

Uncommon Education
for youth of
the Cumberlands



at

Pleasant Hill Academy

Pleasant Hill, Tennessee

Pleasant Hill
Academy



Pleasant Hill
Tennessee

DEAR FRIENDS AND PATRONS:

The future belongs to the young men and women of America who have been trained for useful and responsible citizenship. This is true whether they are from the mountains or plains, from the country or city.

At Pleasant Hill we are giving a group of young people from the southern highlands that type of training. Each year they come with high hopes and aspirations. From them there have arisen leaders in all walks of community life in the south — teachers, ministers, nurses, lawyers, farmers, mechanics, and home-makers.

The enclosed booklet, "UNCOMMON EDUCATION," will give you a graphic picture of the type of educational training we are carrying on at Pleasant Hill. You are helping to make this program possible through your valued interest and support, and we send you this brochure in appreciation and gratitude.

Sincerely yours,

Walter Mueller

Principal

WHAT IS PLEASANT HILL ACADEMY?

For more than sixty years this school has been located on the Cumberland Plateau, in the southern Appalachian highlands, to provide educational opportunities for the youth of the mountains. Founded in 1884 by the American Missionary Association, it has kept pace with the changing needs of the region. Today it offers a high school education that is vitally related to the needs of community living in our American democracy.

OPPORTUNITY FOR SELF HELP

In order that young people from families of low income may have the type of education which Pleasant Hill Academy offers, students are given an opportunity to work in the school program and to help contribute toward their expenses. The school farm, laundry, crafts shop, kitchen, construction work, building maintenance, and many other activities of such an enterprise as this provide practical experience as well as opportunity for earning at least a part of one's educational costs. It is our conviction that the work opportunities constitute some of the most profitable educational experiences. To that end, wherever possible, the work program is made a definite and accredited part of the regular school activities.

RELIGION AND EDUCATION

We believe that our task as a Christian institution is to interpret in terms of daily living the great heritage of our faith. Though conducted by the Congregational Christian Churches, the young people who come to this school are from all denominations. It is our desire that our students learn to become responsible and intelligent members of the churches with which they are affiliated.



WOODBURY CHAPEL
Center of Pleasant Hill Academy Campus



OHIO BUILDING
Recreation center, given by Ohio church women



SENIOR CLASSROOM
Young minds are broadened by new horizons



Religion is made a vital part of all of life at Pleasant Hill

LEARNING, LIVING, AND WORKING

The school day at Pleasant Hill is proportioned to give proper amounts of time to work, study, worship, and play. School is in session from 8:00 A.M. until 4:30 P.M. During this time, two hours are devoted by each student to the work which is necessary to maintain the necessities of our common life. The girls help with the preparation and serving of the meals under the direction of a trained dietitian; they work in the laundry; they serve as housekeepers for the school buildings. Several girls each year receive training in the operation of the school store, and others work as nurses' aids in nearby Uplands Sanatorium, and as typists in the school office. The boys work on the school farm, in the dairy, in the print shop, and help with the maintenance and upkeep of the grounds and buildings under competent supervision. School and farm are a laboratory for learning many types of useful work, and every one is given a share of responsibility according to his age and ability.

Classroom work is made flexible and is adjusted to the needs of the individual students. We recognize that many students are limited in their capacity for verbal learning; this is particularly true in a rural area where there is a scarcity of trained teachers and where the rudimentary preparation in the three R's is often sketchy and inadequate. Therefore, much use is made at Pleasant Hill of non-verbal learning experiences such as moving pictures, dramatizations, field trips, and practical projects. The aim is to provide an educational experience suitable to the needs of the individual, rather than try to force conformity to a standard pattern.

WORLD CHRISTIAN CITIZENS

Rural people of the mountains have long lived to themselves in isolated coves and hamlets. The effect of world-shaking events is now serving to draw them into the main stream of the world's life. What the young people of the mountains will find in their world will depend in large measure upon the vitality of their Christian life. Uneducated mountain preachers have long preached "holiness" in a narrow and limited sense. At Pleasant Hill we stress not holiness but "wholeness" as the clue to genuine Christian living. The minister of Pleasant Hill Community Church has an important role in campus religious life. In the "Pioneer Church" the young people have opportunity for expressing their own ideas of what a Christian church should be. Every member of the staff is considered potentially a teacher of Christian living on the campus at Pleasant Hill.

