CHAPTER TWO

Early Years of the Normal School From 1883 to 1899

The normal school movement for teacher training was an important development in the 1880s. In 1854 William F. Perry, a prominent teacher, became the first elected state superintendent of education. Perry stressed normal school development for teacher training but received little financial support. Nevertheless, he tried to produce a professional spirit among the teachers and a desire for improvement, which had been generally lacking. Teachers received salaries of $20 to $25 a month for four-month sessions; teaching had not become a profession. The War Between the States interrupted the movement, but it was revived during the Reconstruction period.

Jacksonville State University traces its formal beginning to the establishment of the State Normal School. Through the influence of L. W. Grant in the Senate and J. D. Hammond in the House, the 1882-83 session of the Alabama Legislature provided for the establishment of the Jacksonville and Livingston State Normal Schools. Governor Edward A. O'Neal signed the bill on February 22, 1883, and the first appropriation was $2,500 for each school — to be used for no purpose except the payment of salaries. The Normal School at Florence was established in 1873 and the one at Troy in 1885.

With the establishment of the State Normal School, Calhoun College closed, transferring to the Normal School its books and equipment, twelve acres of land, and a two-story brick building, sixty-two by sixty-two feet. Captain William M. Hames, president of the board of directors of the Normal School, accepted the deed. Other directors were John M. Caldwell, L. W. Grant, S. K. McSpadden, James Crook, H. L. Stevenson, J. D. Hammond, W. P. Howell, Dr. J. Y. Nisbet, William J. Alexander, and D. A. Aderholdt.

The Normal School board elected James G. Ryals, Jr., a University of Virginia graduate, as the first president. The school opened with three teachers: W. J. Borden, mathematics; Eliza A. Bowen, English branches; and Ida J. Woodward, primary department. As provided in the establishing act, the Normal School conducted a preparatory or training school attended by children of the town.

At the end of the first year, on August 15, 1884, William M. Hames, president of the board of trustees of the school, reported to the state superintendent of education that the roll book showed 247 names and there were twenty-five pupils in the Normal department proper.

The first annual report to H. J. Armstrong, superintendent of education, also included the following financial statement:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statement of Receipts and Disbursements of the State Normal School at Jacksonville, Ala. Term 1883-84</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Receipts</strong></td>
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<td>From State of Alabama</td>
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<td>County Superintendent of Education</td>
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<td>Tuition and contingent fees</td>
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<td>Concerts given to aid school</td>
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<tr>
<td>Donation</td>
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<td><strong>Total receipts</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Amount paid salaries, as follows:</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>J. G. Ryals, President</td>
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<tr>
<td>Miss E. A. Bowen</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mrs. Ida J. Woodward</td>
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<tr>
<td>Prof. W. G. Borden</td>
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<td>Paid Janitor</td>
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<tr>
<td>Furniture, expenses, etc.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Total disbursements</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Balance from trustees to furniture account</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total balance</strong></td>
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</tbody>
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William M. Hames,
President Board Trustees, State Normal School at Jacksonville, Ala.

The Normal School closed its second annual session on the 20th of June, 1885. Trustee Hames reported to Solomon Palmer, superintendent of education, that the school had improved over the previous year: the regular faculty had increased to five teachers, and of the total attendance of 203,
Jacksonville, Ala.,
Aug. 16th 1887.

Board met on 1/16/1887 of the
president.

Present Mr. W. H. Amos,
President T. W. Grant for A. H. 
Morgan, J. B. O'Brady, J. S. Crook, and 
J. H. Moor. Absent were 
D. H. Baker and 
Alexander and A. C. W. Lodder, 
A. H. Amos, Treasurer and 
Member of the Board of Directors.

Concluded with resignation which 
was accepted and R. T. Cooke 
elected to fill the vacancy. He 
was also elected Secretary and 
Vice-Principal by expiration of term of 
T. W. Grant. The board closing 
to imitate the loss of his vote.

On motion it was 
agreed that the directors shall 
meet next the second in a 
body every two weeks beginning 
with the first day of the school.

R. T. Cooke

W. M. Amos
Pres.
Jacksonville, Ala.

December 22, 1887.

Capt. Howell Samuel,
President of Board of Trustees.

Dear Sir:

It gives me pleasure to submit to you the following report of the State Normal School for the scholastic year ending September 30, 1887.

