

Montgomery County Historical Society HERALD



VOLUME 18 NO. 2

MONTGOMERY, ALABAMA

AUGUST 2010

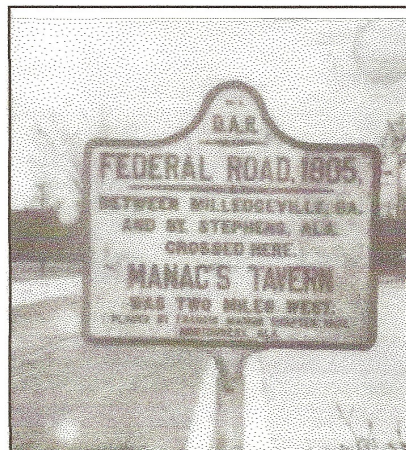
PINTLALA WARRIOR

BY MAJOR GENERAL WILL HILL TANKERSLEY



The Louisiana Purchase was made in 1803 when the United States bought parts of 13 states from France for 15 million dollars. This was a total of 828,000 square miles and stretched from the Mississippi River to the Rocky Mountains and from the Gulf of Mexico to British North America. Napoleon believed that because of the successful slave revolt in Haiti he had lost what he hoped would be the centerpiece of the French colonial empire in North America. He was also concerned about the impending war with Great Britain.

Reaching New Orleans, the most significant city in the acquired territory, required that we either go around the southern tip of Florida or go over the Appalachians and down the Mississippi River. For this reason he directed the Army Corps of Engineers to construct the Federal Road which would begin in Milledgeville - the then capital of Georgia - and end in Mobile. It was referred to as "the longest poor road in the Country."



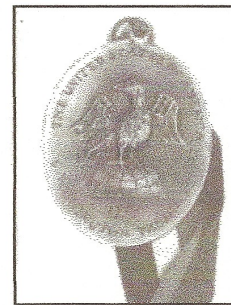
Manac's Tavern marker on the bank of Pinchona Creek

The oldest stand on the Federal Road was Manac's Tavern on the bank of Pinchona Creek, seventeen miles south of present day Montgomery. The proprietor was Sam Manac, a half-breed Creek Indian and Dutchman who was married to the sister of William Weatherford, Red Eagle. Their son, David, was born in Pintlala around Christmas of 1802.

The first treaty of the United States with a foreign power was made during the second year of George Washington's presidency

in 1790. It was called the Treaty of New York and was concluded with the Creek Nation headed by its Chief, Alexander McGillivray, who lived just south of present-day Wetumpka. The United States was not represented by the Secretary of State, Thomas Jefferson, but by the Secretary of War, Henry Knox, who was responsible for all matters dealing with Indians.

There were five secret articles in the treaty. The fifth stated, "The United States agrees to educate and clothe such of the Creek youth as shall be agreed upon, not exceeding four in number at any one time." McGillivray's grand nephew, David Manac, was one of those who benefitted and became the first Indian West Point cadet and graduate in 1822.



Silver Peace Metal

David's father, Sam, had accompanied McGillivray as an interpreter to New York. He received a silver peace

medal from President Washington. He was buried at Pass Christian, Mississippi in 1837, his silver peace medal buried with him.

Much of David Manac's pre-West Point education was typical for a Creek male. He learned early to track and hunt the white tail deer, to withstand the hardships of life and become a successful Creek warrior, to value the diplomatic and oratorical skills of great tribal leaders such as McGillivray, McIntosh, and his uncle Chief Red Eagle, so that he too would be listened to in council. Creek boys were taught early that their day would come and, until that time, they must deferentially perform "the menial tasks of lighting the warriors' pipes, hauling wood for the ceremonial fires, and cooking the black drink, a potion of great ritual importance."

