INFORMATION TO USERS

This manuscript has been reproduced from the microfilm master. UMI films the text directly from the original or copy submitted. Thus, some thesis and dissertation copies are in typewriter face, while others may be from any type of computer printer.

The quality of this reproduction is dependent upon the quality of the copy submitted. Broken or indistinct print, colored or poor quality illustrations and photographs, print bleedthrough, substandard margins, and improper alignment can adversely affect reproduction.

In the unlikely event that the author did not send UMI a complete manuscript and there are missing pages, these will be noted. Also, if unauthorized copyright material had to be removed, a note will indicate the deletion.

Oversize materials (e.g., maps, drawings, charts) are reproduced by sectioning the original, beginning at the upper left-hand corner and continuing from left to right in equal sections with small overlaps.

Photographs included in the original manuscript have been reproduced xerographically in this copy. Higher quality 6" x 9" black and white photographic prints are available for any photographs or illustrations appearing in this copy for an additional charge. Contact UMI directly to order.

ProQuest Information and Learning
300 North Zeeb Road, Ann Arbor, MI 48106-1346 USA
800-521-0600



Downloaded from SHAREOK. Persistent Handle URL: https://hdl.handle.net/11244/485

UNIVERSITY OF OKLAHOMA

GRADUATE COLLEGE

CHARLES DUNCAN MCIVER: EDUCATIONAL STATESMAN

A Dissertation

SUBMITTED TO THE GRADUATE FACULTY

in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the

degree of

Doctor of Philosophy

By

Kenneth L. Myers
Norman, Oklahoma
2002

UMI Number: 3054052



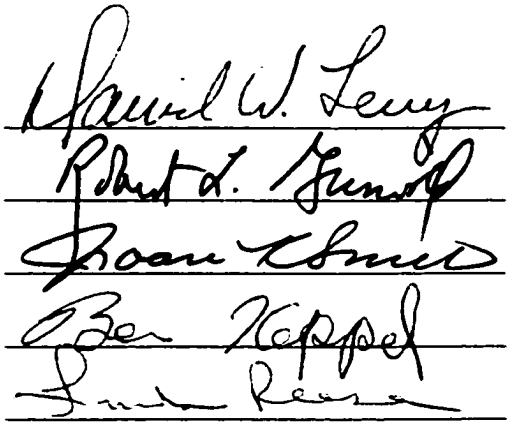
UMI Microform 3054052
Copyright 2002 by ProQuest Information and Learning Company.
All rights reserved. This microform edition is protected against unauthorized copying under Title 17, United States Code.

ProQuest Information and Learning Company
300 North Zeeb Road
P.O. Box 1346
Ann Arbor, MI 48106-1346

CHARLES DUNCAN MCIVER: EDUCATIONAL STATESMAN

A Dissertation APPROVED FOR THE
DEPARTMENT OF HISTORY

BY



© Copyright by Kenneth L. Myers 2002
All Rights Reserved.

Table of Contents

Abstract.....v

Preface.....vi

Chapter One.....1

Chapter Two.....36

Chapter Three.....64

Chapter Four.....102

Chapter Five.....146

Chapter Six.....178

Selected Bibliography.....195

DISSERTATION ABSTRACT

Charles Duncan McIver: Educational Statesman

by

Kenneth L. Myers
University of Oklahoma
Dissertation Advisor: Dr. David W. Levy

Abstract: A biography of Charles Duncan McIver, a New South educational reformer from North Carolina.

Preface

In front of the main entrance to the Jackson Library—at the very heart of the sprawling yet well-manicured campus of the University of North Carolina at Greensboro (UNCG)—stands a twelve-foot tall bronze statue of Charles Duncan McIver. On the base of the statue are carved the years of his life (1860-1906) and two simple words: "Educational Statesman." Those two words are an accurate brief appraisal of McIver's career, for he was not a government bureaucrat with a highly-specialized, narrowly-defined job. Instead, McIver was what some have called a "prophet of the New South," but one whose focus was education. He might therefore be labeled as an "educational prophet of the New South." Even that description, however, falls short in that it implies that he simply enunciated a vision. McIver did more than that. He also helped to bring about the realization of the vision, all the way down to the "nuts-and-bolts" level. He did whatever it took to bring the vision to reality. He spoke, he debated, he convinced, he campaigned, he founded, he managed, he planned, he budgeted, he maintained, and he defended—he performed all the roles that the ardent advocate of a cause must play. He was, indeed, a statesman on behalf of education in the South.

It is easy to see that McIver, as the founder of the college that became UNCG, was central to the school's sense of identity, history, and purpose. In addition to the statue, there are portraits of McIver decorating lobbies and halls on campus, a building named in his honor, and a whole section of the Special Collections area of the Jackson Library dedicated to his and his wife's papers. The visitor might be surprised, however, to see just how important McIver was to the city of Greensboro and the state of North

Carolina as a whole. McIver Street and Duncan Street appear a short distance from the UNCG campus. McIver Elementary School is in another part of Greensboro. Cities all across the state, from the capital at Raleigh to tiny towns in the western mountains, feature streets and buildings named for him (Raleigh also has its own version of a McIver statue). Other southern states, such as Georgia and Tennessee, also have landmarks that bear his name.

Charles Duncan McIver was a towering figure in educational reform in turn-of-the-century North Carolina and a significant force for educational reform in other southern states as well. He pursued—and largely accomplished—two main goals: the replacement of the lowly common schools with the more effective and modern graded schools; and greater educational and professional opportunities for women. In pursuing these goals, McIver made a number of other related and complementary achievements, such as the popularizing and passage of taxes to support graded schools, the acceptance of college-educated women as teachers, the founding of a women's normal and industrial college, and the raising and distribution of large sums of money for educational reform for both blacks and whites. All of this McIver did in spite of many in the South who were initially wary and resentful of government, northerners, egalitarianism, and change in general.

McIver was an important figure in North Carolina and the South during the Gilded Age-Progressive Era and is therefore worthy of serious study. What follows is an attempt to examine his life and work as thoroughly and objectively as possible.

There have been a few previous efforts to chronicle Charles Duncan McIver's life and work. McIver himself started on different occasions to write an autobiography but

never completed it; he was just too busy. Edwin Alderman, McIver's longtime friend and fellow reformer, wrote a brief article titled "The Life and Work of Dr. Charles D. McIver" for the *North Carolina Journal of Education* not long after McIver's death in 1906. A group of McIver's close acquaintances published a collection of reminiscences in 1907.[1] Frances G. Satterfield, a journalist who was an alumna of the Woman's College (as the normal school later became known), published a sixty-eight page "brochure" on McIver in 1942, as part of the celebration of the school's fiftieth anniversary.[2] Several general accounts of educational reform in the South contain overviews of McIver's life and career, including, for example, Edgar W. Knight's *Public Education in the South*, Marcus C. Noble's *A History of the Public Schools of North Carolina*, Charles William Dabney's *Universal Education in the South*, and James L. LeLoudis's much more recent *Schooling the New South*.[3] In addition, general histories of North Carolina too numerous to name have for almost a century included at least brief mentions of McIver and other "educational statesmen."

There has been only one genuine monographic biography devoted exclusively to McIver, however. Rose Howell Holder, a feature writer for the Greensboro *Daily News*,

---

[1] William C. Smith, Viola Boddie, and Mary Settle Sharpe, eds. *Charles Duncan McIver* (Greensboro: J.J. Stone and Company, 1907).

[2] Satterfield, in her introduction, herself referred to her compilation as a "brochure" and acknowledged that it was simply a brief overview of the highlights of McIver's life. She also said, "Some day . . . I hope to write his biography." Unfortunately, she never did. She did, however, include in her brochure material that she compiled through interviews with McIver's wife (who lived until 1946) and other close relatives and acquaintances. Some of this material appears in no other source. Frances Gibson Satterfield, *Charles Duncan McIver, 1860-1906* (Atlanta: Ruralist Press, 1942).

[3] Edgar W. Knight, *Public Education in the South* (Boston: Ginn and Company, 1922); Marcus C. Noble, *A History of the Public Schools of North Carolina* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1930); Charles William Dabney, *Universal Education in the South*, 2 vols. (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1936); James L. LeLoudis, *Schooling the New South* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1996).

published a biography titled *McIver of North Carolina* in 1957.[4] Holder's book is fairly comprehensive and generally well-structured, and her writing style is pleasant; however, the book fails to address adequately McIver's role in the larger issues of the period, does not ask the hard questions about McIver himself, and is overwhelmingly laudatory and uncritical. In addition, it is now approaching a half-century in age. A fresh, objective, and comprehensive examination of McIver is needed, one that will pursue probing questions and attempt to place him in the context of the larger issues that were part of the New South landscape and of the contemporary debate over New South educational reform. The biography that follows will attempt to provide just such a treatment of McIver's life and accomplishments.

Before focusing on McIver specifically, however, it is important to provide an overview of the scholarship on Gilded Age-Progressive Era educational reform in the South. Many of the early accounts, such as those by Knight, Noble, and Dabney, were written during the first half of the twentieth century. These works praised the reformers' rejection of the old ways as part of mankind's ancient yet ever-continuing march toward a better, more democratic society. The educational, social, and economic changes occurring in the post-Civil War South comprised but the latest step in that glorious, inevitable progression.

[4] Rose Howell Holder, *McIver of North Carolina* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1957).

This "Whiggish" interpretation of southern educational reform was not challenged until the 1958 publication of Louis R. Harlan's *Separate and Unequal*, which pointed out that the parallel educational systems in the South—one white and one black—were not at all equally funded or maintained and could hardly be held to represent the democratic ideal; indeed, the whole idea of separate systems for different races was intrinsically racist and undemocratic. Michael B. Katz later highlighted similar inequities and hypocrisies on a national scale in his *The Irony of Early School Reform*.[5] The school of thought Harlan and Katz founded continued well on into the 1980s and 1990s, with William A. Link's *A Hard Country and a Lonely Place*, James D. Anderson's *The Education of Blacks in the South, 1865-1935*, and LeLoudis's *Schooling the New South*.[6] These scholars hold that not only were the educational reformers guilty of establishing and perpetuating systems that were inherently racist and unegalitarian, but that they also created institutions that embodied the values and priorities of *their* day. The reformers thought they were creating something objective and dynamic; instead, these revisionist scholars contend, they merely created something that reflected the white capitalist mindset of the late nineteenth and early twentieth century. The reformers had criticized the old common schools, which had been more about reproducing the society that already existed and maintaining control over it than about providing a quality education. Harlan,

---

[5] Louis R. Harlan, *Separate and Unequal* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1958); Michael B. Katz, *The Irony of Early School Reform* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1968).

[6] William A. Link, *A Hard Country and a Lonely Place: Schooling, Society, and Reform in Rural Virginia, 1870-1920* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1986); James D. Anderson, *The Education of Blacks in the South, 1865-1935*, (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1988); and LeLoudis, *Schooling the New South*.

Katz, and the others, however, argue that the reformers actually simply substituted one set of ideals for another. The old ideals—including the promotion of a local, agrarian, atomistic, white-Anglo-Saxon-Protestant way of life—were replaced with new, more "progressive" ideals, such as the promotion of education as preparation for a career or profession, the exaltation of business and personal prosperity, success measurable by numbers, social homogeneity (for whites), and an understanding of the emerging industrialized world and the preparation of students to take their places in it. Included in these new ideals was a modification of an old one: blacks were no longer to be slaves and were given grudging acceptance as a part of southern society, but they had to be kept segregated and in a second-class status. Some of the educational reformers were enthusiastic about the segregation of blacks, educationally and otherwise; others simply accepted it as "the way things are." Either way, say the revisionists, these ideals became part and parcel of the new educational system that was established throughout the South (and in many other places across the country). LeLoudis writes that the reformers established the school as a "learning factory." A state's school system was seen in the same light as a business, complete with a product and quantifiable results. Taxpayers were equated with stockholders, school board members were executive directors, the superintendent was the general manager, the principals were the foremen, and the teachers were the laborers. The students formed the raw material and were presumably molded into finished products which could fill the needs of society. There was little room for creativity, spontaneity, or individualization. Instead, schools aimed for standardized, uniform efficiency. Only by following this model could the school provide

an acceptable return on the investors' capital and produce the uniform product that society desired and needed.[7]

The biography that follows will endeavor not only to chronicle the life and work of Charles Duncan McIver, but to examine whether the presumptions of either of these two schools of thought apply to him, or if he should perhaps be understood differently within the context of New South educational reform. I will not only examine the events of McIver's life, but also explore such important matters as his attitudes toward women and blacks and his vision for the New South. I will also endeavor to portray McIver as accurately and objectively as possible, revealing strengths, weaknesses, gifts, flaws, triumphs, and missteps. It is hoped that, in the end, the reader will have gained not only a greater understanding and appreciation of McIver, but of his role in New South educational reform.

[7] LeLoudis, 231-32.

Chapter One

Charles Duncan McIver was once asked if he had ever considered changing his long-held stance on a particular issue. "Never," he replied, "I'm a Scotchman."[1] Whether McIver meant to imply an inherited trait of stubborn intransigence or one favoring dogged adherence to principle is not clear. What is clear is that, despite his lighthearted assertion, he and his ancestors had to face and adapt to significant—even tumultuous—changes from the very beginnings of their presence in America.

Although members of the McIver clan had been emigrating from the highlands of Scotland to the Cape Fear region of North Carolina since 1775,[2] the first of this particular set of McIvers came to the United States in 1802. Evander McIver, Charles McIver's paternal grandfather, immigrated at the age of eight from the Isle of Skye with his parents, Duncan and Catherine, and their six other children. They settled in Chatham County, North Carolina, near relatives in the vicinity of a rural community called Egypt.[3]

The vast majority of early settlement in the state had been along the Atlantic coast. Even by the turn of the nineteenth century, the Piedmont region, including

---

[1] Charles Duncan McIver Papers, Jackson Library, University of North Carolina at Greensboro, Greensboro, North Carolina, Folder 9.

[2] For an overview of Scottish patterns of settlement and movement in North Carolina, see Hugh T. Lefler and Albert R. Newsome, *The History of a Southern State: North Carolina* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1973), 79-86; see also William S. Powell, *North Carolina through Four Centuries* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1989), 106-109.

[3] McIver Papers, Folder 9. See also Frances Gibson Satterfield, *Charles Duncan McIver* (Atlanta: Ruralist Press, Inc., 1942), 3. Satterfield wrote and published her "brochure," which is really a long biographical essay, as part of the observance of the fiftieth anniversary of the Woman's College's founding. She conducted personal interviews with a number of McIver's still-living relatives, including his wife, his sister, his cousins, and his children. The information gained from those interviews echoes what McIver wrote in his autobiographical notes and provides additional material as well.

Chatham County, was still largely wilderness. The frontier nature of the McIvers' new home imposed its own hardships, to be sure, but it also afforded its own opportunities. The Louisiana Purchase triggered successive waves of westward migration in the first half of the nineteenth century, and those leaving often sold their lands for a pittance. It was thus that Evander McIver as an adult acquired a considerable estate. By his early thirties, he was a prosperous landowner, planter, and businessman; his holdings at their peak included 6,000 acres, over 100 slaves, and investments in various local businesses.

Evander McIver was nicknamed "Scotch" by his friends, relatives, and acquaintances. The nickname was derived both from his Scottish ancestry (his thick brogue was a constant reminder) and from his legendary thriftiness—a cultural stereotype that even the McIvers and other area Scots were fond of perpetuating. Stories illustrating "Scotch" McIver's cautious stewardship of money have survived. One anecdote relates that he made it a policy never to see any of his newborn children—nine in all—until he had first paid the attending doctor for his services. Family members chuckled and wondered whether it was because he disliked parting with money and wanted to get it over with, or because he disliked doctors and wanted to avoid being beholden to them. Either or both could have been true, for another story relates to a doctor's repeated visits to treat a member of the household. After watching the doctor return numerous times without the patient showing any benefit (and with his having to pay each time), "Scotch" finally told the doctor not to come back. Surprised, the doctor asked why. "We-ell," said "Scotch" in his still-strong brogue, "I thought she might as well die of sickedness [sic] as

be charged to death." Despite his thriftiness, however, relatives said Evander was also generous to those in need and hospitable to visitors. He said it was the "Scotch way."[4]

In fact, a number of things about the local community reflected the Scottish influence. In addition to the celebrated emphasis on thriftiness, the Scottish immigrants of Chatham and Moore counties extolled—as indicated in sermons, letters, and school essays—order, cleanliness, self-reliance, and industry. Decades later, Charles McIver would reflect those values in his oft-repeated maxims to the students of his college: "To close a door is a mark of civilization"; "Be the prize a ribbon or a throne, the victor is the one who can go it alone"; and "Close your windows—North Carolina is too poor to heat all of Guilford County." His esteem for work, punctuality, and organization, and his desire for order in his environment, even down to the obsessive adjusting of shades and rearranging of water glasses in meeting halls, may well have been products of this stern, frontier Scottish heritage. Charles and other family members later recalled that the Scottish-immigrant homes and farms of Chatham and Moore counties showed the same kind of commitment to order and productivity. Potentially idle hands were best kept busy; industry was its own reward.[5]

In addition to order and industry, those early McIvers evidenced a strong commitment to their Presbyterian faith. Buffalo Presbyterian Church, where "Scotch" served as an elder, had been built as soon as manageable (which turned out to be 1797) and quickly became the center of community life. Local place names were one testament to the Biblical orientation of the community; indeed, the name "Egypt" had come from an

---

[4] Satterfield, 4.
[5] Ibid.; McIver Papers, Folder 9.

incident where, like Jacob's sons in Genesis, neighbors had come seeking grain after a crop failure. Another indication of the Presbyterian mindset was a strict, sometimes even stern, morality. Right was right, wrong was wrong, and straying from the path was dealt with swiftly and forthrightly. Charles McIver's students later remembered that he, usually congenial and gracious, could become severe if a student deliberately broke the rules. No doubt he was reflecting his own upbringing.[6]

By the early 1830s, Charles's grandfather "Scotch" was in mid-life and had absorbed all the major elements of his Scottish heritage. But he had also adapted to—and been shaped by—the changes that affected the Scottish immigrant community in North Carolina. In addition to continued immigration and westward movement, "Scotch" and the other McIvers were affected by the rise of the cotton kingdom (which they also played their part in creating). Little is recorded about "Scotch's" thoughts regarding the propriety of slavery, which had not been prevalent in Scotland, but it is known that he was a slaveowner. Family tradition holds that he never whipped his slaves and that he treated them well in general, though there is no firm proof one way or the other. His descendants, emphasizing the family's Scottish heritage, speculated that "Scotch" McIver simply was a good businessman and planted the money-making crop of his day, which was cotton, and growing cotton required slave labor. In fairness, documents related to the nineteenth-century McIvers record none of the racially-based pre-war vitriol that appears in the diaries and correspondence of some southern families. The end of the matter, however, is that by the 1830s, Evander McIver had become, despite his Scottish brogue

[6] Satterfield, 4.

and sensibilities, a southern planter and slaveowner, not altogether unlike thousands of others, with whatever assets and liabilities those labels might carry.

"Scotch" married well, both in terms of character and social standing. His choice for a bride was Margaret McIver, the only child of "Wealthy Miller" Duncan McIver and a distant relative. Duncan's grist mill had made him rich. At his death, "Wealthy Miller" passed on to Margaret, as part of her inheritance, three thousand acres of his land, thereby further expanding "Scotch" and Margaret's holdings.

By 1834, "Scotch" was approaching forty and was, by any measure, a prosperous, respected member of the community. He and Margaret had four children—Jane, Flora Ann, Duncan, and Donald—and were expecting their fifth. On April 21st Margaret went into labor, which the doctor attended while "Scotch" waited outside. After a few hours, the baby—a boy—was born with no complications. According to family tradition, "Scotch" followed his habit of not going in to visit his wife and new baby until he had paid the doctor. A few weeks later, the proud parents presented their new son to the congregation at Buffalo Presbyterian Church, christening him Matthew Henry. "Scotch" said that they would call him Henry.[7]

Henry was reared in a nurturing home that nevertheless emphasized strict Presbyterian morality and discipline. His parents also stressed the value of literacy and education. Scottish Presbyterian immigrants in general held education in high regard and, wherever they went, typically took not only a minister with them but a schoolmaster as well, and the same person often filled both offices. By the time Henry began his

[7] Ibid., 5.

studies, Buffalo Presbyterian Church had served as schoolhouse for several generations of McIver children. Henry proved to be a good student. Interestingly enough, the only whipping he ever got in school was for insisting on studying quietly to himself when the rule of the day was to study out loud. In later years, his son Charles noted, in light of his own endeavors, the irony of this incident.[8]

Henry's older brothers had gone to college and he expected to do the same. His father's agricultural and business interests, however, were at a peak as Henry reached college age, and "Scotch" needed help running the various enterprises. Henry was the last boy at home and, though not forbidden to go to college, realized that logic and tradition placed the responsibility for helping his father on his shoulders. Thus, he made a hard decision and declined to go to college. Though he could not see how any other choice was possible, he regretted that decision for the rest of his life. That decision, however, that may have helped set the stage for future events. Because of his love for learning and the lingering sense of a missed opportunity, Henry imbued a college education with transcendent value and passed that reverence for higher education on to his children. He also instilled in them from very early on the assumption that college was to be part of their futures.

As Henry matured, he gradually assumed greater responsibilities for running his father's plantation and business enterprises. Few specifics survive regarding the period between Henry's finishing school and his marriage, but family tradition says that he was a hard worker and a competent manager. Tradition also holds that, like his father, he made a point of not mistreating the slaves. Descendants consistently maintained that

[8] McIver Papers, Folder 9; Satterfield, 5.

McIver slaves were never whipped, although at least one other account contradicts that claim. In any event, as far as owner-slave relations went, slaves on the McIver farm were probably among the better treated. In addition, Charles later recalled that the slaves stayed with the family during the war, even at times when escape would have been relatively easy, and that they stayed on as hired workers and sharecroppers after the war; this might not have been true had the McIvers been among those slaveowners who were cruel and abusive.[9]

In 1859, Henry married Sarah Harrington. "Pretty Sallie" was described by friends and family as "fun-loving" and "mischievous," with black hair, gray eyes, a genuine charisma, and a fondness for games and pranks. Charles would, in years to come, inherit much of his own charisma and sense of humor from Sallie, his mother. She was seventeen at the time of her marriage. According to relatives, her personality was something of a contrast to that of Henry, who tended to be more serious, but no one enjoyed a joke more than Henry, perhaps part of the reason he so enjoyed Sallie.

Although "Pretty Sallie" possessed a spirited temperament, she was not reckless or irresponsible. She was the daughter of William Harrington, one of the richest planters and biggest landholders in Moore County, a descendant of Scottish immigrants, and a distant cousin of Henry's. Her mother having died some years earlier, she acquired the responsibility of managing her father's household. Far from being spoiled or haughty, in spite of her family's wealth, Sallie worked hard, took seriously her duties—including cooking, cleaning, preserving food, making clothes, and entertaining guests—and proved herself more than competent. She apparently was a stickler for cleanliness, insisting that,

[9] Satterfield, 5; McIver Papers, Folder 9.

among other things, the bed linens be aired out daily. She was also a stickler for tidiness in appearance; her children remembered her saying, "I think it our duty to dress neatly and even genteelly if we can afford it, that we may feel at ease in company." Charles would later observe that he had gotten his reverence for industry, order, and devotion to duty from both parents, not just his father.[10]

The Henry McIvers started married life with a house and a tract of land ("Scotch" gave them the old "Wealthy Miller" place). They did not wait long to enlarge their household. In February of the new year, Sallie discovered she was pregnant. On September 27, 1860, while still a month away from turning eighteen, she delivered the couple's first child, a boy. The baby was christened two months later at a Presbyterian church near Carthage. To the traditional name of Charles they added Henry's maternal grandfather's name, Duncan. Charles Duncan McIver was to be his formal name, but to family and friends, he was "little Charlie."

Little Charlie was born healthy, with no complications for baby or mother, but upheaval was about to engulf his life. Henry, realizing in 1860 that tensions between North and South might lead to violence, moved his fledgling family to a house only about five miles from the Harrington plantation. If war did erupt and he was required to be involved, his wife and infant son would be better off near Sallie's father. The house there was not nearly as comfortable as the one at the former "Wealthy Miller" place, but it came with a large area of good, fertile bottomland located around two creeks. It was on this homestead that Charles McIver spent the war years and lived until he was six.

---

[10] Satterfield, 6; McIver Papers, Folder 9.

When war broke out in the spring of 1861, it indeed affected the McIvers, though indirectly at first. Henry, who said that secession and war were foolish endeavors, managed at first to avoid military service. Even so, the McIvers knew many in the community who had loved ones killed or wounded in the fighting. At home, nearly everyone suffered from wartime shortages and hardships. The Henry McIvers were no exception but, owing to their general prosperity, had it better than many.[11]

Charles McIver's memories of the war years revolved around three people. The first of these was the black foreman of his father's slaves, a man named Sam. Charles remembered that Sam treated him with great kindness, taking pains with him that, even as a slave, he did not have to take. "Uncle Sam" took little Charlie along in the wagon when he had to run errands, let him ride the horses, and talked to him about things they saw. He watched over the child and showed genuine affection, often tousling his hair with his callused fingers. The only time Charlie ever saw a slave whipped—indeed, the one recorded instance of a whipping on a McIver plantation—however, was when Sam whipped a rebellious field hand. The incident stuck with Charles for the rest of his life, perhaps making more of an impression because of the stark contrast between the Sam he knew and the harsh man wielding the whip.

Another person who was prominent in McIver's memories from the war years was a young boy, also a slave, named Dick, who was a few years older than Charlie. McIver later recalled that Dick was the most mischievous of the slave children who were his playmates during his early years. One spring he and Charlie watched as the adults plucked the geese. Soon afterwards, Dick suggested that he and Charlie do the same to

---

[11] Satterfield, 6.

the guineas, for which they were disciplined. Another adventure involved spreading hot coals in the fireplace of one of the cabins on the plantation, Dick climbing up to the roof and dropping a cat down the chimney, and Charlie watching the fireplace to observe the resulting tumult when the cat hit the coals. Yet another joint project between the two was a sweet potato patch they were allowed to plant and maintain on their own. The plants grew well until a neighbor's bull—which the boys acutely feared—jumped the fence and ate the entire crop as they watched. Restrained by fear yet stirred by frustration, Dick finally turned to his companion with a solution. "Charlie," he said triumphantly, "Let's cuss him." Whether the planned verbal assault was actually executed or whether it had any effect on the bull is not known, but Charles did recall that Sam quickly arrived on the scene and carried them away from the bull for their own protection.[12]

Years later, McIver proved to be an entertaining and inspiring public speaker popular with both whites and blacks. Noting his ability to relate well to black audiences, philanthropist Robert C. Ogden asked McIver about the source of his rapport with blacks. "I know them," said McIver. "I played with them when I was a boy."[13] Charles McIver claimed years later that his memories of both Dick and Sam were permeated with "tender and affectionate" feelings for both of them and that his experiences with them had led him to a "compassionate sympathy and friendliness" for their whole race. Whether the McIvers' slaves reciprocated these feelings is not known; slaves sometimes maintained a façade of friendliness and respect towards their owners that hid their real feelings. It is true, however, as mentioned earlier, that, rather than trying to escape (which would have

[12] McIver Papers, Folder 9.
[13] McIver Papers, Folder 5.

been relatively easy at times) or trying to strike back at their owners, the slaves on Henry McIver's plantation stayed with the family during the war and worked for them after the war ended as sharecroppers or hired hands. In any event, Charles's positive recollections of his relationships with blacks in his childhood doubtless played a role in his support for greater opportunities for blacks, especially in education.

The third person upon whom Charles McIver's war memories focused was his father, Henry. Accounts differ, but in 1863 or early 1864, as the Confederate need for men became more urgent, Henry was drafted into the Confederate army. It was a vivid recollection for Charles: "I remember how, when he was telling my mother goodbye, I begged him not to go. I didn't know what war was, but it was not hard for me to realize that there was something awful in that separation." Little Charlie's clinging and crying were finally ended by his father stating emphatically that he *had* to go. "If I don't go, they'll *make* me." The understanding of this concept upset the order of the small boy's world and threatened his sense of security. "This was the first time I had ever conceived of anybody's making my father do anything," wrote McIver later. "It was revelation to me. I had thought that he was the supreme power that made people do things." Indeed, on the McIver plantation, Henry had been the supreme power, his authority undergirded not only by the structures of southern society but of the values of Scottish Presbyterianism as well. Now Charlie realized that there were forces beyond even his father's control. No doubt the young boy suddenly felt small and helpless and perhaps even threatened by things from which not even his father could protect him.[14]

---

[14] McIver Papers, Folder 9.

His father's absence proved to be a formative event in Charles's life. Indications are that he, being only two or three at the time, was angry with his father for leaving and for shattering the stability and security of his world. This anger apparently expressed itself as a subtle rebellious streak in Charles, for whenever he had the opportunity in later years, he would make choices that were in stark contrast to what his father advised. It is also likely that his mother's ability to run the household and farm in his father's absence made a deep impression on Charles; his appreciation for women's abilities and his desire to give them greater opportunities may have begun here. His speeches and personal correspondence often recalled just how hard his mother worked and how capable she proved to be while his father was gone.[15]

His father, however, returned sooner than they had expected. Henry had contracted typhoid fever and been given up to die. He found a way home and suddenly appeared, pale and gaunt, at his house in the fall of 1864.

As Henry slowly regained his strength, he looked for tasks that were not physically taxing. He took the position of teacher in the local school and often brought four year-old Charlie with him as he taught.[16] Charles McIver's introduction to formal education, therefore, was in a one-room schoolhouse that followed the "common school" pattern of the day—that is, all the children of the community were gathered in a single room and were led in lessons that typically involved a lot of memorization and recitation. McIver recalled as an adult:

> For according to the customs of that time and community, anybody who desired to do so "studied out loud" and my most distinct recollection of the school is the

[15] McIver Papers, Folder 10.
[16] Satterfield, 6; McIver Papers, Folder 9.

> constant hum and hubbub made by the pupils['] voices as they ran races to see who could "get over the lesson" first—or who could go over it oftenest. If you could have visited our school when it was busy, you would not have seen many faces. Instead you would have beheld a grand array of blue back spellers (Webster's) held near the faces of pupils, whose mingled voices, like the sound of many waters, would have poured into your ears, and, if you had caught any definite sound, it would probably have been b-a, ba, k-e-r, ker, baker; s-h-a, sha, d-y, dy, shady; l-a, la, d-y, dy, lady, etc. . . . A few were whispering or "studying to themselves" as it was called, while perhaps a few others, who were looked upon as cranks or freaks of nature and probably denominated "quare" (queer) by their fellows, had secured permission to retire to the grove or some secluded spot to study alone. Such was my first impression of school.[17]

It is likely that his father's five-month stint (which was the full extent of the school year) as teacher made a significant impression on little Charlie. His father loomed large in his young mind, and anything that was important enough for his father to devote so much time and attention to *must* be important. The value of education thus received a strong early boost in Charles's thinking.[18]

Meanwhile, the war drew to a close. Soldiers from the area, half-starved and in rags, began returning to their homes, farms, and businesses. In some cases, they returned to homes and farms that had been reduced to ruins, either deliberately or incidentally. The most grievous loss, of course, was the deaths of so many of their young men. Henry's own brother, Duncan, and his sister Elizabeth's husband had both died in the war, as well as other relatives. Henry's father, "Scotch," suffered heavy losses in the defeat. Not only had he lost a son and a son-in-law, but much of his wealth, invested in human chattel, had evaporated with emancipation. He was a broken man, both financially and spiritually. McIver relatives maintained that "Scotch" thought that the

---

[17] McIver Papers, Folder 9.
[18] McIver Papers, Folder 9; Satterfield, 6.

right thing had been done in freeing human beings from the degradation of bondage, but that the evil of slavery had been replaced by the evil of the government wiping out a man's wealth without just compensation. Whatever the case, "Scotch" was ruined. He declined mentally and physically in the year after the war ended and died on September 22, 1866. His estate was divided among his children, and Henry's portion included a tract of six hundred acres. Soon after his father's death Henry built a house on the newly-inherited land. This would be the house where Charles, six years old at the time, and his siblings would spend the rest of their childhood.

Though not yet ready to accept racial equality, Henry was more progressive in many areas than his contemporaries. (The same can be said for Charles in later years: he was quite progressive in some ways but very much a product of his times in others.) Henry McIver's willingness to adapt to change began to show fairly quickly after the end of the war. Lands that had been part of a fairly typical antebellum cotton plantation hosted, by the late 1860s, a multi-faceted enterprise. Henry continued raising cotton as a cash crop but added tobacco as well. In addition, his operation now included part-ownership in a store in Sanford, a water-powered cotton gin, a grist mill, an exposed vein of coal, a blacksmith shop, wheel-making facilities, a woodworking shop, and numerous head of cattle grazing on land blessed with a full-flowing creek and a natural salt lick.

Three forces were at work in shaping Henry's endeavors. The first was his ingrained Scottish Presbyterian work ethic; Henry was quick to extol the virtues of hard work, prosperity honestly earned, and keeping one's self occupied with constructive activity. Another factor was his desire not to have his family's fortunes tied to a single enterprise, as was the case with cotton-related single-mindedness in the antebellum

period. Finally, Henry's growing realization that the old, isolated, self-sufficient plantation was becoming a thing of the past shaped his entrance into the new economic world of the postwar South. Increasingly the McIvers were buying, in stores in the nearby towns, goods formerly made at home. As Henry and his family were discovering, factory-produced clothes, tools, and other products were generally of better quality and lower cost than those made at home. The ideal of the self-sufficient plantation faded as the ever-burgeoning national market economy began pulling even the most isolated rural regions into its orbit. Henry and his family embraced the new way as a positive good and a development that was perhaps inevitable. Charles McIver, therefore, grew up in a home environment which increasingly saw the old, slavery-enabled, plantation-centered way of life as antiquated and undesirable, and the new business-oriented, market-integrated lifestyle as the wave of the future (and better suited to their own Presbyterian emphases on productivity, efficiency, and self-earned prosperity). Thus Charles imbibed "shopkeeper's values," disdained the limitations of the Old South, and grew up looking ahead to a new, more modern region.[19]

One thing that the new McIver estate lacked in 1868 was access to a school. Scottish Presbyterians in North Carolina, with their traditional emphasis on education, typically established schools in connection with their local churches. Usually the local pastor served as the teacher of the school, a duty he saw as part of his ministry. He did, however, charge tuition, which of course meant that a portion of the congregation could not afford to attend.

---

[19] Satterfield, 6; McIver Papers, Folder 9.

Attempts had been made to provide broader access to education in the state. Calvin H. Wiley, himself a Scottish Presbyterian, set out in the 1840s to establish taxpayer-supported, tuition-free schools for all of North Carolina's children. As state superintendent of education, Wiley launched a campaign which succeeded in creating a system of public common schools around the state. Wiley won support—both in funding and enthusiasm—for the system and maintained it for nearly twenty years, keeping it going even during the war. After the war, however, North Carolinians were in no mood for an enterprise like Wiley's. Due to poverty, an aversion to anything that smacked of overreaching government activity (an attitude related to both the war and Reconstruction), and an intense fear that a public school system would eventually be forced to desegregate, enthusiasm for taxation to support public schools evaporated quickly after 1865. The Freedmen's Bureau now provided schools for black children (and, in some cases, adults). In those towns and cities around the state which accepted outside funding, the Peabody Fund and other philanthropic organizations helped support schools for white students. Everywhere else, however, and especially in rural areas, the establishment and maintenance of schools was left almost entirely to the local communities.[20]

Such was the case in the McIvers' community. There was no school of any kind near where they now lived. Henry and several neighbors decided to pool their resources to build and operate a school for their children. Charles turned eight in September, 1868, and started attending the newly-opened school the next month.

---

[20] See Lefler and Newsome, 384-86, 403-404; see also Powell, 305-307, 321-22.

The school, a plain, one-room log affair, served between twenty and thirty students, most of whom were Charles's cousins of one degree or another. The teacher, in addition to being paid a small stipend, was boarded by a different family each month. The school reflected in almost every way the local, familiar, and community-oriented nature that most common schools exhibited in North Carolina at that time.

Class started at eight o'clock and ended at four-thirty with a lunch break at noon. During those hours Charles and his classmates studied reading, writing, basic arithmetic, and spelling. As they progressed in age and ability, geography, history, and grammar were added. The students studied reading using the McGuffey Readers, just as their parents had done. In fact, some of them used the very copies of the Readers that their mother or father had used years earlier. The McGuffey Readers did more than just teach reading; they also highlighted moral precepts that were to be drawn from the stories. In fact, the moral was often spelled out in a poetic verse at the end of the story. Expressions such as "Don't be the boy who cried wolf too often" and "Where there's a will there's a way" became a part of students' everyday speech, especially since they were likely to hear these maxims at home as well. The McGuffey Readers echoed the values of the children's parents, and to some that was as important as any other aspect of their education.

The study of reading included oral recitations, also taken from the McGuffey Readers. Charles and the other students memorized and recited selections each year, two of which made lasting impressions on young Charles. One was *The Blue and the Gray*, a poem written in 1867 to commemorate the impartial decoration of both Union and

Confederate soldiers' graves by the women of Columbus, Mississippi, and which encouraged swift reconciliation and moving forward with the country's business. The other selection was the poem *Abou Ben Adhem* by James Henry Leigh Hunt. The idea that a man who loved his fellow man would be given the place of highest honor in heaven struck a chord in young Charles. In speeches made even years later, he often found occasion to quote Hunt's poem.

Charles later mused that he could never tell which had a greater impact on his life: home, church, or school. In reality, all three echoed the same worldview and values, so it is no surprise that Charles found them indistinguishable. Certainly his home had made a lasting impression on him. The evidence is strong that his church background made its mark as well. As Charles wrote the compositions required in the higher grades, he often included Biblical quotations or references. An essay on the importance of education, for instance, made the following observation: "We should hear instruction and be wise and refuse it not. Prov. 8th chap. 33rd verse [sic]." As he grew in intellect, his mischievous sense of humor found ever more creative outlets, even through his familiarity with the nuances of southern-styled Presbyterianism. When one of his teachers, in the midst of a lesson on indefinite articles, said that the article "a" could only be used before singular nouns, such as "a lady" or "a man." Charles raised his hand and, with only barely a straight face, informed her, "Teacher, you can say "amen."[21]

Evidence that Charles was soaking up the values presented to him via the institutions of home, church, and school appears in the titles of some of the compositions

[21] McIver Papers, Folder 9.

he wrote during his later grammar school years: "Home," "Industry," "The Sabbath," "Friendship," "Education," and so on. His essay on industry, for example, showed an already-strong belief in the virtues of hard work and fruitfulness. His parents and his Presbyterian background had begun chiseling the concept into his psyche even before he started school; both church and school now reinforced the idea. The conviction that work is virtuous and that "idle hands are the devil's workshop" led him to think that one must always be busy or else be considered lazy and foolish. His composition on industry already showed contempt for people who "do nothing all Summer and go around begging those who have worked hard and are bountifully supplied." In another essay he wrote that "time is very precious and should not be used in a foolish or trifling manner." Coupled with his father's policy of refraining from praising his sons lest they "get the big head," Charles grew up fearing idleness and working constantly to gain the approval that seldom came. It was a classic recipe to create what some modern psychologists have called a "Type A" personality—the constantly striving, hard-driving, never relaxing, perfectionist, physically over-extended personality.

