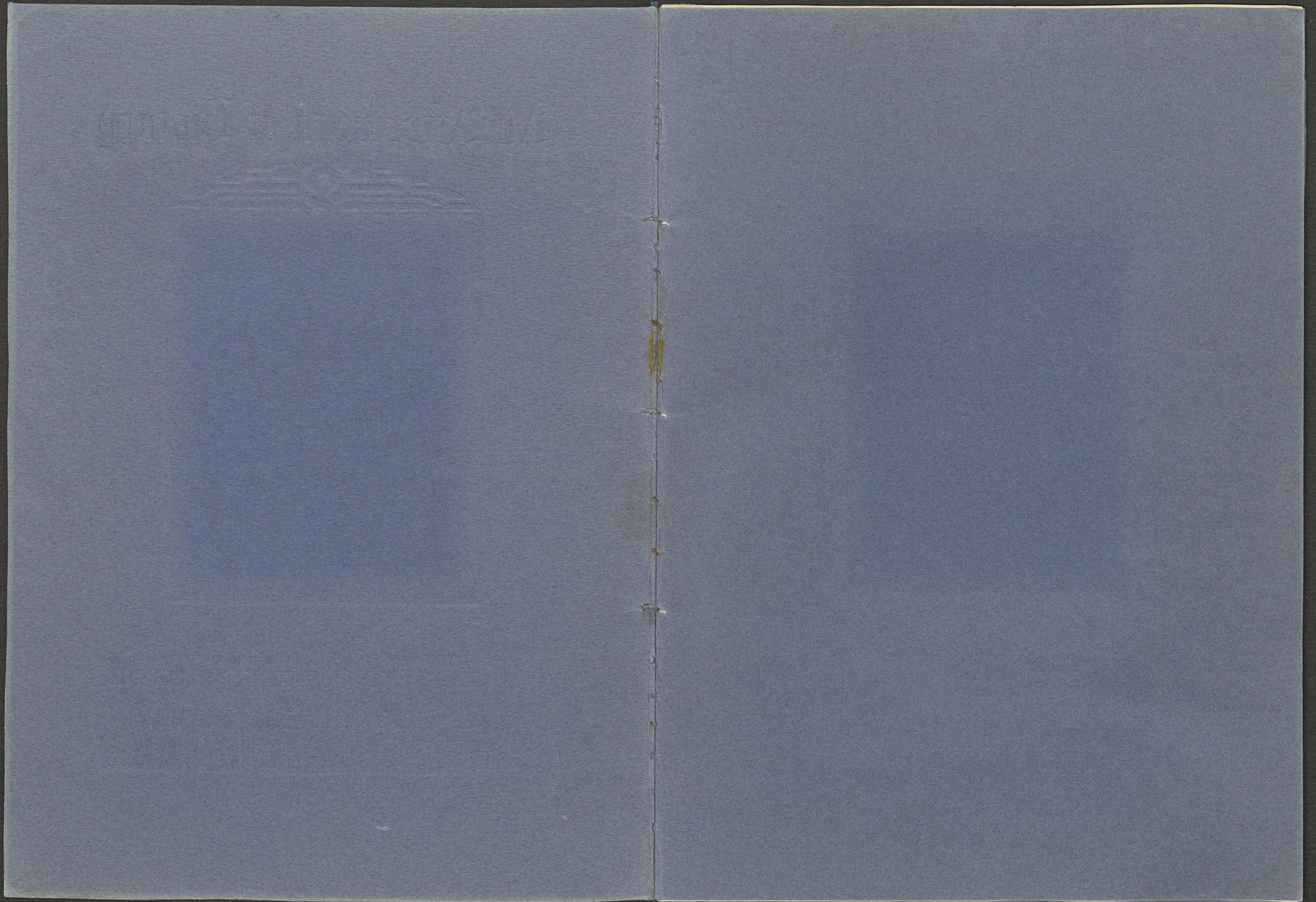


# An Aftermath of History



"While the flowers bloom,  
in the meadow the name of  
the fair maiden shall endure."



# Flora Macdonald College

IN THE HEART OF THE ANCIENT SETTLEMENT OF THE FAMOUS OLD SCOTTISH  
CLANSMEN IN NORTH CAROLINA THAT IS THE RECOGNIZED CENTER  
OF THE SCOTS IN AMERICA—A LEADER WHO FACED THE ALMOST  
HOPELESS TASK OF SPREADING A NEW CREED OF  
EDUCATION AND OF PROGRESS, AND  
HOW HE SUCCEEDED

By  
**RALPH W. PAGE**



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# Flora Macdonald College

By RALPH W. PAGE

**I**F TOMORROW the Western Union, the modern Paul Revere, were to sound the call to arms on the waters of the Lumber and Cape Fear rivers in North Carolina, and the roll of the volunteers were called in the open squares at Carthage and Fayetteville, the sergeant could use as his list the ancient muster of the clans at Cross Hill on February 15, 1776. Donald Macdonald and Alexander MacLeod, John MacKenzie and Murdock MacCaskill would answer now as then. Reading the old chronicle of the days when Flora Macdonald of Milton, the heroine of Skye and the savior of Charles Stuart, last crowned king of Scotland, rallied the remnants of the veterans of Preston and Culloden and the great clan Colla to the sound of the pibroch under the famous mulberry tree at Carthage to march in their last tartan array for the glory of King George, a resident of the region has a feeling that he knows every character—every captain and every private. Why, they are his neighbors! Even the houses, and the roads, and the landmarks are the same—are inhabited by the same families.

