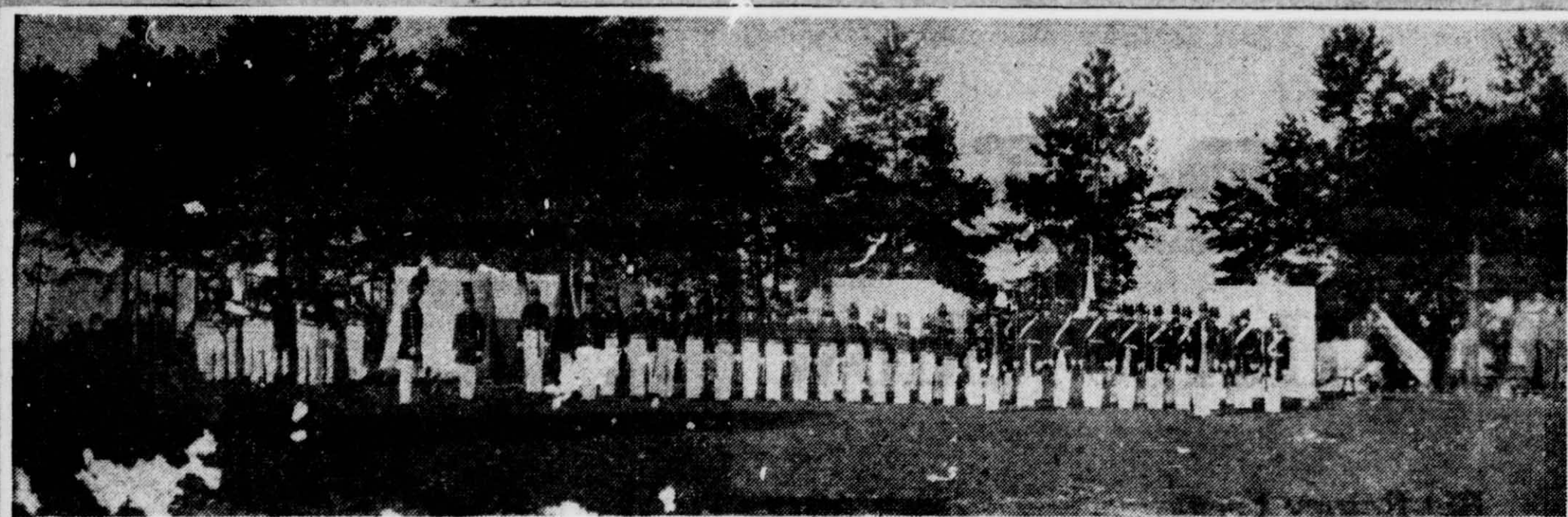


#330Y  
YC

# S.C. - Counties - York - Schools - Kings Mountain Military School



Kings Mountain Military School cadets are shown at Camp Allison, their summer camp. This picture was made by John R. Schorb of York before 1861.

## K. M. M. S. a York Institution

*Rare old pictures show cadet life  
at military school prior to Confederate War*

By JOHN GETTYS SMITH

THE KINGS Mountain Military School was founded in York by Micah Jenkins and Asbury Coward in 1855. These two young men decided while they were still attending The Citadel that they would organize a preparatory school for boys who also planned to attend the Military College of South Carolina. Both Jenkins and Coward were members of prominent planter families from Charleston and they selected old Yorkville, "The Charleston of the Up Country," as the location for their proposed school. Immediately after their graduation they went to Yorkville to select a site. Their venture was looked upon with skepticism both in Charleston and in Yorkville. The little Up Country town, despite its beautiful homes, flourishing Presbyterian Female College and general air of wealth and refinement, was hardly more than a village in size. A few of York's wealthy merchants and planters had formed a corporation and built the Kings Mountain Railroad from York to connect with the newly completed main line at Chester. The road was completed in 1852. The town had been the intersection of two major roads since its settlement a hundred years before and so Yorkville now became the depot for a prosperous plantation area surrounding the town and an extensive back country area to the west. The town looked forward confidently in the mid-1850's and the two young men decided to go forward with it. The first session of the school opened in a frame building in 1855. There were 12 students. Jenkins and Coward were undaunted and by the end of the session the enrollment had doubled. Things began to look up for them and then the building burned. H. F. Adickes, who had erected a large brick store building at the square in town, offered space on the second and third floors of his store for the cadets. They ate their meals at the fashionable Rose Hotel and so the school continued without interruption while a handsome new building was erected. The new school was completed in 1857 and was immediately one of the show places of the town. It was described in an old issue of The Yorkville Enquirer as follows: "The main building, a perfect model of college architecture, is constructed of brick, three stories high and contains twenty-six rooms. On the first floor are four large recitation rooms, and four small apartments intended for various convenient

