STUDENT LIFE AT CULLOWHEE:
THE HUNTER YEARS, 1923-1947

A Thesis Presented to
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Master of Arts in History

by
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PREFACE

Any attempt to study student life at a college or university must take into account the numerous factors which affect the student experience. The growth and progress of the school, its faculty and staff, national and international developments, state politics and local attitudes all influence student life. The school's leadership is a major factor. The president of a university or college determines the quality and direction of the student experience.

Hiram Tyram Hunter was president of Western Carolina Teachers College from 1923 to 1947. During these years the school evolved from a two year Normal school to a four year teachers college. The Great Depression and World War II also took place during Hunter's administration. This study evaluates the impact of President Hunter's leadership on student life as he guided the college through twenty-four important years. Based primarily on research from manuscript collections in Western Carolina University's Archives, this paper also gives a narrative account of the day-to-day life of students at Cullowhee.

A great deal of material used in this thesis was gained through oral interviews with Cullowhee students and faculty contemporary to President Hunter's administration. I am especially

grateful to Mabel Crum, Juanita Eller, Helen Hartshorn, Ruth Matthews, Frank Brown, Jr., Tyson Cathey, Clinton Dodson and Stedman Mitchell for sharing their time and experiences with me.

I would like to thank my thesis director, Dr. Max R. Williams, not only for suggesting such an interesting topic, but also for his patience and willingness to accommodate to my erratic schedule. Revision suggestions and corrections from my committee members, Dr. Alice Mathews and Dr. Gerald Schwartz, were also greatly appreciated. Special credit is due to my typist, Jeanne Nienhuis, whose excellent work improves the quality of any project.

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STUDENT LIFE AT CULLOWHEE: THE HUNTER YEARS, 1923-1947

This study is an investigation of student life at Cullowhee (Cullowhee Normal and Industrial School, Cullowhee State Normal School, Western Carolina Teachers College) during the administration of President Hiram Tyram Hunter. Numerous factors which affect the quality of student life were reviewed. The effects of national and international developments such as the Great Depression and World War II were considered along with the impact of local and campus developments. President Hunter's leadership was seen as a determining factor in how these events affected student life.

Considerable attention was also given to the day-to-day life of the students at the school. The evolution of student rules and regulations was traced as were student attitudes toward discipline. Extra-curricular and social activities were discussed. The strong ties with the local churches were brought out in a study of religious influences. The development of a curricula with a strong emphasis on teacher training was examined. Finally, President Hunter's effectiveness as an administrator and his contributions to the institution were evaluated. H. T. Hunter was a dedicated but cautious administrator who placed great importance on quality education and sound moral training.

The majority of material utilized in this study came from primary sources housed in the Western Carolina University Archives. These primary sources included the President's Office Papers of both H. T. Hunter and William Ernest Bird; the college bulletins; Executive and Faculty Committee Minutes; University Papers and the school yearbooks and newspapers. Oral interviews were conducted with people who were present at the college during Hunter's administration. W. E. Bird's A History of Western Carolina College served as the major secondary source.

While H. T. Hunter was president of the school it developed from a two year Normal school into a four year teachers college. Student enrollments steadily increased between 1923 and 1947. Students also become more autonomous as Hunter's administration progressed. Both the Great Depression and World War II brought difficult problems for the college during this period. President Hunter led the school through twenty-four challenging years with characteristic warmth and respect. The success of Western Carolina University today is a testimony to Hunter's wise leadership and supreme dedication during such a crucial era in the school's history.

Approved Max R. Williams
Thesis Director

CHAPTER ONE

THE EARLY YEARS:
REAFFIRMING OLD TRADITIONS AND TAKING NEW DIRECTIONS

Hiram Tyran Hunter took over the presidency of Cullowhee Norman and Industrial School on July 30, 1923.[1] Accompanied by his wife, the former Glenn Weaver of Weaverville, North Carolina, and two daughters, Martha Lou and Jane, the new president found a twenty acre physical plant in a scenic area of the western North Carolina mountains. Although located in an area of natural beauty, the school might not have appeared attractive to President Hunter. The campus had only three finished buildings, with a fourth nearing completion.[2] Also on the campus were eight outdoor toilets, four pig pens, a cow lot and a dilapidated barn.[3] In accepting the challenge that leadership of the undeveloped school presented, the Hunter family moved into a remodeled farmhouse, thereafter known as

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[1]William Ernest Bird, The History of Western Carolina College (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1963), p. 131. (Hereafter cited as Bird, History.)

[2]Richard W. Iobst, "The Progress of an Idea," The Inauguration of Harold Frank Robinson as the Chancellor of Western Carolina University (October 26, 1974), pp. 11-17. (Hereafter cited as Iobst, "Progress.")

[3]Bird, History, p. 133.

the "President's Home," where they continued to live throughout the twenty-four years Hunter served as president.[4]

Before coming to Cullowhee H. T. Hunter had graduated from Mars Hill in 1908 and had received a Bachelor of Arts degree from Wake Forest College in 1912; the same year he married Glenn Weaver. Later in 1917, he had earned a Masters of Arts from Columbia University. He was an English instructor at Southern Methodist University in Dallas, Texas for the next four years.

Hunter then returned to North Carolina to teach at Wake Forest College.[5] After serving a year at Wake Forest, Hunter left to do further graduate study at Harvard. Attending on a scholarship, he was graduated with the degree of Master of Education in 1922. He returned to Wake Forest to become head of the Department of Education. He had served in this position not quite a year when he was offered the presidency of Cullowhee Normal and Industrial School.[6] Although Hunter knew something of the school, he soon acquainted himself in detail with the history of the institution.

The Cullowhee school had had its beginnings in a small unfinished building in 1889. Professor Robert Lee Madison, a dedicated educator, had begun the school with an enrollment of eighteen students. In 1891 the state legislature had chartered

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[4]Ibid., p. 131.

[5]Iobst, "Progress," p. 13.

[6]Bird, History, p. 128.

it as Cullowhee High School.[7] By 1893 Cullowhee's school enrollment had doubled and included students from outside communities and students of diversified ages, ranging from six to twenty years of age. Professor Madison saw this growth as an indication of the need to offer teacher training beyond the secondary level at Cullowhee. He approached the state legislature with the idea of state sponsored normal training, a two year program beyond the high school level. The educator's efforts proved successful, and a state supported Normal Department at Cullowhee, with annual support totaling one thousand five hundred dollars, was approved in 1893.[8] Graduates from the Normal Department received a three year first grade certificate acceptable in all North Carolina counties.[9] As a result of continued growth, particularly in the Normal Department, the 1905 North Carolina General Assembly renamed the school the Cullowhee Normal and Industrial School.[10]

Madison resigned the presidency in 1912 and was succeeded by Alonzo C. Reynolds. Reynolds held this position for the following eight years.[11] As president Reynolds dedicated himself to the founding purpose of the school, the training of qualified teachers for North Carolina schools. With the aid of a strong

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[7]"Robert Lee Madison is Founder of Cullowhee," The Cullowhee Yodel, November 1924, p. 2. (Hereafter cited as "Madison.")

[8]Bird, History, pp. 38-42.

[9]Iobst, "Progress," p. 12.

[10]"Madison," p. 2.

[11]Ibid.

and able faculty, Reynolds brought the Normal school program to prominence at the institution.[12]

Reynolds resigned as president in 1920 in order to pursue private business interests.[13] Madison returned to take over the presidency of the school; his second term lasted only three years.[14] An important action of lasting influence made by Madison during his second term was the appointment of William Ernest Bird as Vice-President of the school in 1920. The next year he became the first "Dean" of the school when his title was changed. Bird served the school as Dean continuously for the next twenty-seven years. He succeeded H. T. Hunter as acting president in 1947, serving in this office for the following two years. In 1949, Bird returned to his position as Dean until he was recalled to act as president in 1956. Bird retired in 1957 after thirty-seven years of service.[15] Dean Bird's dedication to the school was reflected in his continual efforts, often beyond the call of duty, to help the students and the school.

President Madison resigned the presidency for a second time in 1923 but remained at the school as an English teacher until his retirement in 1937.[16] Hiram T. Hunter then assumed the presidency of Cullowhee Normal and Industrial School and, as his predecessors,

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[12]Iobst, "Progress," p. 13. [13]Ibid.

[14]"Madison," p. 2.

[15]Iobst, "Progress," p. 13. [16]Ibid.

dedicated himself to "the development and training of elementary teachers," the supreme purpose of the school.[17]

In 1922, prior to Hunter's arrival, the school had celebrated its first commencement with two distinct graduations, one for the high school and the other for the Normal Department. President Hunter began immediately to take steps to eliminate the high school as an integral part of the institution. A plan was devised calling for a gradual separation of the two divisions to be completed by the academic year 1927-28.[18] The plan was adhered to, and by 1928 the school had become a separate institution.[19] Many of the school's alumni viewed the separation of the high school with skepticism:

> Many of them positively resented the change, especially the fact that the proportion of young men in the school was being suddenly reduced. To these alumni, Cullowhee had been a boy's school chiefly, with women playing a minor role. They did not like to see it change toward a school for young women. But the change was inevitable if we were to maintain Cullowhee as a teacher-training institution, and to meet professional standards.[20]

Keeping a consistently high percentage of male students at the school was a problem throughout Hunter's administration.

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[17] Cullowhee State Normal Bulletin, Catalogue number 1924-25, v. 1, no. 2, p. 8. (Hereafter cited as Bulletin, Catalogue.)

[18] Bird, History, p. 112.

[19] Cullowhee State Normal Bulletin, Annual Report, 1927-28, v. 4, no. 4, p. 48. (Hereafter cited as Bulletin, Annual Report.)

[20] Ibid.

The school underwent several name changes during Hunter's early years. The state legislature of 1925 had granted the school a new charter naming it Cullowhee State Normal School.[21] Later, recognizing the separation of the high school and the progress of the Normal Department, the 1929 General Assembly granted the Normal Department a new charter under the name of Western Carolina Teachers College, giving it the authority to grant four-year degrees.[22]

President Hunter began efforts to update and revise the curricula of the college upon his arrival in 1923. By 1928 the revised curricula was complete and allowed for a more liberal elective system that would serve to enhance "natural gifts specially peculiar to different individuals."[23] This new system would facilitate transferring for those students who decided they did not want to go into the teaching profession by offering them a field of general electives similar to those at other state four-year institutions. Some courses previously offered were discarded during the development of the new curricula because they were outdated or failed to meet the students' needs particular to teacher-training.[24]

Enrollment enjoyed a steady increase after Hunter's arrival in 1923. Two hundred and eight students were enrolled his first

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[21] Bulletin, Catalogue number 1925-26, v. 2, no. 2, p. 8.

[22] Western Carolina Teachers College, Annual Report, 1928-29, v. 5, no. 4, p. 10. (Hereafter cited as College, Annual Report.)

[23] Bulletin, Catalogue number 1928-29, v. 5, no. 1, pp. 11-12.

[24] Bulletin, Annual Report, 1927-28, v. 4, no. 4, p. 21.

year as president. By the 1927-28 academic year, the student body totaled three hundred and fifty students, with an increasingly large number of students remaining until graduation.[25] The institution that began as a community school with eighteen pupils had become a four-year college with steadily increasing enrollments that assured its permanence.

In the early Hunter years, the majority of students came from rural areas of North Carolina. Many of these students, particularly those in the Normal Department, made personal sacrifices to obtain their education. As reported by one student in the campus paper, The Cullowhee Yodel:

> We are one and all either country or village boys and girls; ninety per cent are from localities where paved streets and street cars are unknown. We have been brought up to know the value of hard work and to have respect for the man in the ditch. To our certain knowledge, ninety-nine per cent of our boys, and fifty-five per cent of our girls, have made part of their expenses by manual labor during the summer months. We have in mind one of our students who resolved to enter school after three years of hard labor in his youthful days, and this one is typical of the student body. Our most popular boys and girls are those who perform the janitorial and dining-room service at the dormitories.[26]

This dedication on the part of students was also noted by Dean Bird in the school's annual report of 1928:

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[25] Ibid., p. 14.

[26] "Our Students Attitude Toward Manual Labor," The Cullowhee Yodel, March 1924, p. 3.

> Indications are, by comparison with groups of students in other colleges, that our students would rank about as an average group in ability. In spirit of industry and earnestness of purpose, however, our students as a group, have impressed me as being above the average.[27]

This responsible attitude on the part of the students resulted in a low rate of failure and an increasing number of graduates.[28] The number of Normal graduates increased from eight in 1924 to ninety-nine in 1929.[29] Students attending Cullowhee between 1923 and 1929 usually did so at great personal expense. This sacrifice caused them to place great importance on their educational experience and motivated them to achieve above average standards in the quality of their work.

The type of students the school attracted plus its location in a remote region caused the attendance for the quarterly sessions to be somewhat irregular. Enrollments were lowest during the fall quarter, picked up some for the winter quarter, and enjoyed a large increase for spring quarter. Many students attending the Normal school were employed as teachers in the public schools which prohibited their attendance in fall and winter.[30] Cullowhee also offered a summer school, dating back as early as 1914, at which only

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[27] Bulletin, Annual Report, 1927-28, v. 4, no. 4, p. 20.

[28] The Cullowhee State Normal Bulletin Annual Report of 1927-28 cites that one out of every twenty-five candidates for a Normal diploma fail as many as one subject. Failure of one subject prohibited graduation.

[29] Bulletin, Annual Report, 1927-28, v. 4, no. 4, p. 52.

[30] Ibid., pp. 13-14.

Normal courses were offered.[31] These summer courses related directly to the professional advancement of teachers.[32] The summer program also attracted a large enrollment.

Since the school at Cullowhee was supported by the State of North Carolina, there was no tuition charge for students in the teacher education program.[33] The first mention of a tuition charge for out-of-state students appears in the Cullowhee State Normal Bulletin for the 1927-28 school year:

> Since the school is supported by the State as a teacher training institution, there is no tuition for North Carolina students preparing to teach. All out-of-state students pay a small tuition fee of fifteen dollars ($15.00) per session.[34]

However, all students were required to pay a special fee for registration, usually costing fifteen dollars. There were also mandatory medical and athletic fees of approximately three dollars each. Certain laboratory courses and individual piano lessons carried charges ranging from six to eighteen dollars.[35] A student loan fund had been established in 1924 to aid students lacking the financial means to attend school.[36] In 1925 the fund totaled approximately

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[31] Cullowhee State Normal Bulletin, Summer School number 1925, v. 2, no. 1, p. 10. (Hereafter cited as Bulletin, Summer School.)

[32] Bulletin, Summer School number 1924, v. 1, no. 1, p. 16.

[33] Cullowhee State Normal Bulletin, 1925-26, v. 2, no. 2, p. 21. (Hereafter cited as Bulletin.)

[34] Bulletin, 1927-28, v. 4, no. 1, p. 21.

[35] The school bulletins for the years 1923-24 through 1927-28 itemize these charges.

[36] Bulletin, 1924-25, v. 1, no. 2, p. 18.

five thousand dollars received from contributions and augmented by any income received from the school's sale of electric power.[37] By the 1927-28 academic year, the loan fund's monetary value had increased to almost six thousand dollars.[38] Also, by 1928 the school was offering self-help opportunities for students requiring financial aid. These self-help positions included dining room work, library assistance, and office help.[39] These jobs, however, were rarely open to first year students; the limited number available were usually taken by students already in attendance.[40] In the school's Annual Report published in January, 1927, it was estimated that between seventy-five and one hundred students were seeking financial assistance each year.[41]

Students attending the Cullowhee school during the 1923-24 school year paid one hundred and twenty-six dollars for board each nine-month term. Room rent was thirty-three dollars for girls and twenty-two dollars for boys. The difference in charge resulted from the individual characteristics of the dormitories. Moore, the women's dormitory, was much more modern and comfortable than Davies

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[37] Bulletin, 1925-26, v. 2, no. 2, p. 19.

[38] Bulletin, 1927-28, v. 4, no. 1, p. 19.

[39] Bulletin, Annual Report, 1927, v. 3, no. 3, p. 11.

[40] Bulletin, 1927-28, v. 4, no. 1, p. 18.

[41] Bulletin, Annual Report, 1927, v. 3, no. 3, p. 11.

Hall, the men's dormitory.[42] Completed in 1924, Moore was adjudged by many as "the finest and best equipped dormitory for women in the state." The brick building was three stories high and accommodated one hundred and eighty people. Besides the students' rooms, Moore contained reading rooms, reception halls, and a kitchen. The dining hall, which served the entire campus, was also located in Moore Dormitory.[43] The nine-month session charge for board had increased to one hundred and forty-five dollars by 1927. Also, by this time, room rent for Moore Dormitory and Davies Hall had increased to forty-five dollars and thirty dollars respectively.[44]

All women students were required to board in the dormitories. Some exceptions were made for girls who wanted to work in the community for their room and board or live with relatives. However, these exceptions required special permission from the president.[45]

Prior to the separation of the high school and the college in 1929, both high school and normal students lived in the dormitories. Members of the school's faculty and staff also resided in Moore Dormitory or Davies Hall. One student, requested by the editor of The Western Carolinian to submit a letter on dormitory life, observed:

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[42]Cullowhee Normal and Industrial School, Announcement, 1923-24, p. 3.

[43]Bulletin, 1925-26, v. 2, no. 2, p. 15.

[44]Bulletin, 1927-28, v. 4, no. 1, p. 21.

[45]Bulletin, 1928, v. 5, no. 2, p. 15.

> A student who does not stay in the dormitory is deprived of the most enjoyable part of school life. There is a feeling of independence that is not found in a private home. One soon finds himself one of a large family, where all share alike, and there is a mutual understanding existing among all members of the family that prompts each one to aid the other in making the most of the time spent here together. To associate with the 'gang' and to be one of the bunch one must remember that all are on an equal plane and none get special attention.[46]

Sometimes the family type "sharing" of dormitory life involved hard work. During the early 1920s, the Cullowhee school was troubled by a faulty water supply. The water problem developed into a small crisis when the water system was connected to a new power plant completed in 1924. Not only were the heating mains and valves defective, but the water supply was grossly inadequate. An emergency reservoir was built, but it only solved part of the problem. In the school bulletin President Hunter praised the students and faculty for their reaction to the crisis:

> Students and teachers were forced to build fires and wear overcoats in the dormitories and classrooms. When water was used in the boilers, the supply in the dormitories was insufficient. For days, even weeks, the teachers and students carried water in buckets for cooking and for drinking purposes. The loyalty of the faculty and students during this emergency can never be forgotten. Cooks would leave on account of the situation, and teachers and students would volunteer to take their places. Not a student left the school, although few were comfortable for weeks at a time, and all might have complained that they were not getting the services for which they were paying. No one can make me believe, after this experience, that our faculty members of today are interested only in themselves, or that students will not respond to the challenge of a heroic task.[47]

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[46] "Dormitory Life," The Cullowhee Yodel, February 1924, p. 3.

