

A Distinctive Contribution: The Bishop Tuttle Memorial Training School

by Lynn Hoke

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Quoting President Edgar H. Goold in his annual report to the St. Augustine's Trustees in 1934: "The Bishop Tuttle School for Young Women who are preparing to enter fields of Social Service or Religious Education has been maintained for a number of years as a special project of the National Women's Auxiliary. Our Church is the first and only Church to provide such an opportunity for training so that this school is widely recognized as being a distinctive contribution of our Episcopal Church to the needs and development of the Negro people."¹ So, today we ask, simply: what made this school distinctive and what happened to this contribution?

"Where can a young Colored woman get training for Church work?" According to Grace Lindley, Executive Secretary of the Woman's Auxiliary from 1919 to 1940, this question began to be asked in earnest in the early 1920s: "There were Church schools for all sorts of training, industrial and academic, there were secular schools and colleges, but there was none for the training of women Church workers of the Negro race. There was little doubt that such a school *ought* to be, and resolutions urging this were passed by the Synods of the Washington and Sewanee Provinces. Then the Woman's Auxiliary said that there *should* be such a school, and set itself to gathering the funds for it. The Conference of Colored People decided that they would try to give \$5,000 toward it."² Thus begins the story of the Bishop Tuttle Memorial Training School, built on the campus of St. Augustine's College in Raleigh, North Carolina.

¹ Edgar H. Goold, Annual Report to St. Augustine's College Trustees, *St. Augustine's Record*, May/June 1934, 4.

² Grace Lindley, "A Satisfying Enterprise to All Concerned: The Bishop Tuttle Memorial House Reflects Spirit of Great Bishop," *The Spirit of Missions*, June 1927, 361.

Last April we told a good bit of this story and celebrated the legacy of the Bishop Tuttle School during an all-day commemoration event co-sponsored by the Episcopal Church Women of the Diocese of North Carolina, St. Augustine's College, and the Diocesan Historiographer, the Rev. Brooks Graebner. As we will do later today, participants gathered in historic St. Augustine's Chapel for a service. People were able to tour the Tuttle Building, now used by the Army ROTC's "Mighty Falcon Battalion." A group of St. Augustine's Theater Department students took on the personae of key historical figures to stage a dramatic reading of documentary sources. Dr. John Kayser, Professor in the Graduate School of Social Work at the University of Denver, gave a formal presentation on the place of the Tuttle School in the history of schools of Social Work. Dr. Kayser and Dr. Pat Page, Convener of the Southern Episcopal Women's History Project, also spoke about how they independently conducted oral history interviews with Fannie Pitt Gross Jeffrey, one of the last graduates of the Bishop Tuttle Training School before it was closed in 1941.³

I began researching the Bishop Tuttle School's history in 2007, as part of a broader ECW survey of the history of African American church women in this Diocese. After combing through the Tuttle School Collection in Austin, I made my notes and photocopies and was ready to write up a short history for the ECW Archives. When I ran just "one more" Internet search on the Tuttle School, Dr. John Kayser's name popped up as the very last presenter for a recent Social Work conference at Dominican University in Illinois. By Googling his university affiliation, I found his e-mail address. He was quite surprised and delighted to find someone else interested in the Tuttle School. When I discovered that he had never even been to Raleigh, I

³ Another researcher who interviewed Fanny Jeffrey, as well as several other Tuttle School graduates, was Joyce Marie Howard. Howard wrote several unpublished articles about the Tuttle School and about the history of black women workers in the Episcopal Church. She died before completing the broader historical account she had envisioned.

suggested that we might work up some kind of program where he could speak. He jumped at that idea. A year and a half later a sabbatical allowed him to be here a week for research preceding our Bishop Tuttle Day.