For until the last decade there has come no change over this ancient Highland settlement. Spreading out from Fayetteville through a country of innumerable streams and great pine forests, the sturdy sons of Scotland's last battle established a frugal and hardy civilization around their churches of Bethel and Bethesda before the American Revolution. They established their cotton fields and their whiskey stills, their pioneer cabins and their independence, and there they stayed, as vigorous and as religious and as ignorant and as poor a population as, perhaps, could be found on the Atlantic seaboard, nevertheless the old Scotch love of learning still burned in their hearts.

## THE SCOTTISH CENTER OF AMERICA

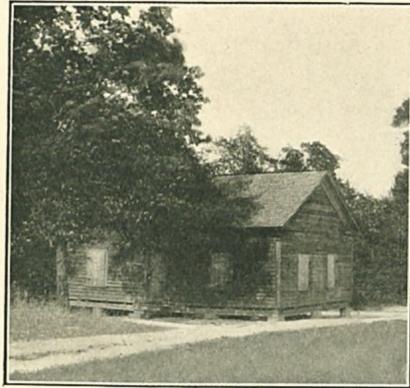
With them they had brought the splendid traditions and legends of their race, and it is not an exaggeration to say that in many respects they were the strongest and purest element in our population. Their inheritance showed no weakness in the strain. They were proud and they were fighters, every man of them. Out of their slim means they disbursed a Mosaic hospitality and displayed a rugged contempt of all outside help and opinion. They were the recognized center and seat of the Scots in America.

Thus the Civil War found them. Never had a Scot lacked enthusiasm for a fight and these Cape Fear Scots were true to their breeding. Into this great conflict between the states they put all of their heart and soul—their money and their men, and lost. Defeated, but not disheartened, they came back to their land, for that was practically all that remained—probably the poorest community on the eastern coast. Nevertheless, in some fashion they maintained their churches in which an educated minister preached to them once a month—sometimes not so often. Men, women and

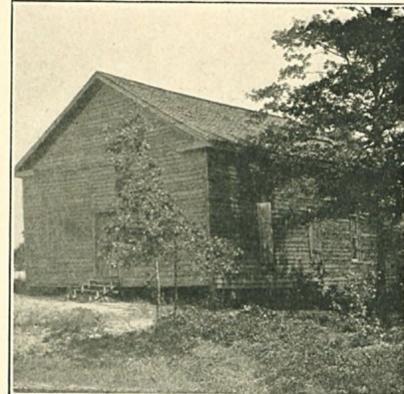
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THE PUBLIC SCHOOL  
AT ANTIOCH (1895)  
FIVE MILES NORTH  
OF RED SPRINGS



THE PUBLIC SCHOOL  
AT RED SPRINGS  
(1895)



THE PUBLIC SCHOOL AT PHILADELPHUS (1895)  
FIVE MILES SOUTH OF RED SPRINGS

*"Alongside of every church the children found a school house, a ramshackle shanty of one room, with sashless windows and unlimited ventilation"*

children came to church in ox carts and springless farm wagons—many of them coming from long distances and over rough roads—but they came. Alongside of every church the children found a school house. True it was only a ramshackle shanty of one room, with no windows, unlimited ventilation and presided over by a poorly trained and poorly paid female, nevertheless this group of a church and a school house was to the people themselves and to all the world a sign and a symbol of the inerradicable longing in the heart of every true Scot for a place to worship and a place to learn.

An amazing change has come over the region within twenty years. For the careful student it is a complete and satisfactory demonstration of three things: First, the obvious proposition that the welfare, as well as the happiness, of a community depends upon the education of its children, particularly the girls; secondly, that,

[ 4 ]

lacking government agencies, this requires in every country neighborhood a Napoleonic leader; and that the benefits derived from the political press and our present political system are precisely none at all. A real leader is confronted at the very beginning with the stink of a partisan county government and the creed of partisan politicians. This creed is to the effect that the people are the best in the world, the county the best in the world, conditions the best in the world, of which consummate perfection he, the politician, is the source and pinnacle.

#### THE COMING OF A LEADER

Just twenty years ago there came riding into this pine clad country of the Macs a leader. The Rev. C. G. Vardell arrived at Red Springs, in North Carolina. He found the "Red Springs Academy," a burlesque on Uncle Tom's Cabin. The neighboring districts of Philadelphus and Antioch boasted twin institutions of equal splendor and learning.

He was depressed with the spectacle, familiar those days in many other places in the South, of the daughters of our purest stock growing up in ignorance and darkest provincialism, alike untrained for affairs and oblivious of the finer shades of life provided by art and music, literature and history. Splendid material was wasting on the dreamy waters of the Cape Fear.