[47] Bulletin, Annual Report, 1927-28, v. 4, no. 4, pp. 43-44.

The early school catalogs state quite clearly the type of supervision students could expect in the dormitories. Women students were closely supervised:

> In addition to the excellent furnishing and equipment of the Home for young women, provision is made for careful and competent supervision of this Home. It is the distinct purpose of the school to throw around the young ladies the influences of a refined and cultured home, and thus to develop in them the desire and the power to create and preside over such homes, and the ability to inspire such desires in the pupils who shall later come under their care.[48]

The male students were not as restricted as their female counterparts:

> Young men who occupy rooms in the Davies Home are allowed as much freedom as they will use well, but they are under careful supervision by a member of the faculty. Such influences are thrown around them as to develop in them self-control and initiative, with enough restraint to prevent them from coming into contact with undesirable influences and forming bad habits.[49]

Students attending the school in the 1920s were governed by several rules and regulations. The administrators of the school set forth these standards in an effort to run the school "as nearly as possible as a well regulated family."[50] The first official regulations appeared in the Faculty Committee Minutes of November 8, 1923, and pertained only to male students. These three rules prohibited smoking at all times indoors and outdoors, except for all rooms above first floor in Davies Hall. They required each student

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[48] Bulletin, 1924-25, v. 1, no. 2, p. 21.

[49] Ibid., p. 17.

[50] Bulletin, 1924-25, v. 1, no. 2, p. 21.

boarding in the dormitory and community to attend Sunday School and the regular service at some church each Sunday. Card playing was not allowed on Sunday or during study hours on the part of anybody whether boarding in the dormitory or in the community.[51]

Listed in the school catalog for the academic year 1924-25 were eight general regulations to apprise students of the administration's expectations. Boarding students were only allowed to make weekend visits to friends twice a quarter. It was reasoned that frequent trips from the campus would interfere with school morale and have a derogatory effect on the student's work. Students residing in the dormitories were expected to keep their rooms clean and in order. Boarding students were required to attend at least one church service each Sunday. Chapel exercises were held during the week and also were mandatory. Unexcused class absences would automatically lower the student's grade in the course. Absences equivalent to two weeks attendance in any one class, unexcused or otherwise, resulted in loss of credit for the course. The three remaining regulations were dormitory restrictions. Irons were not allowed in the bedrooms, students were furnished only one electric light bulb per year, and any guests for meals had to obtain a meal ticket from the Dietitian.[52]

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[51]Cullowhee Normal and Industrial School, Faculty Committee Minutes, Meeting of 8 November 1923. (Hereafter cited as Faculty Committee.)

[52]Bulletin, 1924-25, v. 1, no. 2, p. 21.

By the 1927-28 school year the administration had increased the number of regulations from eight to seventeen. Only one regulation, the allotment of one electric light bulb per student, had been dropped. Among the new regulations was an hour set aside each week during which students were to clean and arrange their rooms. Sunday afternoon from two o'clock until four o'clock was quiet hour, a period during which students had to remain in their rooms. No phonographs were allowed. Each student was held responsible for his room, and any damage that occurred was repaired at the student's expense. Any student leaving school early for the holidays or returning late after the vacation without permission could be forfeiting his or her right to enter school. All students were required to remain at school until commencement exercises were over. The school assumed responsibility for students until they reached their homes. For this reason permission was not given to girls to stop for visits or make any side trips on their way home without written consent from their parents. Two other rules added to the previous general regulations pertained to day students. When not in class, day students were required to stay in the library. After all their classwork was finished, these students were allowed to return to their boarding places. Day students were not allowed to visit students living in the dormitories during study hours without special permission from whoever was in charge.[53]

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[53]Bulletin, Catalogue, 1928-29, v. 5, no. 1., pp. 23-24.

Discipline problems were rare during the first six years of Hunter's administration. The most abused regulation was concerned with students leaving early for holidays or returning to school late after the holidays. The cases of those students guilty of this offense were ruled upon by the Executive Committee of the college. The Executive Committee, composed of administrators and faculty members, was the governing force of the school at this time. Those students who failed to report to the Dean an acceptable reason for their holiday related absences were usually disciplined by being placed on two-week campus restriction. This punishment denied the student all off-campus privileges with the exception of church attendance.[54]

A few other violations are mentioned in the Executive and Faculty Committee minutes prior to 1929. One student was charged with intoxication. There seemed to be an unwritten rule that intoxication or the possession of alcohol was a shipping offense. A shipping offense automatically meant expulsion of the violator from the school. However, when this case was brought before the committee, the student acknowledged his guilt "but with first offense plea asked for mercy." He promised the committee he would not repeat the offense. Several teachers came to the student's defense by assuring the committee that the boy "had always

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[54]Cullowhee State Normal School, Executive Committee Minutes, Meetings of 12 and 13 January 1928. (Hereafter cited as Executive Committee.)

acted the gentleman." The Executive Committee unanimously voted to allow the student to remain in school on probation.[55]

In 1927 charges were brought against three female students for forging letters from home. The counterfeit letters contained parental permission for the girls to be off-campus one weekend visiting at the home of a friend. The girls not only did not go to the home they had stated in the letters but also were seen in the company of men at the movie theatre in Franklin. Two of the girls were expelled immediately on the charges of forging letters, going to a different place than where they stated they would be, having plans to meet boys, and riding in a car with boys. The third offender was temporarily suspended until more evidence concerning her case was made available.[56] After further investigation into her offense, she was placed on campus restriction, on the condition of good behavior, until the end of the term and denied the privilege of returning to the school for future work.[57]

Off-campus students could not be watched as closely as those residing in the dormitories, and the question of how to discipline these students was a problem. The Faculty Committee in December of 1923 came to this conclusion concerning the problem:

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[55]Executive Committee, Meeting of 4 May 1928.

[56]Executive Committee, Meeting of 17 May 1927.

[57]Executive Committee, Meeting of 19 May 1927.

> The concensus of opinion seemed to be that the school has a right at any time to question the conduct of a student, no matter where residing, whenever such conduct was believed to be hurtful to the school; that the school has a right to set its own moral standards, to punish any of its students, and even to exclude students from its doors, whenever their conduct or morals seemed incompatible with the standards of the school.[58]

The off-campus students seemed to be obedient. Few discipline cases involving these students appear in the Faculty or Executive Committee Minutes during the 1920s. Miss Margaret Moore, a community counselor, reported that the off-campus students "seemed to be working well, staying in their respective places, and obeying the rules."[59]

In his book, The History of Western Carolina College, W. E. Bird maintains that during the first seven years of Hunter's administration there was no real indication of self-rule among the students at the school.[60] Students during this period were under careful faculty guidance. A student government association under the direction of a faculty-student council was set up prior to the 1924-25 academic year.[61] This association allowed student body members a small share in the responsibility of the disciplinary

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[58]Faculty Committee, Meeting of 7 December 1923.

[59]Faculty Committee, Meeting of 29 June 1927.

[60]Bird, History, p. 218.

[61]Bulletin, 1924-25, v. 1, no. 2, p. 16.

problems at the school.[62] Students in their respective dormitories elected officers to a faculty-student council. This council then decided what rules and regulations were to be adopted for the school year.[63] Student proctors were appointed to insure the rules were obeyed.[64] The administrative position on this type of student government was clearly stated in the school catalog for the 1924-25 academic year:

> As a matter of course, a young man or young woman who aspires to the important and delicate task of teaching is supposed to be inspired by high ideals of self-control and noble character. Since one aim of all true education is to produce self-control and to lead to the largest freedom, we grant to the students the greatest possible degree of liberty consistent with good order and the successful operation of the school.

The catalog further declared:

> No student is regarded as a suitable member of the school who will not respond to the kind and patient efforts of this system, which endeavors to lead him in right paths, to full and well-rounded development.[65]

This governmental system proved satisfactory until the early 1930s when the first steps to establish a strong, constitutional student government were taken.

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[62] Ibid.

[63] Max Hooper, "Life in Davies Hall," The Cullowhee Yodel, November 1924, p. 2.

[64] "Student Government Officers Elected," The Cullowhee Yodel, October 1924, p. 2.

[65] Bulletin, 1924-25, v. 1, no. 2, p. 16.

Throughout H. T. Hunter's administration there was a strong religious influence on the campus. As stated before, during the 1920s attendance at both Sunday School and church services was mandatory. Chapel exercises, also mandatory, usually included something of a religious nature as part of the program. In the 1924-25 school bulletin each member of the faculty is credited as being a member of one of the local churches; the three denominations represented in the area were Baptist, Episcopal, and Methodist. This same bulletin affirms that "Parents need not feel apprehensive of the religious and moral training of boys and girls entrusted to the care of this institution."[66] President Hunter, a devout Baptist, subscribed to this religious influence and often took groups of students to church meetings in neighboring towns.[67]

Hunter was also interested in offering Bible study courses for credit to the students attending the Normal school. Although aware of the complications involved in offering such courses at a state-supported institution, he sent several letters to the State Superintendent of Schools, A. T. Allen, in hopes of getting the Bible courses approved.[68] His efforts proved fruitful. The 1927-28 school catalog announced a program, fully approved by the State

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[66] Ibid.

[67] Perry Morgan to President H. T. Hunter, 1 April 1927, Hunter Collection, W.C.U. Archives, Cullowhee, N.C.

[68] A. T. Allen to President H. T. Hunter, 17 February 1927 and 26 February 1927, Hunter Collection, W.C.U. Archives, Cullowhee, Cullowhee, N.C.

Department of Education, whereby students could take religious instruction from local pastors. These courses carried full credit in the Normal school.[69]

Although the church and church organizations claimed a great deal of students' non-class time, there were other extra-curricular activities available on the campus. The most popular organizations throughout the 1920s were the Columbian and Erosophian literary societies. Established during the 1894-95 academic year, these rival clubs were well organized and quite active.[70] The two societies offered "excellent opportunities for development of reasoning power and of literary tastes." Members participated in debates and literary exercises. These organizations were so popular that each club was allocated a large hall in the administration building as a permanent meeting place.[71] The students furnished these meeting rooms on their own, even obtaining pictures and pianos.[72]

The first school paper, The Cullowhee Yodel, was published by the faculty and the students through the literary societies in 1924. The first edition stated the paper's purpose as follows:

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[69] Bulletin, Catalog, 1927-28, v. 4, no. 1, p. 17.

[70] Bird, History, p. 53.

[71] Cullowhee Normal and Industrial School, Catalog, 1922-23, v. 1, no. 2, p. 10.

[72] Bulletin, 1925-26, v. 2, no. 2, pp. 16-17.

> The purpose of the paper will be to endeavor to reflect the real life and spirit of the Normal School among the teachers and students and to bring former students and friends of the institution into a closer relationship with the School and each other.[73]

The first year the paper was published it had over six hundred "paid in subscriptions."[74]

Several other clubs were mentioned in school publications of the 1920s. The Orchestra and the Men's and Women's Glee Clubs enjoyed large membership. The Debating Club held many intercollegiate debates. Many students enjoyed participating in the various aspects of the Dramatics Club productions.

The administration favored student participation in these activities:

> Student activities are recognized as a very wholesome and essential part of school life, and every effort is made to encourage the students along these lines. They have shown themselves exceedingly active in promoting such organizations as glee clubs, orchestra, debating teams, dramatic clubs, athletic clubs, literary societies, etc.[75]

However, as early as 1926 the administration found it necessary to adopt several recommendations to prevent extra-curricular activities from interfering with school work. These recommendations restricted Glee Club practices to two nights a week, allowed only two weeks of play practice prior to production, changed basketball

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[73] The Cullowhee Yodel, February 1924, p. 2.

[74] Bulletin, 1924-25, v. 1, no. 2, p. 18.

[75] Bulletin, 1925-26, v. 2, no. 2, p. 16.

practice from evening to the afternoon, and permitted only two movies each month. Students participating in public programs were required to maintain a "B" average with no grade below a "C". Students doing "D" work were prohibited from participating in any extra-curricular activities.[76]

A faculty member also served as athletic coach and the school offered students opportunities to participate in a wide variety of sports.[77] Funding of athletics was a definite problem in the 1920s. The 1923 Faculty Committee passed a motion requiring each faculty member to contribute at least five dollars to the cause of athletics.[78]

The first inter-school atheltic competition was a basketball game held in 1918. Basketball teams on the early schedule included Asheville School, Weaverville College, and various high schools in the area. Frank L. Wells, who coached this early basketball team, had never seen a basketball game played and based his coaching on a textbook about the sport.[79]

The school held its first competitive football game in 1924. Only a few teams were included on the season's schedule. It was difficult for the Cullowhee school to maintain a football program throughout the 1920s because of a lack of players. For

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[76]Faculty Committee, Meeting of 13 January 1926.

[77]Bulletin, 1925-26, v. 2, no. 2, p. 19.

[78]Faculty Committee, Meeting of 21 November 1923.

[79]Bird, History, pp. 101-102.

two years of this period the school had to discontinue the football program altogether.[80]

The only competitive sport open to women was basketball. The Normal School had a series of outstanding girl's basketball teams during Hunter's first years as president. The girls' games were scheduled against local high school teams.[81]

The administration looked upon athletics favorably but had definite opinions concerning their purpose. As stated in a 1925-26 school bulletin:

> We believe in the value of athletics to a school provided every suggestion of professionalism is eliminated, and provided mass exercise and inter-group athletics are not forced to give way to the over-training and over-glorification of a few 'stars'.[82]

Between 1923 and 1929, the athletic program at the Cullowhee school enjoyed sporadic success.

Social opportunities did not seem to suffer from Cullowhee's rural, isolated location. Only two cities with a population of twenty-five thousand were within one hundred and seventy-five miles of Cullowhee.[83] Helen Saunders, in an article for The Cullowhee Yodel, emphasized that after a student had been in Cullowhee for

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[80]"Yodels Making Good Showing in Football," The Cullowhee Yodel, 15 November 1928, p. 1.

[81]"Athletics," The Cullowhee Yodel, February 1925, p. 7.

[82]Bulletin, 1925-26, v. 2, no. 2, p. 19.

[83]College, Annual Report, 1928-29, v. 5, no. 4, p. 11.

only one day, he never again questioned whether any type of social life existed in such an isolated place. She cited the opening day reception, long walks, evening picnics and the anxiously awaited trip to the Cherokee Indian Reservation as popular social activities at the school. Also anticipated with pleasure was the annual weekend camping trip to Tuckaseigee Falls and Whiteside.[84] A contemporary college bulletin mentions weekend visits, participated in by students and faculty, that were made almost every session to Fairfield Inn, High Hampton, Grove Park Inn, and the Biltmore Estate, home of the late George Vanderbilt.[85]

Cultural programs were arranged for the students' benefit, engagements usually were made through the Piedmont Lyceum Bureau. Students also worked together to present "programs of a highly entertaining character."[86] The school owned a "moving-picture machine" as early as 1924.[87] Films were circulated by the State Department of Education and were shown free to students unless a small fee was necessary to cover the cost of transportation.[88]

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[84]Helen Saunders, "Student Life at Cullowhee," The Cullowhee Yodel, April 1925, p. 5.

[85]Bulletin, 1925-26, v. 2, no. 2, p. 14.

[86]Bulletin, 1924-25, v. 1, no. 2, pp. 17-18.

[87]Ibid., p. 19.

[88]"Moving Pictures Seen Frequently," The Cullowhee Yodel, July 1924, p. 5.

Students attending the Cullowhee Normal School during the first six years of Hunter's administration were dedicated to receiving a quality education. In the Annual Report published as part of the 1926-27 bulletin Dean Bird observed:

> Students on the whole have shown an attitude of industry and serious mindedness toward their work. Although numbers of students have made failures in individual subjects, wholesale failures have been rare. The general earnestness of students has no doubt been partly responsible for the creditable records, being conducive, as it is, to good work.[89]

Besides their own personal interest in education, the students were further motivated by various prizes and awards. The two literary societies offered annual prizes and two special essay contests were established by Mrs. E. L. McKee and Mr. Holmes Bryson in 1926.[90] All these awards were highly coveted by the students.

Between 1923, when Hiram Tyram Hunter first became president of the school, and 1929 when it was chartered as a four-year college, much of the groundwork was laid for the future progress of the school. The school had been chartered and was receiving annual funding from the state legislature. The student body increased yearly, and its members came from an increasingly wider area. Dedicated faculty members were employed who remained with the school until retirement. President Hunter, with the aid of his

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[89] Bulletin, Annual Report, 1926-27, v. 4, no. 2, p. 12.

[90] Bulletin, 1926-27, v. 3, no. 2, p. 18.

faculty and staff, established the basis for the type of education Cullowhee students would receive for the rest of the Hunter administration. Cullowhee remained primarily a teachers' college for the entirety of Hunter's term of office. During this period traditions were established that would continue to influence students' day-to-day lives until after World War II. A close faculty-student relationship developed during these early years and endured throughout Hunter's presidency. Dedication to providing students with a well-rounded education, including social, physical, intellectual, and moral training, was a priority for the duration of H. T. Hunter's administration. The school had made great progress since Hunter assumed the presidency, and with the support of faculty, staff, students and friends of the school, those connected with the institution had an optimistic outlook for the future.

CHAPTER TWO

THE 1930s: GROWTH, DEVELOPMENT AND CHANGE

The small school that Robert Lee Madison founded at Cullowhee in 1889 had become, in 1929, Western Carolina Teachers College. Along with the new title, the school acquired the authority to confer four-year degrees. Western Carolina Teachers College granted its first such degrees in August of 1931 to fifteen students.[1] The following June ten more students were granted four-year degrees. The college's total of twenty-five graduates in its first academic year was thought to be a record for North Carolina schools.[2] After forty-two years of dedication and struggle the school was well established and its enrollments were increasing.

Those involved with the college had cause to believe the school's position had stabilized and its future was secure.

