

Oakland College, located in Claiborne County, was established in 1830, mainly through the efforts of the Rev. Dr. Jeremiah Chamberlain. It was under the care of the Mississippi Presbytery. Dr. Chamberlain was the first president. It opened May 14th as a mere grammar school, with three pupils; but at the end of the session there were sixty-five, two of whom were sophomores and five freshmen. Mr. John Chamberlain gave instruction in mathematics and English. In 1831 a charter was obtained, as the institution of learning, under the care of the Mississippi Presbytery. The first commencement was held in 1813, and Mr. James M. Smiley, afterward vice chancellor of the state, received an A. B., being the first man to take a degree at any institution in this state. The principal object of Oakland college was to educate young men for the ministry. Dr. John Ker, son of the Rev. David Ker, secretly denoted the sum of \$25,000 for the endowment of a theological professorship; and in 1837 the Rev. Zebulon Butler was made temporary professor. In a short time the Rev. S. Beach Jones, of New Jersey, was elected to that chair. This professorship was continued only until 1841, but during that time many young men entered, by its aid, not only the Presbyterian ministry, but also that of other denominations. In 1839 the college was transferred to the synod of Mississippi, under which management it remained until the year 1871. At this time the college was very prosperous. It owned two hundred and fifty acres of land; there were three professors' houses, fifteen cottages, a main building of three stories in the course of erection, an apparatus which had cost \$1,500, a library of one thousand volumes, two societies' libraries of three thousand volumes more, and an endowment subscription of \$100,000. Improvements were made from time to time, until it became one of the handsomest and most equipped institutions of its period in the South. In September, 1851, Dr. Chamberlain was killed. The Rev. R. L. Stanton, D. D., succeeded him. The faculty at this time was composed of five members; one thousand youths had attended the different sessions, and of them one hundred and twenty had graduated. The Rev. James Purviance followed Dr. Stanton as president; and he, in turn, was followed in 1860 by the Rev. William L. Breckinridge, of Kentucky. The Civil war soon terminated his service. After the cessation of hostilities the institution resumed its labors. The Rev. Joseph Calvin, D. D., was made president, but he soon died, and on that event the doors of the college were virtually closed. In 1871, because of the destruction of its resources through the calamities of war, the property of the college was sold to the state, which used it for the establishment of the Alcorn university for colored youths. The funds remaining after the payment of debts were transferred by the synod to the presbytery of Mississippi for the establishment of an institution of learning; and thereupon, in 1877, the presbytery established the Chamberlain-Hunt academy, at Port Gibson. Incorporated in 1877, it was named after Dr. Chamberlain and David Hunt, one of the most generous founders of Oakland college. The first session was that of 1879. The buildings are mainly of brick, and are large and well arranged. The library has about two thousand volumes. The endowment is about \$40,000. In the academic department are taught Latin, Greek, French, English, English literature, natural sciences, bookkeeping, history, and mathematics as far as, and including trigonometry and surveying. Prof. W. C. Guthrie, A. B., of Washington and Lee, is principal, and has been from the beginning. There are four other

teachers, and an annual attendance of about one hundred and twenty pupils.

Source: Biographical and Historical Memoirs of Mississippi, Embracing an Authentic and Comprehensive Account of the Chief Events in the History of the State and a Record of the Lives of Many of the Most Worthy and Illustrious Families and Individuals. Chicago: Goodspeed Publishing Company, 1891.