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A HISTORY OF MOUNTAIN VIEW SCHOOL  
WILKES COUNTY, NORTH CAROLINA

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by  
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A HISTORY OF MOUNTAIN VIEW SCHOOL  
WILKES COUNTY, NORTH CAROLINA

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A Thesis  
Presented to  
the Faculty of the Department of Education  
Appalachian State Teachers College

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In Partial Fulfillment  
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Master of Arts

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by  
H. T. Clark  
August 1954

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## CHAPTER I

### THE PROBLEM AND DEFINITIONS OF TERMS USED

For several years historians have realized the importance of the academy movement in the educational history of this country and of preserving its story.

In most cases the original sources were not available at the time the study was made. There are a few people still living who have first-hand information of the movement. If the information were not collected and preserved within the lives of these people, this source would forever vanish. Many people now have letters, papers, catalogs, and photographs which will ultimately disappear if not collected and preserved.

#### I. THE PROBLEM

Statement of the problem. It was the purpose of this study to collect and catalog all available historical material on the influences that came together to establish Mountain View Institute, the history and influences of the educational institutions that preceded it as well as the progress of Mountain View School which replaced the institute in 1929.

Importance of the study. Mountain View School and the schools that preceded it are especially worthy of note

because of the isolation of the community and the date the movement began in it.

The small rural community of Hays, North Carolina, which with the surrounding country, the scene of our study, is located on a low plateau somewhat isolated from the rest of the world. It is noteworthy that Mountain View Academy was established in 1912, after most academies had been replaced by more modern schools. It cannot, therefore, from a sociological or educational viewpoint be considered a stereotype of communities and schools which have been less isolated.

## II. DEFINITIONS OF TERMS USED

Academy. A school usually operated by a community or religious body before state schools were established in an area, and which attempted to give young people an education not readily available otherwise.

High school. A state operated school which took over the functions of the academy, improved them and added others.

Professor, teacher, faculty. Mountain View Institute teachers were commonly called "Professor". The three terms are used interchangeably and indiscriminately in this study.



## CHAPTER II

### REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

Records. A fair amount of published material was available on the school and community. This consisted of newspapers and magazines saved by chance, old letters, blue-prints, photographs, church and school board minutes, school catalogs, and programs. Many people who remember the institute have contributed much very valuable written material not heretofore available for publication.

Interviews. A large part of the material presented was derived from interviews for this study. Many of the men who figured in the founding of the academy, as well as many of the teachers and students are still living. This material contributed much to the study.

## CHAPTER III

### LOCATION

Geography. Mountain View School is located in western North Carolina in the little village of Hays, Wilkes County. It is about twelve miles by hard-surfaced county road from North Wilkesboro. The location of Mountain View School and Hays resembles the hub of a wheel. The hub cap in the center represents the central plateau. Near the center of this would be the village and the campus would join the village and reach to the south side of the plateau.

The spokes would be formed by five wide ridges with roads carved in the top sides. All the roads come together in or near the center of the village. Two of them go into the country and end in smaller roads to farms; one goes southwest about seven miles to Wilkesboro, the county seat; one goes northeast about ten miles to Traphill, long a cultural center and the historical site of three colleges; and one goes southeast about ten miles to Roaring River where the first Baptist Church in the territory was located.

The most beautiful part of the wheel is the rim, broken in the east where the Yadkin Valley cuts through the mountains, but the rest of the circumference is formed by the Blue Ridge and the Brushy Mountains. The views of the mountains are very beautiful and contributed to making Hays

a desirable place for a school.

The land on the plateau has never been fertile, its timber has never been of much commercial value, and even the valleys of the nearby small streams, while fertile, are only a few feet wide; the value of the plateau is the matchless view of the mountains. The first catalog of the institute describes the location as follows:

Mountain View Institute, seven miles northeast of Wilkesboro, is all in healthfulness and scenic beauty that can be desired. Here one gets both the cool mountain breezes and the warm sunshine of the valley.<sup>1</sup>

History. The first white men who came to Wilkes County followed the valley of the Yadkin, later many came through the mountain valleys from Virginia. The first record of a white man living in Wilkes County is a map in the Library of Congress, dated 1749. Hollingsworth<sup>2</sup> says that the map shows the home of Christopher Grist at a place called Mulberry Fields. When Wilkes County was formed in 1777, Mulberry Fields became Wilkesborough, the county seat. It was later shortened to Wilkesboro. It is evident that the county grew

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<sup>1</sup>  
The Catalog, Mountain View Institute, 1913-1914  
Copy owned by writer.

<sup>2</sup>  
J. G. Hollingsworth, History of Surry County  
(Mount Airy, North Carolina: Published by the author, 1935),  
p. 51.

rapidly because Benjamin Cleveland was able to raise in 1787 quite an army of Wilkes County men and to take a prominent part in the Battle of Kings Mountain. The spirit of the people is shown by the fact that the county was named after John Wilkes whom the people greatly admired.<sup>3</sup>

In 1890 a railroad was built to the village of Gordon, across the river from Wilkesboro. Gordon became North Wilkesboro and grew rapidly. The plateau around Hays was not settled to any great extent until about 1900 due to the lack of fertile land and other resources.

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<sup>3</sup> D. L. Corbitt, The Formation of North Carolina Counties (Raleigh: State Department of Archives and History, 1950), p. 227.

Wilkes was the publisher of the "North Briton", a violent political agitator and opponent of the Tory Party in England at the time. "Wilkes and Liberty" was the popular slogan of the agitators for parliamentary reform.

## CHAPTER IV

### SCHOOLS THAT PRECEDED THE ACADEMY

To better understand the forces that came together at this time to give birth to the institute we now turn to look at the men and organizations that founded Mountain View Institute.

Of the schools that existed before Mountain View, Traphill Institute seems to have taken the greatest part in furnishing the inspiration and pattern. It began in a one-room log building about 1790 and was a center of the cultural and educational life of the section for over a hundred years.<sup>1</sup>

The interest of the little community of Hays in the education of its children goes back to the earliest settlers. An old church paper signed by A. A. Parks and L. H. Carter and dated 1884, several years before the Baptists at Traphill organized their association, recommends that for the moral and religious upbuilding of society the young people should have a much better education than their fathers.<sup>2</sup> It stated that the young people should be taught both to read and to

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1

Dr. J. S. Holbrook and Charlie Miles, An unpublished interview, June 19, 1954.

2

Paper, Center Church, Wilkes County, 1884. In possession of writer.

understand what they read and to be able to defend the truth. Much attention, it admitted, should be given to the education of the ministry so that they would be able to propagate the gospel of Jesus Christ. They lamented the fact that "at least three-fourths (of the North Carolina Baptists) are uneducated."

There were many small elementary schools around Hays before the establishment of Mountain View. Typical of these were Little Round Mountain School in the hollow east of Little Round Mountain Church. Records of the origin of this school have been swallowed up by time. It was an old building in 1885. It was made of logs, one being left out on the south end to admit light. A large stone fireplace formed the other end. Benches and tables were made of logs split in half. The flat side was up with holes bored in the round bottom side for stick legs. The roof was made of split boards held down with rocks and poles. This building was used until 1898 when it was replaced by a poorly constructed frame building which was used until the school was consolidated with Mountain View about 1929.

The following is a list of some of these schools:

Alexander or Hogwaller School was located on the present Oak Grove Church lot but was later moved to the intersection of the North Wilkesboro--Roaring River and Rock Creek Roads. The Woodruff or Mutton Hill School was

located just south of the present location of Library Grove Church. The Hays School was near Bethel Church. The Hay Meadow School was near the present Hay Meadow Church.

The Dehart School was located at the intersection of the Maple Grove Springfield Post Office Road about four miles northwest and was originally a poorly constructed two-room wood building, consolidated with Mountain View in 1948. The Walnut Grove School was first held in the Walnut Grove Church, which is about eleven miles almost north of Hays. It was moved to a three-room frame building in the early thirties and the name changed to New Life. It is still in use.

The Johnson School was located south of Oak Ridge Church, later consolidated with Chinquapin Flat and school was held in Covenant Church. Pisgah School was held at Pisgah Church at Dockery Post Office until consolidated. Piney Grove School was located about one-half mile south of Piney Grove Church and ten miles north of Hays and was started in Piney Grove Church. Round Mountain School was at first located at Round Mountain Church one mile southeast of the campus. It was later moved about one mile to the south to a three-room frame building and consolidated in 1929 with Mountain View.