As a young teenager, David Manac probably went through the Creek tribe's "Rite of Passage," his initiation to manhood. The ceremony, which lasted eight to twelve months, was grueling and filled with periods of intense learning, and was physically and psychologically strenuous. Intoxicating and hallucinogenic drugs were administered in the beginning and ended with herbs to induce vomiting and a cold river ceremony to purify the body from the pollution of juvenility. He was also a descendant of the before mentioned Alexander McGillivray, who had fought against the Americans in the late 1700s.

In other words, much like those of later foreign nationals who attended the Academy, Manac's appointment was seen in terms of the national interest, as an important bridge to ameliorate tensions caused by the Creek War. Concluding that Manac's

appointment was essential to both America's future and the Creeks, Russell added, "By his example he will inspire a love for the whites, their manners and customs" which would make him "productive" and a "benefit to the Country."

Although a strong recommendation did not lead to the Creek boy's immediate appointment, the Manacs and their supporters continued to lobby for David's admission. The following year, David Tate, Manac's uncle, and Tate's influential white political allies appealed directly to Secretary of War, W. H. Crawford, in an attempt to get the boy admitted. This second effort led to Manac's admission to the school in September 1817 when Manac was only fourteen years, eight months old. Since he decided to repeat the first year at West Point, he is officially listed in his Cullum file as entering as a fifteen- year-old. The government appointment named him as David Moniac, the name he would bear for the rest of his life. Despite his youth, Moniac was not the youngest cadet in his class. Later, in the 1850s, one family friend claimed that Moniac's admission and education at West Point stemmed from his father Sam's "faithful and disinterested friendship ... to the whites."

In 1817, Sylvanus Thayer took over as administrator at the United States Military Academy. Thayer initiated wide reforms and demanded a higher level of academic performance. To the new superintendent, the curriculum had "to relate to the mission of training engineers or soldiers; all other instruction, however interesting, was irrelevant." Thayer had to contend

with the lax admission stan-



SUPERINTENDENT SYLVANUS THAYER

dards that required proficiency only in reading, grammar, and arithmetic; the extreme variation in the students' educational preparation led to a substantial attrition rate. Only 40 out of 119 students in Moniac's class were graduated in 1822.

In order to deal with this variation in student preparation, Thayer began a system of tracking. Each class was formed into sections of from 10 to 20 cadets, based on the proficiency of the cadets; they could be transferred to more advanced or slower sections based on their oral and written performances. Much weight for class evaluation was placed on daily oral recitation at the blackboard. That continues to this day.

Much more formal than the four previous superintendents, Thayer carried out the idea of ranking cadets in every activity, class, and section, and on the drill field; infractions of the regulations at any time lowered a cadet's standings. The cadet was graded in every single class, every day, and every week. He had to take semiannual exami-

nations in January and June, with certain subjects, especially mathematics, given the most weight in his final academic standing.

Cadet Moniac was a respectful cadet who obeyed nearly all of the rules of the academy. His overall rank in conduct was 15, placing him in the top 40 percent of his class in this category. At a time when Thayer governed with a stern hand and students were subject to military courts martial, Moniac's record was impressive. He received very few demerits during years when two hundred per year led to automatic dismissal from the academy.



Cadet David Manac
CPT Kenneth L. Benton,
Illust. by Mal Singer

Although the Creek youth successfully navigated his first year at West Point, ranking nineteenth in the class, he was held back at his own request on completion of the June examinations. The next year, he repeated the year's curriculum. It is interesting to note that Moniac's new class, the graduating class of 1822, which entered West Point in September 1818, had thirteen other cadets younger than or approximately the same age as Moniac, suggesting that the Creek Indian's youth was a factor in his repeating the first year's course work.

In August 1821, more than two hundred cadets marched from West Point to Boston. When they arrived in the city, they performed their drills with precision, and their marching band played martial music.

One of the cadets was David Moniac. The Corps then marched across the bridge to Cambridge, where they were honored at a banquet at Harvard University. Subsequently, they returned to the city and toured the Bunker Hill battlefield.

