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Womans or Woman's?

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This article is excerpted from *Academy and College: The History of Furman University's Women's College*, by Judith G. Bainbridge, director of educational services and professor of English at Furman. The book will be published this fall by Mercer University Press. Bainbridge says, "I am deeply grateful to Caroline Williams Plyler for allowing me to use her mother's scrapbook."

firmly opposed to coordination. *The Homet's* annual "April Fools" parody featured an article headlined "Furman and G.W.C. Will Be Merged." The staff "reported" (with more foresight than the youthful humorists could have imagined) that the new college would move to Caesar's Head, and that there would be "two main classroom buildings, a number of dormitories, a large dancing pavilion, tennis courts, golf links, football gridirons, swimming pools and several hot dog stands."

The GWC yearbook, *Entre-Nous*, celebrated the college's Diamond Jubilee year and included a history that emphasized its need for endowment. Even though he could not directly solicit funds in Baptist churches, Ramsay arranged to have his four "Songbirds" — Lucille, Edna and Lillie Belle Reams and Nellie Cannada — accompany him on visits to congregations in nearby communities. They would sing and he would speak on the education of young women, focusing on the needs of the Womans College.

The seniors' final college days were filled with traditions and celebrations. They sat at "Senior tables" in the dining hall, planted the customary ivy sprig for the future, sang the "Ivy Song" at Class Day, and participated in their final May Day. "Skip Day" for seniors was celebrated at the State Fair in Columbia.

On Saturday, May 26, Class Day brought the announcement of the seniors' gift to the endowment — \$750, or the value of a one-carat diamond. On Sunday the Class of 1929 heard Edwin McNeill Poteat, former president of Furman, preach the Baccalaureate and Vespers sermons. On Monday they attended the annual college concert and the President's Reception for the Graduating Class, and on Tuesday they received their diplomas.

Zadee Marguerite Shuler had earned her Bachelor of Science

degree, had found a teaching job at Mauldin High School, and was ready to embark on new adventures. The Greenville Womans College, however, would confront continuing problems and its greatest crisis as the nation sank into the Great Depression.

GWC's ongoing financial woes would lead to coordination with Furman in 1933, with one board of trustees and one president.

Zadee Shuler married John U. Williams, who had graduated from Furman in 1927, on December 12, 1933, and moved to Summerville, S.C., where he was principal of Summerville High School. They had three children — Caroline, Marguerite and Fred (Furman, Class of '63). Later John and Zadee moved to Springfield, S.C., where she taught school and was active in her church and community. She died in 1962.

Womans or Woman's?

In 1914 President David Ramsay was finally convinced by the Alumnae Association and the arguments of his suffragist daughter, Eudora, to change his school's name from "the hated" (by alumnae) Greenville Female College to Greenville Woman's College.

He announced the change to the Alumnae Association in 1913, and while they preferred "Mary Judson College," in honor of the school's beloved longtime Lady Principal, they voted "to keep silent."

The board of trustees agreed to the name change, and board chair B.M. Shuman proposed to the South Carolina Baptist Convention in December 1914 that the school's name become Greenville Woman's College. The convention approved unanimously.

The 1915 catalogue, the college stationery, the *Baptist Courier* and the new charter, authorized by the South Carolina General Assembly in 1916, all use the apostrophe in Woman's. And then, suddenly, it disappears. From 1916 to 1930, when Ramsay retired, the name on all literature is Greenville Womans College. Even the college seal (above), which today resides over the entrance to Judson Hall, lacks the apostrophe.

Evidently this was done at Ramsay's insistence, because after his retirement the apostrophe was sporadically reinstated. By 1933, Greenville Woman's College was once again grammatically correct. After consolidation and merger with Furman, it became the Woman's College of Furman University.

In *Academy and College: The History of the Women's College of Furman University*, I have referred to the college as its officials did. It seemed wrong to correct or to [sic] Ramsay's style.

— Judith G. Bainbridge

