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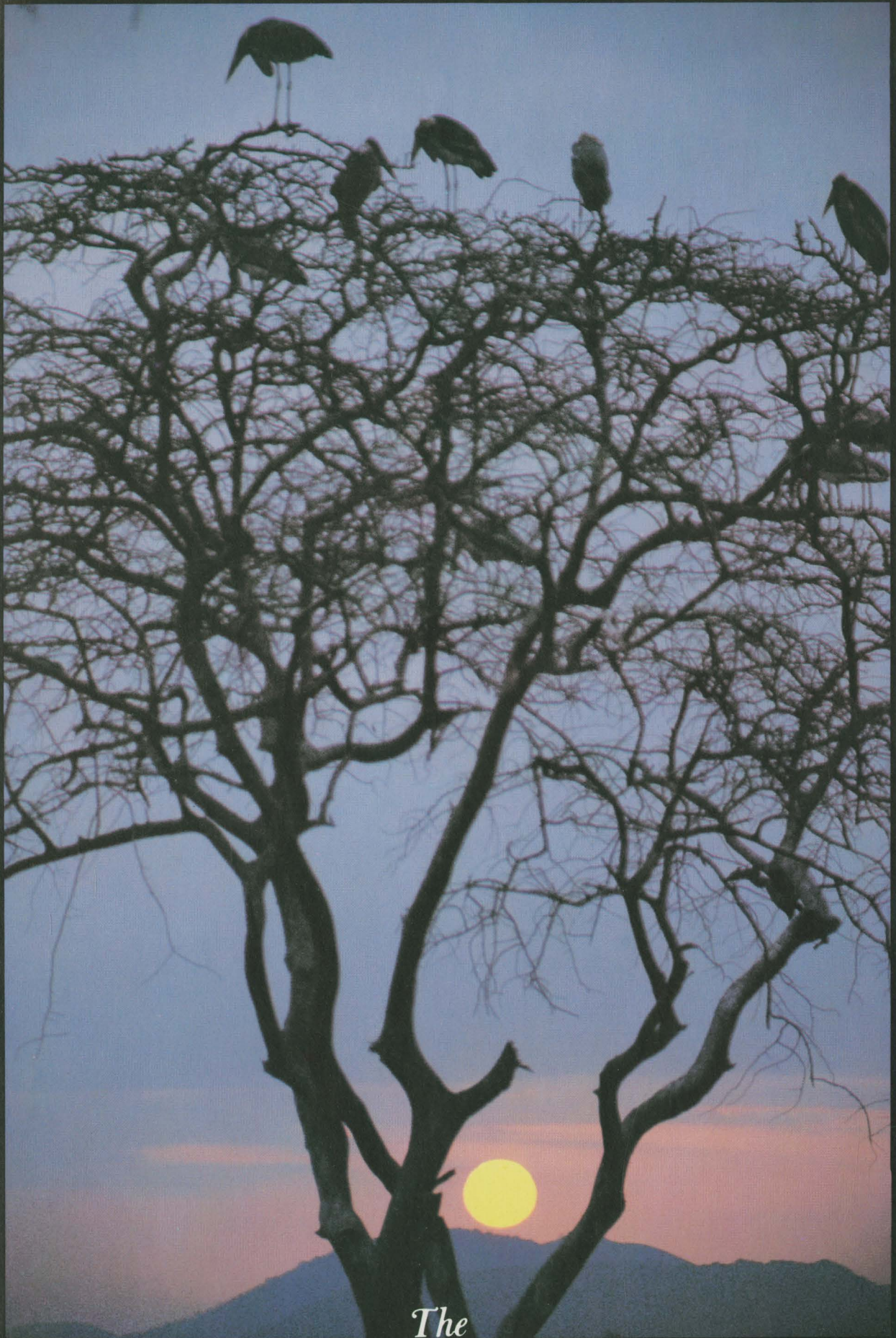
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The

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Spring 1983

Magazine

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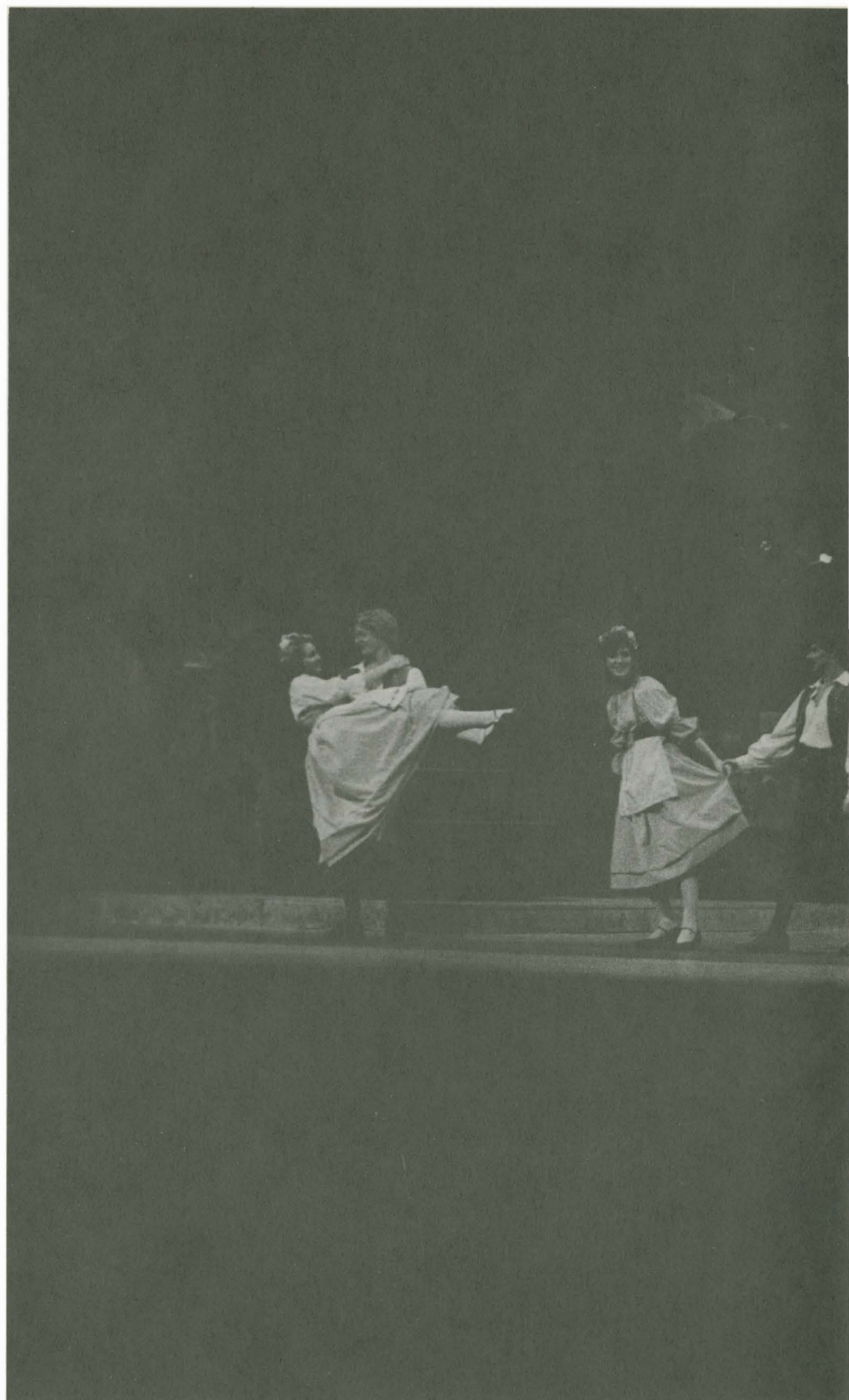
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COVERS

Fred Foy Strang, a Furman junior who lived with the Maasai tribe in Kenya last summer, recorded his experiences in words and photographs. (See page 16.) He took the photograph on the front cover at sunset as the marabou, a kind of large stork, settled in the acacia tree for the night. The "junior" warrior on the back cover, who has just begun to stretch his ears, is responsible for watching the village cattle.

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Jerry Bridges



Act I of The Bartered Bride concludes with a dance choreographed and danced by Furman music and drama students.

The Bartered Bride

In the middle of February the Furman Opera Theater presented two remarkable performances of *The Bartered Bride* by Bedrich Smetana. The performances were remarkable because all 68 members of the cast and 54 members of the orchestra, except the conductor, were students, and yet the production was as good as any performed by professionals. The singing, acting, dancing, instrumental music, costumes and scenery were uniformly splendid.

"Furman is one of the few schools of its size that can mount a production of this scale using only students as performers," says Dr. Bruce Schoonmaker, director of the Opera

Theater, a member of Furman's music faculty and a Furman graduate of the class of 1973. "A lot of small schools bring in professionals for leading roles and solo parts, and that may improve the performance, but it's limiting for students. At Furman we believe in giving students a chance to perform in front of large audiences. It's an invaluable experience for a student to stand in front of 2,000 people and sing a solo. This is one of the great drawing cards of Furman's music program."

Schoonmaker says one reason *The Bartered Bride* was so successful was that the opera was produced jointly by the music and drama departments.

Approximately 130 students and all of the members of the drama faculty worked on the production staff. "The set and the costumes were just magnificent," Schoonmaker says.

Dr. Daniel Boda, professor of music, was the musical director. Dr. Bingham Vick, Jr., director of the Furman Singers, served as chorus master. Costumes were designed by Carol Rae Fisher of the drama faculty, and Rhett Bryson, Jr., also a member of the drama faculty, served as lighting designer and technical director. Lee K. Shiver, a Furman alumnus, designed the set, and sophomore Nita Koon was choreographer.

□



Jerry Bridges

Townspeople gather as the young girls of the village celebrate the first days of spring with a May Pole dance.



Jerry Bridges

Played by Kelly Wells and Tony Stevenson, Marie and Jenik pledge their undying love.

Spring, 1983

Where have all the moderates gone?

by Joan Price

Tom Conley, senior minister at Northside Baptist Church in Atlanta, thinks Southern Baptist moderates must begin to speak out more often.

Sunday morning U.S.A. On the tube . . . a smorgasbord of religious offerings. “Be healed! Be loved! Be saved!” From the pulpit . . . variations on the same theme. To the casual observer, American religion is simple, sweet and easy to digest.

Tom Conley, senior minister at Northside Drive Baptist Church, Atlanta, is a moderate. His faith is not simple, nor his religion sweet, nor his theology easy to digest. But when he speaks, he engages thoughtful believers. And the kinship they share is that of strangers, who together have just unlocked doors . . . some jammed for quite some time.

Tom Conley is different. From his Ralph Lauren pullover to his MGB convertible, he simply doesn't fit the mold. But, then, neither does his church. Northside Drive, located in the heart of one of Atlanta's most affluent neighborhoods, Buckhead, attracts an odd assortment of Baptists: 40 ordained ministers, noted Atlanta businessmen, occasionally an ex-president (Jimmy Carter), a small core

of Furman graduates and hundreds of other young and old professionals.

Wealthy and well-educated, Northside members reflect the haute couture of their environs. Yet in spite of their Brooks Brothers and Saks Fifth Avenue image, the congregation more closely resembles Baptist “refugees.” For in one sense they are — a number of deeply entrenched Southern Baptists, uncomfortable in the mainstream, who have found a home at Northside.

Relaxed and casual, Conley ponders these observations. “What do you mean by secular church?” queries Conley. “Levels of commitment vary anywhere, as do degrees of spiritual maturity.

