

## Fassifern School

by Daniel W. Barefoot, 2006



<sup>[2]</sup> The Fassifern School, a noted preparatory school for girls, was established in Lincolnton in 1907 by Catherine Cameron Shipp <sup>[3]</sup>, the daughter of state attorney general William Marcus Shipp <sup>[4]</sup>. From 1898 to 1902, she and her sister, Anna Shipp McBee, had successfully operated a coeducational preparatory school in Lincolnton. In 1902 Shipp enrolled at Cambridge University <sup>[5]</sup> in England. Upon her return to North Carolina in 1904, she taught at Saint Mary's <sup>[6]</sup> until she opened Fassifern, named for an ancestral home that Shipp had visited in the Highlands of Scotland.

Students came from throughout North Carolina as well as other states, and Fassifern gained a reputation as one of the South's best preparatory schools. Despite an addition to the physical plant, the Lincolnton facility quickly became inadequate for an ever-increasing enrollment.

Enticed by an offer from a group of businessmen from Hendersonville, Shipp moved the institution to that mountain town in 1914. On its spacious new campus highlighted by colonial-style architecture, the school continued to grow and prosper under the tutelage of "Miss Kate."

Soon after her sister died in 1924, Shipp sold Fassifern to Joseph R. Sevier, a Presbyterian [7] minister. Sevier and his son John successfully operated the school for a quarter of a century. Fassifern School continued operation on the Hendersonville campus until 1951, when John Sevier moved to Atlanta to accept a position with Southern Airways [8].

### References:

Delta Kappa Gamma Society. *Some Pioneer Women Teachers of North Carolina* (1955).

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**Additional Resources:**

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A Guide to Historic Henderson County, North Carolina<sup>[10]</sup>, by Alexia Jones Helsley, Dr George A Jones.

Albert Y. Drummond, *Drummond's Pictorial Atlas of North Carolina.*, Charlotte: Albert Y. Drummond, Winston-Salem: Scoggin Printing Company, Inc., c1924:  
<https://docsouth.unc.edu/nc/drummond/jll61.html> <sup>[11]</sup>

Fassifern School, North Carolina Postcard Collection, UNC Libraries: [http://dc.lib.unc.edu/cdm/singleitem/collection/nc\\_post/id/3597](http://dc.lib.unc.edu/cdm/singleitem/collection/nc_post/id/3597) <sup>[12]</sup>

**Image Credit:**

Fassifern School, Hendersonville, N.C. "In the Land of the Sky". Image courtesy of North Carolina Postcard Collection, UNC Libraries. Available from [http://dc.lib.unc.edu/cdm/singleitem/collection/nc\\_post/id/10525](http://dc.lib.unc.edu/cdm/singleitem/collection/nc_post/id/10525) [2] (accessed November 8, 2012).

**Subjects:**

Education <sup>[13]</sup>  
N.C. Industrial Revolution (1900-1929) <sup>[14]</sup>  
Religion <sup>[15]</sup>  
Schools (K-12) <sup>[16]</sup>

**Authors:**

Barefoot, Daniel W. [17]

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Henderson County <sup>[18]</sup>  
Lincoln County <sup>[19]</sup>

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Encyclopedia of North Carolina. University of North Carolina Press.[20]

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