Charles also began to exhibit an appreciation for women and their contributions. Closer to his mother than to his father, his relatives thought he took much of his personality—especially his gregariousness and sense of humor—from her. He also developed a keen awareness during this time of the unrecognized everyday work that women did, how competent women really were (his own mother had demonstrated that during his father's wartime absence), and yet how consistently they were consigned to an inferior status. Years later he would describe women's dependent, second-class status as "galling." When William Lacy, the pastor of his family's church, preached on the

"proper place of women," restricting them to housework and child-rearing, a pre-adolescent Charles expressed to the family—though not to Lacy—his disagreement with that interpretation of the Scriptures. It was the first clear indication of a growing concern for the lot of women, but it would not be the last.[22]

Charles's drive to excel surfaced early, motivating him to be a good student and to absorb whatever his teachers had to offer. He graduated from grammar school at the age of twelve. His diploma, signed by Bertha Buie, reads: "Be it known that on the 15th day of December Charlie D. McIver received this Diploma having been awarded the largest number of Premiums for Good Conduct and attention to studies during the term from Aug. 15 to Dec. 15, 1872 kept in Woodland Green, Moore County." Charles graduated literally at the top of the class.[23]

The emphasis on work and responsibility did not stop with the end of the school day. If lounging around had ever been acceptable on the antebellum McIver plantation, it was certainly not acceptable on the post-war McIver farm. Beyond his regular after-school duties, Charles carried forth an expanded list of chores in the months when school was not in session all the way up until the time he left for college. Even then, he worked whenever he came home on vacation. In later years McIver told numerous audiences, "I have done almost every kind of unskilled labor that a farm boy or man can be called upon to do." That included plowing, planting, harvesting, herding cattle, butchering livestock, making syrup, hunting game, and assisting with whatever repairs needed to be done on the farm. The workday on the farm began at sunrise and ended when the sun went down.

---

[22] Satterfield, 7; McIver Papers, Folder 9.
[23] McIver Papers, Folder 9.

After supper and a short time of relaxation, the family would have a devotional time together. Henry McIver, now an elder in the Presbyterian church like his father before him, read a passage from the Bible and led the family in prayer. The next day, the cycle would begin again.[24]

Still, for at least five months a year, school interrupted that cycle, and even the adults considered the interruption an important one. Certainly Henry McIver thought so; he was determined that all of his children would get a good education and that his sons would have the opportunity to attend college that he missed. All of Henry's boys were instilled early with the idea that they would one day go to college. Charles never questioned that idea and considered it as much his goal as his father's. Before he could go to college, however, he had to attend a college preparatory academy. As it happened, such a school had recently opened nearby.

The academy was taught and run by John E. Kelly, the grandson of "Scotch" McIver's sister Catherine. He had earned his degree at Davidson College, a Presbyterian-affiliated college which was building a good reputation. His academy also had something of a reputation for excellence. Kelly held his charges to high standards and tolerated little foolishness. The academy's curriculum was typical of the time, incorporating English grammar, geography, algebra, Latin, Greek, rhetoric, and composition, with a rich sampling of the classical writers. Charles entered Kelly's academy the fall he turned thirteen and, after three years, graduated with high marks.

The question now arose as to where he would attend college. His family and friends all assumed that he would go to St. Andrews, a Presbyterian college in

---

[24] Satterfield, 7-8.

Laurinburg; after all, that was the school his pastor and most McIver males had attended. When Charles announced that he was thinking of going to the University of North Carolina, a mild tumult erupted. Why, his friends and relatives wondered, would he want to go there? Charles replied in a rational fashion that he was impressed with the University's record of producing leaders and men of achievement; he also said he wanted a greater change of atmosphere than St. Andrews would allow. The University's history of training outstanding graduates was a valid enough reason. It is also possible, however, that Charles, while not challenging his family's principles or heritage, wanted to escape his father's shadow and make his own mark. It may also have been an instance of subtle rebellion against his father.

Perhaps to Charles's surprise, his father did not argue against his choice. Instead, he proposed that the two of them journey to Chapel Hill and visit the University. The date they chose was the commencement of 1877. For the sixteen year-old farm boy, it was indeed an impressive event. Dignitaries from all over the state were in attendance, the stores and hotels were bustling with activity, and all was awash in formality, importance, and excitement. To top it all off, the commencement address was given by Zebulon B. Vance, then in his third term as governor. A change in atmosphere young McIver had wanted, and this was certainly different from both the farm and the quiet environs of St. Andrews College. Charles applied and was accepted at the University of North Carolina. The influences of home, church, and basic schooling had already had

their formative affects on him; to these elements a whole new level of influence was about to be added.[25]

When Charles McIver first walked the halls of the University of North Carolina (UNC) as a student in August, 1877, he entered an institution that had gone through a number of significant, sometimes drastic, changes over the eight decades of its existence, the most important of which involved the University's mission and curriculum. To understand adequately the education McIver began to receive in 1877—and, indeed, to fully understand North Carolina and the South at that point—it is necessary to look briefly at the history of the University itself.

When the University of North Carolina first opened its doors in 1795, the curriculum was inspired primarily by the intellectual currents of the Enlightenment. Courses in history, science, and modern languages enjoyed equal prestige with the classics, and students could choose either a Latin-based degree plan focusing on the classics or an English-based program which included the sciences and literature. A student uprising in 1799, however, brought violence, upheaval, and ultimately change to the school. Critics, with the horrors of the Reign of Terror fresh in mind, connected the chaos in Chapel Hill to the "Jacobine" ideas of the Enlightenment. Frightened by events and worried about losing popular support, the University's officers made sweeping changes, retreating to the traditional curriculum centered on the classics. By 1804 the University of North Carolina was little different from other colleges in the region, emphasizing the classics, focusing on Greek and Latin, and steering students toward

[25] Ibid.; McIver Papers, Folder 9.

simply mastering already-extant knowledge as opposed to pursuing independent thought and inquiry.[26]

The educators at Chapel Hill were not alone. Colleges across the country were retreating to the classics and digging in.[27] In the South, the emphases on tradition and deference to a classically-trained elite of social and political leaders eventually became intertwined with the reactionary defense of slavery and the planter aristocracy. By the 1840s, faculty and students alike at the University of North Carolina were arguing that abolitionists were making the same mistake that the French philosophes had made; that is, they placed too much faith in human reason and its potential for progress. The only protection from the potential excesses of new ideas was in the determined maintenance of the established order. The University had moved a long way from its starting point as a bold experiment in modern education; it was now a fortress anchoring the defense of the status quo, teeming with animosity toward independent or innovative thought of any kind.[28]

For the administration and faculty of the day, education consisted of mastering and honoring existing knowledge rather than equipping students with the tools necessary for independent inquiry and discovery. Students were required to learn the classical languages so that they might ingest the wisdom of the ancients. They were expected to

---

[26] Kemp P. Battle, *History of the University of North Carolina* (Raleigh: Edwards and Broughton Printing Company, 1912), I: 155-80. See also James L. LeLoudis, *Schooling the New South* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1996), 37-60.
[27] George T. Winston, "The First Faculty: Its Work and Its Opportunity," *University Record*, n.s. 1, no. 2 (1901-2), 19; Battle, *History of the University of North Carolina*, II: 139, 238-39, 525-26, 540-42, 608. For a national view of trends in higher education during the period, see Bruce Kimball, *Orators and Philosophers: A History of the Idea of Liberal Education* (New York: Teachers College Press, 1986).
[28] Battle, *History of the University of North Carolina*, I: 1, 205.

be passive recipients of information rather than seek to expand the existing realm of knowledge. Professors commonly used recitation as their preferred method of instruction. Time was seldom, if ever, allowed for discussion or asking questions of the instructor. Outside reading assignments were practically non-existent. The professors were rarely specialists in their fields anyway, most of them being clergymen who had themselves received a general education in the classics. The University made almost no provision whatsoever—not even a library—for specialization, research, or inquiry born of original thought.[29]

The antebellum students saw the Dialectic and Philanthropic Societies to be at least as important to their education as their classroom experiences. These student-run bodies allowed them not only to develop skills they were seldom allowed to practice in the classroom—oratory, debate, composition, etc.—but to cultivate the manly bearing, refinement, and polish that they would need to take their places as leaders of southern society and defend the status quo. In the Societies they learned to be *men*.[30]

After the Civil War, the University experienced a period of bitter criticism (some said an outmoded system of higher education had contributed to the South's defeat), political hostility, and sharply declining enrollment, leading to its being shut down in 1871. The upheaval subsided after a time and the University was resurrected in 1875. The school that re-emerged had been completely overhauled under the leadership of Kemp Battle, a faculty member who had earlier called for change and who was now the

---

[29] Kemp Battle, "Recollections of the University of North Carolina of 1844," *University Magazine* 13 (March-April 1896), 296, 308-309.
[30] Battle, *History of the University of North Carolina*, I: 1, 172-75, 565-69; Angus McNeill, Dialectic Society Records, Wilson Library, University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill, North Carolina, Folder 20.

president. The University now offered courses in a wide range of disciplines, including English literature, mathematics, the sciences, and the "practical arts." Clergymen and generalists on the faculty list began to be replaced with specialists with advanced degrees.[31] Students could now design their own degree programs through the selection of both specialized and general electives. A rigorous grading system based on percentages was instituted; each student now competed with his peers for grades and recognition. Lectures became the backbone of instruction in most courses, and, in the science courses, laboratory experiments and fieldwork also became requirements. Sharing time-honored principles and passing into manhood were no longer the top priority; independent inquiry, scholarly achievement, and academic distinction were.[32]

Once the new UNC was running according to its new design, faculty and administrators observed with satisfaction that "the inner life of the University, its very soul, heart and essence, rest upon the secure basis of self-development." Professors no longer endeavored to shape students into a pre-determined mold. Instead of a cultivated sense of style and machismo, students now saw scholarly achievement as the mark of a distinguished college graduate. For everyone concerned, the "power of original thought" and a commitment to pursue social, scientific, philosophical, and economic progress were the hallmarks of one ready to take his place in the emerging modern world.[33]

---

[31] Winston, "The First Faculty," 26; Battle, *History of the University of North Carolina*, I: 2, 139, 238-39, 525-26, 540-42, 608.

[32] George T. Winston, "The University of To-Day," *University Magazine* 13 (March-April 1894), 327-28. Charles McIver's grade reports reflect the new grading system; examples are in the McIver Papers, Folder 1. See the *Catalogue of the Trustees, Faculty, and Students of the University of North Carolina, 1875-76* for an early example of the new degree programs, including electives; see later editions of the *Catalogue* for examples of how the offerings expanded over time.

[33] Winston, "University of To-Day," 325-27; Battle, *History of the University of North Carolina*, II: 289.

The importance of the retooling of the University can hardly be overstated. The trustees, administration, and faculty had consciously and aggressively made a break with the past and had created a university that both anticipated and facilitated the rise of a more modern society in North Carolina and the South as a whole.

Such was the situation when freshman Charles McIver arrived in Chapel Hill in August, 1877. Not only had the University changed, but its clientele had begun to change as well. By 1890, roughly half of UNC's students were the first in their families to attend college. In addition, over twenty-five percent of them either worked their way through school or borrowed money to pay for their educations. These young men were no longer the sons of the elite preparing to take their places as lords and masters of a slaveholding society; they were the sons of a developing middle class hoping to equip themselves for success in a rapidly changing, increasingly entrepreneurial world. Charles McIver was one of these young men, and he immediately began to imbibe the progressive mentality that now characterized the academic community at Chapel Hill.[34]

Charles—"Mac," as he became known on campus—was part of a class of eighty-eight among a total student body of 160. He lived in the Old West dormitory with fifty-five other young men and took his meals at a nearby boarding house. Charles got to know practically everyone on campus, at least by name, as well as many in the village of Chapel Hill. One of the people with whom he became well-acquainted was Cornelia Spencer, a writer of some influence who had penned a column for years in the *N.C. Presbyterian* and who was an outspoken proponent of the importance of education at all

---

[34] *University of North Carolina Record* 1 (February 1897), 18-19; Battle, *History of the University of North Carolina*, II: 587.

levels. Spencer had long argued that the young women of North Carolina should be educated as well as the young men, contending that females had every faculty needed "to acquire an education such as the culture of the day demands. If the state educates its boys, I am for having it educate its girls also. Why not?" Spencer advocated a state-sponsored university for young women. She thought such an institution should concentrate in particular on educating women to become teachers. Not all professions were suitable for women, but teaching was definitely suitable and one in which women could make their contribution: "women are born teachers," she contended. When once informed that women were barred from membership in a state educational association, she railed in her column, "Not admit women into an Educational Association! Why she is herself an educational association . . . created man's earliest and best teacher by God himself." Charles, in addition to being impressed by Spencer, developed a genuine affection for her, referring to her in letters home and in writings and speeches in later years. He also adopted many of her views on the role of women in education.[35]

Among the students with whom McIver developed a close friendship in his freshmen year was Charles Aycock, who was later to become governor of North Carolina. Aycock, like McIver, held a high regard for the power and importance of education, but for a different reason. McIver came from a background which emphasized the value of education, owing to his Scottish Presbyterian lineage and his parents' priorities. Aycock, on the other hand, revered education because he had seen the tragic effects of its absence.

---

[35] Battle, *History of the University of North Carolina*, II: 79; McIver Papers, autobiographical notes, n. d., Folder 9; Charles McIver to Lula Martin, August 17, 1884, McIver Papers, Folder 8. The quotation is taken from Louis R. Wilson, ed., *Selected Papers of Cornelia Philips Spencer* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1953), 110.

He had witnessed his own mother, who otherwise exhibited a high level of intelligence, enduring a lifetime of hardship, humiliation, and regret because of her illiteracy. Aycock and McIver took their high regard for education with them into their careers.[36]

McIver chose to pursue the Bachelor of Arts in Classical Studies in the School of Literature. Despite his love for extra-curricular activities, and friends and fun in general, his grades over the next four years show that he was a good student. He worked hard and generally made the modern equivalent of "A's" with a few exceptions. Languages, literature, history, and philosophy emerged as his strengths. Dr. Kemp Battle, the University's president, wrote on McIver's senior grade reports, "A truly exemplary student in all respects," and "An excellent student, good scholar."[37]

Though their importance had declined in the "new" University, the Dialectic and Philanthropic societies still played significant roles on campus, and membership in one or the other was required. McIver joined the Dialectic Society, eventually becoming an officer. He wholeheartedly entered into all of the society's activities but one: public speaking. Interestingly enough in light of his later career, McIver froze when called upon to speak before an audience. He stammered and stuttered, his mind went blank, and he came to dread the whole experience. The society levied small fines against any member who refused to speak. Rather than endure the agony of oratory, however, he decided to simply pay the fines. Many years later, a more mature McIver said in an address on campus, "During my four years at this institution I made no appearance before the public

---

[36] Robert Connor and Clarence Poe, *The Life and Speeches of Charles Brantley Aycock* (Garden City, New York: Doubleday, Page, and Company, 1912), 3-20.

[37] McIver Papers, Folder 1; other materials from McIver's university days are located in the McIver Papers, Folder 10.

as a speaker when the payment of fines . . . could relieve me from that duty." A man who used the spoken word to propel great causes and bring about much change in general was as a college student so terrified at the thought of speaking in public that he chose to part with precious funds instead.[38]

Two new arrivals to the University in McIver's sophomore year became among his closest lifelong friends: James Joyner and Edwin Alderman. Of the two, McIver came to be closest to Alderman. There was an almost immediate bond and comaraderie between the two. The immediacy and depth of their friendship is perhaps surprising, since they were very different in many respects. McIver was big-boned, stocky, congenially loud, and occasionally rambunctious. Alderman was thin and wiry. McIver was lighthearted, jovial, gregarious, and egalitarian. Alderman tried to appear dignified and poised, at times projected aristocratic airs, and could be pretentious. It may be that McIver saw through Alderman's pretensions to what lay beneath. Perhaps he knew that Alderman was no higher up the social ladder than he; nobody was much higher than anybody else in the brave new world of the Reconstruction South. Deep down, Alderman realized this as well. "All of us were poor boys," he would later write. In any event, these two very different young men developed a close friendship that would last the rest of their lives.[39]

---

[38] McIver Papers, autobiographical notes, Folder 9; UNC commencement speech, May 9, 1904, McIver Papers, Folder 10.

[39] Satterfield, 12; Edwin A. Alderman, "The Life and Work of Dr. Charles D. McIver," *North Carolina Journal of Education* 1 (December 15, 1906), 4-6. For a full account of Alderman's life and work, see Dumas Malone, *Edwin A. Alderman: A Biography* (New York: Doubleday, Doran and Company, 1940).

Though a committed and successful student, Charles McIver was anything but a wallflower. He could often be found hanging around the Old Well near the center of campus where he would gradually accumulate a crowd. Despite his anxiety about formal public speaking, McIver loved to entertain groups of people with jokes, folksy tales, and comical impressions. He had a talent for mimicry and could make ordinary stories humorous in the telling. His room was often full of laughing classmates, where they gathered to have McIver regale them with stories and impressions of campus figures and characters from "back home" in Moore County. While Mac was not the only popular and entertaining student on campus, he was one of the best at enlivening gatherings.

In keeping with his religious upbringing, he eschewed alcohol. He accepted without hesitation the theological tenets and behavioral strictures of his Presbyterian upbringing, which included a total avoidance of alcohol. He did not, however, sit in judgement of those whose views and behavior differed from his own. His talents and inclinations lay in implementing, not in debating. So it was with his religious beliefs. It was his duty to obey them, not to debate them with others. What the other young men did with their religious convictions was up to them. McIver therefore felt comfortable joining his classmates in the most raucous of parties where the liquor flowed freely, all the while completely abstaining from alcohol himself. In fact, friends teased him in later years about his collegiate ability to whoop it up as the noisiest, most jovial "drunk" among them, all the while remaining stone cold sober.[40]

[40] McIver Papers, Folder 9; Satterfield, 12-13.

Mac approached other extracurricular activities with the same gusto. One faculty member remembered that he could "bat a ball the farthest and holler the loudest" of anyone while participating in intramural baseball games on campus. There was no question about Charles McIver's competitive nature or drive to succeed. Whatever he undertook, he did with energy, enthusiasm, and a full-bore drive for success.[41]

His drive and determination hinted at something else that was often masked by his congeniality. Though not easily provoked, "Ol' Mac" had a fiery temper. Contemporaries at Chapel Hill remembered one demonstration of McIver's temper in particular. William Randall, a painfully shy and sensitive young man from the mountains of western North Carolina, came to the University during McIver's sophomore year. Randall, whose family was quite poor, walked barefoot the whole way (100-150 miles) to Chapel Hill so that he could preserve the only pair of shoes that he owned. Mac became acquainted with Randall not long after his arrival and felt sympathy for the bashful, yet determined young man. Although the University officially forbade hazing, many upperclassmen ignored the ban and made the hazing of freshmen an annual ritual. McIver apparently missed the planning for the 1878 version of the ritual and was late for its start. He arrived upon the scene to discover Randall being forced to dance naked on top of a barrel while the upperclassmen brayed with laughter and shouted lewd and insulting remarks. Mac quickly sized up the tortuous humiliation Randall was suffering. He charged in, face purple with anger, pulled Randall down off the barrel, and shouted remonstrations at the others. The other upperclassmen were stunned to see this side of

---

[41] Charles William Dabney, *Universal Education in the South* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1936), I: 199-200.

"Ol' Mac," his usual friendliness and congeniality making his anger all the more powerful. But the implications of the hazing exercises chosen for Randall were clear to McIver. To him, it was clearly the strong picking on the weak, and that violated both his sense of justice and his egalitarian instincts. Randall, for his part, never forgot McIver's intervention and became a devoted friend thereafter. McIver said years later that Randall kept trying to pay him back, but implied that it was just what any decent person would have done. Randall, an artist, did eventually pay him back after a fashion; he painted the only known portrait of McIver.[42]

The gatherings in "Ol' Mac's" room became almost nightly affairs during his time at the University. Alderman and Joyner were regulars at these get-togethers, and there were usually two or three others, such as Marcus Noble or Charles Aycock. The evening commenced with the usual joking, story-telling, and general tomfoolery. Sometimes, however, the conversation turned serious. The young men knew that they were being prepared to take their places as leaders in North Carolina, and they took those expectations seriously. Already they were making themselves conversant with the intricacies of state, regional, and national affairs, and already they were forming ideas about what should be done.

The Old South was gone, they concluded, and good riddance. Though there was certainly regional loyalty and some pride in past accomplishments, the young men had fewer of the nostalgic illusions about the antebellum South than their elders might have harbored. The Old South was built on a faulty base. Its slave-based labor system, aristocratic pretensions, and stubborn resistance to modernization had brought nothing

[42] James Joyner, quoted in Satterfield, 13.

but backwardness, provincialism, ignorance, poverty, and humiliation. Dependence on slave labor had too long stifled entrepreneurial energies. The young men were realizing, as Alderman would write in later years, "We have passed from the patriarchal to the economic stage of society, where . . . the orators and dreamers of old must, at least, share the stage with the manufacturer, the producer, the industrial man." It was time to move on, to modernize, and to create a "New South," a phrase that would soon appear on the lips of other people throughout the region.

At the top of the young men's concerns, however, was their own stagnant, backward-looking state. As they discussed the many problems and challenges North Carolina faced, they always ultimately came to the same conclusion: the state could make no progress until its citizens were better educated. The young men in Charles McIver's room realized that would require overcoming widespread indifference and even hostility towards education. It might even require a different educational system, although they had little idea of what the specifics of a new system might be. Neither did they know who might do the work of bringing about these changes in their state. The answers to these questions, however, would be presented to them before they graduated.[43]

McIver completed his degree requirements and was ready to graduate in the 1881 commencement. As one of the better students, he was expected to give a speech at graduation. Charles, however, still terrified at the prospect of speaking in public, asked to be excused from speaking at graduation. The faculty took his record into account and

---

[43] Satterfield, 12-13; *Inauguration of Edwin Anderson Alderman, President of the University of North Carolina, January 27, 1897*, n. p., n. d.

granted his request. Ironically, the man who later did most of his work and made his mark with the spoken word was too scared to speak at his own graduation.

Nevertheless, he did graduate. During the ceremony, Governor Thomas Jarvis presented McIver and each of the other graduates with a diploma and a Bible, the latter a gift of the University. Charles's father also had a gift for him: a gold watch which the younger McIver long treasured. His formal education was thus at an end. Paying for it, however, would continue for some time. Debt was something McIver hated, but he never seemed to completely escape it. Though he eventually paid off his college debts, he continually amassed others and spent much of the rest of his life fretting over one debt or another.[44]

In spite of his college debt, the future for Charles McIver looked bright. He had his degree and some general goals in mind. He had also imbibed some important ideals, supplementing those of his childhood: from the University as a whole he had learned the rejection of the antebellum mindset and to embrace the New South; from various faculty members he had learned to value education as the primary preparation for modernity; and from Spencer he had learned to put a premium on educational opportunities for women. McIver had not settled on a career, but he figured there would be in any event a place for him in the state, a way for him to make his mark on North Carolina. He probably did not fully realize the magnitude of the opportunity that lay before him—or its challenges and difficulties.

---

[44] McIver Papers, Folders 9 and 10; Satterfield, 13.

Chapter Two

Like many young college men of his day, Charles McIver had in mind taking a teaching job after graduation to earn his keep while studying law, and when he took his first teaching position in Durham after his graduation, he intended to use the job as a stepping-stone to a law career. The internal momentum for that path, however, had already faded significantly.

The first deterioration of the commitment to study law had taken place while he was still a student at the University. The regular evening sessions of study and informal yet serious debate that took place in "Ol' Mac's" room influenced his thinking powerfully. The discussion, no matter where it started, almost always ended up on the same subject: how best to address the problems of their backward, underdeveloped state. Inspired and influenced by the faculty and personnel of the "new" University of North Carolina, the young men discussed their growing convictions that the old must give way to the new. Almost invariably the same conclusion was reached: education was the key. North Carolina would be able to solve no other problems until it dealt with its own ignorance and illiteracy. Not only was education vital to the state's future, but a budding awareness began to take hold in some members of the group that education might also be a good arena in which to make their marks professionally.

If a new, more modern South was to be created, McIver and his colleagues reasoned, then it must involve new methods and new institutions. And if education was

the key to progress in North Carolina, then there must be a new and different approach to education as well.[1]

That fresh approach soon presented itself. The University often conducted normal institutes—training sessions for teachers—on campus. During these institutes the University brought in guest speakers, some of them well-known in the field of education. Jabez Curry, a towering figure for years in the South and a powerful orator, spoke on occasion, promoting the primacy of education, the importance of universal education, and the need for communities to tax themselves to provide adequate revenue for schools. Curry also supported the graded school concept, which involved grouping students by age and/or ability and teaching them separately. McIver and his colleagues were fascinated and inspired by Curry.[2]

It was another institute speaker, however, who focused on graded schools specifically and drove home to the young men the need for this particular type of educational institution. Edward P. Moses was an energetic educational innovator from Tennessee who had made a name for himself after establishing a graded school in Knoxville and introducing new teaching methods there. Moses eventually was asked to head the new graded schools in Goldsboro, North Carolina, when they opened in 1881. He appeared as the lead speaker for at least one normal institute at the University of North Carolina during the time that McIver was there, and he made a strong impression.

---

[1] Charles Duncan McIver Papers, Jackson Library, University of North Carolina at Greensboro, Greensboro, North Carolina, Folder 9; Frances Gibson Satterfield, *Charles Duncan McIver* (Atlanta: Ruralist Press, Inc., 1942), 12-13.

[2] Charles William Dabney, *Universal Education in the South* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1936), I: 196-200.

Moses met McIver and his friends in person and talked with them at length. He apparently convinced Alderman on the spot to devote himself to education; his influence also planted seeds that would eventually bear fruit in McIver, Joyner, Noble, and others. One of the others was Philander Claxton, whom Moses would one day hire at the new graded school in Goldsboro. Of Moses' influence on the young men, Claxton wrote, "Alderman, McIver and I, and the other men of our ages, including J.Y. Joyner and D.B. Johnson, owed our inspiration and our zeal for the cause of public education almost wholly to Moses." Claxton referred to Moses as a "modern Pestalozzi, the most enthusiastic and inspiring man I have ever known. . . . His voice was that of one crying in the wilderness, and was heard by a few at first, and then by more and more until it became a popular chorus on the highways." Moses won converts—some of whom took little persuading—to his faith and fired them with his passion, including McIver, who recalled that it was Moses who "first turned me towards graded education." The effects of Moses' proselytizing spread exponentially in the years to come.[3]

There were few times and places where educational reformers were more badly needed than in North Carolina during the 1880s. In order to understand fully the importance and impact of the reforms that Charles McIver and other New South crusaders championed, it is necessary to examine the general and educational conditions in North Carolina at the point when they began their work. Antebellum North Carolina had been an economic and cultural backwater. Much of the state's wealth had been tied up in

[3] Ibid. The Claxton quotation is from a letter from Philander Claxton to Dabney, September 8, 1929, quoted in Dabney, I: 195; the McIver quotation is from his autobiographical notes, McIver Papers, Folder 9.

slaves, a circumstance which did little to foster local development. In addition, slaves were a fluid, mobile investment; when the soils in the North Carolina piedmont and coastal regions were exhausted, plantation owners simply took their slaves and departed for new, still fertile lands in Alabama, Mississippi, or Louisiana. This pattern partly explains why North Carolina—not a small state geographically—dropped from a population ranking of fourth in 1790 to twelfth in 1860. Moreover, North Carolinians tended not to favor internal improvements or infrastructure development; for example, it was not until 1856 that a railroad line was built westward beyond the capital city of Raleigh, which is only 150 miles from the coast.

Even after the Civil War, many North Carolinians, particularly in the western two-thirds of the state, lived impoverished, isolated, backward lives. They were primarily farmers, devoted in large part to raising subsistence crops but often supplementing their income with cash crops, milling, and manual labor of various sorts. Work revolved around the farm and the growing season. North Carolinians' interests were generally confined to local affairs, and life was rural, cyclical, and familiar. Indeed, one contemporary observer noted that North Carolina seemed less a state than "a confederation of independent communities." North Carolinians, in their fierce independence and individualism, stubbornly defended this lifestyle.[4]

---

[4] Hugh T. Lefler and Albert R. Newsome, *The History of a Southern State: North Carolina* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1973), 314-26, 362-66; Gavin Wright, *Old South, New South: Revolutions in the Southern Economy since the Civil War* (New York: Basic Books, 1986), 17-33; *Special Report of the General Superintendent of Common Schools, 1854* (Raleigh: W. W. Holden, 1854), 30; James L. LeLoudis, *Schooling the New South* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1996), 3-28.

The state's educational system, not surprisingly, reflected the attitudes of its populace. Intense individualism, opposition to taxation, intrastate friction (between the backwoods counties of the west and the more genteel counties of the east), poverty, and ignorance prevented the establishment of a statewide system of schools until 1839, despite the fact that such a system was mandated in the state's founding constitution. In that year, the North Carolina General Assembly created a public school system and a state board of education to oversee it. The legislature did not, however, provide much in the way of funds for the new system. The state educational fund, called the Literary Fund, was anemic, producing only $100,000 for the entire state. No provision was made for counties or districts to tax themselves to pay for their schools. In addition, the leadership on the state board was unstable, contentious, and divided. There was little real direction or devotion to the cause of public education. The combination of poor leadership and grossly inadequate funding nearly destroyed any interest or confidence that the public might have had. As a result, most people looked to private—generally church-affiliated—schools to educate their children.[5]

In 1852, Calvin Wiley was appointed state superintendent of schools, a new position he helped to create as a state legislator. North Carolina's public schools were in shambles, but Wiley performed a minor miracle. He got the legislature to create county superintendents and district oversight committees, standardize school terms and requirements for teachers, and pass statutes allowing districts to tax themselves to support education. Through his tireless campaigning, he got most districts to pass a tax of some

[5] Lefler and Newsome, 384-85, 403-404; LeLoudis, 3-28.

kind and in general changed the people's mindset regarding public schools. Almost single-handedly, Wiley reinvigorated the public school system and kept it going until his departure from office in 1866. Wiley was not without his flaws—he believed one of the main purposes of the schools was to perpetuate the values of the slaveholding status quo—but without him, the state undoubtedly would have been much worse off educationally.[6]

Emancipation and Reconstruction brought a new state constitution and a general overhaul of the state's governance structure, including the school system. William Holden, a Republican governor who took office in 1868, said in his inaugural address that the demands of the new constitution with regard to public education should be faithfully carried out "at the earliest practicable period and liberally sustained from the public treasury." He said that the state must educate children of both races, but it would be better if they were taught in separate school systems, which "shall equally enjoy the fostering care of the State."[7]

Holden's new school system, established by the legislature in 1869, was organized around the township rather than the district. To fund it, the legislature required that there should be "annually levied and collected a tax of one dollar and five cents on

---

[6] *Acts of Assembly, Establishing and Regulating Common Schools in North Carolina, 1853* (Raleigh: William W. Holden, 1853); Paul Henry Michael Ford, "Calvin H. Wiley and the Common Schools of North Carolina, 1850-1869" (Ph.D. dissertation, Harvard University, 1960), 282-85; *Special Report of the General Superintendent of Common Schools of North Carolina, 1854* (Raleigh: W. W. Holden, 1855), 30; *Report of the Superintendent of Common Schools of North Carolina, for the Year 1859* (Raleigh: W. W. Holden, 1860), 36-37; *Report of the Superintendent of Common Schools of North Carolina, for the Year 1860* (Raleigh: W. W. Holden, 1861), part 2, 12-15. See also Lefler and Newsome, 384-85, 403-404, and LeLoudis, 3-28.

[7] William S. Powell, *North Carolina Through Four Centuries* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1989), 382.

each taxable poll or male between the ages of twenty-one and fifty," seventy-five percent of which would go to supporting the schools. The new school system would also receive an annual appropriation of $100,000 from the state. Lawmakers mandated a minimum school term of four months. They also required the township committees, which were elected bodies, to submit to county commissioners estimates of the amount of money needed for school buildings, teachers' salaries, and operating expenses. Committee members who failed to do so faced indictment on criminal charges and prosecution.[8]

The plan proved difficult to implement. The new townships covered significantly more territory than the old districts and included several separate schools for whites and blacks; managing this situation proved more complex and challenging for committee members than anyone had anticipated. Other obstacles arose, including resentment against "scalawag" Republicans, racial prejudice, white flight, a dearth of teachers, inadequate funding from the state, and inefficient collection of local taxes. As a result, the new school system struggled. Ashley's report for 1870 showed that only seventy-four of the state's ninety counties were maintaining public schools. Perhaps more striking was the astonishing revelation that out of a statewide school population of 229,000 whites and 113,000 blacks, the total number of children attending public schools was 31,093, of which only 7,674 were white.

An even bigger obstacle soon arose. The state Supreme Court found later in 1870 that the new law authorizing the collection of taxes for education without a vote of the local community was unconstitutional. Since voters of that time and place, due to

[8] Ibid., 381-400.

resentment, prejudice, and poor economic conditions, almost always voted against such taxes, it now became nearly impossible to raise the required revenue for the schools. The rest of the law, however, was deemed constitutional, including the clause that mandated that operating expenses be provided to conduct classes for a full four months. The result was a maddening quandary: the county commissioners were required to operate the schools for the full term but had no way of raising sufficient funds to do so.

The situation undermined confidence in the school system even further and retarded the development of a modern educational system in the state for years to come. The legislature in 1877 finally directed county commissioners to collect taxes for support of education, relieving them of the necessity of a popular vote. Nevertheless, the amount was still too small and the vast majority of the populace remained steadfastly against taxing themselves further. While new, higher quality graded schools with a more progressive pedagogy were rapidly emerging in the northern states, the public schools in the South became mired in provincialism and indifference. The school committees became feudal entities that both wielded local power and depended on local support and private contributions. This situation continued until the rise of graded schools in the South.[9]

In 1881, when Charles McIver graduated from college, the common school system previously described was firmly entrenched. Counties were authorized to collect taxes to support the schools and the state contributed a modest supplemental amount from a fund established for this purpose, but funding was woefully inadequate. The office of

[9] Ibid.

state superintendent of education existed, but the superintendent had little real power and often had little contact with the common schools beyond those in the Raleigh area. There were also county boards of education and county superintendents, but these were usually unpaid positions and carried little real weight and generated little interest. Genuine authority over the schools was in the hands of district committeemen who were residents of the local community and who oversaw the schools directly. They hired and fired teachers, established the school calendar, and managed the district's educational funds. They also made sure that the schools emphasized local ideals and prepared their children to perpetuate their way of life.

The common school was an institution in which all the children of the community, regardless of age or ability, gathered together in a group and were taught by a single teacher. (This was true only of white children prior to the Civil War, since black children were generally not formally educated; after the war, both white and black children were educated in separate common schools run by their respective communities.) The typical school was a one-room structure that had been erected by the people of the district in a concerted, one-time event similar to a barn raising. Labor and materials were donated by members of the community. Some common schools were clean, respectable buildings, but many were rough and crudely furnished; some were little more than ramshackle, smoke-filled log cabins situated in the middle of muddy clearings.

State law mandated a school term of four months, but the time actually spent in the classroom often fell significantly short of that goal. School might be suspended, at the behest of parents or district committeemen, during cold or snowy weather, or if it were time for some job to be performed on the farm. The school day was generally from

sunrise to sunset, but the hours that the children were in school varied. Some parents sent their children early with instructions to come home early, while other parents had their children come to school late and depart late.

Teachers tended to be men who, as likely as not, were teaching only until they could buy farm land or find another vocation. A passing score on a state-sanctioned exam was required, but a college degree was not. Teachers were often hired and favored not because of their ability or academic credentials, but because of their willingness to reinforce community ideals. District committeemen normally hired teachers they liked or who were most like them or who were acquaintances or relatives; nepotism was not uncommon. In every way, the teacher was constantly reminded of who was in charge: the district committeemen and, ultimately, the parents. The teacher's job depended not so much on pedagogical skill, but on pleasing the various elements of the community. And introducing ideas of change and progress generally did not please the community.

The curriculum focused on memory work; education was believed to consist of knowing facts and being able to recite them. Understanding underlying concepts and theory was not part of the picture. Students memorized rules of grammar, spelling, and arithmetic without genuinely understanding how to apply them. The students worked at their own paces until they had exhausted the community's supply of books (there were generally no uniform, state-supplied textbooks; teachers had to work with the books that parents passed on to their children or that others in the community lent to the effort) or until their parents decided that they had received enough education.

In general, the common schools were shaped and used to prepare children to take their places as competent and respectable members of a local social structure that was

already well-established. Students did not go to school to be equipped for striking out on their own, but to be made ready to take their places in the rhythms and patterns of the local community. Acquisitiveness, innovation, ambition, and social mobility were not highly valued. Achievement was to be encouraged and rewarded, but only insofar as it related to life in the community. North Carolina's common schools represented what one historian has described as a "peasant pedagogy"—one focused more on simple survival than on getting ahead. It is little wonder, then, that North Carolina had become economically and culturally stagnant.[10]

By contrast, the graded school offered some profound differences in both methods and results. Graded schools grouped students by age and/or ability, had them study subjects together as a group, and provided a teacher for each grade. Students were required to demonstrate mastery over the material presented in one grade before they could move on to the next. A uniform, structured curriculum was introduced. It was no longer enough that one memorize facts; there was now an emphasis on being able to actually perform the operation being studied and to demonstrate an understanding of *why* it worked the way it did. In short, the graded school emphasized a deeper, more theoretical education, innovation, the importance of individual achievement, and equipping oneself with the tools necessary to succeed in an ever-more-competitive world.

---

[10] *First Annual Report of the General Superintendent of Common Schools* (Raleigh: W. W. Holden, 1854), 10; *Biennial Report of the State Superintendent of Public Instruction of North Carolina, for the Scholastic Years 1881-82* (Raleigh: Ashe and Gatling, 1883), 22-27; Charles L. Coon, *A Statistical Record of the Progress of Public Education in North Carolina, 1870-1906* (Raleigh: Office of the State Superintendent of Public Instruction, 1907), 32-40; Ben Ekloff, *Russian Peasant Schools: Officialdom, Village Culture, and Popular Pedagogy, 1861-1914* (Berkley: University of California Press, 1986), 251-82; LeLoudis, 3-28.