At Quincy, the Commandant of Cadets tried to induce Moniac to meet with John Adams, the former President. However he declined and the Commandant told Adams that Moniac was too bashful. Despite his education in the white world, Moniac felt he was still the Indian in the rank, gawked at for being the exception the "civilized Red Man" in the bastion of American military power.

He finally graduated 39 out of 40 in overall rank. The Class of 1822 started with 117 cadets in 1818. The Creek cadet's record is also somewhat ambiguous and hard to interpret. For example in August of 1820 he was appointed fourth sergeant of the second company of cadets. Later in June 1821, he was promoted to first sergeant, but after only a week he stepped down from this appointment. The reasons remain a mystery.

The class of 1822, Moniac's graduation class of forty, included five future generals in the United States Army, two generals in the New Jersey militia, two high-ranking officers in the Confederate army, three college presidents, and at least five civil engineers and/or chief operating officers of railroads. At least ten

of the forty graduates resigned their commissions or died before the outbreak of the Second Seminole War in 1835. Seventeen of the cadets served on the frontier, including three in Creek Country, ten in the Second Seminole War, and one in the Cherokee removal. Three in the class of 1822 died during the Second Seminole War. Among the most distinguished members of the class was David Hunter, who served in the Black Hawk War, Second Seminole War, and Civil War. Rising to the rank of major general, Hunter later served on the military commission for the trial of the conspirators in President Lincoln's assassination. Joseph K. F. Mansfield was ranked second in the class of 1822; he was the nephew of a Professor Jared Mansfield of the United States Military Academy. Rising to the rank of major general after a record of excellence in the Mexican War and Civil War, Joseph Mansfield was killed in action at the Battle of Antietam on 17 September 1862.

Moniac's years at West Point were in the shadow of what happened in the Red Stick War. They also occurred at the same time as the First Seminole War. In 1817, Major General Andrew Jackson invaded Florida, then administered by the Spanish empire. The Seminoles, an offshoot of the Creeks, had harbored fugitive slaves from Alabama, Georgia and South Carolina, and had allied themselves with Spain. Although Jackson's campaign was short-lived, it had significant consequences, including Spain's sale of Florida to the United States and continued tensions between whites and Indians on the Southeastern frontier.

At graduation Moniac was commissioned a Second Lieutenant

in the Sixth Infantry Regiment. Six months later he resigned his commission on December 31, 1822 never serving as an officer in the Regular Army. Perhaps one reason for his resignation was a letter he received from his uncle, David Tate, shortly before his graduation advising him "to get home as quickly as you can conveniently do it, as your presence is much wanted here." Tate said that David's father had lost almost all his property and been forced to move on to the Creek reservation. Tate said he advised Sam not to waste his property, but it had no effect as he stayed drunk and wanted to take over some of his wife's property.

David remained in Alabama acquiring property in Baldwin County where his uncle, William Weatherford lived. He became a country gentleman. He built a

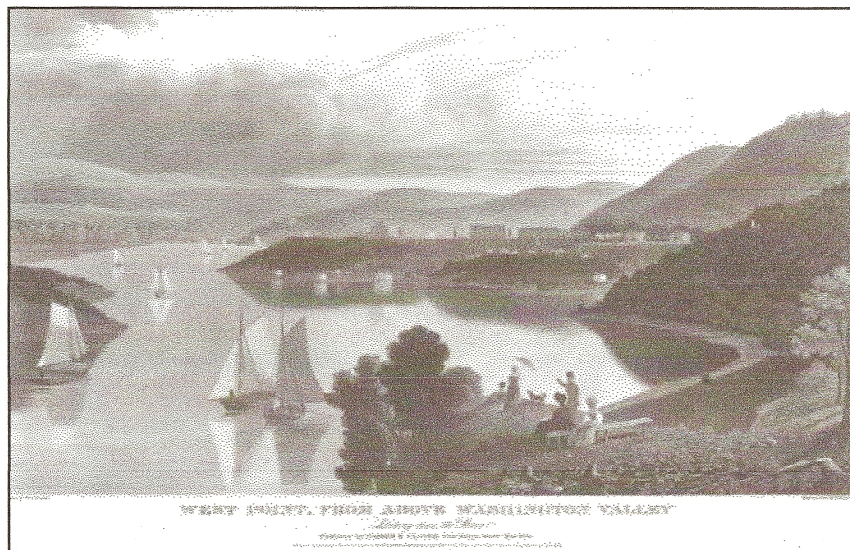
Moniac during the 14 years from his resignation from the Army until he donned the uniform again in 1836. We know he fathered a son and a daughter and was a cotton planter. One neighbor said, "He was a high-toned chivalric gentleman and cordially esteemed by all who knew him."

