ *Atlanta Constitution*, “Bonnell-Pearce,” Oct. 28, 1917, p. B12.

¹² *Emory College Board of Trustees Minutes*, June 10, 1916; *Emory University Board of Trustees Minutes*, June 10, 1916; *Minutes of a Joint Meeting of the Trustees of Emory University and Emory College*, June 12, 1916.

Emory University, filled the pulpit at Sunday morning and evening services through the period. The board of stewards voted to send Young a check for twenty-five dollars and a letter “expressing our sincere appreciation of his kindness and faithful service.”¹³

Even as a pastor, Dickey remained in great demand as a fundraiser for Emory and the general church, and thus continued his extensive travels for speaking engagements and church-related fundraising. In October, he inaugurated a campaign for LaGrange College. In a service held at the Troup County courthouse, he delivered a soaring sermon on the importance of education, and then took subscriptions totaling \$12,500 toward the \$50,000 goal of improvements and enlargements for the Methodist women’s college.¹⁴

At First Methodist, Dickey led the church stewards in turning attention to the Sunday School, starting a new class for young men. The stewards discussed whether to invite Georgia Tech students to attend, and noted a considerable number of recent Emory graduates already in the congregation. Expressing concern that the stewards themselves were lax in Sunday School attendance, Dickey urged that they find a class – perhaps the men’s class meeting in the auditorium. In his fourth quarterly report, Dickey noted, “There is good attention to the ordinances of the church, and the institutions of the church are contributed to cheerfully.”¹⁵

At the end of Dickey’s first year with them, the stewards of First Church enthusiastically requested his return for a second. “Dr. Dickey both as Pastor and Preacher has been quite successful during the Conference Year just closed,” secretary Robert Lee Avary wrote to

¹³ *Atlanta Constitution*, “Dr. Young Will Fill Dr. Dickey’s Pulpit,” July 22, 1916, p. 9; *Board of Stewards Minutes*, Aug. 7, 1916.

¹⁴ *Atlanta Constitution*, “LaGrange College Notes,” Oct. 22, 1916, p. B11.

¹⁵ *Minutes of the Fourth Quarterly Conference*, Nov. 13, 1916; *Atlanta Constitution*, “Little Locals About Things of City Interest,” Nov. 10, 1916, p. 6.

Presiding Elder A. M. Hughlett on behalf of the church.... I trust that Bishop Candler and his Cabinet will in their wisdom return Dr. Dickey to old First Church. We need him.”¹⁶

The Annual Conference, meeting that year in Griffin, indeed appointed Dickey for a second year at Atlanta First, and with Bishop Candler in the chair, debated extensively the matter of church unification. Dickey spoke strongly in favor of a resolution endorsing the unification plan adopted by the Oklahoma City General Conference of 1914 – that would create regional jurisdictions from the current northern and southern branches of the church, and would set the Black membership aside in a separate jurisdiction. After numerous procedural votes and substitute motions on top of substitutes, the conference voted by a large margin to endorse the 1914 plan Dickey supported.

In his report to the annual conference on the state of Emory University, Candler again spoke out against state taxation of private education, declaring his inability to see what in Christian education was worthy of being taxed, and what in secular schooling was worthy of exemption from tax. He declared the legislature ready to act on and pass the exemption, alleging that the matter was being held up by a small number of men manipulating affairs to their own ends.¹⁷ In fact, the legislature did act, and Georgia voters the next year approved a constitutional amendment to exempt college endowments from state taxation. It marked the end of a thirty-year campaign by Bishop Candler.¹⁸

As Atlanta First opened the new year 1917, membership stood at 1,215, the decrease a result of Dickey’s scrubbing of the rolls, which had not been assiduously maintained before his arrival. But, wrote Dickey, “I feel impelled to report that there is a marked improvement in the spiritual condition of the Church. This is manifest in a spirit of worshipfulness on the part of the

¹⁶ *Board of Stewards Minutes*, Nov. 20, 1916.

¹⁷ *Atlanta Constitution*, “Conference Favors Methodist Union,” Nov. 23, 1916, p. 7.

¹⁸ Hauk, *A Legacy of Heart and Mind*, p. 197.

congregations as they gather on the recurring Sabbath. There seems to be an expectancy by the people, a looking for and desiring the presence of God.”¹⁹

At the suggestion of steward H. E. W. Palmer, a member with Dickey of the Emory College board of trustees, the Atlanta First board of stewards determined to provide a scholarship to one or more deserving Emory College students. Rather than an actual scholarship, the plan was for a loan fund much like that Dickey had overseen at Emory – students could receive \$300 a year, not repayable until three years after their graduation. “In every case, the young men are to put themselves under the care of the First Methodist Church of Atlanta, so their conduct and advancement in school may be noted,” the stewards resolved. The first such grant went to Emory sophomore John D. Milton, son of Methodist preacher Charles E. Milton of Cornelia.²⁰ Young Mr. Milton would not be alone at Atlanta First. Dickey noted some fifty or sixty former Emory men now attended the church, and the stewards thought it important to get more young ladies to attend, as well.²¹

A recurring theme throughout Dickey’s pastorate at Atlanta First was the quality – or lack thereof – of the choir. Some key members of the choir were paid, and music committee reports to the stewards included references to giving certain choir members thirty days notice of termination. But there apparently was competition for the best voices, as at one point the soprano was offered ten dollars more per month by another church than she was receiving from First Methodist. It was the opinion of the stewards that “it would be a shame to let the soprano go.” On another occasion, the minutes noted, “After October 1, the Alto, Bass and Tenor of our choir would not be with us. On motion of Bro. Avary the organist Mrs. Chas. E. Dowman and the Soprano Miss Langworthy were retained.” In that Mrs. Dowman was Dickey’s sister-in-law

¹⁹ *Minutes of the First Quarterly Conference*, Feb. 8, 1917.

²⁰ *Board of Stewards Minutes*, April 2, 1917; Oct. 8, 1917.

²¹ *Board of Stewards Minutes*, July 2, 1917.

– his wife’s sister – the pastor was in an awkward position. At several points, the stewards asked the music committee to impress upon Mrs. Dowman that a better choir should be maintained. By summer of 1918, they moved that “the Chairman of the Music Committee confer with Mrs. Dowman and ascertain for what sum a good choir could be secured....” That September, they voted to have a paid choir and to raise the money necessary to support it. The conflict apparently came to a head in January 1920, when Mrs. Dowman submitted her resignation as organist, and despite attempts by the music committee to get her to reconsider, she would not. The committee named a new organist, Mrs. W. H. L. Nelms, making “the organist responsible for the choir,” and directing that “any complaints as to music will be made to the Music Committee.”²²

During Dickey’s time as pastor, the stewards also gave ongoing attention to the condition of the sanctuary building. “The church was finished 14 years ago and practically nothing has been done since,” the committee chairman reported at a meeting in April 1917. Actually, it had been begun 14 years before, in April 1903. A first attempt to begin a fundraising campaign to underwrite renovations and retire existing debt ended with the determination that the timing was not right. The trustees voted instead to personally underwrite continued payment of the interest on the debt. A second committee appointed a year later to determine a way to retire the debt reported back that it had no solution. In response to the committee’s report to the full board, “no steward asked for the floor to offer a plan, whereupon Dr. Dickey arose and spoke of the situation.” Dickey, “merely as a suggestion to the board,” offered his own plan – a subscription drive to raise the necessary \$5,000, payable in three installments of forty percent by November 1, another twenty percent by January 1, and the final forty percent by March 1. The fundraising would be accomplished under the leadership of a committee sponsoring dinners and other means of gaining pledges from the membership. The money raised would be used in priority order to

²² *Board of Stewards Minutes*, March 3, 1917; Sept. 24, 1917; June 6, 1918; Sept. 6, 1918; Jan. 2, 1920.

retire the note, repair the organ, and then refurbish the sanctuary. Dickey's leadership moved the issue – the stewards adopted the plan and appointed a committee to oversee the work.²³ By December, the first part of the plan was underwritten and the debt retired. “Happily, we have been able to liquidate the debt which was incurred during the years 1913-1914 and which, like Banquo's ghost [a reference to a character in Shakespeare's *MacBeth*] has arisen to disturb our peace of mind at regular intervals.”²⁴

“I have pleasure in reporting an improvement in the general state of the church,” Dickey reported to the Fourth Quarterly Conference, held November 1, 1917. “This is manifest in the larger liberality of the people which I believe indicates a larger interest in the welfare of the church, both materially and spiritually.” He reported nearly eight thousand dollars pledged to that date for the fundraising campaign to retire debt, repair the organ and renovate the sanctuary.²⁵ Later that week at the board of stewards meeting, Addison Maupin reported a successful campaign to raise the church's conference apportionments of \$3,388. The minutes note that, upon hearing the report, “Dr. Dickey began to sing ‘Praise God from whom all blessings flow,’ and the Stewards heartily joined in the singing with their Preacher.”²⁶

The North Georgia Annual Conference for 1917 met in LaGrange, with the chief order of business being the election of clergy and lay delegates to the 1918 General Conference to be hosted in Atlanta. Delegates again elected Dickey at the head of the clergy delegation, followed by his predecessor in the Atlanta First pulpit, H. M. DuBose – again placing them as the

²³ *Board of Stewards Minutes*, Sept. 13, 1917.

²⁴ *Board of Stewards Minutes*, Dec. 3, 1917.

²⁵ *Fourth Quarterly Conference Minutes*, Nov. 1, 1917.

²⁶ *Board of Stewards Minutes*, Nov. 5, 1917.

conference's chief candidates for the episcopacy. The conference returned Dickey for a third year at Atlanta First.²⁷

The 1918 General Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, opened in Atlanta's Wesley Memorial Church on Auburn Avenue on May 2. The members of Atlanta First were heavily involved in the local host committee, and the church contributed \$700 of the \$2,000 raised among local churches for entertainment and hosting.²⁸ Sharing the platform at the opening session were Governor Hugh Dorsey, delivering a welcome on behalf of the state, Atlanta Mayor Asa G. Candler on behalf of the city, and Dickey on behalf of Georgia Methodism.²⁹

In his welcome Dickey delivered a forceful address, focusing the eyes of the delegates upon him as a prime candidate for election as bishop. He expounded on Georgia's worthiness to host the conference, recounting Georgia's roles in past wars – describing in detail the roles of her men in the conflicts of 1776, 1812, and the Mexican War. “The Georgia who welcomes you this evening is the Georgia of the sixties, whose sons with the sons of her Southern sister States when they felt that their rights under the Constitution were involved, stepped like bridegrooms to a marriage feast and time and time again wrested the victory from the very hands of death and bequeathed to the sons and daughters of the Confederacy an immortality of fame,” he said. “The Georgia who welcomes you this evening is the Georgia of today, as proud, imperial, and defiant of wrong as ever she was,” he continued, “who at a time like this, when provinces are being wasted and kingdoms are being desolated, when beastiality has become so brutal that human speech cannot command language with which to express its malediction, and when to repress

²⁷ *Atlanta Constitution*, “Candler Urges Unity in Methodist Affairs,” Nov. 10, 1917, p. 9; “Church Where Methodists Meet,” Nov. 11, 1917, p. 7; “Methodists Make But Few Changes in City Pulpits,” Nov. 13, 1917, p. 1.

²⁸ *Board of Stewards Minutes*, April 8, 1918.

²⁹ *Atlanta Constitution*, “Several Bishops May Be Elected When Methodists Meet in Atlanta,” Apr. 22, 1918, p. 4.

this devil's brood the lilies of France are being drenched in blood as they were never drenched before, and the Lion of England is pouring out her heart's blood and our own symbolic eagle is hovering amid their smoke and blood of battle, screaming defiance at the very mouth of hell – I say, sirs, at a time like this Georgia takes her stand beside her sister States with sword unsheathed and swears never to return to its scabbard until tyranny is dead.”

The Methodists of the conference represented many such patriotic citizens, Dickey said, moving on to remind the delegates of the Methodist heritage of Georgia. “I have been requested by a few dear friends of mine not to say that Georgia is the only American Commonwealth really visited by Mr. Wesley,” he continued, expounding at length on the development of the church in Savannah, the coming of the itinerant circuit riders, the contributions of Methodist pioneer Hope Hull at the 1788 conference – the first Methodist conference in Georgia, where ten members attended – and of numerous other Georgians, giving details of each by name. He recounted the separation from the northern church in 1844, and the division of the Georgia Conference into north and south in 1866. He recalled by name many great preachers and missionaries since, emphasizing that each preached only “Jesus Christ, and Him crucified.”

Continuing his speech, Dickey outlined the importance Georgia Methodists placed on education, it being their idea “to attach this tremendous power of mental discipline to the chariot of the kingdom, in order that the gospel might have free course and be glorified.” He remembered the influence of old Emory, and of Wesleyan, and quoting Senator [Benjamin Harvey] Hill, “The snows that fall upon Mount Washington are not purer than the motives which inspired the founding of Emory University.” It was founded, he said, “in order that the sons of our Southland might have an opportunity to receive the very highest culture at the hands of Christian men, with the hope that under the aegis of this great institution, and with faith in

Almighty God and his Holy Christ, civil and religious liberty might abide forever.” Calling Georgia Methodism “the most solid block of Methodism in the wide world,” he bid welcome on behalf of its members – “Their prayers attend you, and their solicitude awaits your every deliberation.” He closed with a quote from the Biblical Lydia, who welcomed the disciples into her home, “If you have judged us to have been faithful to the Lord, come unto our houses and abide there [*Acts 16:15*].”

The audience gave Dickey perhaps the largest ovation of his career – standing and cheering again and again with a period of prolonged applause. Their reception appeared to foretell the coronation of the next bishop of the church.³⁰ The *Constitution* ran a large photo of Dickey in its edition the next day with the caption, “It is now conceded that Dr. Dickey will be one of the newly-elected bishops to be chosen by this conference.”³¹

But as the conference began its deliberations, it turned out there was to be a litmus test in the vote for bishop – the matter of laity rights for women. It was a matter on which Dickey would not compromise. As it did four years earlier, feelings ran strongly in favor of granting such rights, and to oppose it further could well cost him the election. In an extended floor debate, North Georgia delegate John S. Candler made an impassioned speech in the negative, but Dickey apparently did not speak. Yet at the call of the standing vote, Dickey stood in the negative, well aware of the effect it likely would have on his chance to be bishop. “In his manner, upon his face, in any word he said, there could be found no spirit of excited defiance, no over-weening sense of doing something heroic, no hint of chagrin as though some coveted crown were being put reluctantly aside,” wrote fellow delegate Elam F. Dempsey. “It was instantly

³⁰ Dempsey, *Life of Bishop Dickey*, pp. 160-161, 260-271.

³¹ *Atlanta Constitution*, “Methodist Leader,” May 5, 1918, p. 13.

whispered about the hall, as though borne on the wings of electricity, that the vote had destroyed his chance ever to be a bishop.”³²

With six bishops to be elected, on the first ballot, Dickey ran a poor eighth. John Monroe Moore of Nashville, with 183 votes, and William F. McMurry of Louisville, with 167 votes, were elected with the necessary majorities. Dickey trailed badly with 89 votes. Moore, one of the authors of the Oklahoma City declaration on unification, was on record as supporting women’s rights: “It is not such a radical change,” he said. “Women are, after all, asking very little, considering all they have done.”

On the second ballot, with four to be elected, Dickey ran seventh, thus losing further ground. Urban Valentine Williams Darlington of Barbourville, Kentucky, was elected with 183 votes to Dickey’s 80. On subsequent ballots, the delegates elevated three more men to the episcopacy: Horace M. DuBose, Dickey’s predecessor at Atlanta First; William N. Ainsworth, his classmate from Emory; and James Cannon, Jr., president of the Blackstone (Virginia) College for Girls. Cannon’s election came following the election of F. N. Parker of the Emory University faculty, but Parker took the unusual position of declining the office. For yet another quadrennium, for Dickey it was not to be.

