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The John Finley Crowe Effect:

**Tracing the Influence of the Abolitionist Hero-Founder through Hanover College's
Progressive and Regressive History with African-American Students**

Situated precariously just inside the natural continuance of the Mason-Dixon Line formed by the boundary of the Ohio River, Hanover College has repeatedly faced ideological strain on the issue of race since her founding as Hanover Academy in 1827. In order to alleviate that strain at many points in her history, Hanover College experienced several predictable shifts in attitude towards African-Americans. Her first attitude was a progressive one for its era, reflecting the profound radical tolerance of her founder, the abolitionist John Finley Crowe, who passionately advocated that African-Americans should have a right to an education. In Hanover College's infancy, the strong attitudes of her founder would enable the first African-American to study at the college's newly-formed seminary. However, with the advent of the Civil War, the administration at Hanover College adopted a new, wary attitude toward the issue of race in the face of a divided campus, leading the college's trustees to deny entrance to one African-American student just before the Civil War, and to bar African-Americans from the college for nearly one hundred years afterward. Hanover College's return to an attitude of racial equality would only come through the efforts of impassioned individuals, who, mirroring the convictions and stalwart attitude of Hanover's founding father, utilized their positions in the small college to generate change.

Rev. John Finley Crowe's attitude towards slavery was such that, by the time he founded Hanover Academy, his institution could not fail to inherit his powerful convictions. According to a

biographical sketch written by Crowe's daughter, Mrs. S. C. Garritt, "from the time of his conversion [Crowe] had doubted the righteousness of slavery, and on entering the ministry [in 1815] longed to ameliorate the condition of the slave" (qtd. Moore 22). This longing, his daughter writes, lead him to begin teaching a "Sunday-school" of sorts "for slaves, who had permission from their masters to attend" (qtd. Moore 22). Rev. Frank O'Ballard notes that Crowe even schooled the freed slaves of the Blythe family, who were "'Kentucky landlords and slaveholders'" until Dr. James Blythe freed his family's slaves with the desire that Crowe would "'teach them the rudiments of an education to fit them for liberty'" (Rule 26). In defense of his choice to educate former slaves, Crowe indicates in his memoir from December of 1813 that his young students were a joy to teach, with "bright eyes and intelligent faces notwithstanding a black skin" (see Artifact 7). But this work met with predictable community disapproval, and in the absence of support for his teaching, Crowe began writing and publishing abolitionist works in a magazine called the *Abolition Intelligencer*, a publication which he published through the aid of the Kentucky Abolition Society members (Moore 22; Rule 64). According to Prof. A. Earl Martin, the first *Abolition Intelligencer* was published in May of 1822, and it became something of a "'repository for all plans for the abolition of slavery, for all laws, opinions, arguments, essays, speeches, reviews, statistics, congressional proceedings . . . in short, everything that related to slavery'" (qtd. Rule 64; see Artifact 1). This influential publication, however, caused the local Kentuckians to erupt in fury. "'It immediately brought out protests, then warnings, at last threats, should [Crowe] continue the publication,'" writes Mrs. Garritt of her father's poor treatment (qtd. Moore 23). But, she adds, the tribulation, while difficult, only strengthened his resolve. "The prospects of loss of friends and property and congregations caused [him] great distress of mind and commitment of the case to God for direction, which resulted in his becoming satisfied that the deplorable condition of two millions of enslaved Africans called for exertion and sacrifice'" (qtd. Moore 23). And Crowe did continue to exert himself, in spite of his

lack of a press, to hand-copy out his publications of the *Abolition Intelligencer* for an unprofitable twelve months (Moore 23).

Forced to concede momentary defeat because of the persecution he experienced in Kentucky, Crowe removed to Hanover, writing in his diary upon his arrival there in 1823,

‘By the good hand of God upon me, I have been preserved through dangers, and led, as I trust, by a wise and holy Providence to Hanover, Indiana, the land of civil and religious liberty. . . . But the course of humanity is not deserted. . . . Jehovah is the avenger of the oppressed. His servants will not hold their peace until the foul stain of unmerited involuntary and perpetual slavery be expurged from this National Escutcheon.’ (qtd. Baker 82)

These noble dreams would not die, even as Crowe struggled to build Hanover Academy. For, in Hanover, Crowe eventually met again with his old patron, pastor, and friend, Dr. James Blythe, who shared Crowe’s firm abolitionist principles. Blythe, who eventually became Hanover College’s first president in 1833, unapologetically declared in his inaugural address to the student body that “Christianity has taught the world to abhor slavery; to pity the black man in his chains; to take men of every clime and color by the hand, and call them brothers. She [Christianity] has enkindled a light . . . to convert the American master and tyrant into the negro’s friend” (Blythe 14-15). His stance, combined with Crowe’s commitment to the cause, undoubtedly helped to formulate Hanover College’s original stance towards the Race Question.