The Local Tax School on the Jim Gilliam Place was a small school that operated a few years about 1910. Bason

Creek School was held in Bason Creek (or Union) Baptist Church until it washed away in the 1916 flood. The school was never rebuilt and most of the people had to leave when land was bought for the Blue Ridge Parkway. Doughton Park covers most of the area.

The Mountain View Local Tax School just off the present campus on the Wilkesboro Road where Vernon Woodruff now lives was consolidated in 1929, when the state took over Mountain View. It was used for classes and gymnasium for several years.<sup>3</sup>

These schools were often log cabins or poorly constructed frame buildings. Shelby Childress tells about the early days of Flint Hill, one of the newer schools that was later consolidated with Mountain View.<sup>4</sup> This was, at first, a one-room building. They had a "very tall coal heater" with a coal shed outside of the building. Water was carried about one-half mile up a very steep hill and stored in a "cooler" for drinking. Outside privies served

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<sup>3</sup> James Rudd McNeil, A paper submitted in an eleventh grade local history unit, November, 1953. Based on interviews with his grandfather, N. P. Myers.

<sup>4</sup> Shelby Jean Childress, A ninth grade citizenship paper, April, 1954. Based on personal interview and information from her parents.



as rest rooms. The principal and students did all the janitorial work. There was no auditorium, no electric lights, no school busses, and no library. The students, despite all this, often loved the school and many times a good teacher did wonders for them.

One of the very early schools on the little plateau was Maple Branch.<sup>5</sup> It was located on the Traphill Road less than a mile from the present campus. The building was of log construction with board roof and stone fireplace. There was only one room. This room was poorly lighted with two very small windows. Records as to the origin of the building were not available. Perhaps at one time it was a pioneer home or meeting house. About 1909 L. A. Dancy donated a tract of land and, with several others, built a three-room frame school house. It had good strong home-made furniture, brick stove flue and pot-bellied cast iron stoves. In addition to school use, the farmers union and at least one other fraternal body used the building as a meeting place.

One night after a fraternal meeting the building burned. The fraternal bodies had carried insurance on the building. They collected this money after the fire and

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<sup>5</sup> Glenn Dancy, Sr., An unpublished interview, August, 1953. Based on his knowledge and information about his father, L. A. Dancy.

later contributed it to Mountain View Institute. The next term of school was in the old log building with Rev. A. B. Hays and a Miss Pendry teaching in the same room.

Enthusiasm for education was high. In February, 1912, the Rev. A. B. Hays had found time to start a little paper, The Educational and Sunday School Uplift. The first article in it said:<sup>6</sup>

#### EDUCATION

The blessing of education, no good man denies. Its necessity, no wise man doubts, and its opportunities, no just citizen would withhold from the public. In this great country of ours, under present conditions, every boy and girl may receive, at public expense, an education, limited though it be, which will greatly help them in the contest for life's reward. The basic principle in public education, is good citizenship. Three things are essential in good citizenship--a heart so honorable that it cannot be corrupted, and a mind so intelligent that it cannot be deceived; for the three methods the hosts of wrong attempts to corrupt, intimidate and deceive. With a people merely conscientious and courageous oppression has easy contests and fruitful conquests, but with such a people education becomes the bulwark of liberty, increasing their honor and courage.

While there will continue to be bad men, whose evil conduct will ever emphasize the virtue of others, it is fortunate that in our civilization good men, though not perfect, predominate, and with the people educated this number is greatly increased.

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6

A. B. Hays, Editor; A. Caudill, Guest Editor, Hays, North Carolina, The Educational and Sunday School Uplift, 1:1, Col. 1, February, 1912. Original copy in possession of the writer.

Never before in the world's history has the need of an education been of such importance to our citizenship and leadership. A man, to be a citizen, such as times like this demands, must have a good education.

Of all historical men, Moses exhibited the most self-denial and fraternal affection. A man of rare learning, he cast his lot among of multitude of uncultured slaves; he laid down his rank and riches and became an outcast for defending one of his lowly people. It was enough for him that they were poor and afflicted. For them he left a royal court and became an exile in the wilderness.

There is truth in the old adage 'Knowledge is power, and power wealth!' In the years gone by, morals have greatly improved, drunkenness and crime have been greatly lessened, while industry, soberness and patriotism have increased, trend being upward. May all who read, get busy in doing all things that make for man's upbuilding and God's glory.

## CHAPTER V

### ORIGINS OF MOUNTAIN VIEW

The founding of Mountain View School was the work of Baptist churchmen. The Stone Mountain Baptist Association was the leader. This Association received much of its educational leadership from James Senter Kilby.

Morgan Edwards, the famous Baptist historian, notes that by 1695 Baptists, "with all shades and colors of beliefs" were entering the state in considerable numbers but there were no organized churches until about thirty years later when the Rev. Paul Palmer began his work in Chowan and Camden Counties. By 1758 there were enough churches to organize the Sandy Creek Association. At that time this Association represented all organized Baptists in Virginia, North Carolina and South Carolina. Later the Strawberry Association was organized to represent the churches of Virginia and Northwestern North Carolina. The Yadkin Association was formed in 1790 to represent the churches on and near to the headwaters of the Yadkin River. The Brier Creek Association was formed from the Yadkin in 1821.

On November 7, 1879, a committee that had been appointed by the Brier Creek Association met at Cool Springs Church in Wilkes County and organized the Elkin Baptist Association. Committee members were Rev. L. P. Gwaltney,

Rev. W. A. Myers, Rev. E. N. Gwyn, and J. Jennings. After a sermon by Rev. John Adams the association transacted the routine business of organization and elected Rev. John Adams, Moderator, and C. F. Fields, Clerk. Eleven churches were represented with a total membership of 637.<sup>1</sup> In 1896 the Elkin Association had grown to include twenty-five churches with a total membership of almost two thousand. This association appointed a committee that met in New Covenant Church, Dockery, North Carolina, and organized the Stone Mountain Baptist Association in November 19, 1897.<sup>2</sup>

The Brushy Mountain Baptist Association was organized in 1872. Five years later the association appointed a committee to study education and educational needs of the region.<sup>3</sup> Four years later the committee made a decidedly optimistic report and urged parents to see that their children were educated.<sup>4</sup> The Brushy Mountain Association played only

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<sup>1</sup> The Minutes of the Elkin Baptist Association, First Session, 1879.

<sup>2</sup> The Minutes of the First Annual Session of the Stone Mountain Baptist Association, 1897.

<sup>3</sup> The Minutes of the Fifth Annual Session of the Brushy Mountain Baptist Association, 1872.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid., 1877.

a small part in organizing the institute but a rather large part after it was established and operating. The Elkin Association also played a small part in founding and operating the institute.

An active interest in education always marked the work of the Stone Mountain Association. In 1902 it appointed a committee to look into the possibility of establishing a school. In September, 1903, the committee reported that arrangements had not been completed but that the members were confident a successful arrangement could be made in the near future. The report was signed by J. S. Kilby, Joshua Spicer, and T. C. Myers.<sup>5</sup> It was not until 1913 that Mountain View was actually founded.

The man who guided the Stone Mountain Association was James Senter Kilby. The Family Bible record shows that J. S. Kilby was born six miles northwest of Hays on December 31, 1858; on October 30, 1881, he married Laula E. Holbrook; he died on August 26, 1930.<sup>6</sup> The Kilby family, while not wealthy, was respected in the community. He was active in founding at least two academies, one Baptist

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<sup>5</sup> The Minutes of the Stone Mountain Baptist Association, 1903.

<sup>6</sup> J. S. Kilby Family Bible record. Bible loaned to writer by Paul Holbrook.

association and several churches.

Kilby went as far as he could in the local schools, then managed to go to school at Traphill Academy sometime in the late seventies.<sup>7</sup> In Traphill he boarded at the home of James M. Holbrook and fell in love with their daughter, Laula.