Ironically, the College of Bishops vetoed the conference vote on laity rights for women, declaring it to be unconstitutional. The conference, in turn, overrode the veto by a vote of 265 to 57, sending the matter back to the annual conferences over the next four years for votes on a constitutional amendment. It would take a three-fourths vote of the annual conferences and a

³² *Ibid.*, pp. 161-162; *Atlanta Constitution*, “Story of Services of Red Cross Told to Big Conference,” May 14, 1918, p. 1; “Rev. J. M. Moore, New Bishop, Declared ‘Safe Progressive’,” May 15, 1918, p. 11.

two-thirds vote of the next General Conference to amend the constitution to allow the installation of laity rights for women.³³

The conference featured an open house at the new Emory University campus, featuring tours of the several new buildings, an open-air barbecue hosted by the Emory class of 1893, and the presentation of a large bronze bust of Bishop Candler, a gift of the class. A banquet that evening in honor of Bishop Candler was attended by a number of faculty who taught the class of 1893, including Dickey, M. T. Peed, J. F. Bonnell, and H. H. Stone.³⁴

The General Conference elected a new slate of trustees for Emory University, to succeed the incorporating trustees originally established as the Educational Commission by the 1914 General Conference. Thirty trustees were elected – a class of ten to serve eight years, a second class of ten to serve six years, and the third class of ten to serve four years. The eight-year class included, among others, Bishops Candler and Kilgo, Asa Candler, and Dickey. At an organizational meeting held in conjunction with the General Conference, the trustees elected Asa Candler chairman, Bishop Kilgo vice-chairman, and a seven-member executive committee included both Asa and Warren Candler and Dickey.³⁵

The conference discussed unification at length. Judge John Candler, who supported the 1914 Oklahoma City plan, asserted that it was built on the representations of the northern church, but that they had broken faith with it. He favored dissolution of the current unification commission and having the southern church wait to make further statements until the northern church “moves in some way to arrange for a satisfactory disposition of their colored membership.” Others favored continuing the discussions of the commission, thus sending a clear

³³ *Atlanta Constitution*, “Three New Bishops Named by Methodist Conference After Taking Two Ballots,” May 15, 1918, p. 1.

³⁴ *Atlanta Constitution*, “Class of '93 Presents Bronze Bust of Bishop Candler to Emory University,” May 9, 1918, p. 1.

³⁵ *Minutes of New Board of Trustees of Emory University*, May 16, 1918.

message to the northern church that the southern branch stood ready to complete unification. Candler ultimately agreed to withdraw his opposition if the resolution squared with the statement of 1914 that the Black membership of the new church organization must be in a separate body, with only fraternal relations to the reorganized church. With that done, the question passed with only seven votes in opposition, all from the Mississippi delegation. The conference agreed to meet in called session if the unification commission presented a plan in time for it to be adopted by the 1920 general conference of the northern church. The unification commission appointed from the southern church for the quadrennium included Bishops Candler, Denny, Mouzon, Moore and Cannon, and nineteen other clergy, Dickey among them.³⁶

For the fourth consecutive General Conference, Dickey had entered as a considered favorite for election as bishop, and had not been elected. While his reaction is not recorded, there must have been a sense of surprise at the completeness of the defeat. But more so, given his characteristic adherence to conviction regardless of cost, perhaps he felt an inner sense of peace at having done his duty as required. Nonetheless, the time had come when many over the past four years – and perhaps Dickey himself in his own inner thoughts – had expected he would be preparing to assume an episcopal appointment, yet he instead found himself back at work at Atlanta First Church.

As discussions of unification proposals continued in the larger church, the board of stewards of Atlanta First Church went on record with its position supporting the 1914 Oklahoma City resolution – the position held by its pastor, Dickey:

Whereas, this Board of Stewards of the First Methodist Church, So. of Atlanta, Ga. desires to record itself as being in favor only of a plan which will provide a separate church for the Negro and is unalterably opposed to any other

³⁶ *Atlanta Constitution*, “Dr. Parker, Newly Elected Bishop, May Decline Office,” May 16, 1918, p. 1; “Methodists Give Church District to Each Bishop,” May 17, 1918, p. 1; “Episcopal Address Scored in Report by Mission Heads,” May 18, 1918, p. 1.

plan relating to him, as we believe that will be best for the church and best for the Negro; Be It Resolved that this Board respectfully and earnestly requests the Commissioners of the Southern Methodist Church Assembled at the Ad Interim Meeting in Richmond next month, that they do not tentatively or otherwise agree to any plan with reference to the status of the Negro in the proposed reorganized Church which is in any way different from the declaration of our General Conference at Oklahoma City in 1914.

A copy of the resolution was to be furnished to Emory University faculty member N. J. Young, asking that he present it to the interim committee, to which he was a delegate.³⁷ In adhering to this position, Dickey and many of his southern colleagues promulgated a traditional Southern view of “separate but equal,” not desiring any ill to come to the Black race but insisting that its institutions be parallel to and not comingled with the institutions of the white race. Methodist historian Frederick A. Norwood characterizes the position of Candler and the other southern bishops as “racist nativist,” an ego-centric view whose holder believes his own race, his own nation and his own region possess the superior methods of doing things, and who makes efforts to convert those who do not conform to his own world view.³⁸

At the Emory University board of trustees meeting on June 8, Dickey and his colleagues heard a report from Chancellor Candler that the fundraising campaign had reached \$152,160, but that in Kentucky and North Carolina the costs exceeded the funds raised. Trustees referred the matter of the future direction of the campaign to a committee of five, including Dickey. Candler reported that enrollment had fallen significantly over the previous year due to the impact of the war, from 654 to the current 512, with 65 of the decrease coming in the School of Liberal Arts. For the first time, Candler raised the prospect of moving the School of Liberal Arts from Oxford to the Druid Hills campus, partially because a Reserve Officers Training Camp might be attracted to help secure additional enrollment. But, Candler noted, “there is a lack of buildings

³⁷ *Board of Stewards Minutes*, Oct. 6, 1919.

³⁸ Norwood, Frederick A., *The Story of American Methodism*, Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1974, pp. 403-404.

ready for its use in Atlanta, and the erection of additional buildings at this time seems hardly possible.” He proposed that a committee be appointed to study the future location of the School of Liberal Arts and to make a recommendation. That committee, to which Dickey was appointed, deliberated and the same day recommended that the move occur effective September 1919. For the second time since the establishment of Emory University, Professor George W. W. Stone submitted a letter opposing any move of Emory College. After the reading of Stone’s letter and debate as to whether the move should be in September 1918, just three months hence, the trustees approved the committee’s original recommendation.

The executive committee reported that it had approved hiring J. A. Sharp, formerly president of Young Harris College, as headmaster of the Academy, following the resignation from that position of A. M. Hughlett. The goal continued to be that the Academy should become of such strength that it could maintain the Oxford Campus as a viable entity even after the departure of the School of Liberal Arts for Atlanta. A recommendation from the committee that the Oxford campus become a junior college and co-educational following the departure of the School of Liberal Arts was referred to the executive committee.

The effects of the war on enrollment caused concern, but it also was affecting the faculty. Professor Goodrich C. White was on leave in the service of the federal government, and Professor George P. Shingler had accepted a position as secretary of the Red Cross Society. Forty-seven professors and instructors in the School of Medicine had been called into active military service. To replace them, Candler reported that as many other physicians as could be secured had been engaged, and an arrangement made with Grady Hospital to provide clinical instruction at an additional cost of \$1,200. The School of Law was impacted even more, with enrollment reduced to just fourteen students, since law students generally were of draft age and

had no exemptions such as medical or theology students. Candler recommended keeping only one full-time professor on the law staff to carry the current class to graduation. He further reported that “a young lady has been admitted to the school of law,” a matter the chancellor did not actively oppose, but of which he did not approve, “believing that it is neither correct in principle nor wise in policy.”

With seven buildings in place on the Emory campus at Druid Hills, Candler projected the need for nine more to accommodate the move of the School of Liberal Arts, and the opening of new schools of Commerce and Pharmacy and a Teacher’s College. These would comprise a new central building, three dormitories, two classroom buildings, a library, a heating plant, and a gymnasium. Candler estimated the cost at \$600,000, including the buildings, grounds and infrastructure. The General Conference had charged the new board with directing a campaign to raise an additional five million dollars for Emory. “It can be achieved,” Candler reported, “if the Board will act with wisdom, boldness and zeal....” The committee appointed to determine a course of action for the financial campaign recommended that the current campaign continue with the current commissioners by states, with the addition of general commissioners to enhance the effort. Their methods should be to privately approach potential donors, the committee recommended, but public appeals also might be employed. Candler further reported, “Your Chancellor is conscious of increasing incompetency for the work of the Chancellorship,” and asked the trustees to select “a younger, stronger, wiser and more efficient Chancellor...at the earliest possible moment.” In response, the trustees unanimously re-elected Candler as chancellor.³⁹

Two weeks later, on June 20, Dickey attended his first meeting as a member of the executive committee of the board of trustees. They approved a request by Ralph S. Bauer that he

³⁹ *Board of Trustees of Emory University Minutes*, June 8, 1918.

be allowed to maintain a connection with the law faculty by publishing articles as a faculty member, even though he had been effectively laid off for the year. The move implied no obligation, either moral or legal, that he be re-hired for the ensuing year, the trustees determined. Further, the trustees approved the recommendation of law dean W. D. Thomson that no freshman law class be recruited for the coming year due to the impact of the war. The executive committee tabled further action on the committee recommendations regarding the Academy after the move of the School of Liberal Arts to Atlanta.⁴⁰

In the fall of 1918, a worldwide pandemic of Spanish influenza reached Atlanta. On October 7, Atlanta City Council declared all public gathering places closed for two months, including schools, libraries, churches, and theaters. The drastic measures in Atlanta seemed to work – after hundreds of deaths in previous weeks, the city recorded eight deaths in the first week of October and only 105 new cases of the Spanish influenza. But for Dickey’s Atlanta First church, it meant no services and no means of collecting parishioners’ tithes during that period. The stewards voted to authorize the church treasurer to borrow from the bank enough cash to meet the running expenses of the church. Because the flu did not hit Atlanta as hard as other east coast cities, public health officials lifted the public assembly ban after just three weeks. Still, there were 750 deaths in the city from the pandemic that killed 675,000 Americans.⁴¹

Through the early part of 1919, Dickey as an Emory trustee remained involved in plans to relocate the School of Liberal Arts from Oxford to the Druid Hills campus the coming fall. At a January meeting, the trustees confirmed 1904 Emory alumnus Howard W. Odum as organizing

⁴⁰ *Board of Trustees of Emory University Executive Committee Minutes*, June 20, 1918.

⁴¹ University of Georgia Carl Vinson Institute of Government Web site <http://www.cviog.uga.edu/Projects/gainfo/1918flu.htm>, retrieved Aug. 9, 2008; *Board of Stewards Minutes*, Oct. 7, 1918.

dean of the college for the Atlanta campus. Edgar H. Johnson continued to serve as dean at the Oxford campus through the close of the academic year. Odum provided the trustees with an outline of “The Emory Program,” in which he envisioned Emory College at the heart of the university providing the standard collegiate education, with the professional and graduate schools surrounding it to prepare students for “citizen participation in the life and labor of a Christian democracy.” He proposed a faculty of men dedicated to the institution’s educational and Christian purposes, being good teachers and active participants in civic life of the community and nation, serving an enrollment of 300 to 350 undergraduate students and thirty to fifty graduate students.

At the February meeting, Odum outlined specifically which faculty would make the move to Atlanta, including J. B. Peebles in applied mathematics, M. T. Peed and Douglas Rumble in mathematics, E. K. Turner in Latin and C. E. Boyd in Greek, C. F. Hamff in German and Nolan Goodyear in French, J. Sam Guy in chemistry and Robert Clinton Rhodes in biology. To these he proposed adding a number of new faculty, including L. L. Hendren coming as professor of physics from the University of Georgia, Malcolm H. Dewey in French from Allegheny College, and several others. Notable among those not making the move were John Fletcher Bonnell, who took emeritus status and moved to Atlanta until his death eleven years later, and Harry Harlan Stone, the longest serving member of the faculty at the time, who chose to remain in Oxford and serve on the faculty of the Academy.

Odum outlined detailed plans for relocating the library temporarily into the basements of the Theological and Law Schools, dividing the books by the departments that would share office and classroom space in those buildings. Noting that several buildings already were underway – a new dormitory, dining hall, Chemistry building, and residences for faculty – Odum proposed an

additional building, the first of the School of Education group, be completed by fall in order to comfortably fit all the departments from Oxford into the Druid Hills campus. His plan was accompanied by a detailed academic calendar, tuition and fees schedule, proposed salaries for faculty, and an annual budget. Expressing doubt that the university had the financial resources to build the new building and whether the revenue projected in the budget could be realized, Candler nonetheless endorsed Odum's plan. The trustees adopted it in full and instructed the building committee to proceed with the proposed new building.⁴²

Candler remained determined to resign from the post of chancellor. In February, he submitted a resignation to the chairman, his brother Asa, which the committee would not accept, determining "that for the Chancellor to resign at this time would prove disastrous to the University." Again at the June meeting in Oxford, when the time came to nominate the chancellor for another year, he protested his re-election. Bishop Kilgo expressed the belief that it was God's will that Candler remain as chancellor, and at least seven trustees, Dickey among them, made speeches emphatically stating the necessity of Candler's continued service in the post. The trustees confirmed his re-election with a rising vote and trustee T. K. Glenn moved that each member of the board pledge himself to prayer that God would give the chancellor strength to carry on his work during the coming year. Two days later, as the commencement session of the trustees continued, Candler remained unswayed: "My own judgment that it is unwise for me to be continued longer in that office is unchanged," he wrote. "I greatly fear that such continuance means not the benefit, but the injury of the institution." He asked the board's reconsideration, and "If you will not reconsider, [by] your action you shut me up to the effort to go on with the work under a discouraging sense that the interests of the University can not be

⁴² *Emory University Board of Trustees Executive Committee Minutes*, Jan. 8, 1919; Feb. 18, 1919; May 20, 1919; Bullock, *A History of Emory University*, pp. 295-297.

served by me as their importance demands....” The board reaffirmed its previous action and informed him “that we follow his leadership confidently, without any fear of failure.”⁴³

Also at the June 1919 meeting, the trustees agreed to allow girls living in the Oxford community to attend the Academy as day students, and also to allow women to attend the proposed Teachers’ College and summer courses for teachers. Beyond those specific exceptions, the trustees adopted a motion from the Committee on Revision of Statutes signed by Dickey and fellow trustees I. C. Jenkins and P. T. Durham that “the University shall not admit women to any department of the institution....” The motion further stated, “that all students of the University shall be required to attend one service of public worship on each Sabbath, this service to be the preaching service morning or evening,” and “That no inter-collegiate games be allowed by the University.”⁴⁴

As part of that meeting, the separate Emory College Board of Trustees met for the next-to-last time on record. In that meeting, the board approved three motions: to ratify all the actions of the Emory University board in so far as they referred to Emory College, to sell the Harrison Library collection to the Candler School of Theology for \$5,000, and to appoint a committee to make a list of the library books to be left at the Oxford campus. While no mention was made that they would not meet again, the Emory College board would not be convened again until a final, brief session in 1921, beyond which there are no further records and the university board ceased appointing members to a separate board for the college.⁴⁵

Emory University opened the fall of 1919 with an enrollment of 958. Edgar H. Johnson, the former dean at Oxford, assumed the deanship of the new School of Business Administration.

⁴³ *Emory University Board of Trustees Executive Committee Minutes*, Feb. 18, 1919; *Emory University Board of Trustees Minutes*, June 7, 1919; June 9, 1919.

⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, June 7, 1919.

⁴⁵ *Emory College Board of Trustees Minutes*, June 7, 1919; June 3, 1921; Bullock, *A History of Emory University*, p. 297.

Franklin N. Parker, who had been elected bishop but declined, was the new dean of the Candler School of Theology. The Graduate School opened under Dean Theodore H. Jack. Dean William S. Elkin headed the Medical School and Acting Dean William D. Thomson continued to lead the Lamar School of Law. Howard W. Odum would serve only that first year as dean of Emory College before accepting a professorship at the University of North Carolina, being succeeded by Jack, who then led both the Graduate School and the college. The trustees that fall made arrangements for the five million dollar fundraising campaign authorized by the General Conference and purchased additional property from Asa Candler with the new faculty houses he had built upon it.⁴⁶

The wedding of Dickey's daughter, Jessie, to Robert Strickland highlighted the fall. Bishop Candler presided in the noon ceremony October 15 at Atlanta First Methodist, as he had at the weddings of each of Dickey's daughters. Dickey assumed his appropriate role as father of the bride, escorting his daughter down the aisle. The young groom would grow to be one of Atlanta's most prominent civic leaders as chairman of the Trust Company of Georgia.⁴⁷

Dickey threw himself into support of the Methodist missionary movement, which reached its zenith across the world in 1919 with the launching of the Centenary Campaign, a massive fundraising effort jointly undertaken by the northern and southern branches of the Methodist Episcopal Church. The program to further mission work marked the one hundredth anniversary of Methodist missions. The campaign featured 100,000 "Minute Men" charged with soliciting donations and pledges, and was highlighted by a great centenary celebration held in Columbus,

⁴⁶ Bullock, pp. 297-298; *Emory University Board of Trustees Minutes*, Sept. 2, 1919.

