

# History

## History of Trinity, NC

The first settlers in the northwest corner of Randolph County arrived between 1763-1776, settling in what was called the Granville District. The land offices in the Granville District had been closed following the death of the English landowner, John Carteret, Baron Carteret of Hawnes, the second Earl Granville. When independence was declared in 1776, the Granville District was confiscated by the new government, along with all other land owned by persons loyal to the Crown. All the land became public lands and soon thereafter the State of North Carolina was issuing grants for tracts in the former Granville District. Hundreds of former squatters became landowners at last, purchasing the land where they may have lived for several years. The 1779 tax records of Randolph County list 25 families for the Trinity Township.

The Town of Trinity, named after Trinity College, was incorporated by Act of the North Carolina General Assembly at its 1868-69 Session. The act, published in *Private Laws of the State of North Carolina, Passed by the General Assembly at its Session 1868-'69* states that "The Town shall be two miles long from north to south, and one mile wide from east to west, the center of the Town to be the center of the principal College Building." Further sections of the act provided for election of a town magistrate and five commissioners. The town charter was ratified April 12, 1869, but the charter was rescinded in 1924. In this time frame everything in the community came to be measured from the college. Thus, the college was the official as well as the unofficial centerpiece of the town. In 1997 the city was re-incorporated

## A Town Influenced by Education

The first schoolhouses in the area were built by individuals for their own children and possibly for neighboring children. Then, as parents became more conscious about their children's education, schools were built for larger groups of children. One private school in the Trinity area established before 1835 was Brown's Schoolhouse. The first school master is unknown. However, at some time between 1830-1838, one of the masters at Brown's Schoolhouse was Allen M. Frazier, a pioneer Quaker. Mr. Frazier finally resigned his position and built another school house about three-quarters of a mile south of the first one, and was known as "Frazier's School House." It operated for more than fifty years at an unknown location on present day Turnpike Road. After Mr. Frazier left, Brantley York became the teacher in 1838. During the summer of 1838, Mr. York and the patrons of Brown's School House erected a new school. Although this new schoolhouse was larger than the old one, it soon became insufficient to accommodate the increasing enrollment. Mr. York experienced difficulty

in teaching sixty nine (69) pupils in a single room. Mr. York determined to attempt to establish a permanent institute of learning based upon an Education Association. In February 1839 the people of Brown's Schoolhouse met to organize a society for the support of an academy. During the meeting York was asked to suggest a name for the new institution, he suggested Union Institute. This name continued until changed to Normal College in 1851.

In 1841, the State of North Carolina issued a charter for Union Institute, turning it into an academy. From the days of Brantley York, the Academy was a boarding school. There were no dormitories, the students roomed and boarded in the homes of the people of the neighborhood.

The school was re-chartered in 1851 by the Legislature of the State of North Carolina as Normal College, and its graduates were licensed to teach in the public schools of the state. In 1859, the name of the institution is changed to Trinity College upon affiliation with the Methodist Church. Trinity College relocated to Durham, N.C. in 1892 and became Duke University.

The community was centered on Trinity High School, Trinity College's preparatory school which had moved into the old college building, by 1897. It operated as a department of Trinity College, continuing in the old college building from 1892-1908. Some teachers had stayed to teach at the high school and some had followed the college to Durham.

In 1908 Trinity High School was reorganized under the laws of North Carolina as a First Class High School. The buildings used were those formerly occupied by Trinity College. The property had recently undergone extensive repairs. It was secured by a lease and would be devoted entirely to the work of the school until the county could erect its own buildings. The school was supported by funds derived in part from local taxation, from county and state funds. Pupils coming from Trinity, New Market, Back Creek, Tabernacle and Randleman Townships could attend, under the laws of the state and the rulings of the County Board of Education at no tuition charge. In 1909 the Randolph County Board of Education started leasing the buildings and purchased them in 1919. In 1924 the original college building was demolished. A new building was built on the site, using the columns from the old college in the auditorium of the new school. This building served until 1968 when a new high school was built nearby.

The old high school then became Trinity Junior High School which later became Archdale Trinity Middle School. The building was destroyed 1981. The columns in the auditorium were used to make a gazebo in front of Braxton Craven School containing the bell from Trinity College's chapel.