The Holbrook family, for many years, had been prominent in the cultural and educational circles of the state. Laula's uncle, Joseph S. Holbrook, was chairman of the building committee when Traphill Institute was built and became Chairman of the Board of Trustees, an office he held until his death. The writer recently (1954) visited the old family home with Joseph S. Holbrook's grandson, Dr. J. S. Holbrook, who is a well-known surgeon, and was greatly impressed by the architecture and furnishing of this early mountain home. The close association of young Kilby with this family doubtless contributed to his later usefulness.

According to Charlie Miles and J. S. Holbrook,<sup>8</sup> two of the three stores in Traphill closed out their business about the time Kilby finished at the local school. Seeing opportunity, Kilby with twenty-five dollars which he already

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<sup>7</sup>

Charlie Miles, An unpublished interview, June, 1954.

<sup>8</sup>

Charlie Miles and J. S. Holbrook, An unpublished interview, June, 1954. Based on information from J. S. Kilby.

had and twenty-five dollars which he borrowed, went into business for himself. The business was successful from the start but he made his first "big money" buying and selling dried blackberries. At the beginning of the season he started paying a little more than any of the nearby stores and was able to get an enormous stock of berries. Toward the end of the buying season the price more than doubled and Kilby sold his stock for more than twice what he had paid.

He operated the store at Traphill about thirty years. At the end of that time he had, according to Miles and Holbrook,<sup>9</sup> saved over fifteen thousand dollars in cash and had large real estate holdings. To appreciate the real value of fifteen thousand dollars it is necessary to remember that a brick school house could, at that time, be built for about five thousand dollars with six classrooms, an office, and an auditorium.<sup>10</sup>

While he was unusually successful as a business man, Kilby is remembered more for his church work and the school work he did, most of it for and in the name of the Baptist Church.

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9

Miles and Holbrook, loc. cit.

10

Loc. cit.



Records of his early church affiliation and work are lost. Myers thinks that he was originally a Primitive Baptist and a member of Center Church near his boyhood home, and is sure that Kilby became a member of Traphill Church when it was organized in 1887.<sup>11</sup> Holbrook says that this was the case.<sup>12</sup> This is also confirmed by the fact that he was a delegate from Traphill Church to the Elkin Baptist Association, which met at Liberty Grove Church in Wilkes County on October 4, 5, and 6, 1888. At that meeting he was elected a member of the Executive Committee of the Elkin Baptist Association, appointed on at least two committees and selected as a delegate to the state Baptist Convention.<sup>13</sup>

In 1890 he was on a building committee appointed jointly by the Elkin (Missionary) Baptist and the Primitive Baptist Associations to build an academy (Traphill Institute) at Traphill. He became Secretary of the Board of Trustees, and Mrs. Kilby's uncle, Joseph S. Holbrook was President.<sup>14</sup> As Traphill grew and many churches were organized in the

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11

N. P. Myers, An unpublished interview, July, 1954.

12

Paul Holbrook, Mrs. Kilby's nephew with whom she made her home after Kilby died. An unpublished interview, July, 1954.

13

Minutes of the Tenth Annual Session of the Elkin Baptist Association, 1888.

14

Miles, loc. cit.

surrounding territory, Kilby and his friends and associates in the community saw the need and organized the Stone Mountain Baptist Association on November 19, 1897. Kilby became the association's first clerk and treasurer.<sup>15</sup> That he was faithful in church attendance is attested by the fact that for him to miss a religious service was front page news for the local paper.<sup>16</sup>

Of all the activities in his long and busy life, Mountain View Institute must have occupied first place. When he conceived the plan he was in his early fifties, honored by his home town in almost every possible way. He owned a beautiful home in a lovely location with an unusually successful business just across the street. Yet he left Traphill to make a new start in another community. In response to the writer's question, "Why?", Miles and Holbrook said that he saw the need in the Hays community and an opportunity to help establish a strictly Baptist school.<sup>17</sup>

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15

Minutes of the First Annual Session, Stone Mountain Baptist Association, Dockery, North Carolina, 1897.

16

The Curfew-Outlook, Traphill, North Carolina, October 19, 1911, p. 1. News item: Mr. and Mrs. J. S. Kilby were unable to attend religious services at the college Sunday on account of Mrs. Kilby being sick with lagrippe. She is improving at this time.

17

Miles and Holbrook, loc. cit.

The Biblical Recorder said:<sup>18</sup>

. . . For some time Brother J. S. Kilby of Traphill has been studying about aiding some Christian school. He and his devoted wife have encouraged the movement to locate a school somewhere in that section (Hays). . . . It would be hard to find two more devoted, consecrated workers than Brother Kilby and his wife. The influence of such people behind any movement is worth much. . . . They are anxious to do what they can for the young people in that section and in this institution they are planning more wisely than even they can know at present. . . .

About a week after his death the Wilkes Patriot<sup>19</sup> that the loss of his three children, the last of whom died in 1900, and being deprived "of the father's privilege of rearing his own, he devoted his attention toward . . . the education of the children of others," and to promote the growth of Mountain View he moved to Hays in 1914. The Wilkes Patriot describes him as the chief promoter of Mountain View and says that the names, J. S. Kilby and Mountain View, were so closely interwoven that the mention of one suggested the other.

The school's success and usefulness, when measured in terms of solid accomplishments has fully justified Mr. Kilby's dreams, his efforts and his hopes . . . His sudden and unexpected death on August 26, 1930,

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18

G. E. Lineberry, "Wilkes County Mission and Education Campaign," The Biblical Recorder, June, 1914.

19

Obituary in the Wilkes Patriot, September 4, 1930.

in his seventy-second year, closed a life that will rank high in the annals of the school history of Northwestern North Carolina.<sup>20</sup>

A. Caudill was born near Roaring River on August 11, 1879. After completing the work offered by the local elementary schools he graduated from North Wilkesboro High School with the Class of 1900. Charles B. Aycock was the commencement speaker and doubtless young Caudill was inspired by his views on education. After graduation, Caudill went into the sawmill business and was successful from the start. In 1905 he married Fannie Woodruff, a sister of Wilkes County Sheriff Woodruff.<sup>21</sup>

In 1927 one of the local newspapers carried a picture of the Caudill family with the following caption:<sup>22</sup>

Mr. and Mrs. Ab. Caudill, Of Mountain View, and daughters, Misses Clara and Inex, who made perfect school attendance records of ten years each. Gilmer Caudill, a son, who made a similar attendance record, was absent when the picture was taken.

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20

Wilkes Patriot, loc. cit.

21

A. Caudill, An unpublished interview, July 19, 1954.

22

The Tar Heel Republican, Wilkesboro, North Carolina, June 16, 1927, p. 1. Clipping owned by writer. The picture was credited to the Winston Salem Journal.

Clara later graduated from Appalachian State Teachers College, Inez from nursing school, and Gilmer entered the automobile business after one year in college.<sup>23</sup>

Caudill served in the North Carolina State Legislature in 1908, 1910, and 1911. In that capacity he constantly worked for efficiency and economy in government. Among other measures he "Advocated and was successful in having a court stenographer appointed for Wilkes County."<sup>24</sup>

He joined Liberty Grove Baptist Church in 1896 and took an active part in church work from that time. After several years as clerk of the Elkin Baptist Association he became one of the first Mountain View trustees appointed by the Elkin Association and was elected secretary-treasurer of the board.

In addition to his duties on the board he was instrumental in securing several large donations for the school, bought a large house and converted it into a boarding home for boys until the boys' dormitory could be built. He was also one of the institutes largest cash contributors. Caudill closed out his lumber business about 1918, but still lives at Hays where he operates a farm and machine shop.

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<sup>23</sup> Caudill, op. cit.

<sup>24</sup> Campaign clipping owned by writer.

## CHAPTER VI

### MOUNTAIN VIEW INSTITUTE BEFORE 1914

Founding and organization. Many years had gone by since the Stone Mountain Association had appointed a committee to found a school. Many disappointments had met the group but their faith had been great. In September, 1912, the Stone Mountain Association adopted the following report made by the Committee on Education:<sup>1</sup>

#### Christian Education

Somebody said that education gives one the ability to do what he ought to do. . . . It means trained facilities, a mind brought down to a keen edge, a body soundly developed . . . under the power of Christian truth and personal Christian character that will make it a power plant of soulful activities for the glory of God and the good of man.