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[1] H. T. Hunter, President, to the Alumni of Western Carolina Teachers College, 24 August 1931, Hunter Collection, W.C.U. Archives, Cullowhee, N.C. (Hereafter cited as Hunter Collection.)

[2] Western Carolina Teachers College Bulletin, Biennial Report of the President, 1930-32, v. 9, no. 2, p. 7. (Hereafter cited as Biennial Report.)

However, the struggle for Western Carolina Teachers College was far from over; the Great Depression was close at hand. The college was headed for a fight for survival as a result of the desperate financial situation that was intensifying throughout the nation. The Depression began to affect the college in late 1929, and its influence continued to disturb the college until the late 1930s.

Cutbacks in appropriations began almost immediately. The 1929 state legislature, which chartered Western Carolina Teachers College, cut the annual maintenance appropriation for the school by more than nine thousand dollars. This same legislature gave the governor the power "to make cuts in appropriations which it had authorized for any or all institutions and agencies, whenever, in his own judgment, such action seemed warranted." Governor O. Max Gardner found it necessary to exercise this authority early in the 1929-30 fiscal year; he reduced the school's allotment by approximately fifty-six hundred dollars. These budget decreases resulted in cutbacks of faculty and staff salaries, of services, and in expenditures for facilities and supplies. These cutbacks came at a crucial time when the Cullowhee school was making the transition from a two-year normal school to a four-year college.[3]

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[3]William Earnest Bird, The History of Western Carolina College (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1963), pp. 150-151. (Hereafter cited as Bird, History.)

Further budget reductions by the governor caused faculty salary cuts of twenty-five to forty percent by the mid-thirties.[4] In his Biennial Report for 1930-32, President Hunter disclosed that five faculty members, an engineer, and the social director had all resigned or been dismissed because of loss of appropriations.[5]

Faculty teaching loads at the college were already higher than the norm throughout the state and loss of faculty as the Depression continued aggravated the problem.[6] The student-faculty ratio recommended for schools across the country during this period was sixteen students to each faculty member. In 1929 one teacher taught approximately twenty-three students at Western Carolina Teachers College. The ratio had increased to twenty-eight students per faculty member by the 1938-39 academic year.[7]

The college's critical financial situation was intensified by the failure of the Tuckaseigee Bank of Sylva on April 25, 1930. The bank was one of the first in western North Carolina to fail because of the Great Depression. The college had approximately twenty-three thousand dollars entrusted to the bank, most of it deposited the day before the bank failed.[8] President Hunter felt

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[4]Ibid.

[5]Biennial Report, p. 7.

[6]Bird, History, pp. 150-151.

[7]Western Carolina Teachers College Bulletin, Brief Preliminary Biennial Report, 1936-37, v. 13, no. 3, p. 3. (Hereafter cited as Preliminary Report.)

[8]Bird, History, p. 153.

that the college would be "considerably handicapped on account of this unforeseen calamity." No one knew at the time what the college would be able to reclaim from the bank's assets.[9] The immediate result of the failure of the Tuckaseigee Bank was a change in the college's building program. Eventually, however, the school's loss was absorbed by the state.[10]

The adverse effect of these appropriation cutbacks was augmented by an increase in the school's enrollment which continued throughout the Depression. For the regular session of 1928-29, three hundred and eighty-two students were enrolled.[11] Regular session attendance rose to five hundred students by the 1934-35 academic year.[12] Enrollment continued to enjoy steady growth after the harshest years of the Great Depression had been weathered. By the 1936-37 school year, students attending the regular session numbered approximately five hundred and twenty-five.[13] Regular session enrollments had increased forty percent between the 1933-34 and 1936-37 school years; summer school enrollments had risen two hundred percent during the same period.[14]

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[9] Western Carolina Teachers College Bulletin, Annual Report, 1929-30, v. 6, no. 4, p. 9.

[10] Bird, History, p. 153.

[11] Western Carolina Teachers College Catalog, 1932-33, v. 9, no. 1, p. 10. (Hereafter cited as Catalog.)

[12] Preliminary Report, p. 3.

[13] Bird, History, p. 161.

[14] Biennial Report, p. 8.

Increased enrollments caused serious space problems for the college. The library and classrooms were critically overcrowded. Every available classroom was occupied from eight in the morning until four in the afternoon.[15] The Erosophian and Columbian literary societies were moved out of their permanent meeting halls.[16] Laboratories for art and science courses were inadequate. The college set up temporary classrooms in the heating plant to alleviate part of the problem.[17] These unsatisfactory conditions remained a problem for the school throughout the 1930s and it took unceasing dedication on the part of President Hunter, his faculty and staff to continue the school's tradition of offering a quality education to its students.

When the school became a four-year college, its purpose remained the same. As stated in a 1929-30 catalog, "The central purpose of Western Carolina Teachers College shall be to prepare teachers for the public schools of North Carolina."[18] Still mainly involved with the training of elementary school teachers, the administration hoped to have an effective program set up to train secondary school teachers by the fall of 1930.[19] The first major

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[15]Bird, History, p. 153.

[16]Biennial Report, p. 8.

[17]Bird, History, p. 153.

[18]Catalog, 1929-30, v. 6, no. 1, p. 9.

[19]Western Carolina Teachers College, Special Announcement, 1930-31, v. 6, no. 2, p. 5. (Hereafter cited as Special Announcement.)

subject areas offered to students training to teach in the secondary schools were English, history and science.[20] Business education was added in 1935 to meet the state's heavy demand for persons trained to teach commercial courses in the public high schools.[21] Those concerned with the college hoped that by offering training for teachers on the secondary level the institution would be able to attract more male students. Male students seemed to favor teaching on the high school level and few of them enrolled in the elementary teaching program.

The scarcity of male students was taken quite seriously by the administration and it made efforts to eradicate the problem. A 1929-30 school catalog stated:

> Western Carolina Teachers College desires to remain co-educational, and while education standards will not be sacrificed to accomplish this end, all legitmate efforts will be put forth to retain young men as well as young women in the student body. Necessary adaptations in curricula, athletics, boarding and rooming accommodations, literary societies, and general organization will be made in that view.[22]

The administration's efforts proved successful and male attendance increased eighty percent in one year between the fall terms of 1931

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[20] Catalog, 1930-31, v. 7, no. 1, p. 13.

[21] Western Carolina Teachers College, Summer School, 1935, v. 11, no. 3, no page. (Hereafter cited as Summer School.)

[22] Catalog, 1929-30, v. 6, no. 1, p. 11.

and 1932.[23] By the 1936-37 school year male students made up thirty-five to forty percent of the total enrollment.[24]

The number of graduates from the school also enjoyed a steady increase despite the Depression.[25] The number of four-year graduates had grown from twenty-five in 1931-32 to ninety-two in 1937-38.[26] For these graduates the school operated a Bureau of Teacher Placement which consisted of a director and part-time student secretary.[27] The school was fortunate in placing a large percentage of its graduates in teaching positions. Hunter reported:

> Practically all our seniors go directly into the public schools of North Carolina. Of course, the majority of them will be in Western North Carolina, but we have a few occasionally who are placed in the Piedmont section. We have also placed teachers in South Carolina, Tennessee and Georgia. We have actually placed one in Arkansas and one in the Phillippine Islands.[28]

By 1937 the college could claim that over ninety percent of their recent graduates had been placed in teaching positions.[29] This

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[23] Catalog, 1933-34, v. 10, no. 1, p. 10.

[24] Catalog, 1936-37, v. 13, no. 1, p. 8.

[25] The two-year Normal program also had a number of graduates. The program was discontinued at the end of the 1935 fall quarter.

[26] Catalog, 1940-41, v. 18, no. 1, p. 15.

[27] H. T. Hunter to Professor G. W. Diener, 18 December 1931, Hunter Collection.

[28] H. T. Hunter to Dr. Fred R. Brown, Pastor, 16 February 1935, Hunter Collection.

[29] Preliminary Report, p. 7.

consistent ability to place its graduates in teaching positions is particularly impressive in the light of the high unemployment which characterized the Great Depression.

Financing an education was extremely difficult for students during the 1930s. Although the total expenses for nine month attendance lessened as the Depression continued, "making ends meet" was a constant challenge.[30] Adding to the problem, the 1933 state legislature passed a law requiring all teachers colleges in the state to charge tuition of every student. Previously only out-of-state students had been charged tuition fees.[31] In response to this new tuition charge, Western Carolina Teachers College decreased other expenses "to keep the total charges within reach of the student of modest means."[32] Obviously, the school considered its expenses competitive with those of other state institutions. A 1932-33 announcement stated, "Prospective students are invited to make careful comparison of the above expenses with like quality of instructional service and accommodations in other colleges in the State."[33] The college made other efforts toward easing the expenses of an education in troubled times. A five percent

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[30]Nine months attendance in 1926-27 cost approximately $211.50. In 1932-33, the cost was about $198.00 and by 1936-37 it had decreased to $179.70.

[31]Catalog, 1933-34, v. 10, no. 1, p. 16.

[32]Catalog, 1934-35, v. 11, no. 1, pp. 16-17.

[33]Special Announcement, 1932-33, v. 8, no. 3, no page.

reduction in room and board charges was offered when two or more students from the same home were enrolled at the school.[34] Self-help opportunities, loan funds, scholarships, and governmental assistance were all fully utilized to aid students with finances.

Requests for self-help opportunities were overwhelming and their numbers increased as the Depression worsened. Usually written on behalf of the student by parents, relatives, ministers, or friends, these requests were ardent in their appeals. For example, one woman wrote to Hunter requesting a job for her niece:

> Some weeks ago I wrote Jean I could not help her next year, she would have to depend on her-self from now on. I am so happy over her year's work, I just must help that girl another year, no matter what the sacrifice may be for me. . . . I feel selfish to ask you to give her work for another year, but please, please Dr. Hunter, help her another year.[35]

Another letter from a prospective student's minister reads as follows:

> If you are to be at home next Saturday I would like to bring a young man from the senior class up there for you to have an interview with about entering college. He is a very worthy young man and is a Christian, but does not have the money to pay his way through school. He lost his father several years ago and must make his own way in school and in the world. He is ambitious and wants an education. I would like to get him in college if possible. If you can help him I am sure he will appreciate it.[36]

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[34] Catalog, 1932-33, v. 9, no. 1, pp. 20-21.

[35] Grace McFarland to H. T. Hunter, President, 2 June 1930, Hunter Collection.

[36] B. B. Hester to Dr. H. T. Hunter, 23 March 1931, Hunter Collection.

The number of self-help positions the school could offer was limited and it was almost impossible to secure this type of aid as a first-year student. The competitive nature of these jobs made retaining them a serious responsibility. An explanation of self-help opportunities in a 1933-34 catalog carried the warning

> Students who are not willing to work and to sacrifice for their education should not apply for these self-help opportunities. Those who get these work positions but are too lazy to work, or too indifferent, can not expect to hold them.[37]

Applications for loans were as numerous as requests for self-help. In 1930 Hunter wrote to the State Superintendent of Education, Dr. A. T. Allen,

> The closing of fourteen banks in this section is creating almost a crisis with us. About sixty students are from the counties in which there have been from one to six bank failures. Prospective students write that they cannot come without assistance. We could use from three to four thousand dollars immediately for loans. . . .
>
> The closing of the Tuckaseigee Bank together with the recent crash, leaves us, on the one hand, greatly handicapped, and on the other, with an unprecedented demand for assistance.[38]

Loan requests continued to inundate Dr. Hunter until the late 1930s when hard times eased in the area.

Prior to the 1929-30 school year, a student loan fund had been established which totaled approximately ten thousand dollars.[39]

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[37] Catalog, 1933-34, v. 10, no. 1, p. 18.

[38] H. T. Hunter to Dr. A. T. Allen, Superintendent, State Department of Education, 26 November 1930, Hunter Collection.

[39] Catalog, 1929-30, v. 6, no. 1, p- 19.

The Student Loan Fund maintained an average of twelve thousand dollars between 1929 and 1938. When answering a loan request in 1930, Ruth Oliver, the college bursar, explained that a student must have been in attendance at Western Carolina Teachers College for at least three months before becoming eligible for a student loan.[40] As a general rule student loans were given first to seniors and secondly to other returning students.[41] Before the start of the 1933-34 school year an Emergency Loan Fund was established to assist entering freshmen. To be eligible for these loans freshmen must have earned grades that placed them in the upper fifty percent of their high school class and be recommended by at least two responsible citizens.[42] A Masonic Loan Fund was also available to seniors in need of financial assistance.[43] The assets of the Masonic Loan Fund totaled four thousand five hundred dollars in 1932, and had increased in value to six thousand dollars by 1936.[44]

Students were conscientious about repaying their loans. As Hunter noted in a 1934 letter:

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[40]Ruth Oliver, Bursar, to Miss Mary Alice Haigler, 13 August 1930, Hunter Collection.

[41]Summer School, 1930, v. 6, no. 3, p. 12.

[42]Catalog, 1933-34, v. 10, no. 1, pp. 18-19.

[43]Catalog, 1932-33, v. 9, no. 1, p. 18.

[44]Catalog, 1936-37, v. 13, no. 1, pp. 14-15.

> We consider that we have been quite successful in handling our loan funds. We have made hundreds of loans and in only a few cases do we feel that we have actually lost the amount lent. The students as a rule have taken their obligations seriously. In view of the hard times recently, we feel that our showing is exceptionally good. In fact, the auditors who were here recently stated that our loan funds were in about the best condition of those of any college in the State.[45]

The treasurer of the Masonic Loan Fund wrote to Hunter in 1930 that none of the students from the college was seriously behind in payments. He also mentioned that the loans were being paid much more quickly by the girls than the boys.[46]

Scholarships were also utilized to help finance college costs during the Depression. Dr. Grover C. Wilkes of Sylva had established a scholarship fund of approximately thirteen hundred dollars.[47] Dr. Wilkes' fund was used as a revolving student loan fund until 1936, when the interest on the account provided a one hundred dollar annual scholarship. Prior to the 1936-37 academic year, Professor Edgar H. Stillwell set up a fifty dollar annual scholarship open to students from North Carolina.[48]

As early as 1934 the college received federal funds to help students finance their educations by hiring them for part-time

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[45]H. T. Hunter to Miss Virginia Spence, 2 February 1934, Hunter Collection.

[46]A. F. Bowen to Dr. H. T. Hunter, 18 February 1930, Hunter Collection.

[47]Catalog, 1929-30, v. 6, no. 1, p. 19.

[48]Catalog, 1936-37, v. 13, no. 1, p. 15.

jobs. These government jobs paid an average of fifteen dollars a month, with twenty dollars as a maximum monthly wage.[49] President Hunter encountered some difficulties in placing students in these government positions because of the numerous restrictions imposed upon them by the federal government. Although the application of these federal funds was a complicated task, Hunter worked diligently to insure all the money was utilized.

In April, 1935, under the foresigned direction of President Franklin D. Roosevelt, Congress passed the Emergency Relief Appropriation Act. One of the programs authorized by this act was the National Youth Administration. This program was established to aid high school and college students by providing them with part-time jobs.[50] Students at Western Carolina Teachers College could obtain these NYA jobs by meeting government standards based on need, previous record, quality of classroom work, and character.[51] In order to keep the jobs, the students were required to maintain certain scholastic standards. NYA jobs were in great

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[49]H. T. Hunter to Mrs. D. H. Goforth, 22 February 1934, Hunter Collection.

[50]Gilbert C. Fite, Norman A. Graebner, and Philip L. White, A History of the American People, 2 vols. (New York: McGraw-Hill Book Co., 1975) 2:716.

[51]Catalog, 1935-36, v. 12, pg. 13.

demand even though they paid little more than half of a student's total expenses.[52]

Along with these established methods of offering financial aid, President Hunter collaborated with his faculty and staff, parents and relatives of the students, and citizens from the students' home communities to devise ways to assist needy scholars. Hunter appealed to his faculty and staff to employ students whenever they found it necessary to engage extra help. Hunter instigated this policy "simply because some of the young men insist that without such assistance they will not be able to remain in college."[53] In one instance President Hunter arranged for a student to provide some of his father's sweet potato crop to the school dietitian for a fifty dollar debt due the college.[54] In a similar situation Hunter suggested to one girl's mother that she might help meet her daughter's expenses by selling the college some shrubs and evergreens.[55] An example of community members' efforts to aid students can be seen in a letter written to President Hunter by O. B. Jones, County Farm Agent for Henderson County, North

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[52]H. T. Hunter to Miss Louise Gunn, 11 January 1937, Hunter Collection.

[53]H. T. Hunter to Mr. John E. Hooper, 9 October 1930, Hunter Collection.

[54]H. T. Hunter to Mr. Sutton, 6 March 1936, Hunter Collection.

[55]H. T. Hunter, President, to Mrs. Floyd Little, 27 October 1931, Hunter Collection.

Carolina:

> Due to the draught and depressed conditions several of our young people who had planned to enter college this fall will probably be prevented from doing so unless we can find some means of financing them. It has occurred to me that the college boarding departments may be able to contract with a number of these young people for a part or all of their year's supply of canned tomatoes, beans, apples, soup mixtures, etc.[56]

Sometimes a friend or acquaintance would step in to aid a student with expenses. An acquaintance of one girl's family expressed deep concern about the girl's plans to drop out of school in order to help support her family. The author of the letter asked Hunter to advise the girl to remain in school and tell her that a "friend will contribute to her family to the extent she could do it herself."[57]

Hunter, along with numerous others, worked diligently to help as many students as possible secure an education despite desperate economic conditions. In explanation of a broken speaking engagement Hunter wrote:

> Another matter which figured in my final decision not to make the trip was the fact that so many of our students were coming back with financial problems which threatened to prevent them from returning to college. Miss Oliver and I have had to work over numerous individual cases and it looks as though a number of students will yet have to go home.[58]

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[56]O. B. Jones, County Farm Agent, to Professor H. T. Hunter, 21 March 193, Hunter Collection.

[57]G. W. Rice to H. T. Hunter, 17 January 1931, Hunter Collection.

[58]H. T. Hunter to H. Bueck, 22 March 1933, Hunter Collection.

Largely through Hunter's efforts, the school could boast that they had assisted one hundred and twenty-nine students through self-help, NYA, and loans during the 1933-34 school year. An estimated 233 students were aided in 1936-37.[59] This high total of students assisted through established programs, added to those supported by relatives and friends in their respective communities, explained why there was a steadily increasing enrollment at Western Carolina Teachers College as the troubled decade evolved.

