
Sites & Localities Detail

10/20/2015

Name	Mount Zion Institute	Siteno	2015.002S
Description	<p>Mount Zion Collegiate Institute had its origin before the Revolution. John and Richard Wynn moved from Virginia to what is now Fairfield County, about ten years before the lands where Winnsboro now stands. This circumstance between Broad and Catawba Rivers, on the route from Salisbury, N.C., to Charleston, S.C., the name of Winnsboro.</p> <p>The first school house was built of logs about 200 yards west of the present College and nearer the College Spring, which boiled out near where the railroad embankment now stands and supplied the village with water. The first teacher whose name is now preserved was a Mr. Humphrey.</p> <p>It is not known who originated the idea of enlarging the school and making it to some extent a charitable institution. But in January, 1777, John Wunn, Robert Ellison, Thomas Woodward, Richard Strother, William Strother, Joseph Kirkland, John Milling and John Kennedy, of Fairfield, associated with them Thomas Taylor, of Richland, and Francis Adams, Robert Buchanan and David Milling, of Charleston, and applied to the General Asembly, which was then in session in Charleston, for a charter for the Mt. Zion Society. David Milling was a brother of John Milling, and Robert Buchanan was a brother of John Buchanan, of Fairfield, who was also a member. The Society, therefore, was originated and the charter applied for by Fairfield men.</p> <p>The charter was granted on the 13th of February, 1777, to "John wunn, Esqr., the President of the said Society, and Robert Ellison, Esqr., and William Strother, Esqr., the present Wardens, and the several persons who now are or shall hereafter be members of that Society commonly called the Mt. Zion Society" - "for the purpose of founding, endowing and supporting a public school in the District of Camden." And authority was granted to the "corporation hereby erected, to make and hold any charitable donation or devises of lands or personal estate, and to appropriate the same to the endowing and supporting the said school, and to the maintenance and education of such poor and helpless orphans and indigent children as they shall judge proper objects of the charity hereby intended."</p> <p>In the preamble to the rules of the Mt. Zion Society appear the following appeal: "When we cast our eyes around and behold a rising generation, the gratest part whereof must live in ignorance on account of their being no place of instruction near them, where they can be properly educated; also when we behold the orphan left forlorn, and the children of indigent parents growing up more like a race of savages than Christians, becoming thereby useless to their country, to society and themselves' we cannot help being sensible to those tender feelings which the Divine Being hath impressed on our natures, as a spur to prompt us to lend a helping hand, to succor and assist the destitute." "Our country calls, nay, the voice of reason cries aloud to us, to promote knowledge as the firmest cement of a State; and conscience insists, tha ti is our indispensable duty to instruct he ignorant in the principles of Christianity."</p> <p>Within two years from the formation of the Society many new members were admitted in Charleston; it was therefore decided to hold the meetings of the Society in that city. This continued to be the practice until 1825 since which time the meetings have been held in Winnsboro.</p> <p>The school was broken up when Cornwallis occupied Winnsboro, in 1780-81. In 1784 the Rev. T.H. McCaule, of Salisbury, N.C., was invited to take charge of the school. He recommended that it be erected into a college, after the plan of the New Jersey college, at which he and graduated. A charter for such a College was obtained in 1785; at the same time a similar charter was granted to a College at Ninety-six, and at Charleston. At that time the buildings consisted of two one-and-a-half story log cabins, about 30 feet apart, connected by a frame structure of same height, the upper half story being occupied by boarders. The blast of a</p>	Length	
	Width		
	Elev feet		
	Elev metr		

born at daybreak was the signal for the students to rise and dress; at sunrise they attended roll call and prayers; at 8 o'clock went to breakfast; from 9 to 12 and from 2 to 5 the time was occupied with studies and recitations.

In 1787 the foundations were laid for a large brick building, 44 x 54 feet, and two stories high. It was not completed for some years. Rows of cabins were built on the north and south sides of the campus for the accomodation of boarders, under whom, from 1834 to 1858, the institution acquired a reputation co-extensive with the limits of the Southern States, the building was greatly enlarged. First, a three-story brick building was added to the rear, and then similar additions were made to the north and south side of the main building. This splendid building was destroyed in May, 1867, by an accidental fire, gratly to the grief of the community. A one-story brick building was soon afterwards erected on the original foundation, at a cost of about \$3,500.

In 1878 a Public Graded School was established, by consent of the Mount Zion Society, under the able management of Mr. R. Means Davis. This has been continued under his successors to the rpresent time.

In 1885, just one hundred years from the granting of the original charter, it was determined, if possible, to revive the Collegiate feature of the Institute, and in connection with the Graded School, to furnish to the youth of our County the opportunity of obtaining a complete, practical education at home, at a minimum cost. After various plans had been discussed and abandoned, a joint meeting of the Mount Zion Society and the citizens of the town was held, at which it was determined to issue bonds of the town to the amount of \$7,500, for the purpose of erecting such additional buildings as were needed.

Accordingly, on the 25th day of May, 1886, ground was broken for the foundation of a large and well arranged brick building. This contains eight large, well lighted and ventilated school rooms, furnished throught with improved seats, desks and all encessary apparatus.

Under the management of the able and efficient corps of teachers now employed, the number of pupils was largely increased during the past year, thus encouragin the hope that the Institute will soon be again, as in the olden time, a credit to our town, and a benefit and blessing to our whole community.

[from Catalogue of the Mt. Zion Collegiate Institute and Graded School (1889). 2015.236]

Quarter		Township	
Section		Township#	Range
County	State	Prim Meridan	GPS
Country		Longitude	Latitude
Location Notes			UTM East
Collectors			UTM North
Maps			UTM Zone
Publications			UTM Horz
Notes			