Back to May 1922. Contingent on funding, the Presiding Bishop and Council approved the Department of Missions plan for what was then called a Training School for Colored Deaconesses and Social and Parish Workers. They resolved that “such school should be established as a department of some already existing Church School for Colored People.” They requested that the Department of Missions confer with the American Church Institute for Negroes and the Department of Christian Social Service, then report back.⁴

A few days earlier the Rev. Edgar H. Goold, Principal of St. Augustine’s School, wrote to the Rev. Carroll Davis at the Church Missions House in New York to let him know there was “serious interest” in the proposed plan to establish the training school. Goold believed that St. Augustine’s was the place for such a school, and that if there were the assurance of permanent support and financial backing the Trustees would probably favor it. He mentioned the possibility of using a house on the school grounds. Another plus was the likelihood that the staff would cooperate, so that only one or two workers would be needed to begin.⁵

In January 1923 Grace Lindley came to Raleigh from New York to meet with a group of people at St. Augustine’s School to discuss what they were calling the “Training School for Colored Women as Churchworkers”. Those attending were listed simply: Bishop and Mrs. Delany; Rev. E. H. Goold; Miss Lindley; Miss C. W. Hunter; Mrs. Weston, from Tarboro, NC; and Miss Connie Young, Charlotte, NC. Lindley began the meeting with a brief history of the school idea. “Everybody seemed to have thought of it first,” she started. As early as 1921,

⁴ Notes on the establishment of a Training School for Colored Deaconesses and Social Parish Workers, Record Group 131-1-1, Bishop Tuttle Training School Collection, The Archives of the Episcopal Church, Austin, TX.

⁵The Rev. Edgar H. Goold to the Rev. Carroll M. Davis, 6 May 1922, Bishop Tuttle Training School Collection.

Bishop Guerry of South Carolina had offered a resolution for a training school, and a similar action followed at the Synod in Richmond. Planners for the 1922 Triennial Meeting in Portland decided to propose a three-year “special” for the training of women in New York and colored women in the south. Another impetus came from the colored churchmen who met in Philadelphia in the fall of 1922. They adopted a plan to pledge \$5,000, parceled out among the 100 parishes at \$50 each or \$16 a year. She concluded, “The whole movement is thus a joint one, of white and colored.”⁶

A general discussion followed about what type of training should be given, why St. Augustine’s would be a good location, the condition of the facilities that were available, the curriculum, possible names for the school, the cost of tuition, and the number and age of students. Mr. Goold suggested that the tuition be “not less than at St. Augustine’s, which is \$108.” Miss Young advised them not to charge too little or make it free, but to have a regular charge for tuition and give scholarships to those who cannot pay. Mrs. Weston urged, “Now is not the time for ‘caution.’ We should undertake a large work. We need consecrated teachers, who are willing to do the work of the Church on weekdays and on Sundays.”⁷

While the St. Augustine’s group felt assured that Raleigh was the ideal location, the National Council was still gathering information. The Council made it clear that even though a vote had been taken to locate the proposed school in connection with St. Augustine’s, a change of location was still possible. St. Augustine’s was the front runner, because of the general consensus that the proposed training school should be attached to such an established Church institution where the general facilities and faculty were place, and only the faculty for special subjects would be needed. But at a recent meeting of some church workers among colored

⁶ Conference at St. Augustine’s, 21-22 January 1923, Bishop Tuttle Training School Collection, 1.

⁷Conference at St. Augustine’s, Bishop Tuttle Training School Collection, 2.

people a “strong element” expressed disapproval of locating the school in the South. With New York, Philadelphia and Washington as the main choices, Washington was generally favored because it was on “neutral ground” and the academic advantages of Howard University could probably be tapped.⁸

Four region-related reasons were given for this recommendation: (1) Some of the women to be trained in the school would be needed for work in the North and therefore ought not to be trained under exclusively Southern conditions; (2) The whole aspect of work among negroes has been greatly modified by the large emigration to the North; (3) Some Negro Church women now resident in the North would be unwilling to go to the South for training; and (4) The parents of young women resident in the North, would be unwilling to have them go South for training. Immediately following these considerations came what was perhaps the real concern regarding the recent decision-making process: “It became evident in the discussion that the representatives of the Negro group thought that representative leaders of the Negro people should be consulted when plans of this character are under way in order that they may have an opportunity to express their opinion rather than merely to be asked to acquiesce in a matter already decided.”⁹

Whatever additional consultations may have ensued, the original vote for St. Augustine’s stood, and fundraising began in earnest. The “Special” three-year offering adopted by the Woman’s Auxiliary called for raising at least \$75,000, with \$65,000 allocated to a house in New York where furloughed missionaries and mission volunteers could live during their transitions or training. The other \$10,000 would go for establishing a “national school for colored women workers.” The North Carolina Branch of the Woman’s Auxiliary made what the President called a “sacred pledge” of \$3,000 to the Special. Similar efforts were made in branches across the

⁸The National Council, “Memorandum concerning the proposed school for the training of Negro women as Church workers, [1923], Bishop Tuttle Training School Collection, 2.

