

**THE CHURCH AND PRIVATE
SCHOOLS OF
NORTH CAROLINA; A
HISTORICAL STUDY**

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The church and private schools of North Carolina; a historical study by Charles Lee Raper

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GENERAL

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CONTENTS.

Adams, James.....	22
Archibald, Robert.....	59
Arndt, Gottfried.....	61-62
Asheville Female College.....	200-202
The Baptist Female University.....	247
Benthahn.....	63
Bingham School.....	76-84
Caldwell Institute.....	104-106
Caldwell's Log College.....	37-44
Carolina Female College.....	118-119
Caswell Academy.....	75
Catawba College.....	226-228
Charlotte Female Institute.....	124-125
The Chowan Baptist Female Institute.....	219-220
Claremont College.....	240
Clio's Nursery and Science Hall.....	52-56
Cokesbury School and Early Methodism.....	63-67
Crowfield.....	35-37
Church of England, First Schools.....	21-24
Davenport College.....	231-234
Davidson College.....	147 166
Earl, Daniel.....	24
Edenton Academy.....	29 31
Edgeworth Female Seminary.....	108-114
The Eighteenth Century Schools.....	9-71
Elizabeth College.....	246-245
Elon College.....	242-245
The Episcopal Theological School.....	102-103
The Fayetteville Female Seminary.....	120 121
Floral College.....	118
German Schools.....	60-63
General View, 18th Century.....	9-21
Greensboro Female College.....	202-219
Greensboro High School.....	106-108
Griffin, Charles.....	21-23
Guilford College.....	166-174
Hico Academy.....	75
Horner School.....	224-226
Horner and Graves.....	128-129

Some Incorporated Schools.....	67-71
Innes Academy.....	23-24
Introduction.....	3-8
Judson College.....	127-128
Kerr, David.....	59-60
Lenoir College.....	245-246
Littleton Female College.....	240-241
Louisburg Female College.....	234-235
Lutheran Schools.....	60-63
Mashburn.....	23
Moir, James.....	23
Mount Amoena Female Seminary.....	237
Newbern Academy.....	24-29
North Carolina College.....	230-231
Oak Ridge Institute.....	222-224
Oxford Female Seminary.....	220-222
Henry Patillo's Schools.....	50-52
Peace Institute.....	238-240
The Early Presbyterian Schools.....	31-35
Queen's Museum.....	44-50
Robinson, John.....	73-74
Rutherford College.....	235-236
Salem Female Academy.....	84-102
St. Mary's College.....	241-242
St. Mary's School.....	198-200
Statesville Female College.....	235
Thomasville Female College.....	125-127
Trinity College.....	174-198
Wake Forest College.....	132-147
Wallis, James.....	72-73
Warrenton Female College.....	114-116
Warrenton Female Collegiate Institute.....	116-117
Wayne Female College.....	121
Weaverville College.....	228-230
Wesleyan Female College.....	119-120
Wilson Collegiate Institute.....	130
Wilson, John McKemie.....	74-75
Yadkin College.....	121
Zion Parnassus.....	56-58

INTRODUCTION.

To the student of history North Carolina presents many phases and contrasts. It is a queer State, and one often hard to understand. Many classes and distinctions have marked her life. There has been much of politics—often too much. There has been some real industry, though it has sometimes been misguided. There has been intellectual and social culture, but this has been very limited. Indeed it is a State of a number of separate forces, all having something in common, but held together by no very strong ties. The opposition to royal rule and creed early in our existence divorced Church and State; and they have thus remained throughout our history. The country was settled by many different peoples and under various conditions; religious, economic, social and other causes gradually filled up the fertile spots. The English, with a deep love for country aristocracy, with clear distinctions of social classes, with ideas of religion and civil rule of their own, settled and made their mark upon the north-eastern part; the Quakers, of simple and economic, free and peaceful dispositions, opposed to social distinctions, the north-eastern and middle; the Scotch-Irish, of restless and independent natures, made daring and intensely patriotic by the conflicts in their own countries, the south-eastern, along

the Cape Fear, and the section of which Charlotte is now the center; the Moravians, peace-loving and energetic, that which is Forsyth county; the Lutherans and Germans, thrifty and prosperous farmers, opposed to city life and crowded conditions, on both sides of the Catawba and between this and the Yadkin; the French Huguenots as far north as Hillsboro and south as the Pedee river; the Swiss and Palatines at the junction of the Neuse and Trent. All these made their distinct markings upon each section and have shown their life in their various institutions, especially their churches and schools.

The State has never been united on any one great question—on any one idea. Planted as separate elements and under various conditions and faiths, the State is but an aggregation of many distinct forces, all in the main having the same end in view, but endeavoring to attain this in different ways and by different methods. This has been and is especially true in matters pertaining to education. Though the State University has existed more than one hundred years and done her part well, yet the majority of men, and all the women until 1892, have received their education from church and private enterprises; and these have failed to reach hundreds and thousands. For the last forty years or so a public school system has been experimented with; and for the past fifteen or twenty years a good many towns have levied a special tax and had graded schools for nine months in the year. Still many, very many, of the white population cannot read and write. There are now almost as many illiterate whites in this State as in all the other of the original thirteen put together. It is within very recent times that changes in public thought and sentiment on this line have taken place; and a good deal of this is due to the worthy efforts of Dr. Charles D.

McIver, President of the State Normal and Industrial College, and Dr. E. A. Alderman, President of the University of North Carolina. While there is an Agricultural and Mechanical College for the whites at Raleigh, an Agricultural and Mechanical College for the negroes and a Normal and Industrial College for white girls at Greensboro, and several schools of a similar nature for negroes at other points, none of them are old enough to belong properly to history. One State, many church and private schools, and a very poor public system, have fought the battle with ignorance; and fought it nobly, but still there is a great deal to do.

The writer does not want to be misunderstood on this point; and does not say these words from a lack of patriotism and true appreciation of his State's history. He has studied very carefully into the real life of its people. He has seen many phases commendable and great; others far below what they might be. There are latent forces in great abundance, but there has been a decided failure to cultivate them. There is strength of character and intellect as vigorous by nature as any state can supply, but it has rarely been moved to its best. The many and great deeds of valor during the Civil War have demonstrated to the world that many of our people have the stuff of which heroes are made. We are quiet and conservative, yet strong and true; and we have done far more in our life than most people give us credit for. Still we have not done by any means up to the extent of our abilities and opportunities; and in the way of deep interest and enthusiasm in education we have perhaps done least.

As a rule the history of the State has never been written, at any rate with much fullness and accuracy. For the most part the standard histories are only political treatise, and ignore the social, religious and intellectual