It fit with the modern outlook and modern society already visible in the North and that was slowly emerging in the postwar South.

The first graded schools in the United States were established in Massachusetts in 1848. They quickly caught on and began to spread throughout the urban centers of the Northeast. The growing appeal of graded schools in the North—and later in the South—signaled a dramatic shift of emphasis with regard to the purpose and character of public education. It is not a coincidence that the rise of graded schools in the South accompanied the development of "New South" ideology with its embrace of a market economy, free labor, and industrialization. These elements, of course, already existed in the North and had in fact helped to prompt the development of graded schools.[11]

Graded schools developed slowly in North Carolina in the first two decades after the Civil War. The city of Greensboro adopted a new charter in 1870; among its provisions was a clause stipulating that the city should "constitute a school district, and that all the taxes levied upon the citizens of the state for school purposes, shall be expended in conformity with the regulations of the state, in establishing graded schools within the city." The first graded school in the state was established in 1870 in Greensboro under this statute and opened that fall for white students. A graded school for black children opened soon afterwards in the city. Greensboro, a bustling business center and developing rail junction, proved to be unusually friendly to innovations in education and unusually supportive of taxes to support the schools.[12]

---

[11] For an overview of the development of graded schools in the North, see Ellwood Cubberly, *Public Education in the United States* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1934).
[12] Charles L. Coon, "The Beginnings of North Carolina City Schools, 1867-1887, *South Atlantic Quarterly* 12 (July 1913), 235-47.

Graded schools faced a rocky road in other North Carolina cities, including Charlotte. The city established a white graded school in 1873, but it stayed open only for two years due to the fact that it was supported almost exclusively by private funds. Several referenda were held throughout the 1870s to try to get the citizens to tax themselves to support the development of graded schools, but the proposals did not get a positive vote until 1880. Even then, the vote was contested in the courts. The legal hurdles were not cleared until 1882, and the city finally re-opened its graded schools in the fall of that year.

The city of Fayetteville opened a graded school under circumstances that were unfortunately all too indicative of the times. During a court trial that involved the testimony of several male teenagers, black and white, it was realized—to the horror of the white citizenry—that the young black men were able to sign their names to their testimonies, while the young white men could only make their marks and needed someone to sign for them. It turned out that the young black men had been educated in a graded school supported by northern philanthropy, while the young white men had attended a poor-quality common school that held classes only eight weeks out of the year. Mortified by the situation, and energized in part by their racism, the city's white citizens quickly solicited private funds (from sources including the Peabody Fund) to launch a graded school for white children. The school opened in the fall of 1878 and continued with the aid of local tax revenue.[13]

---

[13] Ibid.; Dabney, II: 189-193; Marcus S. Noble. *A History of the Public Schools of North Carolina* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina, 1930), 398-409.

In Goldsboro, Julius Bonitz, the editor of the local newspaper, the *Messenger*, began in the 1870s to draw attention through his columns to the woeful state of the local schools. The public schools there were pitiful little makeshift operations supported only by the meager appropriations of the state education fund. Alerted to the problem by Bonitz's editorials, the educational reformer Jabez Curry looked for an opportunity to promote the cause of graded schools in Goldsboro. He soon saw his chance; Goldsboro would be hosting the North Carolina Baptist State Convention—a major annual event—in the summer of 1880. Curry secured an invitation to speak at the convention and used the opportunity to its fullest. He delivered a fiery speech on the dire need for quality education and the virtues of graded schools. A number of newspapers published the text of his speech and copies were distributed throughout the state. Until Curry's appearance, graded school proponents in Goldsboro had not been able to get a tax referendum passed to provide revenue for the schools. Apparently inspired, chastened, and not a little embarrassed by the negative publicity, the people of Goldsboro voted in May, 1881, to establish a local tax, the proceeds from which would be used to support both schools for whites and schools for blacks. New graded schools opened in Goldsboro and nearby Wilson in the fall of 1881.[14]

The opening of the Goldsboro and Wilson schools generated a rising tide of interest in and enthusiasm for graded schools. Goldsboro was an important city in the eastern part of the state and a major railroad hub; Wilson, only twenty miles away, sat astride a major north-south line. Easy rail access brought to the area thousands of parents and teachers, who observed the cities' innovative new schools and returned home

[14] Dabney, II: 189-93; Powell, 381-400.

inspired. The Goldsboro and Wilson schools became models for graded schools in other parts of the state. Marcus Noble, another educational reformer and college chum of McIver, said of these schools:

> Visitors were charmed by the work in the classes, the orderly, easy, and joyous movement of the children . . . the enthusiasm of the teachers, and the pride of the citizens in the success of their schools. . . . Both of these schools had energetic and persistent press agents in the Wilson *Advance*, then edited by a boy editor of courage and ability (Josephus Daniels) who has never forsaken the cause of popular education . . . and in the Goldsboro *Messenger*, whose editor, a school-loving German (Bonitz), continually pounded away in his columns in favor of the best of public schools for his adopted town of Goldsboro. The many news items and editorials in these two weekly papers on graded schools and popular education, . . . gave winning publicity to the graded school cause in North Carolina.

The attention that Curry brought to the cause of graded schools began to have its effect throughout the state. Aided by the later efforts of McIver, Alderman, and others, who saw the graded school as a crucial tool in their efforts to remake the postwar South, support for graded schools slowly but steadily bloomed in North Carolina in the 1880s and 1890s.[15]

Educational reform in North Carolina had thus taken its very first steps forward when Charles McIver graduated from the University. In 1881, he had his degree, a job, and the seeds of his future calling taking root in his mind. It would take several other events and circumstances to bring his calling as an educational reformer into fuller bloom and sharper focus.

After graduation, McIver took a position as teacher and assistant headmaster at a small private school for boys in Durham, the Presbyterian Male Academy. To friends

---

[15] Dabney, II: 189-93; Noble, 403-404.

and relatives he spoke of the position as a means to allow him to study law; inwardly, however, the influence of Curry and Moses had already greatly weakened his resolve to pursue a law career and he would eventually give up the notion entirely.

The school year began in October 1881. The term was barely under way when the headmaster was called away to manage his family's affairs upon the death of his father. McIver, still somewhat the green college graduate, now inherited the academy from bow to stern. For most of the 1881-1882 school year, in addition to teaching, McIver ran the school and dealt with its problems. By the end of the term, he had been made headmaster in title as well as function, and he acquitted himself well. Students, parents, and the citizens of Durham in general began to take notice of the vigorous new headmaster/teacher who was well-organized, energetic, and, not incidentally, taught the boys entrusted to him with passion and creative new methods. McIver was making a name for himself in the community.[16]

It was not only through his teaching and administration that he made himself known. A group of local residents had begun promoting the graded school concept not long before McIver arrived in Durham. A referendum on the establishment of co-educational graded schools and a new tax to pay for them—twenty cents on each hundred dollars' worth of property—was set for May, 1882. Opponents of the measure distributed handbills arguing that the new tax would drive business away and take money away from much-needed endeavors, such as street improvement. They also said that the establishment of graded public schools would destroy existing private academies that had

[16] Autobiographical notes, McIver Papers, Folder 9; Satterfield, 21.

more refinement and educational value than any graded school could hope to offer. Opponents also fretted that if boys and girls were thrown in together in an inferior graded school, parents would simply take their children elsewhere. Not only would the public schools lack for students, but many fine teachers would be out of work due to declining enrollment.

McIver waded right into the middle of the debate. Talking to anyone who would listen, he pointed out that private schools had never reached more than seven percent of school-age children anywhere in the state. The vast majority were being served—and ill-served at that—by public schools. He contended that an education was every child's right and that each of them deserved the best education that could be given, even if it cost the public a little bit of money. Even though passage of the measure would almost certainly put him out of a job, he urged everyone to vote for it. McIver's small-scale campaigning for educational reform in Durham foreshadowed the crusading he would do in later years, including a hint toward his folksy, personable style. The outcome was also a hint of things to come: the measure, due to some degree to McIver's influence, passed.[17]

Young Charles McIver was adept at glad-handing, back-slapping, storytelling, and winning converts on a one-to-one basis. Speaking before crowds was another story. During the spring of 1882 he attended end of the year ceremonies at the Methodist Male Academy in Durham. Following an oft-observed custom, the Methodist headmaster, a

[17] Autobiographical notes, McIver Papers, Folder 9; Lula Martin McIver, notebook on McIver's early career, n. d., Lula Martin McIver Papers, Jackson Library, University of North Carolina at Greensboro, Greensboro, North Carolina, Folder 1; Satterfield, 21.

Dr. Deans, extended professional courtesy and called on McIver and other prominent figures to "say a few words." The old dread immediately descended upon McIver. His face went crimson even before it was his turn, but he dutifully rose to his feet and attempted to say that he identified with the educational goals of Dr. Deans. "I sympathize with Dr. Deans," he stammered. After an awkward pause, he repeated, "I sympathize with Dr. Deans." Finding that no other words would come to him, he repeated the phrase yet again and then finally sat down in embarrassment. The audience roared with laughter, perhaps not knowing whether or not McIver was trying to be funny. After that, McIver reaffirmed two resolutions that he had made earlier: he would never speak in public and he would never teach a female. In the most profound of ironies, both endeavors would become the lifeblood of his career.[18]

McIver would have to break one of his resolutions right away. The new graded schools in Durham, contrary to what opponents had feared, proved very attractive to the parents and students of the community. The schools also absorbed all of the community's private school teachers, including McIver. He now found himself not only teaching boys and girls alike, but serving as principal of one of the new graded schools.

During his second year in Durham McIver inquired about pursuing an advanced degree at the University of North Carolina. Significantly, he requested information on the A.M. and the Ph.D., both academic degrees, rather than on a law degree. He did eventually study law for a short period on his own, but it was a half-hearted effort.

---

[18] Autobiographical notes, McIver Papers, Folder 9; Satterfield, 21.

Clearly, any enthusiasm for a career in law—if it ever really existed—had already shifted towards education.[19]

And McIver was getting favorable attention for his work and his talents in education. He received an attractive offer to head a new graded school in Winston. According to *The North Carolina Teacher* (a new publication promoting progressive education in the state), the new Winston graded school building would be, when completed, the best in the state, consisting of fourteen classrooms and an assembly hall. McIver was asked to oversee the completion of the campus and to run the school after its first year of classes began in the fall of 1884. He accepted the position and resigned his post in Durham in January, 1884. A local newspaper lamented his departure and described him as one of "the first educators in the state." The comment was no small praise for an educator who was still only twenty-three years old. McIver arrived in Winston in February, 1884 to take the reins of the new school being built there. His days were filled with the tasks of overseeing the completion of the campus, hiring teachers, and preparing for the fall.[20]

McIver began keeping a diary during this first year in Winston, intermittently recording events and thoughts relating to both his professional and personal life. To the end of his life he thought keeping a diary was a desirable, useful, and even important thing to do, but he was inconsistent in recording entries. As he himself observed, when there was something significant enough to write about he was too busy, and when he had

---

[19] Lula Martin McIver, notebook, Lula Martin McIver Papers, Folder 1; Satterfield, 15-16.
[20] "Winston Graded School Will Open in Fall," *North Carolina Teacher*, 2 (March-April 1884), 8-11; "Graded School Principal Leaving," *Durham Messenger*, January 11, 1884.

the time to write there was nothing worth recording. In spite of his inconsistency, a good number of entries made their way into his diary during this time. Many of them recorded tasks he performed in his early months as principal in Winston: writing and conducting teachers' exams, speaking with the builders, consulting with the school board, and meeting with newly-hired teachers.[21]

McIver plunged into the work with the fullest vigor and enthusiasm, as he always did. His diary, however, reveals that he was not all work; indeed, there are more entries in that first year relating to his social life than to his job. A February entry reads, "Met two Winston ladies. Like 'em."[22] McIver enjoyed nothing better than socializing. Apparently, he liked socializing with women at least as much as he did with men; he had developed a reputation among his friends and family as one who kept a steadily growing and revolving list of lady friends with whom he was at various stages of friendship and/or affection. His friend from the University, Dicky Dalton, had earlier teased him for "taking away from me and then turning footloose again every young lady I set my eye on." Not long afterwards, his brother Will, upon receiving word of the end of one of Charles's romances, had written to him, "I am glad of it. I did not believe the girl would suit you. Your disposition to court any girl you want to and then feel good over it, whether you get kicked or no, may be a very happy one; but I agree with you in not admiring it very much." Such admonitions did not change Charles, however; his Winston diary shows that he relished his social life. His notes on the various teas, weddings,

[21] Diary, Charles McIver, entries from various dates in 1884, McIver Papers, Folder 9.
[22] Ibid., entry dated February 10, 1884.

visits, walks, church services, concerts, and plays he attended are sprinkled with women's names.[23]

McIver's social life during this time led to the establishment of two relationships that would be important and long-lasting. The first of these came about when he attended a play on a rainy night in March. Neither the play nor the local interpretation of it particularly impressed him, but he notes in his diary that it did afford him the opportunity to meet Walter Hines Page, the editor of the Raleigh *State Chronicle* (and future ambassador to Great Britain under Woodrow Wilson). Page had founded the paper a year earlier and used it to fulfill what he saw as his calling, that of social and political gadfly. He saw North Carolina as a state rich with potential—potential which was being wasted largely due to the people's preoccupation with the lifestyle and causes of the past. He used his biting wit and sarcasm to illuminate the follies of state leaders and to poke fun at backward and provincial thinking in general. Page was an iconoclast and pulled no punches, but he did so with the goal of awakening his beloved home state.

McIver and Page shared this goal of modernizing and improving North Carolina, and it is partly for this reason that they became fast friends, visiting and corresponding to the ends of their lives, even when separated by considerable distances. Page eventually concluded that his career could go no further in North Carolina and that he had worn out his welcome. He moved to New York to advance his causes there. McIver, on the other hand, had different methods in mind; he believed that North Carolina could be persuaded, but not prodded, into modernizing. The letters that passed between Page and McIver

---

[23] Dicky Dalton to Charles McIver, January 14, 1883, McIver Papers, Folder 1; Will McIver to Charles McIver, November 28, 1883; diary, Charles McIver, various entries, McIver Papers, Folder 1.

reveal much about the two men, including the passion and frustration both felt in anticipating the birth of the "New South." They also indicate that although Page now resided in another region, he still cared about the South's progress; his letters over the years regularly included advice to McIver regarding his reform efforts as well as offers of assistance. Page proved to be an important contact and resource, particularly in later efforts to enlist northern philanthropists in the cause of educational reform in the South.[24]

The other important relationship took root on the day after Easter in April, 1884. McIver had planned to attend a dance that evening, but an excerpt from that day's diary entry reads: "Frank Hanes carried me to ride in the p.m. Stopped with a picnic crowd for a while and enjoyed it. Didn't go to the dance at night."[25] The main factor that diverted him from the dance was someone he met at the picnic—a tall, slender young woman with brown eyes, dark hair, and a considerable degree of personal charm. Her name was Lula Martin. Other diary entries attest to McIver's growing preoccupation with and affection for her. She had apparently captured the attention of the seemingly-incurable "socializer" in a way that no one else had been able to do.[26]

Lula Martin was the daughter of a Winston physician. She had attended Salem Academy, a Moravian school for girls that provided a higher level of education than most young women had access to. She was as intelligent as she was attractive and had presumed upon graduation to follow her father's footsteps and study medicine. Her

---

[24] Diary, Charles McIver, various entries, McIver Papers, Folder 9. Early correspondence between Walter Hines Page and McIver can be found in the McIver Papers, Folder 1; later letters between the two are found in Folders 2, 3, 4, 5, 12, and 33.
[25] Diary entry, April 8, 1884, McIver Papers, Folder 9.
[26] Ibid., various entries.

father was willing, but gently informed her that society at large was not so accommodating. Lula was shocked to learn that being a woman all but precluded her from pursuing her chosen career. She took a position as a teacher, but she would say in later years that she never got over the shock and indignation of that first revelation. She became an outspoken and articulate feminist, quite progressive especially given the time and place. The limitations on women were intolerable, she believed, and something needed to be done to change the situation. One person who agreed with her, to her surprise and pleasure, was the attractive young man she met at the Easter picnic. For his part, McIver wrote in his diary that she was one of the "most sensible" young women he had ever met.[27]

As it happened, the position she took was as first grade teacher at the new Winston graded school, so Charles and Lula found themselves working together in the summer of 1884, as well as meeting at social events. As their time together increased, so apparently did their affection for one another. So obvious to others was the direction their relationship was taking that J. L. Tomlinson, the school's superintendent, wrote to McIver in July of that year, "I have heard it is an 'open secret' that you and Miss Martin are engaged to be married." Charles spent every moment possible with Lula, but he did not forsake his work, either. In fact, he found ways to combine commitments to both, including attending with her a summer normal institute at the University in Chapel Hill.

[27] Notebook, Lula Martin McIver Papers, Folder 1; diary entry, May 21, 1884, McIver Papers, Folder 9.

He records that the two of them reserved a particular spot on campus to which they retired between sessions and savored each other's company.[28]

McIver was sold on Lula Martin, but selling his family might be another matter. Martin was a Methodist and the McIvers were the epitome of Scottish Presbyterian steadfastness. McIver wrote to Lula, "Ma has been lecturing Will about his Methodist sweetheart. I haven't told her about mine yet. I mean about her being a Methodist." In reality, however, Martin was fairly new to Methodism, having been born and reared a Moravian for most of her childhood. The Moravians had, among other things, a tradition of emphasizing a greater degree of equality between the sexes, and Martin had imbibed it fully and considered it normal (thus partly explaining her reaction to being barred from studying medicine). Then, during her teen years, she learned of an incident in which early Moravian immigrants to America had chosen wives by lot upon arrival. The act struck Martin as being particularly degrading and abusive of the rights of women. She was outraged and shortly announced that she was canceling her membership in the Moravian Church. Though her family and church officials tried to dissuade her, she followed through with her threat and began attending a Methodist church with relatives of her mother.[29]

Nevertheless, the idea of marrying someone other than a Presbyterian was anathema to solid Presbyterians like the McIvers and others in his church back in Moore County. To the questions and protestations that his family and his pastor raised about his

---

[28] J. L. Tomlinson to Charles McIver, August 10, 1884; diary, Charles McIver, various entries, McIver Papers, Folder 9.
[29] Charles McIver to Lula Martin, August 15, 1884, McIver Papers, Folder 6; Notebook, Lula Martin McIver Papers, Folder 1.

being betrothed to a Methodist, Charles jokingly replied, "Now, surely you're not going to be selfish enough to want to keep all [the] Presbyterian boys from helping out the denominations not so fortunate as to believe as we do?" Charles worked on his family bit by bit over the ensuing year, and by the following spring he was able to tell Lula, "All the folks at home seem to be perfectly satisfied about my prospective future." Whether that was entirely true or not, Charles was dead-set on proceeding anyway.[30]

It is interesting to note that Charles McIver's pattern was to follow his familial and cultural traditions in general, but always putting his own twists on them. He attended college as his parents wished, but went to the public university rather than St. Andrews. He pursued education rather than the more traditional and more lucrative law career. He went against many of his relatives—though not so much his parents—in rejecting their exaltation of the antebellum past. And he chose for a mate a young woman who subscribed to the Christian faith, certainly, but one whose progressive Methodism differed substantially from his family's stolid Presbyterianism. Charles's brother Will later wrote about him in a teasing yet revealing letter to Lula: "One thing I always noticed in him is somewhat peculiar, I think. It is not so much beauty as novelty in women that attracts him." Apparently Charles was attracted, with regard to women and many other areas, to that which was new, different, and unique.[31]

Unique Lula Martin was, but by the summer of 1885, she was not new to Charles. By this time they had been engaged for more than year and had seen each other constantly, both at work and at leisure. The previous spring they had set the date for their

---

[30] Various letters from Charles McIver to Lula Martin, 1884-85, McIver Papers, Folder 6.
[31] Will McIver to Lula McIver, October 19, 1885, Folder 8.

marriage: July 29, 1885. They also made some unusual decisions about the ceremony. There would be no wedding ring because Lula considered it a symbol of the slavery and oppression of women. The two also agreed that a good marriage should be an equal partnership; therefore the word "obey" was to be omitted from the wedding vows.

The ceremony took place in a Presbyterian church after all because Lula's Methodist church was closed for repairs. That was not a problem, but what happened as the ceremony commenced was. At the last moment the Methodist pastor had had to withdraw from performing the ceremony unbeknownst to the couple, and the Presbyterian pastor, who had not been told of the change in the vows, appeared in the pulpit. Lula's face had consternation written all over it. Charles, on the other hand, could barely suppress his laughter. He stifled a smile and looked at her with raised eyebrows to see what she would do. When the crucial part of the vows came, Lula paused, grappling with her internal predicament. She did not want to agree to "obey," but she did not want to break up her own wedding. In the seemingly interminable silence, she looked over at Charles. He looked at her and perceived her anguish. Then, typical of Charles McIver, he came up with a folksy, humorous solution to the problem. He took out his handkerchief and mopped his brow, the traditional gesture of the henpecked man. Titters of laughter spread across the congregation. Most of those present knew that that situation was not descriptive of the couple, either, and that Charles was simply hot. But the gesture was enough to counter the word "obey," as well as relieving the tension of the moment. Even Lula had to smile. She went ahead and answered, "I do," and the wedding proceeded without another hitch. Lula and Charles would always tell the story

of their wedding as one of humor, and Lula always explained her answer as being related to Charles's gesture and the fact that the day was "*so* hot."[32]

Even before his marriage, McIver had begun to attract attention as an educator. *The Teacher*, North Carolina's premier journal of education at that time, published a laudatory article on McIver and the work he was doing at the Winston graded school in the summer of 1884. The journal praised his industriousness, his devotion to progressive teaching methods, and his insistence on high standards and quantifiable results. In the spring of 1885 he was elected vice president of the North Carolina Teachers' Assembly, a forerunner to the state's chapter of the National Education Association. His professional star had begun to rise.[33]

Perhaps more importantly, McIver had also begun to develop an awareness of a cause. Certainly he was as devoted as ever to the broad concern of using education to modernize his region of the country; as he told the Teachers' Assembly, he believed that education was "the supreme issue with which the South must cope." To educate a state where twenty percent of whites and seventy percent of blacks over ten were illiterate would take a lot of teachers. Unfortunately, there were not nearly enough teachers; there never had been and it did not appear there ever would be. Teaching was at the very bottom of the professions, poorly paid and often disparaged even by farmers and shopkeepers.[34]

---

[32] Notebook, Lula Martin McIver Papers, Folder 1; Satterfield, 25-27.
[33] Untitled article, *The Teacher* I (June 1884), 5; Satterfield, 27.
[34] Speech to the North Carolina Teachers' Assembly, May 17, 1885, McIver Papers, Folder 10; McIver Papers, Folder 6.

If the South were ever to lift itself out of the slough of backwardness, it would have to find a way to attract and train more teachers. And Charles McIver would have a significant role to play in accomplishing that goal.

Chapter Three

Beyond the general causes of promoting education and recruiting more teachers, Charles McIver gradually began to focus on an even more specific need. He realized to his growing dismay that women formed only a small minority of the teaching corps in North Carolina and, no doubt, the rest of the southern states. He knew the reasons for the situation. Post-secondary educational institutions for young white women existed, but they were private and often prohibitively expensive. They were also chiefly finishing schools to which wealthy southerners sent their daughters so that they might learn the social graces of the elite, but they offered little in the way of substantial education or professional training. The young men of North Carolina could attend the state-sponsored university at moderate cost, and black youths of both sexes could attend colleges supported by both the state and northern philanthropy, but young white women had no alternative whatsoever. Another reason for the dearth of educational opportunities was prevailing attitudes toward women, including the idea that they did not need and possibly could not attain an education. McIver became increasingly bothered that North Carolina public figures (all male) consistently made chivalric gestures towards women and extolled their virtues in speeches, but subjected them to the "callousness of neglect" when it came to providing for their education and elevation of station.[1]

The adoption of a cause—or a sense of a "calling" as some might term it—can be an unpredictable event. For some, it is the result of careful study and analysis, leading to

[1] Untitled article, *The Teacher* 1 (June 1884), 5; speech to the North Carolina Teachers' Assembly, May 17, 1885, McIver Papers, Folder 10.

a rational, principled decision to take action. For others, it is a deeper action, coming mostly from factors that influenced one's thinking and perceptions earlier on and which become a subconscious, almost instinctive part of one's psyche. For a person of this latter group, the driving convictions and urges formed from earlier circumstances lie dormant, until awakened by particular events, and the individual has a sort of awakening. At this point the individual finds a "niche" or "calling" and, driven by deep-seated convictions, takes up the cause as a life's work.

Such an awakening gripped Charles McIver in the spring and summer of 1885, and he realized that educational reform, largely focused on women's education, would be his "calling." Intensely practical and with a passion for efficiency, McIver felt frustrated with the talent that was being wasted in the neglect of women's education—talent that was sorely needed in North Carolina's classrooms. His overall concern for education and his desire for a practical, simple solution were two factors leading to his awakening. There were other factors, however, some that had deeper roots. He had never forgotten Mrs. Spencer—the woman whose boarding house he had lived in during his first year at the University and who became his maternal substitute while he was there—and her decrying of the fact that young women were shut out of educational associations and had no university of their own. She had consistently preached to Charles that women were the "natural" instructors of children. Even more influential was his sister Lizzie's situation; she was approaching the end of prep school, and McIver had been looking into good-quality schools she might attend. He was shocked to find that her options were extremely limited. He was also strongly influenced by his fiancé Lula, who still carried her own sense of frustration and resentment over the educational and professional

limitations placed on her earlier and who campaigned for women's rights the rest of her life. Charles had empathized with her from the beginning of their relationship, and both her ideas and her example shaped his thinking on women's education ever more powerfully as time went by.[2]

Finally, there was the awareness that society had placed limits on his own mother. McIver had frequently confided to his close friend Charles Aycock during their days at the University that he shared his friend's sadness and frustration at seeing his mother—otherwise competent and intelligent—shackled by the lack of education. Although McIver's mother had a basic education while Aycock's was completely illiterate, Charles was still bothered by the practical and professional limitations placed on her. This awareness may have been rooted in his experiences as a child, when his father, the provider and strong authority figure, was *made* to go off to war, and his mother had to depend on other male relatives for help in keeping the household going. It is certainly true that Charles spoke often of his memories of the war years and of his feelings of fear and insecurity during that period; he also spoke often of wishing that his mother had had greater academic and professional opportunities.[3]

Two events brought McIver's "calling" to his full attention. One was the meeting of the North Carolina Teacher's Assembly in the spring of 1885, where he took note of the glaringly low number of women teachers. The other event was a normal institute held

---

[2] Autobiographical notes, Charles Duncan McIver Papers, Jackson Library, University of North Carolina at Greensboro, Greensboro, North Carolina, Folder 9; notebook, Lula Martin McIver Papers, Jackson Library, University of North Carolina at Greensboro, Greensboro, North Carolina, Folder 1; ; Frances Gibson Satterfield, *Charles Duncan McIver* (Atlanta: Ruralist Press, Inc., 1942), 28-29

[3] Autobiographical notes, McIver Papers, Folder 9; notebook, Lula Martin McIver Papers, Folder 1; Satterfield, 28-29.

at McIver's own Winston graded school early that summer. During one of the sessions, various persons, including members of the school's faculty, were being called upon one at a time to deliver impromptu remarks on the general subject of improving education. Realizing that his name would eventually be called, McIver felt the old, familiar terror of public speaking returning. With fear creating a lump in his throat, Charles scribbled a note to Lula, who was also in attendance. "I'm afraid lightning is going to strike me," he wrote frantically. "What shall I talk about?" She responded without hesitation: "Talk about women's education."

Suddenly everything congealed in his mind. Here was a subject in which he could immerse himself, a subject for which he held enough passion to compensate for any stage fright he might have felt. He certainly did not lack for material, thanks to Lula's contributions and his own experiences. He could, indeed, talk about women's education; it might have been the only subject in the world that could have made a public speaker out of him at that point in his life, as at least two of his friends (Alderman and Joyner) later said. Create a public speaker it did. The topic of women's education made McIver "the most irresistible and convincing speaker I ever heard," said Joyner; Alderman later wrote that McIver was "the most effective speaker for public education that I have known in America."[4]

McIver rose when called on that day and began speaking in an informal, almost conversational manner about what he had discovered when attempting to help his sister find a suitable college. That informal style would turn out to be one of his oratorical

---

[4] Notebook, Lula Martin McIver Papers, Folder 1; Satterfield, 29; Edwin A. Alderman, "The Life and Work of Dr. Charles D. McIver," *North Carolina Journal of Education*, 1 (December 15, 1906): 6.

strengths. Once he became more comfortable with public speaking, he added to the mix his storytelling abilities and folksy wit that had so beguiled his fellow students during his university days. His earnestness, wit, and funny-but-pointed anecdotes were made more effective because he tied them into a hard-hitting conclusion that drove his point home in a convincing manner.[5]

"When I began to examine catalogues of what are usually called female colleges," began McIver in that first speech at the Winston graded school, "I found certain facts staring me in the face." All the colleges available for his sister cost twice as much as McIver had paid for his education. For that reason, Lizzie and other young women like her were unlikely to complete a full four-year program. Even if she did, the education she would receive "would not be of the kind to make her an independent and self-supporting factor in life." And, for McIver, that constituted one of the key injustices in the situation. The education that a young woman got at one of the "female seminaries"—where she was taught to observe manners, recite poetry, play the piano tolerably, and paint a bit—did little more to contribute to her earning capacity than the training in housekeeping skills she had already received at home. The single woman, whether widowed or never married, would find her finishing school education of little use in supporting herself. In fact, the domestic skills would be of more use, for a single woman could run a boarding house or take in sewing. But illiterate women could do the same. In the end, the female seminary-educated woman was no better off than the uneducated one.

---

[5] Satterfield, 27; Alderman, 6. In addition, Lula clipped numerous newspaper articles on McIver over the years, many of which comment on his speaking style; see Lula Martin McIver Papers, Folder 1.

The injustice did not end there, said McIver. The state of North Carolina had for nearly a century provided and supported a university for white men. Nearly a decade earlier it had established and had since maintained colleges and normal schools for black men *and* women, which meant that a young black woman the same age as his sister had within geographical and economic reach an institution to prepare her for something other than menial labor. His sister and other young white women like her, however, had no such option, and if unmarried, faced a life of demeaning drudgery.

McIver pointed out that he and other young white men had received the assistance of the state, the church, and the philanthropist to enable them to get the education that they could not otherwise have afforded. Northern philanthropy supplemented state funds to provide schools in which young black men and women could obtain an education at a fifth of its actual cost. However, "government and religion and private generosity all say by their acts that they have no concern or interest in the education of my sister" or women like her. Such neglect was not only unjust, said McIver, it was wasteful. It deprived society of a valuable resource: young women who might help meet the dire need in North Carolina and the South for well-trained teachers.[5]

What began as a personal concern for his sister's education had now bloomed into a crusade for McIver. He wrote later that he realized at that point that the education of women was "the greatest question in education." In fact, the two major concerns in his thinking—the need for high-quality graded schools to bring progress to the South, as well as enough well-trained teachers to staff them, and the unjustifiable dearth of educational

---

[5] His first speech, being impromptu, was not written in advance. McIver, however, later recorded it in written form from memory; see the McIver Papers, Folder 10.

opportunities for women—began to merge and suggest a single solution to both problems. The answer was simple: provide a low-cost, high-quality, state-sponsored normal school for young women who currently had no such opportunities and educate them to be teachers. Teaching was one of the few professions that was wide open to women, and, like Mrs. Spencer, McIver believed women were natural teachers. Young women needed educational and professional opportunities, and the state needed teachers. Provide a normal school for women, and both problems would be solved.[7]

McIver hardly had the means or influence to accomplish that goal right away, but he soon began to take steps toward it. In 1886, he was offered a position at Peace Institute, a women's finishing school in Raleigh, as the head of its literature department. He accepted the position, but had a suggestion to make before he even arrived in Raleigh to begin his first year there. He suggested in a letter to Peace President John Burwell that he be allowed to establish a normal program at the college. Burwell's response was enthusiastic. "I have long wanted," he wrote, "to introduce, as you suggest, a Normal Course: It is very desirable indeed, and I know of nothing which would give more satisfaction. Let us by all means work this up. I have now a dozen or more fine young ladies who are preparing to teach and to whom this would be of great advantage." Having won approval for the idea, McIver set forth with gusto to design the normal curriculum which he would implement at Peace in the fall.[8]

He had a number of other important matters to attend to that spring and summer before moving to Raleigh for the fall. His and Lula's first child, Annie Martin, was born

---

[7] Autobiographical notes, McIver Papers, Folder 9.
[8] John Burwell to Charles McIver, March 5, 1886, McIver Papers, Folder 1.

in May. A few weeks later, McIver attended the annual Teacher's Assembly at Black Mountain. It soon became apparent that his fame and stature were growing. Earlier that year, the April issue of *The Teacher* had carried an announcement that McIver had been hired as a professor at Peace, referring to him as "one of the foremost teachers in the State." His rising reputation, as well as the awareness of his advocacy for women's education, had apparently extended even further since then. The educators at Black Mountain chose McIver to chair a committee to lobby the state legislature for a public normal school for women.[9]

While at Black Mountain, McIver also got the chance to spend some time with one of his close friends from his university days, Edward Alderman. McIver took advantage of the opportunity to convert Alderman to the cause of working for the establishment of a state-supported women's college. Alderman soon became an enthusiastic supporter and contributed significantly to the cause, helping to draft the proposal that would be presented to the state legislature. Though a number of well-known figures announced their support for the cause, Alderman insisted that it was McIver's brainchild from the start. Alderman said later:

> [The original idea for the normal school] was born in the brain of Charles McIver. He did not borrow the idea from Massachusetts or New York. The whole scheme forced itself upon him out of the dust of injustice and negligence right under his eyes. I recall the day at Black Mountain when he spoke of it to me in his compelling way, and won my quick sympathy and interest in the idea. His busy brain and unwearying energy rapidly drew friends to the movement, for no one who met him failed to hear of it.

---

[9] Notebook, Lula Martin McIver Papers, Folder 1; Untitled article, *The Teacher* 2 (April, 1886), 8; Satterfield, 30.

Just how thoroughly McIver had sold Alderman on the idea of a women's normal school would become increasingly apparent in the coming years.[10]

McIver and Alderman drew up the proposal for the women's school in 1886 and, along with a group of other notables, including Edward Moses and George Winston, presented it before the North Carolina General Assembly's Committee on Education. The men knew that approval was not likely—Alderman said the proposal was "doomed" before it was even presented—and the legislature did, indeed, reject the idea. The group, however, saw the venture not as a failure but as a starting point. They were determined to continue working to build support and to introduce the proposal again at a later date.

McIver was little deterred by the defeat. He saw the cause as just and as something that *had* to be. There was just enough stubbornness and just enough rebel in him to enjoy a good fight, which made his cause all the more attractive to him. Adding to its charm was the opportunity to rub elbows with power brokers and celebrities and to gain their attention for a time; Alderman admitted that the group, in spite of the defeat, "came away elated and somewhat excited over our first contact with legislative responsibility and greatness."[11]

McIver worked that summer and every summer, even though his permanent employment did not require it, partly because of money. There never seemed to be enough of it, and McIver constantly fretted about his personal finances and the tight constraints of the household budget. He hated to be in debt, but periodically found that he had to borrow money from friends and acquaintances as unforeseen situations arose.

---

[10] Alderman, 5.
[11] Ibid.

Another reason he worked constantly was his temperament. He was driven. He felt compelled to work constantly, and both thrived on and suffered from a high-stress, high-pressure environment. His made personal health and family secondary concerns. His firm Presbyterian upbringing also emphasized hard work as a virtue.[12]

The summer of 1886 found McIver teaching a normal school in nearby Yadkin County. In previous years the state had conducted summer normal schools at the University, but the legislature had recently discontinued the program at the Chapel Hill campus. Instead, the General Assembly had authorized and sponsored local normal sessions that were shorter in length but more intensive and certainly more accessible to local teachers—especially given the fact that teachers' salaries were ridiculously low and the overwhelming majority could little afford to travel. McIver, glad for the change both for principle and for profit, was one of the degree-holding educators who was given the opportunity to lead normal sessions. He was apparently quite capable, for the Yadkin normal started with only seventy-five teachers from the multiple-county region and closed at the end of the two-week session with over two hundred. His speaking abilities were blooming further, as was his confidence in them, and word-of-mouth was beginning to create a positive reputation for the congenial but passionate teacher from Winston with the folksy wit and colorful stories. McIver's delight with his new-found cause grew with his confidence; he wrote to his wife during the Yadkin normal, "I spoke on Female Education for three quarters of an hour to about 125 people." Viewing the word "female"

[12] Notebook, Lula Martin McIver Papers, Folder 1; autobiographical notes, McIver Papers, Folder 9.

as condescending in this context, he soon began referring to the topic exclusively as "women's education."[13]

His ideas, phrasing, and arguments began during this time to take their later well-known shapes. Educate a man and you perform an important task, proclaimed McIver, but the returns may be limited. Educated men are frequently too busy with their professions to pass their educations on to their children, so an educated man, barring other factors, can easily have illiterate children. A woman, however, is in a different situation with her role as mother and overseer of the household. She teaches, intentionally or not, as she spends her day surrounded by hungry little minds; she "necessarily propagates whatever education she has." Educating a man was a short-term investment—a worthy one in its own right—that ended with his death and mainly focused on material gains. But educating a woman was a long-term investment that bore compounded dividends for years and generations to come. "If it be admitted," argued McIver, "as it must be, that woman is by nature the chief educator of children, her proper training is the strategic point in the education of the [human] race." It was not an exaggeration to see the education of women as being crucial to the maintenance of a civilized society; indeed, "the chief factors in any civilization are its homes and primary schools, and homes and primary schools are made by women rather than by men." Educating women was also the most efficient way to ensure the continuation and progress of a literate, stable, and prosperous society; "the cheapest, easiest, surest road to universal

[13] Charles McIver to Lula McIver, July 17, 1886, McIver Papers, Folder 6.

education is the education of those who would be the mothers and teachers of future generations."[14]

There were some uncomfortable aspects of the Yadkin normal that he reported to Lula as well. The couple with whom he was supposed to stay for the two weeks sold liquor out of their home, which McIver considered intolerable, so he paid a dollar a day to stay in a hotel, which put a considerable dent in his earnings from the normal. The other situation he encountered illustrates how the refined and modest McIver often differed from those to whom he spoke. Some of the women brought their children to the sessions, and those with infants would often openly breast-feed their babies to keep them quiet—at one point, three in the front row alone, he wrote to Lula. This was apparently the norm in this region of the state that incorporated part of the Appalachian Mountains and their foothills, but it was something that McIver, in his slightly greater degree of refinement and solid Presbyterian morality, had not encountered before and it embarrassed him greatly. He could be folksy and familiar, but not *that* familiar.[15]

McIver moved to Raleigh in August, to be joined by Lula and the baby a few weeks later. Once there, he found that there was considerable excitement and anticipation regarding the new normal program that he was scheduled to inaugurate at Peace that fall. He wrote to his wife:

> The idea of putting in the normal feature is exceedingly popular. . . . The majority of the patrons of female colleges, I think, are getting tired of paying big prices for butterfly accomplishments and nothing besides. There is a demand for something practical, and I think we may congratulate ourselves on being the first to inaugurate so progressive a movement in North Carolina.