The aim of education is more than knowledge, it is wisdom and wisdom is practical application of knowledge in all the business of life. The best results in life cannot be attained without education. Farming is an educational process, there is the planting, the weeding out, the pruning and the cultivating all before the harvest comes.

All of human life is a schooling. Education is spiritual farming. The ends in view are manhood and womanhood, the kind of man Christ wants, the kind that the world needs . . . is men and women who live the life Christ lived. All our denominational schools are working toward the goal.

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1

The Minutes of the Sixteenth Annual Session of the Baptist Association, 1912.

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Boone, North Carolina

25

Christian education is to be a mighty factor in the solution of our problems in country and town--in home and foreign fields, for it seeks the conservation of the whole man to the service and kingdom of God. Brethren, let us support our schools by our appreciation, our prayers and our money. Wake Forest, Meredith, and the long list of preparatory schools need our practical sympathy.

The committee which presented the report was J. Z. Adams, J. Y. Brooks, and D. S. Hubbal.

At the same meeting J. S. Kilby offered the following resolution which was discussed by W. R. Bradshaw and adopted by the association:<sup>2</sup>

Resolved, That this Association appoint a committee of five to investigate what can be done about establishing a Baptist School in this section, and that said committee be empowered to entertain propositions to receive and hold titles to lands in the name of the Association, and to act for the Association in the furtherance and establishing said school.

J. S. Kilby, J. P. Elledge, C. H. Colvard, J. S. Holbrook and L. W. Shumate were appointed a board of trustees to carry out the intent of the resolution.<sup>3</sup>

All of the associations appointed members to a board of trustees. The Stone Mountain Association appointed J. S. Kilby and C. H. Colvard. The Brushy Mountain Association

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<sup>2</sup> Ibid.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid.

appointed C. C. Wright and Milton McNeil and the Elkin Association appointed C. L. Church, A. Caudill and W. M. Sebastian. Many informal meetings were held and many plans were made even before the first formal meeting of the board.

The first official meeting was held in the office of Milton McNeil, who was also clerk of the United States Court of the Western District of North Carolina in Wilkesboro, on January 6, 1913, and "a majority being present . . . (it was moved and seconded that the trustees appoint F. B. Hendren and J. P. Elledge."<sup>4</sup> The minute does not explain but it seems that the Stone Mountain and Brushy Mountain Associations had each either failed to appoint three members or that two persons had declined to serve, therefore, this action would be necessary to carry out the intent of the association. J. S. Kilby was elected chairman of the board, J. P. Elledge, chairman; A. Caudill, secretary; and W. R. Hendren completed the membership of the Executive Committee.

It is evident that the institute already owned a tract of land because "It was moved and seconded that they would trade S. M. Shumate two acres of land at a reasonable price if it proved satisfactory for the manufacture of brick."<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>4</sup> Minutes of the Board of Trustees, Mountain View Institute, January 6, 1913. Original owned by writer.

<sup>5</sup> Loc. cit.



At the same meeting it was decided that the board would, with C. H. Colvard, survey and lay out lots of such sizes and location as would best serve the interests of the school and reserve land where needed for future school uses. Colvard was to have complete charge of surveying all of the lands belonging to the school. They also agreed to execute a note to pay for land they had already bought and to buy tracts from Grover Pendry and Pete Wood if "the Secretary and Treasurer could collect enough donations."<sup>6</sup>

The next formal meeting of the board was held in McNeill's office on April 7, 1913. Much business had been transacted in the meantime. Tuesday, September 2, was set as the date to open school and Edgar B. Settle was elected principal for the incoming year.<sup>7</sup>

Settle was a native of Wilkes County and graduated from Wake Forest College with an A. B. Degree in 1910. He was working in Whittakers, North Carolina, when he read in the Wilkes Patriot that an academy was being established at Hays. He wrote J. S. Kilby about the principal's place and was employed.<sup>8</sup>

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<sup>6</sup> Ibid.

<sup>7</sup> Original minutes of the meeting.

<sup>8</sup> Edgar B. Settle, An unpublished interview, July, 1953.

At the April 7 meeting the board also set the date for a lot sale on May 30, 1913, and designated J. S. Kilby, A. Caudill, J. P. Elledge, and A. B. Hayes to manage the sale.<sup>9</sup> This was in accordance with a decision of the board at the January 6 meeting. The land had been surveyed and divided into lots by C. H. Colvard.

The board also agreed to hire J. A. Blevins to operate the farm and a short time later executed the following contract.<sup>10</sup>

North Carolina

Wilkes County

This is to certify that the Trustees of Mountain View Institute have employed J. A. Blevins to work the farm owned by the Institute, plowing and planting it in whatever the trustees may direct, and to receive for his services the following: For a team, plowing or wagoning \$2 per day, for one horse, plowing or wagoning, \$1.50, and to receive whatever is customary for manual labor.

It is agreed further that the trustees pay for whatever fertilizer or grain that may be needed on the farm, for the successful growing of crops.

The contract bears the seal of the Institute and was undated. It was signed by J. S. Kilby, A. Caudill, Secretary, and J. A. Blevins.

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<sup>9</sup> Board Minutes, April 7, 1913.

<sup>10</sup> Loc. cit.

On June 2 at a meeting in McNeil's office the trustees appointed J. S. Kilby, E. R. Settle and A. Caudill, a committee, to take steps to secure a lady principal for the institute.

A motion was made and adopted that A. B. Hayes be recommended to the free school committee as assistant teacher. The trustees agree to "Adopt the name of Pearl Kilby as the name for the Dormitory for Girls." A. Caudill was instructed to select and purchase a suitable corner stone to be laid in the building in memory of Pearl Kilby, deceased daughter of J. S. Kilby.<sup>11</sup> Miss Ida Belle Ledbetter was employed as lady principal.

Miss Ledbetter was born in McDowell County and attended the local schools, then was graduated from Fruitland Institute. From there she went to Meredith College and had completed the junior year when she went to work at Mountain View. She returned to Meredith and was graduated in the class of 1915. She was the first person to get a graduate degree at the University of North Carolina on the basis of a degree granted by a women's college. She was told that the University would not grant her a graduate degree on the basis of a Meredith College A. B. and that she should first get an A. B. Degree from the University. She was defended in her

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<sup>11</sup>

Trustees meeting minutes, June 2, 1913.

position and advised to complete her work by Dr. Chase. She completed her graduate work in 1922 and Dr. Chase became President of the University of North Carolina in the meantime.<sup>12</sup>

Miss Ledbetter went to Appalachian State Normal School as one of fifteen teachers listed as "Extra Faculty for the Summer School" in 1925.<sup>13</sup> She liked it so well at the end of summer school that she decided to stay in Boone. Since that summer she has completed additional graduate work at the University of Chicago and the University of North Carolina, but she still "teaches Biology" at Appalachian.<sup>14</sup>

School opened September 2, 1913, in a temporary building, described as "a good two-story building, twenty-four by fifty feet . . . furnished with new patent desks, blackboards and other equipment."<sup>15</sup>

The building was of frame construction and was located on the Hays--Roaring River Road next to the present Baptist Church. It had been erected that year by J. S. Kilby

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12

Miss Ida Belle Ledbetter, An unpublished interview, July 13, 1954.

13

The Dewdrop Appalachian State Normal School Catalog, July, 1925.

14

Ledbetter, loc. cit.

15

Catalog, Mountain View Institute, 1913-1914.

and A. Caudill. It was later remodeled into a residence by John R. Jones. The present owner says that many changes have been made in the building since that time but that parts of the original foundations are still visible in his basement.<sup>16</sup>

The catalog lists expenses that year as follows:<sup>17</sup>

Tuition:

Ranges from \$1.00 per month for the Primary Department to \$2.00 for the high school.

Board:

Within a mile and a half of the school building, good board, including room, lights, fuel and washing, can be had from \$8.00 to \$10.00 per month.

There will be a home on the school grounds which will accommodate about fourteen girls. The Lady Principal will live in this building with the girls, who will be under her direct care. Plans are being made to give board in this home on the cooperative plan, which will reduce it to actual cost. Girls rooming here will be expected to furnish towels, pillow, pillow cases, sheets, and other bed cover. All other furnishings will be supplied by the home.

School lasted eight months. The calendar was as follows:<sup>18</sup>

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16 Eldon Woodruff, An unpublished interview, August, 1953.