While a handful of West Point graduates participated in the War of 1812, the Blackhawk and other Indian wars, it was the Second Seminole Indian War that established a pattern that would become all too familiar to graduating USMA classes. At the peak of the war with the Seminoles, more than 80% of the U.S. Army was deployed to Florida in an attempt to pacify the Seminoles and remove them to lands west of the Mississippi. The impact on USMA classes

General Andrew Jackson had been the first governor of Florida in the early 1820s due in large measure to his successes as an Indian fighter during the War of 1812 and thereafter. Jackson led volunteer Tennessee and U.S. Army regulars in several engagements that helped pacify the rebellious Indian tribes in southern Georgia, Alabama, and northern Florida. Following the infamous Creek Indian massacre of hundreds of U.S. settlers at Ft. Mims, he devised and executed a brilliant strategy that defeated and demoralized the previously warlike Creeks. At the Battle of Horseshoe Bend, he overwhelmed hundreds of Creek warriors who had established a well-fortified position along the Tallapoosa River in central Alabama. As a footnote to this action, Sam Houston was recognized for his bravery as the first American to survive going over the Creek breastworks.

When Jackson became President in 1828, well aware of the push of U.S. settlers into the Southeast, he implemented a policy to evacuate the indigenous Indian tribes from the southeast U.S. to the new open territories in the west. While a number of tribes bowed to the inevitable, to include the Cherokees in the well-documented "Trail of Tears," Chief Osceola, one of the young leaders of the Seminole in Florida, was not so inclined. Instead, he organized resistance, and the stage was set for a classic confrontation between the "old" (the Native American Seminoles) and the "new" (U.S. Army and those settlers pouring into the southeastern U.S.).

By 1835, two major forts had been established by the U.S. Army in Florida - Ft. King in the north (near present-day Ocala) and Ft. Brooke in the central



West Point Military Academy on the Hudson River

home and farmed while indulging in a passion for breeding thoroughbred horses. He married Mary Powell, a cousin of Osceola, who led the Seminoles, generally former Alabama Creeks who had moved to Florida. Little is known of

was immediate and significant, as most of these classes were sent to Florida to participate in the struggle.

The roots of the struggle can be traced to national policy in the first half of the 19th Century.

part of Florida on Tampa Bay - and the situation was rapidly approaching a flashpoint. Osceola had become increasingly resistant to demands that the Seminoles prepare for evacuation and, on 28 Dec 1835, assassinated Wiley Thompson, the U.S. Indian agent for the Seminoles, and four others just outside the gates of Ft. King. On that same day, another event would set off almost seven years of warfare.

Because of rising tensions throughout the latter half of 1835, the Army decided to reinforce Ft. King from Ft. Brooke. In late December, 100 soldiers and eight officers from the 2nd and 3rd Artillery and 4th Infantry Regiments, including five West Pointers, were ordered to Ft. King. CPT George Gardiner (first man in the Class of 1814 and later the first commandant of cadets under Thayer, 1817-18 when Moniac was a Cadet) was initially designated to command the column but was distracted temporarily by his wife's illness, the command passing to MAJ Francis Dade.