⁹The National Council, “Memorandum,” 2.

country. Fortunately, as the costs for the Tuttle School far exceeded the original \$10,000 figure, so did receipts from the Special.¹⁰ Following the death of Presiding Bishop Daniel Sylvester Tuttle in April 1923, the Woman's Auxiliary Executive Board voted unanimously to make this Special a memorial "to our late beloved Presiding Bishop." This honor was described as "peculiarly fitting" because throughout his tenure as Presiding Bishop from 1903 to 1923, Bishop Tuttle had been "so truly the friend of the Auxiliary interested in their efforts and giving to them his fullest sympathy and encouragement in all their endeavors for a wider influence in the Church."¹¹ The house in New York became Windham House, after Bishop Tuttle's birthplace in Windham, New York, and the school for colored women workers became the Bishop Tuttle Memorial Training School.

The Bishop Tuttle School's first and only Dean was Bertha Richards, an active churchwoman from New Jersey who chose St. Augustine's School as her place to serve the Church. After eight years as the librarian, she went on to serve as Dean during the Tuttle School's sixteen years of operation, from 1925 to 1941.¹² Her dedication to the school and its students and graduates became legendary. Her mission to keep the religious emphasis on a par with the academic remained steadfast. She saw the Tuttle School as a real alternative, because "social training was already possible in the North and this school was to meet the need where no

¹⁰ "President's Address," *Thirty-seventh Annual Report*, Woman's Auxiliary of the Diocese of North Carolina, April 1925, 14. Each year this branch listed contributions in a separate "Bishop Tuttle Memorial" column: \$843.23 in 1924, \$953.41 in 1925, and \$1,432.27 in 1926, which means they exceeded their goal by \$228.91.

¹¹ "The Woman's Auxiliary Special," *The Spirit of Missions*, August 1923, 565.

¹² Bertha Richards was both a popular staff member and an early advocate of the training school. Despite her lack of credentials, she was the obvious choice for Dean. On 21 November 1923 Bishop Cheshire and the St. Augustine's Board of Trustees approved her appointment "as Dean or Executive Head under such title as may be determined." Bishop Joseph B. Cheshire to John W. Wood, Executive Secretary, Department of Missions, 22 November 1923, Bishop Tuttle Training School Collection.

such opportunity existed in a school with Church and religious emphasis.”¹³ Grace Lindley also stressed the Tuttle School’s two-fold mission:

Educators may scorn, philanthropists may discredit, this wonderful enterprise for the race of which I am a part, but down in the heart of untold thousands of black folks, whose health will be strengthened, homes made cleaner, economic value increased, religion purified, praises to God will be forever uttered, the significance of which is immeasurable. I have seen the courses of study for all of the Social Service Institutions located in the South land and I know that none measure up to the standard of the Bishop Tuttle School. While the others train in cold, hard, Social Service, the Bishop Tuttle School mixes the religion of the Lord Jesus Christ, and that makes all the difference in the world.¹⁴

As late as 1937 President Goold described the School as “maintained largely through gifts from the National Woman’s Auxiliary for training workers in the field of Christian Social Service.”¹⁵

Unfortunately, there was no field of Christian Social Service. Both the place of this “religious emphasis” and the place of its strong proponent Dean Richards – who did not have a college degree – eventually became problematical for the school’s future.