purposes. On the second and third floors are eighteen comfortable rooms fitted up with fireplaces, a perfect system of sewerage, ventilation and other conveniences for the accommodation of boarders. Attached to either end of the main building are two story, eight room wings, intended for the residence of principals and teachers of the school. The building and grounds cost \$20,000." With the new building came even more success. The reputation of the school spread over the State and the South and students from the most prominent families in the section came to Yorkville to attend K. M. M. S. The regulations were strict and the standards were high. The Charleston Mercury lauded the school in an editorial in July, 1859, saying: "The annual announcement of those successful teachers of youth, Captains Jenkins and Coward appear in the Mercury this morning. The military education of youth has ever been fully advocated in these columns, and it is gratifying to read such reports of examinations . . ." In 1859 there were 130 cadets in the School, an enrollment which rivaled the South Carolina College (University). Micah Jenkins and Asbury Coward had been the only instructors in the school when it opened but the school had prospered to such an extent that the following advertisement appeared in the December 23, 1858 edition of the Yorkville Enquirer: "Kings Mountain Military School Yorkville, S. C. Principals: Maj. Micah Jenkins, Prof. of Mathematics; Capt. Asbury Coward, Prof. French; Lt. C. A. Seabrooks, Prof. of Latin and Greek; Lt. E. M. Law, Prof. History and Mathematics; Lt. R. K. Thomas, Prof. Belles Letters; Lt. R. T. Harper, Prof. English and Arithmetic; B. P. Boyd, Bursar; Drs. A. I. Barron and J. R. Bratton, Surgeons. Terms: For all school expenses, i. e., Tuition, Boarding, Light, Fuel, Stationery, Books, and Medical attendance, \$200 per scholastic year. No pupil under twelve or over eighteen years of age will be received. For further information apply to Principals, Yorkville, S. C. References: Gen. James Jones, Columbia; Gen. D. F. Jamison, Orangeburg, S. C.; Gen. Dan'l. Wallace, Jonesville, S. C.; Col. I. D. Wilson, Society Hill, S. C.; Gen. R. G. M. Dunno-vant, Ninety-Six Depot, S. C.

Jenkins and Coward took a lively interest in their new home town. In 1855, they and Lt. C. A. Seabrook were active in the organization of The Church of the Good Shepherd, Episcopal, in York. Recently new front doors were placed on this beautiful old building, one is dedicated to Asbury Coward and the other to Micah Jenkins. A new volunteer uniform company called the Jasper Rifle Guards was organized in Yorkville in 1859 with Micah Jenkins as its Captain and C. A. Seabrook as the first Lieutenant. Other officers were I. N. Withers, 2nd. Lt. and W. B. Metts, 3rd. Lt. K. M. M. S. was a definite part of the town of Yorkville and its personnel a part of its leadership. By 1861 the enrollment of the school bordered 200 and the faculty looked forward to even greater achievement, but war came in that year. The instructors in military schools were of great importance to the Confederacy and the instructors of K. M. M. S. led the young men of the State to the battlefields rather than the class rooms and encampments. All of the instructors went off to war, but all did not come back. Micah Jenkins won fame as the Commander of the South Carolina Sharpshooters. He was made a Brigadier General, was highly respected and admired by both officers and men, and was killed at the Battle of the Wilderness in 1864 while he was still in his twenties. E. M. Law became a general and suffered a wound that left his arm stiff for the remainder of his life. Asbury Coward served throughout the War with gallantry. Riply's "Believe It or Not" noted several years ago that a Confederate officer signed his name "A. Coward." The story went on to list the many engagements and the distinguished career of Col. Coward to prove that he was not what his name implied. Mrs. Jenkins learned of her husband's death at the same time that the other residents of Yorkville learned of it. Communications were poor in 1864 and the train coming up from Chester usually announced the news by blasts of its whistle. Short, rapid toots from the whistle meant good news and long, doleful ones indicated bad. The citizens of the county listened for the whistle and the residents of the town of Yorkville always came to the station to hear the news. On one particular occasion the train wailed the entire trip up from Chester and by the time it pulled into the station the entire population was waiting to hear the news. Mrs. Jenkins and her children were there in their carriage when the news was announced that General Jenkins had been killed. When the War was over Col. Coward came back to re-open the School. Times were hard during those days and years of Reconstruction. The Federal authorities would not permit the cadets to use rifles and there was indebtedness on the buildings incurred during the War years. Few families could afford to send their sons to school. The school struggled along for a few years with Col. Coward fighting vainly to maintain it and then it closed. Asbury Coward became Commandant of The Citadel, his old Alma Mater, and under his leadership the school flourished. K. M. M. S. opened and closed under different sponsors for a number of years before its doors were finally closed as a school. In 1909 the Episcopal Church in South Carolina purchased the property and moved the Church Home Orphanage which had been founded in Charleston in 1850 to its new location in The Garrison at K. M. M. S. This main building stands today behind its wide campus presenting a facade that has not been altered in more than a century. The voices of South Carolina youth still echo in the halls and youthful energy is spent in games on the campus. On Sunday mornings these children walk into the old Gothic church whose doors are in memory of two young men who were vitally interested in the youth of the State. K. M. M. S. was an integral part of old Yorkville and the Episcopal Church Home