⁴⁷ *Atlanta Constitution*, "Oxford, Ga.," Sept. 28, 1919, p. B4; "For Miss Dickey," Oct. 3, 1919, p. 11; "Dickey-Strickland Wedding of Interest," Oct. 16, 1919, p. 16; Family records held by the author. The couple's son, Robert Jr., born in 1927, would carry on the family's legacy, rising to chairman and chief executive officer of Trust Company and later SunTrust bank, and serving as chairman of the Emory University board of trustees from 1979 until his death in 1994.

Ohio, that rivaled World's Fairs of the day. The northern church raised nearly \$114 million and the southern church almost \$36 million – eye-popping figures relative to the economy of the day. Under the leadership of its pastor, Dickey, and its Centenary Campaign chairman, H. E. W. Palmer, Atlanta First contributed an astonishing \$95,431 to the campaign, or 169 percent of its quota. This is relative to an annual church budget that had not yet exceeded ten thousand dollars.⁴⁸

The board of stewards took an historic action that fall by requesting that Dickey be returned as the church's pastor for a fifth year, becoming the first congregation in North Georgia to utilize new guidelines adopted by the 1918 General Conference that allowed an appointment beyond the fourth year. The stewards took the action to the Quarterly Conference and to the full congregation of the church, which at its morning worship service on August 10, 1919 ratified the request with a rising vote. With Dickey's assent, and with the requisite three-fourths vote of the presiding elders of the Annual Conference, Dickey was reappointed to Atlanta First for the year 1920 when the Annual Conference met in Atlanta.⁴⁹

In accepting the pledge of the board to make the coming year “one of the greatest in the history of Old First Church and the greatest in the life of Dr. J. E. Dickey,” the returning pastor humorously noted that “there might be a tinge of disappointment in some of the congregation who had been accustomed to the pleasure of welcoming a new preacher at the end of four years.” But, Dickey continued, “I have in my life as a Methodist preacher and especially in my work at Oxford gotten accustomed to returning to the same place.” He expressed his sincere desire that following the next year's work no one would say a mistake had been made in sending him back

⁴⁸ Bucke, Emory Stevens, et al., general editor, *The History of American Methodism*. 3 vols. New York and Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1964, pp. 400-401; Norwood, *The Story of American Methodism*, pp. 376-380; *Board of Stewards Minutes*, June 2, 1919.

⁴⁹ *Atlanta Constitution*, “Asks for Return of Dr. J. E. Dickey for Fifth Year,” Nov. 16, 1919, p. 1; “Appointments of Methodist Pastors are Made Monday; New Preachers for Atlanta,” Nov. 18, 1919, p. 1.

for the fifth year. The board in turn, with the success of the Centenary Campaign in the past year, more than doubled the church budget for the coming year to \$18,000, and granted the pastor – who had been paid at the rate of \$3,600 per year since his appointment four years earlier – a one hundred dollar per month salary increase, to an annual rate of \$4,800.⁵⁰

As the Emory trustees met the next to last day of 1919, Chancellor Candler reported the School of Liberal Arts successfully operating on the Druid Hills campus, “although it was unfortunate that it was necessary to remove [it] this year, in view of the difficulties which beset all building operations.” The new dormitory, Alabama Hall, was crowded with students, as were the existing dormitories, Dobbs and Winship Halls. Due to labor delays, construction of the new Physics and Mathematics building remained unfinished. Candler reported that Emory College could not have stayed in Oxford for the year, either, in that the burgeoning enrollment of the Academy had filled the campus with students and the town with boarders. Total enrollment then stood at 977 – a number which, with adequate buildings and faculty, could have been doubled for the coming year, he said. Candler urged that Emory “fall not into the blunder of the Johns Hopkins University and sacrifice all other departments for the building up of the School of Medicine.” He urged the trustees to decline a faculty recommendation for a drama club: “I cannot see that it is necessary for the proper study of the drama, and it would easily and speedily run to lengths inimical to both piety and studiousness.” He opined that under the national trend toward student activities “attention is injuriously diverted from the regular and required duties of student life,” and renewed his opposition to intercollegiate athletics, noting that he did not approve of the field day introduced at Emory College some years ago and continuing to that day. And he again stated his support for required church attendance for students. “It is not reassuring

⁵⁰ *Board of Stewards Minutes*, Nov. 18, 1919; Dec. 12, 1919.

to see any slightest tendency to reduce the religious forces of the institution and increase the methods of amusement and diversion,” Candler reported.

With that report, Candler again submitted his resignation, and after appointing a committee to discuss the matter with him, the trustees this time accepted “with deepest regret.” But by the afternoon, a second committee appointed to recommend a new chancellor had secured Candler’s agreement to remain in the post until the following February so that a proper search could be conducted.⁵¹

At that December 30 meeting, the trustees referred to the executive committee the question of whether to proceed with construction of the Wesley Memorial Hospital – now the Emory University Hospital – on the Druid Hills campus. Although the board had given approval to proceed the previous October and construction materials already were delivered to the site, Bishop Candler objected to the intrusion the medical facility would make on the life of the campus – that its presence would increase the difficulty of student discipline and keeping up the moral and religious life of the institution. When the executive committee considered the matter at a January 9 meeting, Candler could not be present, but sent word of his opposition. The committee determined that contractors and the hospital administrators had relied on the good faith representations of the board, and things had progressed too far to change directions at that point. The vote to proceed over Candler’s objections was five to one, with both Asa Candler and Dickey voting in the affirmative.⁵²

At a meeting of the full board of trustees on February 3, the board as agreed accepted the resignation of Candler as chancellor, and appointed Dean Franklin N. Parker as acting chancellor, acceding to his wishes not to accept the position permanently, but only for the

⁵¹ *Emory University Board of Trustees Minutes*, Dec. 30, 1919.

⁵² *Emory University Board of Trustees Executive Committee Minutes*, Jan. 9, 1920.

remainder of the academic year. Among Parker's first actions as chancellor, he asked for clarification of the mandatory church attendance rule as it applied to graduate students, including medical students. After considerable discussion, the board voted 19 to 1 to rescind its previous action on church attendance as it applied to graduate students, and to leave it applicable only to undergraduates. Dickey's was the sole vote in opposition.⁵³

At its June meeting, the board revived the long-dormant position of president and named Parker to it in an acting capacity until a permanent president could be appointed, and named Candler again to the position of chancellor, although it was understood that it now would be a greatly reduced and more honorary position. In a resolution authored by a committee which included Dickey, the trustees noted that the new president "will find in him a safe counsellor [*sic*] and a sympathetic friend, and every fresh relay of minds graduated from these Schools will be better prepared for life's real service by reason of the abiding influence of our First Great Chancellor."⁵⁴

In September, the trustees named Harvey W. Cox of the University of Florida faculty as Emory's new president. Cox had been nominated for the post by Emory trustee Isaac C. Jenkins, an 1896 alumnus who was pastor of the Gainesville, Florida, Methodist Church and who knew Cox's reputation as a proficient executive and teacher. In his first few years, Cox would move Emory to a sound financial footing and efficient administrative management, laying the groundwork for a presidency that would continue until 1942.⁵⁵

In further development of the five million dollar fundraising campaign, the trustees determined to concentrate on the areas of the university other than medicine, but not to the

⁵³ *Emory University Board of Trustees Minutes*, Feb. 3, 1920.

⁵⁴ *Emory University Board of Trustees Minutes*, June 4, 1920; June 5, 1920.

⁵⁵ *Emory University Board of Trustees Executive Committee Minutes*, Sept. 24, 1920; Bullock, *A History of Emory University*, pp. 298-299; Hauk, *A Legacy of Heart and Mind*, pp. 67-69.

exclusion of fundraising for the medical enterprise. Instead, they established that the School of Medicine required an endowment of one million dollars – four times its endowment at the time. To achieve that, the board voted to set aside an additional \$250,000 for the medical school endowment, and to seek a half-million dollars from the General Education Board of the Rockefeller Foundation, provided the funds would be offered without condition other than that it be used for medical education. The motion passed, and although the vote is not recorded, “Bishop Candler and others” voted in the negative, according to the minutes. The record reflects Candler’s statement that, “I wish to be recorded as opposed to asking the Rockefeller Foundation for any appropriation to Emory University and to any department of the Institution.”⁵⁶

The question of Methodist unification continued its long and torturous road during 1920 with the Joint Commission on Unification meeting at Louisville and adopting a plan for submission to the two branches of the church. As before, the question remained what to do with the African-American membership of the church. Bishop Earl Cranston described the northern view as “a Negro corps in the united armies of Methodism,” while the southern view he saw as the Black members being “an allied army under perpetual treaty....” The 1920 compromise proposed a church of seven jurisdictions – three regional jurisdictions in the north, three in the south, and one made up of the Black membership. The jurisdictions would elect their own bishops, and the general conference would deal with matters affecting the entire connection. Black representation at the general conference would be limited to five percent of the total membership.

Even the two Black members on the commission did not desire integrated local congregations and annual conferences, but they did want their proposed separate jurisdictional conference to be equal to the white jurisdictional conferences in all respects, including

⁵⁶ *Emory University Board of Trustees Minutes*, June 4, 1920.

proportionate representation in the general conference, membership on the general church boards, and the right to elect their own bishops. This latter point was a particular problem for Candler and his conservative southern allies – Dickey among them. The 1920 general conference of the northern church elected two Black bishops, and even though they would preside only over Black annual conferences, in time their seniority would also make them presiding officers at General Conference. “What I have opposed and do oppose is putting white people under the rule of Negro officials,” Candler said. “That would not help either white people or Negroes, nor would it promote Methodism in the South.”⁵⁷

The northern church delegates to the joint commission meeting at Louisville voted unanimously to submit the plan to their 1920 General Conference for ratification, and the southern church delegates split 19 to 5 in favor of transmission to the 1922 General Conference of the M.E. Church, South. As one of the southern delegates, Dickey made it clear in a letter to the editor of the *Atlanta Constitution* that his vote to allow the General Conference to consider the plan did not mean that he personally supported it. “The plan to be transmitted was not satisfactory to either commission as a whole,” he wrote, “and it was publicly agreed in the joint commission that members of the commission voting either in separate commissions or in joint session to transmit the plan to the general conferences did not by that act, in any sense, indorse [sic] the same.”⁵⁸

⁵⁷ Garber, Paul Neff. *The Methodists Are One People*. Nashville: Cokesbury Press, 1939, pp. 116-122. For extensive discussion of the history of Methodist unification, see also Bucke, Emory Stevens, et al., general editor, *The History of American Methodism*. 3 vols. New York and Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1964 Vol. III, chapter 32, “The Story of Unification,” pp. 407-478; Norwood, Frederick A., *The Story of American Methodism*, Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1974, pp. 357-362; Davis, Morris Lee. *The Methodist unification: Christianity and the politics of the Jim Crow era*. New York: New York University Press, 2008; and Sheets, Herchel H. *Methodism in North Georgia: A History of the North Georgia Conference*. Milledgeville, Ga.: Boyd Publishing Company, 2005, pp. 168-170.

⁵⁸ *Atlanta Constitution*, “Methodist Churches to Pass on Merger,” Jan. 22, 1920, p. 1.

Both General Conferences equivocated on the plan, stretching the road to unification in two- and four-year increments into the foreseeable future. The northern church, meeting in May 1920, found considerable opposition to the proposal to set aside the Black membership into a separate jurisdiction and to arbitrarily limiting the percentage of Black representation, and voted instead to seek a joint convention with the southern church to consider the current proposal or any others that might be formulated. The southern church, meeting two years later, would reject the proposal for a joint convention, but would instruct its members of the Joint Commission to continue their discussions and negotiations with their northern brethren.⁵⁹ As a member of that commission, Dickey's agenda would be dominated for much of the rest of his career by the unification question.

The 1920 North Georgia Annual Conference, meeting at Atlanta's Wesley Memorial Church, chose as its emphasis "Christian education," part of the larger church's campaign to finance church-sponsored educational institutions. Comparing the endowments of the colleges of Massachusetts with those of all the southern states combined, Bishop Candler said the secret of the northern state's success "is in the fact that they developed the intelligence of the people. Our backwardness shows the costliness of ignorance. What we want and what we must have is education." Candler determined to remove Dickey from his pastoral appointment at the end of his fifth year, and appointed him instead as a full-time secretary of the board of education, to direct the fundraising campaign. To succeed Dickey at Atlanta First Church, in an unusual move Candler appointed a rising forty-years-young preacher who transferred from the North Carolina Conference, C. J. Harrell.⁶⁰

⁵⁹ Garber, *The Methodists Are One People*, pp. 116-118.

⁶⁰ *Atlanta Constitution*, "\$1,765,000 Quota Will Be Raised by Methodists," Nov. 12, 1920, p. 1; "Atlanta Methodist Pastors Are Given New Appointments," Nov. 16, 1920, p. 1; "Two Conference Plan is Defeated," Nov. 16, 1920, p. 18.

Dickey was reluctant to leave the pastorate and to return to the traveling and fundraising that had marked so great a part of his career. But the 1918 General Conference had authorized the Christian Education Movement, to be undertaken by the annual conferences of 1920. Of the \$33,580,330 goal across southern Methodism, North Georgia accepted a quota of \$1,765,000. Dickey was persuaded to undertake the work not only by Bishop Candler's insistence, but by calls from people across the church – his own North Georgia Conference board of education, the presidents of Methodist colleges in Georgia, and M. E. Church South education officials in Nashville.⁶¹

Dickey threw himself into the campaign, writing an essay on Christian education in a January issue of the *Wesleyan Christian Advocate*. Turning to his familiar recounting of historical perspective, Dickey noted that those societies where the brain power of a people was developed have tended to dominate their neighbors – citing Egypt with her universities, Assyria with her libraries, Greece with her poets and philosophers, and Rome with her senators and sages. And when the brain power of men grew dormant, he continued, the period became known as the Dark Ages. The intellectual quickening that came with the opening of the European universities, he wrote, “transferred the sea front of Europe from the coast of the Mediterranean Sea to the shores of the Atlantic ocean.” But, said Dickey, moving to another familiar theme of moral degradation in society, “[W]e must not overlook the fact that it has often happened when minds were at the zenith of their power, morals were at their nadir.” He cited the Golden Age of Literature when “the minds of men were scintillating...,” but “the morality of the age was unspeakably distressing...,” because, he said, “something was lacking in the content of education.” What was missing, he concluded, was the teaching of the Gospel of Jesus Christ in

⁶¹ Dempsey, *Life of Bishop Dickey*, pp. 173-180.

connection with general education – the classic Wesleyan joining of heart and mind, of knowledge and vital piety.⁶²

In pursuing the educational fundraising campaign, Dickey spent the year traveling the state in the companionship of conference lay leader J. H. Ewing, an Atlanta realtor. The two gave each other strength to pursue the organizational work, identifying key organizers and donors in each of the twelve districts of the conference, but also becoming fast friends. As part of their fundraising efforts, together they loved to hunt and fish with a group of men. As they sat around an evening campfire, Dickey would regale the group by reciting poems from Shakespeare. A questionable joke from one of his companions would bring no comment, but a withering look of disapproval that assured the offender would not repeat the offense. Without fail, Dickey would conduct a campfire devotional for the group before they retired for the night, reading a passage of scripture and praying fervently for the men and their endeavors. Ewing remembered Dickey as “a great shot with a rifle and a shot gun; he enjoyed a good cigar after meals and the fellowship of his friends; he was loyal and true in every walk of life; he was a sincere man, always standing for the right, a Christian gentleman at all times and places.”⁶³

As his personal part of the campaign, Dickey pledged \$1,200 to the English literature section of the Wesleyan College library. He coordinated a conference-wide every member canvass on the last Sunday in May, in which teams dedicated at the morning worship services at every church fanned out to solicit gifts from their local memberships. Pledges were accepted on a five-year payment plan. But it was a period of financial depression and the fundraising was hard. By year’s end, North Georgia had pledged \$741,563, or 42 percent of its quota, and six years later, by the annual conference of 1927, had paid only \$308,639, or 42 percent of the

⁶² Dickey, James E., “Christian Education,” in *Wesleyan Christian Advocate*, Jan. 7, 1921.