The national Woman’s Auxiliary was closely involved with every detail related to the establishment of the Bishop Tuttle Training School. Early in 1924 the Executive Board passed several resolutions regarding its funding, building and on-going administration. One resolution authorized a request from the Department of Missions for \$6,000 of United Thank Offering funds for salaries of workers and maintenance, over and above receipts from tuition.¹⁶ Another resolution called for an advisory committee appointed by the National Council with “representatives of the Department of Missions, the Woman’s Auxiliary, and at least two Colored persons, with such other members as may be deemed advisable, whose duties shall be to

¹³ Bertha Richards, “The Bishop Tuttle Training School,” *The Spirit of Missions*, October 1929, 627.

¹⁴ Grace Lindley, “A Satisfying Enterprise to All Concerned,” 363.

¹⁵ Edgar H. Goold, Annual Report on St. Augustine’s College, *Journal of Convention 1937*, Episcopal Diocese of North Carolina, 49.

¹⁶ The stated rationale for this request was that one mandate of the United Thank Offering was to train and support women workers. Executive Board of the Woman’s Auxiliary, “Statement with Resolutions Passed by the Executive Board of the Woman’s Auxiliary, February 18th, 1924, Concerning the National School for the Training of Colored Women Workers,” Bishop Tuttle Training School Collection, 3.

consider the curriculum, the faculty and all matters pertaining to the school. The nominations for the faculty shall be made by this Committee to the Principal and Trustees of St. Augustine's; the plans and policies of the Training School shall be formed by the committee in consultation with the Principal and Trustees of St. Augustine's."¹⁷ This New York-dominated governing structure would later prove unworkable as the school faced funding, enrollment and accreditation problems.

In May 1925 Howard E. Satterfield, a prominent Raleigh contractor, signed a four-page agreement with the Domestic and Foreign Missionary Society of the Protestant Episcopal Church of the United States of America for the new building on the St. Augustine's School campus. The agreement was not to exceed the cost of \$28,850.00; the work was completed within six months at a cost of \$26,222.04. Following his detailed list of external and internal specifications, Satterfield added this note, "It is understood and intended that the whole job shall be first class in every respect and is expected to meet the full approval of the owners."¹⁸ At an Epiphany dedicatory service in 1926, Satterfield handed over the building to Grace Lindley, who in turn presented it to the Board of Trustees of St. Augustine's School.¹⁹

Howard Satterfield filled the bill. The Auxiliary's Building Committee envisioned a House both "practical and serviceable, simple in effect but dignified and good in lines and material, and reasonable in cost." Of the plans and estimates submitted, Satterfield's were the most satisfactory, and "through his personal interest, cooperation and constant care, the best

¹⁷ Executive Board of the Woman's Auxiliary, "Statement with Resolutions," 2.

¹⁸ Agreement with Builder, 26 May 1925, Bishop Tuttle Training School Collection. This agreement outlined specifications for the following categories: excavation, brick work, fire places, concrete work, tile work, plastering, steel and iron work, framing, windows, blinds, picture moulding, cabinets, stairways, floors, roof, heating, plumbing, wiring, painting, mill work and carpenter work, doors and wood wainscoting.

¹⁹ "Bishop Tuttle Memorial Training School at St. Augustine's Formally Opened," reprint of *News and Observer* article in *The Carolina Churchman*, April 1926, 15.

results have been attained, and due credit should be his for all that he has accomplished.”²⁰ In her announcement to the Diocese, Dean Bertha Richards captured the overall feeling of accomplishment and provided a thumbnail sketch of the building:

There is a new building on the campus of St. Augustine’s School that attracts attention on the outside and almost bursts from the pride of those inside. The Woman’s Auxiliary undertook to make the new building for the Bishop Tuttle Training School for Church Workers an example of what a building should be, and those who have seen it all agree that the Auxiliary succeeded. The entrance of the east front leads directly to the perfectly proportioned living room, with its fireplace and books, easy chairs and piano, and then on the right to the oratory and the two class rooms. The House Mother’s room, the kitchen and pantries, the dining room and office are on the other side, and upstairs are single rooms for seven girls and double rooms for four, with a third floor to be finished for eight more. All are furnished with a bed, bureau, table, book-shelves, lamp, and two chairs for each occupant.²¹

She neglected to include her own two-room living suite on the second floor. Many of the rooms were funded by various Auxiliary branches, dioceses and individuals as Thank Offerings to honor churchwomen, clergy, bishops and others. These same groups also assumed the on-going upkeep of the rooms.²² Opportunities for financial help with the upkeep of other rooms and with scholarships were publicized through brochures and Church-wide publications.²³ In the early years before all the rooms were occupied, Woman’s Auxiliary officials and various volunteers were encouraged to stay at the School for extended periods.