The fourth session of this institution closed June 10, 1887, during which much was accomplished in the way of improving the property, regulating the discipline, systematizing the work, extending the course of study, enlarging the works of teachers, and facilitating in many ways the education of the young, mental and physical.

In closing this report, I have to recommend to the Honorable Board of Trustees the purchase of window shades for the three study halls. At present we have no means of modifying the light that comes in through most of the windows, and this excess of light, coming, as it is, from all directions, is a position injurious to the eyes of those pupils who do much studying in the school building.

Respectfully, submitting,

C. W. Gibson,
President of Faculty.
CATALOGUE

OF THE

OFFICERS AND PUPILS

OF THE

State Normal School

at

JACKSONVILLE, ALABAMA

FIRST SESSION, 1883-1884.
Rates of Tuition.

Normal Class . . . . . . . . . . . Free.
Primary Department . . . . . . . 75 per month.
Intermediate Department . . . . . $1.50 per month.

Collegiate Department.

Junior Class . . . . . . . . . . . . $2.00 per month.
Senior Class . . . . . . . . . . . . 3.00 per month.
Incidental fee for Normal pupils, $5.00 per term of 10 months, payable in advance.
All tuitions payable quarterly in advance.
The next session is to begin on Monday, September 1st, 1884.
thirty-two were in the Normal department. He also included the following in this report:

A very sad bereavement befell the school last spring in the death of its deeply beloved and honored young president, Professor James G. Ryals, Jr. He died of pneumonia on the 18th day of April, after an illness of nine days. He was just thirty years of age at the time of his death... His success during the two years of his presidency of our school was truly remarkable... A few days later the Board of Directors elected Professor J. Harris Chappell to fill his unexpired term.

Professor J. Harris Chappell delivered diplomas to the first graduating class in 1886. The townspeople were proud of the first commencement of the Normal School, as were the nine members of this class: L. J. Bishop, Fannie Crow, J. Flournoy Crook, May Cunningham, Jacob Forney, L. G. Hames, Addie Hammond, Willie Hutchinson, and Nannie Williams. Chappell left Jacksonville at the end of the school year to become president of a girls' school in Milledgeville, Georgia.

Upon the resignation of Chappell, Carleton Bartlett Gibson, a member of the school faculty, was elected president in 1886. Gibson grew up in Mobile and held an A.B. and an honorary M.A. degrees from the University of Alabama. He was regarded as a brilliant educator and an eloquent speaker.

One of the first concerns of the new president was financial resources for the coming year. The state had not increased the annual $2,500 appropriation, although the school was growing.

The Peabody Fund donated $300 annually to the Normal School for the years 1885 through 1888, but the amount was reduced to $150 in 1890. In some years no money was received from this fund. In 1901, $400 was received, the amount increasing to $500 in 1903 and 1904, and to $2,000 in 1909.

The State Department of Education distributed the Peabody donations to the schools, and J. L. M. Curry was general agent of the fund. Donations were made to normal schools and teachers' institutes, and scholarships were given for Peabody Normal College in Nashville, Tennessee.

The George Peabody Fund for Southern Education was based upon the idea that to improve education, the teaching force must first be improved. George Peabody, though lacking family connection or formal education, achieved success as a merchant banker in Baltimore and an investment banker in London. Southern education was his largest philanthropy. Established after the War Between the States, this fund helped many normal schools of the South in the training of teachers to meet the demands of the rapidly developing public schools.

The directors, or trustees, of the Normal School were active in the operation of the school. They visited the college in a body frequently — sometimes every two weeks — and hired the faculty. All expenditures were authorized by the board. The president of the school was referred to as "president of the faculty."

Faculty group in 1892-93. From the left, Miss Jessie Woods, music; Jacob Forney, first assistant to the president; Miss Jarrett, J. B. Jarrett, president; Miss Bessie Haley; Mrs. Ida Grant Woodward, primary.

Courtesy of Barbara Green and John B. Nisbet, Jr.
Graduating class of 1893. Back row, standing: Hally Briddle, Emily Goodlett, Annie Rowan Forney, Cora Lee Driskill, Lucy Whisenant. Seated: Marie Burke, Bessie Montgomery, Mary Haley, Annie Davenport, Nannie Ross. W. A. Wilkerson, the only male in the class, is not shown. He later became a railroad auditor in Jacksonville, Florida.