REV. C. G. VARDELL, D.D.  
President

*"Just twenty years ago there came riding into this pine clad country of the Macs—a leader"*

He went out among the elders of the Presbytery, stern, God-fearing men, whose prime virtue was conservatism, preaching a doctrine to bear great fruit: that the most desirable thing in the world was a cultured Christian woman; that men have the making of civilization, but that women have the making of men; that the chief elements in any community are its homes and its primary schools; that they are made by women; that no State which will educate its mothers need ever fear for its future; that it was the bounden duty of the people to give the girls the best there was in the world to offer, and that this must be for a price so small as to be within the reach of all; that then they would behold these same girls build the primary schools and the homes of their husbands and children. For this purpose he called upon them to build a school for young women.

[ 5 ]



THE FOUR THOUSAND DOLLAR INVESTMENT  
First Building of Flora Macdonald College (1896)

*"For the elders out of their slim funds and grave doubts contributed the lordly sum of four thousand dollars for the establishment of a College and Conservatory of Music"*

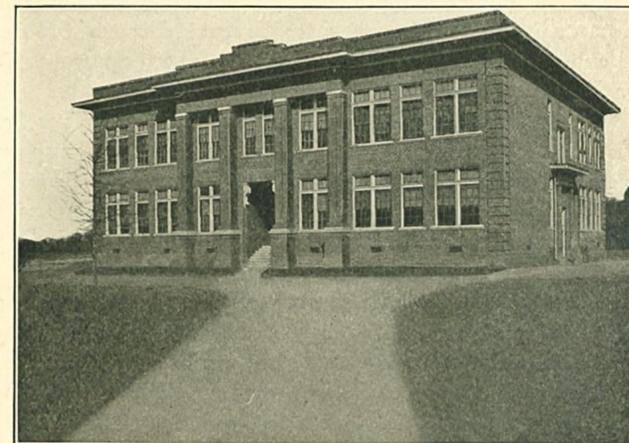
ACCOMPLISHING THE IMPOSSIBLE

A more hopeless task can hardly be imagined. A more necessary one never existed in the old North State. And I venture to say that the debt owed by the state and the Nation to this obscure apostle of light will never be even recorded, not to mention paid. To tell the grandsons of the clansmen who fought and died at Fal-

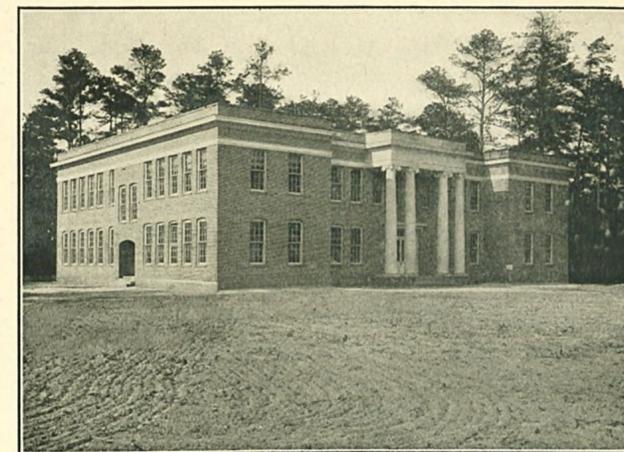


*"The meagre beginnings, the conditions of '96, seemed a myth. The women of the section, graduated from the modest halls of the college, had revolutionized the school—compelled its proper structure"*

ANTIOCH HIGH SCHOOL (1915)



RED SPRINGS HIGH SCHOOL (1916)



PHILADELPHUS HIGH SCHOOL (1914)

kirk and the veterans of Pickett's charge—the vanguard of individualism and the bulwarks of the Presbyterian Church—that they were condemning their progeny to mediocrity and their inheritance to oblivion was bad enough. To extract a budget from a turnip were child's play in comparison with separating an endowment from the savings of the canny Scot. That such a work, the ABC of even a pretence of a modern government, should be left to a private prophet is another count in the indictment against states' rights and a bedlam of authority. But on the other hand, that the leading position in education has been taken by this section of the country, the very Mecca and headquarters of the training of women for all Scots in America, is a tribute to the splendid quality of personal leadership at times developed under a system of rabid individualism.

For the elders out of their slim funds and grave doubts contributed the lordly sum of four thousand dollars for the establishment of the "Southern Presbyterian College and Conservatory of Music." The faith and steady purpose, the desperate uphill fight, and the difficulties encountered in providing a liberal education, a comprehensive, buoyant, and happy outlook upon life, and a thorough training in the domestic arts to the girls of the region for the nominal cost of \$200 a year apiece, including all expenses, with this microscopic nest egg, are apparent. But he set to work in a small wooden structure at Red Springs, in a location healthful and beautiful, in the very center of the country district, among surroundings familiar to his flock. The results shown today are the vindication of the philosophy and the reward for the great effort.