for Children retains that place in York today. Sunday, May 3, is Pilgrimage Day at the Church Home. On the first Sunday in May each year Episcopalians from all over the State come to York to visit their home for children. In York they are joined by members of the Church of the Good Shepherd and many others who are not Episcopalians but who are "friends" of the Church Home. These "friends" are doctors who furnish free medical and dental services to the children; they are peach growers who send trucks loaded with bushels of peaches in the summer; they are merchants who give discounts and they are residents of the town who simply feel a bond of friendship with the Church Home as a York institution.

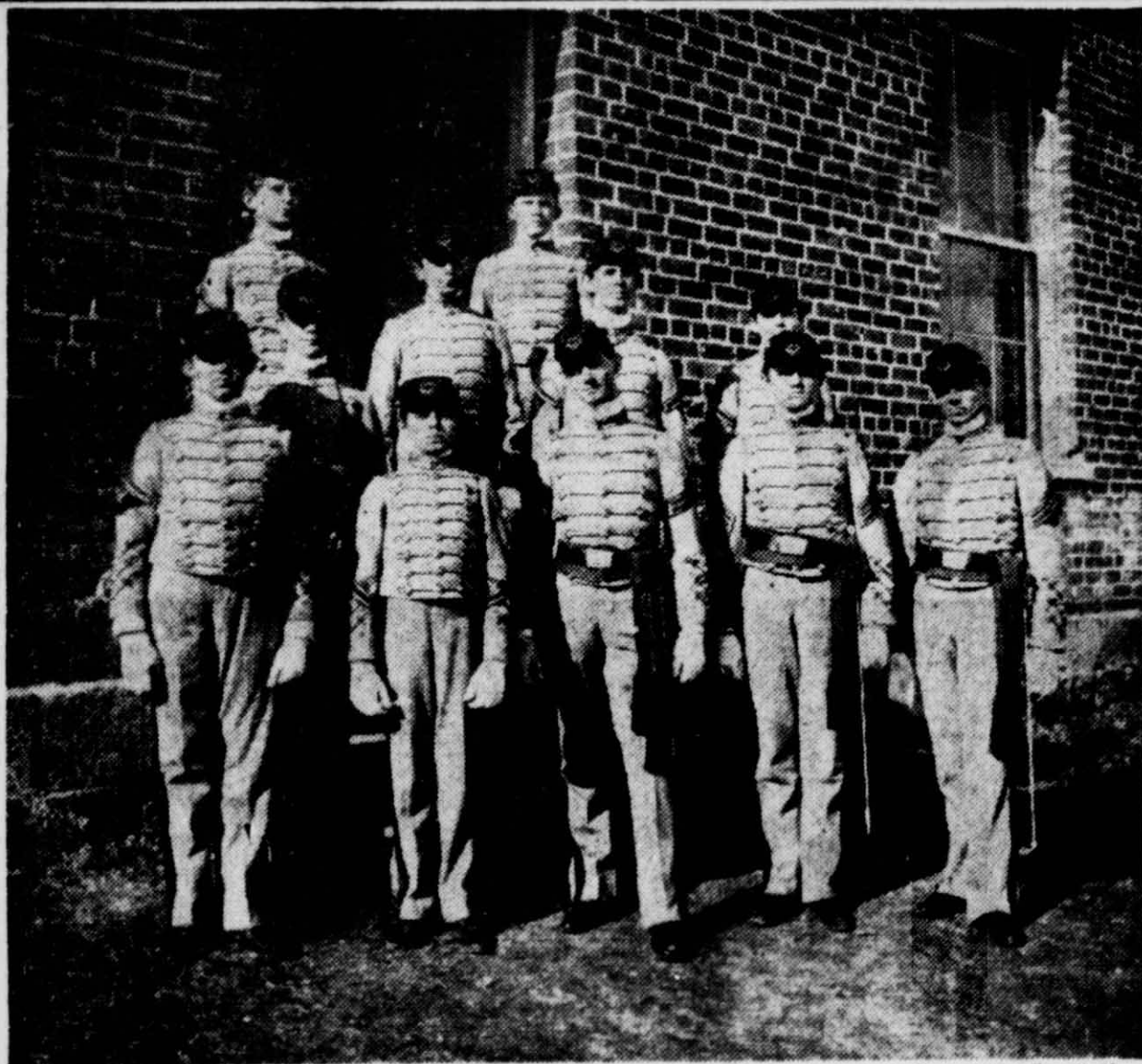
name "A. Coward." The story went on to list the many engagements and the distinguished career of Col. Coward to prove that he was not what his name implied. Mrs. Jenkins learned of her husband's death at the same time that the other residents of Yorkville learned of it. Communications were poor in 1864 and the train coming up from Chester usually announced the news by blasts of its whistle. Short, rapid toots from the whistle meant good news and long, doleful ones indicated bad. The citizens of the county listened for the whistle and the residents of the town of Yorkville always came to the station to hear the news. On one particular occasion the train wailed the entire trip up from Chester and by the time it pulled into the station the entire population was waiting to hear the news. Mrs. Jenkins and her children were there in their carriage when the news was announced that General Jenkins had been killed. When the War was over Col. Coward came back to re-open the School. Times were hard during those days and years of Reconstruction. The Federal authorities would not permit the cadets to use rifles and there was indebtedness on the buildings incurred during the War years. Few families could afford to send their sons to school. The school struggled along for a few years with Col. Coward fighting vainly to maintain it and then it closed. Asbury Coward became Commandant of The Citadel, his old Alma Mater, and under his leadership the school flourished. K. M. M. S. opened and closed under different sponsors for a number of years before its doors were finally closed as a school. In 1909 the Episcopal Church in South Carolina purchased the property and moved the Church Home Orphanage which had been founded in Charleston in 1850 to its new location in The Garrison at K. M. M. S. This main building stands today behind its wide campus presenting a facade that has not been altered in more than a century. The voices of South Carolina youth still echo in the halls and youthful energy is spent in games on the campus. On Sunday mornings these children walk into the old Gothic church whose doors are in memory of two young men who were vitally interested in the youth of the State. K. M. M. S. was an integral part of old Yorkville and the Episcopal Church Home