⁶³ Dempsey, *Life of Bishop Dickey*, pp. 182-183.

pledges. The money nonetheless proved useful to the conference's institutions of higher education. Due to the number of institutions in the state and the church's commitment to Emory University's campaign, more money was to come in to the state's institutions than was to be paid by her members in their quota, but the campaign had not come close to its lofty goal. Surely this disappointed no one more than Dickey, who perhaps gained some consolation in knowing he left for his successor, Elam F. Dempsey, 18,501 subscription cards which had the potential of being collected.⁶⁴

Dickey continued his involvement with the Emory board of trustees, and was part of an historic session that received little note when the final meeting of the old Emory College board was convened June 3, 1921. At that meeting, Chancellor Candler expressed concern that he had accepted the Quillian Lectureship during the period in which he was not chancellor, and that the lectureship fund therefore should not pay his honorarium or the cost of printing the speeches since he had returned to the chancellorship before delivering the lectures. The trustees did not share Candler's concern, and voted that the payments be made as planned. It was the last recorded action of the Emory College board of trustees.⁶⁵

The Emory University trustees meeting at that same session furthered their interaction with the General Education Board of the Rockefeller Foundation, much to the chagrin of Chancellor Candler. Trustee H. E. W. Palmer moved that Chairman Asa Candler and President Cox be appointed as a committee to approach the G.E.B. for \$25,000 for an emergency maintenance fund for the School of Liberal Arts, and a further contribution to the endowment fund of that school. In response to Candler's objections, Palmer said he did not contemplate accepting any gift which had conditions attached that would interfere with the full control of the

⁶⁴ *Ibid.*, pp. 174-175, p. 184; *Atlanta Constitution*, "Methodists Open Great Campaign," May 30, 1921, p. 1; "Gift of \$110,000 is Made at Wesleyan," May 28, 1921, p. 5.

⁶⁵ *Emory College Board of Trustees Minutes*, June 3, 1921.

institution by the trustees. The extended debate continued into the next day's session, when Candler read from his booklet, *Dangerous Donations and Degrading Doles*, vigorously denouncing church school dealings with such capitalist foundations as the Rockefeller. Nonetheless, a report by trustee H. W. Hill indicated the General Education Board had agreed to provide \$25,000 to the School of Medicine for the coming year and \$15,000 the following year, provided the school would raise a matching \$10,000 for the second year. Dickey expressed concern that the gift was to operations and not endowment, meaning that the university would have to make up the amount in subsequent years if it did not continue. But he joined the majority in voting to accept the G.E.B. grant, with only Bishop Candler and trustee E. B. Chappell voting against acceptance. The second motion, to seek further funding from the G.E.B. for the School of Liberal Arts also passed, with Bishop U. V. W. Darlington joining Warren Candler and trustee Chappell in the negative.⁶⁶

At that same meeting, both board chairman Asa Candler and Chancellor Warren Candler submitted resignations. No reason was stated in the minutes for Asa Candler's wish to resign, but the board insisted that such action "would greatly injure the board, and all members of the board expressed the hope that he would acquiesce in the action of the board." Warren Candler's stated reason was an upcoming trip to Europe, during which time he would not be available to appropriately attend to the duties of the university. The trustees declined to accept either man's resignation.⁶⁷

Dickey and his colleagues were shocked just two months later at the unexpected death of H. E. W. Palmer, with whom he had worked for many years both on the Emory board and on the board of stewards at Atlanta First Methodist Church. Palmer, age 65, chief counsel for Southern

⁶⁶ *Emory University Board of Trustees Minutes*, June 3, 1921; June 4, 1921.

⁶⁷ *Ibid.*

Bell Telephone Company and an expert on corporate law, was found dead at his desk at the telephone offices from a reported “stroke of apoplexy.” He was reported to have been in failing health since the death of his wife a year earlier. The son of Emory professor Elmore Palmer, he had grown up with Emory, graduating in its class of 1872 and serving on its board for thirty years. Before joining the telephone company, he had served as private secretary to Georgia Governor Henry McDaniel during the period of the construction of the State Capitol building and the founding of Georgia Tech. He was a former Fulton County commissioner. Dickey conducted the funeral service at the family residence, assisted by Rev. W. F. Glenn.⁶⁸

For Dickey, an even closer loss came that fall with the death of his wife’s sister, Julia Robena Dowman, the widow of former Emory President Charles E. Dowman, who had died seven years earlier. Following her resignation as organist at Atlanta First the previous year, she recently had been undergoing special treatment at Union Memorial Hospital in Baltimore, accompanied there by her son, Dr. Charles E. Dowman, Jr. The family had difficulty contacting Mrs. Dickey, who was visiting in St. Petersburg, Florida, where the wires were down due to a storm, and delayed the funeral service until she could return. Dickey officiated at the ceremony at Oxford’s Allen Memorial Church, and at the burial beside her husband in the historic Oxford Cemetery.⁶⁹

As he had in the Fourth Conference a decade earlier in Toronto, Dickey served in the Fifth Ecumenical Conference, a worldwide gathering of all branches of the Methodist denomination, held September 6 through 16, 1921 in London, England.⁷⁰

⁶⁸ *Atlanta Constitution*, “Head of Southern Bell Legal Force Dies at His Desk,” Aug. 30, 1921, p. 12; “Last Services Today for H. E. W. Palmer,” Aug. 31, 1921, p. 2.

⁶⁹ *Atlanta Constitution*, “Mrs. Julia Dowman Dies in Baltimore Hospital Wednesday,” Oct. 27, 1921, p. 9.

⁷⁰ *1928 Missionary Yearbook*, in Dempsey Collection MSS451, box 4, Manuscript, Archives, and Rare Book Library, Emory University.

With only chairman Asa Candler and trustees Dickey, P. T. Durham and W. D. Thomson present, accompanied by President Cox, the executive committee of the trustees dealt with several issues at its November meeting, including a report on Cox's expulsion of five men for hazing. One of them, E. L. Almand, Jr., demanded a refund of his tuition and his father threatened legal action, the trustee minutes reported, "for he intends to get back every dollar." The trustees denied the request. The president reported that the law dean had promised eight men a full tuition refund for their services as law library staff. While the president recommended that the dean's commitment be honored, he also informed the trustees that more economical means of compensation would be employed in the future. The trustees also approved organization of the Department of Education, consisting at first of just two classes, one for graduates and one for undergraduates, and an additional set of extension courses directed at Atlanta-area school teachers. While the program did not yet amount to the long-anticipated School of Education, the trustees determined it to be "in harmony with the spirit of the institution."⁷¹

The North Georgia Annual Conference for 1921 convened in Augusta in November, yet again electing Dickey to head the clergy delegation to the next General Conference, to be held in April 1922 in Hot Springs, Arkansas. Although the *Atlanta Constitution* incorrectly reported that Dickey would be appointed pastor of the Druid Hills Church, that pulpit went to A. F. Pierce, who vacated Griffin First Church, where Dickey was appointed to succeed him.⁷² On his first Sunday in Griffin, the churches of other denominations in town cancelled their evening services

⁷¹ *Emory University Board of Trustees Executive Committee Minutes*, Nov. 7, 1921.

⁷² *Atlanta Constitution*, "Atlantans Sweep Field in Election," Nov. 11, 1921, p. 1; "Dr. J. E. Dickey Slated as Pastor of Druid Hills," Nov. 12, 1921, p. 1; "North Georgia Appointments Announced," Nov. 15, 1921, p. 1.

to participate in a union service at Griffin First Methodist. Clergy from the Episcopal, Presbyterian, Christian and Baptist churches participated in the service of welcome.⁷³

Dickey eagerly picked up the pastoral duties he so cherished, but barely had time to become acquainted with the Griffin congregation before the 1922 General Conference convened the first week of May. He led a clergy delegation that included W. P. King, editor of the *Wesleyan Christian Advocate*; W. A. Shelton, Emory University professor of Hebrew; C. C. Jarrell, pastor at St. John's Church in Augusta; Elam F. Dempsey, his successor as North Georgia Conference secretary of education; J. H. Eakes, presiding elder of the South Atlanta District; J. A. Sharp, headmaster of Emory Academy at Oxford; and John F. Yarbrough, presiding elder of the Dalton District. John S. Candler was Dickey's counterpart leading the lay delegation from North Georgia, which ironically included its first-ever female member, Mrs. Luke G. Johnson, elected in the third laity position and one of only twenty-five female delegates from across the church. During the conference, she gained the distinction of being the first woman in the history of the southern Methodist Church to make a speech on the conference floor as a regular member of the body.⁷⁴

For the fifth consecutive General Conference, Dickey received mention as a potential candidate for bishop. "Dickey...is one of the most prominent members of the conference and one of the foremost preachers in southern Methodism," reported the *Wesleyan Christian Advocate*. "Commanding in appearance, eloquent in speech, strong in his convictions, and guiltless in his life, Dr. Dickey reflects honor upon the conference which has so honored him." Indeed, five bishops were to be elected to replace those who had died since the adjournment of

⁷³ *Atlanta Constitution*, "Dr. J. E. Dickey Welcomed at Griffin," Dec. 6, 1921, p. 11.

⁷⁴ *Atlanta Constitution*, "Plans Completed for Conference of Methodists," May 7, 1922, p. 4; "Methodist Conference Holds Much Interest," April 23, 1922, p. 4; "General Conference of Methodist Church Reveals Great Progress," May 28, 1922, p. G5.

the 1918 General Conference in Atlanta: James Henry McCoy, Elijah Embree Hoss, Joseph Key, Walter Russell Lambuth, and Henry Clay Morrison.⁷⁵

Having traveled to Hot Springs with his wife, Jessie, Dickey took a moment to pen some words to their daughter, Annie, back home. “Just a few lines to thank you for the sweet letter rec’d from you on the 11th inst. No man ever had lovelier daughters or loved them better than I,” he wrote. “You cannot tell what will happen in the matter of elections. They come off on Tuesday morning, but it will be noon before the first ballot is announced. My friends feel confident, but you must not indulge too great hopes. Should anything chance to happen that will be pleasing to you, I will telegraph you. Give my love to Henry and the children. Affectionately, Papa.”⁷⁶

The Sunday night before elections began, Dickey preached the service in a local church, and being well-known as a potential bishop, drew a large crowd. A lay member of the North Georgia delegation, John F. Shannon, editor of the *Commerce (Ga.) News*, described the scene in a dispatch to his newspaper, as Dickey preached what amounted to a trial sermon. “He was the same Dickey at Hot Springs that he is when preaching to a Georgia congregation,” Shannon wrote. “[S]uch a sermon I have rarely ever heard. He is the orator of the Georgia Conference, and it may be that he is the orator of all Southern Methodism.” At the close of the service, the congregation rushed the pulpit to greet Dickey. “He was almost overwhelmed, and could hardly restrain his emotions,” Shannon reported.⁷⁷

Voting commenced on Tuesday, May 16. The first ballot saw no candidates achieve the necessary majority, but on the second ballot, two were elected: William Benjamin Beauchamp of Nashville, director of the Centenary Campaign, with 209 votes; and Dickey with 194 votes,

⁷⁵ *Atlanta Constitution*, “Georgia Methodists Plan to Attend Conference,” April 16, 1922, p. 6.

⁷⁶ James E. Dickey to Annie Dickey Jones, May 13, 1922, from family papers held by the author.

⁷⁷ Dempsey, *Life of Bishop Dickey*, pp. 185-187.

making him the third Emory president to be elected bishop, following Haygood and Candler. He had finally achieved the summit after sixteen years of standing on the precipice.

On the third ballot, delegates elected Samuel Ross Hay, pastor of First Methodist Church of Houston, with 191 votes; on the fourth ballot, Hoyt McWhorter Dobbs, pastor of First Methodist Church of Anniston, Alabama; there was no election on the fifth ballot; and finally on the sixth ballot, delegates elected Hiram Abiff Boaz, president of Southern Methodist University since 1920.⁷⁸

Great applause greeted the announcement of Dickey's election. "The speaker found it difficult to restrain the friends of Dr. Dickey," Shannon reported. That evening, North Georgia lay delegate Sam Tate hosted a reception for the Dickeys at Hot Springs' Eastman hotel. Bishop Candler presided, with thirty-seven North Georgians among the guests. As the celebrants enjoyed the meal, telegrams arrived by the dozens, and Bishop Candler read each aloud from the podium. "I want to be one of the very first to congratulate you," wired I. S. Hopkins of Atlanta, perhaps the son of the late former president of Emory and Georgia Tech. "Congratulations best wishes prayer from your old pupil," said G. W. Hutchinson of Dawson. "Congratulations it should have been four years ago," wrote W. T. Irvin of Rome.

From former students, family members and parishioners over the years, the telegrams poured in. "We differ widely on some questions of policy but agree entirely on great doctrines of the faith once delivered to the saints I sincerely congratulate you on your election..." said Charles O. Jones of Atlanta. "With all my heart and intellect I rejoice over your election as bishop I congratulate the church Mrs. Dickey and you my wife would join me in this congratulation if she could come back from the spirit land," said the telegram from Atlanta's William M. Slaton. "Regret to lose you but rejoice you have been called to larger fields of

⁷⁸ *Atlanta Constitution*, "Methodists Elect Four New Bishops Tuesday," May 17, 1922, p. 1.

service and hope your efforts to advance the kingdom of God in the Earth will be richly rewarded,” said William H. Searcy, a member of Griffin First Church. From Emory Academy headmaster J. A. Sharp of Oxford: “Dear Jim congratulations.” And from daughter Annie Dickey Jones and her husband Henry: “Congratulations proud of you best wishes lots of love.”⁷⁹

Candler reveled in the moment, sitting at the head table with Dickey on one side of him and Mrs. Dickey on the other. As the bishop read aloud the telegrams and introduced the speakers, he “pulled the bridle off his great storehouse of wit and kept the guests in an uproar of laughter,” Shannon reported. Candler referred to Dickey as his own boy – remembering him as his pupil at Emory College, as the young groom for whom he performed the wedding ceremony, as the father of five children whom Candler had baptized, and then as the father of the bride in the several weddings over which Candler had officiated. In responding, Dickey warmly recalled his life-long association with Bishop Candler, as tears streamed down his cheeks, and expressed a sense of unworthiness for the task. As Shannon recalled, the warmth of the occasion assured it would “live long in the memory of all who were present.” Dempsey quoted Emerson regarding the election: “When a natural bishop becomes a titular bishop, everyone is satisfied.”⁸⁰

It is a high and holy moment in the life of the church when new bishops are consecrated. For Dickey, this occurred Sunday, May 21, 1922 as the conference met for the service of consecration at the Central Methodist Church of Hot Springs. Bishop Candler preached the sermon based on the text from Galatians chapter one, verses eight and nine: “But though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed. As we said before, so say I now again, If any man preach any other gospel unto you than that ye have received, let him be accursed.” Representatives of their

⁷⁹ Dempsey, *Life of Bishop Dickey*, pp. 187-189; Telegrams are from Dickey family papers held by the author.

⁸⁰ Dempsey, pp. 189-190; *Atlanta Constitution*, “Dr. Dempsey Tells of Conference Work,” May 29, 1922, p. 15.

respective conferences presented the newly elected bishops for consecration in the order of their election. Dickey was escorted by fellow North Georgia delegates J. H. Eakes and W. H. LaPrade, Jr. As each of the elected bishops knelt at the altar, Candler led the solemn laying-on of hands for the vows of consecration – for Dickey, Bishop Candler was joined by Bishops Denny and McMurry and by Dickey’s fellow elders, Eakes and LaPrade. Dickey’s former college classmate, Bishop Ainsworth, then delivered the exhortation and presented a commemorative Bible to each of the new bishops, and after a concluding prayer and benediction by Bishop Candler, the service concluded.⁸¹

At the closing business session of the General Conference the next morning, each of the new bishops presided over a segment of the agenda. Under Dickey’s gavel, the conference disposed of reports on the Epworth Leagues and the Committee on Laymen’s Missionary Movement. Before adjournment, the conference set the salaries of the bishops at \$6,000 per year with a \$1,500 allowance for homes and office expenses.⁸² As the assignments for the newly elected bishops were read, four of the five learned they would be in the foreign mission field: Beauchamp to Europe with headquarters in Brussels; Hay to China with headquarters in Shanghai; Dobbs to Brazil and Sao Paulo; Boaz to Siberia-Manchuria, residing in Seoul. Thus Dickey may have taken some solace that his appointment, though distant, was in Texas and New Mexico. He would be in charge of four conferences: New Mexico, Northwest Texas, West Texas and Central Texas. The region was notorious among bishops for its vast distances of travel to oversee the charges. The Northwest and Central Texas Conferences also were recognized as being the heart of uncompromising opposition to plans for unification. For Dickey, it was a good match.

