

Orphanage Is Doing Good Job Under Rev. Smith

REV. STEPHEN SMITH

Native of Wayne County and Free Will Baptist Minister who is head of the F.W.B. Middlesex Orphanage. Mr. Smith moved from his home in Beulaville to take over the duties of the Orphanage.

By DALLAS MALLISON
MIDDLESEX, N.C. — Serving some 398 churches throughout N.C. with a constituency of nearly 50,000 is the local Free Will Baptist Orphanage, an institution which under the guidance of "Pa" and "Ma" Smith is not just an institution but a real home for orphans of this State.

To those who visit this Orphanage it is obvious that the Smiths, who lived 25 years without any children of their own, are real mother and father to the nearly 80 children now at this home. Their long-cherished prayer and desire for children of their own have been answered at last with many boys and girls, all of whom they consider as their very own.

Nestled on the rolling hills of Nash County some two miles from this town, the Orphanage is located amid nearly 300 acres of farmland and woodland which make up the entire land area of the institution. Begun in 1920, the entire plant now totals at least six buildings valued at least at \$300,000 and with a total operating annual budget of about \$70,000.

Now operating without any burden of indebtedness and embarked on its most ambitious expansion and building program, the home is setting its sights to serve even more of the orphaned youth of this State. It does not confine its membership to children of parents of Free Will Baptist faith, and it opens its doors to every section and part of the State.

The Orphanage is operated by the N. C. State Convention of the Original Free Will Baptists and it is the biggest project both in cash outlay and size of enterprise now maintained by this faith. The Orphanage is a part of now the regular budget of virtually all churches in the denomination and all member church contribute financially to its support.

The Free Will Baptists are not as usually viewed confined to the Eastern part of the State. They have a large membership in the mountains of this State and Buncombe County is one of the counties ranking high in total membership among this faith. There are some 300 churches of the Free Will Baptist denomination scattered over most of the 100 counties of the State with a total membership now nearly 50,000.

There are now 270 acres included in the total properties making up the institution, of which at least 125 acres are in cultivation. It opened its doors on May 23, 1920, to four children and now it has a total of 78 boys and girls within its confines.

Located off the main State highway and boasting a new paved road of its own, contributed by the State, the home had its beginning with a gift of fifty acres of land by the late Elder Benjamin Deans, a former Free Will Baptist minister of this section. The remaining acreage has been purchased by the Brotherhood.

At the present time there are six buildings making up the physical plant of the home, consisting of the dining hall which also contains the superintendent's office, a boys dormitory, home for the superintendent, and a modern new church. In addition there are also barns and other farm buildings, including a modern dairy barn.

A total of 18 children, ranging in ages from three years to 19 years old, are attending the institution. They come from as far west as Swannanoa and Walnut near Marshall and as far east as the coast. The children remain at the home until they are graduated from high school. All attend the local public schools. There are only six pre-school. All attend the local public which means that seventy children are now enrolled in the public schools.

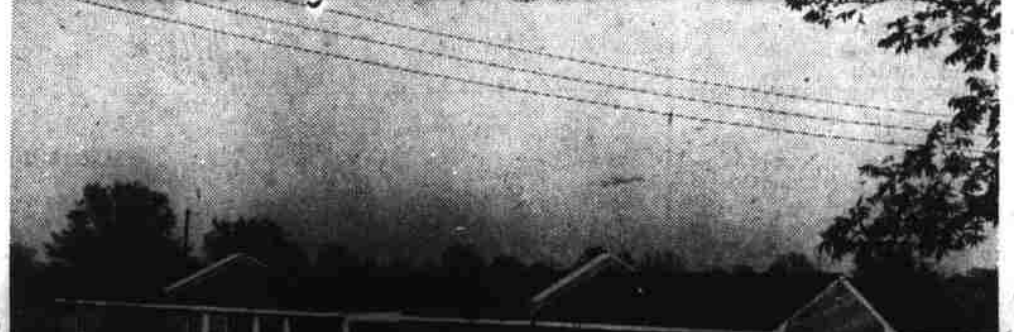
A diversified list of crops and livestock are produced at the local children's home, the aim being to supply as near as possible all their own requirements and dispose of the surplus on the open market. There are only three full-time hired men working on the farm and around the buildings, which means that a large share of the labor involved in the operation of the farm is furnished by the children themselves.

Crops grown include tobacco, wheat, corn, oats, various small grains, and garden vegetables. The farm has a tobacco allotment of 13 acres. The home has a laying flock of 400 hens. It has 37 purebred Hereford and Black Angus beef cattle, valued at at least \$5,000. There is also a herd of 100 hogs. Around \$6,000 worth of surplus hog meat was sold this year.