#### HIS ACHIEVEMENT

The present writer attended the exercises there on May 2nd last. The meagre beginnings, the conditions of '96, seemed a myth. The present school house at Philadelphia was passed on the way. No sign of the decrepit little shanty. Standing back from the road against a background of native forestry stood a modern brick building two stories high, a credit to the architects' and builders' art. Four doric columns adorned the portals, and sixty large windows lighted the classrooms, which bore testimony to Dr. Vardell's power of prophecy. If we had gone no further we would have seen enough to justify his creed and his labors. The women of the section, graduated from the modest halls of the college, had revolutionized the school—compelled its proper structure, themselves overhauled the curriculum, and taken charge of the teaching. From outward view this high school at the cross-roads of a purely agricultural community was the equal of any in Boston or under the shades of Columbia. It is the direct result of another tenet of Dr. Vardell's creed—that girls should be trained in the country. In their hands lies the destiny of country children throughout the land, and it is self-evident that they must be trained where they are, and not shipped off to the gritty paving stones to learn a superficial contempt for their own pastures and homely graces.

The college at Red Springs is not only a school. It is the center of intellectual life in the section. Assembling from every direction came automobiles, old fashioned buggies, and even wagons drawn by the cotton mules, with grandmother enthroned

in state in a rocking-chair surrounded by four generations and the lunch basket. Tethered in the offing was every kind of beast of burden, while gathered for school-breaking was laird and henchman, minister and elder, matron and infant in arms, and the representative of every clan erstwhile in the service of Charles Edward Stuart, hereditary king of Scotland.

#### FLORA MACDONALD COLLEGE

The college itself was a revelation. It was in holiday garb. Pretty girls in quaint costume and happy laughing groups were busy out under the trees and in the corridors planning a festival. Compared with its beginnings the buildings are magnificent. Compared with their needs they are insignificant. There is a broad and ample veranda and the usual classic entrance; a vestibule, reception room, and library beautifully finished in native pine; a three-story rotunda; comfortable quarters for 250 girls; about twenty-five private music rooms with a captive piano in each; a large gymnasium; complete laboratories for chemistry and physics; a separate dining room and kitchen for the study of cooking; a department equipped to teach the mysteries of dressmaking and designing; a steam laundry and a studio; besides dignified executive offices.

To the visitor one of the greatest beauties of it all was outdoors. A natural bowl had been transformed into an amphitheatre. By four o'clock this was filled to overflowing by guests and parents and country people from thirty miles around. Now ensued a scene as sylvan and classic, as full of fairies and old songs as any to be witnessed at Stratford-on-Avon. It was a Shakespearean pageant, a myriad of elves and flowers and spirits of the air—gorgeous costumes from the rialto and the stately court of the Plantagenets, tunics and coats of mail, gabardines and velvet hose, Lincoln green and the gray goose feather. Here was the whole cast of the *Merchant of Venice*, heralded by "Ariel," winding out of the real greenwood, to the soft music of a stringed quartette.

The significance of this stately and artistic performance lies in the fact that from start to finish it was the work of the girls themselves. The gorgeous costumes cost nothing. On closer view magnificent gold necklaces turned out to be cow chains gilded; the cloth of gold was essentially a gunny-sack; the most magnificent baldrick a bedroom fantasy. There were simple country girls come from the humble cottages and the hillside pastures. The most casual observer could see that the very best of our traditional classical education had been provided them. They were most of them proficient performers, as well as appreciative critics of the musical masters.

#### A COLLEGE FOR COUNTRY GIRLS

But the principal value of this country college for country girls is in the thorough and practical training they receive in the essentials of home life. One of the greatest banes of the cotton belt is hog and hominy—is the everlasting enervating succession of fried pork and fried chicken, of fried bread and fried potatoes. Here cooking is taught as an elementary and obvious primary lesson. Food values and costs, preparation and service, proteins, fats, calories are learned as a matter of course. These girls make their own clothes from modern patterns and durable ma-



DEPARTMENT OF DOMESTIC ART

materials, with an eye to beauty and economy. They do not dabble in, they master, the household arts, and, with their songs and laughter, carry back home a practical knowledge of how to live.

I was moved to write the story of this remarkable school because of the two outstanding and striking facts. It not only educates, it trains country girls. It trains them to live and it trains them to make a living. Graduates of the college are in demand all over the South as teachers. They are not only teachers of children—they are builders of schools, and the leading force in many a forgotten community. And even so, it would be of no avail to the rank and file of the country girls if it were expensive. But Dr. Vardell has kept the total cost of a girl's year there down to \$200. This is the crux of the whole business. The other fact is the remarkable hold it has taken upon the Scots in America. It has become a monument to the purpose and the ideals of the sons of the Highlands.

#### THE SCOTS REAL AMERICANS

In these days when we are looking to our defenses and calling the roll of the patriots in our stronghold, to find which of the races of men making up this Republic can be depended upon in time of stress, it is best to turn first of all to those silent in the controversies. It is axiomatic that the silent man is the dangerous man, and that in the last ditch the bridge is held by those long of arm and short of speech.

The United States has come to a cross section in history when it is obliged to take stock of the origin and the affiliations of its citizens. The acid test of World War has brought out the true colors of every European group making up our population. And the highest premium has been placed upon those revealing the white badge of loyalty and courage, undivided faith and readiness to serve.



