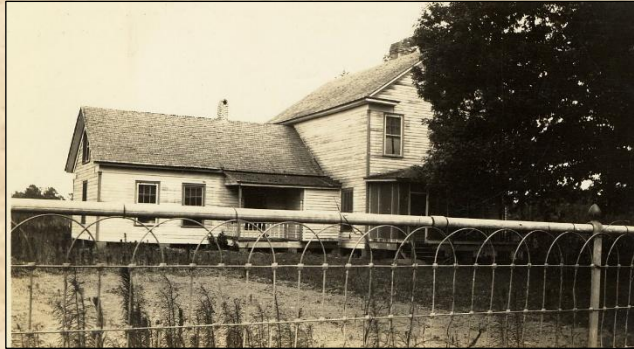


## The Carolina Industrial School at Shelter Neck

Founded in 1900 in Pender County, NC, **Shelter Neck** was established by the **National Alliance of Unitarian Women** of Boston, which purchased the property for the nominal sum of **one dollar**, the deed stating that the conveyance was made "for the love of God and humanity."

**1900–1901:** The campus began with a chapel and then "Dix House," the parsonage, which had a wing added that doubled as a classroom.



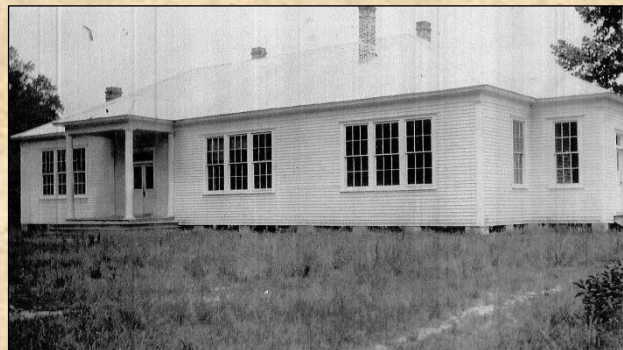
**1907:** Another parcel of land was contributed to the school "for the advancement of the Gospel of God as taught by Jesus of Nazareth and for the good of humanity".

**1908:** The school survived a devastating flood.

**1911–1912:** The school was formally incorporated as one of two institutions (alongside the Emmerton School). Expansion included a dedicated school building (with a library and auditorium) and "Kimball House," which allowed the school to begin boarding students.



**Between 1912 and 1920:** The school building was expanded, adding 2 additional classrooms.



## The Carolina Industrial School at Shelter Neck

**1918:** A fire destroyed Kimball House dormitory, which was rebuilt in later years.



**Daily Life at Carolina Industrial School at Shelter Neck:** Life at the school was defined by a mix of rigorous academics and rural self-sufficiency. Students from the surrounding countryside attended Shelter Neck, often traveling several miles by mule cart, goat cart, bicycle, or on foot. Life at the boarding school followed a structured routine: girls lived in a dormitory with teachers, while boys stayed in Dix House with the minister and staff. Students rose early to complete chores such as building fires, trimming kerosene lamps, setting tables, feeding livestock, and chopping wood. The school was essentially free. Everything was furnished and it didn't cost students anything except some firewood.

For a rural community, the school offered an unusually broad education. Each day began with singing and devotional exercises, while evenings were devoted to study, music practice, and discussions with teachers. Students studied history, literature, French, and music, and the library, supplied with books sent from Boston, introduced them to authors such as Shakespeare, Thoreau, Longfellow, and Keats. Students even performed Shakespearean plays outdoors beneath the moss-draped trees. Social life included Saturday night gatherings with folk dancing and Sunday church services, followed by walks to the river and community singing.

**Challenges:** As public-school systems began providing transportation, the need for Shelter Neck diminished. The property was offered to Pender County for use as a hospital or a school for individuals with disabilities, but the county declined due to financial constraints.

**January 1932:** The property was transferred to the **Universalist Convention of North Carolina, Inc (UCONCI)** for the nominal sum of **one dollar**, the deed stating that the conveyance was made "for religious and community use."

The story of Shelter Neck is one of profound cultural interaction, bridging the gap between the urban North and the Southern swamplands. It highlights the transition of Victorian-era women, newly educated but barred from many professional fields, who found a vital outlet in "settlement work." Much of the school's success rested on the shoulders of one dedicated woman, Abby Peterson, whose death in 1918 signaled the institution's eventual decline. While the school no longer exists, its educational and cultural influence on the community remains a lasting legacy.