⁸¹ Dempsey, pp. 191-194; *Atlanta Constitution*, “Consecration Hour Set for Bishops,” May 17, 1922, p. 1.

⁸² *Ibid.*

Indeed, in what made for an unusual year, every bishop of the church received a new assignment. Candler was named bishop over the Virginia, Baltimore and Louisiana conferences, and William B. Murrah, previously of Memphis, Missouri and Denver, was assigned to a new region containing the North Georgia and Alabama conferences. As the church had proposed that bishops live in their assigned territories, but had not yet required it, Candler let it be known that he would maintain his residence in Atlanta, as it was centrally located to his new and far-flung assignment.⁸³

In addition to electing bishops, the 1922 General Conference rejected the proposal by the northern church that a joint convention be held to consider church unification. The action effectively pushed the unification horizon out another four years, as the conference instructed its Joint Commission members to continue their discussions with the northern church representatives, “looking toward unification in harmony with the basic principles already agreed upon by the Joint Commission as feasible and desirable or upon such other basis as our Commission may determine.” In restructuring its delegation to the Joint Commission, the conference – at the insistence of North Georgia delegate John S. Candler – specified that five of its delegates would be bishops of the church. If a compromise was reached gaining approval of two-thirds of the northern and southern delegates to the Joint Commission, respectively, and was passed by the 1924 General Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church (the northern church), then the southern College of Bishops was authorized to call a special session to consider the matter. The Joint Commission, in effect, had been sent back to the drawing table.⁸⁴

⁸³ *Atlanta Constitution*, “Methodist Bishops Given New Assignments,” May 20, 1922, p. 1; Norwood, *The Story of American Methodism*, p. 361.

⁸⁴ Garber, *The Methodists Are One People*, p. 118; *Atlanta Constitution*, “‘Machine Politics’ Charge Resented,” May 20, 1922, p. 4.

As Bishop and Mrs. Dickey and the North Georgia delegation arrived back in Atlanta, a delegation led by Asa G. Candler met them at the Terminal Station and escorted them to a reception and luncheon in their honor at the Wesley Memorial Church. The elaborate ceremony featured a bouquet of roses for Mrs. Dickey and speeches by representatives of the Methodist clergy and laity of Atlanta – C. J. Harrell of Atlanta First Church and Walter T. Colquitt, respectively. Bishop Candler delivered remarks and offered the benediction.⁸⁵

Not having to report to his new assignment until early September, Dickey proceeded to put his Georgia affairs in order so as to relocate to Texas. At the regular spring meeting of the Wesleyan College board of trustees in connection with commencement at Macon, Dickey submitted his resignation from that board. A week later, at the meeting of the Emory University board of trustees in connection with commencement there, Dickey also offered his resignation in that he would not be able to regularly attend the board meetings over the coming four years. The board unanimously declined to elect anyone to take Dickey's place. At that meeting of the Emory board, the trustees re-elected Asa G. Candler as board chairman for yet another term, and learned that enrollment had jumped 13.9 percent over the previous year, to 1,162.

Dickey preached the baccalaureate sermon for that year's graduation ceremonies – his first sermon since election as bishop. In announcing the appearance, the *Constitution* noted that he was “a former president of Emory college and a co-founder of the university in Atlanta.”⁸⁶

Graduates, family and faculty packed the campus assembly hall to standing room only.

Following an introduction by Bishop Candler, Dickey took a familiar theme from such occasions on previous years – “the estimate of a thing makes one's attitude toward it, and the attitude toward a thing makes one's estimate of it.” He applied this to man's estimate of womanhood,

⁸⁵ *Atlanta Constitution*, “Methodists Honor Their New Bishop,” May 24, 1922, p. 6.

⁸⁶ *Atlanta Constitution*, “Judge Hammond to Quit Wesleyan College Board,” May 25, 1922, p. 6; “Emory Graduates are Announced,” May 29, 1922, p. 3; *Emory University Board of Trustees Minutes*, June 2, 1922.

and the success of those nations that had held womanhood in high respect. But like Rome, he said, those nations which had allowed the institution of marriage to fall into disrespect had faltered. He likewise addressed man's regard for his fellow man: "If the attitude of man to man is that of a machine, the lubricant which will be furnished will be just enough to keep the machine running smoothly." But, he continued, "If a man is only a unit of government, then monarchy and militarism are right; but the reaction shows strikes, lockouts, internal disorders, revolution, and those things which tend to curse and prevent the advancement of civilization."⁸⁷

The full College of Bishops met in Atlanta later in June, Dickey's first session with them since the General Conference. They discussed a revision of the course of study for men desiring to enter the ministry. Dickey filled a heavy calendar of speaking engagements, including addresses to the theological school at Emory, and filling the pulpits at Sunday services at both Atlanta First and Decatur First churches. The Decatur appearance, on the first Sunday in September, was Dickey's last Georgia appearance before his departure for Texas. A packed house of many friends and former parishioners filled the sanctuary to give him a warm send-off.⁸⁸ W. A. Shelton, professor of Hebrew at Emory, succeeded Dickey in the Griffin pastorate for the remainder of the conference year.⁸⁹

Bishop and Mrs. Dickey moved to Waco, Texas in early September and he embarked on a grueling schedule – presiding over four week-long annual conferences in a period of seven weeks. First came the New Mexico Conference, the week of October 4; followed by the

⁸⁷ *Atlanta Constitution*, "Bishop James E. Dickey Addresses Emory Boys," June 5, 1922, p. 6.

⁸⁸ *Atlanta Constitution*, "Methodist Bishops Hold Final Session," June 17, 1922, p. 15; "Bishop James Dickey to Preach at Emory," June 30, 1922, p. 12; "Prominent Speakers Fill Pulpits Here," Aug. 6, 1922, p. 7; "Special Services Sunday in Many Local Churches," Sept. 3, 1922, p. A11.

⁸⁹ *Atlanta Constitution*, "Conference Sidelights," Nov. 11, 1922, p. 6.

Northwest Texas Conference beginning October 18; the West Texas Conference starting October 25; and finally, the Central Texas Conference the week of November 15.⁹⁰

If the reception afforded him at each of the conferences was as warm as that reported from the New Mexico session held at Pecos, the Georgia devotee acquitted himself well in the western regions. “Bishop Jas. E. Dickey did not say in his opening address that all the ‘brains in the universe was in Georgia,’ but he did say that much brains is credited up to the ‘Goober State,’ and in that statement no one will take issue with him,” the *Texas Christian Advocate* related. “But all the Georgia brains are not in Georgia. Some of it has migrated to Texas, and a powerful big slice is stored away in the ‘noggin’ of Bishop Dickey,” the newspaper continued. “The brethren of the New Mexico Conference have already learned to love him. And why shouldn’t they love him? He is one of ‘em in spirit, and at no time during the session of the conference was he too busy to give the humblest preacher a hearing.” The writer commented on Dickey’s kindness and consideration toward each individual who approached him, and on his size – “a big man, big physically and big mentally, big in a vision for big things for God’s kingdom.”

Trying to stay with Dickey’s sermon proved a challenge for the writer, who lamented his fortune in not obtaining a complete education. “I believe I’ve never before felt the need of it as I did that night. I tried to follow him and as long as he kept on the ground I did fairly well, but suddenly he began to soar, and I lost my grip and I never did catch up again.”

While he was talking about some of the modern-day ‘saints and sinners’ I was running smoothly, but when he began drifting away and was ‘hobnobbing’ with the people way back yonder in 476 A.D. and knew the names and characteristics of a lot of ‘fellows’ in yonder days that had to do with making the world history, a bunch that I never knew were on earth and would not know how to pronounce their names even if I could spell ‘em. I just couldn’t keep up, that’s all, and so I’m not giving a synopsis of the greatest address I ever heard....

⁹⁰ *Atlanta Constitution*, “‘Machine Politics’ Charge Resented,” May 20, 1922, p. 4.

And, the writer concluded, “If Bishop Dickey ‘feels his oats,’ to speak in the vernacular of the common people, he is shrewd enough to conceal the fact. He is just naturally a big man – a God-made, big man, not a mere man made big.”⁹¹

While Dickey was between the conferences in West Texas and Central Texas, the North Georgia Annual Conference met the week of November 8 at Atlanta’s Wesley Memorial Church – the first session in North Georgia that Dickey had missed in thirty years. He sent written greetings to his Georgia colleagues, which were read aloud early in the session of the first morning.⁹²

Dickey continued to impress his Texas audiences. “A luminary in the religious world has come to us here in Texas in the person of Bishop James E. Dickey,” reported the *Waco Times-Herald*. “He talks with such simplicity that a child can easily understand him, and yet he sweeps strong men along by the mighty current of his eloquence and earnestness. Actually, the listener forgets that he is a bishop, and we know of no higher tribute we can pay him as a speaker. It isn’t his office that gives weight to his words and power to his message; it is the man and the spirit of love that’s in the man.”⁹³

Dickey maintained his home in Griffin and he and his wife returned to Georgia as often as they could, spending Christmas holidays and portions of the summer months back home. In great demand as a speaker when he was in Georgia, Dickey would draw large crowds of former students, parishioners and colleagues. The first Sunday in January, 1923, for example, he preached the morning worship service to a packed house at the Emory University chapel, discussing “What is the purpose of the church?” on the text Matthew 16:18, “Upon this rock I

⁹¹ *Texas Christian Advocate*, “The New Mexico Conference,” Oct. 12, 1922, from Dempsey Collection MSS451, box 4, Manuscript, Archives, and Rare Book Library, Emory University.

⁹² *Atlanta Constitution*, “Nine Methodist Pastors Placed on Retired List,” Nov. 9, 1922, p. 1.

⁹³ *Waco Times-Herald*, Nov. 13, 1922, as reported in the *Atlanta Constitution*, “Newspaper in Texas Lauds Bishop Dickey,” Dec. 10, 1922, p. 15.

will build my church....” The church is “no more a religious club for the exclusive and rich than it is a guild for the horny-handed sons of labor,” he said. “Nor is it a merely philanthropic institution, although it has inspired the noblest philanthropies all down the ages.... The purpose of the church is the spiritual redemption of men through faith in Jesus of Nazareth as the Son of God.” The Dickeys stayed in Georgia until mid-January that first holiday season, returning to Waco after he preached the Sunday morning service on January 14 at Jackson Methodist Church, where his son-in-law, Henry H. Jones, then served as pastor.⁹⁴

On Easter Sunday morning, 1923, Dickey preached the dedicatory service for the new sanctuary of the First Methodist Church of Breckenridge, Texas, reprising his sermon on “Upon this rock I will build my church.” The *Texas Christian Advocate* reported that he had just arrived from an extended meeting in San Antonio, and was somewhat worn from the travels. But, the writer said, “[W]e have never heard a greater deliverance from him than was the sermon of this hour. Always a great preacher and always presenting and unfolding great themes of the Scripture, it seemed to us that the Bishop was especially happy in his presentation of the place, purpose and perpetuity of the church.” Noting that “history, poetry and philosophy are his familiar friends,” the writer continued, “There are few men in the American pulpit or on the American platform who have the certain command and use of the English language....” He brings to the ministry “a gift of oratory of the highest type,” yet without ostentation or display, the writer said. “Always and everywhere he is the same affable, approachable, charming Christian gentleman, in whose presence and fellowship it is a delight to be.”⁹⁵

⁹⁴ *Atlanta Constitution*, “Bishop J. E. Dickey Preaches at Emory,” Jan. 8, 1923, p. 4; “Bishop Conducts Services,” Jan. 9, 1923, p. 16.

⁹⁵ *Texas Christian Advocate*, “Bishop James E. Dickey Dedicates First Church, Breckenridge, Texas,” (date of publication unavailable), from Methodist biography collection, box 31, Manuscript, Archives, and Rare Book Library, Emory University.

William Hamilton Nelson, editor of a Methodist periodical in the Pacific Coast Conference, whom Dickey came to know as a member of the publishing house committee, described Dickey's oratorical style:

There are people who profess to despise oratory and beautiful speech, but a good steak loses nothing because it is tender and juicy, with a little Bordelaise sauce to add piquancy to the palate, and is served on sparkling china, with spotless linen. Some men have their sermons as bald of adjectives as a peeled onion. They think they are being simple, when the truth is they are only being simple-minded; they haven't any adjectives, and wouldn't know what to do with them if they had. But Bishop Dickey had adjectives, and knew what to do with them, and he also had substantives, and substantial substantives, and in that finely moulded head, which would have graced Apollo Belvedere, he had ideas, and thought the thoughts out of which books are made.⁹⁶

Since the closing of the 1922 General Conference, the Joint Commission on unification, on which Dickey served, had been hard at work. By July 1923, the Commission had jettisoned its previous plan for three northern jurisdictions, three southern jurisdictions, and a separate Black jurisdiction (which, ironically, was very similar to the plan that eventually would be adopted in 1939), and instead came forward with a proposal for a "partnership plan of union." The two churches would form a partnership with little change from the current configuration – each being its own jurisdiction under the larger, combined General Conference of the unified church. That General Conference would comprise two houses – the two jurisdictions – and legislation would have to pass each house to be adopted. The bishops would be elected by the jurisdictions – the former northern and southern churches – but would be bishops of the whole church, meaning that a Black bishop elected from the north could preside over a joint session including membership from the south. This remained a key objection of Candler and the southern conservatives. Another key objection was that the Judicial Council – in effect the Supreme Court of the church – would make its decisions by simple majority vote of its

⁹⁶ Dempsey, *Life of Bishop Dickey*, p. 203.

membership, not divided by jurisdictions. Further, by maintaining parallel organizations, the problem of northern-affiliated churches in the south, and vice versa – the so-called “altar against altar” problem, would not be addressed.

The chairs of the two commissions that combined into the Joint Commission presented an interesting point-counterpoint. Bishop Earl Cranston, the northern chairman was 76 years old, retired from the church and a veteran of the Union army in the Civil War, having served as a captain. He consistently held that an acceptable plan finally would be worked out, and while not instrumental in any particular plan, lectured and campaigned widely in the general cause of unification. Bishop Warren Candler, the southern chairman, as a boy of seven had watched Sherman’s army march past his widowed mother’s home. He was not necessarily opposed to unification in concept, but rather to what he viewed as inherent weaknesses in the various plans that were suggested. His presiding over the commission was noted for its impartiality. He rarely interjected himself into the discussions, perhaps because he realized the purpose of the discussions was to produce an acceptable plan for merger. Yet when a plan would be produced, he would work diligently in the field to bring about its defeat in the grassroots votes of the conferences. Dickey, himself a bishop representing the southern church on the Joint Commission, again stood strongly in Candler’s camp as he had on numerous issues throughout his career.⁹⁷

In spring 1924, the General Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church – the northern church – adopted the latest proposal of the Joint Commission by an overwhelming vote, 802 to 13, sending the plan to the annual conferences of the north for ratification. That action

⁹⁷ Davis, *The Methodist Unification*, pp. 5, 140, 142, 159; Bucke, ed., et al, *History of American Methodism*, Vol. III, p. 448; Garber, *The Methodists Are One People*, pp. 118-121; *Atlanta Constitution*, “Conferences Will Reject Plans, Dr. Elliott Predicts,” June 29, 1924, p. 11; “Objections to Methodist Unification,” June 29, 1924, p. C3.

met the requirements of the resolution of the 1922 General Conference of the M. E. Church, South, that it would call a special session to consider a proposal passed by the northern church. The southern College of Bishops met in Chattanooga on May 27 and agreed to call a special session of the General Conference to begin July 2 in Chattanooga, just 35 days hence.