---

[14] Notes from speech given at Yadkin Normal Institute, July 19, 1886, McIver Papers, Folder 10.
[15] Charles McIver to Lula McIver, July 19, 1886, McIver Papers, Folder 6.

He began his tenure at Peace College the fall of 1886 and, if Burwell's praise is an indication, enjoyed success not only with the normal program but with his other duties as well.[16]

McIver saw an additional opportunity in the move to Raleigh: the chance to be near the state legislators and put his hand-shaking, grinning, storytelling, and back-slapping skills to work. That was an area in which he shone; Josephus Daniels said later that McIver had a "genius for friendship." His talents in that regard had won him substantial popularity during his university days, and he saw no reason why they would not work now. He was not being devious, duplicitous, or even disingenuous; he truly enjoyed being with people, and he was pleasant, sincere, and likable. But he was well aware of his strengths and was now determined to use them to advance the general cause of improved schools and teachers and the specific cause of establishing a women's normal school.[17]

His work in Raleigh therefore encompassed two spheres: his paid, professional role as a professor at Peace, and his unpaid, unofficial role as a one-man lobby for education with the General Assembly. It would be hard to say which occupied more of his time. McIver spent every available moment at the Capitol, meeting legislators in the halls, going to their hotel rooms, or entertaining them at his home. Increasingly, they came to his home. The presence of state legislators and officials in the McIver home

---

[16] Charles McIver to Lula McIver, August 8, 1886, McIver Papers, Folder 6; note from Burwell to McIver, n. d., McIver Papers, Folder 1.

[17] William C. Smith, Viola Boddie, and Mary Settle Sharpe, eds., *Charles Duncan McIver* (Greensboro, North Carolina: J. J. Stone and Company, 1907), 144. This volume was the college's official memorial to McIver, complied soon after his death.

became almost taken for granted; there always seemed to be one dignitary or another "over for supper." Lula took it in stride, herself aware that this was a chance to promote education in general and the cause of women's education in particular. The lawmakers liked coming to the McIver home, for they could count on a decent meal, a homey atmosphere, and always, always Charles McIver with his funny stories, mimicry, down-home aphorisms, and more. McIver did more than make them laugh, however; he slipped promotion of his causes in between the chuckles. Over time he befriended and influenced even those who had strongly disagreed with him in the beginning.[18]

He made at least one friend outside of the legislature during this time. Josephus Daniels had come to Raleigh a year earlier and had taken over the editorship of the *State Chronicle*, a newspaper which had come to be viewed as authoritative on the goings-on in the state capital. In addition to editing the newspaper, Daniels practiced law on the side and maintained some political aspirations, which eventually bore fruit in the form of appointments as Secretary of the Navy under Woodrow Wilson and Ambassador to Mexico under Franklin D. Roosevelt. For the time being, however, Daniels, like McIver, was just starting out, young, and full of ideas, passions, and dreams. McIver and Daniels developed a fast friendship; the former dropped by the latter's newspaper office almost daily after classes. Daniels shared not only McIver's ideas about improving education, including women's education, but his desire to see North Carolina and the South modernized in general as well. So well did they get along that Daniels approached McIver about becoming a partner in his law practice or in his newspaper, both of which

[18] Notebook, Lula Martin McIver Papers, Folder 1.

McIver considered but eventually declined. Even so, the friendship with Daniels would prove to be important time and again in the future.[19]

For two years, McIver's life continued in the same pattern: teach at Peace and lobby the legislature during the school year; conduct normal schools, give speeches, and attend meetings of educational organizations in the summer. During the summer of 1887, he was teaching a normal school in the small mountain community of Sparta when he got word that his second child, a son to be named Charles Duncan McIver, Jr., was born. The next summer found him conducting two normals, one in Wilson in the eastern part of the state in July and another back in Sparta in August. Working with him in the normals were two of his old university colleagues, Edward Alderman and Marcus Noble.

In addition to the normal sessions that summer, McIver found that his star was rising in educational circles. At the State Teachers' Assembly convention in June, he was thrust increasingly into a leadership position. He was asked to address the convention on women's education. He was chosen to nominate his former professor and friend George Winston for president of the body. He was elected chairman of the Executive Committee, the chief decision-making body of the Teachers' Assembly, and was placed on the editing committee overseeing the recording and printing of the minutes.[20]

He was chosen as chairman of one other important committee. The Teachers' Assembly again voted to petition the legislature for the establishment of a women's normal school. They selected McIver, Alderman, Edwin Moses, Winston, and several others to serve on the committee and chose McIver to lead the charge. The appointees

---

[19] Ibid.; Smith, et al, 144.; Satterfield, 30.

[20] Autobiographical notes, McIver Papers, Folder 9; Notebook, Lula Martin McIver Papers, Folder 1.

began at once to prepare to sell the General Assembly on the idea in its next session, even though that was six months away.[21]

Even in summer, McIver was demonstrating tendencies that would govern the rest of his life. He never thought his plate was too full, he never thought himself too busy, and no amount of time and energy was too much for his profession and his causes. He seldom took time for relaxation, choosing instead to fill up any free moments with work-related tasks. He almost literally "burned the candle at both ends." He taught normal sessions during the day, gave public lectures and speeches at night, and handled his duties for educational organizations such as the Teachers' Assembly during his "free time." As he journeyed between locations in the state, he made contact with fellow proponents of education and recruited students for Peace. Already his letters home disclosed that he was "tired, tired, tired," but he showed no inclination to slow down. His work habits also established another pattern: he spent less and less time at home. In later years, he would be away from home much of the time not just during the summers, but year round.[22]

Further signs arose that McIver was attracting attention. The trustees of Floral College, a small private women's college in Robeson County, offered him a position as "principal" of their institution. Not seeing an advantage in being so far removed from the state capital and perhaps not cherishing the idea of living in such a rural setting, McIver politely declined the offer.[23]

---

[21] Smith, et al, 151-153.
[22] Autobiographical notes, McIver Papers, Folder 9; Notebook, Lula Martin McIver Papers, Folder 1; various letters from Charles McIver to Lula McIver, McIver Papers, Folder 6.
[23] Trustees of Floral College to Charles McIver, July 13, 1888, McIver Papers, Folder 1.

As busy as he was, McIver had not lost his sense of humor nor his appreciation for the entertaining side of human behavior. Certainly he was always on the lookout for suitable material for his storytelling. On the way from Wilson to Sparta, he stopped off in Goldsboro, where he stayed with James Joyner and his wife. One evening McIver witnessed a local rally of the Democratic Party that turned violent. He recounted the affair in a letter to Lula:

> They had a big jollification here last night. The town was ablaze with illumination, tar barrels, etc. Long torch light procession. Up till 1 o'clock. One man killed with a brick bat and the murderer put in jail. There was a big crowd in the jail, among others a young white man named Lynch from Greene County. Some Greene men broke into the jail and put in some crowbars to some Negroes [being held there], whom they could reach, and tried to hire them to help Lynch out. The Negroes just got their own cells broken open about day and without helping Lynch, skipped. So to sum up the Democratic proceeds—big jubilee, one Democrat killed and another put in jail. Four Republicans turned out.[24]

Back in Raleigh in the fall of 1888, McIver resumed the regular routine of the academic year: teach classes, lobby the legislature, and carry out the work of educational organizations like the Teachers' Assembly. In fact, those last two tasks merged in the spring of 1889, when McIver and his colleagues submitted their proposal for the establishment of a women's normal school to the state legislature.

The proposal made some salient points and asked some hard-hitting questions relating to women's education. If it was important for the state a century ago to establish a university for its young men and to continually spend significant amounts of money for their education, the proposal asked, how could "any man consistently refuse to allow a small amount from the public school fund (not enough to shorten the school term one-

[24] Charles McIver to Lula McIver, July 25, 1888, McIver Papers, Folder 6.

half a day) to establish a Training School where girls can prepare for almost the only work by which our social conditions allow them to earn a livelihood?" Why provide for those who have many options and ignore those who have few? Without a publicly-supported school, most women would be "doomed to live and drudge and die without ever having known the blessing of being independent." Besides, as McIver had argued before, women, as mothers, were naturally thrust into the role of teaching anyway, and the future of the state depended on how well they were prepared to do that job. In addition, the future of the state depended on an improved educational system, and an improved educational system depended on higher quality teachers. And North Carolina desperately needed teachers in general, good teachers all the more. Why not establish a school to prepare women to meet that need? If nothing else, the state should establish a women's college out of its own interests.[25]

A bill based on the committee's proposal was introduced in the General Assembly near the end of the 1889 session. Not content to sit back and watch the debate, McIver busied himself lobbying as many members of the legislature as possible, including Augustus Leazer, the Speaker of the House. McIver had developed enough of a relationship with Leazer that they considered each other friends. Even so, Leazer was hesitant on the women's college bill; a true politician, he was unsure how far his constituents would let him go in supporting it. Nevertheless, McIver got him to promise that if the bill passed the Senate—which Leazer considered unlikely—he would not oppose it in the House.

---

[25] "Act to Establish a Normal College," March 9, 1889, McIver Papers, Folder 10.

One evening during the time when the bill was being debated in the Senate, the McIvers invited Leazer and his wife to dine with them. Before their guests arrived, McIver, aware of his wife's strong feelings and tendency to speak her mind, warned Lula, "Don't mention the bill. He feels terrible about [not being able to support it directly]." Lula indignantly replied that she was not in the habit of embarrassing guests. When all were relaxing after dinner, however, Leazar said, "Mrs. McIver, since you think so much of education, you will heartily approve of something we did today. We passed a bill establishing a school for the Indians." Charles shot a warning glance at Lula, but she little managed to restrain her feelings. "If I only could be an Indian or a Negro," she replied curtly, "I might expect something from this legislature." Charles, ever the diplomat, managed to smooth things over and change the subject; it was something he often found himself doing when with his passionate, outspoken wife.[26]

During the debate in the Senate, McIver arose to speak to the lawmakers on behalf of the bill. In response, an opponent of the measure warned his fellow legislators not to be swayed by one who appeared before them "clothed in purple and fine linen." Lula, seated in the galley, dropped a note down to Charles on the chamber floor. It read, "Pull up your coattail, Charles, and show them your purple and fine linen." His pants had developed a good-sized hole from age and wear, and she had not long before sewn in a patch of completely different material. Charles, however, declined his wife's suggestion.[27]

---

[26] Notebook, Lula Martin McIver Papers, Folder 1.
[27] Ibid.

To the surprise of some, including Leazer, McIver and his colleagues had convinced enough state senators to get the bill passed in that house by a substantial majority. The House, however, was a different story; the measure was defeated there by sixteen votes.

The news was not all bad for educational reformers, however. State Superintendent Sidney Finger—a friend of McIver's and a supporter of educational reform—managed to salvage something from the situation that would pay future dividends. He got the legislature to pass a measure discontinuing the summer normal schools and establishing in their place a year-round program of institutes that would be conducted on a county-by-county basis. The institutes were to have two purposes: provide training for teachers, and educate the public on school needs and ways to meet them. The program could, in effect, endeavor to create grass-roots support for the improvement of public education.

The move was a shrewd one. The program's aims would be well within the parameters of the Superintendent's designated mission. Moreover, the program's purposes, as stated in the bill, were general enough that almost anyone could support them without angering his constituents. Who was not in favor of improving education? Few legislators fit that description, and the measure passed by a large margin.[28]

Of course, the proposed program's more direct, yet unstated, benefit for McIver and his fellow reformers was that it gave them a state-sanctioned vehicle through which to carry out a campaign of information and persuasion. While the program's conductors

---

[28] Satterfield, 32.

were in an area to train teachers in better methods, they could also set aside time to invite the general public and educate them about the need for graded schools, local taxation to support better schools, and a public women's college. It was clearly a golden opportunity.

The question now was who the state would get to carry out the program. Finger had the two perfect candidates in mind: Charles McIver and Edwin Alderman. In March of 1889, McIver received his letter from Finger:

> At a meeting of the State Board of Education held today, you were selected to conduct institute work, in accordance with a recent act of Assembly which abolishes the . . . normal schools. Your annual salary will be $2000, you bearing your travelling [sic] expenses, and the details of the work will be left mainly to your judgment subject to the advice of the State Supt. of Public Ins. and the specific requirements of the statute.[29]

McIver and Alderman both accepted the positions within a few weeks. In May, the two shared a hotel room together in Chapel Hill when they both came for the University of North Carolina's commencement exercises. There they talked excitedly all night about the job they were about to undertake and its possibilities. Though they were both still in their twenties, Alderman later recalled that they realized then that they were about to attempt something that no one else had done, "except Horace Mann, and he seemed so far off and so great that each of us would have laughed at the other for mentioning the comparison."[30]

Little did they realize the full extent of the challenges before them. Aside from the physical hardships of traveling and lodging in many different—and sometimes ill-

---

[29] Sydney Finger to Charles McIver, March 22, 1889, McIver Papers, Folder 1.
[30] Alderman, 5.

equipped—places, they were also faced with the task of persuading a populace to support something that it traditionally had not supported. The mindset towards education of the average North Carolinian was a swirl of sometimes conflicting views. The people tended to hold high esteem for an educated man and preferred to have that sort of man in positions of leadership. At the same time, however, they looked down on the very teachers who provided that education, seeing them as occupying a lowly position and unable to succeed at anything else. They opposed making widely available the very education that created leaders; the public schools were not very good, but they were good enough for common folk, and if someone wanted to have a better sort of education, he or his family should be willing to foot the bill for it. Some North Carolinians opposed providing financial support to the public schools because they were secular and did not teach Biblical doctrine or morality. Others opposed taxation to support the schools because the some of the revenue would go to schools for blacks; the phrase, "Educate a Negro and spoil a field hand," was often heard. Some thought it was wrong to distribute education revenue equally anyway, because, since the tax would be based on property, those who owned much property would end up paying to educate the children of those who owned little. Taxes in general were despised and considered an evil to be avoided, and state legislators had learned to tread lightly when it came to voting for anything that increased taxes or appeared to be a waste of tax money. McIver later coined the phrase, "Agin' taxes equals politics," to describe how the issue affected North Carolina politicians.

With regard to women's education, the resistance was even stiffer. If there was difficulty in getting North Carolinians to support educational reform in general—and the

local taxation needed to fund it—it was going to be all the more difficult to get them to support a publicly-financed college for women. The idea that a woman's world should not extend beyond home and hearth was well-entrenched; as one man—a public school teacher, amazingly—later put it in a response to McIver, "It is not women's hemisphere to be educated."[31]

One newspaper editor summed up the thought of many on the issue of educational reform in a response he wrote to one of McIver's letters to his paper:

> I take no stock in many of the [new] educational methods of the day. I am opposed to the whole graded school idea and system. . . . I do not believe in educating people in the higher branches at the public expense. After a child has been taught the elementary branches in the common school, he and his parents should scuffle for the balance—that's what I had to do. . . . As for the children of the elite, I would shut them out of the public schools entirely. A man who is able to educate his children ought to be made to do it or else live to see them grow up in ignorance. . . . I would like to see the common schools filled with the shirt-tail children, and to see the basis for an education laid in them—no Algebra, no language, no painting, drawing, or any such business at the public expense.[32]

McIver and Alderman certainly had their work cut out for them and they were about to discover the real scope of the work to which they had committed themselves. The task required some unique talents, which they had, and a lot of hard work and devotion, which they soon learned to give.

The pair resigned their previous positions and began the institute work in July, 1889. They divided the state's counties between them and systematically worked from the western-most counties in the Appalachians to those on the Atlantic coast—"from

---

[31] North Carolinians' mindset on education was summarized in Sydney Finger's *Biennial Report of the State Superintendent of Public Instruction of North Carolina, for the Scholastic Years 1889-90* (Raleigh, North Carolina: Josephus Daniels, 1890); Satterfield, 30-32.

[32] Joseph Caldwell to Charles McIver, August 6, 1888, McIver Papers, Folder 1.

Murphy to Manteo," as North Carolinians have long been fond of saying. Each institute was typically five days long. McIver and Alderman held normal classes for teachers during the first four days. Sometimes in the evenings they delivered lectures. On the fifth day, usually well-publicized in advance, they opened the institute to the public, conducting various exercises and always ending with a rousing speech on educational reform. As time went by, they were able to obtain additional funding so that they could hire, in the summers, other staff members to assist in the program. As a result, James Joyner, Edward Moses, and Marcus Noble ended up working with the program at various times. McIver was even able to get his wife signed on and compensated for helping at different points.[33]

McIver and Alderman recounted in their reports to Superintendent Finger some of the challenges they faced just in getting to and from the institute locations. Railroads could take them to a few of the sites, but there were many towns a considerable distance from the nearest railroad. In those cases, they had to improvise. Sometimes they hired local residents to take them in wagons, which were often farm wagons used, as Alderman put it, "for other 'substances.'" Heavy rains could mean swelling streams and washed out roads and bridges. McIver wrote of crossing one creek on a log and walking the last few miles after his hired wagon could not ford the rain-engorged creek. On another occasion, it took almost three days and several tries to travel less than twenty miles, and even then he only made it by having the wagon's driver navigate water that came up to the seat. He arrived late for the institute with wet pants and a deep sense of relief. Even without a flood, getting to one's destination could be a challenge. Alderman once crossed a stream

[33] Institute reports, 1889-1892, McIver Papers, Folder 10.

in a birch bark canoe to conduct an institute on an Indian reservation. McIver reported getting up at four a.m. to ride twenty miles in a rattling wagon in order to catch a train and ride many more miles. And then there was the question of financing their travels. Since, according to the terms of their employment, they had to pay their own travel expenses, money sometimes ran short. McIver again found himself having to borrow money at times, something that he sincerely hated.[34]

In addition to travel concerns, the quality of food and lodging varied widely. McIver, in his constant flow of letters to Lula, often described the places where he stayed and the food that was served. From Smithfield he wrote, "I am uncomfortably situated in a hotel run by a dirty, old cunning looking man, who also runs a saloon nearby." In the backwoods community of Troy he stayed at a hotel whose proprietor was a "big fat dirty man" who looked like "the very commonest field hand . . . [and who had] a half square foot of naked stomach to be seen through a hole in his dirty shirt." He described a lot of dirty, half-dressed men that he saw in that town. But he reserved his wryest humor for the hotel's cook: "The cook is, or rather was, a white man and looks like the proprietor's twin brother except he has only one gallus and is dirtier and smells bad and wears a greasy apron and has a snuff toothbrush in his mouth when he waits on the table. I can hardly eat enough to keep alive." A stay at a boarding house in Lillington prompted him to write, "I think the landlady is a widow and snuff stains ornament her mouth in wreaths. Winton coffee, no milk, messed eggs, sick-chicken, dingy grease, evergreen collards, aged butter, and a spoilt child made up the bill of fare for dinner."[35]

---

[34] Ibid.

[35] Various letters, Charles McIver to Lula McIver, 1889-1892, McIver Papers, Folder 6.

Food became something of an issue with McIver. One week he would be in a backwoods or mountain community, repulsed by the poor sanitation or hygiene of the cook or his hosts and hardly able to force himself to eat. The next week he might be in a larger city with good accommodations—sometimes even at the home of an old acquaintance—and would have clean quarters and an abundance of good food. The swing from feast to famine and the uncertainty of what the next stop might bring caused McIver to adopt a "get-it-while-you-can" mentality towards food. He began to overeat. His letters to Lula report frequent cases of pronounced indigestion. A picture of McIver at age twenty-seven—the year before he began the institutes—shows a trim, slender physique; a picture taken just three years later displays a man greatly-changed physically, with a double chin and a bulging stomach to go with his balding head. His tendency to overeat would trouble him for the rest of his life; indeed, one long-time student of McIver has said, "He killed himself with knife and fork; he ate himself to death."[36]

When it came time to hold an institute, however, both McIver and Alderman put other concerns aside and concentrated with a passion on the task at hand. It was then, as well, that the talents of both men began to show through. They were well received by the teachers. Those in rural areas were starved for input, instruction, and contact with the outside world of education; those in larger population centers often had heard of the two and were eager to be instructed by ones approaching celebrity status. McIver and Alderman generated a lot of interest among the general public as well. In the late

[36] Ibid. The photographs referenced are in the McIver Papers, Folder 140. The quotation is from Betty Carter, Director of Special Collections at UNCG and curator of the McIver Papers, to the author, June, 2001.

nineteenth century, with few options available for entertainment (especially in rural areas), a visiting speaker—a state official, no less—was an exciting event. It did not matter whether one agreed with these young men who had the audacity to advocate additional taxation; indeed, that only added to the spectacle and increased the curiosity. The people, generally speaking, would come out to hear them; now the only challenge was to convert them to the cause of educational reform.[37]

Though their cause and their devotion to it was the same, the two men differed greatly in speaking styles. Alderman was the classically-styled orator, with his picturesque language, literary and historical allusions, and flawless logic, grammar, and diction. McIver's speaking style was quite different. He certainly was no stranger to grammar, logic, literature, or Latin, but he had already found that the only way he could be a public speaker at all—aside from having a passion for a cause—was to tap into the folksy, storytelling, entertaining side of his personality that had made him popular in college and in Raleigh. McIver connected with the people; he spoke their language. He was not crude and rough as some in his audience might have been, but he had been born and reared in the country and had the "common touch." But it was a common touch that was shrewdly, powerfully aimed. When he perceived that some in a poor, rural community (and he encountered a number of those) were struggling and had nearly despaired of keeping their school going—much less improve it—he told them the story of Old Frog. Two frogs were accidentally knocked into a crock of milk as the cover was placed on the top. One of the frogs splashed frantically for a little while, but then gave up and drowned. Old Frog, however, did not give up; he kept right on kicking. He refused

[37] Notebook, Lula Martin McIver Papers, Folder 1.

to give up and kept kicking all night long. The next morning, the woman of the house came and lifted the cover off the crock and, lo and behold, there sat Old Frog, safe and quite contented on an island of butter. The story was far from classical stature, but it was more effective than any excerpt from Cicero could have been. The people listening understood the message; it met them where they lived and some took it to heart.

Other "McIverisms" focused more directly on educational reform. "Those who teach the young are civilization's most powerful agents, and society everywhere ought to set apart and consecrate to its greatest work its bravest, its best, its strongest men and women. . . . The teacher is the seed corn of civilization, and none but the best is good enough to use." From the rugged old farmer to the child barely old enough to help with planting, they all knew about seed corn. The whole crop depended on it; it had to be of the best quality and it had to be well cared-for. Not all who heard McIver were converted to his position, but few failed to understand his point.

Sometimes he told them jokes or humorous stories just to make them laugh and keep their attention. After having to stuff socks and underwear into the broken windows of his hotel room, he was inspired to tell the story of the teacher who was helping a little boy read. The boy came to the word "glass" and stopped, not recognizing it. "It's what you put in windows," she prompted. The light went on in the little boy's eyes, and he said, "G-l-a-s-s, daddy's old britches."[38]

---

[38] McIver usually did not write out his institute speeches in advance; instead, he compiled a notebook full of well-stated ideas, axioms, illustrations, stories, and jokes. He would then just begin speaking and use the various components as dictated by his audience. His notebook, which includes all the statements, stories, and jokes mentioned above, is in the McIver Papers, Folder 10

McIver did not shrink from challenging people to change their thinking. "The public ought to right about face. The custom of tempting the capable and ambitious to turn away from teaching ought to give place to a policy of financial aid and other rewards that will tempt the most ambitious and strongest people in every community to enter the field of greatest and most potential service to the world." He challenged them on the provocative subject of taxes as well:

> [Hatred of taxation] is ignorance of the fact that just taxation is simply an exchange of a little money for something better—civilized government. The savage alone is exempt from taxation. It is strange that the man who cheerfully pays his annual insurance premium for protection against fire and death should regard it as tyranny when called upon to pay his tax, which is an annual premium to protect against arson and murder.

In one town McIver took note of the fact that the jail was newer and better built than the school. He also found the people there to be ignorant and blindly provincial. In his public address he took them to task: "Education is one of the functions of the State, and it is a shame upon all of us that our school houses are not as good as our jail houses and in many cases the investment in our universities is not equal to that in our penitentiaries."[39]

Occasionally Alderman and McIver held joint institutes, working together on a program for several counties. During the first of these, McIver worried whether he could hold the crowd's attention after they had heard Alderman, who was a genuinely gifted speaker. He decided to point out the obvious—that he was a different kind of orator and could not compete with Alderman on his terms. When his turn came, he mimicked perfectly the black barber in Chapel Hill that both he and Alderman had known during

---

[39] Ibid.

their university days: "Dat ar man McIver shore can sponsify powerful, but I tell you, he jes can't laborate, spashiate, and zaggirate like Mr. Alderman."

Alderman was a more polished speaker, but those who heard both generally agreed that McIver was more interesting, more entertaining, and ultimately had more impact as he drove his points home. It was Alderman himself who later said of McIver's speaking abilities, "It was a dull and senseless audience that did not respond to the breathless onrush of his appeal . . . [equipped] with a homely humor and power of illustration, a shrewd application of story and anecdote unequaled in North Carolina. . . ." James Joyner said later of the difference between Alderman's oratorical abilities and those of McIver, "Without any of the arts of the orator, he (McIver) was the most convincing, the most irresistible speaker that I ever heard. He was too intense, too earnest to employ paltry decorations of speech." One of Alderman's own biographers summed up the difference this way: "Alderman may have charmed more audiences, but McIver won more hearts."[40]

For two years, McIver and Alderman crisscrossed the state, holding their institutes and serving each region at least twice. After only six months, McIver noted that the work was harder and was taking more of a toll on him than he had anticipated. In a letter to Joyner, he said: "I need rest. . . . I have done the hardest work since July that I've ever done or seen done by anybody."[41] He was not discouraged; though he had been well-

---

[40] Alderman's reflections on McIver's speaking style—including the anecdote regarding their first joint institute—appear in Smith, et al, *Charles Duncan McIver*, 145-147; Joyner's thoughts are found on 160-61 of the same volume. The biographer's quotation is from Dumas Malone, *Edwin A. Alderman: A Biography* (New York: Doubleday, Doran, and Company, 1940), 37.

[41] Charles McIver to James Joyner, December 17, 1889, McIver Papers, Folder 1.

received in some places and less so in others, he could nonetheless sense progress in generating support for educational reform. It was just that the work was so very demanding, and he was tired. It was a word he was to use often in the years to come, for the demands were only to increase, and McIver felt compelled to keep up. Though his work was demanding, he knew he had found his niche and not even an offer to head a Presbyterian school in Tennessee, proffered early in 1890, could turn him from the path. He was determined to bring change, and in particular a public women's college, to his beloved North Carolina.[42]

Newspapers around the state began taking note of McIver and the impact he was making with his institutes. One said: "He has aroused interest on the subject of education and the true character and value of the public school as never before. He has placed the public school in its proper light before the community, and made its friends and supporters men who have heretofore been careless and indifferent on the subject." Another editor wrote that McIver's speeches were "a splendid and powerful presentation of his cause and a complete refutation of the arguments against it"; still another said they were "replete with logic and good-natured satire, and marked by that true eloquence which is born of deep conviction." He was even able to use those papers that disagreed with him to his advantage by writing and getting printed responses to their editorials. He learned quickly to generate publicity, not always waiting for editorials but sending carefully prepared articles to a newspaper in advance of his visiting that town.[43]

---

[42] Samuel H. Chester to Charles McIver, January 29, 1890, McIver Papers, Folder 1.
[43] Editorial, Henderson *Gold Leaf* (February 3, 1890), 7; editorial, Wilson *Advance* (April 22, 1890), 11; editorial, Tarboro *Southerner* (May 24, 1890), 7. Examples of McIver's publicity-generating articles are found in the McIver Papers, Folder 10.

That McIver was attracting more attention than ever is borne out by his being invited to be one of the main speakers at the 1890 Teachers' Assembly held in June. Friends in attendance said that he gave the greatest speech of his life that day, and other attendees were apparently impressed as well. They voted unanimously to make McIver the president of the organization. The body also once again made him chair of the committee to petition the General Assembly for a public women's normal school.[44]

Lula was not inactive during this time, either. She accompanied Charles on occasion, sometimes speaking and sometimes organizing groups of ladies to clean and tidy up schoolhouses and other public facilities. In the fall of 1890, Lula accepted a position as the principal of the Charlotte Female Institute, whereupon the McIvers moved to Charlotte. In addition to running the school, Lula also found time to study her first love: medicine. She studied in Charlotte with the state's first practicing woman physician, Annie Laurie Alexander. Though she was never able to complete her studies or open her own practice, the sheer fact that she could at last pursue the study of medicine brought her great satisfaction.[45]

In the McIver household, however, it was education that was the primary focus. Indeed, with his workaholic tendencies and long absences, it had become for Charles almost an obsession. Just how large it loomed in the McIver family consciousness can be seen in the way Charles's children mimicked him. Lula remembered how little Charlie would retrieve the newspaper early in the morning and sit in his father's favorite chair.

---

[44] Autobiographical notes, McIver Papers, Folder 9; Satterfield, 35.
[45] Notebook, Lula Martin McIver Papers, Folder 1.

Still too young to read, he would nevertheless hold the paper in front of him as he had seen his father do and mutter repeatedly, "Education, education, education."[46]

As for Charles McIver himself, the indications of success increased significantly. Numerous organizations around the state, including the influential Farmers' Alliance, endorsed his call for a publicly-supported women's normal college. Newspaper editorials increasingly supported the idea. And he and Alderman were discovering as they returned in their second year to communities they had previously visited that there was a more favorable attitude towards education than there had been before.[47] McIver's star rose in other venues as well. He was increasingly sought after as a college speaker, and accepted more and more invitations as time went by. His college "tour" in 1890 included Wake Forest College, Guilford College, and Trinity College (soon to be Duke University).[48]

Late in 1890, McIver assembled his committee in Goldsboro to plan its pitch to the General Assembly for the establishment of a women's normal college. Excited as he was about the prospect of success, he was also hopeful that success might mean an end to the grueling schedule of institutes. "[Alderman and I] have both worn ourselves down more than we have realized by this institute work and I don't think we could stand it much longer. I know Alderman looks five years older than when we began this work." Perhaps McIver did not realize it, but the same could be said for him.[49]

The legislature had a full agenda when it opened the session in January, 1891. The recently opened North Carolina Agricultural and Mechanical College (later to

---

[46] Satterfield, 36.
[47] Institute report, McIver to Sydney Finger, September 30, 1890, McIver Papers, Folder 1.
[48] Letters of invitation and acceptance from this period are found in the McIver Papers, Folder 1.
[49] Charles McIver to Lula McIver, November 30, 1890, McIver Papers, Folder 6.

become North Carolina State University) was requesting a significant increase in its appropriations, and there were similar requests for other publicly-supported institutions of various kinds all around the state. In addition, an organization called the King's Daughters was petitioning the legislature for the establishment of an industrial school for women. The normal school proponents would have their work cut out for them to make themselves heard above the others.[50]

The normal school proposal, however, had assistance that the other causes did not enjoy: the two years of institutes led by two capable and devoted men had worked their magic, and sentiment in favor of the idea had increased markedly both among the public and in the legislative chamber. In addition, the normal school proposal got a boost from Jabez Curry, who not only made a powerful plea in his speech before the lawmakers, but also brought the promise of additional funding from the Peabody Fund (of which he was head) if the school were approved.

The bill passed the Senate, as it had before, on January 22. The big hurdle, however, would be the House, where it had previously failed. Tension mounted as the days went by and debate continued. As legislators began to decide and give an indication of how they would vote, the normal school proponents began to keep an informal tally. In early February, McIver wrote his wife a hurried letter, which said, "We will win. I can't write. The excitement is too much."[51]

---

[50] Satterfield, 38. See also the Woman's College Scrapbook, a multi-volume collection containing hundreds of newspaper clippings collected during the college's establishment and early years. The Scrapbook is part of the McIver Papers.

[51] Autobiographical notes, McIver Papers, Folder 9; Satterfield, 37-39; Charles McIver to Lula McIver, February 9, 1891, McIver Papers, Folder 6.

The North Carolina General Assembly passed the bill on February 18, 1891. The legislation authorized the creation of a publicly-supported women's college that would be called the North Carolina Normal and Industrial School. Its mission, as specified in the bill, was twofold:

> (1) To give young women such education as shall fit them for teaching;
> (2) To give instruction to young women in drawing, telegraphy, typewriting, stenography and other such industrial arts as may be suitable to their sex and conducive to their support and usefulness.

The combination of the industrial aspect with the normal was a merging of the interests of the educational reformers with those of the King's Daughters. It was also a shrewd move politically, for it drew the support of legislators whose constituents might not be keen on a classical or normal education for women but who could support the idea of giving them training in the "practical arts." Such sentiment arose not only from North Carolinians' increasing desire for modernization but from a growing national consensus on the importance of including industry-related training in college curricula; land-grant colleges and course offerings in engineering and mechanics were other manifestations of this impulse. The bill establishing the North Carolina normal and industrial school additionally specified that students who promised to teach in the state receive free tuition and that board for all students be provided at cost. The measure also said the college was to be located in a suitable community—to be determined by the new school's board—which would provide the physical facilities or the money to build them.[52]

---

[52] Autobiographical notes, McIver Papers, Folder 9; a copy of the bill passed by the legislature, titled "An Act to Establish a Normal and Industrial School for White Girls," is in the McIver Papers, Folder 30.

The institutes were to be discontinued once the school was opened, but for the time being McIver continued conducting them. He felt sure that the board would afford him some position in the new college, but he was not certain what it would be. Whatever it was, he thought, it would offer more stability and financial security for his family than they had at present. In a letter to Lula in March, 1891, he apologized for the lack of a home and the tight budgetary constraints that they had to endure: "The fact is when we do get a home and [financial] competency you will have done at least as much to earn it as I have. It will not be mine to give, but ours to share. I think I see more clearly than ever how galling dependence must be to a sensible woman."[53]

The first order of business for the board was to choose a location. After an intense competition among several cities lasting for months, Greensboro won over its closest competitor, Durham, with a pledge of $30,000 to build the necessary buildings. A group of leading citizens and businessmen signed promises to provide the funds if the city failed to raise the money. After receiving word that their city had won, the populace rang bells and blew steam whistles all over town in celebration.[54]

Now the board had to choose someone to lead the new school. There was little doubt that McIver and Alderman were the front-runners; after all, it had been their vision and they had led the crusade to get it established. The real question was which one of the two tireless campaigners would get the job. The two discussed the matter privately and agreed that neither would harbor any ill feelings should the other be chosen. McIver said as much in a letter to Sydney Finger, a member of the board: "[Alderman] feels as I do

---

[53] Charles McIver to Lula McIver, March 3, 1891, McIver Papers, Folder 6.
[54] "Greensboro Gets the Normal," Greensboro *Patriot* (June 18, 1891), p 1.

about the matter. . . . [T]he selection of either would be no reflection on the other. He would accept a position under my management as I should not hesitate to do under his." McIver went on to emphasize that "only the highest interests of the Institution should be considered."[55]

The two did not have to wait long for a decision. While at the North Carolina Teachers' Assembly convention in mid-June, McIver received a letter from the Board, which read:

> Dear Sir: At a meeting of the Board of Directors of the Normal and Industrial School, held in Greensboro, you were unanimously elected President of the said Institution, at a salary of 2250 dollars a year. In addition to your duties as President of the Normal and Industrial School, you are required to conduct Normal Institutes during vacation of the School. Salary to begin when school formally opens. Hoping that you will accept the Presidency, I am, dear Sir, Yours truly, E. McK. Goodwin, Sect'y to the Board. By Order of the Board.[56]

McIver responded with a letter which said, in part:

> I should like for your Board to know that, in accepting the position tendered me, I am keenly sensible of the honor and the responsibility attaching to it, and that I shall enter upon the discharge of my duties with a determination to do all in my power to promote the success of the Institution. I wish to express my gratification at the action of the Board in selecting Mr. Alderman for the professorship of History and English, for which position he is so eminently qualified. I accept the position with the understanding that it will be my duty to hold Educational Institutes during a part of every vacation.[57]

Charles McIver had indeed seen his dream become reality. Now, however, having won official approval and having been designated the leader of the endeavor, he had to get the proverbial ship off the drawing board, into the harbor, and out to sea.

---

[55] McIver to Finger, June 12, 1891, McIver Papers, Folder 1.
[56] Normal and Industrial School Board of Trustees to McIver, June 13, 1891.
[57] McIver to Board of Trustees, June 16, 1891, McIver Papers, Folder 1.

Accomplishing that would mean even more work and frenetic activity to a man who already had known little else.

Chapter Four

Charles McIver had prevailed in his campaign to get the state of North Carolina to establish a women's college, and the state had in turn prevailed upon him to build it and get it up and running. As of yet he was president of an institution that existed only on paper. It was up to him now to give it definition physically, academically, and in every other way. He had to oversee the construction of buildings, design a curriculum, hire faculty and staff, and recruit students, knowing that he would not get paid a dime for his work until the school officially opened its doors in the fall of 1892. On top of all that, he still had to continue conducting the institutes until the school opened. McIver whipsawed back and forth between Greensboro, his home in Charlotte, and wherever the next scheduled institute was located. The result was the most hectic whirlwind of activity that he had known up to that point.

The institutes actually provided convenient opportunities for him to recruit students. It was easy to combine his pitch for higher-quality graded schools, educational and professional opportunities for women, and greater respect and financial support for education in general with an argument that the Normal and Industrial School was the best way to meet those needs. He was apparently convincing, for not a few of the college's first students came after they or their families had heard him promote the college at one of his institutes.[1]

---

[1] Virginia Lathrop's *Educate a Woman* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1942), a narrative based on first-person accounts of the Normal's early years gathered as part of the college's fiftieth anniversary, includes the stories of a number of women who said that they were first motivated to attend the Normal after hearing McIver speak.

McIver and the college's board located a ten-acre site just outside Greensboro and contracted a local construction company to lay out the campus and erect the first buildings. By August of 1892, the Greensboro *Record* reported that the Main Building was nearly finished and would be one of the most attractive buildings in the city. The original dormitory, also near completion, was already too small to house the over two hundred young women who had applied for admission. The Board of Directors, therefore, authorized the construction of an additional, smaller dorm as well as a president's residence. (Even with the second dormitory and additional housing in private homes, the school would have to turn a significant number of applicants away due to lack of space.) The buildings were close enough to completion that the school could have opened in mid-September, but the boilers and related heating equipment were late in coming. The opening was therefore postponed until early October.[2]

Meanwhile, McIver had been designing a curriculum for the college. By early summer, he had determined that the course of study would include Ancient Languages, Modern Languages, Mathematics, Natural Sciences, Vocal Music, Physical Culture, Domestic Science, Bookkeeping, Freehand and Industrial Drawing, Typewriting, Stenography, and Telegraphy.[3] The inclusion of courses in Domestic Science rankled some, including Lula, and Charles would have preferred to leave them off. The worldly-wise side of him, however, knew that he needed to provide cover for elected officials who might be criticized for their support of the college. Indeed, one politician later justified

---

[2] Greensboro *Record*, August 5, 1892.