17 Catalog, 1913-1914, loc. cit.

18 Loc. cit.

## Calendar 1913-1914

Fall term begins, September 2, 1913  
Thanksgiving Day, November 27, 1913  
Christmas Holidays, December 19-29, 1913  
Spring Term Begins, December 30, 1913  
Commencement Exercises, April 19-21, 1914

The "aim" of the school, as given in the catalog, is interesting and, to a great extent, explains the educational philosophy of the community today.<sup>19</sup>

Mountain View Institute aims to prepare boys and girls for life's duties or for entrance to college. Being a Baptist school and having been adopted as one of the Mountain Schools of the Southern Baptist Convention it also offers a course in Bible study, Missions, and Sunday School Training.

While the school is under Baptist control, denominational differences will not be taught; nor will there be any effort on the part of the school management to induce pupils of other denominational beliefs to embrace the Baptist doctrine. We hope, however, to make the school atmosphere genuinely religious.

The school invites the patronage and support of all friends of education.

Mountain View Institute was accepted by the Home Mission Board of the Southern Baptist Convention, Department of Mountain Missions and Schools in June or July, 1913. A letter written from headquarters in Asheville, informs the principal that the board has "adopted" the school and

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19

Ibid.

appropriated six hundred dollars for its maintenance the following year.<sup>20</sup>

In the letter Brown also states that he has taken up plans for the dormitory (Pearl Kilby Home) with the architect, C. H. Chunn, and that they will be ready to mail to Settle in a day or two.

On August 23 meeting at Pleasant Home Baptist Church, the Brushy Mountain Association had adopted the following report:<sup>21</sup>

Realizing the great importance of Education in our Southland, and the rapid strides made in the past ten years along religious, political and material lines of endeavor, it behooves us to put forth every possible effort in the promotion and continuance of the present aroused interest in education. It gives us pride to note the decrease in illiteracy in our own County . . . The attendance in our public schools has more than doubled . . . We heartily recommend the employment of religious men and women as teachers in our schools and the opening of each day's session by reading the Bible and Prayer.

We recommend to your consideration the recently organized school at Mountain View under the management of Professor E. R. Settle.

The report had been prepared and presented by R. L. Proffitt, U. A. Miller and J. H. Johnson. The adoption of

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<sup>20</sup> A. E. Brown, Letter addressed to Prof. E. R. Settle, Ronda, N. C. Asheville, North Carolina, July 8, 1913. Original owned by the writer.

<sup>21</sup> The Minutes of the Brushy Mountain Baptist Association, 1913.

the report was followed by a "Strong Appeal in Behalf of Education" by E. R. Settle.<sup>22</sup>

The Women's Missionary Union meeting at the same time and place evidently was strongly moved by the possibilities of the new school. The following is from their minutes:<sup>23</sup>

. . . That our societies be asked to co-operate heartily with the President in raising enough money to furnish a Reading or Sitting Room in the Girls Dormitory now being erected by the Mountain View School, also that individuals in a position to do so, contribute suitable books and magazine subscriptions for the room.

The President made some remarks explanatory of the work that the Union is trying to do for the Mountain View School. After motion to adopt, the recommendations were discussed by Mrs. N. H. Waugh in a short talk on "Finances" . . . The recommendations were adopted by unanimous vote.

After the formal business of the meeting was completed, Settle was invited to talk to the group, to which he responded in a very interesting as well as enlightening manner.<sup>24</sup> He stressed the benefits the churches would receive as a result of having the boys and girls better educated by Christian teachers in Christian schools. He reminded the group that Christian education was a tenet of

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22

Ibid.

23

Woman's Missionary Union Section, op. cit.

24

Loc. cit.



the Baptist belief and urged all to stand by the denominational schools.

In their annual meeting on September 27, 1913, almost a month after school opened, J. S. Kilby read the following report which was adopted by the Stone Mountain Association:

Education is training and developing. It is very important in whose care we place the young mind and heart, for Christian education is to be a mighty factor in the solution of our problems in the country and town, in home and foreign field, for it seeks the consideration of the service and kingdom of God. Baptists must educate their own children if they expect to hold this mountain country for God and the Baptists. Realizing this fact the . . . Associations appointed a committee to select a site for a Baptist school, which was located near Hays post office in the center of Wilkes County. The school was opened September 2nd, with Prof. Edgar B. Settle as principal, Miss Ida Belle Ledbetter, as lady principal, and Rev. A. B. Hays, assistant. These Christian teachers are well qualified for their responsible positions.

Our people should rally to the support of this institution, for it is ours to make out of it what we will. The Board has adopted this school into the great chain of Mountain Christian Schools. The work on the dormitory for girls is being pushed as fast as possible. This is a brick building containing 26 rooms and will be seen on the co-operation plan, giving bread at cost.

We unreservedly recommend Mountain View Institute as the school for our young Baptist people, Wake Forest and Meredith for college education.<sup>25</sup>



PEARL KILBY HOME

Doubtless, the big event of the year was the Pearl Kilby Home for Girls. This building was of brick veneer construction with plastered walls and hardwood floors. A central heating plant supplied heat and a gasoline powered generator furnished electricity for lights. There was room for forty-eight girls with "parlor", kitchen and dining room.

The closing exercises of the school attracted many notables from out of town. Among these were G. E. Lineberry, the Educational Secretary to the Baptist Home Mission Board, with J. C. Owen and W. R. Bradshaw of the Division of Mountain Schools.

Writing of the school, Lineberry said that the school was in one of the prettiest locations in the state.<sup>26</sup> He was pleased with the Pearl Kilby Home, calling it "one of the most convenient dormitories in the state." He had words of praise for Settle and Miss Ledbetter and was greatly pleased with the work they had done with the students.

The Baptist Associations were pleased with the start the school had made. The Brushy Mountain Association, meeting at Lewis Fork Church in August, adopted a report which commended the work that was being done. The report also suggested that for Baptists to neglect the education of their youth would be to invite eventual ruin. They called

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26

The Biblical Recorder, June, 1914.

attention to Mountain View Institute in these words:

"Brethren, let us stand by this institute by giving of our means for its development and by sending our boys and girls there." The report was prepared and presented by O. L. Hawkins, H. G. Duncan, and J. M. German.<sup>27</sup>

The Women's Missionary Union reported that special arrangements had been made with the state secretary so that contributions to the Mountain View School could be counted as gifts to Home Missions. They were, at that time, working to furnish a library to be called the Dorris Wright Library. For this purpose they had a large collection of books and \$49.50 in cash.<sup>28</sup>

The second term of school opened with part of the classes in the temporary store building and some in the girls' dormitory. Miss Ledbetter had resigned to complete work for her Meredith College degree; Miss Lala Dixon had been elected Lady Principal, Elizabeth Anderson taught music, and Cora McNeil had the Primary Department.

An important event of the year was laying the Cornerstone of the new Administration Building.<sup>29</sup>

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27

The Minutes of the Brushy Mountain Baptist Association, August, 1914.

28

Loc. cit.

29

Cornerstone papers recovered after the fire of April 2, 1953.



ADMINISTRATION BUILDING

This building was constructed of brick with heavy timber floor and roof supports. There were four rooms and an office on the first floor. The second floor had two rooms at the front and an auditorium at the back. A stairway led to the second story. The auditorium had no outside exit or fire escape.<sup>30</sup>

Brick was moulded and burned on the campus from campus clay under the direction of Sam Craven.<sup>31</sup> Brickmasons employed by the board of trustees wrote a rather lengthy paper on business conditions, politics, and World War I, which was beginning in Europe. The paper ended:

As we work from day to day on this building, we wish the institute and the boys and girls who may attend it now and in the future the greatest possible success.<sup>32</sup>

The Stone Mountain Association was well pleased with the work of the institute.<sup>33</sup> On September 26, 1914, they

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30 Original specifications. Copy owned by writer.

31 Sam Craven, Interview, January, 1954.  
A. Caudill, Interview, July, 1954.

32 Cornerstone papers, op. cit. Signed by D. J. Brookshire, C. L. Horton, John King, A. W. Gudger, C. P. Garrison, and L. C. Brookshire. All these young men were later successful in business or became highly skilled workmen.