Only a year before Blythe’s official presidency and Hanover Academy’s official renaming as Hanover College, a young African-American man named Benjamin Templeton of Ripley, Ohio, enrolled as a “Preparatory student” in 1832 (see Artifact 2). His entrance into Hanover Academy came as something of a last resort in Templeton’s journey to become a pastor. According to the research of Ann Hagedorn, Benjamin Franklin Templeton was “born into slavery on a cotton

plantation in Spartanburg District, South Carolina, in 1809,” but was freed in 1813 with his parents, Pompey and Terak, upon the death of their master, Thomas Williamson, whose will stipulated the emancipation of all of his slaves (60). Having already received a rudimentary education from the forward-thinking Mrs. Sarah Williamson, Benjamin and his brother, John, came with the widow to Adams County, Ohio and sought their further education (Hagedorn 60). John enrolled in Ohio University through his employer, Ohio University’s future president Robert Wilson, graduating in 1828 (Hagedorn 60). Benjamin, desiring to follow in John’s footsteps, applied to Ripley College in Ripley, Ohio, with the aid of the Chillicothe Presbytery in 1831, only to encounter vicious opposition to his presence (Hagedorn 62-63). Not long after Templeton’s arrival, a community member in Ripley named Franklin Shaw sent threatening notes to Templeton at the college, and he later attacked Benjamin as the lately-enrolled young man emerged from Ripley’s campus one afternoon (Hagedorn 62). In the attack, Shaw tore off Templeton’s shirt and beat him with a strip of “cowhide” in a drunken act of fury (Hagedorn 62). Barely recovered from that attack, Templeton soon faced more trials at Ripley College. According to Hagedorn,

[T]he Southern students threatened to withdraw if Templeton did not leave the school. Because of this, the majority of the board of trustees favored Templeton’s dismissal. They did not want the scandal of having the Southern students walk out, and they feared a recurrence of violence, either of which would discourage future enrollments. (63)

Yet, a few Abolitionist administrators stood by Templeton, including Adam Lowry Rankin, Ripley College’s founder, who offered to “take [Benjamin] into his home, where he would tutor Templeton in the same courses he had been taking” (Hagedorn 63). Finishing out the semester under Rankin’s tutelage, Templeton followed his new mentor’s advice to seek admittance at Hanover College, where Rankin knew abolitionist attitudes were stronger (Hagedorn 63).

In 1832, Templeton enrolled in Hanover's "Preparatory Department" or the "Academic Department"—an apparently separate academy from the main college itself—and spent the first four years of his schooling there, years which coincided with two years of Blythe's presidency from 1833 until 1835 (see Artifact 2; "HC Catalogues" 1833, '34, & '35; cf. Moore 49). It is important to note here that Templeton's *initial* admission to the Preparatory predates Blythe's presidency. Templeton's enrollment, therefore, probably had greatly to do with the support of the strongest progressive voice on campus—that of Hanover founder, John Finley Crowe. As a member of the Salem Presbytery, Crowe was present at the first meeting in Salem, Indiana, on April 1, 1824, where the members decided "to devise ways and means for the education of poor and pious young men for the work of the ministry," and was also in attendance the fall following when the Presbytery at Charlestown "formed itself into an educational society" (Moore 25). A sister presbytery, the Chillicothe Presbytery in Ohio, has a historical account describing Templeton as a "colored member of the Manchester Church" who, poor and pious, desired "an education for the ministry"—just what Crowe's own Salem Presbytery education society hoped to find (Galbraith et al. 110). According to the Chillicothe Presbytery's account, the church in Chillicothe took up "collections" in 1831 to "raise funds for his education until application on his behalf could be made to 'a [sic] education society'" of a sister Presbytery (Galbraith et al. 110). Although Hagedorn notes that the Chillicothe Presbytery had Ripley College as "their [first] choice" school for Templeton, his prompt matriculation into the Preparatory School of Hanover Academy in the fall of 1832 after his tribulations at Ripley indicates that, with Rankin's assistance, Templeton likely took his funding from the Chillicothe Presbytery and either applied to the aforementioned Salem Presbytery's educational society, or came directly to Crowe, a member of that society (Hagedorn 61; cf. Moore 25). Whatever Templeton's path to Hanover, Hagedorn's research indicates that Rankin apparently had heard enough of the attitudes of the college's founder to know that

Templeton would “be safe” there (Hagedorn 63).