Money was so scarce that meeting tuition and board costs was difficult for the majority of students and personal spending money was a luxury. In a letter to the mother of a prospective student, President Hunter suggested that students did need a little pocket money, but not more than two or three dollars a month.[60] Ruth Burch Matthews remembers, "Money was very close. No one had any money and with no one having any money, it was really not a problem."[61] Tyson Cathey recalls having only twenty dollars to start school when he came as a student in 1931. He was able to get a school job ringing the bell for classes to aid himself financially.[62] Although many of the students lacked extra

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[59]Preliminary Report, p. 6.

[60]Tyram [Hunter] to Ottie, 4 October 1935, Hunter Collection.

[61]Interview with Ruth Burch Matthews, Cullowhee, N.C., 14 June 1978. (Hereafter cited as Matthews Interview.)

[62]Interview with Tyson Cathey, Cullowhee, N.C., 15 June 1978. (Hereafter cited as Cathey Interview.)

funds for entertainment, they seemed to enjoy their college days. The economic crisis seemed to create the sense of comradery that results from a shared struggle.

Despite desperate financial conditions the Hunter administration continued its efforts to improve the quality of its programs. The 1931-32 catalog announced the first freshman orientation held at the college. The orientation program was established "to aid the incoming freshman in the process of adjustment through which he must pass." Orientation included tests to measure each freshman's mental and physical capabilities. Also included in the program were pre-registration counseling and registration. Campus tours and lectures on various extra-curricular and religious activities were provided to help new students feel more at ease.[63] Freshman orientation proved to be a pleasurable and invaluable experience for students entering the college and became a permanent part of the college program.

Increased enrollments kept the college dormitories filled to capacity. The Pre-Biennial Report of 1936 mentions that for the first time in many years the college was forced to turn away students for lack of room.[64] An unprecedented number of students were boarding in the community. Hunter praised community members for their "excellent spirit of cooperation" in the boarding of

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[63] Western Carolina Teachers College Bulletin, 1931-32, v. 8, no. 1, p. 19.

[64] Preliminary Report. p. 5.

students.[65] Written permission from the president was still required of students living off-campus. A new off-campus requirement, appearing in a 1934-35 catalog, stated that young men and young women could not room in the same home without written approval from the dean of men and the dean of women.[66]

Dormitory life did not alter very markedly during the Depression years. Use of electricity was "rigidly supervised" and students were charged for any excessive use of power.[67] Students paid an electricity fee of from twenty-five cents to fifty cents each quarter that entitled them to the use of the school irons and provided them with light bulbs.[68] Dormitory officials kept a close watch to make sure this privilege was not abused.[69] Several residents of the men's dormitory were very upset as a result of fines they received from keeping irons out overtime. These offenders felt the fines were unfair and questioned why no set rate of fines had been established.[70]

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[65] Summer School, 1930, v. 6, no. 3, p. 13.

[66] Catalog, 1934-35, v. 11, no. 10, no page.

[67] Western Carolina Teachers College, 1932-33, v. 9, no. 1, p. 13. (Hereafter cited as W.C.T.C.)

[68] W.C.T.C., 1936-37, v. 13, no. 1, p. 10.

[69] Western Carolina Teachers College, Executive Committee Minutes, Meeting of 5 March 1934. (Hereafter cited as Executive Committee.)

[70] R. H. to Mr. Hunter, 18 October 1937, Hunter Collection.

It appeared that no major cutbacks in dormitory services occurred as a result of the Depression. One new service was added, however, when the college established its own laundry. The new service relieved students from carrying home burdensome trunks of dirty linen. It also enabled "the poorer student to have as neat and attractive a bedroom as the student of more means."[71]

One effect the Depression had on the dormitory life of the students was noted in the school paper:

> The W.C.T.C. boys have just undergone a serious epidemic of 'trading.' Nearly everything personal in the dormitory has changed hands one or more times. Who wants to keep anything until it wears out? Evidently the boys believe a rapid turnover in economic depressions as a means to relieve the stress.[72]

The majority of faculty members still lived in the dormitories. Clinton Dodson, who joined the college faculty in 1934, recently recalled:

> Of course there was no individual faculty housing. As far as homes go in Cullowhee, there weren't but about two or three homes that had bathroom facilities and indoor water.[73]

Mabel Tyree Crum, also a contemporary faculty member, shared a room in Moore dormitory with another teacher. The overcrowded conditions which prevailed demanded that even faculty members share rooms.[74]

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[71] Summer School, 1930, v. 6, no. 3, pp. 12-13.

[72] "A Moment with the Serious," The Cullowhee Yodel, 1 February 1931, p. 2.

[73] Interview with Clinton Dodson, Cullowhee, N.C., 19 June 1978. (Hereafter cited as Dodson Interview.)

[74] Interview with Mabel Tyree Crum, Cullowhee, N.C., 14 June 1978.

The presence of faculty members in the dormitory had a definite disciplinary influence on the students. However, at least one controversy resulted from the faculty's presence in the dormitories. A 1933 school paper featured an article entitled "Faculty-Student Controversy in Robertson Hall." The author of the article found the faculty members living in Robertson Hall to be uncooperative. Also included in the article was a request from the House Government Association asking faculty members to "refrain from noisy and disturbing parties." The faculty members involved refused responsibility for any rule infringement. The article went on to say,

> Such lack of cooperation is not a good example to set before a student body that has demonstrated its willingness to cooperate with the faculty on numerous occasions.[75]

This type of controversy was rare and until depressed conditions had ceased in the area and faculty members were in a better position to secure individual housing, the faculty and students continued to reside together in the dormitories.

Rules and regulations governing the students remained basically unchanged throughout the Great Depression. Students boarding in the dormitories were allowed only two week-end visits to friends' homes each quarter. Dormitory students were expected to keep their rooms clean and in order. Victrolas and radios were not allowed. Study hours were strictly observed each week day

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[75]"Faculty-Student Controversy in Robertson Hall," The Western Carolinian, 15 March 1933, p. 2.

evening and no visitors could come to the dormitories during study hours except in cases of "special urgency." Quiet hour was observed each Sunday afternoon from two o'clock to four o'clock. By special order from the school's Board of Trsutees electric irons were not allowed in dorm rooms. Each dormitory student was required to attend Sunday School and one preaching service every Sunday at one of the area churches.[76] These regulations applied to dormitory students who were more restricted than students boarding in private homes.

It was easier to watch over and discipline students residing in the dormitories; control of students boarding in the community posed some problems. To aid in the resolution of these problems a special community counselor was employed by the school to further cooperation between private homes and the college in the administration of regulations.[77] Also, a specific set of rules for women boarding off-campus was posted. These rules required that girls not be on the streets or in town after six-thirty in the evening. Library visits were allowed only with special permission of the girl's hostess. Automobile riding was prohibited without special permission and general conditions approved by the school's social director. Special hours were set up for women day students to receive visits from young men. The girls could receive callers

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[76] W.C.T.C., 1929-30, v. 6, no. 1, pp. 23-24.

[77] Summer School, 1930, v. 6, no. 3, p. 13.

from six to ten p.m. on Saturday nights and from four to six p.m. on Sunday afternoons.[78] Day students were expected to sit in the library when not in class. Any day student wishing to visit in the dormitories during study hours first had to receive special permission from the social director.[79]

Any absences from class had to be explained in writing to the Dean. The administration reserved the right "at any time to resort to disciplinary measures for deliberate or wanton cutting of classes." Students cutting classes or leaving the campus just before holidays, or those having unauthorized or unnecessary delays returning from holidays, might forfeit their right to return to school.[80]

Daily chapel attendance was required of all students and six chapel absences in any one quarter meant automatic forfeiture of all credits for the quarter. Attendance at commencement week functions was also expected of all students.[81] Beginning with the 1932-33 academic year, students were required to enroll for one physical education course each quarter unless officially excused. Failure to satisfy attendance requirements for a physical education course resulted in loss of credits for all work taking during that quarter.[82]

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[78]"Regulations for Boarding Day Students," 15 March 1930, Hunter Collection.

[79]W.C.T.C., 1929-30, v. 6, no. 1, p. 24. [80]Ibid.

[81]Ibid. [82]Catalog, 1932-33, v. 9, no. 1, p. 24.

A new regulation, added in 1933, had powerful implications. It read as follows:

> The College reserves the right to decline to register any student whose past record is such as to indicate moral or scholastic unfitness for the teaching profession, or who for any other reason is adjudged without promise as a teacher. The purpose of this regulation is not punitive, but is designed to steer students away from a career in which there is little chance of success.[83]

This new regulation gave the administration considerable authority over the students it governed.

Occasionally, the Executive Committee felt it was necessary to pass added regulations when special problems developed on the campus. For example, several complaints were voiced concerning students' improper attire when playing tennis or going to and from gym class. To eliminate this problem, the Executive Committee passed a motion requiring men appearing anywhere on campus to wear a shirt and trousers and women to wear sports dresses.[84]

Tyson Cathey recalled that the majority of the rules and regulations applied mainly to the girls. He also remembered that the boys' rooms were checked for cleanliness once a week and that no alcoholic beverages were allowed.[85] Ruth Burch Matthews described the rules as quite strict:

> It seems to me that the doors were locked at ten. And, of course, we had the usual mischievous people who had friends and attempted to go back and forth. And no smoking was

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[83] Catalog, 1933-34, v. 10, no. 1, p. 25.

[84] Executive Committee, Meeting of 3 October 1934.

[85] Cathey Interview.

> permitted. I remember so vividly, Miss Cordelia Camp was head of the training school and she lived in Moore dormitory. She had a voice that carried very far and she had a very definite step we could recognize. Miss Camp would climb those stairs and would say, "I believe I smell smoke" and there would be all this scattering of people and so forth. We had lights out at eleven o'clock and that was enforced! And if we did anything after that, well, we had our flash lights. If we wanted to read or had additional studying we did it by flashlight. . . . The boys had to come get the girls and we had to sign out. The rooms were inspected for cleanliness and if they were messy you were left a little note on your door. Freshmen were only permitted to go home once the first three months. . . .[86]

Observance of these rules and regulations was expected of the entire student body. The student government and the administration were quite strict in their disciplinary measures. Conduct cases relating primarily to dormitory life came before the house government for review. As Mrs. Matthews further explained:

> We had a very strong student government at that time. We had a student senate and a type of house government in each dormitory. It seems to me cases relating primarily to dormitory life and so forth came before house government. Other breaking of rules went before the student senate and it was a quite strict disciplinary body and respected.[87]

Cases that were very serious in nature were tried before the school's Executive Committee. The Executive Committee also intervened in cases where they believed the student senate or house government decision was either too lenient or too severe.

The student government and the Executive Committee usually concurred on disciplinary cases; however, one case tried in 1937 created some contention between the two bodies. Two couples had

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[86]Matthews Interview. [87]Ibid.

been reported to the Student Senate for indiscrete conduct. The four students involved came before the Student Senate and acknowledged that "they had kissed and embraced." The Student Senate, after lengthy discussion, ruled that the four students would be allowed to remain in school until the end of the quarter under "the most stringent campus restrictions with all social privileges removed and on probation." After the quarter was completed the offenders were to be placed under indefinite suspension. The Executive Committee, after receiving the Student Senate report of the case, commended the students on "the fine spirit of their work" but found the student government punishment "was not sufficiently severe."[88]

The Executive Committee, on the grounds that the four students' misconduct involved "not only their reputation but the good name of the College," voted to campus the students with strict withdrawal of social privileges and denied them the right to re-register. The Committee explained their decision in a letter to the Student Senate:

> The public generally would certainly regard such cases as involving gross indiscretion; and it is the opinion of the Committee that for the ones in authority to wink at or to condone such behavior would mean the sacrifice of the public confidence and respect, not to mention our heavy responsibility for those committed to the care of the College.[89]

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[88] Executive Committee, Meeting of 6 March 1937.

[89] H. T. Hunter, Chairman, Executive Committee, to Miss Betty McFarland, Secretary, Student Senate, 6 March 1937, Hunter Collection.

The Executive Committee's decision to overrule the Student Senate created a great deal of dissatisfaction within the student body. Many students voiced their disapproval. Hunter stated that he and other members of the Executive Committee "had been surprised to learn that the students seemed ready to revolt should the four disciplined students be sent home." A joint meeting of student government representatives and the Executive Committee was called to settle the controversy. One student spokesman questioned the Executive Committee as to whether the fact that one of the students charged was an Indian had been the reason for their harsher punishment. The Executive Committee responded negatively to this suggestion. Another student confronted the Executive Committee with the possibility that their decision might prove "dangerous to the rights and privileges of the Student Senate." The Executive Committee denied any such intention. After considerable debate the Executive Committee passed a motion to rescind their action in favor of the Student Senate decision if representatives from the student government agreed to meet with the Executive Committee to establish guidelines for social control on campus.[90]

Evidence that the disagreement over authority between the student government and the Executive Committee was resolved can be found in other misconduct cases tried later in 1937. Case reports sent to the Executive Committee by the Student Senate were

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[90]Executive Committee, Meeting of 10 March 1937.

consistently approved. In some difficult cases various student government groups solicited aid from the Executive Committee. For example, the Moore House Council requested assistance from the Executive Committee in November of 1937 with a case where their actions had failed to make an impression. In a letter to the committee, the council secretary wrote of a student:

> We feel that our efforts to make her realize her responsibility have been in vain. . . . It seems that she is not conscious of her duty as a member of the Senate to conform to the rules of good society and to see that the other girls do likewise.[91]

The letter expressed the hope that Hunter, along with the Executive Committee, could use his influence "in making her realize her responsibilities."[92]

The general regulation empowering the college with the right to decline to register any student who indicated moral or scholastic unfitness for the teaching profession was employed by the Student Senate and the Executive Committee. Two female day students were criticized for having too many male visitors at all times of the day. The Executive Committee denied the girls permission to re-register at the college on the grounds of their undesirability as students."[93] The Executive Committee took this action "in accord with the recommendation from the Student Senate advising that the

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[91]Elizabeth Davis, Secretary, Moore House Council, to Dr. H. T. Hunter, Chairman, Executive Committee, 14 December 1937, Hunter Collection.

[92]Ibid.

[93]Executive Committee, Meeting of 20 November 1937.

College exercise its right to decline to register any undesirable student." At the same meeting the committee denied three other students, similarly recommended by the Student Senate, the right to re-register on the basis of their undesirability as students. Seven other students mentioned in the senate report, along with three students named by the Executive Committee, were referred to the Dean of Men and the Dean of Women for warning.[94]

Social indiscretion was not the only offense punished on the campus. In one instance a female student was placed on probation "because of continued negligence in rule-keeping and because she continued to keep a filthy room after repeated warnings from Miss Baker, the Head of the House."[95]

One discipline case, tried before the Executive Committee in 1931, raised some legal questions concerning student rights. Lillian Buchanan, the librarian, was searching in the boys' dormitory for missing library books and discovered a number of books in one student's room that had not been checked out properly. When brought before the Executive Committee, the student defended himself by stating that the books had been left at his door by other students since he was a library assistant that quarter. Two witnesses were examined and the case was discussed. The Executive Committee's final decision recommended that Hunter reprimand the

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[94]Executive Committee, Meeting of 3 December 1937.

[95]Patricia Edgeworth, Dean of Women, to Dean W. E. Bird, 4 July 1934, Hunter Collection.

student for his carelessness in returning library books.[96] This particular case, along with others involving stealing in the dormitories, prompted President Hunter to write to the Attorney-General concerning the school's legal right to inspect student rooms.[97] A. A. F. Seawell, the Assistant Attorney-General, replied to Hunter's request:

> After careful consideration, I have come to the conclusion that a search for stolen articles would not be such an ordinary inspection of a student's room as might be directly connected with the ordinary administration of the affairs of the college, such as the enforcement of the rules for sanitation, study hours, neatness and order, deportment, or the many things which the authorities would have to look after in the proper conduct of its affairs. . . . As a matter of fact, I fear that if the authorities of the school searched the room of a student, solely for the purpose of discovering stolen property, a liability might be incurred, especially if any humiliation or disgrace to the student should be caused thereby.[98]

Thus, a basic student and civil right was assured at the college.

The administration was still vexed with the problem of students leaving early for holidays or returning late after scheduled breaks. In many cases students were excused since their tardiness resulted from their uncertainty over having adequate funds to return to school.[99] After investigating several other

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[96]Executive Committee, Meeting of 16 December 1931.

[97]H. T. Hunter to Honorable Dennis G. Brummitt, 14 December 1931, Hunter Collection

[98]A. A. F. Seawell, Assistant Attorney-General, N.C., to Dr. H. T. Hunter, 17 December 1931, Hunter Collection.

[99]Executive Committee, Meeting of 2 January 1931.

cases, the committee learned that many students were delinquent because they had been out on the highways "bumming" rides to and from school. Although the students had participated in this activity because they lacked financial means to provide their own transportation, the committee adopted a regulation forbidding girls to "bum" rides and discouraging it among the boys.[100] Those students lacking acceptable excuses for their tardiness were placed on campus restriction for three weeks.[101]

A new problem arose to trouble the administration during the Depression era; several hazing complaints were brought to the Executive Committee's attention. The first mention of a hazing incident appears in the Executive Committee minutes of May, 1931. One male student was given an electric shock after he had gone to bed and his bed was upset. Three male upperclassmen, the offenders in the case, were brought before the Executive Committee for trial. All three boys admitted their guilt, with one explaining that the current used for the electric shock was of a very low voltage. The committee placed the offenders under strict campus restriction for the remainder of the year. A suggestion that state hazing laws be posted in the college buildings was agreed upon with the inclusion of the warning that "any definite evidence of group or individual behavior which might be interpreted as forms

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[100]Executive Committee, Meeting of 30 April 1931.

[101]Executive Committee, Meeting of 6 January 1929.

of hazing will result in automatic expulsion from the College."[102] Evidently the warning was not taken seriously; several other hazing incidents were reported to the Executive Committee in December of 1931. One student complained to the committee that several boys had held him while another boy did him an "indignity of a very personal nature." One of the offenders in this case testified before the committee that several episodes of this nature had occurred in the dormitory and that he had also been a victim of them. It was also brought out that several young men had their moustaches shaved and ink put on them. Another boy involved complained of having his room "stacked" and of being forced to black shoes.[103] The committee voted to expel two of the offenders immediately. The four remaining offenders were also expelled but "with proviso that they have the privilege of appealing to the President for a modification of the sentence after having heard them." The president was given the authority to suspend the sentence for the four boys by placing them under strict probation for the remainder of their duration at the college.[104]

Although the frequency of hazing reports declined in the following years, the Executive Committee still voiced concern over the problem. In a 1933 meeting the committee passed a motion

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[102]Executive Committee, Meeting of 13 May 1931.