33 Minutes, 1914, loc. cit.

adopted a report which commended the schools of the state which were able to do a great good, especially if they had Christian teachers. These schools are able to take in account, "In a superficial way, only a part of one's life." Christian education, the report said, undertakes to train the whole person: body, mind, and soul in harmony with God's will. Mountain View was highly recommended as an efficient Baptist school. This part of the report ended:

Brethren, this is our school: let us stand by it and we shall have in a few years <sup>34</sup> one of the best schools in Western North Carolina.

## CHAPTER VII

### MOUNTAIN VIEW INSTITUTE, 1914 - 1924

The completion of the Pearl Kilby Home and the Administration Building was followed by a period of steady progress. The report adopted by the Stone Mountain Association in 1916 stated that if the Baptists were to convince the world that they stood for divine principles it would be necessary to have an educated membership and an educated ministry. To have these it would be necessary to maintain schools where these truths and principles could be taught. The report endorsed Mountain View for academic education, Wake Forest and Meredith for college education.<sup>1</sup>

The educational report of the Brushy Mountain Association in August, 1917, endorsed both the church and the state schools. It said that Mountain View was growing in favor among the people, was well-equipped and had a splendid corps of consecrated and efficient teachers. It well deserved the wholehearted support of the Baptist people. In regard to the state schools they emphasized that the greatest educational need of the county was larger schools with more

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1

The Minutes of the Stone Mountain Baptist Association, 1916.



teachers. They commended the work that the county school superintendent was doing to consolidate schools where practical.<sup>2</sup>

The Catalog lists nine members on the Board of Trustees that year.<sup>3</sup> J. S. Kilby was chairman and F. B. Hendren, Secretary. E. R. Settle was the superintendent and Miss Elizabeth Anderson, who had gone to Mountain View as music teacher in 1914, was lady principal. Miss Mabel Dickey taught piano. The faculty was not complete when the Catalog was printed.

Religious emphasis was increased. The "aim" was stated to be to prepare for more intelligent and useful living, for entrance to college, and for efficient service in the kingdom of God. Compulsory attendance of "reading, prayer, and song service" every morning, preaching, prayer meeting, Sunday School and B. Y. P. U. services once each week "and other religious organizations furnish opportunity for personal work and the development of Christian character." Girls were not allowed to "receive company" on Sunday.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>2</sup> The Minutes of the Brushy Mountain Baptist Association, 1917.

<sup>3</sup> The Catalog, Mountain View Institute, 1917-1918.

<sup>4</sup> Loc. cit.

The school had two literary societies for boys and two for girls. Membership was compulsory for boarding students, optional for others. Opportunities were provided for tennis, baseball, and basketball.

The Boys' Dormitory was completed and placed in use in December and January of that year. This building was brick veneer and had electric lights with a shower in the basement and outdoor rest rooms.<sup>5</sup>

In August the Brushy Mountain Association adopted the following report which was presented by S. S. Jennings, J. T. C. Wright, and Russel Hendren:<sup>6</sup>

Since education is power we should harness that power for good. To be educated means to be fitted for usefulness. To be useful we must be efficient and comply with God's plan of work. Therefore, we believe Christian education rounds out and develops the best within us. To obtain a Christian education we must attend a Christian school. Hence we recommend that our young people attend our schools maintained by the Baptist denomination, one of which is located very near us and known as Mountain View Institute, and this school is our very own, located so near us it appeals to our fondest hopes yet we do not forget our other great schools at Mars Hill, Bowies Creek, our own Wake Forest College and Meredith College, all of which offer great opportunities for higher and efficient preparation for life's great work.

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<sup>5</sup> Ibid.

<sup>6</sup> The Minutes of the Brushy Mountain Baptist Association, 1918.



BOYS' DORMITORY

In September the Stone Mountain Association adopted a Report on Education presented and read by J. T. C. Wright.<sup>7</sup> This report said that the ideal of educating all boys and girls had become a policy of our state. As people become educated they become more efficient in home, state, and church. Our government has taken upon itself the great task of educating the young men who will be the rulers and directors of tomorrow. In the days to come, men of brains with a liberal education will fill the places of responsibility. We as Baptists cannot afford to lag behind in this great work for we contend for the principles of God's Word as we believe it. We must stand by and support our Baptist schools with our means and patronage.

We recommend, therefore, that our people support our public schools and endeavor to make them more efficient. But we realize that these schools do not prepare our boys and girls for the greatest usefulness in life or for college: therefore, we recommend Mountain View Institute, our own school which is doing excellent work in preparing our boys and girls not only for college and the duties of life, but also for more efficient usefulness in the Kingdom of God.<sup>8</sup>

The report ended with an appeal to the people in behalf of Wake Forest and Meredith Colleges, "Supported by

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7

The Minutes of the Stone Mountain Baptist Association, 1918.

8

Loc. cit.

our denomination as higher institutions where the education begun at Mountain View Institute may be continued."<sup>9</sup>

The Winston Salem Journal<sup>10</sup> stated on May 6, 1921 that although the institution had been founded eight years before that time in the "poverty of a backwoods community," it then ranked with the best high schools in Western North Carolina. Situated in one of the most picturesque and beautiful spots in North Carolina the group of four brick structures (counting the church) look more like a college than a high school. From the main building, "The Blue Ridge looks but a stone's throw away". The Winston Salem Journal noted that the average cost per student for tuition and board for a month was sixteen dollars. It was commencement time and the annual address at eleven o'clock was by Santford Martin, an esteemed friend of the school from its founding.

In the summer of 1922 much was done to improve the campus. A central heating plant had been completed which furnished steam heat to the three campus buildings and the Baptist Church across the street. The campus had been cleared of stumps and set in grass while the inside of the dormitories was freshly painted. Plans were underway for

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<sup>9</sup> Ibid.

<sup>10</sup> "Mountain View is Taking Lead--Baptist School of Northwest Makes Fine Progress," Winston Salem Journal, May 6, 1921.

water and sewer connections in the Boys' Dormitory. The Brier Creek and Alleghany Associations had joined in the support of the school.<sup>11</sup> The Board of Trustees now consisted of fifteen men representing five associations and over one hundred Baptist churches. In addition, there were five "trustees-at-large". They were John R. Jones, W. H. Church, Robert L. Doughton, E. E. Eller, and Rev. J. A. Blevins.<sup>12</sup>

The Report on Christian Education, adopted by the Brier Creek Baptist Association on September 28, 1922, said that the Baptist denomination had always stood for general education and congratulated the state for catching the vision.<sup>13</sup> The Christian schools, the report said, should be cherished because that they alone could save the day for the Baptists. Mountain View School was called the most indispensable possession of the Baptists of the section and was highly commended for the work it was doing.

In addition to academic work the school offered courses in bookkeeping, shorthand, typewriting, penmanship, cooking, and sewing.<sup>14</sup>

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11 The Catalog, Mountain View Institute, 1922-1923.

12 Loc. cit.

13 The Minutes of the Brier Creek Association, 1922.

14 The Catalog, op. cit.

The Stone Mountain Association met in the Mountain View Church at Hays in 1922.<sup>15</sup> The Committee on Education again praised the state for its educational effort but deplored the fact that the state only educated the body and the mind; "The real man must shift for itself or starve."<sup>16</sup>

Plans were underway for the growth of Mountain View. The next year it offered freshman college work.

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15  
The Minutes of the Stone Mountain Baptist Association, 1922.

16  
"Report on Education," The Minutes of the Stone Mountain Baptist Association, 1922.

## CHAPTER VIII

### MOUNTAIN VIEW COLLEGE

Mountain View first offered freshman college work in 1923-1924. The Catalog that year admitted that the school had "sometimes run on low gear and sometimes on high" but that its influence had been great when measured in the growth and consecration to service of the Baptists in that area.<sup>1</sup> All felt that it had a great mission to fill. The school keenly felt the competition of the state-supported high school that offered free tuition to its students and the Catalog admitted that only Mountain View's "character as a Christian high school" was keeping it alive.<sup>2</sup> Mountain View was destined to reach its greatest glory as a Baptist school in the next two years as a Baptist junior college. The decline that was to follow would last only a couple of years until the State of North Carolina was to take over and a new epoch begun.

