—Prentiss Institute pioneer

(Continued from Page 74)

Institute is justly proud of its many graduates and former students. The vast majority of them came from rural communities and from poor economic backgrounds. They worked their way through school. This makes their achievements all the more remarkable.

Today they are scattered throughout America and in several countries. Yet, wherever they may reside their contributions are being felt in the spiritual, social and economic life of their respective communities.

* * *

COURSES OFFERED include: Two complete years of college work and two years of teacher training work based on theory and supervised practice; four years of accredited high school work, including: home economics, vocational agriculture, bricklaying, business, commerce, music, cleaning, pressing, carpentry, shoe repairing, auto mechanics, and vocational photography.

Bible training may be secured through the cooperating and adjacent Mississippi Union Theological Seminary. The School is nonsectarian, Christian.

About 40 day students were enrolled the first year with some four or five boarders. Money had to be raised to meet immediate needs as well as to make payments on the mortgage. Prof. and Mrs. Johnson canvassed from house to house among the colored people throughout Jefferson Davis and adjacent counties.

A chicken here, a peck of meal there were used to feed themselves and the boarders. These were the most difficult years in the school's history.

* * *

THE PHYSICAL PLANT of the school consists of 530 acres of land, 24 buildings and farm and trade equipment. The enrollment '1956-1957 session was 780 including many veterans with a staff of 44.

The Institute is supported largely by hundreds of contributors who live in every state in the union. The school's many friends believed not only in the type of training offered, but feel that it is a good program for youth of the nation as well.

* * *

THE INSTITUTION has always prided itself on being the moving spirit in many new ventures. In 1912 the work of the Jeanes Agent in the South began at Prentiss. These agents are assistants to the various county superintendents, of education and supervisors of colored public schools. Today there are 17 states with such agents in the South.

In 1913 the first colored farm extension agent in the state of Mississippi began his work at Prentiss Institute. In 1913 the American Sunday School Union, with headquarters in Philadelphia, Pa., began its work in the South for colored people, at Prentiss.

* * *

THE INSTITUTE has always been a community school, concerned first with local needs and problems. Never has a majority of its students resided outside of the county. A community appeal for help was made by the teachers, high school graduates, who were interested in furthering their education in a school which could offer some opportunity for progression, rather than attend the summer normals then in vogue.

In answer to this appeal the two years of teacher training were added in the year 1940. The State Department of Education approved the Institute for certification of teachers.

On November 19, 1953, Prof. J. E. Johnson died. However, the tenets upon which the school was founded have remained unchanged.

On April 29, 1954, the board of trustees elected Mrs. J. E. Johnson to succeed her late husband as president.

NATCHEZ JUNIOR COLLEGE

President, DR. LEVANDER KINDS

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FOR FURTHER INFORMATION WRITE TO:

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MISSISSIPPI VALLEY STATE COLLEGE
Salutes The AFRO-AMERICAN 10th Annual Career Planning

DR. JAMES HERBERT WHITE...First and only President, Mississippi Valley State College

THE GROWTH OF A DREAM

The dream began on February 10, 1950. A spade of dirt symbolized that simple beginning. A crowd of anxious spectators listened with intense interest as President J. H. White promised, under God, that on a 450 acre tract in the rich Delta plain a college would be built. In this "wilderness" at Itta Bena — in this "snake-infested" cotton patch, President White promised to build an institution as fast as the need and to have a citidal of learning within the reach of 600,000 Negroes. As he made his promise, Ex-Governor Fielding L. Wright and members of the Board of Trustees, Institutions of Higher Learning, State of Mississippi echoed their support.

It was a long hard struggle. President White laid the plans and the blueprint, gave the public relations for the "College With A Million Friends," established friendships through a development program, and at length the classroom building, a boys' and girls' dormitory, a gym, a home economic building, an administration building, a science and library building, a student union, before the other two state colleges, fine dormitories for men and women, improved faculty housing, the Walter Sillers Fine Arts Building, shops, a laundry and the beginning of a $5,500,000 building program which is under construction as we go to press. The new dining hall, nursing building, technical building, Fielding L. Wright, Mathematics and science Center, Edna Horton Hall, a five story dormitory for women, five story boys' dormitory, a gymnasium bring the plant's value to almost 14 million dollars in a 16—year span.

The college has developed human values. There were 14 students and 7 teachers in 1950; there are 2,488 students and 200 members of the faculty and staff at the present time. In 1951 there was an annual appropriation of $150,000 at the present time the appropriation is $1,284,487.98

In academic standardization, the college has grown and is continuing to grow. Many members of the faculty have the terminal degree. There are persons holding the doctoral degree in every area of the learning process. There are many mature masters, persons who have done far more than a year above the master's degree. In every area the college meets the requirement of our regional agency.

The Mississippi Valley State College graduates are giving service in medicine, teaching, ministry, trades and industries, business, social work, the law, physical education, supervision, building construction, nursing, printing and in every area of employment opportunity.

The college is a teacher and liberal arts college. In the fine arts we have produced a "500" Festival, Tournament of Roses Parade Band, a choir that sang at the Waldorf Astoria and teachers that have given service to the school system of the nation in elementary and secondary areas.

We expect to continue to grow. Presently, we have 84 odd buildings, including 22 instructional and service buildings, 8 dormitories, 5 apartment buildings, (for faculty) 19 faculty homes and the President's home, 5 duplex homes, 21 trailors for faculty.

Under the dynamic leadership of our first and only President, the dream will continue to grow and when the colleges and universities of the nation are gathered together in galaxy of institutions of worth, the dream is that Mississippi Valley State College will shine as a brighter star.

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A TEACHER EDUCATION
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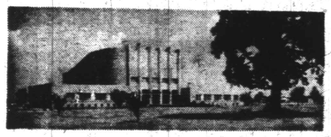

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