[103]Executive Committee, Meeting of 31 December 1932.

[104]Executive Committee, Meeting of 1 January 1932.

requesting Dean Bird to go before the student body to state the faculty's attitude toward hazing, as a "precautionary measure." The same motion charged the school coach, C. C. Poindexter, with the responsibility of alerting the football players to the undesirability of hazing.[105]

Soon after the 1934 fall quarter opened a number of hazing complaints were registered by freshman boys. These boys complained that they had been punished against their will by upperclassmen in the dormitory. Hunter called a meeting of all residents of Robertson Hall. At this meeting the six freshmen openly repeated their hazing complaints after which Hunter read the state law against hazing. President Hunter went on to warn those assembled that hazing would not be tolerated under any circumstances.[106] Even though they were given repeated warnings and the state laws against such behavior were strict, hazing continued among the male students at the college throughout the 1930s.

In the early 1930s the college began the process of establishing a cooperative student-faculty government. The first evidences of student government at the college were the student government associations set up in each dormitory under the guidance of faculty-student councils. First mentioned in the 1930-31 school bulletin, these associations were created "not only to demonstrate

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[105]Executive Committee, Meeting of 19 September 1933.

[106]Executive Committee, Meeting of 25 September 1934.

the capacity of young people for a certain degree of self-government but [to] promote self control and initiative." These house associations were given the authority to supervise and regulate certain aspects of dormitory life.[107] It appeared these governments were not as effective as expected when several complaints were filed concerning "boisterous" behavior in the dormitory. Even student house government officials were criticized for undesirable conduct. President Hunter found it necessary to call a meeting of the house government committees, faculty members, and the Executive Committee to consider ways to improve student government.[108] In May of 1931 a committee of students was appointed to draw up a proposal for a new student government based on plans from several other schools including the University of North Carolina, Wake Forest, and East Tennessee State Teachers College.[109] Apparently no immediate action resulted from this committee's efforts.

A new house government plan was put into effect in the men's dormitory, Robertson Hall, on November 8, 1933. Every hall resident was a member of the house association and each had a vote in the election of officers. The Western Carolinian reported:

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[107] Catalog, 1930-31, v. 7, no. 1, p. 16.

[108] Executive Committee, Meeting of 15 March 1931.

[109] "Plans to Reorganize Student Government," The Cullowhee Yodel, 1 May 1931, p. 1.

> The aim is to bring about better living conditions in the Hall, and to promote the spirit of good-fellowship in the development of loyalty to the group rather than to the individual.[110]

The house government associations remained the predominant form of student government at the college until 1935.

Hunter took personal responsibility for drafting a constitution for a new student government and on January 16, 1935 he presented a draft for the new student government organization to the Executive Committee. When presenting the draft to the committee, he stated that he "had attempted to preserve all the rights and privileges of students, but had sought to make clear the fact that all these rights and privileges were delegated by the Board of Trustees, the President, or the faculty." He went on to request that the committee refrain from discussing the proposed draft outside of the meeting until he had presented it to the students.[111] In April of 1935 the new constitution was ratified by the students and student self-government was established on a campus-wide plan. The new constitution acknowledged the rights of students boarding off campus for the first time by providing for a day student organization. A contemporary article in the school paper commented:

> If there existed any hard feelings between the day students and the boarding students of the college, it is hoped that they will be forgotten. It is a privilege for the day

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[110]"Activities at Robertson Hall," The Western Carolinian, 1 April 1933, p. 1.

[111]Executive Committee, Meeting of 16 January 1935.

> students to organize and become an integral part of the new student set up. All should co-operate to the fullest extent in an effort to make it highly successful.[112]

The control organization of the new government was a Student Assembly composed of all students. The governing body of the Student Assembly was the Student Senate. The Student Senate was made up of representatives from the house government associations and the Day Student Council. Every student was automatically a member of the Student Assembly plus one of the house associations or the Day Student Council. A mandatory membership fee of twenty-five cents was charged each student and went toward funding the student handbook and other projects.[113] Ann Albright and William Bird served as advisors for the new student government and Ned Tucker, a student from Cullowhee, was elected as the first president.[114]

Although a strong religious influence continued on the campus during the Depression, the regulation requiring students to attend church and Sunday School was challenged by the students. At the beginning of the 1930-31 academic year the students requested that the Executive Committee repeal the mandatory church attendance regulation. In a discussion of the request many members of the committee mentioned their dislike of "compelling students

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[112]"Day Students Form Council," The Western Carolinian, 15 April 1935, p. 1.

[113]Catalog, 1935-36, v. 12, no. 1, p. 11

[114]Bird, History, pp. 219-20.

by any sort of force to attend religious exercises" but all agreed that for the good of the school and its purpose of training teachers and community leaders church attendance was desirable. The committee decided to retain the regulation for the rest of the year and to invite students to come discuss future policy with the faculty.[115]

The student body, obviously dissatisfied with the committee's action, petitioned the Executive Committee again in February, 1931:

> We, the students of Western Carolina Teachers College, would like to inquire about the matter of a State College requiring its students to attend Sunday School and Church. As this is no longer a Normal School, we request the nullification of the catalogue rule which states that we are expected to attend Sunday School and one Church service each Sunday. Since we have a six day week schedule we request the freedom of Sunday.[116]

The catalyst for the student movement against mandatory church and Sunday School attendance was the campusing of a number of girls who failed to attend Sunday School. The students felt that the requirement was "not in order" for a state supported institution.[117] Although the students "generaly approved" of the requirement, they did not agree with the disciplinary measures for carrying it out.

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[115]Executive Committee, Meeting of 9 January 1931.

[116]The Student Body, Elise Hunter, Secretary, to the Executive Committee of Western Carolina Teachers College, February 1931, Executive Committee Minutes, W.C.U. Archives, Cullowhee, N.C.

[117]"Students Apply for Nullification of Rule," The Cullowhee Yodel, 15 February 1931, pp. 1, 3.

The student protestors felt voluntary church and Sunday School attendance should be encouraged.[118]

The Executive Committee met with a student committee in April of 1931 to consider compulsory church and Sunday School attendance. The two committees decided unanimously:

> 1. That the catalogue statement of Church and Sunday School attendance stand as it is without application or force to carry it out.
> 2. That a definite provision on student rating sheets be kept to check students' degree of interest in Church and Sunday School attendance and religious work with no spirit of using the record as a coercive plan to secure such attendance.
> 3. That as faculty and student representatives we pledge ourselves to carry out the spirit of cooperation in a high type of religious work through the Church and the Sunday School.[119]

Ruth Burch Matthews, coming to the college as a freshman in 1933, remembered a "healthy" religious atmosphere but not mandatory attendance:

> More students I'm sure affiliated with the churches--for one reason--we were on campus more. At that time, as for myself and so many others here, we had gone to church very regularly before coming and then after coming here we affiliated with one of the churches here. And there was a little bit of social life there too. There was encouragement to do that type of thing but no pressure.[120]

Any mention of mandatory church and Sunday School attendance was dropped from the general regulations after the 1932-33 school year.

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[118] Executive Committee, Meeting of 15 March 1931.

[119] Executive Committee, Meeting of 2 April 1931.

[120] Matthews Interview.

Attendance at chapel exercises continued to be mandatory throughout the 1930s and the numerous chapel programs of a religious nature were not challenged by the students. Chapel was held two or three days a week and attendance was rigidly checked by student monitors.[121] Tyson Cathey recalled chapel as consisting of devotionals followed by some type of program.[122]

The college administration was very supportive of extra-curricular activities on the campus. The administration supported these activities not only because of their interest in the social development of the students, but also because of public education's demand for teachers who could supervise and direct extra-curricular activities in the public schools.[123] There was not an abundance of clubs on the campus in the early Depression years; the two literary socieites were still active but Tyson Cathey recalled that they were not very large.[124] For the first time membership in a literary society was not required of all students. As the decade continued the number of clubs and organizations began to grow in popularity and number. When the new student government was established in 1935, it began granting charters to all student organizations. These new clubs touched on every area of student life

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[121]H. T. Hunter to Miss Edith Cowan, 12 June 1936, Hunter Collection.

[122]Cathey Interview.

[123]Catalog, 1932-33, v. 9, no. 1, p. 15.

[124]Cathey Interview.

including athletic, academic, social and religious areas. Specific clubs listed in the school catalogs were the Journalism Club, Debating Club, International Relations Club, Dramatic Club, Science Club, Business Education Club and the various regional clubs.[125] Glee clubs for both men and women and the college chorus were quite active. Ruth Burch Matthews recalls that the two glee clubs and the college chorus were "outstanding" while she was a student at Western Carolina Teachers College.[126] A college band was started during the 1935-36 school year and all interested students were urged to bring any available band instrument to school with them.[127]

Various honorary and professional groups were organized at Western Carolina Teachers College. Alpha Phi Sigma, a national honorary scholastic fraternity, was chartered during the 1930-31 academic year to promote and maintain high scholarship. All salutatorians and valedictorians entering the college from high school were automatically members of Alpha Phi Sigma and remained so as long as they kept a certain scholastic average. College students became members of the fraternity by making "sufficiently high" grade averages for two quarters.[128] A professional society

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[125] Catalog, 1935-36, v. 13, no. 1, p. 12.

[126] Matthews Interview.

[127] Catalog, 1936-37, v. 13, no. 1, pp. 13-14.

[128] Catalog, 1931-32, v. 8, no. 1, p. 15.

for elementary teachers, Alpha Tau Pi, was organized during the 1934-35 school year. This organization, open to juniors majoring in elementary education with high scholastic averages, was established "to stimulate interest in higher scholastic and professional attainment for teachers."[129]

The various clubs and organizations also served as social outlets for the students. Numerous club picnics are mentioned in the school newspaper. Faculty members worked closely with student organizations and helped students plan special activities such as camping trips or Science Day. Clinton Dodson remembered that students were "very, very loyal" to their clubs up until the war years when things changed somewhat.[130]

The school newspaper, whose name was changed from The Cullowhee Yodel to The Western Carolinian in 1933, continued publication in a somewhat abbreviated form throughout the Depression era. The school had planned to publish its first yearbook in 1931 but was forced to abandon these plans "in view of the difficulties encountered due to hard times."[131] However, later in the 1930s the school began the annual publication of a yearbook.

The school's athletic program continued to grow despite the hard financial times. Tyson Cathey recalled that when he

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[129] Catalog, 1936-37, v. 13, no. 1, p. 12.

[130] Dodson Interview.

[131] "Yearbook Project is Definitely Abandoned," The Cullowhee Yodel, 15 February 1931, p. 2.

was a student the college was especially good in intercollegiate basketball and weak in intercollegiate football.[132] In the annual Southeastern Athletic Association of Junior Colleges' basketball tournament for the year 1929-30, the college received a silver loving cup for first place.[133] The school's intercollegiate football team enjoyed some sporadic success during the Depression but was not consistently outstanding.

Prior to 1933 the school did not offer an intercollegiate baseball program; however, in the spring of that year the students agitated to have the sport started on the campus. One letter, in the March 15, 1933, issue of the school newspaper, explained that students preferred baseball to a spring football program and were willing to sacrifice to have baseball.[134] An "Open Forum" letter in the same issue expressed the opinion that it was not fair to emphasize football, especially when the school had material for a good baseball team. The community also supported the initiation of a baseball program.[135] Two weeks later, in a further effort to get baseball approved, several more letters appeared in The Western Carolinian. One writer concluded:

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[132]Cathey Interview.

[133]Catalog, 1930-31, v. 7, no. 1, p. 21.

[134]"What About Baseball," The Western Carolinian, 15 March 1933, p. 2.

[135]"Open Forum," The Western Carolinian, 15 March 1933, p.2.

> Ninety-five percent of the students are baseball minded now. They are willing to do everything in their power to give Western Carolina a baseball team. . . . The boys have all promised to furnish all their equipment with the exception of the balls and bats and this is a minor expense. The boys and a large number of the girls have even promised to go so far as to give up their Sunday night dinner if these proceeds will go to support the amount needed to buy balls and bats. There seems to be enough money in the Monogram Club to begin on. The Monogram Club is more than anxious to give a negro minstrel which has proved a success in the past for the benefit of baseball.[136]

The second letter said that a baseball team was in the best interest of the school since "a good athletic program is a big drawing card for any school."[137] However, the same edition of the newspaper included an article carrying President Hunter's response to the students' demands; Hunter approved a Monogram Club sponsored baseball team.[138]

By 1936-37 the school offered intercollegiate programs for men in basketball, football, baseball and tennis.[139] Women's intercollegiate basketball was approved, under certain conditions, in November of 1934. All sports were coached by the same man with help from student assistants, but a female faculty member was

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[136]"Open Forum," The Western Carolinian, 1 April 1933, p.2.

[137]Ibid.

[138]"W.C.T.C. Assured of Baseball," The Western Carolinian, 1 April 1933, p. 4.

[139]Catalog, 1936-37, v. 13, no. 1, p. 13.

required to be present at every practice of the girls' basketball team.[140]

The special treatment of athletes and the awarding of athletic scholarships were controversial issues during the Depression years. As early as 1931 a problem arose concerning the advisability of allowing basketball players "excessive" absences during basketball season. In this particular case the Executive Committee approved a team schedule allowing players to miss a maximum of eight days.[141] In 1936 the Executive Committee was confronted with another case of excessive absences on the part of athletes. Thirteen members of the football team along with their coach, Charles C. Poindexter, petitioned the committee for full credit on courses in which they had excessive absences because of football. The petition read in part:

> These absences were on account of football trips for the school and we thought they had always been officially excused. We feel that we should not be penalized for trying to help the school through athletics.[142]

Coach Poindexter added to the petition that the lack of finances and the school's poor playing facilities made it necessary for the football team to play most of its games away from home; this

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[140] H. T. Hunter to A. K. Hinds, Chairman, Athletic Committee, 20 November 1934, Hunter Collection.

[141] Executive Committee, Meeting of 16 November 1931.

[142] Members (13) of the Football Team and C. C. Poindexter to the Executive Committee, 13 Jauary 1936, Executive Committee Minutes, W.C.U. Archives, Cullowhee, N.C.

fact caused excessive absences on the part of the players. In this particular case the football players were given credit for their classes.[143]

In September of 1935 Coach Poindexter sent a request to the school dietitian for separate tables in the dining hall for the football players. Poindexter made this request hoping that

> . . . the kind and amount of their eats can be regulated to suit their needs. They need so much more to eat than other students on account of the hard work they do and there are certain things that they should and should not eat. . . . It also helps build up a spirit of fellowship and team loyalty on the part of the boys.[144]

Poindexter also asked that evening meals be served later so that the team would have more time to practice. He further requested special consideration for meals served before home games both to the home football team and visiting opponents. He buttressed his plea by pointing out:

> Everywhere we go they just ask us what we want and when we want it. Each coach has his own ideas as to what he wants his players to eat and when he wants it. This is very important as I have suffered embarrassment on several occasions in the past. The treatment visitors have in the dining hall makes a stronger impression on them than any other thing.[145]

To help the players feel that their "work and sacrifice" were appreciated Coach Poindexter wanted to have a football banquet honoring

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[143] Ibid.

[144] C. C. Poindexter to Mary Elizabeth Maddux, 26 September 1935, Hunter Collection.

[145] Ibid.

the players at the end of football season. He believed that all his requests were in line with practices at other schools and that better treatment of athletes, although it involved extra expense, would enhance the college's reputation and thus increase its enrollment.[146]

The school dietitian wrote to President Hunter concerning the impossibility of Coach Poindexter's requests. The boarding department was financially unable to give the football players a banquet and lacked the equipment and staff to serve more than one balanced dietary meal an hour. The dietitian also argued that "according to the authorities in the field of nutrition, an athlete should be treated as a normal individual."[147]

Hunter, in his efforts to settle the controversy, sent several questionnaires concerning special treatment of athletes to other schools in the same athletic conference. The consensus of the replies to these questionnaires was that any preferential treatment of athletes should be avoided. At many schools establishment and maintenance of a training table was strictly forbidden.[148]

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[146] Ibid.

[147] Mary Elizabeth Maddux to President H. T. Hunter, 30 September 1935, Hunter Collection.

[148] R. G. Cremer to President H. T. Hunter, 8 November 1935, Hunter Collection.

Problems concerning financial assistance to athletes also developed during the Depression years. A controversy over the ethics of athletic scholarships arose among the members of the Smoky Mountain Athletic Association of which the college was a member. The conference had agreed not to give financial assistance to athletes solely because they were athletes. Hunter received several inquiries from the association's leaders inferring that Western Carolina Teachers College was giving its athletes financial assistance. In response Hunter wrote, "We have never given an athlete five cents for his athletic ability, as we require them to meet the same scholastic and financial requirements as any other student in the college."[149]

Athletic scholarships were furthered by interested individuals, but the administration's attitude toward these scholarships and the special treatment of athletes was definitely negative. Athletes were to be treated the same as any other students at the college. This attitude on the part of the school administrators proved frustrating to the athletes, the coaches, and others interested in developing a strong athletic program at the school. In his 1936 letter of resignation Coach Poindexter wrote:

> My decision to leave has been prompted by several things. Among these are: Lack of sufficient financial backing to put on a suitable athletic program; Lack of sufficient self-help opportunities to attract outstanding athletes; Lack of proper

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[149]H. T. Hunter to Mr. W. O. Lowe, Smoky Mountain Athletic Association, 23 September 1935, Hunter Collection.