'PA' SMITH AND CHILDREN—Supt. S. A. ("Pa") Smith is at his happiest when with the small fry at his institution—in this case, the pre-school tots.



DINING HALL—This building is used as dining and assembly hall. It also houses the superintendent's office. The kitchen is being remodeled soon.



ALBEMARLE COTTAGE—Used as dormitory for boys. Capacity is about 40 boys. A modern building completed in 1951.



CORN FOR THE LARDER—Free truckloads of corn arrives to augment the larder of the orphanage. The home raises much of its food and has fine herds of beef cattle and also hogs.

There are 30 acres given over to pastures of which 20 acres are for cattle and the remaining 10 for hogs.

Indicating how well they provide for the lean winter months, this year they put away a huge roomful of vegetables, and filled at least three large freezer lockers with meats and vegetables. Every available foot of freezer locker space in nearby Zebulon was rented for this winter, and three of the huge lockers are 21 feet in size.

The institution boasts a two-acre fish pond, the gift of Dr. and Mrs. M. Hinnant of Micro. Dr. Hinnant is the chairman of the Board of trustees of the Orphanage. Built in 1949, the pond this year has been stocked with thousands of young brim and bass.

When the Rev. Stephen A. Smith came here to assume the duties of superintendent on November 1, 1951, he found the home laboring under a capital debt of \$34,000. This debt which represented the amount

owed on the new boys' dormitory has been erased and the home is now operating free of debt.

Smith has completed the new boys dormitory, valued at \$60,000, and which has a capacity of 40 boys. It is of the modern cottage type and is named "Albemarle Cottage."

Under the guidance of Smith the new \$75,000 church has been completed saved for the addition of the steeple which is part of the 1954 building program. Smith had to raise \$20,000 in order to complete the building.

Bids are now being advertised for on the construction of the new \$50,000 girls' dormitory with construction of the new \$50,000 girls' dormitory construction scheduled to begin in early January or soon thereafter. The new unit, to house 40 girls, is to replace the present out-moded girls dormitory.

Smith estimates that he has at least \$30,000 on hand of the needed minimum of \$50,000 to construct

the new building. Free Will Baptist churches have been emphasizing the new building in their budgets and throughout the State a special offering was taken at Thanksgiving for this purpose.

The present building and renovation program also include remodeling of the kitchen which will cost from one to two thousand dollars, Smith said. Money for this purpose has already been donated by a friend of the home, he reported.

"The basic purpose of our home," said Smith, "is to instill into the young minds and hearts of our children Christianity."

"With this," continued Smith, "will come humility, integrity, tolerance, and love for one another because these things are Christianity."

"We can provide a home with an abundance of the essentials of life," asserted the Superintendent, "but without training our boys and girls to love the Lord and to be-

come Christian men and women we will defeat our purpose."

"It is our desire," stated the Rev. Mr. Smith, "to send forth into society young people who have a sense of feeling for their fellow-man; who are willing and ready to take their places in life and accomplish worthwhile things."

Thus the home places emphasis upon the spiritual side of life, working to turn out socially-adjusted boys and girls who will be both willing and capable of contributing their bit to this world. They are desired to become useful and law-abiding citizens, and independent, self-reliant, mature persons in the modern world.

So ideally suited are "Pa" and "Ma" Smith for their work here that in a very literal spiritual sense were they "called" to this field of service by the Lord they serve. Smith gave up a lucrative income when he finally decided to come here and he gave only after much prayer and meditation.

Stephen A. Smith was born in 1905 in Wayne County and is now therefore 48 years of age. He never did complete his high school education but did attend the old Free Will Baptist Seminary once operated in Ayden.

He began preaching at the age of 25 and his first church was the Christian Chapel Church in Lenoir County not far from Pink Hill. He served this congregation for six years.

Smith has also served churches in Onslow, Duplin and Craven counties. His last pastorates were at the Daniel's Chapel Church in Wilson County and the Spring Branch Church near Walstonburg in Greene County.

In 1934 he moved to Beulaville in Duplin County and remained there until November 1, 1951, when he transferred to the home for his duties here. During his seventeen years in the Duplin town he preached regularly and built up a very lucrative fertilizer business.

The Smiths had always wanted children but never had been blessed with any of their own. They were married in 1926 and Mrs. Smith is a native of Duplin County herself.

After 25 years of childless marriage, they now have become both the guardians and the only parents they know for some 75 children. There is a very close and intimate relationship between the children and the Smiths and its quite obvious that there is a mutual feeling of love and respect. One seems to feel the very sweetness and understanding that is a part of the relationship between the Smiths and their charges.