Unbeknownst to the column, Seminole chiefs Jumper and Alligator, and a substantial war party sent by Osceola - who was born near Tuskegee, Alabama and was David Moniac's wife's cousin - were waiting in ambush. A vicious battle ensued, and Dade was killed in the first volley. Gardiner attempted to rally the Army regulars and a hasty breastwork was erected. LT William Basinger (Class of 1830), LTs Henderson and Keais (both recently graduated in the Class of 1835) and LT Mudge (Class of 1833), were also inside the breastwork. The American forces were overrun after a battle that lasted most of the afternoon.

The column was annihilated in the action, and Gardiner was last seen wounded and firing his weapon while exhorting his men to "Do your best!" The only survivors, two soldiers who escaped through the underbrush and found their way back to Ft. Brooke, related the details of the massacre. The shock was felt throughout the Army, and monies were raised to erect a monument to honor the fallen command. Dade's monument sits today near the old chapel in the West Point Cadet Cemetery. Americans also will recognize the county in south Florida, named for him, that achieved national renown during the election of 2000.

After the Dade massacre, in retaliation, the Army in Florida was reinforced and the Second Seminole War began. Quite a number of Creeks joined the troops to put down the insurrection in Florida and David Moniac offered to raise a company of volunteers. His offer was accepted and he was commissioned a Captain as the group grew to a number sufficient for three companies. These Mounted Creek Volunteers became part of a regiment mustered and paid as militia in the service of the United States had thirteen officers and Moniac was the only Indian. The troops wore white turbans to distinguish themselves from the Seminoles. The Seminoles despised this identification of other Indians they considered traitors.

When Moniac volunteered for the War, he was living on his plantation at Little River in Baldwin County. The Mounted Creek Volunteers reached Ft. Brooke in Tampa, Florida, on October 5. They proceeded into the interior performing reconnaissance and often had spirited skirmishes with the Seminoles.

Joining forces with General and Florida Territorial Governor R.K. Call, they moved out from Ft. Drain to the Withlachochee River where they attacked a strong Seminole encampment. Moniac was promoted to Major for his gallantry in this engagement. A few days later, General Call's forces were joined by another detachment of Regulars. Many of their officers had been cadets with Major Moniac at West Point.

At dawn on November 21st a force consisting of 2,500 Tennessee Volunteers, a Regular Army Artillery unit, the Florida Militia and the over seven hundred Mounted Creek Volunteers moved into the foggy Wahoo Swamp, where the Seminoles were massed in considerable force on a hammock, which skirted the swamp. This engagement was characterized by a general whooping, yelling and musket fire, with the Seminoles firing and retreating tree by tree. The white turbaned Creeks yelled in their ancient manner and moved toward the Seminoles.

The attacking troops found themselves in dense shrub and wading through muddy water three feet deep. When they reached the main stream of the Withlachochee River they found the Seminoles concealed on the opposite side behind logs and stumps, from which they fired several withering volleys at the Americans. In order to determine if the river was fordable, Major Moniac at the head of his troops, moved into the stream to make an assessment. He was cut down by a deafening blast of enemy fire. It is said that he was recognized by the Seminoles and they concentrated all of their fire on him.

At nightfall the attack was halt-

ed, due to the seemingly impassable terrain and lack of supplies. The next morning, the bodies of Major Moniac and the others killed were retrieved. He had been shot to pieces and was pierced by 67 bullets. They were buried in the middle of the road and the wagons and caissons were run over the graves to prevent the Seminoles from finding and desecrating their corpses.

On January 15, 1837, a burial party retrieved the bodies from the road and transported them to the burial site of the Dade massacre. Major Moniac's body was escorted by an honor guard and buried with full military honors. His father, Sam Manac, was present at the ceremony. His pallbearers were those officers and classmates who had been with him at West Point. After the volleys of musket fire over his grave the honor guard marched back to camp to the tune of Yankee Doodle. Major General T. S. Jessup, the commander of the force said, "He was as brave and gallant a man who ever drew a sword or faced an enemy." He died as he lived, in two worlds: as a Major in the service of the United States and as an Indian warrior in the service of his people.