[3] *First Annual Catalogue of the State Normal and Industrial School* (Greensboro, North Carolina: C. F. Thomas Printer, 1892-1893), 5.

his support of the school by saying that he understood its purpose was to "teach a young woman how to stuff a chicken as well as the head of a dull boy."[4] The Domestic Science courses also helped to quiet the fears of unconvinced fathers who still thought the most important thing their daughters could learn was how to be good housewives. One father wrote his daughter:

> To prepare yourself to become a good well informed woman, fitted to make a good practacal [sic] man a good wife is what I desire. And I do and shall always oppose you preparing yourself to do work only suited to men. Ladies should be housewives pure and simple, and not go to make up the equipment for a lawyer's or merchant's office or counting room.

There would be, particularly in the early years, many such letters received by students at the college.[5]

In assembling a faculty, McIver sought the highest-caliber personnel possible, but he also wanted as many of them to be women as possible. He did so not because he was concerned about inappropriate interaction between male faculty and female students—or even the appearance thereof—but because he wanted to provide the students with living examples of bright, well-educated, professional women. He wanted to offer solid proof to his students and to the rest of North Carolina that women could educate themselves and could devote their lives to something other than domestic drudgery; he also wanted to

---

[4] Frances Gibson Satterfield, *Charles Duncan McIver* (Atlanta: Ruralist Press, Inc., 1942), 37.
[5] Lathrop, 82.

show that women who did so were not freaks or wild-eyed infidels, but dignified, upstanding citizens who had much of worth to contribute.[6]

Toward these ends, he hired professors such as Gertrude Mendenhall, a graduate of Wellesley College, to teach Mathematics and German; Dixie Lee Bryant, an MIT graduate, to teach Natural Sciences; Miriam Bitting, M.D., Woman's Medical College, Philadelphia, to teach Physiology, Hygiene, and Physical Culture and to run the infirmary; and Viola Boddie, Peabody Normal College, to teach Latin and French. There were a number of others as well, all with prior teaching experience and all women with the exception of Edwin Alderman, who was to teach History and English; Edward Forney, who McIver lured away from the state superintendent's office to handle the college's financial affairs and teach Bookkeeping; and McIver himself, who, in addition to his administrative duties, would teach a course titled "The Science, Art, and History of Teaching." All in all, it was an impressive faculty, especially for a new college and (in that day) for a women's college in the South. In addition to the faculty, McIver hired Sue May Kirkland for the position of "Lady Principal," which essentially meant she was the dorm mother and all-purpose chaperone and counselor, and W. Carroway to be the housekeeper. He also hired Ezekiel Robinson, a black man who had been McIver's personal valet in Raleigh, to serve as the college's "general factotum," which meant he ran the president's errands, drove the college's surrey, picked up the mail, and performed

---

[6] E. J. Forney, Fodie Buie, and Emily Semple Austin, *Leaves from the Stenographers' Notebook* (Greensboro, North Carolina: Harrison Printing Company, n. d.), 15. This book is a collection of remembrances of McIver and the early years at the Normal, compiled by three persons who worked, at different times, as McIver's secretary during that period. Two of the three—Buie and Austin—began as students. See also Notebook, Lula Martin McIver Papers, Jackson Library, University of North Carolina at Greensboro, Greensboro, North Carolina, Folder 1.

whatever other odd jobs might arise. Robinson, who showed up for work daily in a suit and tie, did his job with grace and dignity and, by all appearances, was genuinely devoted to McIver. McIver, for his part, would not hear of hiring anyone else for the position and considered "Zeke" indispensable.[7]

In addition to the official college personnel, McIver leaned heavily on Lula. She interviewed prospective students, responded to letters, answered questions, and performed many other tasks that McIver himself was too busy to undertake. Indeed, as time went by and McIver became involved in other matters, Lula served as de facto president and essentially ran the college in her husband's absence—with her husband's blessing and gratitude. The McIvers were finally able to move to Greensboro in the summer of 1892, right before the college opened, and Lula became even more involved and vital to the college's operation after that.[8]

The morning of October 5, the day set for the college's opening, dawned bright and clear. The school was ready to receive its students, although appearances might lead one to think otherwise. There was not much that was impressive at that point. The two primary buildings, referred to pragmatically as the Main Building and the Brick Dormitory, were well-built and attractive enough, but they were surrounded by nine acres of red clay mud, over parts of which boards were strategically placed to facilitate walking. Dry, brown corn stalks still stood on much of the land, revealing its former use. A single bedraggled pine tree stood on the campus. Construction debris was scattered all

---

[7] "Prospectus of the Normal and Industrial School of North Carolina, 1892-93," in *Report of the Board of Directors, 1892-1930*, n., n. d., McIver Papers, Jackson Library, University of North Carolina at Greensboro, Greensboro, North Carolina, Folder 30, 10-12; Satterfield, 37.
[8] Notebook, Lula Martin McIver Papers, Folder 1.

around. Indeed, not all the construction was completely finished. But things were ready enough for school to open and ready enough for the students to come.

And, on October 5, 1892, the students came. Most of them climbed down from the train at the old depot on Elm Street. They were met there by "a fat friendly-looking man," as one student put it, who introduced himself as Charles McIver and who escorted them to one of the carriages he had collected and sent them over to the college. Several trains stopped at Greensboro that day, all bearing students for the new school. When the last train of the day arrived, McIver stepped aboard and asked that the students for the Normal and Industrial School remain in their seats until all the other passengers had gotten off. No one moved. McIver gasped and said, "Heaven forbid! What am I going to do with you all?" The college had planned for 125 students; it now had 176 present who wanted to go to school. The number of students would rise to 223 before the year was over, requiring some doubling-up in the dorms and the housing of some students in private homes and boarding houses.[9]

The young women literally came from every part of the state, which was, not coincidentally, the range of McIver's institutes. They also came from a wide variety of backgrounds and experiences. One student, named Mary Vail, had heard McIver speak at an institute and had taken quite literally his admonition, "Now, when the front door opens [at the school] we expect you to be there"; she repeated his words back to him when he met her at the depot. She was, indeed, the first student to register that day.[10] Fodie Buie, a student from Red Springs, was already well-acquainted with McIver as well. Her father

---

[9] Lathrop, 56.; *Report of the Board of Directors. 1892-1930*, 12.
[10] Lathrop, 56.

had told her that he would sell a sizable section of his land to help send her to college if she won one of the competitive scholarships. She competed, staying in frequent contact with McIver, and indeed won one of the scholarships. True to his word, her father, in spite of the barbed comments his neighbors made about the impropriety of a publicly-supported women's school, sold the land and partially financed his daughter's education. Buie later recalled her first day at the college:

> In the front of the building was a cornfield. I remember those forsaken-looking cornstalks yet. We were assigned rooms. We sat on our trunks in the hall and visited with each other, while we waited for our trunks to be carried to our rooms. While we waited for our beds to be put up for us, we had to sweep the shavings out, for the rooms were not even finished. Nobody knew anybody; even the faculty did not know each other. Everybody was homesick.[11]

Another student arrived with a letter to McIver from her mother, who apparently did not have a very high opinion of the competency or trustworthiness of young women. The letter asked, "Will you please take the money and pay her bills yourself, as girls are sometimes careless about business matters? My kindest regards to Mrs. McIver and ask her would she please look after Daughter?"[12]

The students also came with a wide range of academic preparation, as the administration would soon discover. Some had attended private academies, some boarding schools, and many came from public schools whose academic standards ran the gamut from good to almost nonexistent. Academic placement, which continued over the first three weeks of the term, became something of a challenge as well as a sometimes heart-rending experience. One student from a remote, mountainous part of the state had

---

[11] Forney, et al, 15.
[12] Lathrop, 27.

attended classes less than five full days in her life; after taking the placement exam, she turned in a blank page. Rather than send her home, McIver prepared a program of remedial courses for her. The young woman worked diligently and, after five years, was awarded the Peabody Medal for the "most deserving girl." At the end of her sixth year at the college, she graduated wearing a dress which the president himself had discreetly bought for her. McIver told Edith McIntyre, the Domestic Science professor who presented the young woman with the dress, that the girl had come possessing little but determination and that he wanted her to have as pretty a dress for graduation as anyone else on the platform.[13]

The students also came from diverse socioeconomic backgrounds, a situation for which the school's founders had hoped and planned. There were daughters of doctors, lawyers, and bankers as well as the children of farmers, mechanics, and seamstresses. Some were from the well-read, well-cultured families of teachers, ministers, and social elites; others were straight off the farm and out of the backwoods. Approximately half were paying their own way, including a good number who already had teaching experience.[14]

The students tended to see McIver as something of a father figure. Certainly they believed that he wanted to help them, and most of them thought of him as kind. One of the first students, who graduated and later worked as McIver's secretary, said repeatedly in her recollections of him, "He was the kindest man I ever knew." He could be entertaining as well; in the first few weeks of that first year, McIver enjoyed delivering

---

[13] Ibid., 110-111.
[14] *Report of the Board of Directors*, 13-14.

the mail to the students in the dorms himself, in part for the purpose of putting names and faces together. While passing out the letters he kept a running commentary going on the towns they came from, the handwriting on the envelopes, what might be inside, what the students might be expecting, and so on. There he was in his element again and the old McIver magic still worked; the students laughed and thought him genuinely funny.

The normal students knew he could be stern, too. On the day the school opened, all the students were required to meet in the chapel, where they were asked to formulate together their own rules as to time for lights out, time for the morning "waking" bell, how the necessary chores would be carried out in the dining room, maintenance of lamps and fireplaces, and so on. McIver wanted the students to establish their own schedule and rules for conduct and then he held them to them. Two sisters, Emily and Eliza Austin, after a visit with their uncle, returned to the campus a day later than they had promised, and President McIver gave them a firm lecture about being responsible and keeping their word; he then required them to write the school's approximately one-hundred word "Contract" (essentially an honor code) fifty times. He also occasionally issued a rebuke for some untoward behavior from the podium or gave an amusing illustration that indicated that some young woman should lengthen her skirt. McIver's strictness, however, paled in comparison to that of Lady Principal Kirkland, whom the students saw in much the same way that soldiers view a drill sergeant. Kirkland was prim, proper, almost humorless, and unyielding. She drilled the young women in proper etiquette; in dressing, sitting, and walking correctly; and in conducting one's self as a "proper lady" in general. She insisted that the girls don hats and gloves before going out in public. She refused to let them wear pants even when playing a man's part in school plays,

engineering dresses so that they closely resembled trousers and gave the desired effect. Some students later observed that without this firm standard of decorum the school's enemies would have devoured the institution like a pack of wolves; others maintained that the same goal could have been achieved with a little more warmth and a little less of Kirkland's military demeanor.[15]

Classes got under way after the initial days of registration and, despite some confusion from adjustments due to conflicts and placement concerns, the schedule soon stabilized and the students settled into a routine. Part of that routine included a daily assembly in the chapel. When McIver was on campus—which was more often in the early years than later—he would lead the assembly. With the faculty sitting with him on the stage, he would call the assembly to order. The proceedings would start with the state song. McIver would then read a passage of Scripture, often from Matthew or First Corinthians. Next he would summarize important or pertinent bits of news from the morning's newspaper, which he brought with him to chapel. Sometimes there would be specific instructions for the day, perhaps along the lines of meditating on a new principle or idea. There might also be announcements of upcoming events. Also, at times came those rebukes or admonitions regarding student behavior, sometimes humorous and sometimes not.[16]

McIver would often use the chapel exercises to emphasize concepts that he thought particularly important. The state was making an investment in them; they should return it with their "best professional service in the field of education." They could serve

[15] Lathrop, 22, 85-88, 151.
[16] Lathrop, 85-88.

outside the classroom as well, teaching other citizens that "we are not too poor to educate our children but that we are too poor not to educate them; that ideas are worth even more in dollars and cents than acres of land; that education precedes and creates instead of being, as many suppose, the result of wealth." He touched on other perhaps lesser but still important areas of instruction, such as courtesy ("Thoughtlessness is extreme thoughtfulness of self"), working hard ("Idleness is a crime in rich or poor and any healthy person who does not create more than he consumes is a contemptible drone and a moral vagrant"), and manners ("It is a mark of civilization to close a door once you have gone through it"), though his insistence on keeping doors closed also had to do with frugality and conserving heat.[17]

Periodically the regular daily schedule would be suspended. McIver liked to expose the students to the luminaries and representatives of the outside world, so he maneuvered any worthwhile public figure passing through or near Greensboro into coming by the college and speaking to the students. Some of these speaking engagements were arranged in advance, while some came about in impromptu fashion after McIver charmed the dignitary into addressing the college at the last moment. When it was time for a guest speaker, McIver would ring the big bell called "Prep" (which also woke the students up in the morning as well as announcing meals and the start and end of classes) for a long time, which was the signal for a special event. The students would gather in the chapel, McIver would introduce the guest, and the visitor would give his address. The list of notables during McIver's tenure included, among others, Vice-President Charles Fairbanks, Spanish-American War hero (and later president) Theodore

[17] Ibid.; Forney, et al, 22.

Roosevelt, Governor Charles Aycock, Ambassador James Bryce of England, and presidential candidate William Jennings Bryan, who became a good friend of McIver.[18]

McIver was keenly aware that he not only had to educate his students, but that he had to change their thinking about what women could and could not do and what they could and could not be. Towards that end, he implemented high academic and personal standards, giving the young women a sense of achievement and self-respect and exposing them to the galaxy of great achievement that existed beyond the narrow world most of them had known. It was not only young men who could excel academically, adhere to a firm code of conduct, or who were worthy of hearing a Roosevelt or a Bryan; young women could do those things too, and McIver wanted them to realize it. He so often repeated the line from James Russell Lowell, "Not failure but low aim is crime," that many of the students thought that they could recite it in their sleep. He expected much of them and believed that they could deliver; his students began to believe it, too. In fact, the students got tired of hearing speakers commenting on their loveliness rather than their achievements; they met and authorized a delegation to request that McIver ask guest speakers to refrain from commenting on their physical appearance.[19]

McIver apparently got along well with the faculty in general. They found him to be stubborn at times, but "convincible" if presented with a good argument for another course of action. Most appreciated his management style. "He had the good sense,"

---

[18] Lathrop, 87-88; Forney, et al, 20-22.
[19] Lathrop, 87-88; Forney, et al., 8, 20-22; Notebook, Lula Martin McIver Papers, Folder 1.

recalled one professor, "to get the best possible people to do the job. Then he had the good sense to let them do it."[20]

Not everyone appreciated McIver or the Normal school, however. Outside the placid bounds of the campus hostile forces were gathering. One attack came from an unexpected source: Eugene Harrell, editor of the *North Carolina Teacher* and a prominent book retailer. Originally a firm supporter of the school—indeed, a member of the committee that helped lobby the legislature for its establishment—Harrell apparently had a change of heart after discovering that McIver had ordered the college's textbooks directly from the publisher rather than going through him.[21] In November, 1892, Harrell sent a letter to McIver that contained the following bitterly-toned passage:

> I enclose [a] check for first quarter on account of 'North Carolina Teacher's' scholarship. Would have sent it before but really did not know the school was open having no information whatever on the subject except newspaper items. Our house has not received an order for books or stationery from the institution and I learn from friends at Greensboro that all supplies for the State Normal and Industrial School are purchased direct from the north. If this be true the taxpayers may not feel the same interest in future.[22]

Harrell made his attack public with a February, 1893, published letter to the Raleigh *State Chronicle*. In the letter, Harrell objected to the use of state money to build additional buildings and charged that the school, by teaching art, music, and other general education courses, was not sticking strictly to its original purpose as a normal and industrial school. In an April column in his own *North Carolina Teacher*, he pinned the blame directly on McIver: "If the president of the institution cannot realize this perhaps a competent man

---

[20] Lathrop, 57, 152.
[21] *Webster's Weekly* (Reidsville, North Carolina), May 4, 1893, and Greensboro *Record*, May 22, 1893.
[22] Eugene Harrell to Charles McIver, November 10, 1892, McIver Papers, Folder 1.

can be easily found who will do the work that the state intended should be done for North Carolina girls."[23]

Most people recognized the attack as being born out of a personal vendetta and perhaps political motives, but it could not have come at a worse time. An appropriations bill that would increase the Normal's funding substantially had been introduced in the legislature, and Harrell urged its defeat. He was not alone. The presidents of some of the denominational colleges in North Carolina, fearing the popularity and competition of the new college, lobbied the General Assembly to lower the funding for the school, to restrict its function to normal preparation and industrial training, and to prevent the college from awarding "life licenses" to teach (which only the Normal was authorized to do). In short, they wanted the state to strip the school to its bare bones and make it an institution for the poor who could not go elsewhere.[24]

The students at the college gathered in an impromptu meeting in February to discuss Harrell's *State Chronicle* article, which was read aloud with many interruptions of booing and hissing. In the midst of the meeting, a telegram from McIver in Raleigh arrived indicating that a beneficial appropriations bill had passed and that the legislature had placed no restrictions on the college. The meeting erupted into cheers and became a parade of celebration, with the students using bells, whistles, and any other noisemakers they could find.[25]

---

[23] Raleigh *State Chronicle*, February 21, 1893; *North Carolina Teacher*, 10 (April, 1893), 312.
[24] *State Chronicle*, February 21, 1893.
[25] Forney, et al., 20.

Harrell, however, was not finished. In May, 1893, an article signed "Observer" appeared in the *Biblical Recorder*, a popular Baptist-sponsored publication, calling McIver "totally unfit" to be president and accusing him of misappropriating public funds, enriching himself with college money, and distorting the mission of the Normal by making it a "female seminary" (including a general education curriculum). McIver usually ignored public criticism, but he responded to this serious set of personal accusations by writing to the editor of the *Biblical Recorder*, asking for the true identity of "Observer." The editor, C. T. Bailey, replied that the article had been delivered to him by a messenger, but that the handwriting was that of Harrell. It was eventually widely acknowledged that Harrell had written the article, and newspapers around the state ridiculed him for having to invent supporters for his position. Harrell nonetheless continued trying to make his case against McIver, writing to prominent educators around the state to enlist their support and promising readers of his *North Carolina Teacher* that he would report back on the findings of his investigation (which he never did). Harrell's campaign eventually fizzled as a number of those he contacted wrote back and announced their firm support for McIver. In addition, newspapers around the state, including the Greensboro *Patriot*, the Charlotte *Observer*, the Wilmington *Messenger*, the Durham *Recorder*, defended McIver. Finally, the college's Board of Directors, after conducting an examination of the college's financial records, pronounced McIver completely innocent of any wrongdoing and gave him a unanimous vote of confidence. Harrell conceded defeat in a June article in the

North Carolina Teacher: "We have closed our discussion of the Normal and Industrial School for the present."[26]

Harrell's attack on McIver was only one aspect of a larger assault on the state's public colleges—an assault which threatened the very existence of the Normal and which grew out of long, deep-seated roots. North Carolina's sectarian colleges had strong traditions of offering education for both sexes, albeit with varying standards, dating as far back as the 1830s. When the University of North Carolina first asked the legislature for an annual appropriation in 1881, the request precipitated a battle royal in the chambers of the legislature, led by the church schools. Such subsidizing of a public college gave it an unfair advantage, church leaders said; it also meant that the state was claiming undue control over an area that had traditionally been primarily the domain of the church. If the appropriation bill passed, higher education in North Carolina would pass from sacred hands into secular. Nothing less than the minds and souls of all North Carolinians was at stake. The vitriolic, bare-knuckles fight resulted in lowering the amount of the appropriation, but the bill was approved nonetheless, establishing the tradition of regular state financial support for the University. Four years later, there was a repeat of the appropriations battle for the University, with the same result.[27]

There was an eight-year lull in the hostilities, and then came the bill requesting increased appropriations for the Normal school. The church schools had largely opposed

---

[26] *Bibilical Recorder*, May 10, 1893; McIver to C. T. Bailey, May 12, 1893, McIver Papers, Folder 2; various newspaper editorials in the Woman's College Scrapbook, Special Collections, Jackson Library, University of North Carolina at Greensboro, Greensboro, North Carolina; Forney, et al., 20-21; *North Carolina Teacher*, 10 (June, 1893), 460.

[27] Luther Gobbel, *Church-State Relationships in North Carolina Since 1776* (Durham, North Carolina: Duke University Press, 1938), 132-84; Kemp P. Battle, *History of the University of North Carolina* (Raleigh: Edwards and Broughton Printing Company, 1912), II: 247-61

the establishment of the college, but were partially placated with its emphasis on normal and industrial training. When they realized, after the 1892-1893 school year got under way, that the curriculum also offered general education courses and that it was tapping into their prospective student base—and not just serving the poor—church school leaders became alarmed. In addition, the Depression of 1893 and its associated economic hardships cut into enrollment at the sectarian colleges, exacerbating their concerns. The denominational leaders mobilized their forces and mounted a new attack against "state aid" to the public colleges.

The church school men introduced a bill into the legislature to elevate the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill to an exclusively graduate and professional institution and either to make the school at Greensboro strictly a normal and industrial school or close it altogether. They also opposed any increase in the Normal's appropriation. Their hope, obviously, was to clear the field of any competition in undergraduate education.

George Winston, McIver's friend and former professor, was now president of the University. He and McIver found themselves fighting the same foes in the chambers of the General Assembly. Winston used his wit and sarcasm, both in print and in speeches, to fight his fight. McIver, too, made speeches and applied his sense of humor, but he also relied on his ability to charm and sway legislators outside the chambers. In the end, the church men's bill was defeated and the University continued on with increased support

and funding. The Normal school, as has been seen, survived unscathed and got an increased appropriation in 1893.[28]

The whole campus breathed a sigh of relief and focused on the school's first commencement as the vehicle of celebration. The event, spread over May 23 and 24, drew large crowds, despite storms and heavy rains. Local merchants gave discounts to get in on the act, and even the railroad offered special rates to and from Greensboro. Prominent personalities made speeches, with the keynote address coming from former North Carolina governor Thomas Holt. President McIver himself presented ten young women with diplomas, which served as "life licenses" to teach in North Carolina. (All but one had previously graduated from other colleges.) Six others received five-year provisional teaching certificates and another five received certificates in business training. McIver and the faculty had decided not to award degrees until they could say without question that the school's graduates had met the same standards as those of the state's other institutions (the first actual degrees were awarded in 1903).[29]

The denominational opposition to the Normal and to state aid did not die, however; it only regrouped for a more forceful attack. Since the legislature met to consider budgets and appropriations only on a biennial basis, church school leaders—primarily Baptists and Methodists—had nearly two years to plan their next assault. The Baptists' own publication, the *Biblical Recorder*, recalled, "It was in December, 1893, that the Baptists of North Carolina began their organized opposition to the policy of our

[28] Gobbel, 132-84; Battle, II: 247-61; Woman's College Scrapbook.
[29] Raleigh *News and Observer*, May 25, 1893; Forney, et al., 22.

State in Higher Education."[30] The plan was to generate—through print, from the pulpit, in organized rallies, and through the promotion of like-minded political candidates—a groundswell of opposition to state aid. Wake Forest College President Charles Taylor wrote a series of articles, published in the *Biblical Recorder*, opposing state support for education through "involuntary taxation." For John Kilgo, President of Trinity College (the future Duke University), the question was a fundamental issue of "Christian Education vs. Godless Education." His denomination, the Western North Carolina Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, passed a resolution opposing state aid. Josiah Bailey, editor of the *Biblical Recorder*, framed his argument in apocalyptic terms: "We have got to fight or give over the banner of Christ. It is the battle of the secular against the sacred, of politics against religion, of Satan and the Saviour. Let each man choose his standard, let each follow his captain."[31]

There were other signs of rising opposition. McIver, while conducting his normal institutes during the summer of 1894, found himself defending not only the Normal but the principle of public funding and taxation to support education. A graduate of the Normal wrote to McIver from where she was teaching, "I fear we are going to have a hand to hand fight at the next Legislature. The Baptists are working in earnest. Two or three speeches have already been made in this little town against State schools, and some of the best and smartest men in the place are in favor of taking away all appropriations the schools now have." Kemp Battle, former president of the University, warned McIver

---

[30] *Biblical Recorder*, July 6, 1898.

[31] Taylor's articles ran in various issues of the *Biblical Recorder*, March, 1894 through November, 1895; Gobbel, 146-47; *Biblical Recorder*, August, 31, 1894.

that the denominational forces were attempting to elect legislators who would be hostile to public funding for education.[32]

Indeed, there was something of a political groundswell taking shape in the state. Rural voters, beset by falling crop prices and other financial hardships, had grown to see government—local, state, and national—as being controlled by wealthy, elitist interests and indifferent to the concerns of the common man. This made them suspicious of anyone in a position of authority, anyone with a degree of wealth, anyone of advanced education, or anyone who was part of the current system—in short, anyone who was not "one of the people." It also made them hostile to increased funding for educational institutions and to the concept of taxation to support education in general. With these sentiments gaining prominence, many voters began to switch from traditional party affiliations to the new Populist Party.[33]

Denominational leaders were able to use the political currents to their advantage. Their arguments often dovetailed neatly with Populist sentiments. An editorial in a September, 1894, *Biblical Recorder* admonished readers:

> Keep 'Christian and Popular Education' prominent in your own and your candidate's mind. Know that state aid means the crippling of the best institutions of higher learning in the State; know that it now waxes fat while the common schools [meaning the denominational colleges] are suffering; know that it is taking all it can get and crying for more of the taxes you pay; know these things, and let it not be your fault that your neighbor and your candidate don't know them.[34]

---

[32] Pattie Carter to Charles McIver, July 19, 1894, McIver Papers, Folder 34; Kemp Battle to Charles McIver, August 24, 1894, McIver Papers, Folder 34.
[33] Hugh T. Lefler and Albert R. Newsome, *The History of a Southern State: North Carolina* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1973), 555-61.
[34] *Biblical Recorder*, September 21, 1894.

The campaign by church leaders combined with other elements to produce startling results in the legislative election of 1894. North Carolina's Farmers' Alliance movement reached a crescendo of power after growing for a number of years, and its members contributed substantially to the organization of a state Populist Party in 1892. The Populists created an alliance with the state's Republicans—who were stronger in North Carolina than in other southern states—and the resulting Fusionist slate of candidates won most of the legislative contests in 1894, convincingly driving the Democrats out of power. It was unclear, however, whether the Fusionist legislature would be friendly to education; indeed, a number of the Populist and Republican candidates had won election by denouncing Democratic extravagance in appropriating money to the public colleges.[35]

The newly-constituted General Assembly opened its session early in 1895, and denominational leaders were ready. The Baptist State Convention had created a committee to ask the legislature to protect the church schools from "unnecessary competition from State schools." Their proposal included limiting funding for all the state's public colleges and restricting the Greensboro school and the Agricultural and Mechanical college in Raleigh to providing normal and technical training and nothing else. The committee members shrewdly (and accurately) pointed out that the state's public elementary and secondary schools were in bad shape and desperately needed funds; how could one justify giving money to colleges for higher education when the resources for basic education were so sorely lacking?[36]

---

[35] Lefler and Newsome, 548ff; William S. Powell, *North Carolina Through Four Centuries* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1989), 430ff; see also Gobbel, 147-48.
[36] Gobbel, 148.

The church men almost had their way. Indeed, in a letter to his old friend Mrs. Spencer, McIver described the initial situation in Raleigh: "The Baptist flood roared and surged and threatened. Could they have gotten a vote the first two weeks, we [would have] been abolished root and branch by a 3 to 1 vote." The matter did not come to a vote until much later, however, in part due to delaying actions taken by state aid supporters. The church men used the opportunity to present a more drastic alternative bill; McIver wrote to Lula on March 3, 1895: "A bill was introduced yesterday to take away all appropriations from the University, Normal and Industrial School, and Geological Survey."[37]

The delay turned out to be crucial, for it provided an opportunity for passions to ebb in the legislature and for cooler heads to prevail. It also gave McIver and his colleagues time to make their case and to use the various elements that played to their advantage. They pointed out that the public colleges had always been concerned for the well-being and improvement of elementary and secondary schools. In addition, McIver himself had been—and still was—a well-known and outspoken crusader for graded schools and improved schools in general. As McIver, Winston, and others challenged the church men's argument point-by-point in the legislative chamber, the church men's motives became more transparent. It was incongruous, anyway, for these leaders of denominational schools to be promoting the cause of public schools, even at the lower level; they were simply using the tactic as a way of eliminating funding for the public colleges. McIver himself presented several hard-hitting arguments, including the statistic

[37] Charles McIver to Cornelia Spencer, March 2, 1895, McIver Papers, Folder 2; Charles McIver to Lula McIver, McIver Papers, Folder 7.

that if both the University and the Normal were closed, the funds saved would be enough to increase school terms by a mere two days. The Normal did not pose as dire a threat as the church men had argued; 81 percent of the Normal's students had said that they could not have afforded to attend another college in the state. He also challenged the ideas that education should be primarily the province of the church and that higher education was meant only for a certain segment of society, calling both notions outmoded. Universal education—the opportunity for everyone to be educated to as high a level as their capacities and desires might take them—was key to North Carolina catching up and taking its place in the modern world.

Other elements helped sway the legislators as well. Winston shrewdly undermined the church men's argument by saying that they were not the bastions of godly influence on education they claimed, pointing out that some of their colleges had accepted gifts from some very worldly businesses, such as Standard Oil and the American Tobacco Company. This revelation, of course, rankled the Populists in the General Assembly. State aid proponents enlisted the support of a black minister, whose words helped to sway the votes of some black Republican legislators. And McIver began to use his skills and charm, working the halls and asking numerous legislators who were graduates of the University—including the presiding officers of both the House and the Senate—to preserve that institution and his own, as well as appealing to those who knew him personally and felt a degree of loyalty to him.[38]

---

[38] Forney, et al., 22-23; Raleigh *News and Observer*, March 7, 1895.

In the end, the church men's bill was defeated and an appropriations bill increasing funding for all three public colleges was passed on March 9, 1895. The tide had turned significantly in favor of state aid; the bill passed both houses by significant margins.[39] In fact, some legislators indicated their willingness to push for an even greater amount, but McIver declined, calling it "dangerous." The passage of the bill as written would be sufficient, and he would be glad to get it and be done with it. Though he was "worn to a frazzle," he refused to leave Raleigh until the bill was signed and fully settled, concerned that there might yet be one more trap that the Normal's enemies might try to spring. After receiving word of the bill's passage, Lula wrote to him, "We were all bitterly disappointed that you did not come home tonight. The girls had planned to meet you and have a torch light procession and general jollification." McIver's daughter Annie, nine at the time, included a letter of her own:

> We wanted you to come home last night so bad. The girls had a barrel full of pine and set it afire and danced around it. They came over to our house . . . [and] yelled for you but you did not hear them. But they heard them down town. Zeke said you telegraphed and said that you heard them in Raleigh and had not slept for a week.[40]

The battle was won and the Normal was spared. The school's supporters all around the state indicated their pleasure at the outcome.[41]

The war was not over, however; the church men refused to give up. They marshaled their forces yet again for the next appropriations battle in 1897. The threat this

---

[39] *Public Laws and Resolutions of the State of North Carolina, 1895* (Winston, North Carolina: M. I. and J. C. Stewart, 1895), 187.

[40] Telegram, Charles McIver to Lula McIver, March 9, 1895, McIver Papers, Folder 7; Lula McIver to Charles McIver, March 10, 1895, McIver Papers, Folder 7; Annie McIver to Charles McIver, March 10, 1895, McIver Papers, Folder 7.

[41] Numerous editorials from the week of March 10, 1895, appear in the Woman's College Scrapbook and hail the outcome of the vote.

time, however, was not as great. The General Assembly, though still Fusionist, had largely solidified its position regarding the state's public colleges and there was little change in 1897. Indeed, the legislature approved, by large margins in both houses, significant increases in funding for public higher education; the Normal's appropriation was doubled to $25,000, equal to that of the University. At an assembly a few days later, McIver told the young women at the Normal that they should feel proud that the state, even this early in the school's history, had "seen fit to place it on a financial level with her time-honored University, and that justice had at last been done. . . ."[42] The legislature had also changed the name of the school to the Normal and Industrial College, a title which more fully realized and supported its true nature. Opposition to state funding for public colleges did not die after 1897, but it waned somewhat and the legislative threat was over. The Normal continued to get increased appropriations with each subsequent session. The school still had enemies, but they would have to find new ways to attack it.[43]

Meanwhile, both McIver and the Normal continued to develop their places in the state's educational system and in the public eye. In June, 1893, McIver was given an honorary doctorate from the University of North Carolina. (The Chapel Hill school also that month lured Alderman away from the Normal to be a part of its own faculty.) The Normal opened its second year in September, 1893, with an enrollment of nearly four

---

[42] Forney, et al., 24.

[43] *Public Laws and Resolutions of the State of North Carolina, 1897* (Winston, North Carolina: M. I. and J. C. Stewart, 1897), 212; Forney, et al., 24.

hundred, and its enrollment continued to climb year after year. Finding room for all the students was a perennial problem.[44]

The school's second commencement took place in May, 1894, and, in addition to the excitement of the various associated activities, Greensboro was abuzz with talk of the commencement speaker. William Jennings Bryan, who was quickly rising in popularity with the wave of Populist sentiment sweeping parts of the country, spoke—for nearly two hours without notes—on the need for unlimited coinage of gold and silver and for the abandonment of the gold standard. It was a topic which was a bit beyond the students' political knowledge and experience. McIver admitted in an interview with the Charlotte *Observer* that he had some reservations about the propriety of the subject, but that he was nonetheless glad that Bryan "did speak on a subject in regard to which he had earnest convictions, instead of coming as politicians very often do to talk to educational institutions on education."[45] Afterwards, McIver thanked Bryan for speaking on a matter of substance.[46] The students and newspaper writers who crowded into the auditorium for the event noticed something else: Bryan bore an uncanny resemblance to their own Charles McIver. They were, in fact, the same age, and shared many physical attributes, from their pot bellies and balding heads to their manner of dress (both were fond of bow ties). The resemblance was remarked upon for years to come; in fact, a New York City restaurant employee once refused to take a tip from McIver because he thought he was Bryan.[47]

---

[44] A copy of the honorary doctorate certificate is in the McIver Papers, Folder 9; Forney, et al., 18-20.
[45] Forney, et al, 18-20; Greensboro *Record*, May 24, 1894; Charlotte *Observer*, May 24, 1894.
[46] Charles McIver to William Jennings Bryan, McIver Papers, Folder 34.
[47] Forney, et al., 19.