“At Northside, our focus is on worship, or liturgy, and missions. Perhaps I should say evangelism, but that's a word that has become soiled in recent years by emotionalism and manipulation. It has come to imply an effort that never seems to follow itself up.”

Conley is just beginning to warm

up. Theology, doctrine and the Southern Baptist Convention are among his favorite topics. Yet Conley's words distinguish themselves; they are careful, smooth and aggressive. And they intensify as he talks more plainly about “his cause” — a cause he loves dearly enough to risk jeopardy in some Baptist circles.

“Moderates, myself included, have sat back for too long,” says Conley. “We've been comfortable in our assumption that the convention's umbrella was large enough for everyone. We're finding out we were wrong. Certain groups who have little or no understanding of Baptist history have done a good job of closing that umbrella. And slowly but surely we've seen them try to divert us from our heritage.

“Today, the ultra-conservatives, or the fundamentalists,” Conley says, “have gained such power within the convention that many moderates are prisoners of their own vested interests — mainly their jobs!”

Conley is not a politician, and he's



Mark Elliott

not out to become one. He is out to defend, however, what he terms the moderate's "free enterprise system of ideas." In a *Christian Index* editorial this past summer Conley said: "The 'ultimate cancer' is not diversity about Biblical infallibility but the prideful and absolutist spirit that believes only one belief is the 'true' belief system and any deviation from that is heretical"

"It's not the moderate," says Conley, "who wants to see tension within the convention. But it's hard to sit back when people start telling you you're not as righteous, religious or even as Christian as they are. All the moderate wants is a viable political voice."

Then, what has happened to this voice? According to Conley, it has been stunned by the fundamentalists' rigid approaches. Intimidating, they attempt to bar from power those who deviate. And armed with a sense of righteousness over Biblical inerrancy, they force others to walk a very narrow path. In essence, the fundamentalists

have successfully marketed a simple, religious package, to which a vast number of Southern Baptists are subscribing.

The moderate minister, therefore, is left with the **tenuous** choice between action and **reaction**. "By our very nature," says **Conley**, "moderates tend to be reactive **instead** of intentional. We've got to **learn** to be more politically sensitive, **however**, or we may find ourselves **totally** outside the denomination **one day**."

Conley's **sense** of history left him with only **one choice** — action. An admonisher **of the** historical/critical approach to **Scripture**, he bases his reaction on **three** principles. Borrowing from **J.S. Whale**, and amending **slightly**, he terms them "the personal **principle**," "the voluntary principle" and "the spiritual principle." The **personal** principle safeguards the **personal** nature of the religious experience: the right of each believer to become priest. The voluntary principle insures the autonomy of the local church. And the

spiritual principle supports the individual as his own advocate before Christ.

"These are the very principles on which the Reformation was founded," says Conley, "and I hate to see us lose sight of them."

Conley attributes the willingness of some within the convention to compromise these principles to two major changes within our society.

"Foremost, we have not been swift enough to address two significant sociological shifts," Conley says. "One, the pluralism of today's society, and its ensuing crumbled value structure; and two, sprawling technology. As our lives become more closely tied to the exactness of science, our tendency is to want to extend that same absolutism to other areas of our lives. We expect our religion to reflect that same precision.

"Both of these have contributed to the fundamentalist efforts, and have allowed them to gain ground."

Conley has always been active in denominational matters, but only

“Actually, there are a lot of awfully good theologians in the Southern Baptist Convention.”

recently in an organized way. His action seems to be rooted in his own frustrations. “I guess for too long I’ve counseled people who were supposed to have found Christ 20 years ago,” says Conley. “When the water hit the wheel, though, they suddenly discovered hundreds of unanswered questions — questions that can’t be answered. But someone’s telling them they can be.”

Writing has served as one outlet for Conley. He now has four books, numerous articles and several editorials to his credit. And recently he has branched out, taking his theologies directly to seminary and college campuses. Last year Conley served as a Theodore F. Adams lecturer at Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary, presenting papers on Christian preaching and practical ministry. This spring, he returns to North Carolina to lecture at Wake Forest University at their annual preaching conference. And this summer, he will present lectures at Golden Gate Theological Seminary for the Doctor of Christian Social Ministry track.

Of course, much of his “political” involvement has begun at home. Conley frequently addresses Northside members on issues such as Biblical inerrancy, the nature of God, and the power of prayer — all in an open forum that allows for congregational reaction and questioning. And recently, Conley was named one of the planners of the “Theology Is a Verb” conference to be held in Atlanta next fall. Conference participants, who first met in Charlotte last year, will be coming together again to address three key issues: women’s rights, hunger and world peace.

What does Conley hope to accomplish? To amass a network of moderates with a voice strong enough to keep the denomination’s umbrella open. “More and more groups are beginning to form that support the moderate cause, particularly within the

Southern Baptist Convention,” says Conley. “And that’s an encouraging sign. I’m convinced it’s all a matter of more of us becoming vocal and lending support to those reluctant to step forward.”

In all of Conley’s struggles, he has considered leaving the denomination only once or twice. Conley explains, “I have such a strong loyalty to the folks who birthed me spiritually.”

Conley is a born and bred Southern Baptist, reared in the religious succulence of Columbia, S.C. He received his “secondary” religious education at Furman University (class of 1959), before marrying Elizabeth (Betty) Bishop (also class of 1959) and moving to Louisville, Ky. There he pursued a master’s in theology — a degree he carefully distinguishes as academic rather than professional.

Conley continued along the road to Baptist “pastorhood” by beginning his ministry in a small rural church in Owenton, Ky. — Beech Grove Baptist. Conley spent the next nine years pastoring two more Kentucky Baptist churches, before realizing he might be more effective in a theologically less restrictive environment. His next metropolitan church was University Baptist in College Park, Md., a church dually aligned with the Southern and the American Baptist conventions. Here Conley enjoyed the stimulation of an academic community close at hand. In 1976 he had the opportunity to move to Atlanta and to Northside Drive Baptist Church. Northside proved to be a good move for Conley, his wife and his two sons, Scott and Sean, for the church already had established its moderate stance.

This, perhaps more than anything else, has given Conley the security to make such bold statements. In his *Christian Index* editorial this past summer, responding to an article about Dr. Adrian Rogers, Conley cut through to the heart of the moderate/fundamentalist political issue.

“Dr. Rogers says that a person

‘ought to be up front’ with theological views. But some of us have watched the bloody historical parade of those who were honest . . . Crawford Troy, W.H. Whitset, Ralph Elliott Some had paid a price for total honesty too high for others of us who have wanted to be honest, but knew that the intellectual and theological climate within the Southern Baptist Convention would not support such honesty.”

What does the future hold for moderates? “Greater organization and more intense efforts to equalize the balance,” says Conley. “That’s what it will take to keep the umbrella open enough for the moderate to coexist with the fundamentalist.”

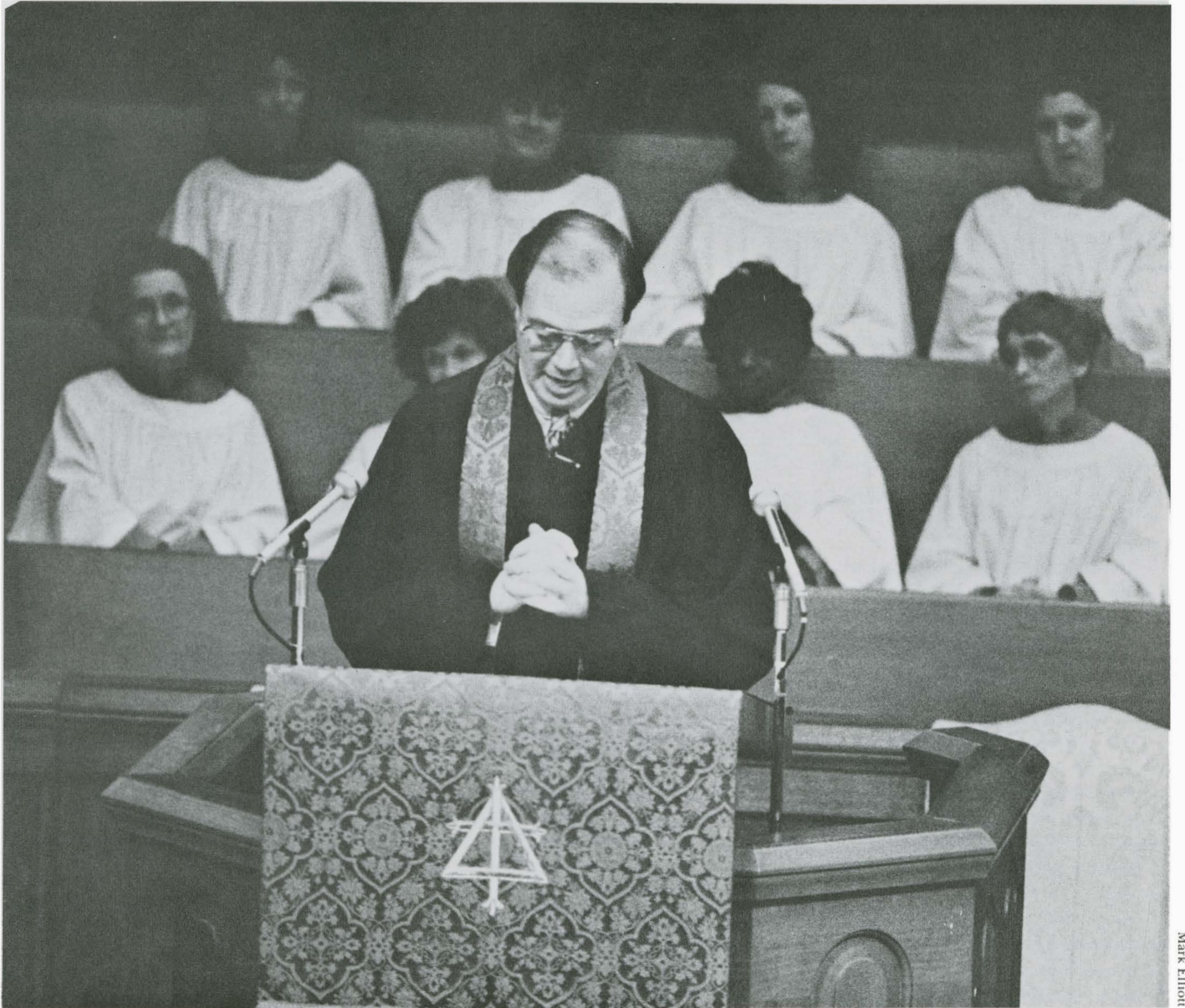
“Actually, there are a lot of awfully good theologians in the Southern Baptist Convention. Only, more of them need to step forward and express themselves. If they don’t, we’re going to leave a lot of folks with no alternative but to leave the denomination.”

New faces appear at Northside every Sunday. A stream of renegade Baptists seems to trickle in, most commenting on the freshness of perspective. For those who ascribe to no creeds, Northside offers a new spiritual challenge — of balancing cultural sophistication with spiritual maturity, while adhering to a scriptural Christianity.

If the moderates’ voices have been silent, it may be because they’ve had more important things on their minds. Or perhaps, they’ve only just recently realized they have a battle on their hands. Or maybe, they’ve been awaiting a forthright leader. In Atlanta, at least, they’ve found one.

□

Joan Price, a 1978 Furman graduate, is associate director of the Furman Loyalty Fund. She worked as a communications specialist for the Home Mission Board in Atlanta, before returning to Furman in 1981.



Mark Elliott

Conley frequently addresses the members of Northside Baptist Church on issues such as Biblical inerrancy, the nature of God, and the power of prayer — all in open forum that allows for congregational reaction and questioning.