My great grandfather, John Roy Tankersley, was a Private in Colonel John Coffee's regiment in the War of 1812. He was living in Franklin, Tennessee when he enlisted in the Militia at Nashville in December of 1812 at the age of 35. Major General Andrew Jackson raised these troops in response to the massacre at Ft. Mims. The last unit of Tennessee Volunteers in which John Roy Tankersley served was Dyer's 1st Regiment of Volunteers in which Davey Crockett also served. After the Battle of New Orleans, he and

his Mounted Gunmen comrades rode back up the Federal Road in early 1815, stopping at Manac's Tavern at Pintlala and camping a few miles north of there at Allen's Hill before starting back to Tennessee. In 1821 he moved his family to Pintlala and settled. I have a small house there which is a couple of miles from where Manac's Tavern was located. Tankersley descendants have lived in Pintlala ever since John Roy settled there.

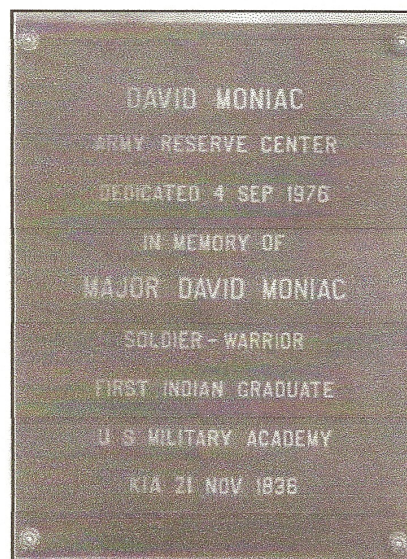
It was my intention at my personal expense to have David Moniac's body disinterred where he was buried with those killed in Dade's Massacre and then returned to be buried at Pintlala. First though, I had to find his remains. When I served as Chairman of the Reserve Forces Policy Board of the Department of Defense, principal advisors to the SECDEF on matters concerning the National Guard and the Reserves (1985-1989), a member of the Board was Major General Robert F. Ensslin, Jr., Adjutant General of Florida. Through his contacts he was able to determine that David Moniac's remains were removed to the National Cemetery adjacent to the Florida National Guard Headquarters in St. Augustine in 1842. There they were buried in one of the three coquina stone pyramids, common graves, with those who fell in Dade's Massacre.

When I was the Presidential Appointee in the Department of Defense responsible for the oversight of the National Guard and Reserve, I was able to cause a new Reserve Center in Montgomery, Alabama to be named for Major David Moniac.

On Saturday, September 4, 1976, the Center was dedicated

in a ceremony by Congressman William L. Dickinson of the House Armed Services Committee and myself.

With the assistance of my good friend, Congressman G.V. "Sonny" Montgomery, later Chairman of the House Veteran Affairs Committee, I was able to have a monument to Major



David Moniac erected at the Florida National Cemetery, Bushnell, Florida in 1996 by the Veterans Administration, a few miles from the Wahoo Swamp Battlefield and the Dade Massacre location. I attended the dedication of this monument.

I had the Montgomery Area Chamber of Commerce erect a historical marker regarding the Federal Road and David Moniac at the intersection of Cloverfield Road and Federal Road in the Pintlala Community. With the assistance of personnel in the Alabama Department of Archives and History, I have attempted to fix the exact location of Manac's tavern. I am not satisfied we have found the exact location, but I believe we are very close. I think it will take the efforts of archeologists to ascertain the

location exactly.

I have found it rewarding to research information on this fellow West Pointer - Major David Moniac - and to assist in memorializing this heroic American soldier. It is a small slice of history regarding Montgomery County, Alabama and America that I believe to be important.