> co-operation on the part of the faculty and administration in athletic program; The fact that I had to do full teaching and coaching both at a lower salary than most other faculty members; That I have not any additional pay for vast amount of traveling and personal work I have done to secure students--most of that time having to pay my own expenses; and many others I could mention. I have made numerous appeals to have these matters adjusted, but without success. The school will never be what it should without the proper kind of athletic program.[150]

Despite the intercollegiate athletic program's problems the teams were respectable and enjoyed strong student backing. Ruth Burch Matthews recalled that everyone went to the ball games. Since the college was so isolated ball games were important social events. She remembered an "ardent" school spirit and that athletes and cheerleaders were highly regarded.[151]

Western Carolina Teachers College also offered a full program of intramural athletics for both men and women. The slogan of the intramural program was "Play for all and all playing." Intramural activities for boys included basketball, baseball, track, tennis, wrestling, boxing, volleyball, horseshoes, croquet, hiking, and swimming.[152] The girls' intramural program was set up as an athletic association which awarded letters and monograms

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[150] C. C. Poindexter to H. T. Hunter, 28 June 1936, Hunter Collection.

[151] Matthews Interview.

[152] "Students Enjoy Intra-Mural Sports Program at W.C.T.C.," The Western Carolinian, 1 March 1935, p. 4.

for sports. Women's sports included basketball, volleyball, tennis, baseball, track, stunts, hiking, soccer, and horseshoes.[153]

Activities were the center of student life. Since Cullowhee was an isolated area and transportation was scarce students spent very little time away from campus. Freshmen were only allowed to go home once during their first three months of school. For these reasons the students' social life revolved around the campus and their school friends.

At the onset of the Depression some students felt social life at the school could be improved and petitioned the faculty for more social privileges. As a result of their request the usual social hour held from four p.m. to six p.m. each Sunday afternoon was changed to four p.m. to five p.m. with a Vesper service following in the reading room. Public teas were given in the parlors once each month and students were allowed to get whatever was appropriate in the line of magazines and games for the reading room.[154]

During the 1930s various social events became traditional at the school. Homecomings were held in the fall of each year. Homecoming Day festivities usually included a football game, a banquet or picnic, and an evening social or dance. Several

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[153]"Girls Organize For Athletics," The Western Carolinian, 19 May 1934, p. 4.

[154]"Social Life Improved at Cullowhee Normal," The Cullowhee Yodel, 15 March 1929, p. 1.

homecoming celebrations incorporated a "Mom and Dad's Day," inviting parents to come and get acquainted with the campus and the college.[155] An annual Halloween party was sponsored by the men's dormitory.[156] A picnic supper, usually held at the Woodland Stage, was given each year to honor the incoming freshmen.[157]

Hikes, camping trips and special events were all planned for students' entertainment. Students were also able to make occasional trips into Sylva to shop or see a movie but these excursions were limited and closely supervised. Both Tyson Cathey and Ruth Burch Matthews recalled that the few students affluent enough to have cars on campus were quite popular.[158]

The students often expressed their desire for social training during the 1930s. They frequently requested formal dinners "for the moral and social welfare of the students."[159] A Student Senate resolution, passed unanimously in 1937, petitioned the college administration to authorize the use of paper napkins in the dining hall as a cultural asset. The Student Senate felt paper

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[155]H. T. Hunter to the Mothers and Fathers of the Students of Western Carolina Teachers College, 1 November 1933, Hunter Collection.

[156]"Party," The Western Carolinian, 1 November 1935, p. 1.

[157]"Picnic Dinner Given in Honor of Freshmen," The Western Carolinian, 1 October 1935, p. 3.

[158]Cathey Interview; Matthews Interview.

[159]Student Activities Committee to President Hunter, 3 April 1937, Hunter Collection.

napkins were necessary to "add to the enriching of the culture on our campus and in providing cultural experiences for our fellow students." The students also suggested that grace be sung at noon and evening meals by a quartet or sextet "to eliminate the embarrassment brought upon the dietitian, members of the faculty, and a majority of the students by a few students who sit, talk, or pull out chairs while grace is being asked."[160]

A serious confrontation between the students and the administration occurred in the early 1930s over the allowance of mixed dancing on campus. The administration's attitude toward female students' attendance at public dances was brought into question as early as 1929. At this time the administrators decided not to establish a definite policy but rather elected to deal with individual cases as they occurred.[161] However, in 1931 a letter from the chairman of the student activity committee accompanied by a student petition forced the Executive Committee to establish a policy concerning mixed dancing. The petition read:

> Be it resolved that the students, both men and women, of Western Carolina Teachers College be permitted to dance together on the college campus, with the observation of one of the following options:
>
> (1) That the men and women be allowed to dance in the parlor of Moore or Robertson Hall each Saturday evening after adjournment of either society until ten o'clock in the evening, the dancing to be chaperoned by the hostess of the dormitory in which the young men and women are dancing.

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[160]Charles R. Holloman, President, Student Senate, to the Executive Committee, October 1937, Hunter Collection.

[161]Executive Committee, Meeting of 19 July 1929.

> (2) That the young men and women be allowed to dance in the gymnasium one hour each evening, two evenings each week, the dancing to be chaperoned by hostesses of the young ladies dormitories.[162]

Hunter, hesitant about making a decision on the issue, sent out hundreds of questionnaires to parents of present female students and future students, patrons of the college, school superintendents across the state, and colleges and universities, polling attitudes concerning the practice of mixed dancing among students.

The majority of replies to the questionnaires indicated a rather strong opposition to mixed dancing.[163] Out of the few questionnaires returned by parents of female students, an overwhelming number did not allow their daughters to dance with men at home and were opposed to supervised dancing on a teacher's college campus. These parents also felt the college's reputation would be hurt if mixed dancing were allowed and stated they would not allow their daughters to attend a school which held mixed dances even if the dances were supervised and held only in college buildings.[164]

Several patrons of the college also disapproved of mixed dancing on the campus and school superintendents were most assuredly opposed to dancing. Forty-two questionnaires were mailed to

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[162]Thelma Howell, Chairman, Student Activity Committee, to Mr. H. T. Hunter, President, 2 November 1931, Hunter Collection.

[163]Executive Committee, Meeting of 24 November 1931.

[164]"Report of the questionnaire of parents of present women students as to dancing," November 1931, Hunter Collection.

superintendents and twenty-four were returned. Ten superintendents answered emphatically that they opposed dancing while seven responded it was acceptable under certain conditions. Several other answers were less definite. For example, one superintendent replied that he personally favored dancing but was against it as public policy. Many of the superintendents thought the college would lose public appeal if it were known that the school allowed mixed dancing. When questioned about their county's local sentiment toward mixed dancing, most superintendents answered that mixed dancing was not favorable among the majority of their board members and patrons. A few superintendents claimed they would not employ a teacher if they knew she had danced in college. Closely related was the fourth question inquiring as to whether school committeemen would be "disposed to be unfriendly" to Cullowhee graduates as teachers if it were known they attended supervised dances at the college. The majority of superintendents felt sure that several of their committeemen would be hesitant to employ a graduate of a school which allowed dancing.[165]

Various responses were received from the questionnaires mailed to teachers colleges and universities across the nation. Several schools had encountered the problem on their campuses and sent suggestions to President Hunter. The majority of replies favored mixed dancing. Some college presidents viewed dancing as

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[165]"On Dancing, Results of Questionnaire to County Superintendents," November 1931, Hunter Collection.

a needed social experience which the majority of students did not abuse. Mixed dancing was also seen as an opportunity for personal growth. Many letters mentioned the fact that if students were forbidden to dance on campus they would still do so somewhere else. One reported:

> In our section at least the young people would attend dances anyhow, either during vacations or school time. Our experience points to the conviction that reasonable freedom in this matter, combined with intelligent counsel, tends to promote the poise, self-discipline, and social adjustment which should characterize a teacher. In short, we regard this as part of the social education of our students and consequently as a social responsibility to be intelligently administered rather than evaded or forbidden.[166]

Many school administrators expressed the belief that campus sponsored dancing kept the students away from the "evils" of public dance halls.

Schools in the southern states seemed less likely to allow mixed dancing than those located elsewhere in the nation. Many southern administrators mentioned strong sentiment against dancing in rural communities plus a hesitancy to hire teachers who had been known to dance. These administrators cautioned Hunter about allowing dancing if there were strong sentiment against it in North Carolina.[167] One exception is noted in a letter from Robert H. Wright, President of East Carolina Teachers College:

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[166]F. W. Thomas, President, Fresno State Teachers College, to President H. T. Hunter, 24 November 1931, Hunter Collection.

[167]A. O. Bowen to President H. T. Hunter, 30 November 1931, Hunter Collection.

> We do not have any regulation with reference to the dances they give here on the Hill. This means that boys and girls dance together.
>
> When I was a boy the men sat on one side of the church and the women on the other and they had a petition running down the middle of the Church separating the men from the women. Today they sit together--and I believe worship God with as much fervor, as when they sat on opposite sides of the Church. Personally, I think there is no objection to boys and girls dancing together, if you admit that dancing is not wrong and the Good Book tells us to praise God in dance.
>
> Boys and girls dance with each other out of college; we are trying to make college not exclusively a preparation for life but an opportunity to live one's life while in college, all of which means I see no reason why boys and girls should not dance together.[168]

After hearing a consensus of the responses to the questionnaires and engaging in a lengthy debate, the Executive Committee, at a December,1931 meeting, passed a motion denying the student body request for mixed dancing. The Executive Committee made this decision for three reasons. First, they felt mixed dancing would hurt students professionally as prospective teachers, and second, they thought it would hurt the patronage of the college. They also considered this decision to be in keeping with the sentiments expressed in the replies to Hunter's questionnaires.[169]

In January of 1932 the faculty approved "occasional dancing" with strict rules and regulations.[170] Dancing evolved into a regular campus activity as the 1930s progressed and former students,

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[168]Robert H. Wright to President H. T. Hunter, 25 November 1931, Hunter Collection.

[169]Executive Committee, Meeting of 16 December 1931.

[170]Western Carolina Teachers College, Faculty Committee Minutes, Meeting of 6 January 1932.

who attended the college during the Depression era, recall dancing in Moore Parlor before meals and a few dances held in the school gymnasium on special occasions.[171]

The Great Depression caused many changes in the student life at Western Carolina Teachers College. Students struggled to pay for their education in such financially hard times. School officials, family and friends all helped the students remain in school. However, the student attitude was not at all pessimistic during this period; students joined together to make the best of a discouraging situation. An active social environment characterized the campus, and students, with the help of those affiliated with the college, made every effort to insure they received a well-rounded college experience despite depressed times. Although several conflicts between school authorities and the students occurred, a warm and close relationship prevailed between the two groups. President Hunter, his faculty and staff labored unceasingly and at great personal expense to keep the college going and to assist the student body. By the late 1930s when hard times began to ease in the area, the school had weathered the storm and was a larger, stronger, more secure institution than in the days prior to the Great Depression.

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[171] Matthews Interview; Cathey Interview.

CHAPTER THREE

THE 1940s:
WAR BECOMES REALITY

On October 28, 1939, Western Carolina Teachers College celebrated its fiftieth year with its annual homecoming festivities. The "Golden Jubilee" program began with an address by Governor Clyde R. Hoey and the dedication of six new buildings, including Breese Gymnasium, Madison Hall, McKee Training School, Graham Infirmary, Hoey Auditorium, and a student union.[1] After these morning ceremonies and a barbeque luncheon, Western Carolina's Catamounts took on East Carolina Teachers College in the Homecoming football game. A record crowd of three thousand spectators attended the ball game and witnessed the crowning of the college's first homecoming queen, Miss Fannie Mae Ashley, at halftime.[2] An evening banquet was held featuring Dr. Frank P. Graham, president of the University of North Carolina, as guest

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[1] Western Carolina Teachers College, 1941-42, v. 18, no. 1, p. 16.

[2] Western Carolina Teachers College, Fiftieth Anniversary Celebration, v. 16, nos. 4-5, p. 34. (Hereafter cited as Anniversary.) Western Carolina Teachers College News, v. 15, no. 5, p. 7. (Hereafter cited as News.)

speaker.[3] One of the largest dances in the history of the school ended the day of celebration. The dance, in honor of the college alumni, was held in the newly dedicated Breese Gymnasium. The Bill Stringfellow Orchestra played for the occasion and the twenty-two chaperones in attendance prevented any disciplinary problems.[4]

All those connected with the college had good cause for celebration on its fiftieth anniversary. Since conferring its first four-year diplomas in 1931, the school had awarded 1,200 degrees.[5] Enrollments had steadily increased, with 142 more students registered in 1939 than the previous year. Other applicants had been turned away for lack of space.[6] And finally, the college had survived the harshest years of the Great Depression and was enjoying new growth as the nation's financial situation began to improve. However, earlier in 1939 Britain and France had declared war on Germany and Western Carolina Teachers College was faced with even greater problems and challenges as America became increasingly involved in World War II.

War had become a reality to those on the college campus when the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor was announced. Juanita Eller recalled the student reaction to the news:

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[3]H. T. Hunter to Mr. L. Berge Beam, 13 October 1939, Hunter Collection, Western Carolina University Archives, Cullowhee, N.C. (Hereafter cited as Hunter Collection.)

[4]Anniversary, v. 16, nos. 4-5, p. 34.

[5]Ibid, p. 11.

[6]Ibid., p. 10.

> Well, the day that we heard--on December 7--that the Japanese had attacked Pearl Harbor, when we all went to supper--this was it--everybody just couldn't believe it. Everybody was very emotional and everybody cried and we all sang "God Bless America" . . . and boys were calling home that very night trying to make arrangements to go to the Army or go to the Navy.[7]

Helen Hartshorn was listening to the radio in a dorm room with several friends and immediately heard about the Japanese attack. Recently she said,

> I can remember the sensation of that event. The only thing I can compare it to is hearing about the death of Kennedy. Total unbelief, you know, it can't happen--it's impossible. You remember exactly where you were when you heard the news--the time of day, who was in the room. The men on the campus immediately started congregating down on the square in front of Joyner. They were down there wanting to sign up; waiting to find out how they could get into town and how they could get home to enlist.[8]

An article in the school paper described the tenseness on the campus as everyone listened to the announcement of the Japanese declaration of war on the United States. The paper reminded all students to "keep calm, determined and united" during the crisis. The article further stated that Americans have something worth fighting for and that each student owed a debt to his country which was now due.[9]

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[7]Interview with Juanita Fisher Eller, Cullowhee, North Carolina, 9 June 1978. (Hereafter cited as Eller Interview.)

[8]Interview with Helen Hartshorn, Cullowhee, North Carolina, 15 June 1978. (Hereafter cited as Hartshorn Interview.)

[9]"America to the Colors," The Western Carolinian, 13 December 1941, p. 1.

The college had enjoyed steadily increasing enrollments in the late 1930s, but as soon as war broke out in Europe, attendance began to drop off, particularly among male students. Between 1942 and 1945 total enrollments decreased sharply with male students comprising less than ten percent of the student body.[10] As Helen Hartshorn wrote in The Western Carolinian:

> War--a three letter word that spells doom for many and disaster and conflict for many more. Although we at Cullowhee have had none of the actual experience of war such as black outs or air raids, we have seen the number of our students slowly diminish as individual bursts of patriotism influence our boys to answer the national call to arms.[11]

Juanita Eller recalled that after the United States entered World War II, the college practically became a girl's school. The only males remaining were those unable to enter the service because of age or physical disability.[12]

The loss of these students was sharply felt by the members of the student body and numerous adjustments had to be made. When The Western Carolinian's business manager, along with several staff members, left to aid in the war effort, a reduced staff had to carry on the newspaper's publication.[13] Confusion arose concerning

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[10]William Ernest Bird, The History of Western Carolina College (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1963), p. 210. (Hereafter cited as Bird, History.)

[11]Helen Hartshorn, "United We Stand, Divided We Fall," The Western Carolinian, 31 January 1942, p. 1.

[12]Eller Interview.

[13]"Staff Members Don Colors," The Western Carolinian, 19 January 1942, p. 2.

advertisements for the 1942 annual when its business manager, Johnny Wilson, was drafted into the Army. It was finally decided to omit advertisements from the annual for the duration of the war.[14] Also in 1942, the president and vice-president of the student body joined the war effort. New elections were held to fill these recently vacated offices with female students who planned to remain in college.[15]

The school not only lost students to the armed forces but also lost numerous students, including many girls, who took jobs in war related industries. Other female students accepted clerical jobs with the federal government. The college also lost several faculty and staff members to the war effort. The athletic department suffered a "crushing blow" when Jim Whatley, head coach and director of athletics, entered the Naval Reserve.[16] However, the school continued to operate throughout the war years despite the problems caused by the loss of students, faculty, and staff.

In the late 1930s and early 1940s, as Europe fell to Hitler's forces, the preservation of democracy became a sacred ideal to the American people. Colleges and universities across the nation

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[14]Western Carolina Teachers College, Executive Committee Minutes, Meeting of 27 April 1942. (Hereafter cited as Executive Committee.)

[15]"Creasman, Feaster to Fill Office Vacancies," The Western Carolinian, 31 January 1942, p. 1.

[16]"Whatley Joins Naval Reserve," The Western Carolinian, 21 March 1942, p. 4.

accepted and worked to further this democratic idea. In a 1940-41 catalog Western Carolina Teachers College restated its purpose as a teaching training institution accompanied by the explanation that "teachers are key people in a democracy" and education the "most important enterprise of the state."[17] When the United States entered the war, the college administrators addressed themselves to the problem of how the school could best serve the state and the nation. Statesmen and educators across the country strongly urged all public schools to remain open. Those directing Western Carolina Teachers College were determined to keep their school functioning and reasoned that "while the College is training teachers, it can and will continue to render a direct service to the war effort." The administrators affirmed that the school was ready, at any time, to change its current program in order to serve the nation. An emphasis had already been placed on courses such as science and physical education which might be useful in war preparedness.[18] As President Hunter wrote in a letter to new and prospective students:

> Western Carolina Teachers College is welcoming students to its doors this year with a sense of overwhelming responsibility. In the first place, in common with all institutions of higher learning, we feel under obligation to promote patriotism and national defense in every way within our means. Our revised educational offering, together with public programs and the emphasis of the classroom, will bear testimony to our efforts to meet this obligation.

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[17] Western Carolina Teachers College Catalog, 1940-41, v. 17, no. 1, p. 12. (Hereafter cited as Catalog.)

[18] Catalog, 1943-44, v. 20, no. 1, pp. 14-15.