The Normal's third year saw continued growth and yet another prominent speaker for commencement: Nicholas Murray Butler, president of Columbia University. That summer brought development of various kinds. Construction began on additions to the Main Building; the new wings would add more classroom space and dining capacity. The college also added to its land holdings through the purchase of a nearby 112-acre farm. The McIvers had a new development of their own: their third child and second daughter, Verlinda, was born in August.[48]

A development during the school's fourth year is revealing. In the spring of 1896, a group of students sought to create a sorority on the Normal campus. The president was outraged upon discovering the organization and called the young women to his office. Literary societies—which, much like the societies McIver had known at the University, promoted scholarship and intellectual development and in which membership was encouraged but not required—had existed on campus from the very beginning, but sororities McIver had specifically sought to keep out. He did not like the exclusivity or stratification they engendered; such elements violated one of the fundamental elements of the Normal, namely its egalitarian nature. Besides, sororities struck McIver as being un-democratic, a characteristic which he personally could not tolerate. He demanded that the students disband their organization, which they did.[49]

Politics once again showed up at McIver's doorstep in the spring of 1896, this time in a much more direct way. It looked likely that the Fusionists would retain control of the legislature in the fall elections, and now state Democrats were worried that they

---

[48] Satterfield, 44; autobiographical notes, McIver Papers, Folder 9.
[49] McIver's notes on the situation are found in the McIver Papers, Folder 138.

might lose control of the governorship as well. In their search for a gubernatorial candidate whose appeal would transcend party lines, a number of eyes fell on Charles McIver. Democratic papers around the state began a "draft McIver" campaign. One editor felt sure that McIver would win, since "but few of any political party or race would cast their ballots against him." Numerous other papers gave him their endorsements, including the influential Raleigh *News and Observer*.[50]

McIver, however, had no interest whatsoever in holding political office. His passions lay entirely in promoting and facilitating education in North Carolina, especially for women. His answer to the draft attempt, printed originally in the *News and Observer* and reprinted in other papers, did not disguise his feelings:

> I have no political aspirations whatever, and my highest ambition is that I may be able to hasten the day when North Carolina shall open her eyes and see that the question of free silver sinks into insignificance when compared with the question of free education for all the children of the state . . . that the tariff tax and internal revenue tax questions are not half so important to this State just now as the question of additional local taxation for public schools . . . and that solution of no unsolved problem of statesmanship would do more for the present and future prosperity of North Carolina than a recognition of the fact that women's education should be put upon as liberal a financial basis as that of men. . . . Holding these views as I do, and desiring above all things, to see them generally adopted, it would be unwise for me to encourage, or seem to encourage, the use of my name in connection with political honors. I appreciate none the less, however, the kind and complimentary expressions that have called forth this statement. . . .[51]

The Democrats' eventual candidate, Cyrus Watson, was defeated by Republican Daniel Russell, and the legislature indeed retained a Fusionist majority. Beginning in 1897, the

---

[50] Fayetteville *Observer*, April 10, 1896; Raleigh *News and Observer*, April, 15, 1896.
[51] Raleigh *News and Observer*, May 2, 1896.

reins of power in the state would all be in the hands of the Populist-Republican coalition.[52]

McIver was in Buffalo, New York, in July, 1896, attending the convention of the National Education Association, when word came that his friend Bryan had been chosen as the Democratic nominee for president at that party's convention in Chicago, where he had electrified audiences with his "Cross of Gold" speech. McIver wrote Lula that, due to mutual friends and the miracle of telegraphy, he "knew of Bryan's nomination as soon as he did himself." McIver sent a telegram of his own with his congratulations.[53]

Upon his return to North Carolina, he discovered that another campaign was under way—one which had him all but confirmed as the next president of the University of North Carolina. His old friend Winston had left to take the presidency of the University of Texas and, despite earlier denials of any interest in the job, newspapers and educators around the state were spreading the idea that McIver was a sure bet to replace him. One paper, assuming that it was already a done deal, even predicted what kind of job he would do: "Dr. McIver will make the University hum; a worthy successor of Dr. Winston." McIver, however, was single-mindedly focused on the school in Greensboro, and the Raleigh *News and Observer* soon carried his statement that "his life ambition and clear duty" prevented him from leaving the Normal and that he still believed "the most important work of the State was in the field of the education of women." Having gotten a

[52] Lefler and Newsome, 552.
[53] Charles McIver to Lula McIver, McIver Papers, July 15, 1896.

clear, indisputable answer from McIver, the University instead hired one of the other shining stars in the state's educational firmament: Edwin Alderman. Alderman excelled at running the University, developing enough of a reputation that he was eventually lured away to head another venerable, prestigious school, the University of Virginia.[54]

The following January McIver's path once again crossed over into the world of politics as he headed back to Raleigh for the biennial battle over appropriations. In preparation for the session, McIver wrote a long, detailed article titled, "North Carolina and Education: Our Next Educational Advance," which ran in a special edition of the Greensboro *Daily Record* and was reprinted in other papers around the state. In the article he repeated his two main emphases—improved educational opportunity for all and the promotion of women's education—which a *Daily Record* writer had earlier dubbed "McIver's double row of tracks." McIver showed, as before, that he considered the two inextricably linked:

> The next step forward would be taken when townships began to supplement State taxes with local levies for [local] schools. . . . But proper provision for the education of women [is crucial]. . . . Education given women propagates itself, whereas that given to men often dies with those who have received it. . . . Women determine the character of homes and schools. No civilization can go in advance of them.[55]

The efforts of McIver and others paid off; the 1897 legislature appropriated the same amount of money for the Normal that it did the University, putting men and women

---

[54] Asheboro *Courier*, July 22, 1896; Raleigh *News and Observer*, July 27, 1896; Dumas Malone, *Edwin A. Alderman: A Biography* (New York: Doubleday, Doran, and Company, 1940), 162, 204.
[55] Greensboro *Daily Record*, January 22, 1897; see the Woman's College Scrapbook for reprints in other papers.

on equal terms with regard to funding. The legislature that year also approved $50,000 for the improvement of the state's public elementary and secondary schools, which marked a huge leap forward and a dramatic shift in attitudes towards education. It also marked the beginning of a systematic effort to establish graded schools on a wider basis. The legislation would likely never have been passed had it not been for the advocacy of the Teachers' Assembly and the pleas that McIver, Alderman, Joyner, and others made before the joint Committee on Education. The spirited arguments by these men from the world of higher education for greater funding for public schools gave the lie to the church men's claim that the public colleges were only looking for themselves and did not care about the lower echelons of the state's educational system.[56] McIver himself remarked, "I doubt whether all our critics put together have plead more unceasingly . . . than Alderman and I have done for the public schools of North Carolina." The *News and Observer* said in an editorial, "But for the untiring, effective work of President Alderman and President McIver . . . this act to appropriate $50,000 to the schools would have died in the Senate, and never been resurrected."[57] The Normal students did their part for their school's funding, sending a contingent in February to a county fair in Raleigh, where they invited legislators to view a display featuring products of all the counties from which Normal students had come (which was nearly all of them). The exhibit from Durham County, a center for tobacco production, got them into trouble, however. Some of the young women had sewn cigarettes onto their costumes and when the exhibit was over, they

---

[56] *Public Laws and Resolutions of the State of North Carolina, 1897* (Winston, North Carolina: M. I. And J. C. Stewart, 1897), 24; *Report of the Board of Directors*, 14.
[57] McIver to Josephus Daniels, April 7, 1897, McIver Papers, Folder 9; Raleigh *News and Observer*, March 24, 1897.

smoked them. McIver pulled the girls aside later, told them smoking would not be tolerated, and made them promise not to do it again.[58]

Having contributed to the improvement of public schools for all, McIver endeavored to do the same for women's education at the Normal. He continued to expose the students to the outside world by inviting prominent, thought-provoking guest speakers to the college, especially at commencement. The fourth commencement in 1896 saw Colonel R. M. Douglas, son of Stephen A. Douglas, speak to the students. The 1897 commencement featured Walter Hines Page, McIver's old friend from Raleigh, now the editor of *Atlantic Monthly* and residing in New York. The students and assembled crowd, dressed in finery, were expecting the usual lofty and noble words associated with a commencement address, but Page startled them by giving his soon-to-be-famous "Forgotten Man" speech, a stark and heart-rending picture of poverty, illiteracy, and backwardness in North Carolina. Page skewered many of the state's sacred cows—as he had done for years in print—but closed by saying that the Normal represented the first fruits of a revolution in progress, a definite step in the right direction. A Charlotte journalist wrote in reaction to Page's address, "He told us the Truth about ourselves, and it hurt. Yes, Lord it hurt." The 1897 commencement also featured the unveiling of a portrait of McIver that the artist W. G. Randall had painted and donated to the school. This was the same Randall that McIver had rescued from hazing years before at the University.[59]

---

[58] McIver's notes on the "smoking incident" are found in the McIver Papers, Folder 52.
[59] Wilmington *Messenger*, May 22, 1896; Charlotte *Observer*, June 24, 1897. The complete text of Page's "Forgotten Man" speech can be found in his book, *The Rebuilding of Old Commonwealths* (New York: Doubleday, Page & Co., 1902).

In the summer of 1897 McIver resumed his usual summer routine: conducting the summer institute and filling a growing number of requests for him to speak. He also encountered the results of political currents again. McIver and other educators hoped that a statewide referendum allowing local taxation for the support of schools would pass that fall. But the referendum had been arranged by the Fusionist legislature, including a number of black Republicans in prominent positions, and the racism in the minds of many combined with the traditional antipathy towards any taxation, led many supporters of the measure to fear that it would go down to defeat. In his travels that summer McIver found the "Democrats of Sampson County against school tax, politics and 'the nigger.'" The people of other locales, to his dismay, displayed similar sentiments. As feared, the taxation measure was defeated.[60]

The backlash fueled by racial prejudice, however, was only beginning. The "white supremacy" campaign, as North Carolina historians have long termed it, began in earnest on November 30, 1897. The Democratic Party issued an announcement, carried by many papers around the state, to the effect that the state had "fallen upon evil days," that there were segments of the population that were too "ignorant for the masses to control," and that the Democrats promised "on its return to power to correct all these abuses." In the Fusionist takeover, a significant number of black legislators had been elected. In addition, the Fusionists had fulfilled a campaign promise to return control of local governments to the local level, undoing a centralization measure Democrats had put into place years earlier to prevent a post-Reconstruction resurrection of Republican

---

[60] Satterfield, 46; Powell, *North Carolina Through Four Centuries*, 442; Charles McIver to Lula McIver, August 5, 1897, McIver Papers, Folder 7.

power. As a result of the Fusionists' actions, a number of counties, cities, and legislative districts around the state were now under black leadership; however, the situation made these officials, most of whom were well-qualified and competent, inviting targets for Democratic Party operatives. Democratic activists worked to stir up the old racist fears of being at the mercy of a "heathen race" run amuck. A number of scandals involving Republican elected officials, including Governor Russell, served to aid their cause. The state was going to "pot" in a hurry, they cried, and something had better be done quick. The solution, they said, was to restore Democratic control.[61]

McIver, perhaps single-mindedly focused on education and the Normal, remained mostly silent, at least in his written communications and public pronouncements. Some Democrats circulated the idea—which would become part of their platform the next year—that the state ought to require a certain level of education to vote and hold office. In a letter to his friend Aycock, McIver responded vaguely that it might be a good idea. In the next line, however, he remarked only partly in jest that, since his opinion had been asked (and Aycock had), he would consider an educational requirement for marriage to be much more valuable, since it would include both men and women, and "the state could better afford to have five illiterate men than one illiterate mother."[62]

People, places, and events beyond North Carolina soon touched McIver's life. He accompanied the Normal's senior class on a trip to Washington, D. C., in mid-March, 1898. They toured the White House, visited with President McKinley, and had tea with

---

[61] Lefler and Newsome, 555-556; the quotations are from a Democratic Party press release dated November 30, 1897, quoted in Lefler and Newsome, 555.
[62] Charles McIver to Charles Aycock, February 27, 1898, McIver Papers, Folder 3.

North Carolina's Senators. While there, McIver received a letter from Lula in which she remarked, "Things are beginning to look somewhat more serious about the *Maine*." McIver was aware of the unfolding situation as well; Washington was abuzz, both in the papers and on the streets, with the latest developments and rumors. Shortly after the Greensboro group returned home, the country plunged into the Spanish-American War.[63]

For the rest of 1898, McIver's life became a blur of activity. Not only was he busy running the Normal, but now his services as a speaker were being requested at an ever-accelerating rate. He spoke that year at engagements all across North Carolina, in New York, Illinois, and Minnesota, and at schools such as Vanderbilt University, Vassar College, and the Peabody Normal in Boston. In addition, he was rising in prestige and responsibility in organizations such as the National Education Association, of which he was a national officer.[64]

Try as he might to focus on education, however, tempestuous southern politics continued to intrude. The 1898 election campaign had heated up. The Democrats were determined to win back the legislature at all costs and did not hesitate to use race as an issue. They stirred fears of "Negro domination" and played on stereotypes. They gave unofficial approval to the activities of the "Red Shirts," armed white men on horseback wearing crimson shirts who, though they usually did not actually use violence against blacks or Republicans, maintained the unspoken threat of physical harm as they rode

---

[63] Adelphian and Cornelian Literary Societies of the State Normal and Industrial College, *Decennial*, (Greensboro, North Carolina: Adelphian and Cornelian Literary Societies, 1902), 49; Lula McIver to Charles McIver, March 20, 1898, McIver Papers, Folder 7; notebook, Lula Martin McIver Papers, Folder 1.

[64] Letters of invitation during this period from various schools and organizations and McIver's responses, can be found in the McIver Papers, Folders 3, 53-58.

through black neighborhoods or stood guard at political rallies. The Democrats encouraged the "Red Shirts" and stirred-up party faithful to intimidate blacks into silence and into staying away from the voting booth in November. The peak of racist fury came in Wilmington during the same month as the election. A group of white businessmen, determined to end "black rule" in Wilmington, ran the outspoken black editor and publisher of a local newspaper out of town. The next day, those businessmen led a mob of about four hundred angry whites as they broke into the paper's offices, smashed the printing presses, and set the building on fire. A group of blacks gathered, tensions rose further, fighting broke out, and shots were fired. Before the local militia put an end to the ugly scene, eleven people were killed and twenty-eight wounded.[65]

The "white supremacy" campaign of 1898 had several results. Perhaps the most important and obvious was that the Democrats did indeed recapture control of the General Assembly. Another result was that the Democrats took steps to make sure that the Republicans, and especially blacks, were never able to gain power again. In spite of denying during the campaign that they intended to do so, the Democratic majority in the legislature of 1899 proposed an amendment to the state constitution—carefully worded so as to get around the U. S. Constitution's Fifteenth Amendment—that would require citizens to pay a poll tax and meet a literacy requirement before being able to vote. Wanting to exclude blacks but not poor whites, they added a clause which said that anyone who had been eligible to vote or whose ancestor had been eligible to vote on or before January 1, 1867, would be able to vote anyway—the infamous "grandfather

[65] Powell, 436; Lefler and Newsome, 557-59.

clause." The amendment was later ratified in a statewide vote. It would be decades before blacks again voted in significant numbers.[66]

Another result of the 1898 reassertion of Democratic control was that McIver and other educational leaders now faced a different membership and a different mood in the legislature. McIver feared that the 1899 General Assembly would not be as friendly to higher education as the previous one and, when he went before them early in the year to ask for increased appropriations, he found that to be true. In fact, some of the politicians had made a deal with the state's Baptist leaders to prevent increases in appropriations to the public colleges in exchange for their support in the 1898 election. In the end, McIver won a small increase in appropriations, including enough money to build a dispensary, and contented himself with trying again in two years.[67]

Back in Greensboro, McIver busied himself with his usual full slate of activities, but he found himself somewhat distracted by the upcoming birth of his fourth child. Lula was determined to have the campus physician, Dr. Anna Gove, deliver the infant. Gove was only the third woman ever to be licensed to practice medicine in the state at that time and was considered such a curiosity that a male physician once traveled several miles from a nearby town just to see what a "female lady doctress" might look like.[68] Some of the McIvers' neighbors thought Lula was "demented" to allow a woman doctor to care for her and her baby, but Charles fully supported her decision. In fact, when Lula went

---

[66] Lefler and Newsome, 560.
[67] Satterfield, 51-52; *Report of the Board of Directors*, 20.
[68] Lathrop, 14; Elisabeth Ann Bowles, *A Good Beginning: The First Four Decades of the University of North Carolina at Greensboro* (Chapel Hill, North Carolina: University of North Carolina Press, 1967), 39.

into labor on March 20, McIver continued with his work as if everything were normal. He was dictating a letter to his secretary—who was more distracted than he was—when word came that the baby, the McIvers' fourth child and third daughter, had been born healthy and that the mother was doing fine. McIver, declaring that he was going to name this baby himself, gave her her mother's name: Lula.[69]

By all indications, Charles not only loved his wife but esteemed her highly, considering her assistance to him invaluable. He supported her taking positions of employment with the institutes and at the women's school in Charlotte, as well as in studying medicine. Not everyone thought as highly of Lula, however; neighbors considered her a poor housekeeper, disorganized, and even messy. The McIver children later recalled that their father liked things neat and orderly while their mother did not seem as concerned about organization. The constant stream of people at her door legitimately occupied a great deal of her time, but the truth was that keeping things neat and running smoothly in her house simply were not her highest priorities. She left the running of the household almost entirely in the hands of Julia Booker, a black woman who worked for the McIvers as a domestic servant. Lula was infamous among family members for inviting people to stay for a meal at the last moment and leaving it up to Julia to figure out how to feed all of them. On one such occasion, the McIvers' daughter Annie was in the kitchen helping Julia as they scrambled to make lunch. "She must have known an hour ago they were going to stay," Annie moaned. "Why couldn't she have given us a little notice?" Julia replied, "Now, you just hush right up. You know your mother was meant for the pulpit, not the kitchen." Lula was indeed a crusader—and a

[69] Forney, et al., 87.

surprisingly progressive feminist—and it may have been the shared sense of championing a cause that drew her and Charles together in the first place. He could not resist teasing her at times, though. When she told him that she had found a nurse to help take care of the new baby, she said, "And the woman is in fortunate circumstances. She is a widow." "Now, Lula," said her husband, feigning shock, "isn't that taking feminism a little too far?"[70]

Beyond the household, the demands on McIver's time continued to rise steadily. After the 1899 Normal commencement, in which the largest class (39) of young women so far had graduated, he went on the road once again, filling the incessant demand for speaking and paying visits to friends and prominent figures. After making several speeches in the South, he visited Walter Page in Boston, then stopped over in New York to talk with Butler of Columbia about private funding for education. While in New York, he attended a fundraising dinner for his friend Bryan, who was preparing for another run at the White House. He found time to write letters advocating George Winston as the best candidate to take the vacant presidency of the North Carolina College of Agriculture and Mechanic Arts. A prominent state official wrote back to him to say that with McIver on his side Winston was sure to win: "I heard a prominent judge say a day or two ago 'Winston is obliged to be elected, he has the shrewdest manipulator in the State managing his campaign, one who never gets beaten.' When asked who, he said 'President

[70] Satterfield, 53.

McIver.'" Winston was indeed offered the job and came back from Texas to head the North Carolina school.[71]

McIver returned to Greensboro for a short time, then set out again in August to conduct the annual summer institute, this time at the little mountain town of Boone, which was a four and a half day ride by wagon. He took his daughter Annie along for company and his secretary Edward Forney so that he could do work in his "free" time. During the two weeks in Boone, he lectured five hours a day, visited the area's schoolhouses—some of the worst in the state—and dictated letters to Forney into the night, sometimes as late as midnight.[72]

McIver's whirlwind of activity that year did not go unnoticed. He had earlier received a letter from Page, urging him to slacken his pace: "Let me whisper into your ear in confidence a secret—and a most important and solemn utterance it is. You need to rest this summer. I've come twice within an ace of the last precipice by not taking such advice quite in time, and you are wound up with too active and strong springs to know when the proper time comes. . . ." McIver politely thanked Page for his concern, talked about other matters, and sent his best wishes. Then he had set out for Boone. Rest was not in the picture.[73]

Health was soon to be a concern for more than just McIver. Outbreaks of malaria and typhoid hit several areas around the country that summer and fall, prompting many to

---

[71] Forney, et al., 88-89; B. R. Lacy, State Commissioner of Labor, to McIver, June 3, 1899, McIver Papers, Folder 3.
[72] Forney, et al., 90-92.
[73] Walter Hines Page to McIver, May 29, 1899, McIver Papers, Folder 3; McIver to Page, June 1, 1899, McIver Papers, Folder 3.

speculate that soldiers returning from the war had brought the new, more virulent forms of those diseases with them. By September, North Carolina health authorities were reporting a number of cases of malaria across the state, including several in Guilford County.[74] On October 23, campus doctor Gove reported that there were several students who appeared to have contracted malaria, only one of whom was sick enough to require treatment in the infirmary. These first cases responded well to treatment. Soon, however, the number of cases increased dramatically and some of these students did not improve. The epidemic continued to spread, and on November 15, Gove sent an urgent message to McIver, getting him out of his civics class: one of the students had died from heart complications as a result of malaria. Three days later, the news got even worse. Four young women on the campus were seriously ill, but not with malaria. Gove studied their symptoms and came to an inescapable conclusion: it was typhoid. The school would have to be closed.[75]

Upon receiving the news, McIver immediately rang the big bell behind the Main Building, summoning the students to an unexpected assembly. He told the young women that typhoid had been discovered on the campus, the college would be closed until further notice, and they were to go home as soon as possible. The students who were too sick to go home—forty-eight of them—were gathered into one dormitory where they were cared for by Gove, who was assisted by volunteers from the surrounding area, relatives of the young women, and students who wanted to stay and help. One young woman died the night after classes were cancelled; another died the following day. In all, sixty-seven

---

[74] Lefler and Newsome, 561.
[75] Greensboro *Record*, November 21, 1899; Forney, et al., 93.

students contracted malaria; ten of those also came down with typhoid. Forty-five others were stricken with typhoid. Fourteen students and one college employee died of the diseases between November and January. For the college community, it was a tragedy beyond words.[76]

Most parents and relatives, though grief-stricken, did not blame the college or its administration. The one exception was a Stoneville physician—and a deceased student's brother—who wrote a letter to the Raleigh *News and Observer* asking, "Why was it these young ladies were huddled in a pest hole? If it be criminal indifference and neglect it is nothing short of murder. If it be incompetence it is sure a scandal."[77] Several parents—including some whose daughters had died—published a statement which defended the college's handling of the situation.[78] The general public was generally supportive as well. The Charlotte *Observer* carried an editorial praising North Carolinians for their patience and level-headedness regarding the epidemic and resulting deaths, but cautioned that "[the people] do expect to know the exact truth about all this wretched business and will be content with nothing less."[79] The only public voice that actively spoke of wrongdoing and blame was one of the school's old enemies, the *Biblical Recorder*, which said, "The epidemic was not necessary. Some one has blundered badly."[80]

McIver, meanwhile, called together a group of medical and sanitation experts to investigate the outbreak. They found that it was caused by a defective sewer which had

---

[76] Raleigh *Morning Post*, November 23, 1899; Satterfield, 53.
[77] Raleigh *News and Observer*, December 17, 1899.
[78] Copies of the parents' statement of support can be seen in numerous state newspapers from December, 1899, and January, 1900, in the Woman's College Scrapbook.
[79] Charlotte *Observer*, December 17, 1899.
[80] *Biblical Recorder*, December 20, 1899.

contaminated the college's main well The college's Board of Directors, upon reviewing the medical examiner's report, issued a statement outlining the findings and giving their "thorough endorsement" of the administration's handling of the incident.[81]

There is little from McIver himself to indicate his thoughts or feelings during this time; when things became rushed or hectic, his personal reflection and correspondence were among the first things he let go. It is likely, however, that he was racked with anguish, sorrow, guilt, and self-recrimination. His friend Edwin Alderman, anyway, anticipated that this would be his mood and wrote a letter of consolation and encouragement: "I'm one of the few, I fancy, who can more nearly enter into your mind. You have acted with dignity and that is all one can do at such a time. You have done your duty, too, and this is not the state to be unjust or even unkind to . . . a faithful public servant."[82]

McIver undertook to cleanse the school of any contamination and restore it to operating condition as soon as possible. Repairs were made to the campus sewers and the college was connected to the city water supply. In addition, a filtering system and new plumbing were installed in the buildings. Every room was stripped of all furniture and bedding, sanitized, and repainted. The cost of all this not only wiped out funds allocated for a gymnasium but created a debt that the college did not settle until 1908. The Board of Directors announced that the college was now as clean and safe as was humanly possible. When the school reopened on January 30, 1900, approximately three-fourths of those who had been enrolled in the fall returned. Some stayed home due to illness

---

[81] *Report of the Board of Directors*, 27.
[82] Edwin Alderman to McIver, December 20, 1899, McIver Papers, Folder 4.

(malaria outbreaks continued around the state), and others had transferred to other schools during the epidemic. By the next fall, enrollment at the Normal was back at its usual levels.[83]

McIver and his college had survived some difficult financial, political, and medical challenges. With the dawn of the new century, however, he would find that a whole new component, with its own set of challenges, was about to be added to his life and career.

[83] *Report of the Board of Directors, 1892-1930*, 27-29.

Chapter Five

Charles McIver had established the normal college and had kept it running through eight years of not only growing public notice, but of trial and adversity as well. He had been offered other opportunities—the presidency of the University of North Carolina and even the Democratic nomination for governor—but he had declined them in favor of staying with the Normal. No doubt he thought his lot in life was set: he would run the college, fill speaking requests, conduct summer institutes, biennially lobby the legislature for appropriations, work with educational organizations, and continue to promote improved education in North Carolina and the local taxation to support it. He could not anticipate that events were about to thrust him onto an even wider stage.

In the spring of 1900, McIver accepted the invitation of Robert Ogden, a wealthy New York philanthropist, and Jabez Curry to attend commencement exercises with them at Hampton Institute in Hampton, Virginia. Ogden, whom McIver had not met before, had invited him at the recommendation of Curry. Both Ogden and Curry were key figures in the Conference for Education in the South, a group that included northern businessmen and philanthropists as well as southern educational and political leaders. The Conference first met in the summer of 1898 and met again in 1899. The group originally focused on educating blacks in the South—indeed, many of its well-to-do members had already given generously to schools for blacks in the region—but became convinced by the pitifully poor conditions of schools for whites that they should work for the improvement of education for both races. Curry himself had pointed out, at the second meeting, that even though blacks might be educated, the ignorance and prejudice

of whites in the South would hinder them from gaining social equality; educating southern whites in addition to blacks would help to remove those impediments: "There is nothing we can do which will be an ultimate and permanent remedy of the evils we complain of at the South . . . until the whole community is transformed by the magic power of education.[1] Others echoed Curry's ideas, including Hollis Frissell, Hampton Institute's president. Given their majority status and iron grip on political power, the attitudes of whites would have to be changed before blacks saw see any appreciable change in their social status, regardless of how well-educated they were. And education was the best road out of ignorance and irrational hatred. In order to educate them, however, southern whites would first have to be convinced of the value of education for all people and of the importance of local taxation to support a good system. The Conference's mission, therefore, changed in 1899 to promoting universal education in the South.[2]

At Hampton's commencement, McIver was caught off guard when Frissell suddenly thrust him into the spotlight. He recounted what happened in a letter to Lula:

> I have had a rather remarkable experience for the past few days. I reached Hampton Wednesday at 2:15 p.m. and with no notice whatever, after a few talks by Dickerman, Booker Washington, and a few others, Dr. Frissell called on me and spoke very complimentarily of our work at Greensboro. My remarks seemed to "catch the crowd," and I have been regarded as something of a new discovery. . . . Thursday afternoon to my astonishment I was called on again at the close of the commencement proper and after three eloquent speeches by Booker Washington, Dr. Curry, and Mr. Ogden. . . . When we closed, a New York banker came to me and said, "I will send you $1000 for your work next fall." I was invited to join the northern party today and so came with them in their special [private railroad] cars to Washington—a delightful party of teachers, millionaires,

---

[1] Charles William Dabney, *Universal Education in the South* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1936), II: 2, 534.

[2] *Proceedings of the Second Capon Springs Conference for Education in the South, 1899* (n. p., n. d.), 7-8.

> preachers, old maids, artists, newspaper reporters, etc.—all the guests of Mr. Ogden, who paid everybody's fare and furnished food and refreshment for the party.[3]

As a result of the Hampton event, McIver met, impressed, and befriended not only Ogden but George Foster Peabody as well. It was Peabody who had promised to contribute $1,000 to the Normal, which he did. A year later, he gave $10,000 to the school. McIver was a bit surprised at how much people from the North enjoyed his homespun humor and folksy anecdotes; he said they "pleased people more than I had expected [they] would. The Yankee loves a well applied joke even if he does hem and haw too much to use one successfully himself." The group, especially Ogden and Peabody, also liked McIver's passion for education and his reputation for fighting hard for its improvement.[4]

One other result of the Hampton event was that McIver was invited to attend the third Conference on Education in the South, which was to be held in its usual location at Capon Springs, West Virginia, in late June. At their third meeting the Conference participants decided to turn their annual private gathering into a public forum on education and to hold it in larger cities with greater exposure and public access.[5]

Before the Conference, however, McIver had to handle a number of other challenges that were placed before him. After overseeing the Normal commencement in mid-May, he was exhausted and ill with unspecified symptoms, too sick to venture much beyond his bedroom for nearly three weeks. The college's Board of Directors gave him a two-month vacation, but McIver, having recovered most of his strength by early June,

---

[3] Charles McIver to Lula McIver, June 7, 1900, McIver Papers, Jackson Library, University of North Carolina at Greensboro, Greensboro, North Carolina, Folder 7.
[4] The letters accompanying Peabody's donations are in the McIver Papers, Folder 68; Dabney, II: 10-12.
[5] Dabney, ibid.

saw it as simply an opportunity to get more done. He took time to decline yet another offer to take the presidency of the University of North Carolina, then headed off to Virginia for the Hampton commencement, and then to Charleston, South Carolina, for a meeting of the National Education Association, of which he was an officer. In late June and early July, he attended the third Conference on Education in the South at Capon Springs, West Virginia. In August, he lectured as a guest instructor for two weeks at a normal institute in Atlanta. Between these events, he scheduled brief speaking engagements up and down the eastern seaboard of the United States. In his speeches he now began to encourage the expansion of professional opportunities for women: "You cannot keep a human being with a well trained intellect unemployed. . . . With the new opportunities of education coming to women, there is a greater demand for an outlet for their activities." In addition to opening up the doors of education for women, he said, society now must allow them to prove themselves in the greater world of work.[6]

The campaign of 1900 heated up that fall, and the political tempest soon engulfed every North Carolinian. Not only were most of the state's legislative seats to be decided, but the governor's position and a number of congressional seats were open as well. The legislative campaign was largely a repeat of the 1898 campaign without the violence for the most part. The Democrats used the race issue to promote the passage of the constitutional amendment mandating a literacy requirement for voting. McIver's friend

[6] McIver's itinerary can be reconstructed from his general correspondence from this period (McIver Papers, Folder 5) and from the letters that flowed between him and his wife (McIver Papers, Folder 7). The quotation is from a newspaper article reporting on his appearance, Richmond *Times Dispatch*, July 20, 1900.

Charles Aycock was the Democrats' candidate for governor that year, running on the promise that he would be the "educational governor." He did not, unfortunately, decry or try to curtail his party's racist tactics; instead he downplayed the race issue and essentially ignored the heavy-handed actions of party operatives (although the presence of Red Shirts at some of the rallies would have been hard to ignore). He did, however, campaign for "universal education" and said that creating an educated citizenry, black and white, would remove race as a problem in state politics. Most North Carolina public schools were still in woeful conditions and funding was still abysmally low; Aycock declared that before the state could move forward in any way, it had to address its dire educational needs. He was to have the opportunity to demonstrate the truth of that contention: Aycock was elected by a comfortable margin in 1900 and the Democrats retained large majorities in both houses of the legislature.[7]

The tragic political storm of the 1890s and early 1900s did have a few positive outcomes. The state's Democratic Party, chastened by its previous loss of power, gradually forced its older, more conservative elements to retire or fade into the background. A newer, younger, more progressive group of leaders came to the fore, especially after 1900, leaders who were more sympathetic to the "New South" ideal, more responsive to the needs of the common man, and more aware that new strategies were needed in a rapidly-changing time. In addition, they placed a higher value on the importance of education; the Populist movement had forced politicians of both major parties to embrace at least the rhetoric of educational reform. Aycock, therefore, had a

---

[7] William S. Powell, *North Carolina Through Four Centuries* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1989), 445-46.

legislature to work with which was more amenable to his ideas than previous bodies had been. Under his leadership, the state dramatically increased its appropriations for public schools, set up a statewide system of property taxation to give the schools additional support, consolidated school districts to make them more efficient, and established high schools in all the districts. To his credit, Aycock continued to support educational progress—though in separate schools systems, of course—for blacks as well as whites. In 1901, when legislators from his own party proposed bills that benefited schools for whites but did nothing for blacks, Aycock threatened to resign if the bills were passed (North Carolina's governor did not have veto power at the time) and the measures were voted down. Though racism remained a problem—the gap between funding for white schools and funding for black schools, for example, remained substantial for decades to come—the state's attitudes towards public education had greatly changed. The "Rip Van Winkle" state, which not many years before had shown icy indifference when its schools nearly died for lack of funds, now awakened to the importance of education. A good indication of the change is the fact that when the 1901 General Assembly, in one stroke, fully doubled the previous appropriation for public schools, there was applause and loud cheering in the legislative chamber from the legislators themselves. That could not have happened just ten years earlier. Aycock, McIver, and others had helped to bring about dramatic changes in how North Carolinians thought about education.[8]

McIver was present for part of the legislative session of 1901, but he did not get to witness the spontaneous celebration over the passage of the appropriations bill for the

---

[8] Hugh Talmage Lefler and Albert Ray Newsome, *North Carolina: The History of a Southern State* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1973), 562; Powell, 445-46.

public schools. Midway through the session he had nearly collapsed due to illness, and his physician ordered him to bed, where he stayed for over a week. This was a repeat of an episode that had occurred in November, when he had also spent nearly two weeks in bed. After he recovered somewhat from his November illness he went to New York to visit his friend Page, who was now part owner in the publishing firm of Doubleday, Page, & Co. Page saw to it that his friend spent some time in leisurely activities; he took McIver for his first Turkish bath and to dinner at Delmonico's. The two also went to an exclusive banquet at the Waldorf-Astoria, where they heard entertaining speeches from two very different speakers: Andrew Carnegie, the well-known entrepreneur and philanthropist, and Winston Churchill, a British writer and naval officer fresh from the Boer War. McIver returned to Greensboro, then left a few weeks later for the opening of the legislative session, apparently thinking he had completely recovered. The breakdown during the General Assembly's session indicated otherwise, however. Documents that mention these two bouts of illness do not specify symptoms, but the context clearly indicates that these episodes were either a product of or related to over-taxation and fatigue. McIver's breathless pace and habit of neglecting his health were beginning to take their toll.[9]

By mid-March, 1901, however, he had recovered enough to resume his hectic schedule. In addition to running the college that spring, he once again traveled the length and breadth of North Carolina and several other eastern states, speaking and lecturing. In

[9] E. J. Forney, Fodie Buie, and Emily Semple Austin, *Leaves from Stenographer's Notebook*, (Greensboro: Harrison Printing Company, n. d.), 101, 104; Charles McIver to Lula Martin McIver, December 3, 1900, McIver Papers, Folder 7; Charles McIver to Lula Martin McIver, February 20, 1901, McIver Papers, Folder 7.

April the fourth Conference on Education in the South met in Winston-Salem. McIver arranged for many of the participants who accompanied Ogden from New York on his chartered train—the group numbered over a hundred—to visit the Normal at Greensboro. Classes were cancelled and activities were held, including public speeches by Ogden, George Foster Peabody, Curry, Frissell, Page, James McAlister (president of Drexel Institute), Lyman Abbott of the *Outlook*, and Albert Shaw of the *Review of Reviews*. Also present but not speaking was John D. Rockefeller, Jr., who was so inspired by the Conference and by his "educational tour of the South" that he went home and persuaded his father to create the General Education Board to funnel money to improving education in both North and South.[10]

Once back in Winston-Salem, the Conference decided to create an executive agency to carry out a public campaign to promote universal public education. The new body was called the Southern Education Board. Ogden was chosen as its chairman and, as authorized, he selected the remaining members of the Board. He chose McIver, Alderman, Frissell, Charles Dabney, George Foster Peabody, and Wallace Buttrick, a minister from Albany. The Conference closed after the Board was instructed to complete its organization and begin operation by November.[11]

---

[10] McIver's itinerary for the spring of 1901 is derived from various letters (McIver Papers, Folder 4) and from newspaper clippings in the Woman's College Scrapbook, Special Collections, Greensboro, North Carolina, University of North Carolina at Greensboro, Jackson Library. The Ogden group's visit to the Normal is described in the Winston-Salem *Daily Sentinel*, April 19, 1901, as well as in several other clippings in the Woman's College Scrapbook and in Dabney, II: 37. The group visited other North Carolina colleges, including the recently chartered North Carolina Agricultural and Mechanical College for Negroes, which later became North Carolina A. & T. State University.

[11] *Proceedings of the Fourth Conference for Education in the South, Winston-Salem, N.C., 1901* (Harrisburg, Pennsylvania: Mount Pleasant Press, J. Horace McFarland Company, 1901), 11-12.

After the Normal's commencement in May, McIver headed off to the annual convention of the National Education Association in Detroit. While there, he received a telegram from Ogden asking him to come to his summer home in Kennebunkport, Maine, for a meeting regarding the Southern Education Board. McIver arrived in mid-July. To his wife he wrote: "I saw a sign at the Boston Railway station yesterday making it a $100 fine to spit on the floor. What would N. C. folks say if someone proposed to fine them $100 for spitting anywhere on earth?"[12] Ogden, who knew McIver's achievements in North Carolina, wanted his advice on how to carry out the mission of the Southern Education Board. Increasingly as the two men talked, the North Carolina experience—public addresses, press coverage, and correspondence with newspapers and public figures—emerged as the guiding model for the new Board's campaign. McIver suggested that Alderman's advice should be sought, since he had been his partner in the institutes and had shared in the effort. Ogden quickly brought Alderman to Maine, and well into August the three discussed plans for implementing the Board's campaign.[13]

When the full Southern Education Board finally met on November 4 in New York, the group elected Ogden president, McIver secretary, and Peabody treasurer. Then, over the next several days, the Board mapped out its operational strategy. It would seek to raise $40,000 annually over the next two years to finance its operations; a committee was formed to handle the financial gifts (this committee later merged with Rockefeller's General Education Board, so that the latter funneled money to both the Southern

---

[12] Telegram, Robert Ogden to Charles McIver, July 12, 1901, McIver Papers, Folder 11; Charles McIver to Lula McIver, July 18, 1901, McIver Papers, Folder 7.
[13] William C. Smith, Viola Boddie, and Mary Settle Sharpe, eds., *Charles Duncan McIver* (Greensboro: J. J. Stone and Company, 1907), 152-53; Dabney, II: 56-57.

Education Board and other endeavors deemed worthy). The Southern Education Board would not directly award gifts to schools or educational organizations; instead, it would focus on generating enthusiasm for "universal education," which, among other things, would hopefully result in increased public and private funding. The actual field work of "educational evangelization," as they termed it, was to be done by three district directors—McIver, Alderman, and Frissell—each of whom was assigned to a specified portion of the South. The Board also established a Bureau of Information to collect and disseminate data on education in the South, and, in addition to being a district director, McIver found himself part of the committee overseeing the Bureau of Information. Few had greater knowledge of the generally poor state of southern education and what it would take to correct it, so it was a good fit. Besides, his work with the Board was to a large degree a continuation of what he had been doing all along, anyway, although now on a larger stage. In short, the Southern Education Board was McIver's and Alderman's county institute work on a grander scale, this time better funded, encompassing multiple states, and receiving assistance from northern interests. For his work McIver was to receive an annual honorarium of $2,000.

To get the fund-raising started in a substantial way, Ogden invited to dinner on the evening of November 8, a group of approximately one hundred well-to-do or influential people. The group—which included such luminaries as Lyman Abbott, Professor Woodrow Wilson of Princeton, Rev. Charles H. Parkhurst, Morris Jessup, John D. Rockefeller, Jr., and many others—converged on the Waldorf-Astoria, where they dined and listened to speeches detailing the plight of southern education. "The people are poor because they are ignorant," said Dabney, "and they are ignorant because they are poor."

Alderman said that educating southern whites while also educating blacks was essential to removing obstacles to social equality in the South. McIver emphasized his oft-stated principle that the education of women must not be neglected, for that was one of the quickest means of educating all southerners. Near the end of the proceedings, Ogden introduced the Southern Education Board to the group, explained its strategy, and closed by asking those present to consider helping raise the $40,000 needed for the first year's operations. In response, George Foster Peabody committed to paying for the entire first year's work himself, and others in the audience pledged either financial or logistical help. The Southern Education Board was up and running.[14]

"Up and running" aptly describes McIver himself after this point as well. True, his new work with the Southern Education Board was in form "more of the same." It was, however, significantly more of the same. In addition to North Carolina, his district officially included South Carolina and Georgia, and his work often took him into Tennessee and Virginia as well. For a man whose life was already quite full, it was a huge addition. True to his "workaholic" nature, he could not and did not know when to say no, especially when it involved the cause that was so near to his heart.[15]

As if that were not enough, another job was soon added to McIver's agenda. Governor Aycock, trying to build momentum for a plan to centralize and equalize property tax revenues for all school districts in the state, was facing opposition from whites who objected to their money going towards educating blacks. The racist cry,

---

[14] Dabney, II: 58-63.
[15] Ibid., 64; see also McIver's reports as a district director to the Southern Education Board, McIver Papers, Folder 16.