The trustees had set out to make Mountain View a standard junior college and to offer two years college work that would be accepted by "any standard class A college

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1

The Catalog, Mountain View Institute, 1923-1924.

2

Loc. cit.



in the south."<sup>3</sup>

The faculty was headed by the President, J. C. Pow, who held B. A. and M. A. degrees from Furman University. Of the nine other faculty members at least four held college degrees.<sup>4</sup> The Brushy Mountain Association and other Baptist Associations saw the value of the school and supported it more than ever before.

A report adopted by the association in August, 1923, said that it was imperative to educate their children in the highest sense of the word. In Mountain View they had a school well fitted for the job. Members were exhorted to support it with "Prayers, patronage, and money." They resolved to build a great Christian college at Mountain View, to this end they would stand by the faculty, encourage them and make the school go. The only alternative offered was to "Let the school die on our hands."<sup>5</sup>

The people responded and Mountain View opened as a junior college in the fall of 1924 with J. C. Pow as President and a staff of ten teachers. The enrollment reached one hundred and eighteen.

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<sup>3</sup> Ibid.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid.

<sup>5</sup> The Minutes of the Brushy Mountain Baptist Association, August, 1923.

The Stone Mountain Association urged the members to support the school.<sup>6</sup> Reasons given were that more students were enrolled from their territory than from any other association, and that state schools were competing. The objection was raised that the state schools did not teach religion and especially did not teach "Denominational Principles." The leaders of the Association were also warned that the state's educational program, including compulsory school attendance, would mean "A much more intelligent membership in our churches, and that we must educate a still larger proportion of our ministers . . . an educated membership will demand an educated leadership."<sup>7</sup>

In 1925-1926 the school enrolled ninety-three students. Religion and especially denominational beliefs were stressed more than ever before. The stated aims were to "Emphasize the religious side of life and to prepare students for efficient service in the Kingdom of God."<sup>8</sup>

One period each day was set aside for chapel exercises in which an effort was made to impress the students that the "Crowning achievement of man is the acceptance of Jesus

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<sup>6</sup> The Minutes of the Stone Mountain Baptist Association, 1924.

<sup>7</sup> Loc. cit.

<sup>8</sup> The Catalog, Mountain View College, 1925-1926.

Christ as his Saviour"<sup>9</sup> and that "The greatest service one can render to man and to God is the leading of a lost soul to Christ."<sup>10</sup> All students were required to take five periods per week in the Bible and denominational literature. The Baptist Training Union, Wednesday night Prayer Meeting, and Sunday School were held each week in the Baptist Church across the street with preaching services twice per month. The students had to attend all these and, in addition, the girls had to attend Young Womens' Auxiliary once per week.<sup>11</sup>

The Baptists held Evangelistic Meetings at least once each session. At the close of the services in 1925, seventeen young people volunteered for special Christian service.<sup>12</sup>

Under the heading Social Life in the Catalog, we read,

Our teachers live in the homes with the students, eat at the same table, share in their duties and pleasures, and become their close friends and advisers. Occasional social hours and receptions, under the direction of the teachers will be given.<sup>13</sup>

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9 Ibid.

10 Loc. cit.

11 Loc. cit.

12 Loc. cit.

13 Loc. cit.

Dress was expected to be "Modestly plain"; all extravagance was frowned upon by the faculty and the board.<sup>14</sup> Students were expected to keep themselves under control at all times. Rules were "Enforced kindly but firmly."<sup>15</sup> There were eighteen things the students were not allowed to do listed under the heading, Regulations.<sup>16</sup>

The reactions of the students to this discipline was not, in most cases, respect for the rules but was characterized by a desire to be boys and girls. Many true stories are told in the community. A few are related here to illustrate this point.

A demerit system was set up, fifty demerits being sufficient for expulsion from the school. Smoking counted twenty-five, speaking to a girl without a teacher being present counted twenty, other "offenses" carried similar penalties. All demerits were cancelled when and as often as one "professed religion". Some of the students learned that "professing" was a good way to violate rules and avoid punishment. One little "campus beauty" developed a habit

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14 Op. cit., p. 13.

15 Op. cit., p. 14.

16 Op. cit., p. 15.

of "professing" every time she got  $49\frac{1}{2}$  demerits. On at least one occasion after she "professed" she looked, with eyes full of tears, at one of the male teachers and cried out, "Oh, I'm so sorry for the way I've done!" She then grabbed the teacher around the neck with both arms and broke into sobs as she petted his face with a mop of feminine hair. The teacher said, "All is forgiven, Sister! All is forgiven!"

Once Settle caught two fine young people talking to each other on the campus. They were in plain view of other students. The boy was sent home at once and a lady teacher was assigned to sleep with the girl and watch her at all times until her parents could come for her.

One day John Smith decided he had to say something of very great importance to a girl and it could not wait. The faculty gave him permission and designated a lady teacher to go with him. When they met the young lady on a path, John removed his hat and said, "Good morning." He then turned to the lady teacher, "That's all I wanted to say," as he replaced his hat and walked away.

There were many more "extra-curricular activities" in which the students could indulge when the teachers' backs were turned. These included blowing fuses on the old style open wiring and stealing milk from a Mr. Holder, with the co-operation of his cow. This cow actually preferred, as the report goes, to give her milk for the bread and cake

scraps the boys fed her instead of the hay Holder fed her. One night as a student, John Smith, milked her one of the boys who was on duty watching for Holder fired a gun. They later found most of John's pants on the barbed wired fence around the barn.

The 1926-1927 Catalog announced that the college had been temporarily discontinued. The reason is not apparent from the writer's research unless the state-owned colleges were offering too much competition. A comparison of such a school<sup>17</sup> with the Mountain View School shows that expenses at Appalachian State Normal School that year were about \$148.00 and \$162.00 at Mountain View.<sup>18</sup>

Of the ninety-three students at Mountain View that year about eighty-seven were from Wilkes County.<sup>19</sup> Of the 1,097 enrolled at Appalachian, sixty-eight were from Wilkes County.<sup>20</sup>

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17

The Dew Drop, catalog edition of Appalachian State Normal School, later Appalachian State Teachers College, Boone, North Carolina. 1925.

18

The Catalog, op. cit.

19

Mountain View Catalog, op. cit., pp. 17-19.

20

The Dew Drop, op. cit., p. 102.

From the research, the writer has concluded that the greatest difference was in the viewpoint on ethics and religion, that the decline of Mountain View was the reaction by people who preferred the greater freedom of thought offered by the state-owned school.

Mountain View was never able to operate successfully after that year. James S. Kilby, in the next two years, loaned them a large amount of money, in return for a mortgage on the school property, in a last effort to keep the school open. The Baptists met unexpected financial difficulties and the state was asked to use the property for a school.

## CHAPTER IX

### MOUNTAIN VIEW SCHOOL 1929-1954

In the spring of 1928 it became evident that Mountain View could no longer operate successfully as a Baptist school. On March 26, the Wilkes County Board met "to hear the report of Mountain View as to a junior high school."<sup>1</sup> At the meeting the secretary informed the board that, "owing to conditions now existing in that community" the proposition could not be considered at that time.<sup>2</sup> The writer was unable to be sure what these "conditions" were but it is known that Kilby had loaned a large sum of money and held a mortgage on the property. At any rate, the board met again on April 2 and ordered that a junior high school be established at Mountain View.<sup>3</sup>

Two weeks later the board met in the office of C. C. Faw in North Wilkesboro to consider an offer to buy the school property at Mountain View. After discussion, the board decided to request State Superintendent A. T. Allen to send someone to look over the school property as soon as

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<sup>1</sup> Wilkes County School Board Minutes, March 26, 1928, p. 321.

<sup>2</sup> Loc. cit.

<sup>3</sup> Op. cit., April 2, 1928, p. 322.



possible.<sup>4</sup> The Baptists, many of whom still hoped a way could be found to keep the school open, operated it another year but the leaders knew that to keep it was impossible. Arrangements were made before the end of summer in 1929 for the state to take over that fall.