Templeton did find a safe-haven at Hanover, but can it be said that Templeton was Hanover College’s first African-American graduate? Hanover’s records indicate that, in 1835, after studying in Hanover’s Preparatory Department for four years, Templeton matriculated into Hanover’s newly-formed off-shoot school, the Indiana Theological Seminary, an institution which had only its “property and funds . . . under the management of the College” (“HC Catalogue 1835-1836”; Moore 49). Two years later, in 1837, Templeton’s name appears in the *Catalogue of the Officers and Students of Indiana Theological Seminary and Hanover College* under the “Senior Class” of the Seminary, but has no college listed under his “Graduate Status” as his baccalaureate alma mater, only a simple dash: “—” (6). According to a statement by Hanover’s Office of Communications and Marketing (formerly the P.R. Office), this is because “Hanover College was not chartered until 1833,” and Templeton had entered the school before its renaming (see Artifact 3). However, this assertion may not be entirely correct. In the 1837 *Catalogue of the Officers and Students*, there are eight contemporaries of Templeton’s class listed with either “Hanover College” or the marking “do.,” signifying “ditto” for Hanover College as their baccalaureate alma mater (6). Apparently, unlike some of his fellow senior seminary classmates, Benjamin Templeton either never finished his baccalaureate at Hanover or was never a student in the actual College. In any case, while his graduation from Indiana Theological Seminary has firm substantiating evidence, Templeton is not listed a Hanover College graduate in any official statements of the college, or in any college historian’s accounts explored in during the research for this paper.

But, perhaps, the degree from Hanover’s off-shoot seminary was all Templeton wanted; it was certainly what Crowe’s educational society hoped to give to a young would-be minister. Hagedorn reports that Templeton went on to Lane Theological Seminary to find a ministry, and that he was “ordained minister in the Ripley Presbytery in 1838, later pastoring his own churches in

Pittsburgh and Philadelphia” (63-4). The Chillicothe Presbytery’s historical account notes that his site of ordination was “the Presbytery at Hillsborough, [Ohio]” in April of 1838, followed by a journey to the “Presbytery at Ripley” in September of 1838, where he was “appointed to labor as missionary” (Galbraith et al. 110). “Where he went to does not appear,” write the authors of *The History of the Chillicothe Presbytery*, but we may safely surmise that Hagedorn’s aforementioned findings in Pittsburgh and Philadelphia fill in the missing links in his story (Galbraith et al. 110). Frank Baker’s *Glimpses of Hanover’s Past* corroborates Templeton’s presence in Philadelphia, adding new information that tells us that Templeton wound up “serving the Second African Presbyterian Church in Philadelphia at the time of his death in 1858” (75).

Although Templeton had success at Hanover, the college’s attitude would soon change. Just within the frame of Templeton’s lifetime, another African-American student attempted to matriculate into Hanover College on January 19, 1857, but his suit did not meet with a good reception. The rejection of this student seems puzzling when we consider the fact that Hanover College’s abolitionist founder John Finley Crowe, though in declining health, was still very much an influential presence at the college and would remain so until his death on January 17, 1860 (Rule 65). The ambiguous language in Secretary J.B. Garritt’s Faculty Board meeting minutes concerning the rejection of the African-American student only adds to the mystery of the decision made that day:

A special meeting of the Faculty was called to consider the application of Moses Broiles, a colored man, for a regular admission into the college. He came from Franklin [Indiana], having the benefit of the Sloan Scholarship, wh[ich] sch[olarship] was given with the express condition that a colored student was to receive the benefit of it. The Faculty passed a resolution, that considering the present circumstances of the institution, and its situation, it was unadvisable to receive him into College. The

consideration of the subject, and a final decision of it, was referred [to] the Board of Trustees, at its next meeting. (Artifact 4)

According to Baker's account, the Board of Trustees not only backed up the Faculty's decision, but they "voted to return the Sloan Scholarship to the donor" (75). However, Baker is careful to note in the college's defense that Hanover would not have "accepted the scholarship in the first place if there was any possibility of its conditions not being met" (75). While Baker's statement of faith in the administrators' willingness to take a progressive racial stance is comforting to the reader and historian, it still begs the question: What could have caused the Boards of the Faculty and Trustees to block Broiles's admission?

