

PIERCE, George Foster, first president of Georgia (afterward Wesleyan) female college (1839-40). (See biographical sketch in Vol. I., p. 518.) This "mother of female colleges," as it has been called, located at Macon, Ga., was chartered by the legislature of the state in 1836. In November, 1838, a faculty was duly chosen, consisting of the Rev. G. F. Pierce as president and professor of English literature, assisted by eight tutors and instructors. On Jan. 7, 1839, ninety young women enrolled their names as pupils, and before the end of the first term the number increased to one hundred and sixty-eight.



Wesleyan Female College

The college property at that time consisted of one large building 160 feet long by 60 wide, rising four stories high in the centre, with wings three stories high. In 1843, owing to financial embarrassments, the trustees were obliged to dispose of the college at sheriff's sale, and the institution was given over to the Georgia conference of the Methodist Episcopal church. Under the new régime the name was changed to Wesleyan female college, and the state granted a second charter in November, 1843. It was empowered to confer all degrees usually conferred by colleges and universities, and was the first college in America, if not in the world, to confer a literary degree upon a woman, which was done in 1840 by President Pierce, when a class of eleven was graduated.

ELLISON, William H., second president of Wesleyan female college (1840-51), was born at Charleston, S. C., Dec. 4, 1805, the third son of John and Susan Ellison. In early life he enjoyed the advantages of a liberal education, having been kept at the best schools the city of Charleston afforded until he was sixteen years of age. He was then sent to the South Carolina college at Columbia, where he was graduated at the age of twenty. During the next year he was licensed to preach, and joined the South Carolina conference the following winter. He served in that conference only three years, during which time he was married to Anna Capers of Charleston. In the year 1833 he was transferred to La Grange, Ga., where he took charge of the professorship of mathematics in the La Grange female college. Here he remained three years, when, his health having failed him, he resigned his professorship, and lived on a farm for two years. In 1838 he was chosen professor of mathematics in Wesleyan female college at Macon; two years later he was elected president, in which position he remained until July, 1851. His health failed him again, and he moved to Alabama, and engaged in farming. Subsequently he took charge of the Chunnenugee institute, then under the control of the Alabama conference, at which place his wife died, and he married Mrs. Mary Lampkin, who survived him. He

did much laborious itinerant work in the Alabama conference—serving as presiding elder and pastor of various charges—until his health failed completely a short time before his death. His alma mater conferred on him the degree of D. D. He was a man of fine physique and of agreeable manners. His sermons were unique, and as a pulpit orator he had few equals, being both eloquent and logical. He died in Clayton, Ala., Dec. 26, 1884.

MYERS, Edward Howell, third and sixth president of the Wesleyan female college (1851-54 and 1871-74), was born in Orange county, N. Y., in 1816. His father emigrated to Florida in his early childhood, and he was reared to manhood in that state. He was graduated from Randolph-Macon college, Va., in 1838. Upon leaving college he was employed as teacher in the Georgia conference manual labor school, an educational enterprise which subsequently developed into Emory college, at Oxford, Ga. He was admitted to the Georgia conference in January, 1841, and continued in the pastorate until 1845, when he was elected to the chair of natural science in the Wesleyan female college. This position he filled until 1851, when he succeeded to the presidency. He filled all its onerous and delicate duties with eminent success. In 1854 he was elected editor of the "Southern Christian Advocate," published at Charleston, S. C. His editorial career

covered the period of seventeen years, and was characterized by distinguished service to the church, and won for him a place among its wisest counselors and most trustworthy leaders. Randolph-Macon college made him a doctor of divinity. In the autumn of 1871 he retired from the editorship to resume the presidency of Wesleyan female college, made vacant by the death of Dr. Bonnell. After three years of successful service he again entered the pastorate, and in 1874 was appointed to Trinity church, Savannah, Ga. When negotiations touching fraternity were determined upon by the northern and southern Methodist churches, Dr. Myers was appointed chairman of the southern commission, and the complete vindication of the wisdom of the appointment was manifested by the universal satisfaction given in the measures of adjustment. He had just completed this important service at Cape May, N. J., where the commission met, when news reached him of the appearance of yellow fever in Savannah. Unselfish and full of sympathy, without a thought of personal safety, he hastened to the relief of his people in the plague-stricken city. Day and night he ministered to the suffering of his flock, until he himself was smitten by the dreadful fever, and on Sept. 26, 1876, he died, a true Christian martyr.

SMITH, Osborn L., fourth president of Wesleyan female college (1854-60). (See Vol. I., p. 519.)

BONNELL, John Mitchell, fifth president of Wesleyan female college (1860-71), was born in Bucks county, Pa., Apr. 16, 1820, and reared principally in Philadelphia. At an early age he entered Jefferson college, where, ultimately, his collegiate education was finished. But while a student approaching his final course, being rather young for such advanced studies, he was advised against so early a graduation. He accordingly left college at sixteen years to take charge of a school at Louisville, Ky. After a year's experience in teaching, he returned to finish his college course, graduating at the age of