Four of the bishops dissented strenuously – Candler, Darlington, Denny and Dickey – who took their case to the newspapers by issuing a statement. Their argument was a complicated one on several levels. First, they contended that the disciplinary paragraphs giving bishops the authority to call special sessions of general conference had not been properly adopted as constitutional amendments by the various annual conferences. But even if they conceded the constitutionality of the paragraphs, the four bishops contended, the paragraphs in question still did not give the bishops authority to call such a session on so short a timeframe that the annual conferences could not consider who their delegates might be and how they should be instructed on the matters at hand. As it stood, the delegates to the prior General Conference would still be in place for the called session.

“We do not see any reason for such a hasty assembling of the general conference on July 2, 1924,” said the bishops’ statement. “Our preachers and people have a right to more time for examination and consideration of the plan.” The College of Bishops had defeated an attempt by the four to set the date for May 1925, a date they believed “would have escaped all legal difficulties, would have accorded the annual conferences their rights, and would have done simple justice to them.” Their proposed date, they asserted, would have more faithfully carried out the intent of the 1922 General Conference resolution directing a special session. “We cannot

in good conscience approve a call the date of which, as we believe, violates law and does the annual conferences grave injustice by depriving them of their rights....”⁹⁸

As the called session of General Conference opened July 2 in Chattanooga, Bishop Candler presiding, A. J. Lamar of Nashville made a motion to adjourn on the grounds that the session was of questionable legality. One of the most ardent debaters in favor of continuing the session was John S. Candler of the North Georgia delegation, which appeared split on the question of proceeding and of putting the question to the annual conferences. The debate over the legality of the session and the question of adjournment consumed the entire first day and into the second, with the various issues of objection making their way into the debate. To those expressing concern over “the Negro question,” unification proponent H. H. White of Alexandria, Louisiana noted that he was born under the Bonnie Blue Flag and was a southerner in every sense of the word, but that his relatives likewise had served under the Stars and Stripes and shed their blood in France. “I think,” he said, “it is time to forget the rebel yell. It is an echo of the past. It is wrong to raise the ghost of the Negro question here.” Others, such as Judge Perry S. Rader of Jefferson City, Missouri, said they favored adjournment and would favor unification at a later conference, so as to remove all legal question of the appropriateness of the action. Finally, a voice vote on the motion to adjourn was called. It was so obviously defeated that proponents did not seek a roll call vote.

Bishop J. M. Moore of Dallas presented the majority report supporting the plan of union, and Bishop Collins Denny of Virginia the minority report opposing it. Denny’s seven-thousand word statement discussed every objection at length, particularly the relation of the two Black bishops from the northern church to the unified body should the plan be adopted. The length of

⁹⁸ Garber, *The Methodists Are One People*, p. 120; *Atlanta Constitution*, “Methodists Name Conference Site,” May 29, 1924, p. 1.

his presentation raised objections that he was making a speech rather than a report, which bishops were not allowed to do without the unanimous consent of the house. After Denny's nearly two-hour presentation, Judge Candler again took the floor, spending nearly two hours himself refuting the opposition – his own brother's position – point-by-point. Speaker after speaker addressed the subject as the conference dragged through a third day – the Fourth of July – before finally reaching a vote late in the day. Despite all the dramatic discussion, the vote was about four to one: 298 to 74 in favor of sending the question to the annual conferences for ratification. There, a three-fourths vote of the aggregate total of all the votes cast collectively across the annual conferences would be necessary for the unification plan to be adopted by the southern church. The question was far from decided, as achieving such a super-majority across the various annual conferences would be a tall order.⁹⁹

Through the remainder of 1924 and all of 1925, Dickey and Candler maintained a heavy correspondence regarding their efforts to secure the necessary votes in the annual conferences to defeat the unification plan. Writing to Candler from Albuquerque at the close of the New Mexico Conference in October 1924, Dickey said “The sentiment here is divided...but the opposition to the plan is much stronger than I had thought. We have not lost any ground during the session of the conference.” A plan to introduce a resolution endorsing the action of the Chattanooga Conference was withdrawn, Dickey said, when it became apparent it did not have the votes to pass. “Some of the men who favor the plan would vote against resolutions endorsing the action of the General Conference,” he wrote. “They want to be free to vote on the main plan when the time comes to take the legal vote.” Indeed, Dickey wrote Candler, “Quite a number

⁹⁹ *Atlanta Constitution*, “Postponement of Methodist Conference Looms,” July 3, 1924, p. 1; “Georgians Prominent in Day's Discussions,” July 3, 1924, p. 4; “Sentiment for Methodist Unification Mounts,” July 4, 1924, p. 1; “Unification Sentiment at Convention Grows,” July 4, 1924, p. 2; “Methodists Vote Almost 4 to 1 for Unification,” July 5, 1924, p. 1.

who favored the plan have come to me to talk over the situation and they are now on the fence or on our side. I feel greatly encouraged.”¹⁰⁰

And writing to Candler from Temple, Texas at the close of another conference the next week, Dickey noted that again no resolution concerning the plan had been introduced, sentiment running too strongly against it. “Clyde Campbell came to me at the close of the session and thanked me for setting him straight. He is now clearly against the plan,” Dickey wrote. “Quite a number of the leading men are against it. I have hope of a strong vote against it next fall. Notwithstanding the fact that I am known to be a strong opponent to the plan, the conference passed unanimous resolutions of appreciation and requested the College of Bishops to send me back next year. How is that for a border [Dickey’s underline] conference?” He closed, “With an all hail! to our great Methodist chieftain.”¹⁰¹

Through the period, debate for and against the question packed the pages of the *Texas Christian Advocate*. Matters came to a head at the District Conferences in the spring of 1925, at which the lay men and women would be chosen who would cast ballots at the annual conferences later in the year. The normally tame elections were rife with political intrigue worthy of a political convention. Both sides formed national organizations: the “Association for the Preservation of Southern Methodism,” and the “Friends of Unification.” Bishop John M. Moore of Dallas, a stalwart in the pro forces, expressed concern over Dickey’s activism. “Bishop Dickey is to hold...a statewide meeting in Waco. [Bishop] Ainsworth is to be with him. He is doing what he can to organize the anti forces,” Moore wrote to a colleague. “Dr. Culver has invited me to come to Fort Worth to speak, but I have taken the position that I will not go into Bishop Dickey’s district without his consent. I think possibly that is best. I do not know

¹⁰⁰ Dickey to W. A. Candler, Oct. 1, 1924, W. A. Candler Collection, box 52, Manuscript, Archives and Rare Book Library, Emory University.

¹⁰¹ Dickey to W. A. Candler, Oct. 6, 1924, W. A. Candler Collection, box 52.

whether he is writing letters. I know he is making public addresses. I will do what I can to take care of my territory.”¹⁰²

Dickey continued to rally the troops against the unification plan, speaking in March to a large crowd in Abilene assembled by four districts of the Northwest Texas Conference and two districts of the Central Texas Conference. “The ‘Friends’ are rather hard-pressed for argument it seems to me,” he wrote to Candler. “I have just read some propaganda to the effect, ‘The Texas Bishops are for the Plan, the Georgia Bishops oppose the plan, whom should we follow – Texas Bishops or Georgia Bishops?’ The statement to my mind is an expression of weakness. They are putting forth unusual effort to retrieve what they have lost,” he concluded.¹⁰³

And later that month, writing from his home in Waco, Dickey responded to a news clipping Candler had sent him. “I cannot believe that Bishop Mouzon made the statement attributed to him. He could not have said that this measure would be declared passed even if it did not receive the required $\frac{3}{4}$ vote.” Noting that “Friends” of the unification plan continued to campaign widely through his territory, as well, Dickey worried, “The enterprises of the church are being hurt by the divisions already caused. I fear worse results are ahead. I cannot but do my duty as I see it and that is to continue to do what I can to defeat this measure.”¹⁰⁴

Over a period of eighteen days that spring, Dickey made twenty-one appearances, most of them connected with opposing the unification plan, and had not been to his home in Waco in three weeks. “I am a little weary,” he wrote Candler from Fort Worth, “but still able to give reasons for the faith that is in me on the subject of unification.” He would speak that Sunday

¹⁰² Vernon, Walter N.; Sledge, Robert W.; Monk, Robert C.; and Spellmann, Norman W. *The Methodist Excitement in Texas: A History*. Nashville: Parthenon Press, 1984, pp. 219-221.

¹⁰³ Dickey to W. A. Candler, March 14, 1925, W. A. Candler Collection, box 52, Manuscript, Archives and Rare Book Library, Emory University.

¹⁰⁴ Dickey to W. A. Candler, March 23, 1925, W. A. Candler Collection, box 52, Manuscript, Archives and Rare Book Library, Emory University.

morning against the plan at Fort Worth First Church, and at the evening service at Fort Worth Central Church. But, he wrote, "Dallas and Fort Worth are both suffering the hardship of having pastors and P.E.s [presiding elders] who favor the plan. There is not much chance of accomplishing anything in either city, except to gratify the laity who oppose it." Dickey predicted his position would carry by majority votes in three of his four conferences: Central Texas, Northwest Texas, and New Mexico. "If we do not win by majorities, the count will be so close as to give no comfort to the opposition," he wrote to Candler. But, he said, he would be satisfied with one-fourth to one-third in the West Texas Conference. "I have worked very hard and am still at it, but I shall count it all joy if we can but defeat this measure, and we shall." [Dickey's underline]¹⁰⁵

Apparently the stress of his distant assignment and the unification battle began to affect Dickey's health. From his home in Griffin in July, 1925, he wrote Candler: "I was able to go to Atlanta on yesterday for examination. The doctors tell me that I have been going under too high pressure. I was not conscious of it but they say that the pressure was there. I was ordered to keep quiet for a while. My blood pressure, kidneys and heart all seem to be normal. I shall attend the Atlanta meeting if I am able to travel. At present, it is difficult for me to get about to any extent. Go right on with the meeting. Do not let my condition affect the date. I hope to be there. I continue to hear good reports from Texas and New Mexico."¹⁰⁶

As the annual conferences across the nation began in the fall of 1925, it became apparent that the northern church would overwhelmingly endorse the plan. Conference after conference approved the question by substantial majorities, with the final aggregate vote in the north being

¹⁰⁵ Dickey to W. A. Candler, April 17, 1925, W. A. Candler Collection, box 52, Manuscript, Archives and Rare Book Library, Emory University.

¹⁰⁶ Dickey to W. A. Candler, July 8, 1925, W. A. Candler Collection, box 52, Manuscript, Archives and Rare Book Library, Emory University.

18,140 to 935 – a 95 percent margin. But as the vote came in across the southern church, it likewise became apparent that the proposal was dying a slow death, as many conferences voted with a majority, but not the required three-fourths super-majority. Meeting at Griffin First Church, the North Georgia Conference defeated the plan by a substantial margin – 235 to 116, generating charges of inappropriate politics as both laity and clergy submitted slates of candidates for election to the next General Conference who were uniformly in opposition to unification. The Little Rock Conference meeting at Arkadelphia voted 115 to 56 in favor of the plan, but still not a three-fourths majority. Dickey’s Central Texas Conference voted against the plan 182 to 162, and his Northwest Texas Conference also rejected the plan outright. His other two conferences, West Texas and New Mexico, approved the plan but with less than the requisite 75 percent. One of the more lopsided negative margins came in the South Georgia Conference, which defeated the proposal 217 to 94. Although the overall vote across the southern church was 4,528 in favor to 4,108 against, and the question gained a majority in more than half the conferences, the question fell well short of the required three-fourths margin.

Another vote on the matter of unification would not come up again in Dickey’s lifetime, and the 1926 General Conference of the M.E. Church, South, specifically voted that “there should be no agitation, discussion, or negotiations concerning unification during the next quadrennium.”¹⁰⁷ That conference, meeting in Memphis in May, did however appoint a committee to study the question “in its historic, economic, social, legal and other aspects.” While not entirely acceptable to either the pro- or anti-unification forces, such a committee was

¹⁰⁷ Garber, *The Methodists Are One People*, pp. 120-122; Vernon, *The Methodist Excitement in Texas*, p. 222; *Atlanta Constitution*, “Methodist Conference to Vote Upon Unification on First Day,” Nov. 15, 1925, p. B2; “Interest Centers on Unification,” Nov. 15, 1925, p. B2; “Lay Delegates Join in Attack on Union Plan,” Nov. 18, 1925, p. 1; “3 Conferences Oppose Union of Methodists,” Nov. 19, 1925, p. 1; “Hint of Politics Stirs Conference,” Nov. 20, 1925, p. 1; “South Georgia Methodists Vote Against Merger,” Nov. 26, 1925, p. 1.

considered a compromise that at least would keep the issue alive without allowing it to advance to votes and debates as the most recent four years had seen. The fourteen members of the study committee included Emory's Theology Dean Franklin N. Parker and professor Andrew Sledd.¹⁰⁸

Although Dickey would not be involved in further unification discussions, a brief summary of the denouement of the issue for the church is in order. In May 1928, a new party joined the discussions, as the Methodist Protestant Church created a commission with the authority to negotiate with other branches of Methodism. The Methodist Episcopal Church created a similar commission, but it was 1934 before the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, again came to the table ready to discuss new plans. A new joint commission in 1935 drafted a plan very similar to the 1920 proposal, to create "The Methodist Church" with three northern jurisdictions, three southern jurisdictions, and a separate Central Jurisdiction for the Black church. With concessions from all sides concerning election of bishops, the make-up of the judicial council, and Black representation in the General Conference, each of the branches adopted the plan – the Methodist Protestant Church and the Methodist Episcopal Church in 1936, and the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, by putting the question to a vote of the annual conferences first in 1937, and ratifying their votes at the 1938 General Conference. The three branches came together in the Methodist Uniting Conference held in St. Louis in April 1939, creating the Methodist Church – eleven years after Dickey's death. Ironically, one of the North Georgia Conference delegates to that conference was his son-in-law, Henry H. Jones. The issue most notably left unsettled – that of racial separatism – was not finally resolved until 1967, when the Methodist Church voted to end the separate Black Central Jurisdiction, and 1968, when the

¹⁰⁸ *Atlanta Constitution*, "Methodists Urge Four-Year Delay on Unification," May 16, 1926, p. 9.

Methodist Church and the Evangelical United Brethren Church merged into today's United Methodist Church.¹⁰⁹

Although the unification issue dominated Dickey's four years in Texas, the general work of the church was ongoing. He gained note among conference members there for his concern and interest toward the young pastors, and toward those laboring in relatively obscure appointments. He began a practice of allowing retiring ministers at each annual conference to take the floor and say whatever was on their heart at the moment. No matter the group or classification or status, he treated them with consideration.¹¹⁰

As do all bishops, even today, Dickey struggled with the appointment process, through which the responsibility fell on him to send preachers to their pastoral assignments. At times, he would confide these struggles in his correspondence with Bishop Candler. "I cannot understand Caspar Wright," Dickey wrote. "He has reversed himself several times recently in his opinion about appointments. I do not know what has gotten into his head about transferring. I can take good care of him in the West Texas Conference. I do not know that Bishop Moore would take him to Dallas. I rather doubt it from former conversations with him. He is unnecessarily disturbed. I have not told him where I propose to send him. He knows that I will take care of him and that is enough for him to know."¹¹¹

On occasion, Dickey would share with Candler reports of high moments and success. "This session of the New Mexico Conference is the best of the three that I have held," he wrote. "The preachers left the conference in fine spirits. I think the appointments gave general satisfaction." Yet he also would express to Candler his weariness at the extent of the task. "On

¹⁰⁹ Garber, *The Methodists Are One People*, pp. 121-132; Sheets, *Methodism in North Georgia*, pp. 168-169, 279.

¹¹⁰ Dempsey, *Life of Bishop Dickey*, pp. 206-209.

¹¹¹ Dickey to W. A. Candler, Oct. 4, 1924, W. A. Candler Collection, box 52, Manuscript, Archives and Rare Book Library, Emory University.