Unfortunately for Broiles, 1857 was apparently a year in which Hanover College needed to pay careful mind to both her pocketbook and the peace of the campus. In the 1850s, the college was expanding at such a rate that a new building for instruction became a necessity. According to Hanover College historian and past president, William Alfred Millis, the first "College Building," later named "Classic Hall" underwent construction in the years leading up to 1857, costing the college "nearly \$43,000, of which over \$27,000 was obtained in various ways from the Endowment Fund, to the great distress of the Faculty, and almost of the College" (136). By 1855, A. Y. Moore writes, the finances of the college were in "dire straits because of its new building and because of arrears accruing upon professors' salaries" (92-93). These straits continued because the "subscriptions" that the trustees attempted to sell to rebuild the fund were "collected from a wide region of the country, and were liable to shrinkage" when subscribers moved about or reneged on their subscriptions (Moore 93).

Unfortunately, the fact that the greater United States was on the brink of the Civil War only served to further threaten the precarious financial situation at the college, building tension which could snap if Hanover were to stir up the political storm over the issue of race. Baker argues that the

decision not to admit Broiles “should be understood in light of the approaching conflict between the states” (75). Historian I. George Blake would agree, since his research indicates that many Southern Indiana colleges, including Hanover, faced terrible ideological strain in this era. “Many of [these Southern Indiana colleges] had among their founders men with Southern antecedents,” Blake explains, adding that, due to geography alone, “[t]here were many islands of Southern sympathy, especially in the Southern half of the State, and the campuses found themselves with a divided opinion in the face of the struggle” (66-67). These “islands” of ideology probably existed in Hanover’s student body in the year that Broiles attempted to enroll in the college, not only because Southern Indiana had areas of divided loyalties, but also because several students on campus came from the slave states of Virginia, Kentucky, Georgia, and Texas (“Annual Catalogue 1857”). In light of these concerns, Baker writes, “it is not too surprising that the College decided to ‘play it safe’” in the case of Moses Broiles (75).

After Hanover College turned Broiles away from her door, nearly one hundred years passed without the attendance—or any indication of matriculation attempts—of any African-American students at Hanover College. In *History of Hanover College*, written in 1927, Millis indicates that this race-based gap in attendance existed partially because of the precedent set by the Moses Broiles decision when he writes,

Admission to Hanover is denied the negro. . . . The story of the sole negro applicant for admission, and of the rejection of the Board in sustaining the Faculty in their rejection of the youth has been told. The policy then established has not been changed. (184)

At the same time, Millis notes some inconsistency in this policy, since “[n]o other races are barred [from Hanover College]” (184). “In fact,” Millis adds, “there have been many representatives of other races received and a number graduated [from the College]”—an interesting observation that

can be proven through many accounts of Asian and South American students who came as welcome additions to the college during the intervening time between the Civil War and the Great Depression (184). The admission of foreign students of other races to the student body demonstrated a progressive swing in the administration's attitudes at Hanover, reflected in their equally forward-thinking choice to admit women "with great unanimity" to Hanover College in 1880 (Millis 184). Yet, in light of the rights granted to these minorities at this time, Hanover's vigilant maintenance of a policy denying African Americans admission seems very outmoded, ironic, and even illogical. Baker takes note of this regressive trend when he admits that "Hanover was one of a few—if not the only—Indiana College that did not admit negroes [until] as late as 1948" (195).

When Hanover College finally did admit that first African-American student, a young woman from nearby Madison named Alma Gene Prince, it was because of the progressive stance of Hanover's Presidential couple, President Albert Parker and his wife, Katharine, who, like John Finley Crowe, had great influence on the small college. Alma Gene Prince's matriculation into Hanover College initially went smoothly. According to Mrs. Parker in her memorandum, a Hanover trustee's wife contacted her personally to tell her of Miss Prince's wish to enter the college with some transfer credits from Indiana University (Artifact 5, p.1; Baker 196). Seeing that Miss Prince had sufficient financial support from the congregation of the Hanover Presbyterian Church, the Parkers agreed to admit her (Artifact 5, p.1). But, as Baker reports in his anecdotal account, "President Parker did not anticipate the storm that was to arise when the admission [of Prince as a student] became public. . . . in two weeks all hell broke loose when certain trustees found out that Hanover had allowed a negro to enroll" (196).