From the beginning the Tuttle School struggled with two issues related to support from the wider Church: recruitment and job opportunities. Bertha Richards wrote numerous letters and articles with this litany of questions: “Do you know of any women of the right sort to enter the school, who can be trained to do the work for which it fits? Is there not in your parish an

²⁰ Eva D. Corey, “The House the Woman’s Auxiliary Built: Careful Planning and Intelligent Supervision Have Brought the Best Results for the Least Possible Money,” *The Spirit of Missions*, January 1926, 51. A video tour and history of the building based largely on this article was produced in conjunction with a commemorative event for the Tuttle School in April 2009.

²¹ B. R., “St. Augustine’s New Building,” *The Carolina Churchman*, December 1925-January 1926, 6. A video tour and history of the building was produced in conjunction with the Tuttle School commemoration in April 2009.

²² Bertha Richards, “The Bishop Tuttle Training School,” *The Spirit of Missions*, October 1929, 627-28.

²³ Lindley, “A Satisfying Enterprise to All Concerned,” 363-64.

educated woman, strong, eager to do the Master's work, young enough to look forward to the future along new ways, waiting perhaps for the suggestion that here lies service worthy of the best her womanhood can give? Will you find her?"²⁴ She also considered the placement of the early graduates to be a key factor in creating momentum for their placement in church positions. She wrote letters to those Bishops of the Church who might need the help a Tuttle School graduate could provide. She publicized the virtues of the new Tuttle School graduates through every means possible:

There will be three graduates of this School in June, and we are concerned to find positions for them in the Church, if possible. The Public Welfare people are waiting for them with impatience, but two of them especially ought to find their work in the Church. They will be trained in modern methods of social work, case work, etc. They have studied social science at St. Augustine's, have been members of Bible classes and had practical experiences of home management under most competent instructors. They will be fitted to organize and develop Church Schools, to teach and to train teachers, to carry on clubs, and to deal with and understand the social and spiritual problems presented by the dependent and delinquent of their race. My hope is that they may secure positions in diocesan leadership or oversight.²⁵

Over time this hope faded in the face of economic realities and diocesan indifference.

Year after year, in a strangely repetitious manner, St. Augustine's President Edgar Goold echoed Bertha Richards in his reports to Diocesan Convention. His first appeal for recruits and church positions came in 1927: "A start has been made at the Bishop Tuttle Training School, erected with the aid of the National Woman's Auxiliary, for the purpose of training Negro women as Church and Welfare workers. To be effective this School must be supplied with good material for training, and suitable places must be made available for its graduates. Our Church

²⁴ Bertha Richards to Grace Lindley, 29 March 1928, Bishop Tuttle School Collection.

²⁵ "Brief Items of Interest," *The Spirit of Missions*, February 1928, 120.

people should interest themselves in accomplishing this.”²⁶ Goold’s annual pleas and admonishments never brought the desired results.

The Great Depression played a role in the lack of response from around the Diocese. First, the black churches and diocesan programs most in need of Tuttle School graduates were the least likely to have either scholarship support for potential students or paid positions for graduates. Second, the majority of jobs for social workers materialized in the New Deal’s public relief and social service programs – not in the Church. At one point ninety-seven percent of the trained social workers in North Carolina were Tuttle School graduates.²⁷ By 1940, after more than a decade of work trying to promote its vision of the paid professional social worker/church worker, another underlying factor emerged. All along, Bishop Edwin Penick’s vision had been altogether different from that of the Woman’s Auxiliary. He wanted the Tuttle School to train and provide the Diocese with “missionary women not seeking remunerative considerations but seeking to serve the Negro race where conditions are not satisfactory; where the Church has conditions to meet. A woman missionary is needed.”²⁸ This attitude was generally prevalent, if not openly stated. Tuttle School graduates found only a few church-sponsored paid positions from which to choose. A few joined the National Woman’s Auxiliary as field workers or took appointments under the United Thank Offering. A few worked in Episcopal parishes that had schools and social programs. None found such positions in North Carolina.²⁹

Between 1927 and 1941 approximately seventy graduates went out from the Bishop Tuttle School. While the early years were highly successful, with overflow enrollment and easy

²⁶ Edgar H. Goold, Annual Report on St. Augustine’s School, *Journal of Convention 1927*, Episcopal Diocese of North Carolina, 40.