MAKING RURAL LIFE ATTRACTIVE

Many fine things have been written about the charms of rural life, and there is a movement among city dwellers today toward rediscovering the values of living on the land. But the truth remains that much rural life in isolated regions where the land is poor is still hard, lonely, and unlovely. Rural areas have their slums, their delinquent children, their poverty-ridden homes as surely as the cities, and the problems are often more intimate and pathetic. The "neglected one-third" of our nation lives in the mountains of the southern highlands as well as on the east side of New York.

To make rural life in the mountains more attractive, Pleasant Hill carries on a program of arts and crafts which is directed toward beautifying and improving the rural home. A well equipped arts and crafts shop offers students the opportunity to refinish furniture, to build useful articles for the home, and to learn the principles of interior decorating. In addition, the art director goes into the homes of the surrounding region to help the people revive their almost forgotten skills of carving, weaving, spinning, and furniture making. Articles sold to the public in the Pleasant Hill Craft Shop have added to the small cash income of many mountain homes.

BETTER FARMERS AND HOME-MAKERS

In spite of the number of log cabins that are still to be found in the Cumberland mountains, no President of the United States has ever come from Pleasant Hill. But leaders have gone through this school who have taken their rightful places in many walks of community life as teachers, ministers, nurses, lawyers, farmers, mechanics, and home-makers. They have contributed to community development and leadership in many parts of the South.

The emphasis at Pleasant Hill is on a practical type of education which fits the students for good citizenship. Many of our students have gone on to college and have made excellent records in higher education. But for the majority, Pleasant Hill is as far as they will go in formal education. The type of education which is offered is not primarily to train for college, but to train for better living. Better living in a rural community begins with better farming, which raises the economic income, and with better home-making, which improves the standards of the most basic of all American institutions—the home.



CRAFT SHOP

Learning to refinish furniture is a useful skill for the future home-maker



BIOLOGY

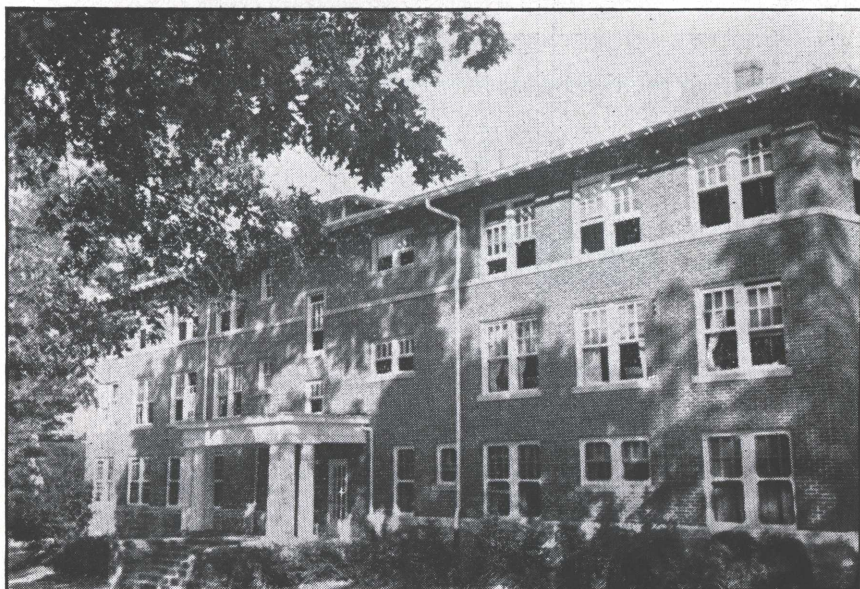
There is no shortage of living specimens to study at Pleasant Hill



WHEELER HALL
Girls' Dormitory



Sunday Morning Choir



ROBERTS HALL
Boys' Dormitory



HOME ECONOMICS

The classroom is the place for discussion



But the kitchen is the place for practice!

"FORTY ACRES AND A MULE" — PLUS

It takes more than "forty acres and a mule" to provide the economic basis for making rural life attractive. A considerable amount of the time and energy of the Pleasant Hill staff goes into the encouragement of farmers' cooperatives and credit unions, and into the development of improved farming methods. The average farm in Cumberland County, Tennessee, is only 70 acres, part of which is generally uncleared woodland. No farm as small as that can maintain a tractor, a harvester combine, a potato digger, or a spraying machine. Yet all of these machines help to produce better crops and to increase farm income.

The answer has been found in the Pleasant Hill Farmers' Cooperative, which now owns and operates every one of the farm machines mentioned above. Twenty-three farmers of the surrounding communities are members of the cooperative and benefit from the use of this machinery. An extension of the activities of the co-op is contemplated for the purchase of seeds and fertilizer, and for the marketing of farm products, such as beans, potatoes, cattle, and hogs.