Among those "certain trustees" was Harry V. Wade, a member of the Executive Committee, who immediately became concerned about the situation ("HC Bulletin" 4). In a letter written on June 24, 1949 to Mr. and Mrs. Fred Millis, members of one of Hanover College's most influential

families and two of her greatest benefactors, Wade describes a covertly-named “Athletic Club” meeting that took place on December 7, 1948, concerning Prince’s admission to the college (see Appendix Letter A). Adopting a confidential tone, Wade preambles his account of the situation to the Millises by telling them that “wisely all of this has been kept out of black and white for reasons I will later touch upon, but unless I am mistaken the following is what happened” (“A” 2). Then Wade describes what went on at the secret meeting:

There was a straw vote on the point as to whether the young woman in question would be permitted to finish out her college career or whether other arrangements could be made. As I remember, the vote was rather close in favor of letting her finish if she so desired. . . . I then made the observation that the situation could not be handled as simply as it appeared, that everyone of the trustees who were alumni of the institution had voted against permitting the young woman to continue after the ’48-’49 season. . . . As I remember the situation, then the suggestion was made that perhaps private arrangements could be made to interest the young woman in another institution and verbal offers went around the table to the effect that young individuals would contribute perhaps to a fund that would help the young woman. I remember that I said I thought I could arrange it for her admittance to another institution, and it was in this way that the matter was left. Fred, I may be mistaken in my estimate of the situation, but please believe my sincerity when I say that the majority of the trustees in my mind in their off-the-record action did finally vote to permit the woman to continue, but later on we agreed, because of the feeling of the alumni trustees, to do everything in our power to move her on to another school. (“A” 2)

Baker corroborates Wade’s admission that some of the trustees agreed “to do everything in [their] power to move her on to another school” by adding in his own account that “[s]everal [trustees]

went to Gene and offered to cover her expenses at Indiana University if she would just quietly slip away" (196). Wade himself was desperate to see the situation resolved, seeing danger in the controversy that Prince could cause for the College. His desperation reveals itself in his colorful use of metaphorical imagery in his letter to the Millises. "In order to get Hanover where I want it to go," he writes, "I would crown [Prince] either Queen of the May, as they did up at McGill University [with another black student], or have her play the central figure in a realistic pageant of Joan of Arc, and if it required me either to place the crown on her head or apply the torch, I would do it to her or anyone else" ("A" 4). With this kind of passion provoked by her presence, we well may wonder whether Alma Gene Prince felt the temptation to leave for her own safety.

Yet, in spite of these feelings from some of the trustees and tight finances during her second semester, Miss Prince did not give in to the pressure. Her willingness to stay was largely due to the support of Mrs. Parker, who became worried about the girl's feelings and increasingly strained financial situation. "I talked with [Alma Gene], simply saying to her that there were some people here who didn't want her to leave Hanover because of finances," Mrs. Parker writes in her memorandum about the Prince case (Artifact 5, p.1). After discussing her plans with Mrs. Parker to either go into nursing school through Methodist Hospital in Indianapolis or to continue at Hanover, Miss Prince told Mrs. Parker that "she wanted to return to Hanover" (Artifact 5, p.1).

In a manner reminiscent the fundraising performed by the Presbyterian educational societies in which John Finley Crowe took part, Mrs. Parker then arranged for Miss Prince to find some financial support for her schooling by approaching John N. Fox, the reverend of Hanover Presbyterian Church, with her concerns (Artifact 5, p.1). Fox networked Prince to Jay and Doris Taff, a couple who often gave financial aid to foreign students who wished to study at Hanover. The Taffs, like Mrs. Parker—and John Finley Crowe before them—found support for their convictions concerning racial equality in the strong, deep roots of their Christian faith. According

to Mrs. Parker, the Taffs “fe[lt], as many others do, that in a Christian college, there is no reason why a student should be refused admission because of race or color” (Artifact 5, p. 2). Mr. and Mrs. Taff, who had supported Hanover students from foreign countries before, offered to completely cover Miss Prince’s college costs for the semester, but Prince decided to work in the Taffs’ home during her school year to earn extra spending money, and persistently balanced her new job with her schoolwork (Artifact 5, p. 2).