> In the second place, we owe a duty to individual students who come to us. These students wish to keep the process of their education going, war or no war. Many will come perplexed about the possibility of not being able to complete four years of college work. Others will come with vocational choices scarcely made or not made at all. Still others will need personal and sympathetic guidance in matters of a personal nature. The college, to a man, would like to play the part of an understanding and friendly counselor to every student who enters it doors.[19]

The men at Western Carolina Teachers College were more than willing to meet the demands of war. As Helen Hartshorn recalled, "It wasn't a matter of going out and yanking them into service--they wanted to go ahead and sign up." Several faculty members helped to set up Naval Reserve programs for those students who wanted to complete their education before entering military service.[20] One of the faculty members, Clinton Dodson, was appointed by President Hunter as Armed Services Representative. Dodson was in charge of coordinating the activities of all of the students and faculty members in the various branches of the service. The reserve programs allowed students to attend the college for basic training while specializing in some major field of the college curriculum.[21] Dodson recalled that the service administrators were interested in the reserve students obtaining a sound education so they would be able to "read, write, and interpret things."

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[19] H. T. Hunter to New or Prospective Students, 25 May 1942, Hunter Collection.

[20] Hartshorn Interview.

[21] The Western Carolinian, 18 April 1942, p. 2.

The service administrators did not want the college to give the men any military training.[22] After graduation the reserve students entered the officer's training school and were then commissioned as Marine or Navy officers.

World War II caused numerous changes in student life at Western Carolina Teachers College. Prior to the outbreak of war in Europe, married students attending the school were a rarity; however, as America drew close to full scale involvement in the war, the administration was faced with a growing number of student marriages. Young couples seemed to feel that they might never see each other again and hoped to have a few "happy months together" before the men went off to war.[23] Also during the war years, coeds' parents were more willing to allow their children to marry before they finished college. Juanita Eller admitted that her family would never have considered allowing her to quit college and marry under any other circumstances.[24]

The increase in student marriages began as early as 1937 and peaked during the war years. The administration was very concerned about the situation, particularly about how to handle housing of the young married couples. The Executive Committee held several meetings to discuss the problem and decided to mail out inquiries to find out how other colleges were coping with the

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[22]Interview with Clinton Dodson, Cullowhee, North Carolina, 19 June 1978. (Hereafter cited as Dodson Interview.)

[23]Hartshorn Interview. [24]Eller Interview.

problem. The majority of those who answered the questionnaire allowed married students to remain in school but demanded that they immediately withdraw from the dormitories. They all agreed that a young married woman should not be allowed to reside in the dormitory for reasons that "do not need explanation."[25] After a careful study of the situation, the Executive Committee adopted several recommendations which permitted married students to remain in school, as long as there was no question as to the propriety of the marriage, and required them to live outside the dormitories.[26]

America's entrance into World War II led to changes in students' extra-curricular activities. The loss of students left many clubs and organizations without important leaders and staff members. Many of the student organizations were interested in supporting those students who had left to go to war and took on added duties to keep in touch with the servicemen. For example, staff members of The Western Carolinian wrote hundreds of letters to servicemen to find out how they were and where they were located. The letters were written on special "V-mail" forms with a limited number of words and sent to APO addresses since the locations of

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[25]Harriet Elliott, Counselor, Woman's College of Greensboro, to W. E. Bird, 30 January 1937, Hunter Collection. Kate G. Harbin, Winthrop College, to Mr. W. E. Bird, 30 January 1937, Hunter Collection. Jennie Todd, Dean of Women, Appalachian State Teachers College, to Mr. W. E. Bird, 30 January 1937, Hunter Collection.

[26]Executive Committee, Meeting of 5 March 1937.

most soldiers were a military secret. The paper's staff tried to decipher military codes used in their correspondence in hopes of discerning the men's locations. The newspaper's staff also sent copies of The Western Carolinian to all servicemen who had been students at the college. The format of the paper was altered to provide more space for information about the war.[27] The staff of the school yearbook emphasized patriotism by using a red, white, and blue color theme throughout the annual. The 1943 senior class dedicated their annual to college alumni serving in the armed forces.[28]

Extra efforts were made to keep the clubs and organizations functioning on a normal level. The Sylva Herald did the printing for the school newspaper; however, during the war years there was not a car available to take the copy to Sylva. Helen Hartshorn, editor of the paper, and Helen Bird took the copy to Sylva by bicycle. It was a long trip but the girls were determined not to lose an issue of the paper.[29]

Intercollegiate athletics were also affected by the war. Intercollegiate football was discontinued for the 1942-43 school

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[27]Hartshorn Interview.

[28]"Patriotism is Feature of New W.C.T.C. Annual," The Western Carolinian, 19 January 1942, p. 1. "Yearbook Dedication Made by Senior Class," The Western Carolinian, 28 October 1942, p.1.

[29]Hartshorn Interview.

year since there were not enough male students to sustain a team and several other colleges in the conference had dropped their football programs. The fifteen hundred dollars usually allocated for football was converted into reserve program scholarships.[30] The college did not attempt to have an intercollegiate basketball team for the 1943-44 school year; the school had "so few boys," and administrators felt they were "up against a real struggle to keep the College going on a creditable college level" and should devote all efforts to that end.[31]

Although intercollegiate athletic programs were discontinued until the end of the war, the college still maintained a strong intramural program. The students were very involved in intramurals and quite proud of the program. As Johnny Wilson wrote in the school paper:

> There's nothing in the world that makes better citizens than teaching the people in school how to play in competitive sports as they are played here at Western Carolina in Intramurals.
>
> If the whole world had such a program Hitler would have been stalemated long ago.[32]

The college curriculum also underwent some changes as a result of the war. Additional courses were added in first aid,

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[30]Western Carolina Teachers College, Faculty Committee Minutes, Meeting of 18 March 1942.

[31]H. T. Hunter to Dean J. D. Rankin, Appalachian State Teachers College, 28 December 1943, Hunter Collection.

[32]Johnny Wilson, "Treading the Catamount Trails," The Western Carolinian, 15 January 1941, p. 3.

nursing, foreign languages, science, mathematics, health, and physical education.[33] For the most part students were receptive to these new courses. However, some students were unhappy that some of these courses were required for graduation and carried extra laboratory charges. One student lamented:

> No student enrolled at Western Carolina is not more than willing to do anything he considers his patriotic duty in a time of national emergency. Neither is [there] a student that isn't willing to co-operate with the faculty and the administration when properly consulted about policies vitally affecting him. But the student body as a whole is fed up with things being pushed over on them, and if they fail to click in the performance having their credits threatened. The college catalog is supposed to be the law of the college for the year in which it is dated, but in some matters this is no longer true.[34]

Most of these extra courses and physical activities applied mostly to the men but women were encouraged to take more courses in science and mathematics.[35]

Students at Western Carolina Teachers College were very much involved with defense activities outside the college community. Many members of the student body joined the National Defense Committee and the Committee to Defend America.[36] Girls at the college volunteered to knit for the men overseas, while others

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[33]"W.C.T.C. Aiding Defense Work," The Western Carolinian, 19 January 1942, p. 4.

[34]"Militaristic Courses," The Western Carolinian, 25 April 1942, p. 3.

[35]Executive Committee, Meeting of 5 April 1943.

[36]"Students Observe National Defense Day," The Western Carolinian, 7 May 1941, p. 2.

donated clothes, shaving articles, and talcum powder.[37] Students from the Business Education Department aided "Uncle Sam" by helping register all men in the area between the ages of twenty and forty-five for the draft.[38] Various school organizations assisted in the program to sell war bonds.[39] The faculty, staff, and students of the college were all eager to support their country in its defense of democracy.

There were numberous other changes in the day-to-day life of Western Carolina's students as a result of World War II. Commencement invitations had to be ordered early because of the paper shortage.[40] Reduced taxi and bus service caused by gas restrictions created acute transportation problems.[41] Students practiced blackout drills and other war-time procedures "for in time of war the least civilians can do it to carry out orders."[42]

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[37]"Bundles for a Sister Democracy," The Western Carolinian, 13 December 1941, p. 2.

[38]"Several Students Here Assist with Registration," The Western Carolinian, 28 February 1942, p. 1.

[39]Secretary to the President to Mr. Philip Renlan and Miss Phillis Dillard, 29 September 1944, Hunter Collection.

[40]Mrs. Andrews to President Hunter, 30 January 1942, Hunter Collection.

[41]"Freedom to Travel," The Western Carolinian, 24 February 1943, p. 2.

[42]"Students Urged toObserve All Blackout Signals," The Western Carolinian, 29 September 1943, p. 4.

Although far away from the combat zones of war, the students at Western Carolina Teachers College were constantly aware of World War II. Nothing brought the agonizing reality of war so close to home as the news that a fellow student had paid the supreme sacrifice. As Helen Hartshorn expressed it:

> We'd get word pretty quickly and we had special memorial services for those killed in action. This was always a constant thing with us. One of my dearest friends had her fiance killed in service and I can remember hearing her cry out when she received a telegram telling her about it. It was something that was very much a part of you because you knew everybody.[43]

Students bravely accepted the loss of their friends and expressed great pride in their gallant classmates. An article in The Western Carolinian reflected the feelings of the student body when they received word that a fellow student had been killed in action.

> Our college is proud that one of her sons has given his life for all that we as Americans cherish. There are some things dearer than peace; there are some things more precious than life. These it is ours to suffer for. These it was Gary Hampton's privilege to die for. Today we are richer because he died. Today America means more to us because one of our Alumni has died for her freedom and way of life.[44]

More than five hundred students or former students of Western Carolina Teachers College served in World War II; of this number, twenty-six were killed.[45]

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[43]Hartshorn Interview.

[44]"Robert Gary Hampton," The Western Carolinian, 1 June 1942, p. 1.

[45]Western Carolina Teachers College Bulletin, v. 24, no. 4, August 1947, p. 5. (Hereafter cited as Bulletin.)

Some areas of student life progressed normally despite the war. During the 1940s college students did much more than just attend classes. The average college experience included educational, physical, and social training. The directors of Western Carolina Teachers College emphasized the importance of a well-rounded education and shared responsibilities. As stated in the school catalog:

> Modern college life is organized life. It parallels life in general in this respect. In spite of democracy's emphasis upon the importance and worth of the individual, in actual life much that we do is accomplished as a member of some organization or group. Learning to live together, with a minimum of regimentation, is an art of supreme importance. The College administration, as far as student organizations and social life generally on the campus are concerned, is organized on the basis of shared responsibilities.[46]

Big Brother and Big Sister programs were set up to help freshmen adjust to college life. The Big Brothers and Sisters wrote to the new students before school opened and greeted them when they arrived at the college. As Helen Hartshorn remembered, "We knew what to expect and what to bring. They helped us get our luggage in, to get our rooms straightened, and to get settled. Then they showed us around the campus."[47] The Big Brother and Sister program was a very personal sort of orientation which worked most effectively.

Another program, which may not have been as amiable to the freshmen, was set up to accustom freshmen to college life. Rat Week,

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[46] Catalog, 1940-41, v. 17, no. 1, p. 21.

[47] Hartshorn Interview.

traditional at Western Carolina, was a week when upperclassmen initiated the freshmen. Juanita Eller recalled that Rat Week was a "fun week" but felt that a week was a little too long.[48] Certain rules were set up for freshmen boys and girls to follow throughout the week. The rules varied from year to year. An article in a 1940 school newspaper described a few of these rules.

> Rats of every size, shape and kind have simply swamped the campus this week. They have worn pigtails, up-swept hair, and towel hats. They have carried umbrellas, coat-hangers, pocket books, suitcases and waste baskets. They have kept their chins up and met life with a smile. A few have grumbled, some have kicked, but in general they have taken their initiation like good sports.[49]

Those rats who received violations (and as Juanita Eller remembered, everyone received some sort of violation) were brought before the men's or women's Rat Court for sentencing. The "rat" was guilty until proven innocent and then he was still guilty. Sentences meeted out by the Rat Court varied. Juanita Eller had to ask a boy out on a date on the steps of Joyner building, a "shocking thing for a girl to have to go through in those days." Some of the male rats jitterbugged with broomstocks tied to their legs while others raced golf balls from Joyner building to Madison Hall with their noses. The most violated Rat Week rule among the girls prohibited the female rats from talking to the men. Girls

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[48] Eller Interview.

[49] "Upper Classmen and Even Most Freshmen Enjoy Rat Week," The Western Carolinian, 16 October 1940, p. 2.

violating this rule were sentenced to polish shoes or not allowed to curl their hair for several days.[50]

Practically all the freshmen were cooperative during Rat Week and any type of mean or degrading behavior was prohibited. Occasionally a few upperclassmen would take advantage of Rat Week proceedings by playing practical jokes on the freshmen. In one such incident six female upperclassmen obtained the dormitory pass key and went into each freshman girl's room and placed her mattress on the floor. The six girls were tried before the Women's House Government and testified that they only intended to disturb the beds; however, in at least three rooms personal belongings of the freshmen women had been disturbed. The government council could not determine who had caused the disorder so the six girls were required to divide the cost of the damages among them and received written warnings from the Women's House Government Council.[51]

Dormitory life continued much the same during the war years. Some of the faculty began to move into private homes but many still resided in the dormitories with the students. Each dormitory had

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[50]Interview with Mabel Tyree Crum, Cullowhee, North Carolina, 14 June 1978. (Hereafter cited as Crum Interview.) Eller Interview. "Boys Rat Court Tries Freshman Offenders," The Western Carolinian, 1 September 1944, p. 1. Hartshorn Interview. "Rat Week at Madison Dormitory," The Western Carolinian, 16 October 1940, p. 2. "I Smell a Rat," The Western Carolinian, 24 September 1941, p. 2.

[51]Allene Jackson, Women's House Government, to Mr. H. T. Hunter, 7 November 1941, Hunter Collection.

a house mother, assistant house mothers, and student proctors to monitor behavior and to insure that rooms were kept in order.[52] The college catalog stated, "Rooms or apartments should be treated as cultured members of a family treat their own home. . . . For wanton damage or for persistent unsanitory or obnoxious conditions in one's room, a student may be denied the privilege of the dormitory."[53] It appeared that several male students found it difficult to maintain their dormitory rooms and in a few cases the offending boys were put on probation and given a work sentence for not keeping their rooms clean.[54] After a room inspection of Madison Hall in 1941, the two house mothers were pleased about the change in the men's rooms. Before it was considered "dangerous to start down the hall" on some floors unless you lived on them, but conduct and order had finally been restored.[55]

Rules and regulations similar to those used to govern during the 1930s were enforced during the war years. As Juanita Eller recalled:

> They had lots of rules. There was a certain period of time after dinner that you could go to the Post Office down in the basement of Joyner building. I can't remember if it

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[52]Hartshorn Interview.

[53]Catalog, 1940-41, v. 17, no. 1, p. 24.

[54]Tom Pryor, President, Men's House Government, to Executive Committee, 11 March 1941, Hunter Collection.

[55]"Men's House Government Meeting," The Western Carolinian, 5 March 1941, p. 2.

> was a thirty or forty-five minute period after dinner. Then you had to be in the library or in your room. The library closed between nine and nine-thirty and you could stay until it closed. Really it wasn't bad. If anybody got loud or boisterous, somebody would come--say, one of the hall proctors--and knock on your door. I think it was eleven o'clock that they had room check and the proctor came by to make sure you were either in your room or there was a note on your door saying whose room you were in. They really were not very strict about the lights out bit, just so you were in your room--you could stay up and study or play bridge.[56]

Juanita Eller further remembered that the boys' rooms were not checked at night and it seemed that men had more freedom than the girls.[57]

Students were required to attend Chapel exercises and to enroll for one physical education activity course each quarter. Visitors were not allowed in the dormitories without approval from the faculty or staff member in charge. The college reserved the right to place restrictions on the number and nature of absences, along with campus social privileges, of any student whose academic work was reported as unsatisfactory.

Another strict regulation remained from the Depression years:

> The College reserves the right at any time to decline to re-register any student whose past record is such as to indicate moral or scholastic unfitness for the teaching profession, or who for any reason is adjudged without promise as a teacher. The purpose of this regulation is not punitive, but it is to steer students away from a career in which there is little chance of success.[58]

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[56]Eller Interview. [57]Ibid.

[58]Catalog, 1944-45, v. 21, no. 1, pp. 37-38.

Also listed in the school's regulations was an announcement that the school held the right to change any regulations or add new rules if war conditions made it seem wise or necessary.[59]

Besides these regulations published in the school catalog, students were governed by other rules agreed upon by the administration and the student senate. Intoxication and the possession of alcoholic beverages was strictly forbidden. Any student found guilty of trying to enter Moore dormitory after the building was closed for the night or helping others in the act was promptly expelled. Any female student staying out overnight without permission was also subject to expulsion. Cheating was illegal and various punishments were meted out to those who broke this regulation.[60] Smoking was not allowed in the parlors or halls of the women's dormitory at any time and phone calls were not to be made or received during dormitory quiet hours.[61]

In several instances where students were found guilty of drinking, the offenders were campused and socially restricted.[62]

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[59]Ibid.

[60]"Regulations Set Up By the Standards Committee and Approved by the Senate and Student Activities Committee for Student Government," Western Carolina Teachers College, Executive Committee Minutes, Meeting of 26 September 1939.

[61]"Attention Called to Rules and Regulations," The Western Carolinian, 25 October 1941, p. 1.

[62]"Report of the Penalties Imposed By the Student Senate of Western Carolina Teachers College," Western Carolina Teachers College, Executive Committee Minutes, Meeting of 8 November 1938.

A campused student had to remain on the college campus and was only allowed to go across the highway to church for religious purposes. Campused students were allowed on the athletic field only during regularly scheduled games.[63] Several male students found guilty of playing poker in Madison Hall were restricted to campus, required to be in their rooms by nine-thirty each night, and deprived of all social privileges such as dating "and any and all associations with the opposite sex."[64] Other male students were sentenced to several hours of manual labor when found guilty of playing poker in the men's dormitory.[65] One student, who left the infirmary without an official permit, was put on probation for the rest of the school year and warned he would be dismissed if he violated any health rule of the college again.[66]

Student government developed into a well-organized system at Western Carolina in the early 1940s. The Cooperative Student-Faculty Government was the result of many years of evolution as the students gradually took on more responsibility. As stated in a 1940-41 catalog, "The government is set up to give students as much initiative as they will exercise with prudence, and yet at

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[63] The Western Carolinian, 15 January 1941, p. 2.

[64] "Report to the Executive Committee from Men's House Government Board," Western Carolina Teachers College, Executive Committee Minutes, Meeting of 15 May 1940.

[65] Executive Committee, Meeting of 5 October 1942.