Courtesy of Kathleen Daugette Carson

William M. Hames, president of the board of trustees, reported on November 10, 1891, to John G. Harris, superintendent of education, that enrollment was increasing and the Normal had not been allowed in any sense to become a local school controlled by local influences.

"The number from abroad who received training here was much larger last year than ever before in the history of the school," he wrote, "and this year promises even better results in this regard."

The overall budget for the school term beginning September 2, 1890, and ending June 10, 1891, was $5,238.24, according to the report of P. D. Ross, treasurer of the State Normal School at Jacksonville. Receipts included a state appropriation of $2,500 while the township fund provided $300 and the Peabody fund, $150. Salaries were paid to the president and six teachers, the president receiving $1,200.

The Normal School added courses and improved its methods from year to year, and enrollment fluctuated as did financial support. Gibson served as president until 1892.

The next president of the Normal School was J. B. Jarrett, who remained for one year, 1892-93.

A member of the first Normal School graduating class, Jacob Forney, became president in 1893. This son of Major General John H. Forney had graduated with an A.B. degree in 1889 and had received an honorary M.A. degree in 1892 from the University of Alabama. The following information is found in the minutes of the board of directors of the State Normal School, dated July 5, 1893, and signed by P. D. Ross, secretary:

On motion of L. W. Grant to the Board resolved to elect teachers for the Normal Department for the ensuing year, the president stated that Jacob Forney was the only applicant for the presidency of the faculty, and he being nominated was unanimously elected president of the faculty for the ensuing scholastic year of ten months at a salary of $100 per month.

The 1894-95 catalogue indicates there were six teachers in addition to the president. Mentioned also in this bulletin was progress in the teaching profession:

The school has been successful during the whole of its life and has sent its graduates out to teach in the different schools of the State and the South. Many of these graduates have shown by their work how much they have benefited by this wise provision of the State [for normal schools].
Minutes of the board of trustees, dated October 8, 1894, state: "C. W. Daugette was elected a member of the Faculty for the remaining eight months of the school for the present year at a salary of $60 per month."

President Forney was authorized to inform the young science teacher of the appointment. When Daugette first came, some zealous citizens of the town were skeptical as to his religious beliefs, feeling all science teachers believed and taught the Darwin theory. One Sunday afternoon, in a talk to the YMCA group, Daugette dispelled this fear.

The Normal School was becoming established. Act 545, "to constitute the town of Jacksonville, Alabama, a separate school district," was approved by the Alabama Legislature on February 18, 1897.

The corporate limits of the town were to be known as the Jacksonville public school district. The board of directors of the State Normal School constituted the board of trustees for said school district, and the president of the Normal School was to be superintendent of the public schools, "both white and colored." This act further provided that public schools for white children should constitute a model training school for the State Normal and the school district would receive its proportionate share of public school revenue from the state, as well as poll and property taxes collected locally.

Historically, this act is the forerunner of the present connection between the city schools and the Jacksonville State University, and was an important public issue and concern of the future administrations of C. W. Daugette and his successors in the presidency.

After one hundred years, Jacksonville State University maintains a caring attitude toward its students and a wholesome environment to achieve academic excellence. C. W. Daugette, Jr., chairman of the board of trustees, has said, "This school has always tried to provide an opportunity for ambitious students to receive a quality education, to give more than instruction, to be sensitive to their responsibilities, to give them inspiration to succeed - personalized education."

The following letter was written by President Forney to Mary Nisbet, a great-aunt of John B. Nisbet, Jr., mayor of Jacksonville:

School,
May 5, 1897

My dear Mary,

I am very sorry to hear that you are laid up with the fever. I trust that you will soon be yourself again, but above all do not let the thought that you are missing your lessons and are standing a bad chance of making your examinations worry you. You must get well and strong by commencement, and if you can't stand the examinations, we shall see that your fruitful work of the past eight months will carry you through, and you may rest assured that we deem you as thoroughly qualified, as any of the other seniors, for graduation.

So don't fret about your absence from school, but try to get well in time for the Commencement exercises.

Your teacher,
Jacob Forney

The Nisbet family records show that the young lady died soon after receiving this kind, concerned letter and was buried in the dress she planned to wear for graduation.

Jacob Forney left Jacksonville to return to the University of Alabama as professor of psychology and education in 1899. He died in Springville, Alabama, in 1902.

Although the early presidents had relatively short tenure, their enduring efforts kept the Normal School in operation. They provided the best faculty and curriculum permitted by the financial resources and educational opportunities of the late 1800s.