In spite of Miss Prince’s quiet determination, some of the trustees continued to challenge her presence. In fact, during the summer of 1949, following Miss Prince’s first year at Hanover, a slew of heated correspondence between the trustees began. Concerned that Miss Prince had settled on staying, Executive Committee member M. E. Garber apparently wrote to fellow committee member T.C. Werbe, who then wrote directly to Executive Committee Chair Charles Lynn (Appendix Letter B; “HC Bulletin” 12). In Charles Lynn’s response letter to Mr. Werbe, which his secretary forwarded to all members of the Board of Trustees, Lynn tells his fellow trustees that,

I have not had the slightest inkling from faculty or students that they were not perfectly content to have Miss Prince in the school. Anyone who attended the Commencement exercises and heard the addresses of the salutatorian and valedictorian must know that there is a very strong feeling among the students and faculty at Hanover against racial discrimination. . . . Both addresses were very loudly applauded. (“B” 2)

In light of the strong campus position on against racial discrimination, Lynn firmly advises the trustees in this same letter to “let the matter alone,” cautioning that the “persistent effort on our part to secure the withdrawal or removal of Miss Prince from the school will do great injury to Hanover if it is not discontinued” (“B” 2).

Just days after Lynn composed his cautionary letter in June of 1949, Harry Wade began to wage an ongoing correspondence campaign against Miss Prince's presence, writing even to her most supportive advocate, Mrs. Parker. Although part of their correspondence—which apparently spanned several letters—is lost, we can surmise from Mrs. Parker's surviving letter that Wade's missing first letter included his "desire to know the facts" about Mrs. Parker's role in Miss Prince's continued enrollment at the College (see Appendix Letter C). Specifically, Mrs. Parker notes that Wade had a wish to know whether she had "'prevailed upon [Prince] to stay at Hanover'" ("C" 1). In her response, she tells Wade that, while she has helped network Prince to financial aid through Rev. Fox's connections, and that she "urged" Prince to go speak to the heads of the nursing program at Methodist Hospital to seek guidance for her desired career, she has nevertheless "[a]t no time . . . 'prevailed upon' Miss Prince to do anything [about staying at the college]. She has made her own decisions and will continue to do so, with no coercion from me" ("C" 1). She also corrects some rather seedy misassumptions, and near-accusations, apparently made on the part of a third party who originally wrote to Mr. Wade.

In your questions 2 and 3 you ask (2) whether I believe Miss Prince has been 'upgraded' in her classes because 'none of the faculty wishes to incur the Parker animosity by flunking her' and (3) whether I believe that some members of the faculty when queried on this point, answered 'What else could we do?' ("C" 1) Mrs. Parker rejects both assumptions outright, affirming the "professional integrity" of the faculty ("C" 2). She then attempts to paint Mr. Wade a new picture of the circumstances on campus by telling him, "I sincerely believe that the morale of both faculty and students is better because they feel that the college has put itself on what they believe is the Christian side of the problem of racial discrimination" ("C" 2). Wade, in his response to Mrs. Parker seven days later, issues her a warning, telling her that her statement about the morale of the faculty and students being high

because of their unity on the “Christian side” of the race issue is a dangerous one (see Appendix Letter D). “You may maintain that sentiment as your God given right, but by expressing it in terms of Hanover College, you are jeopardizing your tremendous investment that you and Albert [Parker] have made in the same,” he warns her (“D” 1). As Wade sees it, taking that particular stance as the College’s own, and lining it up under the image of the Cross, is asking for controversy. And that is something which Wade has already admitted to the Millises that he would rather avoid (“A” 3-4). Only a few lines before this warning in his letter to Mrs. Parker, he accedes to her that “we both agree that the young lady in question should not be disturbed in her collegiate career,” but adds in a dramatic turn of phrase in the same line, “although I frankly believe that if something would happen to encourage her to go to some other school, it would be a blessing from Allah as we would be rid of a very hot potato from many different aspects” (“D” 1). Here Wade reveals his favored solution to the controversy in naked language: he wanted to simply get “rid of” its source.

Getting rid of Alma Gene Prince would prove harder than Wade thought. For, as both Charles Lynn and Katharine Parker point out in their letters, the student body and the faculty members were now firmly behind Alma Gene Prince, even if several of the trustees were decidedly not. When Miss Prince returned to Hanover in the fall of 1949, right on the heels of all this heated summer correspondence, Mrs. Parker’s memorandum indicates that Prince changed her major to Sociology and embarked on a clear plan to finish her undergraduate degree in just two-and-a-half more years by transferring credits from Indiana University (Artifact 5, p. 2). While the details of her experiences in the intervening years between the fall of 1949 and her graduation in the spring of 1951 have yet to be unveiled by Alma Gene Prince (now Saunders) herself, the fact that Prince did finally earn her degree in “social science” verifies that her path to success at Hanover, while certainly not easy, was nevertheless left ultimately unobstructed (“148 Seniors”). That she was eventually allowed to graduate was in itself a great victory. Greater still is the fact that, as the first

African-American to graduate from the official institution of Hanover College in the spring of 1951, Alma Gene Prince rightfully holds a historical place in Hanover's history books.