Sunday I received a telegram from Bishop Moore informing me of his illness and requesting me to come to his help next week. I shall, therefore, go to Paris [Texas] next Tuesday and spend the week there. Then follows in succession the West Texas and the Northwest Texas Conferences, making those consecutive weeks in the chair.... I shall be glad to help Bishop Moore, though the continuous presiding is somewhat trying to my nerves.”¹¹²

When not presiding over conferences or campaigning against unification, Dickey still maintained a heavy traveling and speaking schedule. While visiting in Georgia, he would fill a pulpit nearly every Sunday, including frequent returns to his former pastorates. He preached Christmas Sunday of 1924, for example, at Atlanta First Church, before attending the College of Bishops meeting in Jacksonville in early January and filling other Georgia pulpits on each Sunday in January before returning to Waco. One of those was Grace Church, where he had served as pastor a quarter-century before. That same week, he and Candler made separate addresses to the annual banquet of the Emory Alumni Association at Atlanta’s Capital City Club – “the largest gathering of Atlanta Emory University alumni ever held,” it was billed. Candler and Dickey by that time were the only two living former presidents of Emory.¹¹³

The 1926 General Conference assigned Dickey to the Louisville episcopal area, placing him in charge of the Kentucky, Louisville, Illinois and West Virginia Conferences. He and Mrs. Dickey moved from Waco shortly after the close of the conference and spent the summer at their home in Griffin, visiting with family and keeping speaking engagements. During that period, he preached the sermon at the first anniversary worship service at Atlanta’s Peachtree Road Methodist Church. In early September, the Dickeys took up residence in a Louisville hotel – the

¹¹² Dickey to W. A. Candler, Oct. 6, 1924, W. A. Candler Collection, box 52, Manuscript, Archives and Rare Book Library, Emory University.

¹¹³ *Atlanta Constitution*, “Bishop J. E. Dickey at First Methodist,” Dec. 21, 1924, p. B8; “Bishop J. E. Dickey Will Preach Sunday at Grace Methodist,” Jan. 24, 1925, p. 6; “Alumni of Emory to Meet Tonight,” Jan. 26, 1925, p. 8.

Puritan – continuing to maintain their primary residence in Griffin. The next year, the Dickeys purchased a newly-constructed home at 1627 North Decatur Road in DeKalb County, directly across the street from the Emory Druid Hills campus, intending to use it as their primary residence when not on assignment in Kentucky. Dickey immediately added two more rooms to the house – a bedroom and a study. His aunt, Sally Thomas, and his daughter and son-in-law, Julia and Clarence E. Boyd, and their two young sons, lived there in the Dickey’s absence.¹¹⁴

As Dickey arrived in Kentucky, a reporter for the *Louisville Herald-Post*, conducting an introductory interview with the area’s new bishop, described him as “very human,” an “impressive figure, physically,” and that “he does not look his years,” guessing him to be forty-five, when in fact, he was then sixty-two. “None would ever deem this scholar, famed for his works as a preacher and educator, has passed three-score years,” the newspaper observed. In the interview, Dickey recalled 1891 as a significant year in his life – that of his graduation from college, his license to preach and joining the North Georgia Conference, his election to the Emory faculty, and certainly his marriage to Jessie Munroe. In the extensive interview recounting his career, Dickey discussed with the reporter his revolutionary ancestor, Benjamin Few, whose brother, William, signed the United States Constitution for Georgia in 1787, and went on to become U.S. Senator from Georgia and later mayor of New York City. It is the only place in the considerable record of Dickey’s life that he is found to make much to do about his remarkable ancestry.

Perhaps Dickey chose to discuss his personal attributes with the reporter because he preferred not to discuss issues then at the forefront in the Kentucky church. “It appears that he first would prefer to ‘view the landscape o’er’ before entering upon the merits or the demerits of

¹¹⁴ Dempsey, *Life of Bishop Dickey*, p. 210; *Atlanta Constitution*, “Buckhead Church Will Hear Dickey Preach on Sunday,” June 4, 1926, p. 5; Family records held by the author.

the land,” the reporter wrote. “He impresses. There is geniality about him and lots of it. He looks his listener in the eye. He talks with a ‘punch.’ Physically big, mentally alert, a kindliness in speech and manner. Louisville is going to like him....”¹¹⁵

As in Texas, the work in Kentucky continued to be hard and wearing on Dickey. His engagement calendar for the year 1927 showed 125 preaching engagements in 225 days, and many of those both morning and evening services. The days between were filled with annual and district conferences and consultations with his colleagues in the church. “This is my third conference ‘hard-running,’” he wrote to his confidant Bishop Candler. “Were it not for the Good Lord and Miss Jessie I could hardly keep going. The brethren have been kind and appreciative far beyond my deserts, but, at best, the work of the Gen’l. Supt. is not a bed of roses. I am grateful for manifold mercies. At times, I am almost overcome by a sense of unworthiness, but I shall press on, hoping that my labor may not be altogether in vain.”¹¹⁶

Dickey still found time occasionally to participate in meetings of the Emory University board of trustees. At the session in connection with 1927 commencement, he chaired a committee considering an offer from a delegation of Valdosta businessmen to assist Emory in establishing a junior college in their city. Dickey balked at the proposal in committee, sending it forward to the entire board without recommendation. With the support of President Cox, the full board passed the question 15 to 5, Dickey voting in the negative.

The trustees engaged in extensive discussion on the actions of the General Conference that doctrinal standards be guarded in all aspects of church life, including the educational institutions. The trustees reiterated their stance on faithfulness to church doctrines in the teachings of the university, “...to assure all concerned that the School of Theology is conforming

¹¹⁵ Dempsey, *Life of Bishop Dickey*, pp. 211-217.

¹¹⁶ *Ibid.*, pp. 217-218; Dickey to W. A. Candler, Sept. 1, 1926, W. A. Candler Collection, box 62, Manuscript, Archives, and Rare Book Library, Emory University.

to the teachings of evangelical Christianity and is carrying out with fidelity the avowed purposes expressed by the action of the governing bodies of the Church and the founders of the University.” The trustees further discussed a plan to build a church on campus land to be donated to the North Georgia Conference for that purpose. The proposal ultimately resulted in the construction of Glenn Memorial Methodist Church, directly across the street from Dickey’s new home.¹¹⁷

Bishop Candler’s seventieth birthday brought Dickey and many prominent Georgians to celebrate and honor the Methodist leader. Former Senator Hoke Smith made the address as Candler accepted the keys to a new Franklin sedan automobile, driven onto the lawn of his North Decatur Road home as a surprise. As part of his acceptance speech, Candler recounted that “during my presidency of Emory college at Oxford I helped to make two men who are the best of bishops, full of faith and good works [referring to Ainsworth and Dickey]. It is a much finer achievement to make two great bishops than to become one sorry bishop.” Candler told those present that he loved Georgia and intended to live in the state the remainder of his life and keep working until he died.¹¹⁸

In October 1927, Dickey’s health very nearly failed him, as he suffered a severe intestinal attack while presiding over the West Virginia Conference. Physicians at first could not decide whether it was ptomaine poisoning or appendicitis. He lay in critical condition for several days in a hospital in Huntington, West Virginia. Bishop U. V. W. Darlington, whose home was in Huntington, presided in Dickey’s place for the remainder of that conference. The episode caused him further to miss presiding over the session of the Louisville Annual Conference, to which Bishop Candler traveled from Atlanta to preside in Dickey’s absence. Later that month, Dickey

¹¹⁷ *Emory University Board of Trustees Minutes*, June 3, 1927.

¹¹⁸ *Atlanta Constitution*, “Many Prominent Georgians Pay Homage to Bishop Candler on 70th Birthday,” Aug. 24, 1927, p. 8.

wrote Candler, "I am writing this note, first, to thank you for your great kindness in coming to my aid in an hour of great need, also, for the gracious letter which came to me a few days ago.... I cannot tell you how much I appreciate your help, thus I shall only say that I am very grateful and thank you accordingly. My love for you abides and will abide forever." With a P.S., Dickey added, "I am gaining strength daily, though I have not yet learned to sleep as formerly."¹¹⁹

When the North Georgia Conference met in Atlanta in November, both Bishops Candler and Dickey were in attendance at the opening session. When introduced by presiding Bishop Beauchamp, they received a standing ovation and each made a short address to their colleagues.¹²⁰

Returning to work in Louisville, Dickey faced a backlog of correspondence from during his illness. "I was sick when the enclosed letter was received from you. It was put away with some of my conference papers," he wrote to Candler. "The appointments referred to have been happily adjusted long since, but, though very tardy, I conform to your request."¹²¹

And in early April, the two apparently discussed appointment of one of their conservative group of bishops to a general commission of the church. "Without doubt, Bishop Denny is the man," Dickey wrote. "It will be a shame to leave him off this commission. I regret that the indications at the last session all pointed to the fact the he could not be elected, yet I am still hoping against hope that the tide will turn in his favor." As to Candler's suggestion that Dickey be named to the position, Dickey responded, "I feel that there are many men in the College better

¹¹⁹ *Atlanta Constitution*, "Bishop Dickey Ill," Oct. 13, 1927, p. 5; "Bishop Dickey Taken by Death," April 18, 1928, p. 1; Dickey to W. A. Candler, Oct. 26, 1927, W. A. Candler collection, box 64, Manuscript, Archives and Rare Book Library, Emory University.

¹²⁰ *Atlanta Constitution*, "2,000 Methodists Hear Report on Mission Work," Nov. 24, 1927, p. 1.

¹²¹ Dickey to W. A. Candler, Feb. 22, 1928, W. A. Candler Collection, box 65, Manuscript, Archives and Rare Book Library, Emory University.

qualified for the service in question, and besides, I do not think for one moment that I could be elected.”¹²²

The first week in April, Dickey preached a noon service each day in the Rialto Theater in downtown Louisville – a week-long series of Lenten revival services sponsored by the Methodist Men’s organization of Louisville. The sermons drew large crowds, and Dickey’s remarks were reported daily in the *Louisville Courier-Journal* and *Times* newspapers, reflecting many of the same themes from his sermons and speeches over his career. “The man who is not conscious of the Divine Presence in this world finds it a prison,” Dickey said in his Monday address, “but the man who is conscious of this Presence finds beauty everywhere.” From Hamlet’s “all is vanity” to Solomon’s accumulation of great wealth in search of happiness, Dickey raised examples of “men overcome by the mere monotony of life.” Some men of his day sadly coped with such emptiness by ending their own lives with empty vials or pistol shots, Dickey related. But those who knew the Divine Presence could do good in the spirit of Christianity, and carry on, he said.

On Tuesday of the revival series, Dickey preached that the Ten Commandments constitute the basis of all government. “No people, no nation or race can have power, dignity and perpetuity unless it has regard for the fundamental laws of life as conceived in the Ten Commandments,” he said. “All the art, all the philosophy, genius and wealth of Greece and Rome could not save those countries. Only the law of the Lord can save even America. All the wisdom of her statesmen, the power of her military forces, and the culture of her schools, will avail nothing unless the law of the Lord is observed.”

On the third day, Dickey told his audience of Louisville men that “where men raise their voices to God or offer sacrifices to Him while indulging in sin, sensuality and oppression, it is loathsome to the Heavenly Creator.” Instead, God wants man to present himself as a living

¹²² Dickey to W. A. Candler, April 3, 1928, W. A. Candler Collection, box 65.

sacrifice, Dickey continued. “He showed His infinite mercy for man when He gave His only begotten Son to redeem him from his uncleanness and his sin.”

On Thursday, Dickey told the congregants that liberty and perfect freedom are found in subjection to the law, not freedom from it. He decried “soap-box orators” who “tell the man in the crowd that he is a slave because he can’t pack a gun,” or “tote a flask” or “have someone else’s wife if he wants her. The result of such teaching is anarchy, the death and destruction of all freedom of government.”

And concluding the series on Good Friday, April 6, Dickey urged men to give up all other duties to serve God. “Excuses for not serving God should not be considered,” he said. “If you can’t buy and sell and still come to the feast; if your social duties prevent you from coming, I say you should give up your buying and selling and your social duties.”¹²³

That Sunday was Easter, April 8, 1928. At the Broadway Methodist Church of Louisville, Dickey preached what was to be his last sermon. The text is not recorded, except that it was an Easter message on the glory of the risen Christ. That evening, he and Mrs. Dickey attended services at another church, hearing a sermon by Alfred F. Smith, editor of the *Christian Advocate* of Nashville.

The next morning, Monday after breakfast, Dickey told his wife he did not feel well. A physician who saw him Tuesday morning diagnosed acute appendicitis. Dickey underwent an emergency operation that afternoon at a Louisville hospital. He lingered for a week, with daily reports of his condition in the papers in Louisville, Atlanta and elsewhere. “He passed a good night and his condition was reported ‘satisfactory’ this morning,” the *Atlanta Constitution* reported on April 13. But the next day, the newspaper reported, “He had a very restless night but

¹²³ *Louisville Courier-Journal* and *Louisville Times* clippings, April 3, 4, 5 and 7, 1928, in Dempsey collection, MSS451, box 4, Manuscript, Archives and Rare Book Library, Emory University; Dempsey, *The Life of Bishop Dickey*, pp. 228-235.

was somewhat better today.” On Tuesday, April 17, he lapsed into a “restless unconsciousness.” His wife, Jessie, stood at the bedside with son Edward, daughter Julia, and family friends, Dr. and Mrs. R. N. Allen of St. Louis. James Edward Dickey died just before midnight.¹²⁴

The family, with Dickey’s body, left Louisville by train at 5:40 p.m. Wednesday for the overnight trip to Atlanta. On Thursday, a throng packed Atlanta’s First Methodist Church for the funeral service, officiated by Bishop Candler, who recalled that “the steadfastness of his life proclaimed a center of devotion above all of the changing things of time and sense.” Bishop Ainsworth read the ritual as the body was brought into the church; Samuel Senter, pastor of Atlanta First, announced the hymns; W. H. LaPrade, Jr. led the prayer; J. W. Quillian, pastor of Decatur First, read from the Old Testament; and W. L. Pierce, presiding elder of the North Atlanta District, read from the New Testament. Pallbearers were J. H. Ewing, Charles B. Shelton, H.Y. McCord, Waights G. Henry, Nolan A. Goodyear and Addison Maupin. Clergy of the North and South Atlanta Districts joined the Board of Stewards of Atlanta First Church as honorary escorts.¹²⁵

The newspapers remembered not only his church appointments and his Emory presidency, but characterized him as a “staunch fundamentalist and an anti-unificationist,” noting his alliance with Bishops Denny, Candler, Ainsworth and Darlington in “violently opposing” the unification movement.¹²⁶ Others, such as the student newspaper, the *Emory Wheel*, remembered him more warmly, as “King Dickey, [as] he was affectionately called by the fortunate individuals who attended Emory College during the thirteen golden years of his leadership.” The students remembered how their predecessor students loved him, and how his leadership as president had

¹²⁴ Dempsey, *Life of Bishop Dickey*, pp. 235, 239-240; *Atlanta Constitution*, “Bishop J. E. Dickey is Resting Easily After Operation,” April 13, 1928, p. 15; “Bishop J. E. Dickey Has Restless Night,” April 14, 1928, p. 22.

¹²⁵ Dempsey, pp. 241-242; *Atlanta Constitution*, “Final Rites Today for Bishop Dickey,” April 19, 1928, p. 22.

¹²⁶ *Atlanta Constitution*, “Bishop Dickey Taken by Death,” April 18, 1928, p. 1.

advanced the institution. “But for James Edward Dickey’s efficient and untiring management from 1902 to 1915, Emory University might even yet be only a dream unfulfilled,” they wrote.

“The King is Dead and Emory Mourns,” headlined the *Emory Alumnus*. “A stalwart of stalwarts,” the *Atlanta Georgian* called him. “He was not only a scholarly speaker, but one of great force,” reported the *Atlanta Constitution*, “...a thorough religionist, and lived his convictions. He was one of the purest, sweetest, gentlest characters in his church.” And, said the *Atlanta Journal*, “He shirked no duty, evaded no issue, compromised no principle, but wherever right or truth was challenged there he made his battle field. Of the hosts who have heard him preach, none can forget the grace of his words, the power of his sincerity, the persuasiveness of the orator born. So simply he spoke that little children understood, yet with the profoundness of one whose thought was of the eternal.”¹²⁷

“Bishop Dickey was a man of strong convictions and fearless in his advocacy of such causes as enlisted his support,” wrote the *Nashville Banner*. “He did not count the cost to himself if he saw an opportunity for carrying on the great work to which he dedicated his life and his ceaseless devotion to duty doubtless hastened the end of his earthly career.”¹²⁸ “Nature had done much for him in giving a striking physical appearance and endowing him with marked intellectual strength,” said the *Central Methodist*. “He was at home in the pulpit and charmed his hearers with the clarity of his thought and the force and beauty of his utterance. From his Southern forebears he had inherited that style of earnest, enthusiastic delivery which has made

¹²⁷ Dempsey, *Life of Bishop Dickey*, pp. 243-246; *Atlanta Constitution*, “Bishop James E. Dickey,” April 20, 1928, p. 8.