²⁷ John Kayser, “The History of the Bishop Tuttle School of Social Work for African American Church Women, 1925-1941,” *Arête* 31(2007): 160.

²⁸ The Rt. Rev. Edwin A. Penick, Report to the Advisory Committee of the Bishop Tuttle School, 26 February 1940, Bishop Tuttle Training School Collection.

²⁹ Lynn Hoke, “A Distinctive Contribution: Commemorating the Bishop Tuttle Memorial Training School,” List of Graduates and Positions, 11-15.

employment, the national scene had changed considerably by 1934. By this time the professionalization of social work had made accreditation imperative. The Tuttle School's status as a church-sponsored and church-funded institution with a strong religious education component created reservations among some of the social work leaders who were consulted for recommendations. One opponent of accrediting the Tuttle School was Forrester Washington, head of the Atlanta School of Social Work and an Episcopalian himself, who called it "a little school for Sunday School teachers." Both Forrester and his predecessor, E. Franklin Frazier, held doctorates in sociology and were "highly critical of the well-intentioned but untrained social worker, fearing that untrained black workers would reflect negatively on the race."³⁰

Without accreditation Tuttle School graduates found it harder to get jobs, and new students were reluctant to enroll. After a public relations tour in 1935 Bertha Richards presented the issue clearly to the Tuttle School Advisory Committee: "It all resolves itself into the question – whom are we to train in this School, and for what? In no uncertain terms did I hear in Washington the definite closing of the doors of agencies against our graduates, and the girls reflect the probability of those in positions losing them. As an unaccredited school I believe that we have come to the end of our usefulness, if we wish to continue along the line of our development thus far."³¹ Reflecting on this tour she noted that her time in Washington brought out the necessity of standards in professional work, while the visit around Alabama and Georgia showed the variety of opportunities available for workers in Church and school and community.³² Bertha Richards still envisioned keeping both tracks of the school intact.

³⁰ Kayser, "The History of the Bishop Tuttle School," 162-63.

³¹ Bertha Richards to Chairman of Advisory Committee, 18 October 1935, quoted in Minutes of National Council, 11-13 February 1936, 3-4, Bishop Tuttle Training School Collection.

³² B. R., "The Bishop Tuttle School," *St. Augustine's Record*, December 1935-January 1936, 2. The name changes alone reflect the on-going challenge of the School's identity and dual mission: A Training School for Colored Churchworkers and Deaconesses (1922); The Bishop Tuttle Memorial Training School (1925 Plaque); The Bishop Tuttle Training School for Colored Women As Church Workers [1926]; The Bishop Tuttle Training School for

The major steps toward accreditation were to affiliate formally with a college or university, to double the annual budget, and to require more advanced academic courses and more rigorous field work supervision.³³ In his May 1936 report to the Diocese, President Goold included the optimistic note that “At present the friends of the school are hoping that the time is not far off when it will qualify for membership in the American Association of Schools of Social Work.”³⁴ Later in the year one of the faculty members announced that such membership was “now a definite goal of the Bishop Tuttle School.” She described several curriculum changes that were part of working toward this goal, including the re-organization of the second-semester schedule for seniors to release them from classroom work for a full program of field work.³⁵ A year later one of the Social Work faculty members wrote an encomium with familiar strains and sweeping claims for mending the social fabric: “We believe in Bishop Tuttle School. We believe in it because it has recognized and preached, since its pioneer days, that social work and religious education are sister services. . . .Because we believe in social work, in the effort to push across frontiers of economic privation, to give people a chance to develop their personalities, to improve the environment where all of us live; because we have faith in the inspiring and directing benefits of religious education, we think Bishop Tuttle School has an important

