
This Week in Eden History

March 7 | Eden students and faculty join civil rights demonstration in Alabama



Above: a group of unidentified students at the demonstration in Montgomery. Right: protestors in front of the capital building. | Richard Scheef, Jr., Collection, Eden Seminary Archives

On March 7, 1965—a day known as “Bloody Sunday” in the history of the American Civil Rights Movement—state troopers and county posse attacked 600 unarmed individuals as they began marching from Selma to Montgomery in a protest against racial discrimination and voter suppression. Violent images of police attacking protestors with clubs and tear gas were televised internationally, creating public outrage and political activity that helped pave the way for passage of the 1965 Voting Rights Act.

The Eden community met on March 8, to discuss how it might respond. Later that day, students Richard Carter, Melvin Jordon, and Thomas O’Connor, New Testament professor Lionel Whiston, and alum Richard Mann left by car for Selma to participate in a demonstration planned for March 9. During the following tense weeks of continued violence against protestors, 15 additional Eden students, plus professors Richard Scheef, Walter Brueggemann, and Oscar Rumpf, travelled to Montgomery to join 25,000 protestors lead by Martin Luther King, Jr. The event marked the successful completion of the Selma to Montgomery march on March 25.

An account of the participation of the Eden community in these historical events was reported in the *Eden Theological Seminary Bulletin*, Vol. 18, No. 3 (May 1965), pp. 2 ff.