The next president, Clarence W. Daugette, was to serve for forty-three years.
Faculty group in 1894. Prof. Jacob Forney, President; Prof. C. W. Daugette, Assistant; Miss Mary C. Forney; Miss Clara Lund.

Courtesy of C. W. Daugette, Jr.
Clarence William Daugette
1899-1942

Courtesy of C. W. Daugette, Jr.
Clarence William Daugette
1899 - 1942

July 23, 1895
Dear Son—
May your daily walk in life be so perfect that others may be constrained to follow your example.

Your Mother,
C. J. Daugette

Clara Janet Rankin Daugette was close to her son and always encouraged him to excel in his undertakings — to go beyond what others expected of him.

Clarence William Daugette was born at Bell’s Landing in Monroe County, Alabama, on October 14, 1873. His mother’s grandparents were born in Scotland and came to the United States in their early lives. His father, William Thomas Daugette, was a planter and served four years in the Confederate Army.

The early education of Daugette began in the Monroeville schools and the Monroeville Academy. After graduation from the academy, he entered the Agricultural and Mechanical College of Alabama, now Auburn University, and while on summer vacation in 1889, he became a sixteen-year-old teacher in the public school in Repton. He received a Bachelor of Science degree in 1893 and continued at Auburn for a Master of Science degree in 1894.

That same year Daugette came to Jacksonville as a science instructor in the Normal School, and there met Annie Rowan Forney, the sister of President Jacob Forney. They were married three years later on December 22, 1897. For many years, the town of Jacksonville was home for their five children, Kathleen (Mrs. W. C. Carson), Palmer (Mrs. William J. Calvert, Jr.), Clarence William, Jr., Rutledge, and Rankin. Daugette continued as a science teacher until 1899 when he succeeded Jacob Forney as president.

The twenty-six-year-old president continued his education. In the summers of 1901 and 1903 he attended the University of Chicago. Later he studied with Colonel Francis W. Parker, a revolutionary thinker and worker in education, and in 1916, he received an honorary Doctor of Laws degree from the University of Alabama.

For forty-three years this president was an energizing force in a growing educational center. With keen business ability in managing meager resources and a firm resolution to expand facilities, he dreamed and built as the years passed. Ahead of the times, he laid the foundation for Jacksonville State University and for the students who would become leaders in Alabama and throughout this country.

Not only did he build modern buildings and recruit an outstanding faculty, but he also enriched students with the inspiration to excel in life and to pass on to their students and children the zest for achievement. From devotionals to physical culture to academics, the president marched with the students, assisting with finances, offering advice and moderate discipline, and becoming involved personally with every phase of student life. He included in school bulletins for many years the statement: “Parents desiring the President to take special oversight of their sons and daughters will please make it known before they send them to Jacksonville.” He cared, he chaperoned, and he caught some students in their efforts to outmaneuver the sharp father figure.

This president was always the peacemaker in any controversy. The following story is told about a football game. The players were in an argument in the middle of the field, and Daugette was there entertaining the Jacksonville boys to be more gentlemanly and gracious. Someone came up from behind with a rolled-up newspaper and hit him on his naturally unprotected head.
“Crown 'em, boys! Crown 'em,” the president shouted, and competitive spirit prevailed.

How did Daugette attract teachers with Ph.D's from prominent universities to come to a small Southern town and a struggling teachers' college?

Robert P. Felgar, Sr., Ph.D., University of Texas, came to Jacksonville State Teachers College in 1929, and Charles E. Cayley, Ph.D., the University of Chicago, came in 1934 — both taught history. Loy W. Allison, Ph.D., Peabody, was hired to teach psychology in 1930. William J. Calvert, Jr., Ph.D., Harvard, joined the English Department in 1934, as did Henry Bascom Mock, Ph.D., University of North Carolina. Clara Weishaupt, Ph.D., Ohio State University, became professor of science in 1935. The same year, James Harding Jones from Mississippi, Docteur (Lettres) de I'Universite de Montpellier, came to teach French and later became director of the International House program. Other early faculty members were encouraged to take leave and get higher degrees. The list could go on.

This question was answered recently by William Calvert, who became the president's son-in-law. "Well, jobs were scarce and Dr. Daugette was a persuasive fellow," he said. "Although he couldn't promise me much, he came through with everything he said he would. Dr. Daugette believed this was the best place on earth."

