

October 5 Marks First Official Registration On Present Campus

"Just see Mr. D. D. Dougherty and sign your name." These were the instructions for registering for enrollment in the Appalachian Training School for Teachers in 1903.

How different they are from registration instructions for 1963. This is not the only aspect of life on this campus that is so very different from what it was sixty years ago.

While 1903 is the year which is denoted as the first year of the existence of ASTC, an earlier date is perhaps more accurate.

In the August 24, 1899, issue of the Watauga Democrat an advertisement appeared announcing that a school was to be opened September 5, 1899. The courses to be offered were common school courses (elementary courses), academic courses (high school courses), and two years of collegiate courses.

Music and Business were also offered, and special attention was to be given to elementary teachers. Tuition was one to three dollars per month.

On September 5, 1899, the Watauga Academy began its first day of classes in an old two room building. At this time there were only elementary classes taught. By Christmas the classes had moved to a

new frame building which was to be known as the Watauga Academy.

A news announcement appeared in the DEMOCRAT on September 7, 1899, stating that the school had opened with flattering prospects and the principals had been optimistic about its future.

On January 15, 1903, another news bulletin appeared in the papers. It stated that Watauga Academy was certainly booming. One hundred twenty-three answered the roll call on Monday (January 11) when the mercury was hovering uncomfortably near the zero point.

In the February 19, 1903, edition of the DEMOCRAT there was an editorial commending the formation of the proposed Newland Bill—the bill was a request for a state institution.

This statement appeared in the article: "We predict that teachers from all over the state will flock here to spend the summer months in the school in preference to attending the same kind of school in Raleigh or Greensboro."

The Newland Bill did pass and Watauga Academy became Appalachian Training School.

On October 5, 1903 a grand total of 273 students visited Mr. D. D. Dougherty, signed their

names to the register, and paid their tuition.

Some students signed pledges agreeing to teach for two years in North Carolina. By this, their tuition fees were paid by the State.

The campus was quite different from what it is today. Since there were no dormitories, the students had to find residence in homes in Watauga County. The one building on campus, a two-story frame structure, served as both a classroom building and administration building.

There were two buildings under construction at this time. One was a brick Administration building which is now used as the business education building. The other was a frame building which housed one hundred girls. This building stood where the hospital is today.

This one lone building and the two partial constructions constituted the entire campus for the 273 students and five faculty members in 1903.

The range of courses offered was limited by the small faculty. Faculty members were B. B. Dougherty and D. D. Dougherty. They served as both administrators and teachers. Maude Harris taught English and French, W. M. Francum taught history and geography,

and Margaret B. Khes taught music and art.

This composed the entire faculty. Julia Hardin was not actually a member of the faculty, but she was responsible for the elementary program.

The sixtieth anniversary of ASTC presents much to celebrate. The changes made since

1903 seem remarkable, but even more remarkable is the fact that ASTC is still growing in leaps and bounds.

This rapid growth and the ever changing face of the campus make one wonder what ASTC will be like on its one hundred and twentieth anniversary, 2023.



Alice Lambert (left) skims a vat of cane juice to ensure the purity of the finished product. The woman at right is holding an electric blower, which is also used at intervals in the skimming process.

Molasses Time Brings Memories Of Mules Crushing Cane Stalks

By CLARK COX

When you mention molasses-making to an old-time mountaineer, he immediately conjures up a mental picture of mules plodding around a hand-fed cane mill, the sweet and tempting elixir which emerges to be carried into heavy vats over a blazing wood fire.

There it is stirred and skimmed by hand for hours, with huge, shovel-like ladles, before it reaches the proper color and consistency to be removed, cooled, and transferred to gallon jugs for sale.

But with the onset of mechanization, this type of molasses-making has become a vanishing art. It is so much easier and more profitable to use power-driven cane mills, mechanical arms for lifting the mixture between the various stages of its manufacture, and shiny vats in which the temperature and heating time is rigidly set and controlled, to produce the sedimented mixture which now passes for sorghum molasses; but old-timers will tell you that the flavor of this modern concoction cannot compare with old-fashioned 'lasses.

The few mountaineers who still insist upon the more flavorful but more laborious methods are a hardy crew. Probably they've tried a little bit of everything in their lifetime; more often than not they're sawmillers and abattoir operators as well as farmers, and work is the last thing in the world that would scare them.

Such a man is Dale Barker of the Bina community in neighboring Ashe County. For the past two weeks—and this will probably continue for two or three weeks to come—Barker has gone to bed at midnight and risen at four in the morning to run off molasses from the sorghum cane grown by himself and several of his neighbors.

The only concession that Barker makes to mechanization is the use of a small, motor-driven cane mill, in lieu of mules.

Help has, fortunately, been plentiful, as interested neighbors pitch in generously with their services in return for the privilege of sitting in the log shed around the boiling vats and exchanging gossip and opinions about the severity of the coming winter with the two or three dozen others who are present.

Since oven-baking, quilting parties, and communal tobacco-grading have gone the way of all such leisurely but perhaps inefficient get-togethers, molasses-making time is about the only chance left for country people to engage in such neighborly contact; and they make the most of it.

One of Barker's helpers in the yearly project has been Alice Lambert, a gigantic woman who has become an Ashe County legend because of such feats of strength as wrestling a full-grown bear at the county fair. (She won, too!) On several occasions, Miss Lambert has been observed nonchalantly carrying a 200-pound sack of grain under each arm. For Barker, she is in charge of skimming the greenish ever-rising foam from the vats of cane juice, in order to insure top-quality flavor and purity.

Children, too, are plentiful at molasses-making, drawn from miles around in order to lend whatever help they can and to spend the rest of their time watching wide-eyed and sucking voraciously at fresh cane stalks. Parents may object to the unsanitary nature of this last prac-

tice; but as a country boy myself, who has spent many hours spraying apple orchards against the wind and suffering nothing worse than a headache, I can tell you that few things beat

fresh sorghum cane for flavor.

But if anything can best cane for flavor, it's the molasses that Dale Barker makes from that cane. I'm going back for my second gallon this week.



Dale Barker (left) watches as an unidentified workman feeds cane to the grinder for eventual transformation into molasses.

Telephone Talk

by W. R. COOKE, JR. Your Telephone Manager



TELEPHONE VALUE—DID YOU KNOW THAT . . .

In 1920 it took some shouting—and money—to call coast-to-coast? When making the same call today, you can hear a whisper and pay only \$2.25 instead of the \$18.50 it cost in 1920.

In the early days of telephony, major storm damage was not repaired at times for as long as three to five months? Today similar damage is restored in a matter of hours and days. The Bell System annually puts into the business more than twice as many dollars as it earns.

SCHOOL'S IN . . . and that means the children will be out by the dozens, walking to school, riding their bicycles, getting on and off school buses. So, it's time again for all of us to be extra careful with our driving . . . especially around schools, crossings, and bus stops. Watch for the signs, drive slowly, and STOP whenever required. Our children are our most precious assets, and it's up to all of us to protect them.

EVER HAD TO SCRAMBLE—with the rest of the family—to talk on a Long Distance call? A Speakerphone gives everyone a chance to participate in calls without huddling, crowding or waiting in line. And families will enjoy hearing both sides of the conversation. Call our Business Office to find out more about the Speakerphone.

THE WORLD'S FIRST TELEPHONE EXCHANGE celebrated its 85th birthday early this year. In 1878 the exchange, in New Haven, Connecticut, listed nearly 50 telephone subscribers. The switchboard itself was primitive to say the least. Among its fittings were teapot handles, and the whole thing was strung together with wiring from the frames of ladies' bustles!



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