Colored Church Women [1928]; The Bishop Tuttle School for Church and Welfare Workers [1932]; The Bishop Tuttle School – A National Center for the Training of Young Women for Christian Leadership in Church and Community [1935]; The Bishop Tuttle School for Training Church Workers in Religious Education and Social Service [1938]; The Bishop Tuttle School – A National Center Under the Auspices of the Protestant Episcopal Church for the Training of Young Negro Women for Christian Leadership in Church and Community (1939); The Bishop Tuttle School (1941). Even long after the school’s closure, another variation of the name was used in Bertha Richards honorary degree citation: Bishop Tuttle School of Social and Religious Work (1963).

³³ Specific recommendations from consultants are listed in the “Bishop Tuttle School” Minutes, 6 January 1936, Bishop Tuttle Training School Collection.

³⁴ Edgar H. Goold, Annual Report on St. Augustine’s School, *Journal of Convention 1936*, Episcopal Diocese of North Carolina, 58.

³⁵ L. R. McK. [Louise R. McKinney?], “Notes on the Bishop Tuttle School,” *St. Augustine’s Record*, October-November 1936, 2.

responsibility on St. Augustine's campus, in the capital of North Carolina, on the eastern seaboard between Atlanta and New York."³⁶ But, by this time believing was not enough.

One of the "sister services" suffered its first policy blow at the January 1938 Tuttle School Advisory Committee meeting. In light of the funding issues that made accreditation impossible, the chair appointed a committee to prepare a resolution defining the School's change of policy. As member and spokesman, Bishop Penick helped write the new policy and then reported it back. His own bias came through clearly in the third clause, "Whereas, changing conditions in Church and community indicate the need for an increasing number of women trained for leadership in Religious Education and in general parochial and diocesan work." The resolution called for adjusting the curriculum by the fall of 1938, "with the retention of selected courses in social service but with increased emphasis upon educational subjects, looking to the preparation of well-rounded Church workers with special equipment for educational service."³⁷ This new structure attracted fewer and fewer students, forcing the school's closure in 1941.

Social Work scholar John Kayser suggests that the closure of the Bishop Tuttle School "had as much to do with racial and gender discrimination as it did with the program's inability to reconcile tensions between secular and religious missions."³⁸ Among the faculty and students he traces a growing consciousness of racial and gender inequalities, which eventually led to words and actions that threatened power structures in the church and white privilege in society. Dean Bertha Richards herself exemplifies a transformation in attitudes about race – from benevolent condescension to active intervention, which seemed to have piqued Bishop Penick's own "southern" sentiments. Following her support of several student challenges to southern segregation, Bishop Penick wrote a confidential letter to Presiding Bishop Henry St. George

³⁶ L. F. B. [Lula Fairly Burton?], "Bishop Tuttle School," *St. Augustine's Record*, October –November 1937, 2.

³⁷ Advisory Committee of the Bishop Tuttle Training School, Minutes, 28 January 1938, 6.

³⁸ Kayser, "History of the Bishop Tuttle School," 163-

Tucker criticizing Richards, slamming her leadership, and exposing his real feelings about the Tuttle School and its students:

So far as my observation goes, the School is making practically no contribution to the work of the Church among colored people. To be frank, I regard the School, not only as of negligible value but as downright discreditable to the Church. . . . I believe in encouraging the Negro whenever he shows any ambition to become a helpful influence or leader for his race, but I am sure it is a mistake to make them racially conscious and aggressive until they appear to be seeking occasions for giving offence. Miss Richards, quite sincerely but I suspect deliberately, has pushed the Tuttle students into situations where their presence and their manner was objectionable. I have told her that her policy did not make friends for the School. It is my personal opinion that the School cannot possibly succeed so long as the administrative head possesses and inculcates in the student body a racial attitude that is wholly foreign to that of the south.³⁹

Penick went on to offer several recommendations for changing the school's administration. One would be to let it remain a Woman's Auxiliary project, but to appoint "a group of competent southern women" to investigate the present conditions and make recommendations for the future. He advised against the appointment of a Negro to head the school. He recommended continuation, but only under a "New Order," with a new system, a new faculty, a new curriculum, and a new purpose. And finally, he cautioned, "Negro institutions require strict supervision. They have a tendency to grow slack. I, therefore, believe that a group of men and women should be chosen from the neighborhood of Raleigh who would meet frequently and keep in close touch with every aspect of the School."⁴⁰ Local *southern* leadership was clearly essential.