Observations of a Frenchwoman

by Janine Tschann

After living in the United States, Furman professor Tschann finds herself analyzing the French national character every time she goes home.

On July 30 last summer, as I was going through the French customs with a terrible headache and bleary eyes, I was pleased to hear one of my fellow countrymen returning from the United States comment on the unpleasant attitude of the customs officer. "Tiens on est en France!" he said, which loosely translated means, "Boy, that makes me feel at home right away!"

Then I wondered whether all French people are really alike. As someone who has lived 25 years in France and the rest of my life in North America, I have made the study of national character a particular form of introspection. I do know that there are several species of French people, but at that time I was struck by the change which takes place in people during the holidays.

To understand the importance of the summer holidays in France, you must be aware of several facts. In 1936 there was a great deal of social turmoil in France and one of the outcomes was a law establishing the right to four weeks of paid vacation for every worker. After a person worked for the same company for so many years (five, I think), those four weeks of paid vacation became five. Now the socialist government has increased everyone's vacation to five weeks from the start.

Since many people live in high-rise apartments in the big cities, they view their holidays as an absolute necessity. Many start saving for the following summer as soon as they return from vacation.

People who have children want to take their vacation when the schools are out. Everyone wants to go when the weather is most likely to be good. Thus, everyone ends up going in July or August. This causes a massive exodus on three specific dates: July 1, July 15 and August 1.

The huge traffic jams which result are a constant headache for the government and the source of an incredible

number of accidents. If you ever travel on French roads on one of those days, you will find that the benign smile on your face quickly changes into an angry expression, and words you have always tried to avoid as being unfit for young ears suddenly come out — in our case, in two languages.

In July and August the major cities turn into ghost towns, except for the center of Paris where every language is heard except French. The grocery stores, bakeries and butchers are closed and so are the big manufacturing plants. The industrial activity of the country almost comes to a total stop.

Where do all these people go?

A majority go to the beach; most prefer Southern beaches. The more active types go to mountain resorts and the less fortunate go to the country, where they may have relatives living on a farm. For every Frenchman, going on vacation means going back to "nature." By this I mean that French formalism when it comes to dressing habits gives way to a lot of laxity — to say the least.

One of the favorite pastimes of people on vacation is the search for the little inexpensive restaurant which offers local specialties. Then it's time for the after-lunch nap. The fields along the roads have their share of people enjoying "la sieste," to the dismay of the local farmers. Usually the husband is sleeping and the wife is knitting.

In all resort towns, but especially in

the Southeast, the nap is followed by a traditional game of "petanque," which uses heavy balls. This game vaguely resembles American bowling, but you play it on the village square or on the country lanes.

All these scenes are very familiar to me, as are the outdoor markets. In the summertime grocery shopping is an obvious pleasure; people leave their aggressiveness behind.

On sale at these colorful outdoor markets are many mountain herbs, as well as local produce and products. However, the vendors today are not old people, as you would expect, but many are young people, remnants of the hippy era or imitations of American hippies. I noticed that some were selling very interesting hand-work, pottery, candles decorated with wild flowers; whereas others were a sorry-looking lot who had ill-digested a culture which they had not understood in the first place.

Another phenomenon struck me this year. It was the number of tourists coming from northern countries. I figured that three-fourths of the cars we passed on the highways were from Belgium, Germany and the Netherlands. In southern France entire villages have been bought by these tourists. What infuriates the natives is that some tourists do not patronize the local stores but bring everything (food included) from their own country. These are rare instances, however.

I did see many tourists trying their

best French in the stores, and this led me to think of the students at Furman and how I wished they could realize the necessity of learning a foreign language. As soon as you can communicate with Frenchmen, you find out that these crazy French people can be nice and polite.

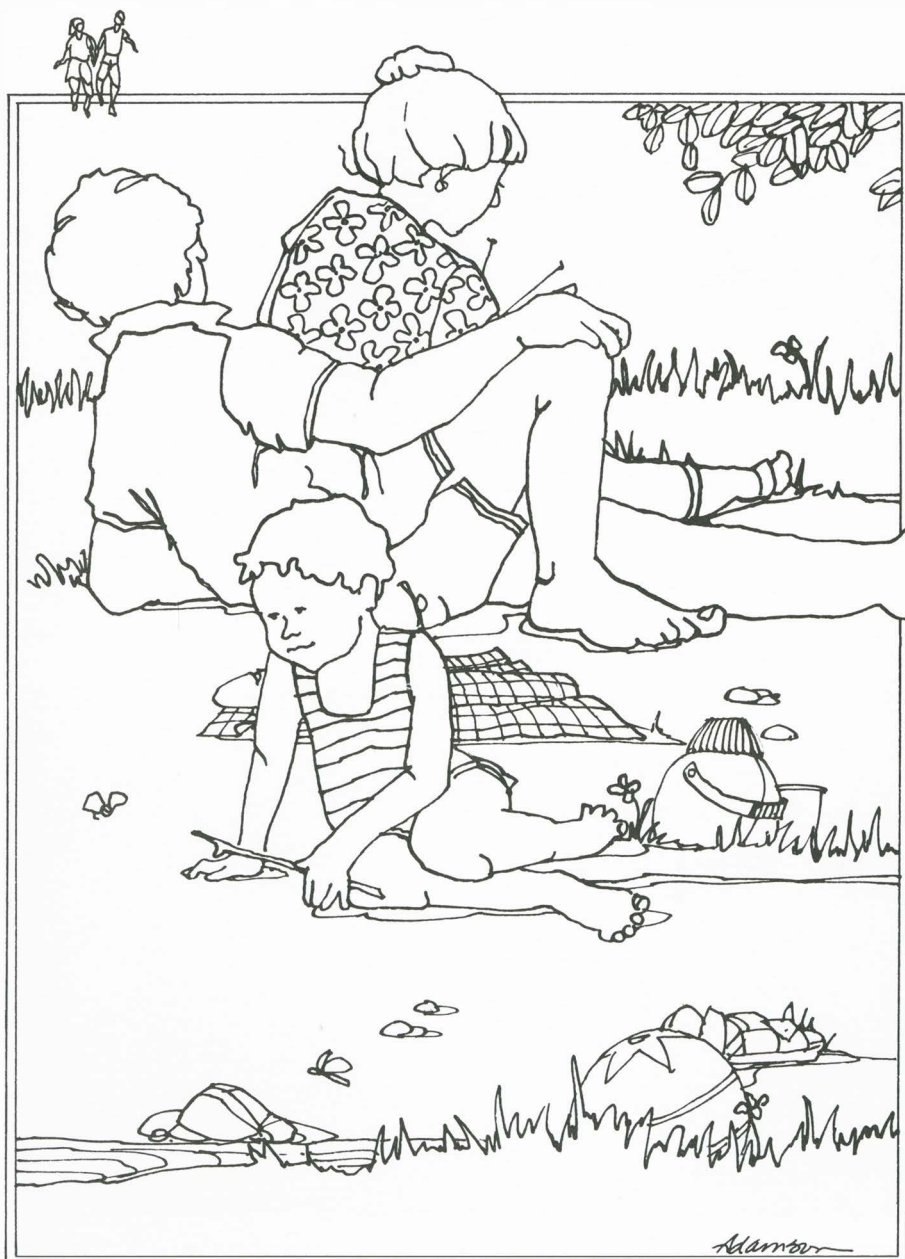
Feeling like an outsider at times, I had a more critical approach to the French, and for a reason yet to be explained I found myself speaking English to my children on French streets. I wondered why, since I always communicate in French here in the states.

On the other hand, my children when playing together used almost only the English language. This leads me to another thought. Switching back and forth between two languages when it is not necessary made me think of the theory which says the brain functions with only one system when two languages are being used.

The bilingual person, then, would open the tap corresponding to the language he or she wishes to use. The theory goes on to say that the change-over is usually total, but I found that when the concept my children wished to express did not seem to exist in English, they would throw in the French word without slowing down their speech. Does it mean that a "motley" language occurs because of the difficulty of translating some words, or from some overall property of languages and the contexts in which they are used? Did our sudden use of the English language mean we were trying to set ourselves apart as belonging to another culture? I tend to think that when I am on French soil I feel American and vice versa. It's like having one foot in each country.

My youngest son does not worry about this kind of introspection and I will give him the last word. He was playing and speaking English with his brother in a tiny village of the French Alps when another little French boy came up to him and asked, "Are you English?" He replied, "No way! I'm American." □

Janine Tschann, a native of Paris, teaches French at Furman. She received the Agregation (the French equivalent of the Ph.D.) from the Sorbonne. Since 1976 she and her family have lived in Greenville, where her husband Christian is employed by Michelin Tire Corporation.





The Greenville Court House, where Governor Chamberlain awarded the Greek prizes at a public meeting in December, 1875

Black Thursday

by A. V. Huff, Jr.

When Governor Chamberlain traveled to Greenville to award the prizes in a Greek contest, radical Republicans took advantage of his absence from Columbia.

The course of politics in South Carolina has seldom run smoothly. But one of the strangest things to happen in the past 100 years began with a Greek contest in Greenville in 1875. In fact, the unforeseen consequences of the contest had such a drastic effect on state politics that December 16, 1875 — the day the contest winners were announced — became known throughout the state as Black Thursday.

By December of 1875, the little village of Greenville was just beginning to shake off the successive ravages of the Civil War and the economic depression of 1873. Its population was growing faster than at any time in history — from 2,750 in 1870 to 6,150 in 1880. The Richmond and Danville Air Line Railroad had recently brought a second rail line to town. Some Boston carpetbaggers, as they were known to the local population, had led in the building of the Camperdown textile mills, and in 1875 low country entrepreneurs and local businessmen had resumed the construction of a mill at Piedmont.

Still struggling for survival,

however, were the four Baptist educational institutions in Greenville. Closely related to each other, they often exchanged faculty and students. On the west side of the town, rising high on the ridge above the Reedy River, was Furman University with just over 50 students. Nearby, former Furman professor John B. Patrick operated the Greenville High School as the preparatory department for the university. Across the river, south of the court house square, was the fledgling Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, formed from the theological department of Furman just before the Civil War. (The seminary's half dozen or so students were already planning to move with the seminary to Louisville, Ky., as soon as money became available for a new campus.) On the east side of town, on College Street, was the Greenville Female College, leased from the Furman board of trustees and operated by Furman professor Charles H. Judson. The four institutions had less than 200 students and about 15 faculty members among them.

Politically, Greenville and South

Carolina — like the rest of the South — were in the midst of Reconstruction. After the war, white leaders, formerly Democrats who preferred to be called Conservatives, had unwisely ignored the rights of newly freed blacks, and Congress had seized control of the reconstruction process. A strong Republican Party won the support of the blacks, while most native whites withdrew from politics.

Nationally, it was the era of bossism and corruption — some called it “the great barbecue” — and South Carolina was not immune. From 1868 to 1874 public officials openly squandered the state's meager resources. Then in 1874 Attorney General Daniel H. Chamberlain ran for governor as a reform Republican. He promised reduced public spending, revised assessment laws and an end to the abuse of the governor's pardoning power. In his successful campaign Chamberlain attracted wide support from white antebellum leadership.

Chamberlain was a native of Massachusetts, a graduate of Yale College, and a student at Harvard Law School until he withdrew to join the



Governor D. H. Chamberlain

Union Army in 1863. After the Civil War he came to South Carolina and became a planter on Johns Island. Attracting the attention of state Republican leaders, he was elected attorney general in 1868. Personally honest in a government characterized by corruption, he was elected to a two-year term as governor in 1874.