The Smiths have quickly taken their places as members of the local community and take an active part in local civic religious and educational activities. Mrs. Smith is president of the Middlesex Parent Teachers Association while Smith is secretary of the local school board.

All the 70 children at the home who are of school age attend the local school. Twenty-two of these are enrolled in the high school department. There are only six pre-school children at present.



CONCERT GROUP—Shown above is a singing group of the orphanage, which makes several appearances in the State each summer in hundreds of Free Will Baptist churches.

minister and is now doing graduate work in theology in the doctorate level at the National Bible College in Nashville, Tenn.

Board of Trustees
The Board of Trustees of the Orphanage is composed mostly of professional men, farmers and ministers. There are nine regular members and one honorary member.

Dr. M. Hinnant of Micro is chairman of the board and R. L. Spencer a farmer of Columbia is secretary.

Other members are H. M. Mallard, a farmer of Trenton; Jesse Gay, farmer of Walstonburg; Calvin McLeod, farmer of Dunn; the Rev. M. L. Baxley of Red Springs; the Rev. C. B. Hinsley of Newport; the Rev. Wayne Smith of Swannanoa; and the Rev. Paul Brown of Rockingham.

The honorary member is Levi Hill a retired farmer and educator living in Snow Hill.

When the Smiths and the scores of orphaned children who are now at the home were brought together, it produced an ideal mating. For in the Smiths was found a pair who literally hungered for children, and in the children there is a great hunger for parental love, sweet and tender and true, which they find in abundant measure in "Pa" and "Ma" Smith.

If any proof were needed to demonstrate that God still rules this world and still "calls" persons to certain tasks and missions in life, one needs to go no further than here. In both a literal and a symbolic sense the Smiths have been chosen or "called" to their present mission or role for which they are preeminently fitted both by talents and temperament.

N. C. Travel Notes

A sure sign of spring on the North Carolina coast is increased ferry service to Hatteras Island and its choice fishing and recreation spots. On March 15, the free automobile ferry across Oregon Inlet to Hatteras will resume its full schedule of 12 trips daily, which had been curtailed to 10 trips for the winter months. The first ferry departure from the north shore of the Inlet will be at 5:50 a.m., and the final return trip from Hatteras at 6:05 p.m. At least one new ferry will be put into operation during the peak traffic season this summer. The Oregon Inlet ferry links North Carolina Highway 158 with a new paved highway extending the full length of Hatteras Island through the nation's only National Seashore Recreational Area.

Garden Tour in the Sandhills

The Sandhills resort of Southern Pines, North Carolina, has scheduled its annual spring garden tour for April 7, when dogwood, azaleas, and other flowers are expected to be at the height of their bloom. The tour, sponsored by the Southern Pines Garden Club, includes a number of homes and estates, Shaw House, restored and maintained by the Moore County Historical Association, will again be headquarters for the tour.

7 Races at Stonebrook March 20

When the exciting sport of steeplechasing opens its spring season with the Stonebrook Race Meeting at Southern Pines, North Carolina, March 20, spectators will see a card of seven races. Of these, four are sanctioned by the Hunj Committee of the National Steeplechase and Hunt Association: the Stonebrook Open Hurdle Race; the Sandhills Cup, over timber; the Silver Run, six furlongs on the turf; and the Yackin, over hurdle. Other events will be the Moore County Pink Coat Race, the Two Year Old Trial, and the Pines. Top steeplechase riders and horses will compete at



OLD GIRLS' DORMITORY—Is an outmoded structure in use since the Free Will Baptist Orphanage was established. Funds will be raised to replace the structure in the near future.

Stonebrook before moving on to other sanctioned events on the nation's hunt racing circuit.

Sporting Information From Dare County

Channel bass are expected to show up in the surf along the Outer Banks any day in March, and the Dare County Tourist Bureau has just published a new Sportfishing Bulletin which includes information about where and how to capture these prized "copper beauties." Available free on request, the bulletin also contains data on other salt and fresh-water fish, a list of local guides, a map of the Outer Banks region in Dare, housing in-

formation, and ferry schedules. Appearance of the first channel bass is the signal for the opening of many hotels and motor courts in Dare County.

WM. DAVID HARRELL

Word has been received of the death of William David Harrell, 77, in a Philadelphia Hospital Sunday night. Mr. Harrell formerly of Rose Hill is survived by his wife and four children of Philadelphia and Washington, D. C., 5 sisters, Mrs. Nellie Teachey and Mrs. Callie Teachey of Rose Hill, Mrs. Macie Faircloth of Clinton, Mrs. Lillie M. Vance and Mrs. Jessie Herring of Washington, O. C.; 1 brother, J. D. Harrell of Washington, D. C.

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