COOPERATION, CONSERVATION, CREDIT UNIONS

The three C's which will bring about the rehabilitation of the mountain farmers are **Cooperation, Conservation, Credit Unions**. Cooperation, through growing intelligence and the force of economic necessity, is bringing the mountaineer farmer out of his traditional individualism, and leading him to merge his welfare with his neighbors in cooperative marketing, ownership, and credit. By means of credit unions, he is able to free himself from the high interest rates of the professional money-lenders, and to borrow money for the improvement of his home or his farm with no other collateral needed than an honest character can supply.

Conservation is the clue to saving the eroded land and the mined-out soil of the mountain regions. This means instruction and demonstration in the wisdom of rotation planting, terracing, contour plowing, and contour fencing. Government agencies such as the Farm Security Administration and the Tennessee Valley Authority have put all their resources behind the teaching and practice of correct farming and conservation methods. They have welcomed the readiness of Pleasant Hill staff to use the school farm as a demonstration center. Slowly the results are becoming visible in improved rural living after years of patient training and cultivation by men and women with social vision.

NOT ALL WORK AND NO PLAY

The emphasis at Pleasant Hill is upon an all round development of life that includes work, study, worship, and play. There are excellent facilities for athletics in the new Ohio Building, with its basketball and volleyball courts, and with the stage for dramatic and musical programs. Boys' and girls' basketball teams engage in competitive play with other high schools in the surrounding region, and the aim is to encourage a high type of sportsmanship and fair play. An outdoor athletic field and a tennis court provide field activities and softball during the outdoor season.

The traditional folk dances and ballads of the mountain people have become a part of our American heritage. At Pleasant Hill we have encouraged the revival and development of these traditional forms of folk art. For several years, a regional folk festival for people from other communities in the state who are interested in folk-dancing has been held at Pleasant Hill. In addition to the prominence which is given to this form of recreation in the school program, groups of Pleasant Hill students have gone as folk teams to churches and civic groups in other states to interpret the mountain music.

From 4:30 until 8:30 every evening, students are free to engage in creative hobbies and activities of their own choosing. The interest groups, conducted under faculty guidance, include sports and folk-dancing, model airplane building, wood-working, dramatics, journalism, first-aid, choir, and free reading in the school library. Everything is done to help the young people develop recreational interests of permanent value.

THE FRIENDS OF PLEASANT HILL

What is described in these pages is possible because friends of Pleasant Hill have helped carry on this work for more than half a century. Student work and student fees pay for only a small part of the total cost of education. The rest must be provided in direct scholarship aid. The cost of a year's residence at Pleasant Hill is \$450. Of this, each student is asked to provide \$135, either by cash payment or summer work. This leaves \$315 per student to be provided by interested friends, and by the Board of Home Missions of the Congregational Christian Church. It is important for us to have the continued support of our friends if we are to carry on this type of uncommon education for the youth of our southern highlands.



FURNACE BOY

He keeps things hot for the rest of us!



THE LAUNDRY

The school laundry helps keep everybody clean



Boys' Basketball Squad



Better farms will help make better homes in the Cumberlands

A SCHOOL FOR COMMUNITY LIVING

A community school is one which serves all the needs and interests of the region, and is not concerned alone with the processes of formal education. It is the purpose of Pleasant Hill Academy to aid and encourage all types of activities which will improve community life—farming, home-making, arts and crafts, cooperatives, credit unions, health, recreation, and religious life.

AN EXTENSION PROGRAM

As important as we consider the work with young people, we believe that if this school is to influence the life of the whole community, we must work with parents and adults as well. In cooperation with other organizations, such as the Federal Security Administration, the Tennessee Valley Authority, the State Agriculture Extension Service, to name some that are typical, we are working to help the families of the Cumberland highlands achieve a better economic and social life. It is our purpose to put the resources and facilities of Pleasant Hill Academy at the disposal of all the people of this region.

While other self-help schools in the mountains maintained by other denominations have closed or have been changed into public schools, we are continuing to provide educational opportunities for as many as our space will permit. In spite of the fact that public schools have increased since Pleasant Hill Academy was founded, there are still large numbers of young people in the rural mountain areas who do not have ready access to a high-school education. It is for them, to a large extent, that this school is maintained.

PLEASANT HILL ACADEMY

**Conducted under the Auspices of the
AMERICAN MISSIONARY ASSOCIATION DIVISION
BOARD OF HOME MISSIONS
CONGREGATIONAL CHRISTIAN CHURCH**