DEPARTMENT OF DOMESTIC SCIENCE

*"The principal value of the College is the thorough training the girls receive in the essentials of home life"*

In calling such a roll the sturdiest and most reliable of all might almost be forgotten in the muster, so modest are they and so inarticulate. The Highland clansman is the most formidable warrior in the world, the most devoted follower, proudest of his traditions, his family record, and his country. A fair half of this Spartan race are this day citizens of the United States. For centuries the other half has fought the battles of the world. No legion of Cæsar or band of Knights Templars has such a record as these who broke the old guard of Napoleon and whose tartan is familiar in every corner of the world, making history in Africa, India, China, Crimea, Sudan.

It is not only fair but of inestimable value to every true American that the stirring chain of romantic adventure marking the path of the great houses of Macdonald and MacLeod, MacIntosh and MacGregor from Inverness to the heart of America should be inscribed and placed beside the records of the Pilgrims and the Old Dominion. And that while men with anxiety and concern observe such national groups as the German-American and the Irish-American and the illiterate South European burst forth in activities of doubtful benefit to the country, it may be well to lay emphasis upon the movement of the most closely knit of all the races in the country and inquire what Clanranald is doing.

The Highlanders are not a nation. They are forty-five great families, hardly more numerous than the Myrmidons and somewhat more potent. They do not look upon the general traditions of a mother country to be lost by time, but from generation to generation of personal family achievement and custom; and they are at this moment banding together under the ancient colors of their clans in common pur-

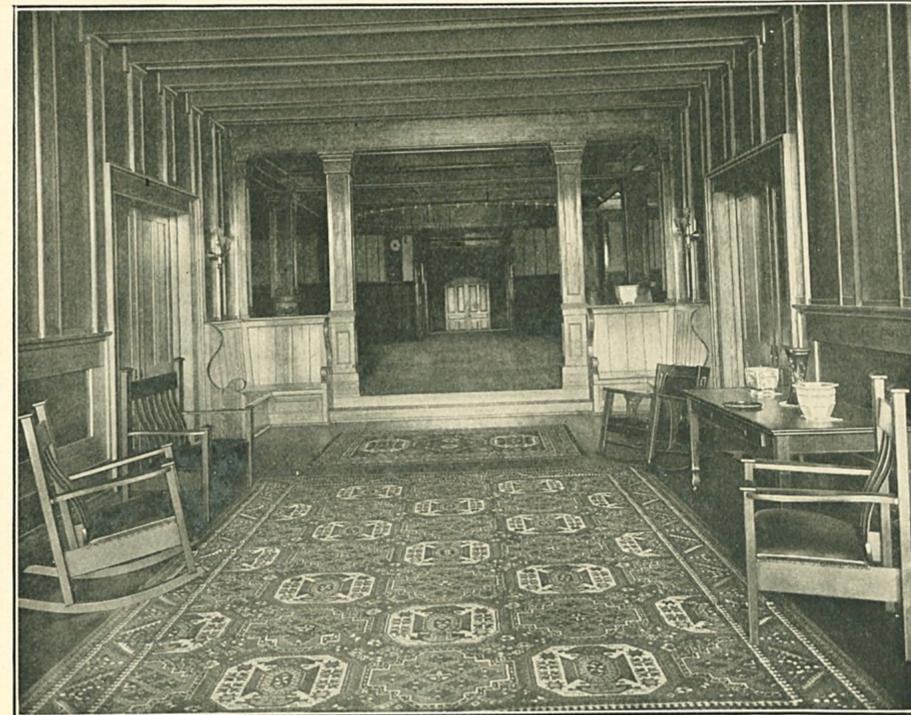
pose to keep alive the warlike memories of their race and to make an everlasting monument to their great heroine.

Their memories are of Flora Macdonald, and their monument is this school to teach the daughters of Albion to be leaders in the land their fathers have given them. These men who will hold the first line when diplomacy fails are not assembling to blow up bridges, to advise the President, to invade Ireland, or to intimidate Congress, but to build America and to add a monument to the treasured legends of Colonial days. Flora Macdonald is the heroine and darling of Scotland. All men know the story of that last and greatest adventure of the Highlands, "that lawless land of romance where deeds of wonderful enterprise were things of daily occurrence and little consequence." How Charles Edward Stuart, hereditary king of Scotland and soldier of fortune, sent the fiery cross through the hills and led the Camerons and the great clan Colla, the Grants of Glenmorrison and the Stuarts of Appin under the meteor flag, wearing the white cockade, against the British Empire.

It is not so well known that this remarkable woman lived four eventful years of her life at Killegray, an estate owned by her husband Allen on the waters of Mountain Creek, not far from Fayetteville, and led the clans in their last great gathering during the Revolution.