[66] Executive Committee, Meeting of 4 January 1940.

at the same time provides for faculty participation or counsel in all phases of government."[67] The student government was set up in a way that allowed both faculty and students to be represented in every club and organization. The Dean of Men and the Dean of Women served as faculty sponsors for the house governments and the student senate. Juanita Eller recalls that these faculty advisors were not resented and that none of the students felt as though the advisors limited their authority.[68] A Pre-Session Conference was held annually to study campus problems and to outline plans for improvements for the up-coming school year. President Hunter, the Deans, club sponsors and officers, student senators, and class officers all attended this Pre-Session Conference.[69] Student government was a strong organization and it was considered a great honor to be elected to government positions. People worked for the honor of being elected, nearly everyone voted, and those elected were considered the student leaders.[70]

Various awards and honors were presented to students to encourage high standards of scholarship and leadership. During the 1939-40 academic year, a Dean's List was established "to encourage development of all-round students." Students became eligible

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[67] Catalog, 1940-41, v. 17, no. 1, p. 21.

[68] Eller Interview.

[69] Hartshorn Interview. News, 1938, v. 15, no. 5, p. 6.

[70] Eller Interview.

for the Dean's List the second quarter they were enrolled. Social adjustment, leadership, health, personality, attitude, and morality were all important factors considered by the Dean's List Selection Committee. Dean's List students also had to earn a place on the scholastic honor roll during the quarter for which they were selected, be active in at least one extra-curricular activity, and make at least an average score on a General Culture Test.[71] A bronze plaque displayed in the library was engraved with the names of those elected Best College Citizen.[72] A Student Distinguished Service Award was given to the student who made "the most distinctive contribution to college life" either through one outstanding service or based on the student's entire college career.[73] Eleven students were chosen to represent Western Carolina in Who's Who in American Colleges and Universities in 1941, while thirteen students received the honor for 1942. These students were chosen for "character, leadership in extra-curricular activities, and potentiality for future usefulness to business and society."[74]

Numerous self-help positions were available for students requiring financial aid. A number of male students worked on the college farm. Stedman Mitchell was the manager of the farm which

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[71] Catalog, 1939-40, v. 16, no. 1, p. 31.

[72] Catalog, 1938-39, v. 15, no. 1, p. 18.

[73] Catalog, 1940-41, v. 17, no. 1, pp. 30-33.

[74] "Eleven Students Chosen From Western Carolina," The Western Carolinian, 8 November 1941, p. 1.

provided milk and fresh vegatables for the college dining hall.[75] The school received National Youth Administration funds for student self-help until the close of the 1941-42 school year. All NYA jobs paid twenty-five cents an hour and students worked as clerical and library assistants; teachers' assistants; laboratory assistants; assistants to the nurse, dietitian, and health officials; tutors; landscapers; and participated in special campus projects. These federal jobs were awarded according to need; students who received NYA help had to prove it was impossible for them to attend school without aid. NYA workers were also required to maintain an above average scholastic record.[76] Self-help workers who earned more than ten dollars a month were restricted in the number of course hours they took and the Self-Help Committee reserved the right to withdraw self-help positions from students who proved "unworthy or unwilling to do honest work."[77]

Loan funds were still available and totaled approximately twenty-seven thousand dollars.[78] Besides the regular continuing scholarships, several war time scholarship funds were established. Students provided fifteen hundred dollars for Naval Reserve

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[75]Interview with Stedman Mitchell, Cullowhee, North Carolina, 23 June 1978. (Hereafter cited as Mitchell Interview.)

[76]Bulletin, 1940, v. 17, nos. 3-4, pp. 23-24.

[77]Catalog, 1938-39, v. 15, no. 1, p. 22.

[78]Catalog, 1941-42, v. 18, no. 1, p. 27.

scholarships of fifty dollars each. The faculty and staff set up a similar fund for ten to fifteen scholarships awarded to students not involved with the reserve programs.[79] Victory Scholarships with a maximum value of one hundred dollars were awarded for the 1944-45 school year on the basis of need, scholarship, and merit.[80]

Extra-curricular activities were an integral part of college life during the war years. Western Carolina Teachers College had numerous clubs and organizations. Clinton Dodson recalled that students were "very, very loyal" to their clubs.[81] Juanita Eller observed that the smallness of the school and the fact that everyone knew each other were largely responsible for avid student interest in extra-curricular activities.[82] There was an organization for every hobby or interest. The school paper, yearbook, English Club, and Journalism Club attracted those students with literary interests. Musically inclined students could join the Boys' Glee Club, Schubert Glee Club, Girls' Glee Club, McDowell Music Club, Halcyon Chorus, the band or the orchestra. There were also numerous athletic and academic groups.[83] The Science Club sponsored the area's first public demonstration of television while the Dramatics

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[79] Western Carolina Teachers College, Supplement, to v. 19, no. 1, no page.

[80] Catalog, 1944-45, v. 21, no. 1, pp. 30-31.

[81] Dodson Interview.

[82] Eller Interview.

[83] Catalog, 1940-41, v. 17, no. 1, p. 21.

Club sponsored high school drama tournaments.[84] Helen Hartshorn recollected that students tried to keep the clubs and organizations functioning on a normal basis during the war years for the sake of the college and to have encouraging news to send to classmates in the armed forces.[85]

A strong religious influence was still apparent on the campus and a close relationship existed between the churches and the college:

> Two things have marked Cullowhee community and the college in all its fifty years of history: the fine spirit of cooperation between the churches themselves and between both of them and the College, and the splendid religious atmosphere on the campus. The latter is nothing less than phenomenal for a state school.[86]

Although church attendance was no longer mandatory, students were encouraged to attend Sunday School and one preaching service each Sunday.[87] Students also retained the option to take religious courses for academic credit.

Chapel was held every Tuesday and Thursday after lunch and attendance was required of all students. Students did not resent mandatory chapel attendance. "It was accepted as part of your college training. Just like you went to math class and English

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[84]"Television is Demonstrated by Dr. Hoskins," The Western Carolinian, 28 February 1942, p. 1.

[85]Hartshorn Interview.

[86]Catalog, 1940, v. 17, nos. 3-4, p. 30.

[87]Catalog, 1939-40, v. 16, no. 1, p. 17.

class, you went to Chapel," said Juanita Eller.[88] President Hunter had some difficulty getting the faculty to attend chapel exercises regularly. In 1940 Hunter sent a letter to the faculty urging them to be present at chapel because "at a time like the present, such a move will be conducive to unifying our own group, building up the espirit de corps of the College, and will furthermore, be a wholesome example to students."[89]

Social training was very much a part of a student's life in the early 1940s. The collage catalog described social life at the school as "well-developed and wholesome." Since there was such a small student body, students and faculty became well acquainted. Ann Albright, the Dean of Women, directed social events and planned get-togethers for both small and large groups.[90] The school held four or five formal dances a year, along with informal special occasion parties on Halloween, Christmas, and other holidays.[91] Receptions were held in honor of incoming freshmen and transfer students complete with a formal receiving line of student senators.[92] Students invited their own guests to special candlelight dinners held once each quarter. Students could ask faculty members or day

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[88] Eller Interview.

[89] H. T. Hunter to Members of the Faculty, 1940, Hunter Collection.

[90] Catalog, 1937-38, v. 14, no. 1, p. 13.

[91] News, Number 1937, v. 14, nos. 4-5, p. 15.

[92] News, Number 1938, v. 15, no. 5, p. 15.

students who did not regularly dine in the dormitory, and special place cards and favors were used at the tables. The dinners were followed by conversation, group singing, bridge playing, and an hour of dancing. The administration felt these dinners had "definite cultural value to the students and faculty members."[93]

Sunday dinner was a dress occasion at Western Carolina Teachers College and, after the meal, coffee was served in the large, formal parlors of Moore dormitory. Juanita Eller remembered, "You were supposed to go in there, all dressed up in your high heels, and learn how to manage a cup on your hand while you made with the charming chit-chat. It was good social training that a lot of girls miss now."[94]

Dean Albright became concerned as the war progressed that the junior and senior girls were not experiencing enough social interaction with young men so she invited a military group from Asheville to attend a dance at the college. However, when the men arrived for the dance they spent the majority of their time talking to the girls about their wives and children at home.[95] Despite the difficulties imposed by war conditions, students at Western Carolina Teachers College received well-rounded social training.

The faculty, staff, and students of Western Carolina Teachers College worked together to meet the challenges that World War II

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[93] News, Number 1937, v. 14, nos. 4-5, p. 16.

[94] Eller Interview.

[95] Crum Interview.

created for colleges across the country. It was no small feat to keep the college running on a normal basis with the decline in attendance and serious budget problems; however, Western Carolina not only remained open but made a substantial contribution to the war. More than five hundred persons who had been students at the college served in the armed forces and several members of the faculty and staff also joined the war effort.[96] Those affiliated with the school had just cause for pride in bringing the college through such troubled times while faithfully supporting the men and women who had gone from the campus to join America's fight for democracy.

Western Carolina Teachers College survived the war years and opened its doors wide to welcome back new and former students. Although the war years only slightly altered student life at the college, the post war years brought permanent changes for the student experience. Attendance was back to normal soon after World War II ended in August of 1945. By 1947 Western Carolina was faced with serious problems due to rapidly multiplying enrollments.[97] Classrooms and dormitories were overcrowded and faculty members were burdened with extra work loads. As a result of veteran's wartime back wages and federal passage of the G.I. Bill, many students were in school who could not have gone to college otherwise.[98]

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[96] Bulletin, 1949, v. 24, no. 4, p. 5.

[97] Bird, History, pp. 152-53.

[98] Eller Interview.

Prior to World War II, married students were an oddity on the campus. Many post-war students were married and the college had no facilities for housing the young couples. The problem was partially alleviated by the acquisition of some mobile Army barracks from military bases in South Carolina. These "apartments" were rented to the married students at a nominal fee and the complex was formally called G.I. Village.[99] The apartments were more commonly known as "Boodleville," so named, as Clinton Dodson recalled, because the students did a lot of "boodlin'" there.[100] The married couples who resided in "Boodleville" had the same status as dormitory students and were represetned in the student government. "Boodleville" even had its own mayor.[101]

Reconversion to civilian life was difficult for many World War II veterans and Western Carolina had many disciplinary problems with the returning soldiers. Prominent among these problems was the possession of and over indulgence in alcohol among the veterans. One student, guilty of public drunkedness and the use of obscene language, reported that he felt his experiences in the Marines had affected him.[102] Another man, charged with the same offense, defended himself by explaining that while a combat pilot

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[99]Bird, History, p. 213.

[100]Dodson Interview.

[101]Mary Alice Cowan, Senate Secretary, to Dr. H. T. Hunter, 11 January 1947, Hunter Collection.

[102]Executive Committee, Meeting of 19 July 1946.

he had been given drugs to keep awake during missions. After completion of the mission, he was given whiskey and sedatives to counteract the drugs and help him sleep. After the war he, along with other veterans, often turned to whiskey to help them relax.[103] These intoxication charges were not exceptional during the post-war years. Tyson Cathey, a professor at the college, recalled that the veterans were "rough" and used to "their beer and rough times."[104]

Gambling also became a major disciplinary problem among the men in the years after the war. Stedman Mitchell surmised that many boys paid their way through school by playing poker. Poker games, although against the rules, were frequent and taken quite seriously by the players. One young man caught cheating was hung out a third floor dormitory window by his feet.[105]

Former soldiers attending the school were unusually rowdy and often disrupted day-to-day life with their "pranks." Some of the first returning veterans were caught rolling trash cans down the dormitory steps.[106] Another G.I. threw a lighted cherry bomb

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[103]Executive Committee, Meeting of 15 May 1946.

[104]Interview with Tyson Cathey, Cullowhee, North Carolina, 15 June 1978. (Hereafter cited as Cathey Interview.)

[105]Mitchell Interview.

[106]Thelma Joyce Finch, Secretary, Student Senate, to Charles Cotter Jake Schoonerwoerd and Joe Turner, 14 November 1945, Hunter Collection.

into the commode of his "Boodleville" apartment. Pieces of china flew everywhere and the apartment windows were blown out. Stedman Mitchell, who was responsible for renting the apartments, recollected that "everything in the world, anything that you thought could happen, would happen" in the G.I. Village.[107]

The veterans were repeatedly caught for violating the school's rules and regulations. Occasionally, one of them would be "shipped home" to settle down for a little while, but the majority of the offenders were given lighter punishments.[108] As Juanita Eller explained, "They returned as men when they had left as college boys and they resented the rules and stipulations."[109] It was quite difficult to restrict men who had spent the past several years in combat and found the college punishments to be mild compared to their previous dangers. Many of the men had gone behind enemy lines and others had been held as prisoners of war. Gradually the rules and regulations changed to accommodate the returning veterans and to adapt to a more mature, independent college student.

Many traditions of the school were affected by the returning veterans. Rat Week ended rather abruptly. Combat veterans were not about to shine shoes or make beds for upperclassmen.[110] The social life of the school was also altered. Students sought more individualized recreation. Many veterans had visited some

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[107] Mitchell Interview.

[108] Cathey Interview.

[109] Eller Interview.

[110] Crum Interview.

of the world's most exciting cities and were dissatisfied with what they considered to be the limited social offerings of Cullowhee and Sylva. Many men had cars and spending money, never the case on the campus before, and couples tried to spend more time alone away from the planned campus activities. Participation in extra-curricular activities declined. It appeared that students were preoccupied with dating and social get-togethers. Perhaps the long period of separation caused the young men and women to overemphasize socio-sexual activities, but many members of both sexes were anxious to find the "perfect" partner to share a marital commitment.

The purpose of the college was also changed to adapt to the changing times. A larger, more varied student body demanded more choice in their curriculum. A survey of returning students and area high school seniors revealed that many students wanted to attend college but did not want to become teachers.[111] The school met the demands of these new students and in 1953 the college began granting liberal arts degrees. The college achieved full university status in 1967 when it became Western Carolina University.

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[111] Dodson Interview.

CHAPTER FOUR

A CONCLUSION

Of the numerous factors which affect student life at a college or university, the school's leadership is the most important. Other influences, such as national and international developments, affect the student experience but the college president determines how the school meets these challenging problems. The administration sets the pace for the growth and progress of the school and is also responsible for choosing faculty and staff members. Particularly during the period under discussion, 1923 to 1947, the president of Western Carolina Teachers College held a powerful, almost autonomous position. Throughout his twenty-four years as president, Hiram T. Hunter accepted this awesome responsibility and cautiously guided the school through many troubled times.

When H. T. Hunter arrived at Cullowhee in 1923, the school was undergoing the transition from a two year Normal school to a four year teachers college. Hunter met this challenge with characteristic determination. As noted in the school newspaper:

> Upon his becoming President, he was immediately confronted with difficulties and perplexing problems that would have discouraged the stoutest heart, but he never lost faith nor gave up his enthusiasm. He rapidly acquainted himself with the new situation and began to outline a constructive program of

> work. He caught a vision of the possibilities of Cullowhee, which has guided him and lead him on toward the accomplishment of his ideals.[1]

It was a difficult task for Hunter to direct this change to four year status and insure that the school continued to function on a creditable basis. The president had to make numerous trips to Raleigh at personal expense to convince legislators of the benefits of a degree granting institution in Western North Carolina. Hunter worked diligently and the school became a four-year institution in 1929.

Soon after the conversion to a four-year college was completed, the Great Depression began to intensify across the nation. Ironically, while the school was faced with serious financial problems, it was also experiencing an unprecedented increase in attendance. President Hunter had to deal with serious overcrowding problems at a time when morale was extremely low due to budget decreases and faculty cutbacks.[2]

As soon as the worst of the Great Depression had passed, the college began to feel the effects of World War II. The war years were particularly troublesome for President Hunter. As recounted in The Western Carolinian:

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[1]"President H. T. Hunter," The Cullowhee Yodel, 1 February 1929, pp. 1, 5.

[2]William Ernest Bird, The History of Western Carolina College (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1963), pp. 152-153. (Hereafter cited as Bird, History.)

> He saw the classrooms emptied as the young men went off to fight the nation's war. They were all his 'boys.' Many of them were killed in action. For them he grieved with a feeling of bereavement that was genuine and sacred. During all of these tragic years he wore the war and its sacrifices close to his heart.[3]

The post-war period also brought trying times. Problems caused by reconversion, dramatic increases in attendance, and an ambitious physical expansion program exhausted Hunter as he worked to guarantee that the college received the greatest benefit from its new opportunities.[4] In October, 1947, Hiram T. Hunter was found dead, the victim of an apparent suicide.

Known for his vigor and vitality, President Hunter had suffered a slight paralytic stroke about a year before his death. He never fully recovered from the stroke and failed to heed his doctor's advice for a prolonged period of complete rest.[5] Hunter had planned to retire as president in 1948 to return to classroom teaching. In memorializing him, The Western Carolinian concluded:

> The trait in Dr. Hunter which made the deepest and most lasting impression on his friends and associates was his overwhelming and increasing sense of consecration to the college which he headed.
>
> The spirit of consecration led Dr. Hunter to make many sacrifices for the college. In serving the institution's growth, he spent his strength with prodigality and with no thought of self. He simply did not know how to recognize the normal limitations of his own body when the vital interests of the institution were involved.

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[3]"H. T. Hunter," The Western Carolinian, 18 October 1947, p. 2. (Hereafter cited as "Hunter," Carolinian.)

[4]Ibid.

[5]Bird, History, pp. 226-27.

> . . . A naturally rugged body finally rebelled. In his consecration to the college, Dr. Hunter had demanded too much of his fading strength. Death came as a consequence of long sacrifice.[6]

Although a somewhat hesitant and cautious administrator, H. T. Hunter accepted the decision making responsibilities of his position and by 1947 his leadership had guided the college through a series of challenging problems. The establishment of the school as a creditable four-year teachers college; the desperate years of the Great Depression; the painful years of World War II; and the adjustment to post-war difficulties had all been handled successfully. A great deal of credit must be given to the man who led the faculty, staff, and students through such trying times with characteristic warmth and respect. President Hunter's strong religious faith served as an inspiration to all and set a high moral tone for the campus. Students were fully aware of the personal sacrifices made by both President Hunter and his wife to insure a pleasant, well-rounded educational experience for them. Mr. and Mrs. Hunter were considered the "parents" of the college family and were loved and respected by students, faculty, and staff.

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[6]"Hunter," Carolinian, p. 2.

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