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## The Founding

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## The Founding

We've heard of three men in a boat, the butcher, the baker and the candlestick maker. Oakwood College's story also contains three men *and* a boat: the *Morning Star* and Oakwood's three founders. The *Morning Star* was the inspiration of Elder J. E. White, son of Ellen G. White. His idea was to build a floating chapel and schoolhouse which could tie-in along the banks of the Mississippi bringing book-learning and Bible-teaching to Blacks along its shore. This was no easy matter. The boat was built in Allegan, Michigan, floated to Lake Michigan, then towed across to Chicago, taken through the Chicago drainage canal, and finally made its way down the Illinois River to the Mississippi.

It was this maiden voyage of the mission ship to the South that convinced the S.D.A. educators that God's work would require more firmly-rooted effort. Hence Elders G. A. Irwin, O. A. Olsen, and S. M. Jacobs came to Huntsville and founded Oakwood College in Madison County. If metaphorically they were following the Star, it quite literally later followed them. When the ship was dismantled, the star, the bell, and the boiler (later used to power the sawmill at Oakwood) were brought to Oakwood's campus. These three emblems embody the vision of Ellen G. White and her son—the star, the mission; the bell, the call to service; the boiler, the beauty and necessity of work.

The dismantling of  
*The Morning Star*.  
The star, the bell  
and the boiler  
were brought to the  
Oakwood campus.