But every Scotsman knows it. From that day to this, the sons and daughters of these Highland tribes, scattered over the Union and Canada, taking high place in business and government, have held Fayetteville as their headquarters, and the traditions and memories of Flora Macdonald as their ideal. The whole country surrounding the scene of this dramatic exodus and the last fight is inhabited by the descendants of her followers. Now, one hundred and twenty-six years after their heroine has departed and their claymores sheathed forever, the spirit of their fathers has called them together again, to revive the old spirit. They determined to build an everlasting monument to their great heroine, and establish a common purpose and ideal to rally around and fight for. The leading members of all the clans and societies in the country heralding from the Highlands have joined the movement. Their name is legion. It was fitting that it should have been first inaugurated by the most eminent member of the great Macdonald clan now in America, Dr. James A. Macdonald of Toronto, at a gathering of the clans at the old headquarters in Fayetteville. The Scottish Society of America there held session in May, 1914. And there, in this one-time backward hinge of the new world, they discovered, already established, a goal and purpose worthy of their cause and their ideals. On that day Dr. Vardell's crusade enlisted the full array of the clans, and his college was formally constituted the monument to Flora Macdonald and the contribution of the Scots to the civilization of America. The name was changed to Flora Macdonald College, an endowment of \$1,000,000 was started, and the spirit of the school and the occasion expressed by the president of the Society, Dr. Macdonald, standing at the stump of the veteran oak under whose branches long since the famous heroine reviewed her countrymen in battle array:

"The most worthy memorial of Flora Macdonald would be an educational institution bearing her name, that would offer to hundreds of girls and young women in



THE VESTIBULE AND ROTUNDA

these Scottish communities the advantage of a college education, which Sir Alexander Macdonald, the chieftain of Syke, gave to Flora herself when he sent her for three years to a ladies' college in Edinburgh. Like very many Scottish girls in the Carolinas and Virginia, Kentucky, Tennessee, and Alabama, she inherited good blood,



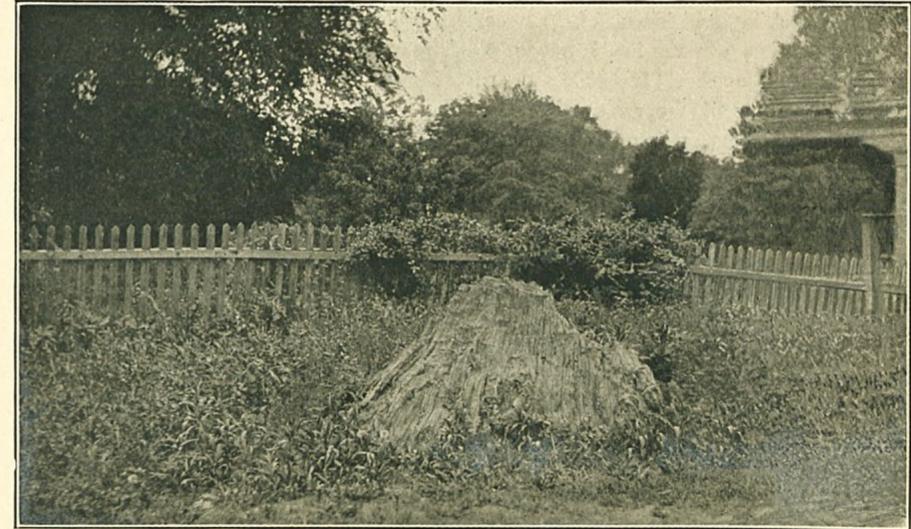
AUDITORIUM STAGE AND ORGAN



SCENES FROM  
THE MERCHANT  
OF VENICE



"A natural bowl had been  
transformed into an  
amphitheatre"



STUMP OF TREE UNDER WHICH FLORA MACDONALD STOOD IN 1776

*"The stump of the veteran oak under whose branches long since the famous heroine reviewed her countrymen in battle array"*

good character, and good ability, but not even a competent portion of worldly wealth. War and the reverses of history have made for these Southern States what similar influences did for our forefathers in the shires and islands of Scotland. And what Macdonald of Syke did for his young kinswoman, our Scottish-American democracy might surely do for generation after generation of our young women, who, like her, have high ambitions and a worthy desire to fit themselves for useful lives and helpful service. Therefore, it is, I propose a Flora Macdonald College.

During the last year I ventured to suggest to the authorities of the Southern Presbyterian College and Conservatory of Music at Red Springs that the name of that excellent institution be changed, that the college be adequately endowed, and that its scope be broadened so as worthily to bear the name of the Scottish heroine, herself a Presbyterian, a college graduate, and a noble example of Christian womanhood. I find that already the executive authorities have taken action. They are planning for a fund to clear off a small debt and to yield an endowment of \$100,000. They are resolved that the present enrollment of nearly three hundred students shall be increased, that the high educational standard be maintained, and that the doors shall be closed to no worthy girl whose only bar is poverty.

The Red Springs College, with its fine buildings and fine surroundings, is chosen because it is in the very heart of the Flora Macdonald settlement, because 80 per cent. of its students are of Scottish ancestry, because its spirit and ideals are worthy, and because its endowment would go, not into unnecessary bricks and mortar, but into personality and training and the unbuilding of character. To express my faith in

this undertaking, and in you of the Scottish people of these states, and in you of the Scottish Society of America, I am prepared, as your president, to add to the endowment, when it reaches \$100,000, a contribution of \$10,000 and still further to seek its assistance until the endowment shall be worthy of the cause, worthy of the Scottish traditions, and worthy of Flora Macdonald College.”