"Educate a Negro, spoil a field hand," had been raised and repeated. Whatever inconsistencies McIver might have had in his attitudes regarding race, he was clear and emphatic in his support for educating all people, including blacks. In his 1902 speech before the Southern Educational Association, of which he was president, McIver launched a focused attack on those opposed to paying for the education of blacks. Education, he said, never spoiled anything, and educating anyone ultimately helped everyone. If the South were ever to lift itself out of poverty and ignorance, it would have to educate all of its people. Money spent in the education of blacks was not a burden, he argued, it was an investment in the future of all southerners.[16]

Knowing McIver's stand on the matter, and needing a way to outflank the entrenched Democratic traditionalists in the educational bureaucracy, Aycock contacted him about launching a concentrated effort to build support for greater funding for public education and for the centralization of school revenues. McIver agreed to help, noting that he could easily justify using Southern Education Board funds to underwrite most of the expenses involved in carrying out the campaign. However, he said, the effort would be most effective if as many as possible of the educational institutions and organizations in the state could be brought on board. With the influence of the governor's office behind the effort, the various parties would be more likely to participate and take the program seriously. Aycock took McIver's advice, and in February, 1902, forty-three representatives from almost all of the state's school districts, as well as representatives from most of the state's colleges (public and private), academies, and military schools met with Aycock and McIver in the governor's office in Raleigh. The group, calling

[16] Smith, et al, 155; Asheboro *Argus*, January 22, 1902.

themselves the Central Campaign Committee for the Promotion of Public Education, adopted a declaration of principles—which McIver called a "second declaration of independence"—calling for, in effect, a war on illiteracy and the attitudes which permit it to exist.

The group wanted longer school terms, the consolidation of districts, higher teacher pay, better school facilities, and, to pay for it all, centralization of school revenues. The campaign created a pool of speakers (including McIver) who spread out over the state; it kept a steady stream of articles flowing to state newspapers; it asked ministers throughout the state to preach at least one sermon a year on education; and it encouraged communities to hold "educational campmeetings" to promote the program's goals. The idea was to mobilize the whole state on behalf of education. With Aycock and McIver driving it and the Southern Education Board and General Education Board funding it, the campaign got under way in the spring of 1902 and soon gathered momentum. Education in general had already begun rising as item of popular support; now the idea of increased tax revenue to fund schools adequately began to catch on. The "North Carolina campaign," as McIver called it, continued in one form or another for the rest of Aycock's term and, before the latter left office, had achieved many of its goals.[17]

McIver returned to Greensboro to dedicate a new facility at the Normal, a practice and observation laboratory, for both the Normal's regular students and participants in the

[17] Dabney, II: 336-38; minutes of the Southern Education Board, November 6 and 7, 1901, vol. 38, Southern Education Board Papers, Chapel Hill, North Carolina, University of North Carolina, Wilson Library; *Biennial Report of the State Superintendent of Public Instruction for North Carolina, for the Scholastic Years 1900-01 and 1901-02* (Raleigh, North Carolina: Edwards and Broughton, 1902), 67-70; Powell, 446-447.

new intensive short term that McIver had created especially for rural teachers. A few weeks later, as part of the "North Carolina campaign," he met with prominent women, including Lula, from around the state and helped them create a new organization: the Woman's Association for the Betterment of Public School Houses (WABPSH). The group was to be loosely based in Greensboro and was to receive some assistance from the Southern Education Board, but it was to mainly be a voluntary effort; each local "cell" would be responsible for the cleaning, improvement, and maintenance of the schoolhouse nearest to it. The WABPSH would outlive McIver and go on not only to improve school facilities all over the state but to raise the standards for what a schoolhouse should be in the public mind. It was also an important force for promoting the improvement of education in general.[18]

McIver also took the state campaign to other sectors of society. He spoke to businessmen in Charlotte in March. Acknowledging that they typically pursued "turning ideas into dollars," he urged them to now turn dollars into ideas by educating the ignorant. That endeavor, too, was a worthwhile investment, he argued, because the educated are more likely to turn ideas into dollars and benefit society as a whole. This "dollars and cents" approach was not new for McIver, but he did employ it more consistently in the North Carolina campaign, reasoning that it might be the most effective tactic in a state so stubbornly pragmatic. In a conference with the state's superintendents a bit later, he encouraged them to argue that "The only real estate . . . is brains." If a

[18] Forney, et al, 108.; minutes of the organizational meeting, June 2, 1902, Records of the Woman's Association for the Betterment of Public School Houses, Folder 1, Greensboro, North Carolina, University of North Carolina at Greensboro, Jackson Library. See also Eugene Clyde Brooks, "Women Improving School Houses," *World's Work* 12 (September 1906): 7937.

predominantly rural people, accustomed to reckoning land as the primary commodity of value, could be made to see that "brain is better property than land and that ideas and inventions multiply a thousand fold the natural products of the earth," then the battle for better education would be won.[19]

In April, McIver put aside the state campaign for a while and traveled to New York for the formal installation of Nicholas Murray Butler as president of Columbia University. He then caught Ogden's chartered train and rode with his party to the fifth Conference on Education in the South, being held at Athens, Georgia. The Conference had by this time grown greatly in notoriety and prestige. It was now attracting journalists from national publications, educational officials from various states, and politicians. Aycock was one of the latter and was, in fact, one of the featured speakers at this particular meeting. The Conference also brought in more money to fund the activities of the Southern Education Board. Even though the Conference dramatically increased its funding over the next several years, it is interesting to note that the Southern Education Board never raised McIver's pay. Though he was easily the most active of the district directors, his honorarium remained at $2,000 annually the whole time he worked for the Board.[20]

After speaking at the commencement of the University of Tennessee in May, McIver returned to the Normal for its own commencement, a particularly meaningful one,

---

[19] Notes for speech with title, "To Charlotte Chamber of Commerce," March 8, 1902, McIver Papers, Folder 9; notes for speech with title, "To Superintendents," March 22, 1902, McIver Papers, Folder 9.
[20] Dabney, II: 89-95; see *Proceedings of the Fifth Conference for Education in the South, Athens, Georgia, 1902* (New York: Conference Committee on Publication, 1902) for the details of business transacted. See McIver's reports as district director for information on his honorarium, McIver Papers, Folder 16.

since it marked the tenth anniversary of the college's founding. In his address to those assembled, he announced that the administration and faculty had determined that the college was ready to offer bachelor's degrees, not just the diplomas or certificates that it had been awarding. In order to accommodate students who still came with a broad range of preparation, the bachelor's program would be a five-year course of study, with the first year consisting of leveling courses. When public high schools were widely available and offering a consistent level of academic preparation—which, McIver optimistically told them, might be sooner than they had previously expected—the first year of the program would be eliminated. The purpose in requiring the fifth year now, he said, was to make sure that the Normal's graduates came up to the same standards as that of the University because he did not want anyone to be able to say otherwise.[21]

Soon after the commencement, McIver left to teach a government class at the new Summer School of the South, a program set up by the Conference on Education in the South. It was designed to offer teachers a range of intensive, six-week college-level courses, more intensive than a regular summer institute might afford, to have higher academic standards, and to draw on some of the best college instructors in the South. The University of Tennessee in Knoxville hosted the event without charge, and the General Education Board paid the instructors. McIver, Alderman, Dabney, and a number of other notables in the world of education were featured as instructors that first summer, and over

[21] Forney, et al, 110; *North Carolina State Normal and Industrial College Decennial* (Greensboro: Adelphian and Cornelian Literary Societies of the State Normal and Industrial College, 1902), 77-78. See also the Woman's College Scrapbook for numerous newspaper articles reporting the announcement.

seventeen hundred teachers showed up to take classes. The Summer School of the South became an annual, much celebrated event and ran for several more years.[22]

From Knoxville McIver went directly to Minneapolis for the annual convention of the National Education Association. He spent the week making speeches, attending meetings, doing committee work (he was on several), and preparing reports. One Minnesota journalist covering the convention noticed his resemblance to William Jennings Bryan and mentioned it prominently in his article.[23]

Once back in North Carolina, McIver turned his attention again to the state educational campaign. A big rally was held in July in Wentworth and featured speeches by several dignitaries, including McIver and former governor Thomas Jarvis. The idea of the "educational campmeeting" caught on, and communities all around the state began to plan similar rallies. Politicians, lawyers, businessmen, clergy, and anyone else with a hankering to speak began to get on the educational bandwagon. It was the popular movement of the moment and it became almost embarrassingly common to be "for education," even among people who did not always know the full ramifications of the cause they were espousing. Still, it represented a sea change, and it was a significant factor in North Carolina's finally emerging from the darkness and coming into the light educationally.[24]

---

[22] Charles Dabney to Charles McIver, February 25, 1902, McIver Papers, Folder 12; Dabney, 105-114.
[23] A number of letters from Charles McIver to Lula McIver during July, 1902, describe his activities at the NEA convention; McIver Papers, Folder 7. The newspaper quotation is from the Minneapolis *Tribune*. July 10, 1902.
[24] Greensboro *Patriot*, July 21, 1902; report to the Southern Education Board, August, 1902, McIver Papers, Folder 16.

McIver immersed himself in the North Carolina campaign with his usual zeal, traveling from one end of the state to the other and back again, interrupting the itinerary here and there to travel to New York, Georgia, and Tennessee. He was on the road more than he was at home. He was very popular in North Carolina and his fame and popularity were growing elsewhere. He received standing ovations that year for his speeches in Knoxville, Minneapolis (at the NEA convention), and in Atlanta. The Southern Educational Association at its meeting in Atlanta passed a resolution of appreciation to him, saying that "the cause of education regards him with pride and pleasure." Newspapers published glowing accounts of his appearances and summaries of his achievements. All the success and recognition, however, came at a price. McIver frequently wrote that he was "very tired." In addition to his health, his protracted absences took a toll on his family life. His letters home record his regret at being absent so much, at missing so much of his children's developmental years, and at being away when important milestones occurred. His children, meanwhile, displayed great excitement when their father was home and appeared genuinely to enjoy him when he was there; however, they recalled that they were also somewhat relieved when he left again because he took the hectic storm of activity with him. His children did much of their growing up without him, saw him almost as a stranger at times, and even sometimes preferred the peace that his absences brought.[25]

---

[25] Report to the Southern Education Board, August, 1902, McIver Papers, Folder 16; see the Woman's College Scrapbook for clippings regarding his ovations and accolades in 1902; see McIver's letters to Lula McIver for the summer of 1902, McIver Papers, Folder 7; notebook, Lula Martin McIver Papers, Jackson Library, University of North Carolina at Greensboro, Greensboro, North Carolina, Folder 1.

The following year, 1903, saw little change for McIver. He continued managing and balancing his daunting responsibilities: running the Normal, serving as district director (and Secretary) of the Southern Education Board and promoting education on its behalf, helping to conduct the officially-sanctioned North Carolina educational campaign, serving as an officer with various educational organizations such as the NEA, teaching at summer schools and institutes, and filling speaking invitations from dozens of other sources in the state and beyond. And he continued to garner accolades and win ever-increasing renown. He may have been, in those early years of the twentieth century, the best-known and most popular man in North Carolina; he had certainly made more personal appearances and spoken directly to more people than anyone else, including the governor. Not everyone liked him, certainly, for he had his detractors, as letters to the editor published in the Greensboro *Record* indicate. Some complained that he was obsessive, hard-headed, and egotistical, and the record over his adult life would give at least some credence to the first two charges. Other complaints mention his bossiness, even with equals, and his volatile temper. One source relates the story of an explosive confrontation between McIver and a local printer when the printer used the abbreviation "Chas." In spite of scattered instances like this, McIver's status as a public figure admired by most North Carolinians continued to grow.[26]

Financial support seemed to follow his growing success. He secured a gift of $15,000 from the General Education Board for the college, and was able to persuade the Peabody Fund to commit additional funds to assist rural schools in the South, after a

[26] See the Woman's College Scrapbook for examples of letters to the editor criticizing McIver; Smith, et al, 166-67; Forney, et al, 113.

paper he wrote showed that most aid went to city schools serving only twenty-five percent of school-aged children. Indeed, after the Peabody Fund's long-time director Jabez Curry died, the position was formally offered to McIver. It was one of the few offers that genuinely tempted him. Here was a chance to take his ideas to a higher stage, to direct the flow of substantial funds all across the South to the places where he knew, better than anyone, they would do the most good. The Normal needed him, he knew, but surely the need was even greater on a broader stage. And here, at last, was a position which would pay well enough to allow him to do justice by his family. Many of his friends, including Alderman, Dabney, and George Foster Peabody himself urged him to take the job.[27]

In January of 1904, McIver traveled to New York to meet with Ogden and other members of the Southern Education Board. He was still debating whether to take the Peabody Fund position and wrote to Lula that he was "not sure what I ought to do." On the train back to North Carolina on January 20, he was still weighing the respective merits of staying at the Normal or taking the new position. The decision was soon made for him. When he arrived in Greensboro that evening, he learned that a devastating fire the previous night had destroyed a substantial part of the campus. The fire began in the early morning hours in the recently expanded Brick Dormitory and quickly spread to other buildings. No one was hurt, since the fire was discovered early by the night watchman, who sounded the alarm. All 350 students housed in the dorm had gotten out,

[27] Wallace Buttrick to Charles McIver, January 3, 1903, McIver Papers, Folder 13; Daniel C. Gilman to Charles McIver, October 13, 1903, McIver Papers, Folder 13; Hoke Smith to Charles McIver, McIver Papers, Folder 13; Satterfield, 56.

but approximately 125 had lost all their belongings and had only the clothes they had flung on as they ran outside. The blaze destroyed not only the dormitory but the kitchen, dining hall, laundry, and newly-built cold storage plant. McIver immediately pushed everything else out of his mind and focused on the calamity.[28]

At around 11 a.m. he rang "Prep" and the young women—many of them ill-clad, smelling of smoke, and dazed—joined the faculty in the auditorium. McIver asked that, instead of the customary state song, they sing the hymn "Praise God from Whom All Blessings Flow." He then addressed the students. He spoke earnestly of his relief and gratitude that no one had been hurt. He was sorry that many had lost their belongings, but, he reminded them, material things could be replaced and human lives could not. Then he said that even though things might now seem dark, the Normal would go on. He was not quite sure how at the moment, but it would continue. He asked for a show of hands as to how many of the students were willing to trust him to get the school functioning again and would be willing to return; most of the young women raised their hands. The president breathed a sigh of relief; as long as they were willing to go on, he said, he would make the necessary arrangements to allow the school to continue.[29]

The "arrangements" began almost the minute the assembly dismissed. Donations of money and clothes had begun arriving from the city of Greensboro and beyond, and

---

[28] Charles McIver to Lula McIver, January 15, 1904, McIver Papers, Folder 8; Forney, et al, 22; McIver, "Report of the President," in *Biennial Report of the Board of Directors*, n.p., McIver Papers, Greensboro, North Carolina, University of North Carolina at Greensboro, Jackson Library, Folder 30, September 15, 1904.

[29] Forney, et al, 22; McIver's words to the students were reconstructed from interviews with former Normal students, excerpts of which appear in Elisabeth Ann Bowles, *A Good Beginning: The First Four Decades of the University of North Carolina at Greensboro* (Chapel Hill, North Carolina: University of North Carolina Press, 1967), 76-77.

the college's administrators started passing the gifts out. McIver's philanthropic contacts began to help as well; Ogden, Peabody, and V. E. Macy of New York contributed to a fund for the fire victims that eventually totaled approximately $2,000. Other arrangements were also made. The college's Board of Directors suspended classes for three weeks, and the Southern Railway Company provided free transportation home for the students. During the recess, work crews erected a temporary building to serve as the kitchen and dining hall. The bottom floor of the unfinished Students' Building was divided, with the help of rods and curtains, into little cubicles. In this way nearly 200 of the 350 affected students could be accommodated. Approximately 100 students dropped out after the fire, and the remainder were housed either in private homes or by doubling up in the small dormitory.[30]

Meanwhile, McIver wrote a letter to the Peabody Board: "I have as you know given my life to the establishment of a great institution for the liberal education of women and the training of teachers. I cannot leave it, or appear to desert it, in the hours of its adversity. . . ." He expressed sincere appreciation for being offered the position, but he had made up his mind; the Normal was his life's work, and it needed him now more than ever.[31]

While the job of getting the college ready to reopen proceeded in Greensboro, McIver set out on another errand to benefit the school. While in New York on Southern Education Board business, he received word that Andrew Carnegie had responded favorably to his petition for funds to build a library at the Normal. The steel magnate and

---

[30] McIver, "Report of the President," *Biennial Report of the Board of Directors*, September 15, 1904.
[31] Charles McIver to Hoke Smith, February 5, 1904, McIver Papers, Folder 5.

philanthropist had committed to giving $15,000 for the project. McIver was glad for the positive response but a little disappointed at the amount; he wanted to build a truly substantial library, and that would cost more than $15,000. He made an appointment to visit with Carnegie himself. After an hour and a half of the "McIver magic," Carnegie told him to build the library he wanted and he would give the additional funds necessary. The businessman was apparently impressed with McIver, telling him, "I've got a lot of faith in you." He then invited him to accompany him and his wife to an orchestral concert that evening. Upon parting, Carnegie told him, "Go on and build that library. I am very glad I met you and I want you to come to see me again."[32]

The Normal reopened on February 23. In the assembly that day, McIver told the students that they might be a bit cramped for a while, but that good things were on the way. He related the news regarding Carnegie's donation for the library and promised that construction would begin soon. He also told them that he expected quick action on the building of a new dormitory. He was right; in early March the state authorized the Normal to borrow $80,000 for a new housing facility. At the commencement that June, he announced to the assembled crowd that the construction of both buildings was to begin. He also held a ceremony laying the cornerstone for the new dormitory, which would be named for his old friend Cornelia Spencer. The facility was completed by the opening of the school that fall.

The fire and subsequent rebuilding, however, left the college deeply in debt. The value of the buildings destroyed by the blaze totaled $64,458, and the insurance paid only

---

[32] Charles McIver to Lula McIver, February 13, 1904, McIver Papers, Folder 8. See also McIver, "Report of the President," *Biennial Report of the Board of Directors*, September 15, 1904.

half that amount. Temporary arrangements cost $16,000, more than a third of which consisted of materials that could not be used again. In addition, the school had now borrowed $80,000 to build Spencer Hall. Total indebtedness went well beyond $100,000 and it would be several years before the college would retire the debt.

The school, however, rebounded quickly in terms of enrollment and routine operation. It had a student body of nearly 600 in the fall of 1904 and continued to expand both its course offerings and its faculty. The fire had failed to stop the Normal; as McIver had promised, it had gone on.[33]

After setting the women's college back on track, McIver resumed his breathless routine. In April he attended the seventh Conference for Education in the South in Birmingham. The proceedings show that McIver's influence on the organization was profound; the meeting focused on local taxation as the main "practical concern" and affirmed that "the Southern state superintendents and college presidents were a unit for better schoolhouses, longer terms, and better teaching for both races." One writer observed that "a few Southern politicians and newspapers are filled with alarm at what they call 'the Ogden movement,' but predominant public opinion at the South is undoubtedly progressive. . ."[34]

McIver received a second honorary doctorate from the University of North Carolina at its commencement in May. In late June, not long after the Normal's commencement, he left for the national convention of the NEA in St. Louis, not coincidentally the site of that year's World's Fair. He wrote home of having to fight hard

---

[33] Woman's College Scrapbook; *Biennial Report of the Board of Directors*, September 15, 1904.
[34] New York *Daily Tribune*, April 30, 1904. See also Dabney, II: 2, 278-80.

in one of his committees to keep "educational anarchists" from passing resolutions condemning philanthropic gifts from "robber barons." He also spoke of enjoying the World's Fair. In addition, he gave an important speech at the convention, and a local newspaper reported that it was well-received: "Charles McIver of North Carolina won the heartiest applause award of the day by his witty address, and he was encored for several blushing bows." He apparently made an impression; he was elected vice president of the NEA.[35]

He was attracting attention from other quarters as well. The University of Tennessee offered him its presidency, which he graciously declined. B. Frank Mebane, a North Carolina textile manufacturer, met McIver in St. Louis and offered to make him a partner in his business, but the he declined this offer as well.[36] McIver went next to the University of Alabama for a week as a guest lecturer in its summer school. From there he journeyed to Knoxville to teach in that year's Summer School of the South. While in Knoxville he received a letter reminding him of the Southern Education Board meeting scheduled for August 10 at Ogden's summer home on Lake George in New York. On his way there, McIver stopped off in New Jersey for a visit with his old friend Page, who took McIver for his first ride in a new-fangled invention—the automobile. Charles wrote Lula that the machine "took us home over a delightful road ten or fifteen miles in less than an hour. "It beats the train and street car for comfort." He then went on to Lake

[35] The award is found in the McIver Papers, Folder 9; Charles McIver to Lula McIver, June 29, 1904, McIver Papers, Folder 8; St. Louis *Chronicle*, June 28, 1904.
[36] McIver tells in his June 29, 1904 letter to Lula McIver of receiving a telegram in St. Louis offering him the University of Tennessee position and of his declining the offer; a July 1 letter to Lula, also found in the McIver Papers, Folder 8, tells of his refusal of Mebane's first offer while in St. Louis.

George for the Board meeting, where he received another letter from Mebane offering him a different position. McIver again declined.[37]

After a busy several weeks, which included numerous speaking engagements, not to mention getting the Normal started on the 1904-1905 academic year, McIver accompanied Lula to a health resort in western North Carolina. A Greensboro newspaper noted that "Dr. McIver has been urged by his physician to take a rest, as he has not fully recovered from his sickness last summer. . . ." He did not get much rest, however, as he spent only a couple of days at the resort, before heading off to Yale University for a speech to Connecticut's state teachers' organization. He then went to Raleigh to speak to a conference of North Carolina superintendents of education, where he emphasized the importance of educating women and the need to raise the embarrassingly low pay of all teachers, which he noted was lower in many districts "than that of state convicts working on the roads." In December he traveled to Jacksonville, Florida, for the annual convention of the Southern Educational Association. He and Aycock were two of the convention's main speakers. It was at this same convention that the delegates made him president of the organization.[38]

Early in 1905, McIver journeyed to New York for a meeting with Ogden concerning Southern Education Board business. While there, he learned that one of his endeavors had borne unexpected fruit. In a letter to Lula he wrote, "Mr. Carnegie has just subscribed $10,000 this year to the Southern Education Board." The eccentric steel

[37] McIver recounts his travel, work, and experiences that July in a series of letters to Lula McIver, McIver Papers, Folder 8.
[38] Series of newspaper clippings from the fall of 1904, Woman's College Scrapbook.

magnate had apparently been more impressed with McIver and his work than the latter had realized.[39]

The Normal president then traveled to Raleigh for his biennial plea before the North Carolina legislature for appropriations for his school and education in general. He wrote Lula that he thought he was "doing some good in the scramble before the appropriations committee" and the conclusion of the matter later proved him correct: educational reform continued to be a popular movement, and the legislature approved several measures aimed at improving education in the state, including increased funding.[40]

Suddenly it was April again and time for the annual Conference on Education in the South, held this time in Columbia, South Carolina. McIver went early for meetings with Conference leaders and state superintendents. He wrote Lula that his time had been productive, but that he was "very tired." He was apparently showing his fatigue because Peabody mentioned that he was concerned about his health. He asked for the "privilege" of paying for McIver to take a two-month vacation in Europe, and he would not take no for an answer. He considered it, he said, an investment in the cause they shared. McIver accepted graciously, promising that he would take the vacation in late summer. Meanwhile, his pace did not slacken nor did his health improve. After the Normal's commencement in June, he went to Albany, New York, where he addressed a convocation at the University of the State of New York. He became ill enough while

---

[39] Charles McIver to Lula McIver, January 18, 1905, McIver Papers, Folder 8.
[40] Charles McIver to Lula McIver, January 25, 1905, McIver Papers, Folder 8; *Public Laws and Resolutions of the State of North Carolina, 1905* (Raleigh, North Carolina: Edwards and Broughton and E. M. Uzzell, 1905), 37-39.

there to see a doctor, who also, of course, advised rest. In spite of that advice, he insisted on giving the speech, though he was at only about half of his strength. From Albany he went directly to Asbury Park, New Jersey for the annual NEA convention. McIver had been nominated for the presidency of the organization and at first appeared to be a sure bet. His campaigning and committee work kept him up late into the night, a schedule that would not have allowed him to rest even if he had tried. McIver defeated his main opponent in the early balloting, but that candidate's supporters then threw their votes to another candidate and defeated McIver's bid. The result was that he did not win the NEA presidency, a position that he had genuinely desired. It was one of the few goals in his life that he did not achieve.[41]

Back in Greensboro, McIver prepared for the beginning of the Normal's school year in September, handled various speaking engagements, and looked forward to his upcoming European vacation. Lula would not be able to go, due partly to the expense but mainly because she had suffered a miscarriage a few weeks earlier and was not yet fully recovered. Charles was disappointed that she could not go but glad that she was gradually regaining her strength. Still, he did not wish to go to Europe alone and began looking for a replacement companion. He was able to convince Joyner to go after some persuasion (and Joyner's wife's urging), and the two made plans to sail from New York in early September.[42]

McIver went to New York a few days early to run a couple of errands related to the Southern Education Board. While there, he listened to—and ultimately rejected—an

---

[41] Woman's College Scrapbook; Charles McIver to Lula McIver, April 28, 1905, McIver Papers, Folder 8.
[42] Notebook, Lula Martin McIver Papers, Folder 1; Smith, et al, 177-78.

offer from the American Tobacco Company to be that firm's representative in Mexico. B. Frank Mebane invited him to spend a day with him and his wife while he was there and once again urged him to take a position with his company; his offer included much more attractive benefits than the first one. McIver listened to the offer and again politely declined.[43]

He and Joyner set sail a few days later. McIver made one request: "Let me sleep. I've lost so much sleep." Joyner agreed, and McIver slept as many as ten hours a day. "This was the first day of perfect rest and freedom from care that I've had in a long time," he wrote to his wife. He and Joyner made a pact: no discussion of education while on the trip and no visits to educational institutions. This was to be strictly a pleasure trip. The two men landed in France, explored Paris, spent some time in the French countryside, and then toured Germany. From there they traveled to Switzerland and north to England. In Scotland they not only visited castles and other historic sites, but also met the Scottish branch of McIver's family, who spelled their name "MacIver." And they kept their pact; they did not "talk shop" the whole time they were there.[44]

The two-month vacation did not, however, cure all ills. Friends and family remembered that he was more irritable upon his return than they had ever seen him before. In addition, he had to resume immediately his harried schedule. He left a few days after his return for a meeting of the Southern Education Association in Nashville. The rest of that fall was filled largely with North Carolina engagements, though they

---

[43] Charles McIver to Lula McIver, August 28, 1905, McIver Papers, Folder 8.
[44] Smith, et al, 178; various letters from Charles McIver to Lula McIver, September and October, 1905, McIver Papers, Folder 8.

spanned one end of the state to the other. January of 1906 found him back in New York for meetings with the Southern Education Board and the General Education Board. In addition to attending to the general business of both organizations, McIver discovered to his pleasure that his visit also benefited the Normal, since several members of both groups wanted to make donations to the school.[45]

A few weeks later, after he returned to Greensboro, he received yet another offer from the persistent B. Frank Mebane. The industrialist wanted him badly, and this proposal would not be easy to refuse. Mebane would pay him $7,500 a year—a prodigious salary in that day—to assume management of his North Carolina enterprises and would include a house and farm that Charles and Lula had once visited and dreamed of owning. (How Mebane knew of this is not recorded.) McIver, stunned by the wealth dangled before him, asked for some time to think it over. He struggled with the decision on his own for a few days, then took the train to Raleigh to ask Joyner and Daniels' help in making up his mind. He said his commitment to education was unwavering, but the one thing that made him consider this offer seriously was that, successful in his field though he was, he was not accumulating either property or savings to provide for his family in case something happened to him. And that, he said, was something any man must consider. Daniels and Joyner agreed, but both thought he talked as though he had already made up his mind. The decision he finally reached was one they anticipated. He again graciously declined Mebane's offer.[46]

---

[45] Notebook, Lula Martin McIver Papers, Folder 1; Woman's College Scrapbook; McIver, report to Southern Education Board, January, 1906, McIver Papers, Folder 16.
[46] Telegram, B. Frank Mebane to Charles McIver, February 10, 1906, McIver Papers, Folder 5; Smith, et al, 180-181.

It was fitting that McIver stayed at the Normal, for at that spring's commencement, he announced that the school had finally reached a goal he had greatly desired: the Normal's standards were finally equal to those of the University and other colleges in the state. From that point forward, he said, graduates of the college would be awarded Bachelor's Degrees after four years; the fifth year would no longer be necessary. The Woman's Normal and Industrial College was no longer an experiment, he announced with pride. Its standards were high, its graduates were respected, and it had solid support in the state government and among the public. It had come of age.[47]

Its president, too, had reached something of an apex. By the start of 1906, McIver had reached the high point of his profession. He headed a school that had blazed a trail in women's education, had survived trials of various kinds, had converted former foes into friends, and was now popular and well respected. He was acclaimed as one who had played a major role—perhaps *the* major role—in converting North Carolinians from hostility to public education to supporting the schools and the taxation to adequately fund them enthusiastically. He was an influential member of the Southern Education Board, which was awakening the southern states to the importance of education, and his connections with the General Education Board and Peabody Fund were helping to channel thousands of dollars every year to desperately needy southern schools at every level. He was a leader of several state, regional, and national educational organizations. And he moved regularly and easily in some of the highest circles of power, money, and

[47] *Report of the Board of Directors, 1892-1930*, n. p., n. d., McIver Papers, Greensboro, North Carolina, University of North Carolina at Greensboro, Jackson Library, Folder 30; Woman's College Scrapbook; see also Satterfield, 62.

influence in the country, rubbing shoulders with and befriending politicians, industrialists, publishers, and other important public figures. McIver had certainly reached a pinnacle of success and influence. Many thought he could only go higher, and given his record of achievement, it seemed a safe bet.

Chapter Six

Along with Charles McIver's professional success came wide acclaim for his achievements in newspapers, journals, and magazines. The influential *Outlook* magazine, for example, lauded him in an August, 1906, article on educational reform as the "soul of the forward movement in his region," adding that "in the Southern States there is no man better entitled to be called a champion of the public schools, and of the whole idea of popular education, than Charles Duncan McIver." The magazine went on to say that "for the past 20 years his voice has been raised in behalf of popular education, not only in every county of his own State, but throughout the South and in great National assemblies. There is no abler speaker on the subject than Dr. McIver." "Ol' Mac" from Moore County, North Carolina, had indeed come far.[1]

McIver, however, gave no indication of having "arrived" or being ready to rest on his laurels. Certainly his schedule gave no evidence of complacency. Despite increasingly frequent episodes of illness and obvious signs of fatigue, McIver apparently never considered cutting back In addition to his duties at the Normal, he continued to travel, speak, and teach. In March he spoke before the Louisiana Public School Teachers' Association. In April he conferred in Lexington with the state superintendents of Kentucky. A few days later, he was one of the main speakers and convention leaders at the Conference for Education in the South, which was also held in Lexington that year. The Normal commencement was a few weeks later, and then he was off to teach summer school at the University of Alabama and, a bit later, the Summer School of the South at

[1] *The Outlook*, August 9, 1905, 106.

the University of Tennessee. After that he made visits to schools in Georgia and conducted institutes in western North Carolina, where some of the Normal's graduates were teaching.[2]

The summer had flown by and suddenly it was August. McIver headed north to Peabody's home on Lake George in New York for a meeting of the Southern Education Board. On the way he stopped off in New York City to visit Page. While there he was once again approached by Mebane with yet another offer to go into business, this one even more attractive than the previous. But McIver had largely put that question in to rest in his own mind the year before. He again declined Mebane's offer. Once at Lake George, he plunged into the work of the Board and even indulged in a little leisure time, yachting on the lake and sitting on the porch of Peabody's home drinking in the scenery while chatting with the other men. He and Alderman found themselves reminiscing together, marveling that they had moved so quickly from boyhood to middle age. Alderman recalled that "our moods alternated between the kind of boyish, unrestrained merriment possible only to men who have grown up together and a certain strain of premonition and sadness." This line of thinking led the two to discuss, half in jest and half in earnestness, who would outlive the other and what the survivor might say when called on to commemorate his friend. Alderman thought he might pass away first. "Make it short," he said. "Just say that we had a good time together pounding away at real things." McIver replied, "Though I look stronger than you, you may outlive me after

[2] McIver's itinerary for the summer of 1906 can be gleaned from his reports to the Southern Education Board, McIver Papers, Jackson Library, University of North Carolina at Greensboro, Greensboro, North Carolina, Folder 16, and from the Woman's College Scrapbook, Special Collections, Jackson Library, University of North Carolina at Greensboro, Greensboro, North Carolina.

all, and I give you the same counsel." They could not have foreseen how soon one of them would be called on to carry out that sad commission.[3]

After the Southern Education Board meeting, McIver returned to New York, where he stayed for more than two weeks, handling Board business, filling requests for articles and speeches, and conducting a search for a new music instructor for the college. He also found time to visit with Page and another old friend, William Jennings Bryan, who was in the midst of a whistle-stop tour in anticipation of making a third run for the presidency. McIver asked the Commoner if he would come to North Carolina as he particularly wanted the great orator to deliver one of his speeches on campus, as he had done ten years earlier. Bryan agreed, assuming the arrangements could be made. McIver replied that he would see to the necessary preparations and that he would personally join Bryan when his train got to Raleigh.[4]

McIver returned to Greensboro in time to get the Normal started on another school year. Soon it was time for Bryan's visit, and McIver came to Raleigh for his friend's speech in the capital city. It was a great speech and well received. Great oratory, with its soaring imagery and entertaining anecdotes, thrilled audiences, brought the speaker applause, and won converts to the cause—this had been McIver's element, whether he was the speaker or not, for a long time now, and he still savored it, which was ironic, given his early dread of public speaking. He enjoyed the speech in Raleigh, all the

---

[3] Charles McIver to Lula McIver, August 8, 1906, McIver Papers, Folder 8; William C. Smith, Viola Boddie, and Mary Settle Sharpe, eds., *Charles Duncan McIver* (Greensboro: J. J. Stone and Company, 1907), 182-83.

[4] This information comes from two letters from McIver to Lula McIver on consecutive days, August 30 and 31, 1906 (McIver Papers, Folder 8).

more because of his friendship with the speaker. It would be the last speech he ever heard.

By the time Bryan's train arrived at the next stop on the tour, Durham, McIver was not feeling well. Rather than accompany Bryan to the speech, McIver said he would go to a nearby drugstore for some medicine. He found the drugstore closed due to Bryan's appearance. Upon returning to the train, he mentioned to a reporter who had also stayed behind that he was feeling "really bad." He stretched out on one of the long seats in the train car and rested for a while. When Bryan and his party returned from the site of the speech, McIver sat up and greeted them with his typical joviality, apparently trying to make things seem as normal as possible. After a few minutes he grew quiet again, frowning and complaining of a sharp pain in his chest and indigestion. One of the group offered him some brandy and he took some. A minute later, he abruptly collapsed onto the floor. Two doctors who were part of Bryan's entourage immediately began trying to revive McIver to no avail. He was dead.[5]

The doctors on the train attributed his death to "apoplexy," a catch-all term of the day for unknown ailments that caused unexpected death. A modern physician who has studied McIver's lifestyle, work and eating habits, and manner of death, however, believes that he died "due to the cardiac rhythm abnormalities that often accompany acute myocardial infarctions." In other words, McIver died of a heart attack. The same physician believes that it had not occurred without warning, either. McIver's lifestyle—

[5] This account of McIver's last hours is taken from stories written by Greensboro journalists who rode the Bryan Special from Raleigh to Greensboro; both articles were published the next day, September 18, 1906, one in the Greenboro *Daily Record* and the other in the Greensboro *Industrial News*. Accounts from other newspapers can be found in the Woman's College Scrapbook.

his "workaholic" tendencies, highly-stressful job(s), bad eating habits, and being overweight—as well as his two and three-week bouts of debilitating illness and frequent complaints of fatigue, all point to a classic history of heart disease. He likely also had hypertension, which can contribute to heart problems. Even some of his frequent experiences with indigestion may have been in actuality angina, or chest pains. In the decades after McIver's death, heart disease would come to be understood and often successfully treated. But in the early twentieth century, heart attacks were unrecognized, unexpected, and often deadly.[6]

The members of Bryan's party were stunned by McIver's sudden death. The train stopped at the next station, Hillsborough, and a messenger sent a telegram on to the Normal: "As train left Durham Dr. McIver had stroke of apoplexy and never recovered consciousness. Break the news to his family. Notify undertaker to meet Bryan special." Word spread quickly throughout Greensboro and there was a substantial knot of people at the station when the train pulled in. Ezekiel Robinson accompanied the hearse that took McIver's body away from the train, and the stunned crowd began to dissipate. It was true; McIver was dead.

Bryan, crying as he left the train, sobbed repeatedly, "It cannot be, it cannot be." He told those sponsoring his appearance in Greensboro that he could not possibly speak that evening. After he had calmed down and had rested a bit, his advisers and local Democratic leaders tried to convince him to go on with his speech. Finally, Bryan agreed, but he would not make a political speech; he would instead deliver a eulogy for

[6] Richard Kelly, M.D., personal interview, January 21, 2002.

McIver. That evening in the Greensboro Opera House he did just that, speaking without notes for more than an hour and a half on McIver, his accomplishments, the importance of his contributions to the world, and the value of his friendship.[7]

Two days later, Charles Duncan McIver was laid to rest. He was buried in the cemetery of First Presbyterian Church in Greensboro. Classes were canceled at the Normal. Factories and businesses in town were closed for the day. Colleges and schools around the state flew their flags at half-mast. At the hour of his funeral, the University of North Carolina rang its big bell at the center of campus forty-five times, once for each of his years of age.

Bryan was not the only one to memorialize McIver. Most of the state's newspapers carried articles summarizing his accomplishments and mourning his passing. Beyond North Carolina, papers such as the *New York Times*, the *Knoxville News-Sentinel*, the *Richmond Times-Dispatch*, and others published articles on McIver the day after his death. In the weeks to come, a number of magazines such as the *Outlook*, the *Review of Reviews*, the *South Atlantic Quarterly*, and Page's own *World's Work* also published feature articles on the man from North Carolina. McIver had touched many places during his lifetime, and now many of those locales mourned his passing.[8]

Back at the Normal, classes resumed and life went on. Julian Foust, who had been Academic Dean of the college, was named acting president by the Board of

---

[7] Greensboro *Record*, September 18, 1906; see also Woman's College Scrapbook.

[8] There are dozens of articles clipped and preserved in the Woman's College Scrapbook, from publications across the state and in several other states, commemorating McIver. The Raleigh and Greensboro papers gave the most details about his funeral, business closings, and other observances.

Trustees. The following May he was unanimously elected president on a permanent basis. The Normal continued to grow and prosper under his leadership.[9]

The Board of Directors also voted to permit the McIver family to live in the President's House on campus as long as they wanted. Lula accepted a paying position as the field secretary of the Woman's Association for the Betterment of Public School Houses. She also continued working with the college for the rest of her life, becoming a familiar and honored figure to generations of students. In addition, she became an even more outspoken advocate for women's rights and even for full social equality for blacks. She died in 1944, and her funeral was held in the President's House, where she had lived for fifty-two years of her life.