name "A. Coward." The story went on to list the many engagements and the distinguished career of Col. Coward to prove that he was not what his name implied. Mrs. Jenkins learned of her husband's death at the same time that the other residents of Yorkville learned of it. Communications were poor in 1864 and the train coming up from Chester usually announced the news by blasts of its whistle. Short, rapid toots from the whistle meant good news and long, doleful ones indicated bad. The citizens of the county listened for the whistle and the residents of the town of Yorkville always came to the station to hear the news. On one particular occasion the train wailed the entire trip up from Chester and by the time it pulled into the station the entire population was waiting to hear the news. Mrs. Jenkins and her children were there in their carriage when the news was announced that General Jenkins had been killed. When the War was over Col. Coward came back to re-open the School. Times were hard during those days and years of Reconstruction. The Federal authorities would not permit the cadets to use rifles and there was indebtedness on the buildings incurred during the War years. Few families could afford to send their sons to school. The school struggled along for a few years with Col. Coward fighting vainly to maintain it and then it closed. Asbury Coward became Commandant of The Citadel, his old Alma Mater, and under his leadership the school flourished. K. M. M. S. opened and closed under different sponsors for a number of years before its doors were finally closed as a school. In 1909 the Episcopal Church in South Carolina purchased the property and moved the Church Home Orphanage which had been founded in Charleston in 1850 to its new location in The Garrison at K. M. M. S. This main building stands today behind its wide campus presenting a facade that has not been altered in more than a century. The voices of South Carolina youth still echo in the halls and youthful energy is spent in games on the campus. On Sunday mornings these children walk into the old Gothic church whose doors are in memory of two young men who were vitally interested in the youth of the State. K. M. M. S. was an integral part of old Yorkville and the Episcopal Church Home