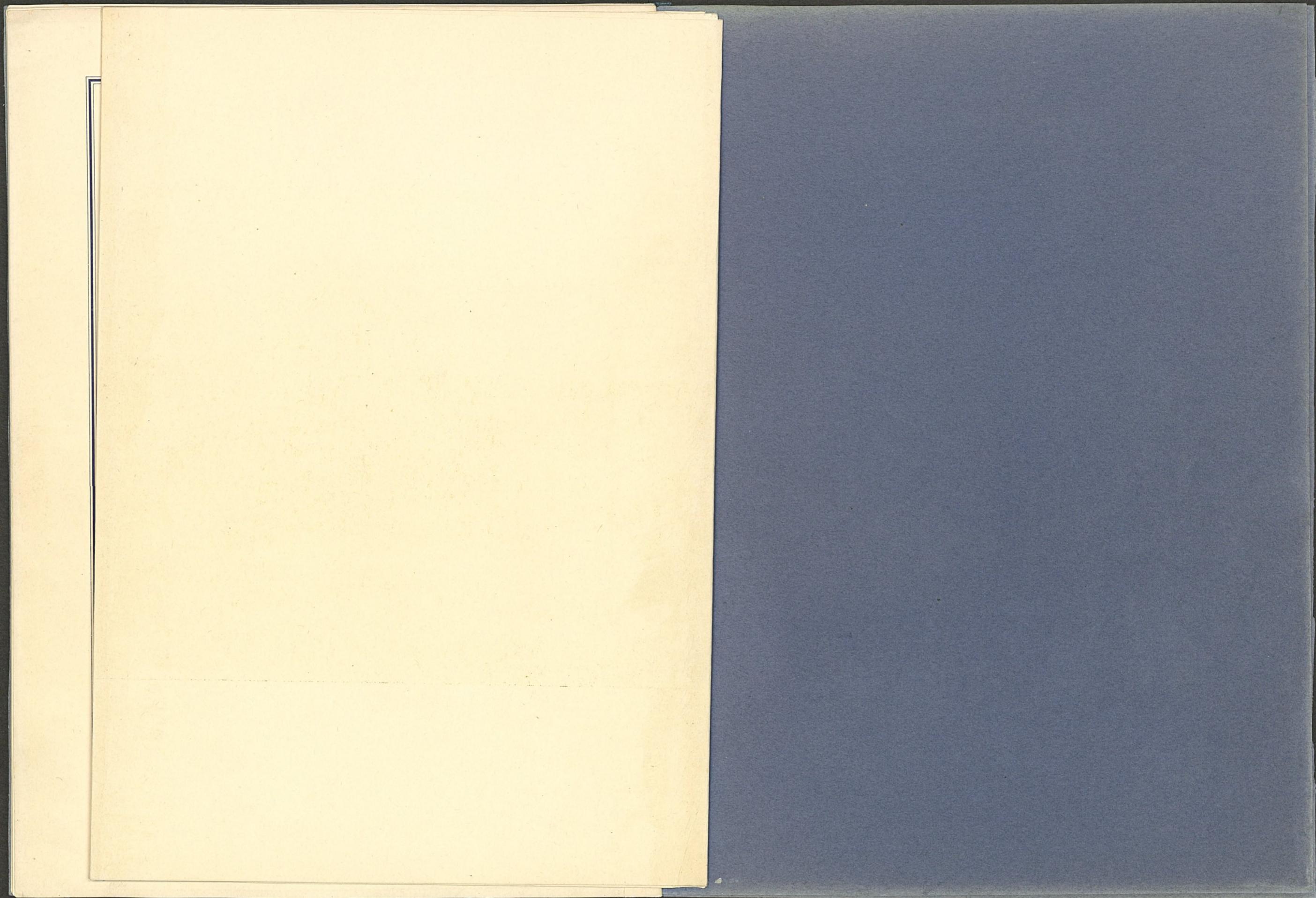
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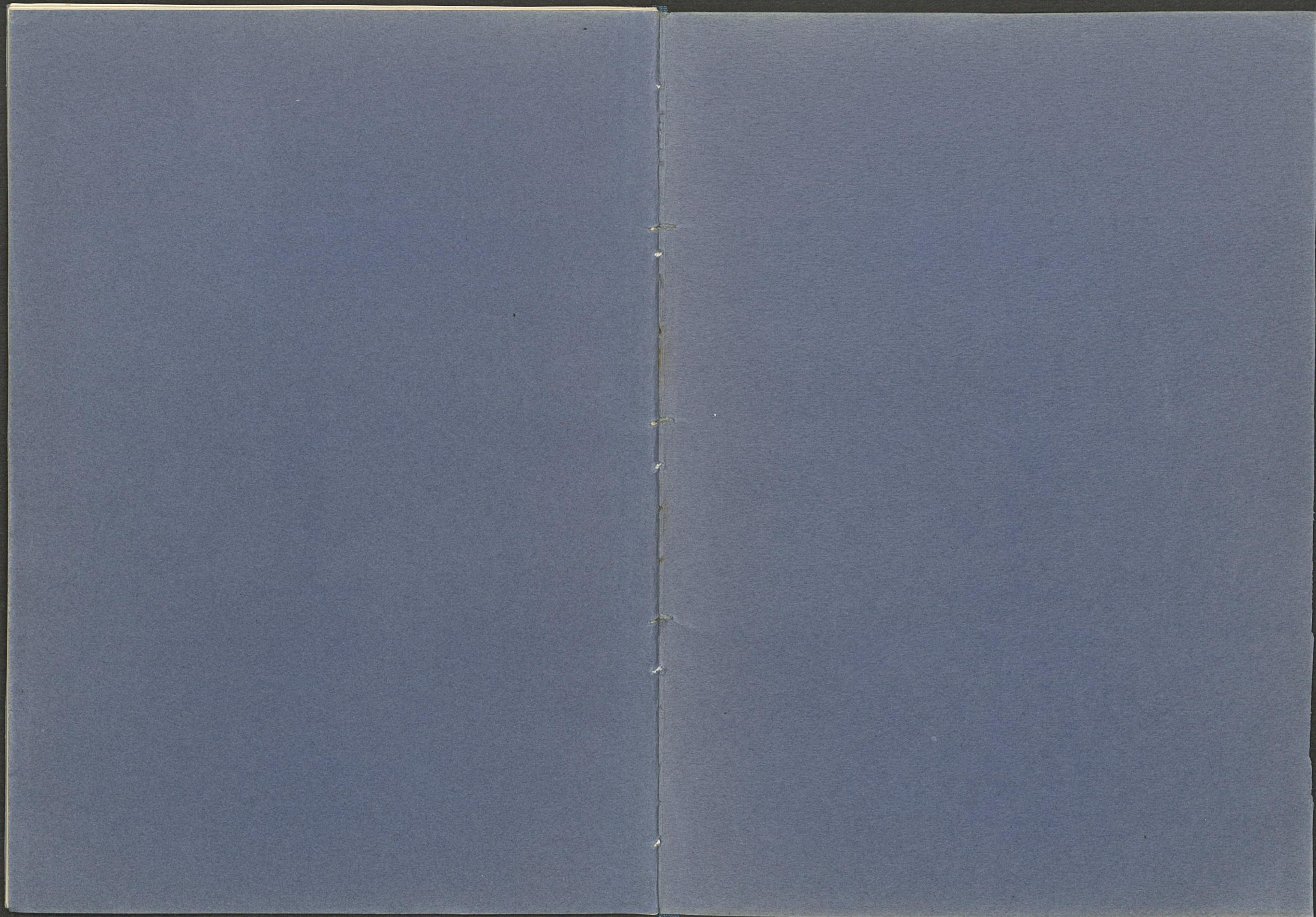
Since Mr. Page's article was written the doctrine preached by Dr. Vardell has borne fruit. The value of the work being done at Flora Macdonald College has met a well deserved recognition—the experimental stage has passed. In 1917 one progressive and forward looking man in North Carolina offered the college \$50,000 if it would raise \$100,000. This has been done and on January 1st, 1920, the college announced an endowment of \$150,000. All of this money except \$4,000 has come from the state of North Carolina and by far the larger part of the \$100,000 from within a radius of 50 miles of the college. This, however, is only the beginning of better things, for the college greatly needs additional funds. Last year 175 girls were refused admission on account of lack of room. These students should be cared for. Flora Macdonald College can absorb and worthily use \$250,000 for buildings and equipment and there should be at least \$500,000 for endowment. This college offers a great opportunity for investment in citizenship and we will heartily welcome any assistance looking to the extension of this most worthy and successful effort. Communications may be addressed to the following:

PRESIDENT, C. G. VARDELL, Red Springs, N. C.  
COLONEL WALTER SCOTT, 495 Broadway, New York City.  
NORMAN E. MACK, Buffalo, N. Y.  
DR. F. E. STEWART, care The H. K. Mulford Company, Philadelphia, Pa.  
HON. A. W. MCLEAN, Washington, D. C.  
MISS MARGARET WOODROW WILSON, Washington, D. C.  
JOSEPHUS DANIELS, Secretary of the Navy.  
HON. H. B. F. MACFARLAND, Washington, D. C.  
WILLIAM INGLE, President, Baltimore Trust Company, Baltimore, Md.  
WILLIAM ADGER LAW, President, First National Bank, Philadelphia, Pa.  
JAMES MACDONALD, W. S., 21 Thistle Street, Edinburgh, Scotland.  
SIR ALEXANDER WENTWORTH BOSVILLE MACDONALD, of the Isles, Thorp Hall, Bridlington, Scotland.  
DR. JOHN GRIBBEL, LL.D., Director Curtis Publishing Company, Philadelphia, Penna.  
R. H. RICE, Executive Secretary, Flora Macdonald College, Red Springs, N. C.



FLORA MACDONALD COLLEGE TODAY  
*"The College itself was a revelation"*







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