Three of the McIvers' four children lived to adulthood; Verlinda died as a child. Of those three, Lula McIver Dickinson was the last to pass on; she died in 1965. Through a strange set of circumstances, all three either had no children or had children who died young. As a result, after 1969 there were no living descendants of Charles Duncan McIver.[10]

* *

Even though McIver's biological lineage ended with his children, he nevertheless left behind a substantial legacy. The most obvious component of that legacy is the

---

[9] *Report of the Board of Directors, 1892-1930*, n. p., n. d., McIver Papers, Folder 30, 113.
[10] Ibid.; notebook, Lula Martin McIver Papers, Folder 1; Elisabeth Ann Bowles, *A Good Beginning: The First Four Decades of the University of North Carolina at Greensboro* (Chapel Hill, North Carolina: University of North Carolina Press, 1967), 32-33.

college he established and led for a decade and a half. The Woman's Normal and Industrial College continued to grow in enrollment and expand its course offerings and services. In 1932 it was made part of a state-wide university system, along with all the other public colleges in the state. At that point its name was changed to the Woman's College of the University of North Carolina. In 1963 the state legislature, recognizing the school's greatly broadened range of programs, changed its name to the University of North Carolina at Greensboro. The next year it became a coeducational institution, welcoming men as resident students for the first time. By the early twenty-first century, the University of North Carolina at Greensboro was a major institution of regional stature, offering doctoral degrees in fourteen fields. Perhaps fittingly, its two areas of greatest strength are in education and women's studies.[11]

McIver left an even broader mark with regard to women. Through his efforts and those of other reformers like him, as well as the work of graduates from the Woman's College, attitudes towards women, their right to an education, and the value of expanding professional opportunities for them began to change in North Carolina and the rest of the South. Many who scoffed in the 1890s when McIver painted a vision of women working side by side with men and making valuable contributions in numerous professions were alive to see that dream made real three decades later. Lula, who saw herself as continuing the work that she and Charles had begun together, continued to promote expanded

[11] Bowles, 178.

opportunities for women, becoming what one historian later called "the state's foremost white female educational advocate."[12]

The public schools constituted still another aspect of McIver's legacy. He lived to see the graded school movement sweep across the state and begin a transformation and elevation of the state's schools. This advance was due in no small part to his tireless promotion of better schools while teaching normal institutes in the late 1880s and early 1890s and his continuing promotion of the idea after becoming the president of the Normal in 1892. He combined his crusade for better schools with arguments for local taxation to support them in the 1890s, and with his participation in a state-sponsored educational campaign and work with the Southern Education Board in the early 1900s. The result was that by the end of the first decade of the twentieth century, a centralized system of apportioning tax revenue had been created, graded schools were spreading even to rural areas, the school year was lengthened, and all counties of the state were required to have high schools. A leading North Carolina historian has written that by the 1920s "North Carolinians could take pride in the progress of their schools."[13] Perhaps even more important was the change in attitudes towards education. McIver was one of the main engines driving the "educational revival" that hit North Carolina in the 1890s and early 1900s. The populace went from a position of indifference—even hostility—towards public education to being enthusiastically supportive. McIver, more than anyone else, was responsible for the change. His penchant for a good story, his collection of

---

[12] Glenda Elizabeth Gilmore, *Gender and Jim Crow: Women and the Politics of White Supremacy in North Carolina, 1896-1920* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1996), 187.
[13] William S. Powell, *North Carolina Through Four Centuries* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1989), 447.

homespun anecdotes and analogies, warm sense of humor, and personal charm, combined with his ability to know when to drive the point home, had helped to convert them. He had awakened the "Rip Van Winkle" state.

It was not only in North Carolina that McIver raised awareness of the value of education and the need for greater opportunities for women. Through his work with the Southern Education Board and other teaching and speaking opportunities, he traveled throughout the southeastern United States and promoted these causes, helping to bring about similar changes in thinking in the other southern states. His ideas were in harmony with the increasing calls for social change that accompanied the Populist and Progressive movements, and whether he helped to give rise to these movements or focused an already-extant reform impulse on his pet causes does not matter, though the former seems more likely. Either way, he helped to change minds about the importance of education in the South; not only that, but he helped to bring greater attention—and money—from philanthropic and reform-minded northerners to bear on southern educational needs. As a result, by the end of the first decade of the twentieth century, the improvement of education at all levels in the South was significantly farther along than it would have without him.

As was noted earlier, however, not everyone sees the legacy of McIver and his fellow reformers as being ultimately positive. Harlan, Katz, Link, LeLoudis, and other revisionist historians have challenged the system that McIver, Aycock, Alderman, and others put in place; these scholars suggest that, instead of creating something unique and transcendent, they simply established a new status quo. Instead of developing a dynamic model of education that encouraged creativity and individualism, they installed a system

that was rigid, standardized, and mechanistically efficient. It was a system built around the values of business and capitalism. The new school was a "learning factory" that categorized and quantified students. They were the raw material and the school was the factory that was to turn them into useful products ready to take their place in an industrialized society. Worse yet, the system was racially segregated from the outset, making it decidedly undemocratic and unegalitarian. Far from being the timeless template for a continually progressing and more democratic civilization, the school system developed in the South in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries was a snapshot of the values of a group dominated by the white capitalists who created it. The reformers had criticized the old school system for propagating the ideas of a bygone era; rather than creating something truly different, however, they had simply substituted a system that inculcated and propagated the values of their own generation.

How is Charles McIver to be understood and evaluated in light of this argument? That he and his fellow reformers created an educational system in the South that sought to be more modern than the one that it replaced and that was generally an improvement over the previous one is largely beyond question; not even the revisionist critics challenge that idea. Rather, it is in part the reformers' embrace of the values and priorities of the industrial age to which the revisionists object, and to that charge McIver must plead guilty. His letters, speeches, and other documents indicate that he indeed saw a new, more modern, industrialized society emerging and that he thought it was better than the older one it was replacing. He had, in fact, a sense of urgency about the need for North Carolina and the South to join the move toward modernization. Moreover, he believed the emerging America would be a freer, more democratic society and that the changes

were part of the continuing upward movement of civilization. It must be noted, however, that neither McIver nor any other educational reformer who came within the view of this study ever made the claim that the system they were creating was timeless or would never need improving or replacing. They promoted their system to prepare students to participate in the society that was emerging, a society that did revolve around business and industry. They did not see the new system as dehumanizing; they saw it as empowering. Just as school systems in the late twentieth and early twenty-first centuries scramble to equip students to participate in the emerging Information Age, McIver and his colleagues saw themselves as preparing students for what *was*, regardless of what—in their eyes or anyone else's—*should be*. To do anything less would have been, they thought, irresponsible and impractical.

An even bigger objection raised by the revisionists touches the reformers' indifference to institutionalized racism with its separate-and-unequal dual schools and built-in white dominance. This charge is also undeniably true. The establishment of such a system undermines the sense that the emerging society was more democratic and egalitarian. Blacks undoubtedly benefited from the expanded opportunities that the new system afforded, but those benefits were severely limited by lower funding, poorer facilities, and lower teacher pay. The educational system guaranteed that whites would maintain the upper hand. It must be noted, however, that the politicians and education reformers who created this system fell into two camps: those who aggressively and enthusiastically promoted the separate-and-unequal model, due largely to racist motivations; and those who did not actively promote it but quietly accepted it as the way things were. This latter group included individuals possessed of a wide variety of

perspectives, ranging from those who shared racist ideals but simply did not enunciate them to those who favored social equality but believed that attaching that cause to educational reform would be to doom educational reform to failure. McIver falls somewhere in this group. The subtleties of his attitudes on race are a bit difficult to pin down. It is certain that he did not publicly espouse or promote racial hatred, nor did he include such sentiments in his personal correspondence. It is also true, however, that he did not campaign for full racial equality. Nor did he attempt to open his college up to black women or try to hire black faculty members. And he did perpetuate some racial stereotypes, as when he mimicked a black person's manner of speech in an anecdote or when he teased college valet "Zeke" Robinson about liking watermelons. On the other hand, he ignored or diplomatically turned away from racist proposals or diatribes. He also willingly taught normal institutes for blacks as well as whites, openly supported Aycock's and others' efforts to make sure that *all* school districts received equal tax revenue, spoke at black colleges such as Hampton and worked with their administrators (such as Frissell) to promote their well-being, and solicited (through the Southern Education Board and General Education Board) private funds for those schools. Indeed, Charlotte Hawkins Brown, the prominent black educator and founder of North Carolina's Palmer Institute, called McIver her "first friend" in the state's educational circles.[14] Whatever his views towards blacks personally, evidence in both words and deeds indicates that he did not give mere lip service to quality education for blacks; he saw it as the just and proper thing to do.

[14] Gilmore, 188.

In the area of attitudes towards women, McIver was clearly ahead of his time. If many of the political and educational reformers sought to establish a new system around the values of white capitalists, they meant white *male* capitalists, and McIver was clearly out of step on that point. He wanted women to have the same educational training as men, to be schooled to the same standards as men, to be regarded as being as intellectually competent as men, and to be given the same range of professional opportunities as men. He was outspoken and clear, both in public and in private, with regard to his stance on changing the lot of women in American society. He demonstrated these ideals in his private life as well, with his choice of Lula Martin, an ardent feminist even as a very young woman, as a mate. He willingly acceded to certain arrangements in their wedding (the omission of the word "obey" and Lula's rejection of a ring as a "badge of slavery"). He treated Lula as a partner rather than a subordinate and supported her pursuit of a career, including the study of medicine. He even used women doctors for his family's medical care. It is clear that McIver made no bones about his unequivocal—and for the day, at times quite radical—support for the advancement of women. If for no other reason, his views on women prevent him from fitting into the mold that the revisionists have cast for the educational reformers of this period.

The question then arises: if Charles McIver was willing to take such an advanced position on women's issues and to fight doggedly and publicly in that area, why was he not willing to speak up on racial equality? Why did he fight for the rights of women but not for blacks? And if he supported equality for women but not blacks, whether due to racism or some other reason, did he not see the intellectual disparity between those two

stances? How could he allow such a philosophical inconsistency to exist in his own thinking?

Part of the answer lies in McIver's own temperament. He was a doer, not a thinker. He was by no means unintelligent, but his intellectual and personal talents did not lie in the ability to construct complex-yet-consistent philosophical frameworks. He was not bothered by contradictions in his thinking, unless they were glaring and immediate, and he did not go looking for them, either. He focused with laser-like intensity on women's education—which he saw as the key to solving other problems with education and general progress in the South—and gave little thought to other matters. He made the advancement of women his cause and then set out single-mindedly to accomplish that goal.

It is likely, though McIver did not state so directly, that the other reason he did not advocate racial equality was that, though he never held office, he had a politician's awareness of what can and cannot be done. He correctly perceived that to promote racial equality in that particular environment would have been to commit political (and perhaps literal) suicide; he would have been ostracized and his pleas for women's education ignored. Rather than doom both causes by linking them together, he pragmatically focused on what could be achieved—the advancement of women's education—and avoided direct advocacy of racial equality.

The educational system that McIver and his fellow reformers established did indeed embody the values of their day. Its segregated character did weave racism into the fabric of southern education. And its emphases on standardization, uniformity, classification, quantification, and measurable productivity did emanate directly from the

industrial values of the day. In fairness, however, as biased and unfair as the system was, it *was* more democratic and egalitarian than the system it replaced, since it destroyed the old southern elite's monopoly on education, advanced educational and professional opportunities for women, and facilitated more educational benefits for blacks than they had ever had before. It should be stressed, too, that the New South educational reform movement did not give rise to "Jim Crow" and the curtailment of the rights of blacks; the inverse is true—the former was affected and infected by the latter.

And with regard to the educational reformers' embrace of industrial age values, we must ask whether there has ever been created an educational system that did not embody the values of its day? Even revisionist LeLoudis admits that "schools are key institutions for framing and passing along from one generation to the next the values and ethical principles that shape our lives together."[15] He and other revisionists call for the establishment of schools that focus on individualism, foster creativity, are not bound by rigid classroom settings or schedules, and are tailored to meet the students' particular talents and needs. But are these not characteristics that resonate with the emerging Information Age? If so, then the revisionists are doing what McIver and the other reformers did a century ago; rather than envisioning a system that will transcend the day, they are calling for one that will serve the particular age in which they find themselves.

In the end, however one might see New South educational reform as a whole, it is best to evaluate Charles McIver in the context of what he accomplished rather than what he did not. He set out to establish graded schools throughout the South and he did that;

---

[15] James L. LeLoudis, *Schooling the New South* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1996), 234.

he purposed to expand educational opportunities for women and he did that. Perhaps it is fairer to laud him for winning a piece of the pie than to criticize him for not winning the whole thing. It is also important to recognize that McIver knew the world in which he lived and how its politics worked. Even in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, the astute knew that politics—even on a broad level—was the art of the possible. Perhaps that is one of the best reasons that the label "educational statesman" fits McIver so well. A statesman determines what can be done given the currents of the day, sets that as his goal, and then sets about to make it happen. Had he lived a half-century later in Greensboro, it is possible that he might have cheered what happened at a certain downtown lunch counter, and his view of the possible might have been greatly expanded.

Selected Bibliography

Manuscript Collections

Charles Duncan McIver Papers. Jackson Library, University of North Carolina at Greensboro, Greensboro, North Carolina.

Edwin Anderson Alderman Papers. Edwin Anderson Alderman Library, University of Virginia, Charlottesville, Virginia.

Lula Martin McIver Papers. Jackson Library, University of North Carolina at Greensboro, Greensboro, North Carolina.

North Carolina State Archives, State Archives Building, Raleigh, North Carolina.

Records of the Woman's Association for the Betterment of Public School Houses in North Carolina. Jackson Library, University of North Carolina at Greensboro, Greensboro, North Carolina.

Southern Historical Collection. Louis Round Wilson Library, University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill, North Carolina.

University Archives. Louis Round Wilson Library, University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill, North Carolina.

Women's Normal Papers. Jackson Library, University of North Carolina at Greensboro, Greensboro, North Carolina.

Government and School Documents

Acts of Assembly, Establishing and Regulating Common Schools in North Carolina, 1853. Raleigh: William W. Holden, 1853.

Annual Report of the Board of School Commissioners of the City of Winston, for the School Year Ending May 23, 1895. Winston: Stewarts' Printing House, 1895.

Annual Report of the Superintendent of Public Instruction of North Carolina, 1868. N.p., n.d.

Annual Report of the Superintendent of Public Instruction of North Carolina, 1878-1880. Raleigh: E. M. Uzzell, 1879-1881.

Annual Reports of the Public Schools of Raleigh Township, Wake County, N.C., 1885-86. Raleigh: E. M. Uzzell, 1886.

Biennial Report of the State Superintendent of Public Instruction of North Carolina, for the Scholastic Years 1881-1904. Raleigh: E. M. Uzzell, 1883-1904.

Catalogue of the Trustees, Faculty, and Students of the University of North Carolina, 1848-49. Fayetteville: Edward J. Hale, 1849.

Catalogue of the Trustees, Faculty, and Students of the University of North Carolina, Raleigh: News Publishing Company, 1876.

Catalogue of the Trustees, Faculty, and Students of the University of North Carolina, at Chapel Hill, Ninety-First Year, 1885-86. Raleigh: Edwards and Broughton, 1886.

Connor, Robert Diggs Wimberly. *The Woman's Association for the Betterment of Public School Houses in North Carolina.* Raleigh: Office of the State Superintendent of Public Instruction, 1905.

Coon, Charles L. *A Statistical Record of the Progress of Public Education in North Carolina, 1870-1906,* [Raleigh]: Office of the State Superintendent of Public Instruction, 1907.

Eighth Annual Catalogue of the North Carolina State Normal and Industrial College Greensboro, N. C., 1899-1900. Greensboro: Jos. J. Stone, 1900.

Fifth Annual Catalogue of the State Normal and Industrial College, Greensboro, N. C., 1896-97. Winston: M. I. and J. C. Stewart, 1896.

Fifth Annual Report of the General Superintendent of Common Schools. N.p.: Holden and Wilson, n.d.

First Annual Catalogue of the State Normal and Industrial School. Greensboro, N.C., 1892-93. Greensboro: C. F. Thomas, n.d.

First Annual Report of the General Superintendent of Common Schools. Raleigh: W. W. Holden, 1854.

Fourth Annual Catalogue of the State Normal and Industrial School, Greensboro, N. C., 1895-96. Winston: M. I. and J C. Stewart, 1896.

Journal of the House of Representatives of the General Assembly of the State of North Carolina, 1887-1891. Raleigh: E. M. Uzzell, 1887-1891.

Laws and Resolutions of the State of North Carolina, 1889. Raleigh: Josephus Daniels, 1889.

Laws and Resolutions of the State of North Carolina, 1891. Raleigh: Josephus Daniels, 1891.

Mayo, Amory Dwight. "The Final Establishment of the American Common School System in North Carolina, South Carolina, and Georgia, 1863-1900." In *Annual Reports of the Department of the Interior. Report of the Commissioner of Education, for the Fiscal Year Ended June 30, 1904*, vol. I: 999-1090. House Documents, vol. 25, no. 5, 58th Congress, 3rd session. Washington: Government Printing Office, 1905.

Mebane, Charles H. *The Woman's Association for the Betterment of Public School Houses in North Carolina.* Raleigh: Office of the State Superintendent of Public Instruction, 1908.

Ninth Annual Catalogue of the North Carolina State Normal and Industrial College, Greensboro, N.C., 1900-1901. Greensboro: C. F. Thomas, n.d.

North Carolina Reports. Vol. 94, February Term, 1886. Raleigh: Nash Brothers, 1909.

Report of the State Board of Examiners for the Two Years Ending January 1, 1905, *together with the Report of the Superintendent of the Colored State Normal Schools for 1904-05.* Raleigh: E. M. Uzzell and Company, 1905.

Report of the Superintendent of Common Schools of North Carolina, for the Year 1859. Raleigh: W. W. Holden, 1860.

Report of the Superintendent of Common Schools of North Carolina, for the Year 1860. Raleigh: John Spellman, n.d.

Report of the Winston Graded Schools for the Year Ending May 17th, 1888. Winston: Stewarts' Job Office, 1888.

Rose, Wickliffe. "The Educational Movement in the South." In *Annual Reports of the Department of the Interior. Report of the Commissioner of Education for the Fiscal Year Ending June 30, 1903,* vol. I: 359-90. House Documents, vol. 25, no. 5, 58th Congress, 2nd session. Washington: Government Printing Office, 1904.

Second Annual Catalogue of the State Normal and Industrial School, Greensboro, N.C., 1893-4. Greensboro: C.F. Thomas, n.d.

Seventh Annual Catalogue of the North Carolina State Normal and Industrial College, Greensboro, N.C., 1898-9. Greensboro: Jos. J. Stone, 1899.

Sixth Annual Catalogue of the State Normal and Industrial College, Greensboro, N.C., 1897-8. Raleigh: Edwards and Broughton, 1898.

Special Report of the General Superintendent of Common Schools of North Carolina, 1854. Raleigh: W.W. Holden, 1855.

Third Annual Catalogue of the State Normal and Industrial School, Greensboro, N.C., 1894-5. Greensboro: C.F. Thomas, n.d.

Weeks, Stephen B. "The Beginnings of the Common School System in the South; or, Calvin Henderson Wiley and the Organization of the Common Schools of North Carolina." In *Annual Reports of the Department of the Interior. Report of the Commissioner of Education, for the Fiscal Year Ended June 30, 1897,* vol. 2: 1379-1474. House Documents, vol. 22, no5, 55th Congress, 2nd session. Washington: Government Printing Office, 1898.

Directories and Biographical Dictionaries

Alumni History of the University of North Carolina, 1795-1924. Chapel Hill: General Alumni Association of the University of North Carolina, 1924.

Ashe, Samuel A'Court, et al., eds. *Biographical History of North Carolina.* 8 vols. Greensboro: Charles L. Van Noppen, 1905-17.

Dictionary of American Biography. 10 vols. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1929-30.

Powell, William S., ed. *Dictionary of North Carolina Biography.* 7 vols. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1979.

Newspapers and Periodicals

Africo-American Presbyterian

Alamance Gleaner (Graham)

Biblical Recorder (Raleigh)

Bulletin of the North Carolina Department of Agriculture

Carolina Messenger (Durham)

Carolina Watchman (Salisbury)

Charlotte Observer

Christian Educator (Durham)

Greensboro Patriot

Greensboro News

Greensboro Record

The Land We Love

Morning Post (Raleigh)

New York Sun

North Carolina Education

North Carolina Journal of Education

North Carolina Presbyterian

North Carolina Teacher

Orange Jewel

Review of Reviews

Schoolteacher

Southern Literary Messenger

Star of Zion (Salisbury)

State Chronicle (Raleigh)

State Normal Magazine

Tarboro Southerner

University Magazine

University Monthly

University of North Carolina Record

Weekly Globe (Durham)

Wilson Advance

Conference Proceedings

Minutes of the Seventy-Second Annual Meeting of the Baptist State Convention of North Carolina, Held at Durham N.C., December 9-14, 1902. Raleigh: Edwards and Broughton, 1902.

Proceedings of the Fourth Conference for Education in the South, 1901. Harrisburg, Pa.: Mount Pleasant Press, J. Horace McFarland Company, 1901 .

Proceedings of the Ninth Conference for Education in the South, 1906. Richmond: Executive Committee of the Conference [Times Printing Company], 1906.

Proceedings of the North Carolina Teachers Assembly, 1884. Raleigh: Uzzell and Gatling, 1884.

Proceedings of the North Carolina Teachers Assembly, Fourth Annual Session, 1887. Raleigh: E. M. Uzzell, 1887.

Proceedings of the Second Capon Springs Conference for Education in the South, 1899. N.p., n.d.

Proceedings of the Seventh Conference for Education in the South, 1904. New York: Conference Committee on Publication, 1904.

Books and Articles

Alderman, Edwin A. "The Child and the State." In *Proceedings of the Fifth Conference for Education in the South, 1902,* 55-62. Knoxville, TN: Gaut-Ogden Company, 1902.

—. "Higher Education in the South." In *National Educational Association Journal of Proceedings and Addresses Session of the Year 1895,* pp 979-87. St. Paul, MN: National Educational Association, 1895.

—. " The Life and Work of Dr. Charles D. McIver." *North Carolina Journal of Education* I (December 15, 1906): 4-6.

Anderson, James D. *The Education of Blacks in the South 1865-1935.* Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1988.

Apple, Michael W. *Cultural and Economic Reproduction in Education: Essays on Class Ideology, and the State.* Boston: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1982.

—. *Education and Power.* Boston: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1982.

—. *Ideology and Curriculum.* London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1979.

—. *Teachers and Texts: A Political Economy of Class and Gender Relations in Education.* New York: Routledge, 1988.

—. "Teaching and 'Women's Work': A Comparative Historical and Ideological Analysis." In *Expressions of Power in Education: Studies in Class, Gender and Race,* edited by Edgar B. Gumbert, 29-49. Atlanta: Center for Cross-Cultural Education, 1984.

Arnett, Ethel Stephens. *For Whom Our Public Schools Were Named.* Greensboro: Piedmont Press, 1973.

Baldwin, William H. "The Present Problem of Negro Education, Industrial Education." In *Proceedings of the Second Capon Springs Conference, 1899,* 67-77. N.p., n d.

Barney, Hiram H. *Report on the American System of Graded Free Schools.* Cincinnati: Office of the Daily Times, 1851.

Battle, Kemp Plummer. *History of the University of North Carolina.* 2 vols. Raleigh: Edwards and Broughton Printing Company, 1912.

—. "Old or Extinct Schools of North Carolina, Supplemental." In *Biennial Report of the Superintendent of Public Instruction, 1898 /99-1899 /1 900,* 428 -43. Raleigh: Edwards and Broughton and E. M. Uzzell, 1900.

—. "Struggle and Story of the Re-Birth of the University." *University Magazine* 17 (June 1900): 305-21.

Berkeley, Kathleen C. "'Ladies Want to Bring About Reform in the Public Schools': Public Education and Women's Rights in the Post-Civil War South." *History of Education Quarterly* 24 (Spring 1984): 45 -58.

Bledstein, Burton J. *The Culture of Professionalism: The Middle Class and the Development of Higher Education in America.* New York: W. W. Norton, 1976.

Bode, Frederick A. *Protestantism and the New South: North Carolina Baptists and Methodists in Political Crisis, 1894-1903.* Charlottesville: University Press of Virginia, 1975.

Booth, A. E. "Teaching as a Profession." *North Carolina Teacher* 4 (November 1886): 109-12.

Bordin, Ruth. *Women and Temperance: The Quest for Power and Liberty, 1873-1900.* Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1981.

Bowles, Elisabeth Ann. *A Good Beginning: The First Four Decades of the University of North Carolina at Greensboro.* Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1967.

Brooks, Eugene Clyde. "Some Forgotten Educational History." *North Carolina Education 9* (May 1915): 3-4.

—. "Status of the Graded School." *North Carolina Journal of Education* I (February 1907): 5-7.

—. "Women Improving School Houses." *World's Work* 12 (September 1906): 7937.

Brooks, Lucy. "A Day in My School Room." *North Carolina Journal of Education* 2 (December 1907): 10-12.

Buchanan, J. R. *The New Education.* Boston: N.P., 1882.

Burton, Orville Vernon. "The Effects of the Civil War and Reconstruction on the Coming of Age of Southern Males, Edgefield, South Carolina." In *The Web of Southern Social Relations: Women, Family, and Education*, edited by Walter J. Fraser, Jr., R. Frank Saunders Jr., and Jon L. Wakelyn, 204-24. Athens: University of Georgia Press, 1985.

Constitution and By-Laws: Woman's Association for the Betterment of Public School Houses in North Carolina. Greensboro: J. M. Reece, 1902.

Coon, Charles Lee. "The Beginnings of the North Carolina City Schools, 1867-1887." *South Atlantic Quarterly* 12 (July 1913): 235-47.

—, ed. *Public Education in North Carolina: A Documentary History, 1790-1840.* 2 vols. Raleigh: Publications of the North Carolina Historical Commission, Edwards and Broughton Printing Company, 1908.

Cooper, John Milton. *Walter Hines Page: The Southerner as American, 1855-1918.* Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1977.

Cremin, Lawrence A. *The Transformation of the School: Progressivism in American Education, 1876-1957.* New York: Vintage Books, 1964.

Curry, Jabez Lamar Monroe. *A Brief Sketch of George Peabody and a History of the Peabody Education Fund through Thirty Years.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1898.

Dabney, Charles William. "The Public School Problem in the South." *Proceedings of the Fourth Conference for Education in the South, 1901*, 39-64. Harrisburg, PA: Mount Pleasant Press, J. Horace McFarland Company, 1901.

—. *Universal Education in the South.* 2 vols. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1936.

Dale, George W. "About Normal Colleges." *North Carolina Teacher 5* (February 1888): 243-44.

Daniels, Frank A. "'The New South." *University Monthly 2 (*April 1883): 99—110.

Daniels, Josephus. *Editor in Politics.* Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1941.

—. "The Progress of Southern Education." In *Proceedings of the Sixth Conference for Education in the South, 1903*, 142-55. N.p., n.d.

—. *Tar Heel Editor.* Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1939.

Dean, Pamela. "Learning to be New Women: Campus Culture at the North Carolina Normal and Industrial College." *North Carolina Historical Review* 68 (July 1991): 286-306.

Desmond, William J. "The Evolution of the Educator." *North Carolina Teacher* 7 (January 1890): 247-48.

Dickinson, J. W. "Results of Methods Teaching." In *The Addresses and Journal of Proceedings of the National Educational Association, Session of the Year 1880,* 95-102. Salem, Ohio: National Educational Association, 1880.

Diehl, Carl. *Americans and German Scholarship, 1770-1870.* New Haven: Yale University Press, 1978.

Drake, William E. *Higher Education in North Carolina before 1860.* New York: Carlton Press, 1964.

DuBois, W. E. B. *The Education of Black People,* edited by Herbert Aptheker. Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 1973.

Durden, Robert E. *The Climax of Populism: The Election of 1896.* Lexington: University of Kentucky Press, 1965.

Edmonds, Helen G. *The Negro and Fusion Politics in North Carolina, 1894-1901.* New York: Russell and Russell, 1973.

Eklof, Ben. *Russian Peasant Schools: Officialdom, Village Culture, and Popular Pedagogy, 1861-1914.* Berkeley: University of California Press, 1986.

Escott, Paul D. *Many Excellent People: Power and Privilege in North Carolina, 1850-1900.* Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1985.

Forney, E. J., Fodie Buie, and Emily Semple Austin. *Leaves from the Stenographers' Notebook.* Greensboro, North Carolina: Harrison Printing Company, n. d.

Fosdick, Raymond B. *Adventure in Giving: The Story of the General Education Board, A Foundation Established by John D. Rockefeller.* New York: Harper and Row, 1962.

Foushee, Alexander Roundtree. *Reminiscences: A Sketch and Letters Descriptive of Life in Person County in Former Days.* Roxboro, N.C.: The Seeman Printery, 1921.

The General Education Board: An Account of Its Activities, 1902-1914. New York: General Education Board, 1915.

Gibbs, Warmoth T. *History of the North Carolina Agricultural and Technical College.* Dubuque, Iowa: Wm. C. Brown Book Company, 1966.

Gobbel, Luther L. *Church-State Relationships in Education in North Carolina since 1776.* Durham: Duke University Press, 1938.

Goodwyn, Lawrence. *Democratic Promise: The Populist Movement in America.* New York: Oxford University Press, 1976.

Grumet, Madeleme R. *Bitter Milk: Women and Teaching.* Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 1988.

Hamilton, Joseph Gregoire de Roulhac. *North Carolina since 1860.* A History of North Carolina, vol 3. Chicago: Lewis Publishing Company, 1919.

Hamlin, Charles Hunter. *Ninety Bits of North Carolina Biography.* New Bern, N.C.: Owen G. Dunn Company, 1946.

Harlan, Louis R. *Separate and Unequal: Southern School Campaigns and Racism in the Southern Seaboard States, 1901-1915.* New York: Atheneum, 1968.

Highsmith, Edwin M. "State Normal School Idea in North Carolina." *Meredith College Quarterly Bulletin,* series 7 (November 1923): 4-38.

Hill, Walter B. "Negro Education in the South." *Proceedings of the Sixth Conference for Education in the South, 1903,* 206-17. N.p., n.d.

Hoffmann, Nancy. *Woman's "True" Profession: Voices from the History of Teaching.* Old Westbury, NY: Feminist Press, 1981.

Holder, Rose Howell. *McIver of North Carolina.* Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1957.

Johnson, Guion Griffis. *Ante-Bellum North Carolina, A Social History.* Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1937.

Kaestle, Carl F. *Pillars of the Republic: Common Schools and American Society, 1780-1860.* New York: Hill and Wang, 1983.

Katz, Michael B. *Reconstructing American Education.* Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1987.

Knight, Edgar W., ed. *A Documentary History of Education in the South before 1860.* 5 vols. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1950.

—. *Public School Education in North Carolina.* Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1916.

Kousser, J. Morgan. "Progressivism—For Middle-Class Whites Only: North Carolina Education, 1880-1910." *Journal of Southern History* 46 (May 1980): 169-94.

Lathrop, Virginia Terrell. "Alumnae for 'School Betterment,' 1902." *Alumni News: The University of North Carolina at Greensboro* 60 (Spring 1972): 10- 13, 22.

—. *Educate a Woman: Fifty Years at the Woman's College of the University of North Carolina.* Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1942.

Lefler, Hugh Talmage. *History of North Carolina.* 4 vols. New York: Lewis Historical Publishing Company, 1956.

Lefler, Hugh Talmage and Albert Ray Newsome. *North Carolina: The History of a Southern State.* Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1973.

LeLoudis, James L . "School Reform in the New South: The Woman's Association for the Betterment of Public School Houses in North Carolina, 1902-1919." *Journal of American History* (March 1983): 886-909.

—. *Schooling the New South.* Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1996.

Link, William. *The Paradox of Southern Progressivism, 1880-1930.* Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1992.

Logan, Frenise. "The Legal Status of Public School Education for Negroes in North Carolina, 1877-1894." *North Carolina Historical Review* 32 (July 1955): 346-57.

Malone, Dumas. *Edwin A. Alderman: A Biography.* New York: Doubleday, Doran and Company, 1940.

Mayo, Amory Dwight. "The New Education and Col. Parker." *Journal of Education* 18 (August 1883): 84-85.

A Memorial to *the General Assembly of North Carolina from the State Teachers Assembly Praying the Establishment of a North Carolina Normal College for Training the Men and Women of the State Who Are Preparing to Teach Together with the Proposed Act to Establish a Normal College.* N.p., n.d.

Miller, Howard. *The Revolutionary College: American Presbyterian Higher Education, 1707-1837.* New York: New York University Press, 1976.

Mitchell, Theodore R. "From Black to White: The Transformation of Educational Reform in the New South, 1890-1910." *Educational Theory* 39 (Fall 1989): 337-50.

Moore, Charles H. *Report of Professor Charles H. Moore, State Inspector of Negro Schools.* Durham: Press of the Durham Reformer, n.d.

Murray, Percy. *History of the North Carolina Teachers Association.* N.p., n.d.

Nathans, Sydney. *Quest for Progress: The Way We Lived in North Carolina, 1870-1920.* Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press for the North Carolina Department of Cultural Resources, 1983.

Neverdon-Morton, Cynthia. "Self-Help Programs as Educative Activities for Black Women in the South, 1895-1925: Focus on Four Key Areas." *Journal of Negro Education* 51 (Summer 1982): 207-21.

Noble, Marcus Cicero Stephens. *A History of the Public Schools of North Carolina.* Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1930.

Page, Walter Hines. "The School That Built a Town." In *The Rebuilding of Old Commonwealths, Being Essays towards the Training of the Forgotten Man in the Southern States,* 49-103. New York: Doubleday, Page and Company, 1902.

Patton, James W. "Southern Reaction to the Ogden Movement." In *Education in the South: Institute of Southern Culture Lectures at Longwood College, 1959,* edited by R.C. Simonini Jr., 63-82. Richmond: Cavalier Press, 1959.

Poland, C. Beauregard. *Twentieth Century Statesmen: North Carolina's Political Leaders, 1900-1901.* N.p., n.d.

Prather, H. Leon, Sr. *Resurgent Politics and Educational Progressivism in the New South: North Carolina, 1890-1913.* Rutherford, NJ.: Fairleigh Dickinson University Press, 1979.

Purvis, J. "Women and Teaching in the Nineteenth Century." In *Education and the State: Politics, Patriarchy and Practice,* edited by Robert Dade, 359-75. Sussex: The Falmer Press, 1981.

Raymond, Zillah. *Then and Now, or Hope's First School.* Wilmington, N.C.: Jackson and Bell, 1883.

Redcay, Edward E. *County Training Schools and Public Secondary Education for Negroes in the South.* Washington, D.C.: The John F. Slater Fund, 1935.

Reese, William J. *Power and the Promise of School Reform: Grass-Roots Movements during the Progressive Era.* Boston: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1986.

Robinson, T.M. "What Can a Woman Do to Earn a Living?" *State Normal Magazine* 3 (February 1899): 391-94.

Rogers, Lou. *Tar Heel Women.* Raleigh: Warren Publishing Company, 1949.

Satterfield, Frances Gibson. *Charles Duncan McIver.* Atlanta: Ruralist Press, Inc., 1942.

Smith Hoke. "Popular Education as the Primary Policy of the South." In *Proceedings of the Fifth Conference for Education in the South, 1902,* 43-51. Knoxville, TN: Gaut-Ogden Company, 1902.

Smith, William C., Viola Boddie, and Mary Settle Sharpe, eds. *Charles Duncan McIver.* Greensboro: J.J. Stone and Company, 1907.

Strayhorn, J.T. "Southern Development." *University Monthly* 2 (January 1883): 19-21.

Taylor, Charles E. *How Far Should State Undertake to Educate? Or, A Plea for the Voluntary System in the Higher Education.* Raleigh: Edwards and Broughton, 1894.

Tyack, David B. "The Tribe and the Common School: Community Control in Rural Education." *American Quarterly* 24 (March 1972): 3-19.

Williams, Charles B. *A History of the Baptists in North Carolina.* Raleigh: Edwards and Broughton, 1901.

Wilson, Philip Whitwell. *Unofficial Statesman—Robert C. Ogden.* Garden City, NY: Doubleday, Page and Company, 1924.

Winston, George T. "The First Faculty: Its Work and Its Opportunity." *University Record*, vol. 1, no. 2 (1901-2): 18-31.

—. "Industrial Training in Relation to the Negro Problem." In *Proceedings of the Fourth Conference for Education in the South, 1901*, 103-107. Harrisburg, PA: Mount Pleasant Press, J. Horace McFarland Company, 1901.

—. "The University of To-Day." *University Magazine* 13 (March-April 1894): 325-28.

Woodward, C. Vann. *Origins of the New South, 1877-1913*. Vol. 2, *A History of the South*. Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1951.

Wright, Gavin. *Old South, New South: Revolutions in the Southern Economy since the Civil War*. New York: Basic Books, 1986.

Dissertations, Theses, and Unpublished Papers

Ayers, Edward. "Toward a New Synthesis of the New South." Paper presented at the annual meeting of the Organization of American Historians, Reno, Nevada, March, 1988.

Butchart, Ronald E. "Educating for Freedom: Northern Whites and the Origins of Black Education in the South, 1862-1875." Ph.D. dissertation, State University of New York at Binghamton, 1976.

Dean, Pamela. "Covert Curriculum: Class and Gender at a New South Woman's College, 1892-1910." Ph.D. dissertation, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, 1994.

Ford, Paul Henry Michael. "Calvin H. Wiley and the Common Schools of North Carolina, 1850-1869." Ph.D. dissertation, Harvard University, 1960.

Harris, Robert Chalmers. "Development of the Rural Public Schools in Cabarrus County." M.A. thesis, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, 1932.

Hurt, Alfred Burman. "Educational Development of Ashe County." M.A. thesis, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, 1929.

King, William Eskridge. "The Era of Progressive Reform in Southern Education: The Growth of Public Schools in North Carolina, 1885-1914." Ph.D. dissertation, Duke University, 1970.

Pippin, Kathryn A. "The Common School Movement in the South, 1840-1860." Ph.D. dissertation, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, 1977.

Prince, David Hyde. "A History of the State Department of Public Instruction in North Carolina, 1852-1956." Ph.D. dissertation, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, 1959.

Shreve, Clark Gerow. "The Development of Education to 1900 in Wilson, North Carolina." M.A. thesis, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, 1941.

Steelman, Joseph Flake. "The Progressive Era in North Carolina, 1884-1917." Ph.D. dissertation, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, 1955.

Thompson, Samuel Hunter. "The Legislative Development of Public School Support in North Carolina." Ph.D. dissertation, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, 1936.

Todd, Irma. "The Historical Development of the North Carolina Teachers Association." M.A. thesis, North Carolina Agricultural and Technical University, 1952.

Westin, Richard B. "The State and Segregated Schools: Negro Public Education in North Carolina, 1863-1923." Ph.D. dissertation, Duke University, 1966.