After his election, Chamberlain received many invitations from the old South Carolina ruling group to address country agricultural fairs and such organizations as the New England Society in Charleston and the literary societies at Erskine College. Later the *Charleston News and Courier* led a movement to encourage the old power structure to join with the reform wing of the state Republican Party in supporting Chamberlain for re-election in 1876.

From the beginning of his administration, Chamberlain was at odds with the radical forces within his party. During the legislative session in November and December 1875, he worked furiously to keep the radical Republican majority from overriding his veto of bills that would undo his reform program. Using his white conservative allies in the legislature, the governor hoped to outmaneuver his opponents and win re-election in 1876. It was a dangerous gamble, however, for Chamberlain risked alienating his rank-and-file Republican support.

In the midst of all this activity, the governor received an invitation to come to Greenville on December 16, 1875, to deliver an oration and present the prizes in a statewide Greek competition. Although December 16 was the day that a joint session of the two houses of the legislature was to elect two circuit judges, the radical Speaker of the House Robert B. Elliott promised Chamberlain that the election would be postponed until he returned to Columbia.

The Greek contest was the idea of William Heth Whitsitt, a young

From the beginning of his administration, Chamberlain was at odds with the radical forces within his party.

professor who had recently joined the academic community in Greenville. Whitsitt was described by the state Baptist newspaper, the *Working Christian*, as “one of the most promising and prominent of the young Baptist ministers of the South.” He was “a popular preacher, a courteous Christian gentleman, a strong defender of the truth, and possessed a highly cultivated mind of singular acuteness.”

Born in middle Tennessee, he interrupted his college education to become a chaplain in the Confederate Army in 1863. After the war was over, he enrolled in the University of Virginia and later the Southern Baptist Seminary in Greenville. For two years he studied in Germany, first at Leipzig, then at Berlin. In 1872 he became professor of Biblical Introduction and Polemics at the seminary.

Whitsitt would eventually become president of Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, after the institution had moved to Louisville. Later he would be forced to resign after the publication of his findings that English Baptists had not practiced baptism by immersion from their beginnings in the seventeenth century. The revelation of this discovery upset those Baptists who maintained that there had existed a “Baptist succession” since the first century.

But in 1874 the young, enthusiastic Professor Whitsitt, fresh from his European schooling and eager to revive classical learning in his native region, proposed an annual Greek contest, with prizes to be awarded at a public gathering. He enlisted his colleagues in the schools in Greenville and a group of townspeople to give the examination, judge the results, contribute prizes and entertain the participants. The efforts, according to Whitsitt, “resulted in gratifying success.” He immediately began to lay plans for a second competition in 1875.

The date for the second contest was set for December 15. Publicity went

out across the state. Greenville citizens contributed three prizes — of \$25, \$15 and \$10. Any person under 21 years of age could compete in the written and oral examination.

According to an article in the *Greenville Enterprise* and *Mountaineer*, the “whole of Xenophon’s *Cyropaedia* and the whole of Hadley’s Greek grammar” would be the subject of the examination. “The student will not only be examined on the Syntax, but efforts will also be made . . . to test his ability to apply its principles in reading. Ability to read Greek aloud with fluency and a proper regard to accent and expression will be of service to the student.”

Railroad passes were arranged for the contestants traveling to Greenville, and they were to be entertained in local homes. Prizes were to be awarded on Thursday, December 16, the day after the examination, at a public meeting in the Greenville Court House, followed by a dinner next door at the Mansion House, which stood on the site of the present Poinsett Hotel.

The day of the contest arrived, and a group of eager young men appeared to take the examination. The next evening at 7:30 “an immense audience” attended the public meeting, according to a report in the *Charleston News and Courier*. Governor Chamberlain awarded first prize to William C. Dorrah, a student at Greenville High School, who later graduated from Furman University. The two students who shared the second prize were “Mr. Saunders of Furman University, and S.S. Broadus, who is studying under a private teacher.” Charles H. Carpenter, Furman class of 1877, received honorable mention.

Introducing the speaker of the occasion, Professor Whitsitt promised the audience “a literary entertainment of unusual merit and importance. The Governor is an eminent alumnus of Yale College, an orator of chaste and finished style and an ardent promoter

of classical studies.”

“This occasion,” Chamberlain intoned, “is a pure tribute to the worth of classical culture . . . It is an effort to rekindle the fires, the cheering, unconsuming, enlightening fires of learning, in the places where the baleful, devouring flames of war so lately burned.” He contrasted the scene in Greenville with the “electric flashes of passion” and “the murky vapors of prejudice” with which he had to contend in the State House in Columbia. Classical study, he said, “is the torch of learning, of principles, of morality. Beneath its illumination walk religion, law, and Christian civilization, while ignorance, and violence, and corruption glide away to haunts unvisited by its pure rays.”

Little did anyone present that evening — least of all the governor — foresee the political consequences of his absence from Columbia that day. Despite Speaker Elliott’s promise, as soon as the governor boarded the train for Greenville the radical leaders convened the joint session and proceeded to elect two of their more notorious colleagues to the vacant judgeships: former governor Franklin J. Moses, Jr., to the Sumter circuit and the popular legislator William J. Whipper to the Charleston circuit. Elliott himself seconded the nomination of Whipper and declared that the vote was “a test of loyalty to the Republican Party.”

The editor of the *Charleston News and Courier*, Francis W. Dawson, tried in vain to hold the coalition of reform Republicans and Conservatives together. On Sunday, December 19, after Chamberlain’s return from Greenville, he interviewed the governor in order to give him an opportunity to explain that he had not been involved in a conspiracy with the legislature. But on December 21 the editorial page of the *Charleston* newspaper denounced “the horrid work of Black Thursday.” There was only one way, it said, “in which the

Not daring to leave Columbia again, the governor telegraphed a plea for support to the New England Society in Charleston.



Professor William H. Whitsitt

State can be wrested from the thieves and given over to the custody of honest men . . . by organizing the Democratic Party in every City, Village, and Township, and by enlisting under the Democratic banner, as regulars or auxiliaries, all men who are sick of rascality, who yearn for an era of public cleanliness and days of security and peace."

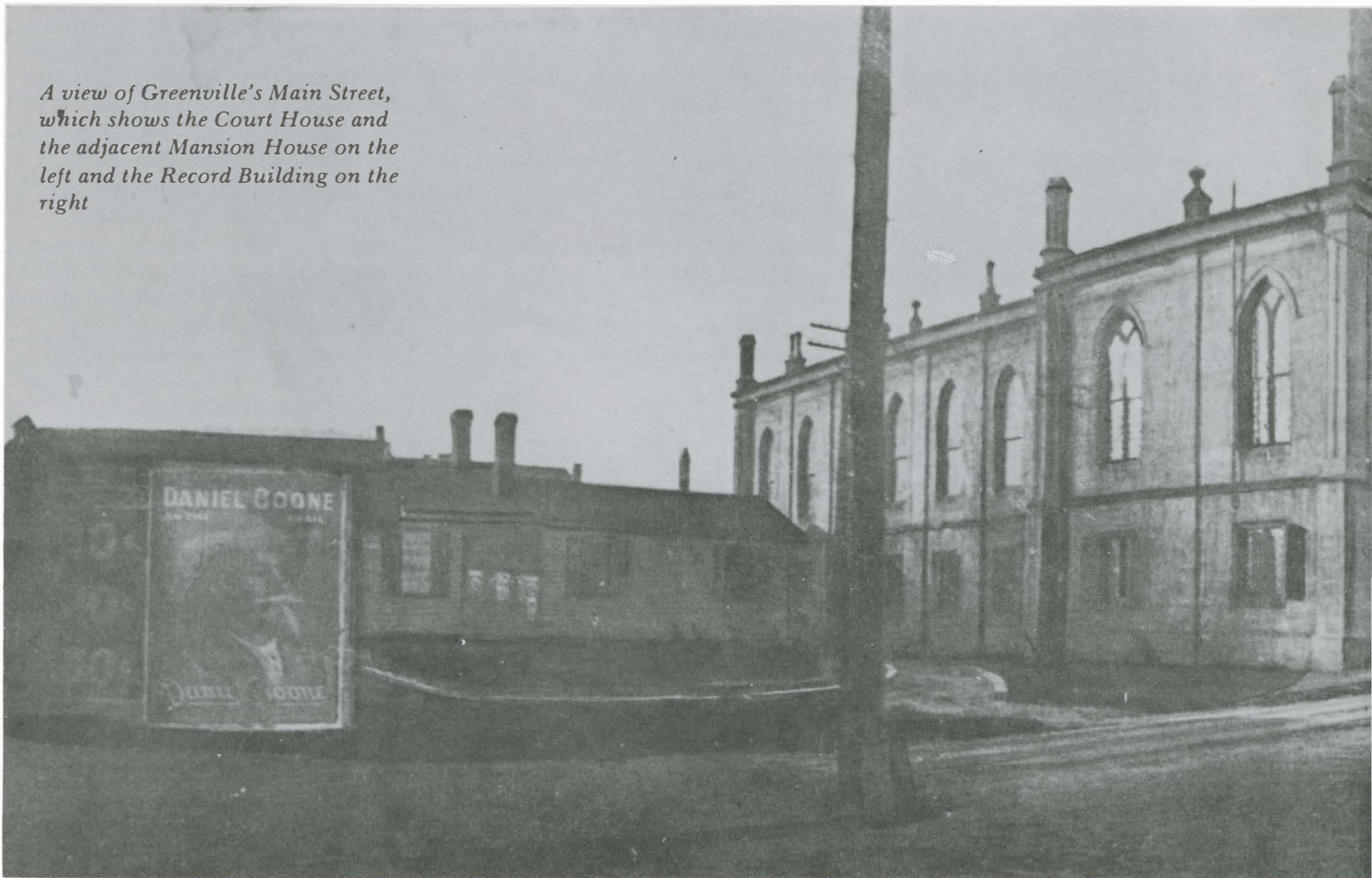
The governor countered this overt threat to his hoped-for coalition by rallying support for the reform movement within the Republican Party. Not daring to leave Columbia again, he telegraphed the annual meeting of the New England Society in Charleston, "If ever there was an hour

when the spirit of the Puritans, the spirit of undying, unconquerable enmity and defiance to wrong, ought to animate their sons, it is this hour, here, in South Carolina."

But the damage had been done. Even though Chamberlain refused to sign the commissions of the newly elected judges, the hostility aroused by Black Thursday could not be suppressed. Even the radical newspaper, the *Union-Herald*, announced that the legislature had "signed the death warrant of the party."

Although there had been virtually no Democratic Party in South Carolina since 1868, on December 23, 1875, the state's National Executive

A view of Greenville's Main Street, which shows the Court House and the adjacent Mansion House on the left and the Record Building on the right



*The damage had been done.
The Democrats nominated
Confederate General Wade
Hampton for governor.*

Committeeman called a meeting of the Democratic State Central Committee. Committees were organized in county after county, and by February 1876, it was clear that the new Democratic organization would no longer support fusion with the reform Republicans. Instead, they planned to nominate a straight-out ticket. On July 6, 1876, a riot in Hamburg, near Augusta, pitted a group of white men against the local black militia. Democratic opinion against the coalition solidified at the grass-roots. In August the state Democratic Convention formally ended all hope of cooperation and nominated a straight-out ticket headed by former Confederate General Wade

Hampton for governor. The end of Reconstruction in South Carolina was at hand.

In January 1876, oblivious to the strong political currents already in motion, Dr. James C. Furman reported to the *Working Christian* on the progress of Furman University in Greenville: "With the doors of this institution flung wide to all who will come . . . and with such a literary Governor as Mr. Chamberlain, to invite the youth of our land to earnest endeavors to reach a higher plane of knowledge, we can well augur a glorious future for our loved Carolina."