Bishop Tucker accepted his responsibility for making a decision on the Tuttle School's future, but before doing so he sent the Rev. Almon Pepper, Executive Secretary of the National Council, to Raleigh to get more detailed information about the actual situation. Pepper tried to assuage some of Dean Richards' anxiety about this official visit to consider the future: "These

³⁹ Edwin A. Penick to Presiding Bishop Henry St. George Tucker, 15 April 1941, 1, Bishop Tuttle Training School Collection.

⁴⁰ Penick to Tucker, 2.

are days when this is sound practice, and I know that nobody more than you wants the original purposes, namely, to train colored leaders for Church work among their own people, to be carried out.”⁴¹ Bertha Richards surely embraced the original purposes, but her vision for the Tuttle School had grown with the times. Bishop Penick’s much narrower vision and his recommendations held sway at the National Church. There was to be no “New Order,” and within two weeks of Pepper’s visit the Tuttle School – as it had been envisioned and as it had evolved – was “temporarily” closed forever.⁴²

The Tuttle School merits a formal history that would follow its double strands of church work and social work. The school played a unique role in providing African American women workers trained in both disciplines. It offered a quiet challenge in the Jim Crow era, as faculty and students not only experienced interracial communal living, but also underwent life-changing experiences as a result. Its leaders deserve to be more widely known and appreciated. One unanswered question regards the lack of response from individual churches and dioceses to raise up and support prospective students and/or to employ new graduates in paid positions for much-needed services. The economic hardships of the Great Depression obviously played a part. But, in North Carolina, another question arises about Bishop Penick’s preference for “missionary women not seeking remunerative considerations.” With this he expressed a prevalent church-wide expectation of the time, and one that still has resonance today. Bishop Penick knew the Tuttle School graduates almost all gravitated to positions in various social service agencies. He wanted a different type of student, more like the “parish worker” types who were running several

⁴¹ Almon R. Pepper to Bertha Richards, 8 May 1941, 1, Bishop Tuttle Training School Collection.

⁴² Resolution Adopted by the Board of Trustees of St. Augustine’s College, 28 May 1941, Bishop Tuttle Training School Collection. RESOLVED: That in response to the recommendation and action of the Presiding Bishop and other officers of the National Council as contained from them dated May 22, 1941, regarding the continuance of the work of the Bishop Tuttle Training School, the Board of Trustees of St. Augustine’s hereby declares the work of the Bishop Tuttle Training School suspended as of May 31, 1941, and the services of the staff terminated as of that date, and furthermore expresses its willingness to cooperate with the National Council in working out plans for the use of the Bishop Tuttle building and for the possible future resumption of activities in the school.”

missions in North Carolina, mostly volunteer, some receiving local funds now and then, some funded from the outside as UTO workers. He also wanted a different type of curriculum, one that would help train and inspire young “missionary women” to seek a life of service. Examining this church-wide attitude will help place the Bishop Tuttle School story in the context of the larger story of women’s continuing struggle for equality and recognition in the Church.

Between 1941 and 1974 the Tuttle School building was used for various purposes, including as a residence hall for the St. Agnes Hospital Nursing School students and as a student dormitory. Since 1974 the Army ROTC program has been headquartered in Tuttle Hall. A darkened and hard-to-read bronze plaque hangs beside the building’s main entrance:

**THE
BISHOP TUTTLE
MEMORIAL
TRAINING SCHOOL
ERECTED BY THE
WOMAN’S AUXILIARY
TO THE
NATIONAL CHURCH
1925**

In conjunction with the April 2009 commemoration, the ROTC Battalion Commander oversaw the engraving and placement of metal door plates that identify the original Tuttle School rooms and their donors. Until this event, no member of the St. Augustine’s community who had ever heard of the Tuttle School or knew the original building still stood on campus, could be found.