Mountain View began operating as a state school in September, 1929. There were three high school teachers, Hugh Long, Miss Wren Duncan, and Herman Powell. Miss Pearl Parsons and Mrs. J. S. Elliot were elementary teachers. The Mountain View Special Tax School across the road was discontinued and all the school was housed in the Institute Administration Building.<sup>5</sup>

Because of the mortgage held by Kilby, the institute could not sell the property and an arrangement was made to lease the property to Wilkes County until a permanent arrangement could be made.<sup>6</sup> Kilby died in August, 1930, and some time after that Mrs. Kilby applied to the court and received a clear title to the property. On September 12, 1934, she sold the property to Wilkes County for eight thousand dollars.

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<sup>4</sup> Op. cit., April 16, 1928, p. 327.

<sup>5</sup> Information presented to the writer by P. W. Gregory, the present principal.

<sup>6</sup> Gregory, loc. cit.

At that time the property consisted of 36 acres of land and three main buildings: the Pearl Kilby Home for Girls, the Administration Building, and the Boys Dormitory.<sup>7</sup> This property, with some equipment, had been valued at one hundred thousand dollars or more according to a Baptist estimate.<sup>8</sup>

The state at first housed all the school in the Administration Building, but later used the Pearl Kilby Home Annex for primary groups and the Boys' Dormitory for grammar grade groups. To enable the school to expand and to provide for the consolidation of small and poorly equipped schools as communities grew and roads became available a building program was initiated in 1935. At that time the Administration Building was remodeled to make more classrooms available. The inside stairway was removed and two outside entrances were built to the second floor according to insurance and safety specifications. The space made available by the removal of the inside stairway and the auditorium was converted into classrooms.<sup>9</sup> As soon as this was completed, the Pearl Kilby Annex was torn down and in 1936 the salvaged materials were used to construct the present lunch room building. It was used for classes until the lunch room program was started in

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7

Gregory, loc. cit.

8

The Catalog, Mountain View Institute, 1925-1926.

9

Gregory, loc. cit.

1938. The Boys Dormitory was torn down and the present Elementary Building constructed on the site in 1937.<sup>10</sup>

The present gymnasium was a co-operative W. P. A. and community leader project in 1938. Many people in the community gave time and money to the project. Men such as F. C. Johnson, J. A. Gilliam, and G. C. Pendry, as well as others in the community, contributed leadership, time, equipment, and money. Trees were cut and lumber sawed on the campus.<sup>11</sup>

The elementary building annex was completed in 1951. It is of cinderblock and brick veneer construction with concrete floors covered with asphalt tile. The inside of the eight classrooms and two halls are finished with plastic paint. Up to the time this building was completed, the Pearl Kilby Home and the auditorium were used for classes.<sup>12</sup>

The lunch room program was initiated in 1938 with Federal Assistance. The original purpose was not well balanced meals but was a way to get rid of surplus foods. As a result, the meals served were very simple and unbalanced. Lunches were served for five or ten cents and consisted of the surplus foods that happened to be available.

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10 Gregory, loc. cit.

11 Gregory, loc. cit.

12 Gregory, loc. cit.

The lunch room program has improved each year; the health of the students has been made the major aim. Surplus commodities are still furnished to the lunchroom at a very low price which makes it possible to serve good school lunches at a price almost all students can afford to pay. Free lunches are served to the children of families who cannot pay the small charge.<sup>13</sup>

### Recent History

P. W. Gregory became Principal of Mountain View School in 1947 and began the present era of the school's history. Gregory grew up in the community, was one of thirteen who graduated from Mountain View the first year it was a state school (1929-1930). He then attended Appalachian State Teachers College and after graduating and teaching a few years he became part of the R. J. Reynolds Tobacco Company sales force in New York City and vicinity. When he returned to Mountain View as principal, there were twenty-two teachers, 118 high school students and five hundred in the elementary school. Today (1954) the school has grown until thirty-five teachers are employed. The high school enrolls 227 students and the elementary school 850. The high

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13

Gregory, loc. cit.

school division graduated forty-four students in 1954.

About four o'clock in the afternoon of April 2, 1953, fire was discovered in the belfry of the old Administration Building. The North Wilkesboro Fire Department rushed a pump truck and two tanks of water to the scene but they were only able to save the other buildings. The people of the community were able to save most of the records and office equipment but almost everything else was lost.

School closed for two days but reopened with a twelve-foot wood partition in the gymnasium dividing it into four classrooms and by using five classrooms in the old North Wilkesboro High School Building. The rooms at North Wilkesboro were available because the high school had recently been consolidated with Wilkesboro High School to form the new Wilkes Central High School. Students were transported to North Wilkesboro and back by bus. This arrangement was used until a new building was ready in January, 1954.

The old building had been covered with \$49,500.00 insurance and \$3,500.00 insurance on the contents. The Wilkes County Commissioners appropriated \$35,000.00 which, with the \$53,000.00 insurance money enabled the school to quickly erect a new building.



ADMINISTRATION BUILDING FIRE

The new building has cinder-block and brick walls finished with plastic paint on the inside and has concrete floors covered with asphalt tile and a steel and concrete roof. Nine classrooms, a large library room, and an office are on a long hallway. The building houses the high school and the eighth grade.

Mountain View has been a union school ever since the state took it over from the Baptists. At that time the Special Tax School at Hays was consolidated with it. Year after year as buildings and roads have permitted, other elementary schools have been consolidated with Mountain View. Today (1954) only one small school, New Life, remains. This school will be brought in as soon as buildings and roads will permit.<sup>14</sup>

The prestige of the school has greatly increased since 1947. Among the reasons that could be cited are the following: The curriculum has been broadened; a business department was added in 1947, and has constantly been improved since that time. Guidance has been stressed; all teachers are encouraged to be as helpful as counselors as they can, and in 1953 three periods per day were assigned one teacher for counseling. Thus children are better understood and better teaching is possible. Better teachers are employed

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14

Gregory, loc. cit.

than in the past and the teacher load has been reduced. To this might be added, better administration and administrative policy have produced a community school spirit that takes great pride in the school. It can truthfully be said that Mountain View can be proud of the past and look forward to a bright future.

#### Future Plans

In all probability, 1954-1955 will be the last year for Mountain View High School. School plans outlined to the writer by P. W. Gregory after he had discussed the matter recently with the Wilkes County School Superintendent, C. B. Eller, include consolidation with Traphill. It is expected that the above program will be authorized within one year and construction started on the new school. A neutral site will most likely be selected and a modern high school, which will include vocational home economics, vocational agriculture, industrial arts, diversified occupations, and a strictly modern commercial department, in addition to the present curriculum. The new school is expected to be called North High. 15

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15

P. W. Gregory, A written statement to the writer, July 17, 1954.



In a statement to the Winston Salem Journal, Eller said that advantages which may be gained by merging Mountain View and Traphill to form North High are being studied.<sup>16</sup>

## CHAPTER X

### CONCLUSIONS

Before a people can make material advances there must be an underlying philosophy to point the way. To locate the origin of an idea is always difficult, often impossible. In this study the writer selected the settlement of North Carolina as a starting point. It would have been possible to consider religious persecution and restrictions on freedom of thought in New England or even in the British Isles as the beginning of the movement that produced Mountain View School.

In 1665 the promise of religious freedom and a voice in the government brought many liberty loving people to North Carolina. Many of these people were Baptists. Soon they were establishing homes and churches across the tidal country, over the Piedmont, and eventually they followed the river valleys through the mountains.

The century that followed the American Revolution saw the Baptists fill the valleys of the upper Yadkin. Churches were established, associations were formed and the movement to found Baptist academies and colleges was launched. An academy was established at Traphill and out of it grew Traphill Institute and the Stone Mountain Baptist Association.

The reader's attention has been called to the fact that originally the inspiration and plan for Mountain View came from Traphill and especially Traphill Institute through J. S. Kilby and the Stone Mountain Baptist Association. Just as Stone Mountain Baptist Association and Traphill Institute were born and grew up together, so Mountain View School is the child of the Stone Mountain Baptist Association. As a Baptist school, Mountain View enjoyed great success, but changing times decreed the end of the academy and it became a state school. Again as a state school it prospered but once more changing social conditions demand reorganization. If the plan to consolidate Mountain View High School with Traphill is carried through, this will, most likely, mean that a new school will be built between Hays and Traphill. This will be a better and more efficient school than either community could afford alone. North High, if it is built, will cover practically the entire territory included in the Stone Mountain Baptist Association with the best school it has ever had.

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