Pleased as he was with the

governor's support of education, Dr. Furman did not foresee that Chamberlain's trip to Greenville would bring about the rebirth of the Democratic Party in South Carolina and cost the governor his re-election. Nor did Dr. Furman or Professor Whitsitt suspect that their Greek examination would be remembered in history as the cause of Black Thursday. □

Dr. A.V. Huff, Jr., chairman of the history department at Furman, is the author of two books and numerous articles about South Carolina. He is currently working on a study of Charleston during the Civil War.



Living with the Maasai

by Fred Foy Strang

Furman junior Fred Foy Strang recorded his experiences in Kenya last summer in words and photographs.

In the great Rift Valley of Kenya and Tanzania a proud tribe of nomadic herdsmen wander the dry brown scrub grass dotted with green acacia thorn trees. Their land is harsh, seared by soaring temperatures and driving winds. With cattle, goats and sheep they move their families in search of fresh grass and precious water. Their villages are arranged in circles. Their homes are made from dung. Their lifestyle is simple; yet, their lives are filled with rich traditions and ceremony. In this epoch of civilization they are a living witness to a vanishing culture. They call themselves Maasai.

During the summer of 1982 I lived in Kenya among the Maasai as a volunteer in mission for the Presbyterian church. I recorded my experiences in a journal and in photographs.

June 8, 1982

I can hardly describe the swell of emotion that swept over me when I first saw African soil. It all seems like a dream. At Monrovia, Liberia, the plane landed for fuel. The moment I reached the exit door a combination of

intense humidity and dung odor overpowered me. The surrounding foliage was deep green: palms, brush and grass. The Monrovia area is one of the last remaining tropical lowland rain forests. The final jog to Nairobi, Kenya, went quickly. Tim and Sue Anne Fairman, Presbyterian missionaries among the Maasai, and their daughters Julie and Joy met me and my five college-age companions, Mary, Janet, Sue, Brooke and Paul, at the airport. We'll be recovering from the trip at the Mennonite Guest House, a homey retreat for visiting missionaries.

June 10, 1982

I woke up at 3:00 a.m. this morning raring to go, but I convinced myself to roll over and go back to sleep. Later, we all piled into Tim's land cruiser for a tour of the large, modern city of Nairobi. The traffic was terrible — they even drive on the wrong side of the road! A Datsun pickup, crammed full of people and loaded with chickens, corn and bags tied all over it, whizzed by us. Tim called it a "matatu," competition for Kenya's public transportation. Although

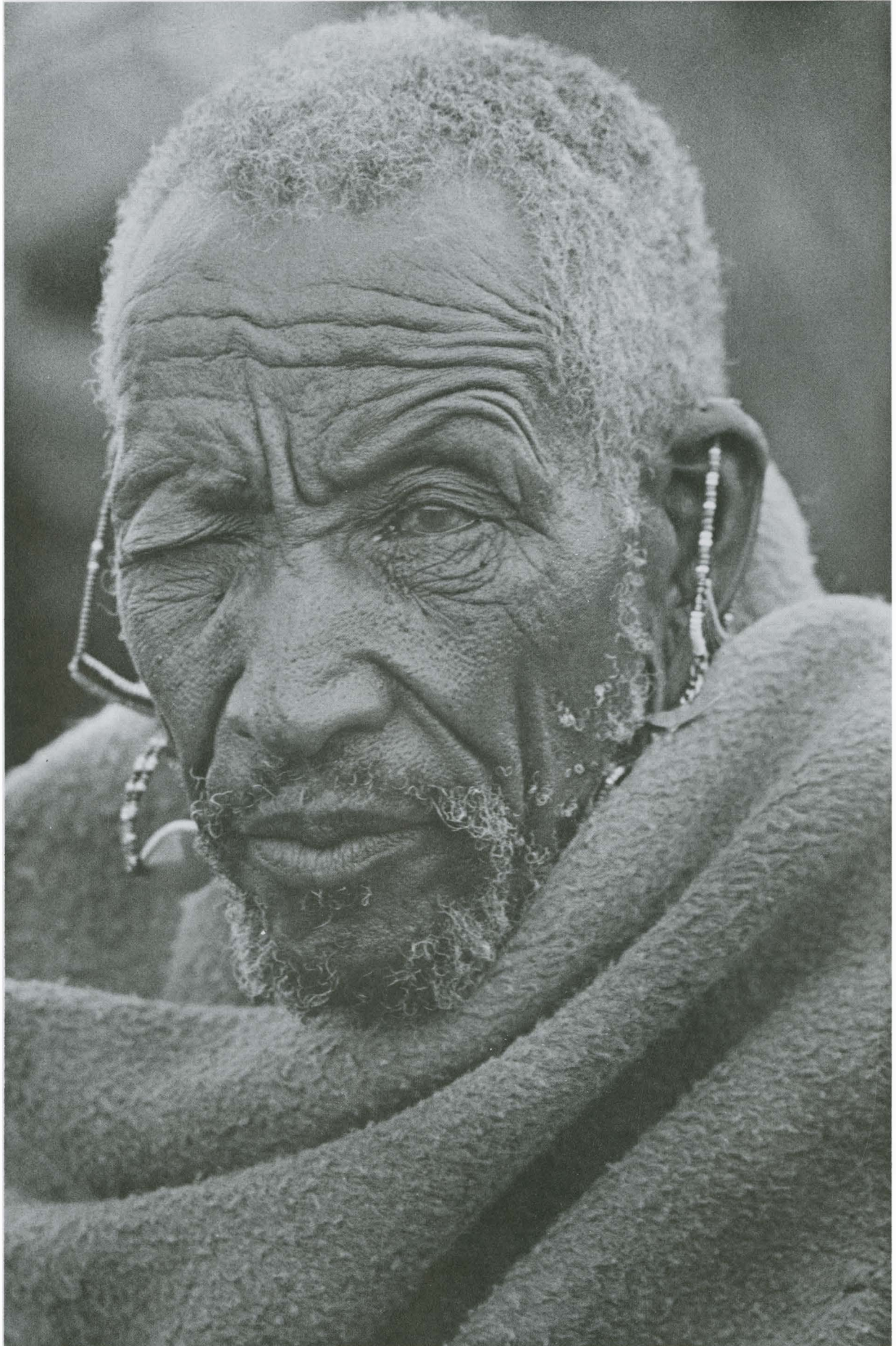
matatus zip around, life is really laid back; morning and afternoon tea are musts. People just aren't in a hurry about anything. If something needs to be done, it will get done — sooner or later. I'm so used to being on the go it's hard to adjust. It reminds me of Faulkner's line, "I ain't got so much time so as I can hurry it."

Back at the guest house I met Andy and Cyndy Clark, missionaries in Tanzania. They drove a giant Leyland truck up to Nairobi for supplies. Andy told me, "We haven't seen a bar of soap in two years, and toothpaste is a nonexistent luxury." I feel out of touch with that kind of lifestyle. I hope I will be exposed to it while living with the Maasai.

June 11, 1982

We left the city early heading towards Maasailand. (The Nairobi area was once a part of Maasai territory.) Thirty minutes away from the city we left the

Right: A Maasai elder and a respected leader of his tribe





*The model village, where
Strang lived, was built
in the Maasai tradition.*

paved road and bounced along a rocky, red clay trail for some time. Tim pointed out a Maasai village in the distance. I didn't see it at first; the low, rectangular, stick-framed homes covered with sun-cracked dung blended into the surroundings. Soon I saw a skinny boy, clothed only with a drape, tending cattle. He balanced like a heron on one leg and chewed a stem of grass. Nearer the village women, draped with colorful cottons and decorated with beads, were busy with chores, while older men, wrinkled with age and wrapped in blankets, sat in the shade.

A little further down the trail is the village where the Fairmans live, Olosho-oibor, a model village for the area. It seeks to keep Maasai traditions while utilizing modern methods. The homes are basically the same size and shape of the dung huts, but built with an arched frame and plaster covering. Bougainvillea covers the outside of

Left: Maasai women chant and sway as they perform a tribal ceremony. The women wear colorful cotton drapes and an assortment of beads for decoration. Below: Two women rest outside their huts in a Maasai village. The huts are made of dried cow dung and arranged in a circle for protection.

these domes, providing insulation and beauty. Olosho-oibor has utilized a spring and piped water to the homes and a large garden. Some years ago the Maasai sold cattle and constructed a giant reservoir to catch the precious rainwater as it drained through the valley. Maasai drive their herds for miles to water at the lake.

Simeon, the village elder, came to welcome us: "Shopa!" he declared as he grasped my hand. "Epa," I responded (English equivalent of "hello"). Women and children surrounded us. Although I couldn't speak the language, I felt a sense of loving acceptance through their actions and facial expressions.

June 25-26, 1982

The Fairmans knew we were anxious to see some of Kenya's wildlife, so Sue Anne arranged a two-day visit to Amboseli National Park at the foot of Africa's highest mountain, Kilimanjaro. Along a rough 60-mile dirt trail to the lodge, animals abounded: elephant, zebra, giraffe, wildebeest, gazelle. Around one bend we saw a large plain filled with thousands of grazing animals. After checking in at the Serena Lodge, which was designed like a Maasai village, we turned in early.

As the sun rose, we loaded up the

land cruiser for an early morning "game run." Although the run only lasted two hours, it was one of the greatest experiences of my life. Before going a half mile we spotted a lioness on the prowl.

Mist, rising from the ground, surrounded her; her breath puffed up in clouds. The pastel colors of the morning sun cascaded down the snow covered top and crevasses of Kilimanjaro as we followed the lioness across the grassland. After a couple of miles we lost her in a stretch of bush. Tim knew of a clearing a bit further on and suspected the lioness would be heading for it. We hurried ahead to the clearing and parked among grazing zebra, gazelle and wildebeest. I stood up, my head stuck through the roof hatch, my camera poised, my body tense with excitement. Minutes passed — a vulnerable young wildebeest wandered close to the edge of the bush; suddenly, the lioness sprang out of the thicket charging the startled animal. She swiped it with her paw and knocked it down. She then jumped on the struggling animal and clamped her powerful jaws over its mouth and nose. With blood dripping from her face, the lioness dragged her kill into the overgrowth. I was humbled in the presence of God's power and majesty revealed in nature.



*“Just before quitting time
a herd of 40 giraffe came
ambling by the church”*



This young man travels around the countryside with a band of warriors to protect villages from tribal enemies and wild animals.

June 27, 1982

After breakfast we traveled over some of the roughest terrain I have ever been on to a small Maasai village, where an elder and his family wished to be baptised. Since they have no church, Tim took church to them. The people gathered for worship outside the village under an acacia tree. The women, children and elders had shaved heads, while the warriors had long, plaited hair coated with ochre, a red clay and mineral pigment mixed with water or fat. Women's and men's earlobes were pierced, stretched and adorned with beads.

After the service we were invited into the village. At night the cattle are driven into the village for protection, thus the ground is a foot or so deep with cow dung, and flies swarm by the thousands. I made my way to the home of my host, Sarah, and stooped low to enter. An overwhelming amount of smoke met me inside the maze-like corridor which led through the home. Without windows and ventilation the interior is very dark and smoky. A small fire in the 6' x 8' x 5' main room gave a little light, and a lot of smoke!

Fifteen people crammed into this small dirt and dung-floored room. Sarah offered us tea. A large pot of the boiling liquid was on the fire. Sarah picked up the sizzling pot, with her bare hands, flames licking her fingers, and poured. Then she offered a Maasai specialty from a gourd in the corner: sour milk and charcoal. By this time I enjoyed the taste and graciously accepted. She reached for the calabash, and poured the chunky gray mixture in my old tin cup. Then the Maasai gave each of us a special name. They called me "Taota," which means director or leader.