By 1838, more than 10,000 men had been deployed by the Army to Florida in an attempt to resolve the Seminole problem. This included many West Pointers with familiar names: Robert Anderson '25, Joseph E. Johnson '29, John B. Magruder '30, George Thomas '36, Braxton Bragg '37, Jubal Early '37, John Sedgwick '37, Joseph Hooker '37, George H. Thomas '40, and later William Tecumseh Sherman '40. Although Osceola had been captured, (unceremoniously taken under a flag of truce by General Thomas Jessup) and died shortly thereafter at Ft. Moultrie, near Charleston, South Carolina, the Seminoles continued to fight. A war of attrition ensued into the 1840s as captured Seminoles were shipped out and many others died of disease. Nevertheless a decisive battle was never fought, although the administration in Washington sent a variety of commanders with orders to conclude the Seminole War. Among these were General Zachary Taylor (later President of the United States), Richard Keith Call (governor of Florida), Walker Keith Armistead '03 and General Winfield Scott.



Gen. Tankersley is Vice Chairman Emeritus of Sterne, Agee and Leach Group, Inc., investment bankers and members of the NYSE. He joined the firm in 1958 and served as President and Vice Chairman of the Board. He was Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense for Reserve Affairs from 1974-77 and Chairman of the DoD Reserve Forces Policy Board from 1985-90. He was a combat infantryman in six campaigns of the Korean War. He attended the Citadel before entering the U.S. Military Academy, graduating from West Point in 1950. He has a master's degree from the College of Business at Auburn University and served as chairman of its Advisory Council and as chairman of the University's Research Advisory Council.

(National WWII Memorial Archives)

This most interesting article written by Gen. Tankersley, one of our community's historical reservoirs, particularly on military subjects, here gathers much information concerning one of Alabama's earliest citizens. It was kindly supplied to us for publication and has only been presented at a meeting of a literary club in Montgomery.

Thank you, Will Hill, for this fine research and historical paper.

Editor

ALABAMA CONFERENCE
Female College.
TUSKEGEE.....ALABAMA
THE next session of this Institution will open on MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 19th, 1881. We ask attention to the following points:
I. Our literary curriculum embraces a good course in, 1. English; 2. Mathematics; 3. Natural Sciences; 4. Moral Philosophy; 5. Ancient Languages and Literature; 6. Modern Languages and Literature.
II. The Institution has been noted from its organization for its high order of aesthetic culture. We are increasing every year our facilities for Musical and Art culture. We are confident that we are now prepared to satisfy the most cultivated taste in both of these departments.
III. We promptly pay liberal salaries to our teachers, so that we command the best teaching talent within the range of our knowledge.
IV. The table of the College Boarding Department is abundantly supplied with wholesome and well prepared food, and every effort is made to secure the health and comfort of pupils.
V. This school has made a health record of over twenty years' standing, that will challenge comparison with that of any other school in the country.
VI. Our charges are as moderate as they can be made without marred the highest results in culture.
For full information send for Catalogue.
Address JOHN MASSEY, President,
July 27-4m Tuskegee, Ala.

State Agricultural
--AND--
MECHANICAL COLLEGE.
AUBURN, ALA.
THE next term of this Institution begins
WEDNESDAY, SEPT. 28, 1881.
There are five regular degree courses, viz: Agriculture, Civil and Mining Engineering, Literature and Science. Tuition free.
The whole expenses per Term for board, fuel, lights and washing in good private families, is only from \$55.00 to \$65.00.
Uniform complete, \$35.00.
For catalogues and further information, apply to
E. T. TICHENOR, President.
E. T. GLENN, Treasurer.
Aug 6-4m

WESLEYAN FEMALE COLLEGE,
MACON, GEORGIA.
WILL begin Forty-fourth Annual Session, Sept. 21st. A full Faculty of experienced teachers. Advanced course of study. The best advantages in MUSIC, ART, LITERATURE and SCIENCE. CAREFUL ATTENTION TO ALL THE WANTS OF PUPILS. PRICES MODERATE. Apply for Catalogue to
Rev. W. C. BASS, D. D., President.
July 21-4m

A C Female College prior to moving to Montgomery and becoming Huntingdon College
SAMC became API then Auburn U.
WFC became Wesleyan Conservatory