Yet, most important of all are the far-reaching effects of her presence at Hanover. As one of Hanover's "firsts," Alma Gene Prince blazed a trail for future members of her race at the College. After Prince's graduation from Hanover, the trustees apparently had a much harder time justifying the rejection of other African-American applicants. In order to preserve some semblance of fairness, while not totally yielding up control of the situation, Harry Wade proposed to Charles Lynn in a letter dated April 15, 1954, that the Executive Committee of the Board of Trustees be allowed to screen any "student coming from a background different from the general background of the majority of the members of the Presbyterian Church in Indiana" before granting the student admission to Hanover (see Appendix Letter E, p. 1). Wade goes on in his letter to reveal that Lynn himself apparently wanted Wade to draft a resolution including the above stipulation. "Now then," Wade writes, "I have done what you wanted me to and I would support the resolution, but not enthusiastically, for the following reasons . . ." ("E" 1). Among these reasons was the school's public reputation. "We have nothing on the minutes of the College that prohibits anyone from being admitted to the School," Wade asserts, adding, "I think it should officially remain that way" ("E"2).

President Albert Parker himself, who had been forwarded a copy of Wade's letter to Lynn, writes to Wade with surprising sympathy for his concerns on April sixteenth of the same year (see Appendix Letter F). In his letter, Parker indicates to Wade that he would not be opposed to making the Executive Committee in charge of admission screening, but warns him that, while "[m]ost of us do not want to have negro students at Hanover any more than you do . . . there are some things we cannot avoid. We must soon get rid of the barrier" ("F" 1). Parker also tells Wade in this letter that the removal of the barrier can be done without loss of funds, or face, to the college, reasoning that the "generous people are probably on the side of removing racial barriers," and because it is

possible for the trustees to “remove this barrier by agreement and have no record in our minutes” (“F” 2). But Wade, as reluctant to remove the barrier as ever, continues writing to Parker with his reasons for maintaining an unofficial segregation, even going so far as to give Parker the negative results of a poll given to the students on campus that asks whether or not they would “room with,” “eat” with, or “work with” a negro student, and so on (see Appendix Letter G and Artifact 6).

But in June of 1954, the matter of barring admission to African-American students finally went to an official vote among the members of the Board of Trustees, forced, perhaps, by the *Brown v. Board of Education* decision handed down in May. The results of the Trustees’ poll, reported in a letter from Charles Lynn to Harry Wade on June 10, apparently came close to a “3-to-1” vote in favor of removing the prohibition (see Appendix Letter H, p.1). However, Lynn also indicates to Wade that he wishes to suggest to the trustees that “the prohibition be removed but that no Negroes be admitted before the fall semester of 1955,” so as to avoid “any sort of rushing on the part of some who might be interested in bringing Negroes to Hanover” (“H” 1). Whether the trustees adopted this suggestion or not remains uncertain, but the three-to-one vote, as well as Lynn’s desire to put off the removal of the prohibition for another school year, clearly indicate that this small-yet-monumental change was hard to accept for some of the trustees at that time.

Today, we are still writing the story of Hanover College’s history with African-American students, and it is good for us to review her previous chapters. From Hanover College’s strong abolitionist founding to her less-than-glorious days of administrative controversy during the Segregation Era, the tiny college has given in to the political pressures of her temporal stage, but it has also demonstrated the unique power to transcend social climate that a few determined individuals can generate on a small campus. As the college founder, John Finley Crowe’s bravery fore-ran and foreshadowed that of Katharine Parker, paving a way for the pioneering spirit of students such as Benjamin Templeton and Alma Gene Prince. This handful of social activists,

separated by centuries, transformed Hanover College policies and, perhaps, some of the mindsets of her students and administrators in their time—altering forever the face of Hanover College as an institution and a body.