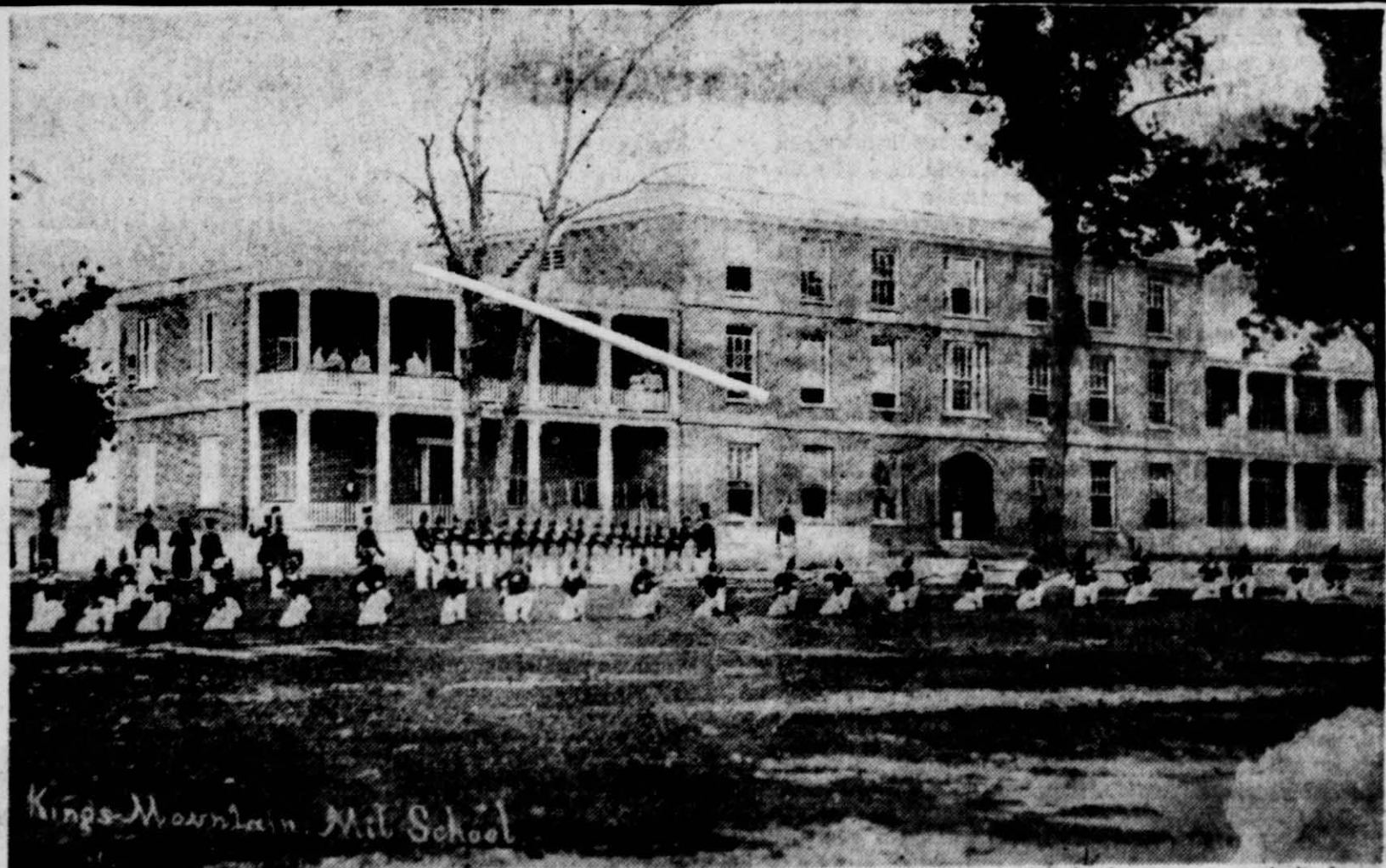
for Children retains that place in York today. Sunday, May 3, is Pilgrimage Day at the Church Home. On the first Sunday in May each year Episcopalians from all over the State come to York to visit their home for children. In York they are joined by members of the Church of the Good Shepherd and many others who are not Episcopalians but who are "friends" of the Church Home. These "friends" are doctors who furnish free medical and dental services to the children; they are peach growers who send trucks loaded with bushels of peaches in the summer; they are merchants who give discounts and they are residents of the town who simply feel a bond of friendship with the Church Home as a York institution.

COLUMBIA, S. C., SUNDAY, MAY 3, 1959





A group of young men at the Kings Mountain Military School just before the Confederate War. Many names later well-known in South Carolina were on the school's roll. Old photographs dating to ante-bellum days are quite rare now, and York is fortunate in having had John R. Schorb, "America's First Commercial Photographer," to make a visible record of life in that town 'before the War.' These pictures belong to the York Memorial Museum, whose director is John Gettys Smith, author of the accompanying article.



Kings Mountain Mil School  
Cadets on parade in front of "the Garrison" after its completion in 1857. Note Negro band, the servants and the hoop-skirted ladies standing on the gallery.