The Normal School grew into a promising teachers' college by 1929 and became one of the largest in the state in the 1930s. In the mid-thirties, however, there was opposition. Some people felt there was a surplus of teachers and a duplication of courses, and suggested that consolidation of the normal schools would be more economical. Daugette met with various committees and with members of the Legislature and staunchly explained the work being offered and the advantages of his school. He usually got favorable action. Numerous times he spoke against consolidation saying, "Many deserving young men and women will not find it possible to go to a college a long distance away from home."

The president met other challenges successfully, and the school never closed its doors during World War I nor the Great Depression of the thirties. He took promissory notes from students for tuition and board, and he always encouraged them in the worst of times. His last activities involved the students who were serving in World War II.

Helping the school grow from a small building valued at $16,000 to a physical plant valued at several million dollars, and from six teachers in the Normal School in 1899 to fifty-two teachers and thirty staff members in the Jacksonville State Teachers College in 1942, this president fostered teacher education and education in general throughout Alabama. His accomplishments were possible because of his tenacious spirit and the loyal support of citizens of the town and state.

This "persuasive fellow," who was known as the dean of college presidents in Alabama and who was credited with many civic and church achievements, died on August 9, 1942. The message on the university seal, EXEGI MONUMENTUM AERE PERENNIUS “I have reared a monument more enduring than bronze” could be a memorial to Clarence William Daugette.
Annie Rowan Forney Daugette

Courtesy of C. W. Daugette, Jr.
Annie Rowan Forney Daugette

Annie Rowan Forney was born at the Jacob Forney plantation, Satoah, three miles southwest of Jacksonville, Alabama, on June 1, 1876. This Jacob Forney, her grandfather, was the father of General William H. and John H. Forney. Her family tree includes a president of the First Continental Congress, Henry Middleton; Edward Rutledge and Arthur Middleton, both signers of the Declaration of Independence; Gen. Peter Forney of Revolutionary fame; and her father, Gen. John H. Forney, who scored a remarkable record in the United States Army and later in the Confederate Army. Her mother was Septima Sexta Middleton Rutledge Forney.

The family of Annie Rowan Forney was talented in music and art, as well as patriotic. After her graduation from the Jacksonville State Normal School in 1893, Annie Forney studied in New York City at Cooper Union and the National Academy of Design, where she won the coveted Elliott Medal for the best drawing of heads.

In a letter from her mother — discovered by Kathleen Carson — Annie Rowan Forney first learned of C. W. Daugette, who had been hired as a promising new science professor at the Normal School. In a letter, dated October 13, 1894, Mrs. Forney said:

The new teacher arrived yesterday, Mr. Daugette. Mr. Wright brought him around last night. He is very, very tall and slim, not handsome, but has fine eyes and a cleft chin which always shows character, is quiet and rather dignified. I don’t think Mr. Wright need fear him as a rival in the hearts of the girls.

Shortly after returning to Jacksonville, Annie Rowan Forney met Daugette. Traditionally, Jacksonville provided the background for romance, and the talented couple were married on December 22, 1897. Soon to become the first lady of the Normal School, Annie Forney Daugette began a career of community and state-wide service.

The United Daughters of the Confederacy bestowed on her their highest award, the Jefferson Davis Medal, for distinguished service. As a result of a campaign initiated by Annie Forney Daugette, the Great Seal of Alabama, with alterations by Mrs. Daugette, was re-adopted in 1939. Jacksonville State University honored her with the Doctor of Humanities degree. She was inducted into the Alabama Hall of Fame on October 26, 1978, with ceremonies at Judson College. This honor is given posthumously.

Although Mrs. Daugette received numerous honors and awards, she placed her duties to her family first.

This matriarch of a distinguished family contributed a steady vision and a wise leadership to her city, county, and state. She died in Jacksonville at the age of ninety-eight on September 11, 1974.
The Magnolias was built about 1850 by Judge Thomas A. Walker, soldier, statesman, and financier. In 1903, the house was purchased and remodeled by Clarence William Daugette, president of the State Normal School and the Jacksonville State Teachers College for forty-three years. This house has not only been the Daugette home, but also the heart of the school and town. Historically significant for its world-famous guests, as well as its building and architecture, The Magnolias is filled with antiques, art, and photographs spanning generations of this family. Presiding over the home now is a daughter, Kathleen Daugette Carson.