June 28, 1982

Our main job as volunteers is to assist in the construction of a church for the Maasai at Kimuka, five miles away from Olosho-oibor. At Kimuka some

Maasai had already cleared the ground; we unloaded our truckload of wood and tools. The building, a simple rectangle, will not take long to construct. The holes for the posts, at 4-foot centers, had to be dug in the hard clay with spears or pikes. By day's end we had all the posts in and a 2' x 4' cap around the entire top. I was fascinated at my ability to communicate and become friends with many Maasai without speaking their language.

June 29, 1982

At Kimuka today about 10 Maasai from a nearby village came to help, so we had about 25 men working — well, 10 working and 15 giving moral support. It was interesting to watch the haphazard construction. A level or square wouldn't be welcome on the site! I suggested various methods for doing things quicker and better, but the men did it their way. Even so, it's taking shape and doesn't look bad at all. Just before quitting time a herd of about 40 giraffe came ambling by the church barely 100 yards away. We all stopped and looked in awe at these magnificent creatures. Paul, Brooke and I ran the five miles back to Olosho-oibor after work. Running through the bush of the Rift Valley beside the Ngong Hills with the sounds of wild animals and the rustling of a gentle wind was an unforgettable experience.

July 1, 1982

The tin sheets for the sides and roof came today and we put them on. We didn't have enough tin to cover the apse, so we used scrap wood. I was nailing up these pieces; my hands were raw, bloodied from blisters and cuts. My good Maasai friend, George Sakuda, saw I wasn't going to stop working so he took my bandana from my head and carefully wrapped it around my hands, shaking his head and murmuring my Maasai name, "Taota, O Taota." The beauty of his

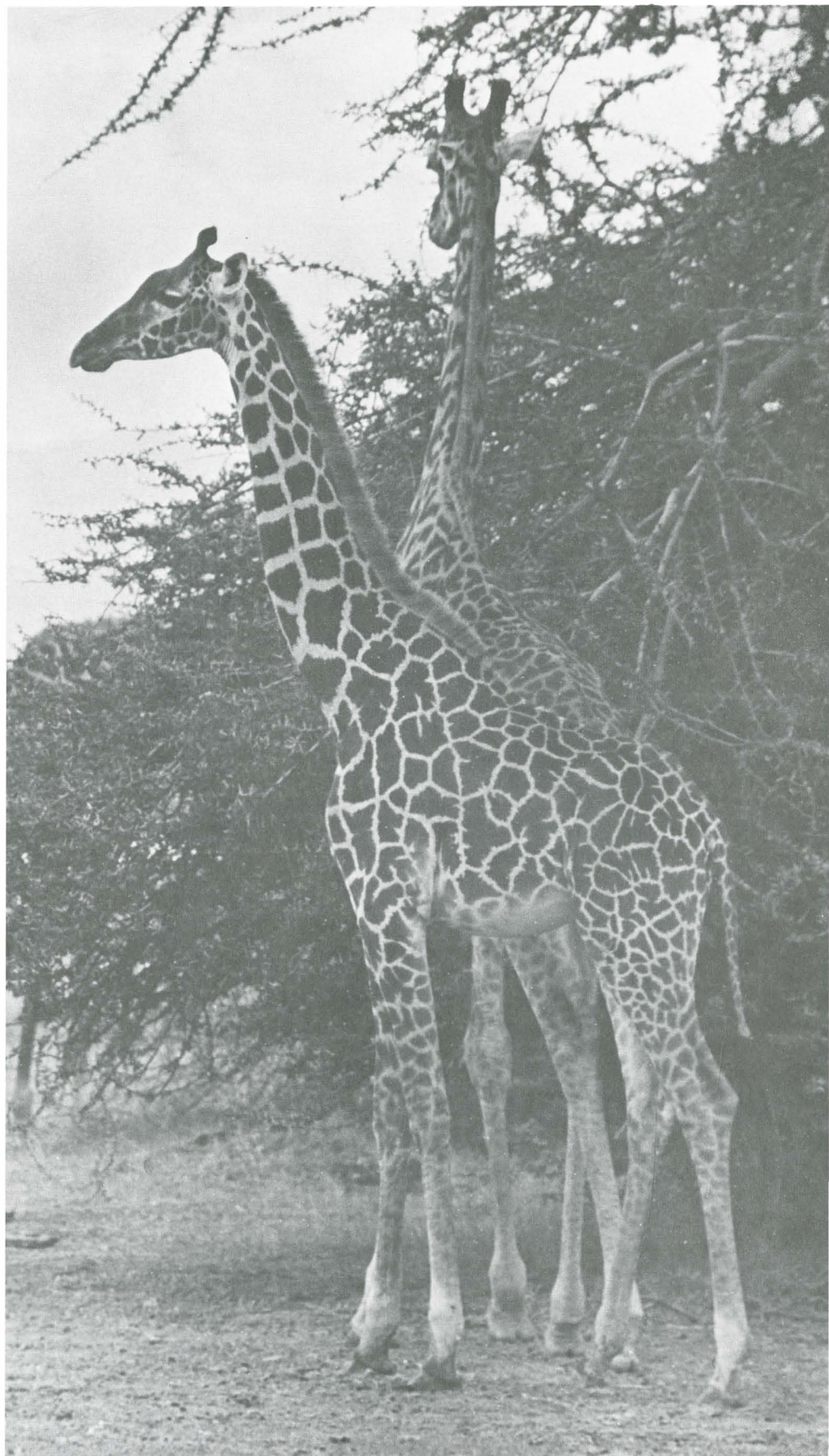
simple act of loving compassion
deeply touched me.

The Maasai invited us to their camp for a meal celebrating the construction of the church. We hiked a short way through the bush to a clearing where a few men were standing over a large pot. They had killed a goat in our honor, and had boiled it in its own blood and a little water. The tough greasy meat wasn't bad, but I could have done without a cup of the broth.

July 5, 1982

On my way back from giraffe-watching last night I saw a group of warriors marching into the next village. I asked Tim about them; he said they are senior warriors about to "graduate" into the junior elder stage. In the ceremony they go from village to village drinking, dancing and devouring huge amounts of food. This morning they came out walking in the characteristic Maasai "strut," a heel-to-toe bounce with an upper body dip, and singing a rhythmic, resonant chant. The warriors were painted with ochre, dressed in rust-colored drapes and covered with beads. With their spears and clubs they marched out in the clearing, formed a line and began, one by one, to jump. The jumping was most impressive; each warrior took a turn shooting several feet straight up while the others sang. After the jumping the warriors marched in a serpentine manner back to the village. Later in the day we dressed up as Maasai and went to meet the warriors. I thought they would never stop laughing!

Right: While giraffe and other wild animals are a fairly common sight in some parts of Kenya, the natives admire their beauty and treat them with caution.



“When the time came to leave, the Maasai begged me to stay...”



Fred Foy Strang, a junior English major from Winter Haven, Fla., works with natives to build a church (above). His photographs have appeared in other Furman publications. While in Africa, he collected Maasai myths, legends, tales and proverbs which he has included in a book entitled Maasai Oral Literature. This booklet will be used in Kenya to help teach English to Maasai school children, and a copy of it is in the Furman library.

July 6, 1982

After supper I walked over to a neighboring village to watch the animals come in. Each cow knew exactly where to go: the heifers waited patiently to be milked or to feed their calves, the goats walked to their pens and the sheep knew their place. The women came to fill their calabashes with fresh milk. Finally the boys, coaxing the straggling animals, came in and pulled large acacia limbs across the opening. They looked tired from a long, hard day. The fading colors of the setting sun and the shimmering whiteness of the full moon rising over the Ngong Hills gave a soothing feeling to the pastoral scene.

July 7, 1982

Today I walked with Jehoshaphat, once a mighty warrior, and Peter to visit a village about 10 miles away. We got an early start and climbed down an escarpment of rocks in order to cross a wide valley. The view looking back was awesome: the Ngong Hills in the background with two valleys and scattered villages in front; the green acacia trees and scrub grass were a contrast to the rocky hills and clay soil. After a long hike we arrived at the village of Saikeri. We were warmly welcomed and invited into the home of a Maasai woman, named Mary, for lunch. The plain fare of beef, rice and tea shared with my Maasai friends was especially satisfying. Stephen, an English-speaking Maasai, told me about the traditions and folklore of his people. As we left, Mary gave me a necklace as a sign of friendship. The hospitality of the Maasai is incredible. I feel like they are my brothers and sisters. Jehoshaphat took me back to Olosho-oibor and then continued on saying, “Oloser Ololashe.” “Go in peace, my brother.”

July 11, 1982

The dedication service for the new church at Kimuka was a great joy. Maasai came from miles around to

participate in the service. My American friends and I sang for everyone and expressed our appreciation to the Maasai for their hospitality. When we finished, Simon, the church's Maasai pastor, presented us with beautiful bead necklaces and wristbands on behalf of the congregation. I find it hard to express the feeling in that place. In such a short time and across cultures I had become so close to so many men and women. Now we stood united in love and friendship dedicating the church we built together.

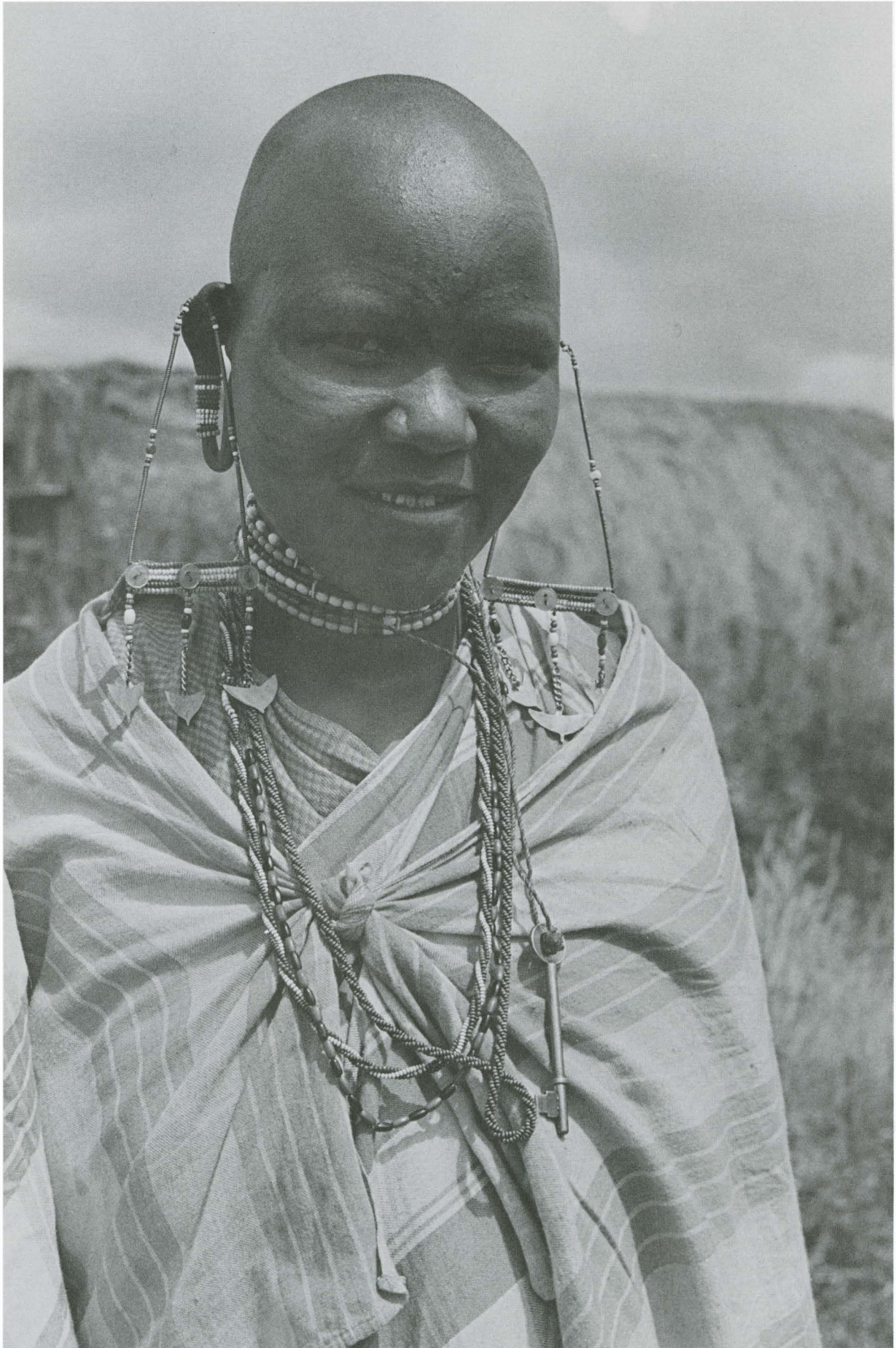
July 18, 1982

I was sad leaving the Fairmans and my Maasai companions. When the time came to leave, the Maasai begged me to stay and asked, “When will you come back?” I kept answering them, “Kalotu kenya, ololashe.” “Soon my brothers . . . very soon.”