¹²⁸ *Nashville Banner*, April 18, 1928, clipping in Biography collection, box 31, Manuscript, Archives and Rare Book Library, Emory University.

the South famous for its great orators, and in his most animated moments he could rise to heights of great eloquence.”¹²⁹

Bishop Darlington arrived home following an arduous voyage from Antwerp the morning of April 18 and was met at the door by his wife with the news of Dickey’s death. “What a shock to all of us!” he wrote to Bishop Candler. “I would immediately take up my journey to Atlanta to be with Mrs. Dickey, but I know you are there, and Bishop Ainsworth is not far away,” he wrote.¹³⁰ He and virtually every bishop of the church sent a telegram or wrote to Jessie Dickey expressing condolences. “The church has suffered a great loss,” said W. F. McMurry. “Deeply grieved at my dear friend’s death,” wrote John M. Moore. H. M. Dubose conveyed “soulful sympathy,” and Bishop Ainsworth wrote of the loss of his college companion, “My heart is deeply grieved.” “We are deeply afflicted with you,” Bishop Candler wrote to Jessie Dickey, “and your church has lost one of its most faithful and useful servants.”¹³¹

Indeed, Candler himself had suffered a personal loss, and received letters of condolence from colleagues. “I know that you have lost a dear friend and that the church has lost one of her most useful servants,” wrote B. B. Glasgow, presiding elder of the Talladega District in Alabama. “The Gospel we preach to others should comfort our hearts and make us more determined to do our work in a larger way.” And from A. J. Lamar of the Methodist Publishing House, “It is certainly a great loss to the conservative forces of the church. To you I know it is a personal bereavement as it is to me. A good man and in many respects a great one has gone

¹²⁹ Dempsey, *Life of Bishop Dickey*, p. 247.

¹³⁰ Darlington to W. A. Candler, April 18, 1928, W. A. Candler collection, box 65, Manuscript, Archives and Rare Book Library, Emory University.

¹³¹ Family papers held by the author.

from us. I share your sorrow.” And from Bishop Ainsworth, “My heart is sad over the going of dear Dickey. One by one our dearest friends are passing away.”¹³²

Arthur J. Moore, who himself would be elected bishop in 1930, and would preside over the Atlanta area (North and South Georgia Conferences) as bishop from 1940 to 1960, determined to enter the ministry while a student at Emory College during Dickey’s presidency. He later was pastor of San Antonio’s Travis Park Methodist Church during the time Dickey was bishop there. At the time of Dickey’s death, he was pastor at First Methodist Church of Birmingham. “I doubt if among all the thousands who loved and admired Bishop Dickey if there was any one who loved him more tenderly than I did,” he wrote to Mrs. Dickey. “I went to Emory a green boy with a wife and two children. While there he was like a father to me. God alone knows how he encouraged and helped me. He was my ideal then and remained so to the cease of his good life.” And the future bishop continued, “Then when he came to Texas as my bishop how proud I was. How free I felt in his presence. How dearly I loved him and how fully I trusted him. It seems too cold when you write it, but I gave him the unmeasured affection of my heart. I was always thrilled when he referred to me as one of his boys. He was so fair, so brotherly, so thoughtful.... I shall always cherish his memory.”¹³³

On Sunday, May 20, Atlanta First Methodist hosted a memorial service for Dickey. Norman C. Miller, a college classmate who had served alongside him in the ministry over the years, had gone for a walk on the Oxford campus to gather his thoughts for his memorial remarks:

¹³² Glasgow to W. A. Candler, April 21, 1928; Lamar to W. A. Candler, April 24, 1928; Ainsworth to W. A. Candler, April 24, 1928; W. A. Candler Collection, box 65, Manuscript, Archives, and Rare Book Library, Emory University.

¹³³ Moore to Jessie Dickey, July 10, 1928, Dempsey Collection MSS451, box 4, Manuscript, Archives, and Rare Book Library, Emory University.

I walked under the shade of the same trees where Bishop Dickey and Colquitt and I had walked more than thirty-five years ago when we were boys, with all the hopes and ambitions and vision of life in front of us. I stood in front of Few Hall, where we had sat together amidst the confusion and uproar of a college boy debate. I saw before me again the intellectual youth, the Apollo of manly form and grace that thundered with all the spirit of a boy's enthusiasm in what to us seemed great contests, and they were. As I looked back upon those scenes of our college days, my heart softened and subdued into a sweet sorrow which only the happiest and holiest associations of bygone days can call into being. There are times in our lives when grief lies heaviest on the soul; when memory weeps; when gathering clouds of mournful melancholy pour out their floods and drown the heart in tears. Such was the occasion to which I refer....

I knew him as a college professor and I respected him. I knew him as a college president, and I honored him. I knew him as pastor for five years, and I loved him. I saw him elevated to the highest council of his Church and I rejoiced with him.... Bishop Dickey was a man of high purpose; he was a serious man; he was a man of courage; he was a good man; he knew his Lord.¹³⁴

Meeting the month following Dickey's death, the College of Bishops determined to divide his episcopal area among other bishops until the next elections and reallocation of areas at the 1930 General Conference. They assigned West Virginia to Bishop Denny, the Illinois and Kentucky conferences to Bishop Darlington, and the Louisville Conference to Bishop Dubose.¹³⁵

At their first meeting following Dickey's death, the Emory University trustees adopted a memorial resolution authored by Bishop Candler, recalling his service to Emory College and Emory University, his work in the church and his faithful and effective service as bishop. "This board unites with the Church in deploring what seems his untimely death," they said. "By his death both the Church and the country have suffered a bereavement that is nothing short of a calamity. In the prime of his useful life on earth he was called to his heavenly reward above.

¹³⁴ Miller, Norman C. Personal tribute delivered May 20, 1928. Dempsey collection, box 4, Manuscript, Archives, and Rare Book Library, Emory University; *Atlanta Constitution*, "Service for Dickey Planned for Church," May 17, 1928, p. 20.

¹³⁵ *Atlanta Constitution*, "Reallocate See of Late Bishop Dickey," May 6, 1928, p. 9A.

We submit in faith and patience to this dispensation of Divine will while we long to have back what we would not take.”¹³⁶

Candler likewise wrote an introduction to a memorial biography of Dickey that the North Georgia Conference published, authored by his colleague, Elam F. Dempsey. Said Candler,

His characteristic excellencies of balanced judgment, admirable dignity, strong mind, sound learning, purity of purpose, and marked power as a preacher enabled him to fill well all the various and elevated positions to which he was called during his consecrated and useful life. In no work to which he was appointed by his church did he disappoint the confidence reposed in him or fall below the lofty level of fidelity and effectiveness expected of him.

“From his youth to the end of his high career on earth his purposes and plans were well considered and deliberately pursued to their accomplishment with unwavering resoluteness and unfaltering conscientiousness. No fitful impulsiveness marred his life and labors, and no distracting ambitions diverted him from the path of duty in which he determined to walk. He moved upon an elevated plateau of serene fidelity, without startling peaks or deep depressions. He was removed the furthest possible from sensationalism or anything akin to it. He met all events with uniform calmness and discharged all duties with unvarying fidelity. Hence his life was not marked by striking incidents and surprising effects, although he served in many departments of the work of the Church, evincing in his labors the most brilliant gifts and the most versatile capabilities.

“Far above his manifold and distinguished services shone his resplendent virtues and spotless character. What he did was less than what he was. So steady and stable was his life that he seemed to be exempt from the temptations common to men and to exemplify Christian virtue as if it were his second nature. No selfish motives found place in his soul and no unholy dispositions colored his conduct. He was the soul of honor, candor, and courage. By faith he exemplified in fairest form the life that is hid with Christ in God. He won no position by the unworthy schemes of worldly ambition and achieved no honor by the ingenious methods of compromise and concession.... This volume...shows a real man living without apology and toiling without dishonor in an era of vain sham and ostentatious showiness.”¹³⁷

Candler’s influence in Dickey’s life is paramount to any understanding of his life story.

From Dickey’s first encounter with the new president at the start of his sophomore year at Emory College, Candler grew to be his mentor, supervisor, colleague and life-long friend. He shared Candler’s traditional theology and conservative style in church affairs, but likewise worked side-

¹³⁶ *Emory University Board of Trustees Minutes*, June 1, 1928, pp. 39-40.

¹³⁷ W. A. Candler, Introduction to Dempsey, *Life of Bishop Dickey*, pp. xi-xiii.

by-side with him in progressive efforts to bring Emory College from a small, Southern liberal arts college to the beginnings of the great research university into which Emory has grown today. While there were a number of issues on which Dickey conscientiously deviated from the position held by Candler, for the great majority of their dealings they were in lock-step in principle and practice.

Beyond Candler's considerable influence, Dickey's life is woven through with four additional overriding themes. First among these is that he was a son of the South. He loved and championed Georgia and the South. Born in the literal path of Sherman's March to the Sea in 1864, he grew up in the horrible backwash of the Civil War in Georgia, ever drawing through use of "Lost Cause" rhetoric upon Southern reverence for its great heroes such as Robert E. Lee and Jefferson Davis, the latter of whom as a young man he personally heard speak. But ultimately Dickey became a champion, and a leader, of the New South described by Atticus G. Haygood and Henry W. Grady. Virtually all that occurred in his life must be viewed through this – as John R. Thelin describes it – "regional prism." His Southernness, and the Southernness of the institutions with which he is so intimately involved – Emory College and the Methodist Episcopal Church, South – are significant contextual factors in virtually all his activities. The Southernness placed constraints on Dickey and the other leaders of Emory and the church. The many aftermath effects of the war, the devastated economy of the South during and following Reconstruction, the mindset of the North toward the South and vice versa, all directly affected Dickey's day-to-day existence and formed a significant portion of his world view.

In concrete terms, and as a sub-theme, was the hardness of the Southern economy in Dickey's life. It impacted his financial world, from the personal shortfall that kept him from entering college until age 23, to the hand-to-mouth existence over which he presided for much of

his years as Emory's president, to his role as the greatest fundraiser in the history of the college or of the church in Georgia until that time. In the face of such financial exigencies, he ultimately was able to lead Emory in its first major capital construction projects in a generation – a new dormitory, a new gymnasium, a new science building and a new church/auditorium all completed during his time as president.

Standing equal with Southernness, and a key corollary to it, is the matter of race. Racial interaction and attitude flowed through every phase of life in Dickey's time and location. Virtually every aspect of his life, his college, and his church was tinged with racial overtones. Arguably the most significant challenge of his presidency had to do with faculty member Andrew Sledd's witnessing and writing publicly about the lynching of a Black man by a mob. Ongoing debate about the funding of education, public and private, had to consider at every turn how to educate the Black population, and in the context of the day, how to do it separately and thus at greater financial burden. Further, there was the ever-present question of how much to educate the Blacks lest they become a threat.

The overriding issue of Dickey's later career was his opposition to the unification of the branches of the Methodist Church following its north-south split in 1844 over the question of slavery. A key point in that national debate was how to organize the Black membership in a unified church. Dickey's attitude on race is troubling, but must be considered wholly within the context of the time in which he lived. He and his mentor, Bishop Candler, believed that the white Southerner would not accept Blacks in their churches nor would they accept Black officials over their churches. With their heartfelt loyalty to the furtherance and preservation of the church, they did not want to adopt that which would cause the church injury in their minds. Were they "racist-nativists," as charged by Norwood? Perhaps – but if so it was not with vicious

intent, but rather a pragmatic position for their times. Witness that the Methodist Church could not find a way to end the racial separation until 1967 – nearly four decades after Dickey’s death. That he was “a product of his times” is not an excuse, but a statement of hard fact.

A third theme of Dickey’s life was the Wesleyan creed of uniting heart and mind – knowledge combined with vital piety. Upon this philosophy is built the very concept of Methodist involvement in higher education. The church was not just the founder of the college – the relationship of the two institutions was symbiotic. Dickey and Candler saw no difference in their roles as preachers and as teachers, as bishops and as college presidents. Each role was a function of the same fundamental goal to provide Christian education to the next generation – not just religion, and not just education, but Christian education. They sought to win souls and to educate minds for the furtherance of the kingdom, and therefore of society. This could be done before a congregation on Sunday or before a classroom on Monday. It was no accident that many of the Emory faculty were ministers and that many of its trustees were bishops or leading Methodist laymen. The college was fundamental to the mission of the church. In Dickey’s later career, his role in the founding of Emory and Southern Methodist universities was an extension of this philosophy that education was a fundamental and core method of advancing the faith. In his last meeting as an Emory trustee, he participated in a discussion of how to inextricably tie Emory’s future to evangelical Christian principles. The melding of knowledge and vital piety was a fundamental tenet.

A fourth theme to Dickey’s life was his role in the onset of the Progressive Era. Emory at the time of his arrival as a student, and even as president, was a small college still heavily reliant upon the classical curriculum. During his time there as student, faculty and president, the college opened the door to alternate courses of study that did not require Latin and Greek, and

added professional courses including law, business and theology. By the end of his career, Dickey had played a significant role in ushering Emory from a sleepy Southern liberal arts college to a great new university that today is one of the nation's best. One would like to think that this was the result of great foresight on the part of Dickey, Candler and their colleagues, and certainly they exhibited foresight. But also, a number of the developments were more market-driven responses than the result of extensive planning. They had to take steps to boost enrollment at a time when it was lagging and tuition income with it. They had to attract students who could not compete in a classical curriculum – the largest class was the sub-freshmen made up of those needing remediation to do college work. Geiger asserts that, in making such adjustments, small denominational colleges may be the “missing link” in higher education's transition from classical to progressive.

Such development went hand-in-hand with Dickey's and Candler's view of the New South. Observing that which was successful in higher education elsewhere in the nation and in Europe, Dickey wanted it badly for the South, for Georgia and for Emory. He and Candler were boosteristic civic leaders, well-connected in the business community. Dennis, in *Lessons in Progress*, counts Candler among leading southern progressives. Rudolph marks the Progressive Era as an important link between Mark Williams and the log (quoting James A. Garfield – all you need is the professor on one end of a log and a student on the other) and the multiversity posited by Clark Kerr. And John Barnard, writing of Oberlin, says it was not a great leap for such a small school – and we will extend this to Emory – to move from an evangelism approach, designed to educate while saving souls and raising up ministers and new leadership, to progressive teaching designed to save and benefit society as a whole. For some, it may be a difficult juxtaposition to consider that Dickey and Candler could be such hard-nosed

conservatives in matters such as women's rights and race, yet progressive in educational ideals that would lead to the founding of a great university. Their roles cannot be placed into silos by these themes – but instead those themes must function as an interwoven context for their lives in the times in which they lived.

Underlying all this was Dickey's core operating philosophy of devotion to duty. His love of God and the church, his love of Georgia and the South, his dedication to the combining of knowledge and vital piety in his students, and his determination to move matters forward in a progressive way drove him in all things. His service was unselfish, at times to his own detriment. It drove him to spend late nights writing countless fundraising letters on behalf of Emory College, or to spend the time when faculty were on vacation or pursuing further studies instead to make fundraising calls and speeches for the college. It further drove him to tirelessly campaign across four conferences of Texas against a proposal to unify the Methodist church, because he believed it was the right thing to do. It was a consistent theme of his teaching to call the members of his churches and the students on his campus to selfless service of God, of campus, of society. In doing so, he pronounced his own benediction any number of times, such as with these words from the Emory College baccalaureate address to the class of 1908:

If you can do nothing more, plant a tree so that the shadow of its friendly boughs, symbolical of your purposes, may offer to those who come after you a retreat from the heat and burden of the day. Be still, and listen. Hear the still small voice as it calls you to service, a service that shall lay hold on the eternities. Respond to it, and some day, when all the clamoring voices of conquest, of government, and of commerce shall have been hushed, aye, when the voice of love itself is still, out of the unbroken silence you shall hear in tenderest cadences: 'Well done, thou good and faithful servant; enter thou into the joy of thy Lord.' And that will be enough.¹³⁸

¹³⁸ Dickey, James E. "The Call of the World." Baccalaureate address delivered at Emory College June 10, 1908. Dickey Collection, box 1. Manuscript, Archives, and Rare Book Library, Emory University.

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