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Appendix of Artifacts and Letters

Artifact 1 (Copy). Front pages of the first Abolition Intelligencer and Missionary Magazine. (Vol. 1, No. 1.) published May 7, 1822. “Edited and published by John Finley Crow,” this issue of the *Intelligencer* includes an apologetic (i.e., defensive) argument for abolitionism from the standpoint the Kentucky Abolition Society, reflecting Crowe’s personal beliefs. The original microfilm was produced by Wisconsin State Historical Society Microfilms, Ann Harbor, MI, in 1948.

Artifact 2 (In Archives). Hanover Academy Student Records Ledger Book. “Registry 1832.” This hand-written ledger contains the names of early matriculated students, including Benjamin Templeton.

Artifact 3 (Copy). Hanover College Office of Marketing and Communications (P.R. Office) statement concerning the college’s first African-American graduates, sent to Christy Switzer in the Office of Alumni Relations on November 13, 2008.

Artifact 4 (In Archives). Hanover College Faculty Board Meeting Minutes from January 19, 1857, written by Faculty Secretary J.B. Garritt, containing account of the rejection of African-American applicant, Moses Broiles.

Artifact 5 (Copy). Hanover First-Lady Katharine Parker’s “Memorandum about Alma Gene Prince,” submitted to the college administration in August of 1949.

Artifact 6 (see Letter G).

Artifact 7 (In Archives). John Finley Crowe’s Memoirs, from the John Finley Crowe Family Collection, Box 1, Fd. 3-7.

Letter A (Copy). Mr. Harry V. Wade to Mr. And Mrs. Fred Millis, written June 24, 1949, in which Wade discusses the “straw vote” among the Trustees as to whether Alma Gene Prince should be allowed to stay at Hanover.

Letter B (Copy). Executive Committee Chair Charles J. Lynn to Mr. T.C. Werbe, written June 16, 1949, in which Lynn sets the story “straight” for Mr. Werbe and other trustees concerned about Prince’s continued presence on campus. He tells Werbe that the faculty and students are supportive of her and urges the trustees to “let well enough alone.”

Letter C (Copy). Mrs. Parker to Mr. Harry V. Wade, written June 21, 1949, in which Parker addresses Wade’s concerns and the concerns of other trustees surrounding Miss Prince’s presence on campus, defending Prince’s right to stay on campus.

Letter D (Color Copy). A response from Mr. Harry V. Wade to Mrs. Parker, written June 28, 1949, in which Wade indirectly expresses a wish to see Prince leave, and also indirectly warns Parker about what her active convictions about racial equality might do to Hanover College.

Letter E (Copy). Mr. Harry V. Wade to Mr. Charles J. Lynn, written April 15, 1954, in which Wade pens a draft of a resolution to bar African Americans from the college and admits that Hanover currently has no official prohibitions on admitting “anyone” to the school.

Letter F (Copy). President Albert Parker to Mr. Harry V. Wade, written April 16, 1954, in which Parker tells Wade that Hanover’s barrier to African Americans can be quietly removed without loss of face or finances for the college. Parker also sympathetically addresses Wade’s fears.

Letter G/Artifact 6 (Copies). Mr. Harry V. Wade to Mr. Charles J. Lynn, written May 7, 1954, with attached student survey. In his letter, Wade makes a final stand against admitting “any and all negroes to Hanover College,” and offers Lynn evidence that the majority of the student body would not be comfortable with their presence. The attached questionnaire (**Art. 6**) was given to students to collect Wade’s data.

Letter H (Copy). Mr. Charles J. Lynn to Mr. Harry V. Wade, written June 10, 1954, in which Lynn informs Wade that the vote-by-correspondence on the issue of admitting African-American students is in favor of admitting them.

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I owe a debt of gratitude to Hanover Archivist Doug Denné, whose interest in this subject is contagious. Thank you, Doug, for letting me handle crumbling materials that rarely see the light of day, and for allowing me to poke around in your stores of knowledge—both on the shelves and in your head.

The most recent information about Alma Gene Saunders (née Prince) came from the thoughtfulness of Christy Switzer in the Office of Alumni Relations. Thanks for searching to Alaska and back for me, Christy—and for letting me make an expensive call there, too.

Speaking of Alaska, I would also like to thank Anchorage’s own Stacey Saunders, daughter of Alma Gene Saunders, for taking the trouble to answer my calls and letters. I’m looking forward to learning more of your mother’s story, and to hopefully reweaving those unraveled bits of history from that particularly controversial section of the tapestry of Hanover’s many-threaded past. May your mother rest in peace—and find this work a good reflection of her adventure here.