I finally made it to New York, even on time! I'm dirty, tired and ready to catch my last flight home. The last six weeks all seem like a dream now. Yesterday I was 50 feet from wild animals; less than a week ago I was sitting in a Maasai home, enjoying tea, seeing ochre-covered warriors dance, and making friends across cultural barriers.

My experiences have been incredible! I know my life will take on new dimensions because of them, and I hope I will be able to communicate them to others and make their lives richer as well. □

Right: Considered a great beauty, this woman has burned patterns on her face with hot sticks. Maasai men and women shave their heads at certain stages during their lives.



Pioneer on a new frontier

by Marguerite Hays

“When I look at a computer,” says Furman professor Hayden Porter, “I see it as a way of translating imagination into physical reality.”

Hayden Porter intended to be a physicist. He got two degrees in physics (B.S. and Ph.D.) at the University of Cincinnati and did postdoctoral work in physics at the University of Florida. Then he succumbed to the siren song of the computer.

That’s not the way he would put it, of course, but when Porter talks about computers he almost becomes poetic. “When I look at a computer,” he says, “I view it as a way of translating imagination into physical reality.”

Actually the same thing is true of all machines, he explains. Someone thought of being able to move around faster and the automobile was invented. Someone thought of being able to fly and the airplane was created. The artist’s brush, the violin and the pipe organ are machines that were invented to enable artists and musicians to translate their ideas into painting and music.

“As our ideas have evolved and we have been able to translate them into machines that changed our physical reality, we have become more sophisticated in the process,” he says. “The

computer is in some ways the obvious current end of this process. In effect, we have taken the idea of a machine from the framework of rather simple kinds of tools to a machine through which we can create machines.”

The computer provides a way for human beings to change physical reality through language, he says. “In that sense, I feel this is a very fundamental revolution in terms of human thinking. This is not just a car anymore, but rather it is a machine in which other machines can be created logically, not physically, which then, working down through the layers of logic, ultimately create changes in our physical environment. Thus, this kind of machine is far more general and far more interesting to deal with than a machine like a car or airplane. Its purpose is to execute language, and anything that can be described by language can be brought into existence. We are limited mainly by our imagination in terms of what we can do with it.”

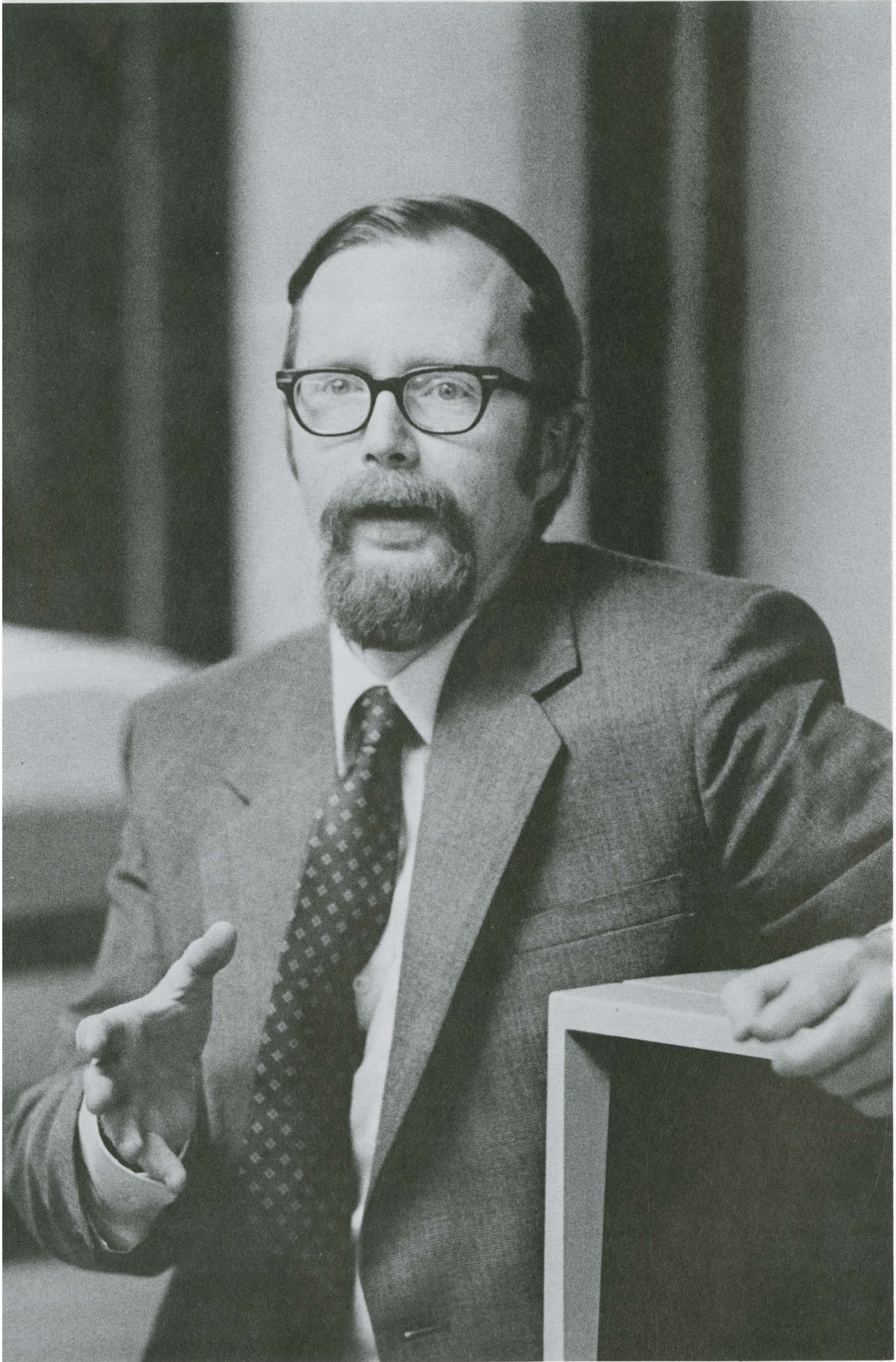
Now in his fourth year of teaching computer science at Furman, Porter says his conversion from physics to

computer science did not occur overnight. At first, when he began using computers in graduate school to solve problems in theoretical physics, he thought of them as nothing more than high speed calculators. Later, in postdoctoral work at the University of Florida, he found himself using them much more frequently for sophisticated computations in space physics.

The more he worked with computers, the more intrigued with them he became. “As the level of computation increased, I realized I was pushing the machine to its limits. I began to become more interested in the working of the machine, in what was actually going on.”

During his last two years in Florida he dealt almost exclusively with computers. In 1976 he joined the technical staff of Computer Sciences Corporation, a company that develops software. Three years later he decided to come to Furman to teach.

Part of the appeal of computer science, he explains, is that it is a new discipline. “There aren’t many computer scientists at this time. We’re like psychology was 100 years ago:



Blake Praytor



Computer scientists seldom have actual machines that possess all of the characteristics they need, explains Porter, so they create their own logical machines.

people of similar interests have moved into a new field. There is a great deal of variation in perspective among us at this point. Computer science is not nearly so well defined as an area like physics."

An amiable man in his late thirties, with red hair and beard and a pleasant laugh, Porter agrees reluctantly to explain some of his ideas about computers. He is hesitant to do so, he says, because some people may not agree with his views. In addition, although he is nice enough not to say so, he foresees difficulties in talking to a "computer illiterate."

From the beginning of the conversation, he cautions that he uses terms that may mean something else to anyone other than a computer scientist. For instance, when he defines a computer as a machine whose purpose is to "execute language," he means that computers carry out instructions which are processed electronically, similar to the way a human would carry out a set of written instructions. (Some common computer languages are BASIC,

FORTRAN, COBOL and Pascal.)

Although computer scientists aim to build machines that will communicate with human beings as they communicate with each other, he explains, it is incredibly difficult to even approximate human language in a machine whose every action must be reduced to "on" and "off" electronic signals. In fact, computer scientists seldom have actual machines (hardware) that possess all of the characteristics they need, so they create their own logical or "virtual" machines as computer programs or software.

In creating a logical machine, the computer scientist makes up a new, more complex language based on combinations of the comparatively primitive language of the original computer. Because the new language is more sophisticated, the logical machine can do things that would be very difficult to express to the actual machine. When the computer scientist wants a computer with even higher level capabilities, he creates another, still more complex language, based on

the language of his last logical machine. Thus, he creates a new logical machine that is a level of complexity above the last machine, or or two levels above the original computer. In fact, he can repeat this process again and again so that he can create many layers of logical or virtual machines based on the original, physical computer.

The reason for creating these virtual machines, explains Porter, is to provide an intermediary between humans and machines. "The virtual machine interprets our high-level language into low-level language that can be used by the machine. If we knew how to build this complex hardware, we would do it directly. But we are not that advanced technically, so we develop logical machines as computer programs that interpret our language to the computer. The very fact that we are able to create logically a machine with the properties we want means that such a physical machine can be built eventually.

The concept of the virtual machine, which does not exist in the form of an actual machine but exists on paper or as a computer program, is central to computer science, says Porter. "What we do is create many levels of logic which depend upon each other and ultimately get down to this physical device that we work with. The whole view of building upon languages, from very primitive ones to very, very complex ones, is a view that I think is unique to computer science."

Most people who use the computer as a tool use it at a level of complexity several levels above that of the actual computer, although they do not know it, explains Porter. The user can deal with a computer from a very simple, logical perspective because the computer scientist has constructed a program that makes this possible.

"The complexity of dealing with an actual machine is just enormous. But by properly putting layer upon layer of language here, we get to the point

“While computers are electronic right now, there is no reason why they should retain that particular technology.”

that the user doesn't even know — or need to know — all of the things that are going on. To him this *is* the physical machine, when, in fact, all of these logic-constructs are necessary to make the computer do the things he wants it to do.”

A word processor is an example of the way a computer scientist allows a person to use a computer in a simplified manner, Porter explains. “The word processor is the computer scientist's way of making you think that the computer is a word processor. His imagination creates an environment that lets you deal with the word processor alone without having to know about all of these other levels.”

Porter emphasizes that it is the logical aspect of computer science, not technology, that interests him. “The technology is immaterial. Only the logic aspect of the machine is significant. While computers are electronic right now, there is no reason why they should retain that particular technology. Computers may come to be based on light. They may come to be based on genetic material. As soon as we have some other way of indicating “on” and “off” in any kind of technology, we can use it to build a computer. What's important is the logic of this device, not the technology that was used to manufacture it.”

If computer scientists like Porter are interested primarily in logic and can develop their own logical machines on paper, why do they need computers? Because computers can bring about changes in our physical environment, Porter explains. In the computer, logic is expressed as changes in voltage or current that come out eventually as a signal to the printer or the cathode-ray tube-terminal or the stereo-amplifier. “In the computer we have something that stands for our intelligence,” Porter says. “It is a machine that does what we tell it to do, faster than we can do it, and we don't have to be there to supervise it.”

Working with computers can teach us a great deal about ourselves and the way we think, Porter says. Computers are objective machines, with no world view or preconceived ideas. They simply reflect back to us exactly what we communicate to them. If we do not capture the essence of whatever we are trying to teach them, these machines will not fill in the blanks for us. They will simply be unable to perform the action we want them to perform.

“Without question, the experience of trying to explain to the computer our understanding of a problem greatly improves our understanding of what the problem actually is,” he says. To communicate with a computer, our thought must be far more complete than it would be to communicate with other human beings.

Computer science has already led to the discovery of some important concepts in the organization of information, he says. It has already had an impact on certain areas of psychology, linguistics and biology.

Although we have already discovered many ways to use computers, Porter thinks we have only scratched the surface of what they can do. “Of course, we're only looking at 35 years of history right now,” he says. “Our technology is still very primitive; thus the complexity of computer language is low, but a hundred years from now it will be a wholly different story.”

Porter believes that the philosophical implications of the computer are far greater than most people now realize. For the first time, the potential for human beings to create a new kind of intelligence exists. “I think this represents a new view for the human species as to its relation to the world,” he says. “Just as we found ourselves moved from the physical center of the universe by the discoveries of Copernicus and moved from the center of the species by the theories of Darwin, we are potentially going to find ourselves moved from the center

of intelligence. I think these new kinds of investigations could cause a paradigm shift for humanity as a whole.”

Can computer intelligence exceed human intelligence? Porter is not willing to predict this. “I would not say that we know where it's going. I would simply say that the potential exists to cause us to share in a new view of intelligence. We may not be the sole possessors of intelligence; there may be other kinds of intelligence. We're going to have to share the limelight, perhaps, with other views, and that's going to be very difficult for people to accept.”

It is not just in computer science that we encounter a relation between programming and intelligence, he explains. Sociobiology, for example, tells us that our genes may program us to behave in certain ways, and while we can alter that behavior to some degree, we may find that we are more constrained in our behavior than we had thought previously. “We may find that we're not nearly so creative and free-willed as we would like to think we are. Through this kind of investigation we are finding perhaps that there will have to be a shift in the way we view what we're like. I'm not saying that this is guaranteed, but I know that there is a lot of activity in this area and that it has the potential to mushroom.”

While Porter believes computers provide great opportunities for us, he worries that there is so little debate, and even awareness, of the consequences of our use of them. He foresees the time when many decisions that we now make individually will be made by computers, and we will not even be aware that this is happening. For instance, when a person steps on the gas pedal in his car, a computer — not the driver — will tell the car how fast to go.

“As time goes on, we're going to find we don't directly control a lot of things anymore. There's this little

“One well-placed nuclear bomb could knock out most of the computers in the country.”

intelligent device in there between us and what we do and while we think we're controlling something, we're actually interacting with a language interpreter that has someone else's intelligence imbedded in it.”

There is also a real danger that computers will be used for unethical and illegal purposes, Porter believes. Since most financial transactions are handled now by computers, it is possible for an individual or an organization to be defrauded electronically. Also, because vast amounts of information about individuals are now accessible on computers, unscrupulous people can use this information to manipulate or even harm other people.

“If you think of people being rounded up in Germany based on only a few shoe boxes full of information, then imagine the danger of having enormous data banks on every individual that can be read in an extraordinarily short time. The ability of the government or any other organization or individual to amass large volumes of information on individuals definitely exists.”

Porter also warns that there is grave concern about the reliability of computers during a war. “One well-placed nuclear bomb could knock out most of the computers in the country,” he says. “If a high altitude nuclear blast occurred over the center of the United States, the enormously high electric field that it generated would destroy all of the individual logic elements in computers across the nation, and we could be plunged into an abysmal communication situation.”

Porter would like for the general public to become more aware of the consequences of the use of computers. He would like to see more public discussion and debate of issues related to them. Ultimately, he believes, there will have to be new laws to define and protect the rights of individuals in the electronic age.

As Porter talks about his concerns,

he is interrupted from time to time by students who come to his office for help. He excuses himself and walks across the hall in the basement of Plyler Science Hall to the new computer science laboratories, where approximately 45 students are working. After solving the problem of the moment, he returns to his office.

Why did Porter give up a lucrative job in industry to come to teach at Furman?

“Obviously, not the money,” he smiles. “I've always enjoyed teaching. I taught as a graduate student and as a post-doctoral fellow, and the thing I enjoyed most at Computer Sciences Corporation was teaching the younger people who worked for me.”

Porter heard about the position at Furman through a friend who had worked for the same company and had taken a teaching job at Furman. Porter came to the campus for an interview, and he was especially impressed by the quality of the students.

“I felt Furman was a very attractive institution,” he says. “I was impressed by the seriousness of the students and their willingness to go beyond the normal level of effort. But it was an agonizing decision. There is a great monetary difference between industrial salaries and faculty salaries, especially at small, private liberal arts colleges.”

He and his wife talked over the advantages and disadvantages of coming to Furman and finally decided that he should give full-time teaching a try. “Besides enjoying teaching, I also wanted to have some time for intellectual reflection,” he explains. “I'm very much a believer in liberal arts and I try my best to make sure that every course I teach has a liberal arts perspective. We're not teaching technology here. We're trying to teach general concepts and ways of viewing things. Each discipline is nothing more than a way of viewing one's environment. It is important to be able to relate the information one

gains from a discipline to the whole picture, and that's the kind of thinking process we are trying to teach here.”

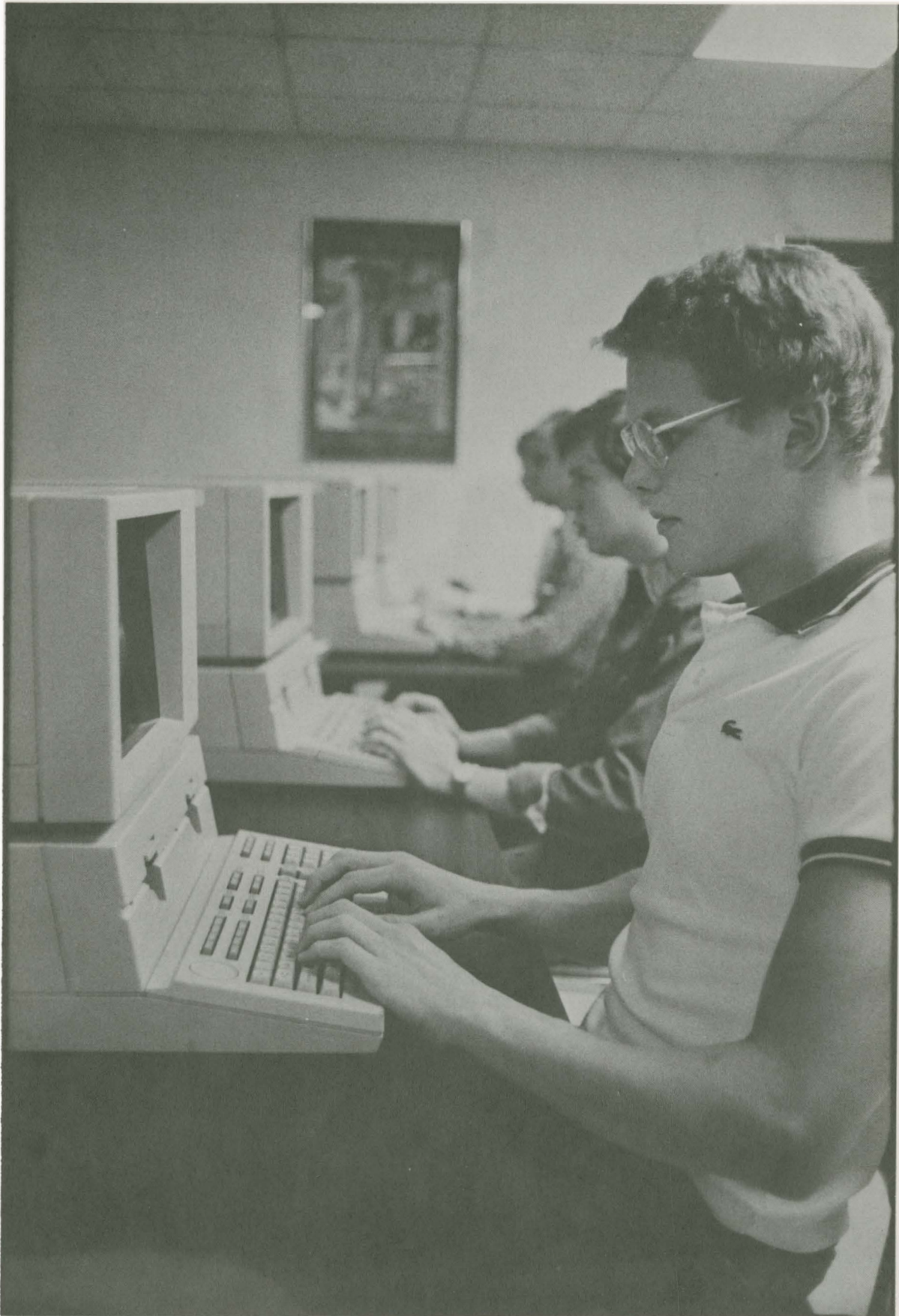
Since coming to Furman, Porter has received two research grants, one in 1981 for \$13,000 from the National Aeronautics and Space Administration and one last fall for \$27,000 from the National Science Foundation. With the NASA grant, Porter and his student assistants developed computer programs for the interpretation of satellite data from the aurora borealis. With the NSF grant, he and his students are now conducting research in image processing and speech synthesis. Under his supervision, eight Furman students have given papers at meetings of professional associations.

In spite of his reservations about some uses of computers, Porter cannot suppress his excitement when he talks about the work he and his students and other computer scientists are doing. “We are trying to teach computers to talk. We're trying to teach them to see, to hear, to understand. Because computers are just objective machines, it's quite a new experience.

“Many schools teach only the use of the computer. They do not teach what I call the concept of general interpretation of language, which I see as a far more fundamental and very philosophic issue. At Furman we are very interested in what this machine tells us about our own thinking processes and our relation to the natural world. To us, this machine is a laboratory where ideas can be examined and understood.”

“Hayden Porter changed the way I think of computers,” said a recent visitor to the campus. In fact, anyone who has talked with Porter must surely come away with a new appreciation for computers and a strong suspicion that computer scientists may be the intellectual pioneers of a new era.

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Blake Praylor

Computer science students at Furman learn general concepts as well as complex problem-solving methods.

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