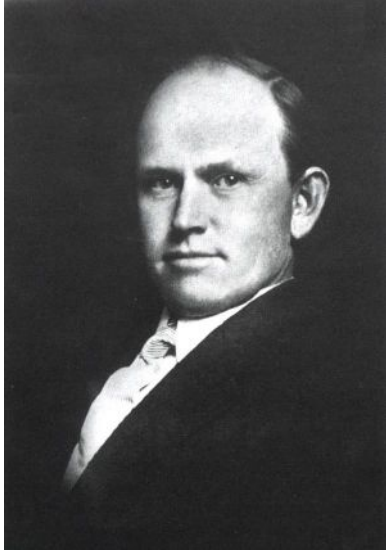


WILLIS BAXTER BOYD
History of Tennessee
by Will T. Hale & Dixon Merritt 1913
pgs. 1866 & 1867

Willis B. Boyd. Now president of Dixie College at Cookeville, one of the flourishing institutions of higher and better learning in Tennessee, Mr. Boyd has been actively identified with educational work since he was seventeen years of age, and has had a career of remarkable success in this field. He began teaching in the Cumberland mountains twenty years ago, and since then has spent a large portion of his time as executive head of the Mount Vale College in Clay county.



Picture source: Tennessee Technological University by Mancil Johnson and W. Calvin Dickinson, pg. 14. Willis Baxter Boyd was the first president of Dixie College, from 1912-1914. A graduate from Burritt College in Van Buren County, he attended the University of Chicago for graduate study. Boyd taught English literature and moral sciences at Dixie College.

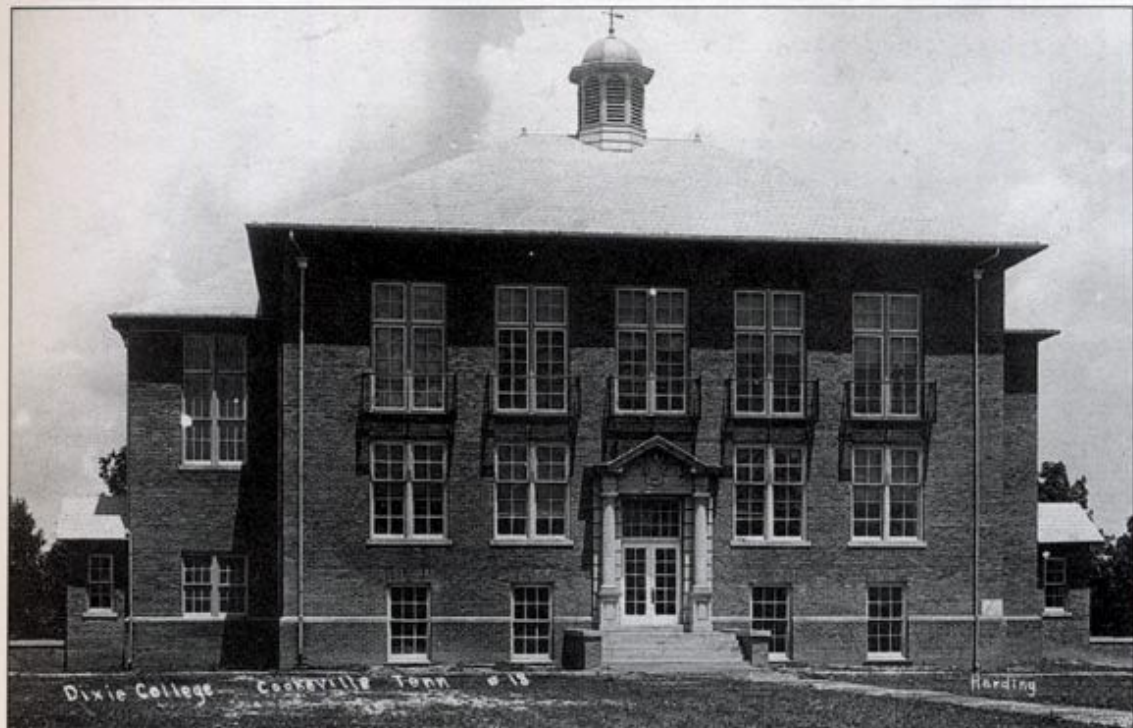
Willis B. Boyd was born in Bledsoe county, Tennessee, February 1, 1876, a son of Benjamin F. and Margaret (Howard) Boyd, both of whom were natives of Virginia, and came into Tennessee in the early part of the nineteenth century, settling in Bledsoe county, where they spent the remainder of their lives as substantial and respected citizens.

The paternal grandfather during the war was a Confederate sympathizer. The maternal grandfather was William Buckner Howard, the name of his wife being Cooper. He was born in North Carolina and was also an early settler of Tennessee and a farmer in Bledsoe county, during the balance of his life. Both parents of Professor Boyd were natives of Bledsoe county, the father born in 1851 and the mother in 1856. The father passed away in 1905 and the mother in 1892. They represented the cultured citizenship of old Tennessee, and both of them received their education at Sequatchee College, the old institution which was so prominent before and for a short time after the Civil war, but which no longer exists. The father was a builder and contractor by trade, and all his possessions were the result of a career of self-effort.

He and his wife had six children, Willis B. being the oldest, and the others named as follows: Brown W., a bookkeeper in Pipeville, Tennessee; Walter S., a traveling salesman in Oklahoma; Edwin Y. a farmer and merchant in Oklahoma; Leslie R., in the clerical department of the Southern Express Company at Chattanooga; Della J., the wife of Will Carey, at Olustee, Oklahoma. The father, though a man of modest means, thoroughly believed in education and managed to send all six of his children through college. He was a member of the Christian church, and in politics a Democrat. In his community he served on educational boards and at one time was a trustee of Burritt College at Spencer.

Professor Boyd attained his early education in the public schools, and subsequently entering Burritt College at Spencer was graduated in 1900. During the year 1908 he was a student in the University of Chicago. His career as teacher began in 1896 at Griffith school house in the mountains of Cumberland, where he taught for three years. He subsequently taught for two years at High View, and then went to Celina in Clay county, where he founded the Mount Vale College. He remained president of that college for eight years, and conducted an institution which was noted over a large section of country for its excellent instruction and the fine moral influences which environed the students. He built up his enrollment to two hundred students. In 1909 Mr. Boyd came to Cookeville to become president of the Dixie College, and during the first year the enrollment reached two hundred and twenty five students. He has a faculty of eight teachers, and the best facilities for learning and for moral progress are offered at this well known Tennessee College.

Professor Boyd on April 29, 1911, married Mrs. Nan D. Rauchfuss, a daughter of Charles Ford, a native of Tennessee, and a merchant and for some years a trustee of Putnam county. Mr. Boyd and wife are members of the Christian church and in politics he is a Democrat. During 1906 and 1907 he was elected and served as county superintendent of schools in Clay county. He has membership in the Tennessee State Teachers Association, being now a member of its executive committee and is also a member of the Middle Tennessee Teachers Association. He has done considerable lecture work for his church and in behalf of Sunday school organizations.



Built in 1911-1912, this was the only building of Dixie College, although architect William B. Stetner had drawn a complete campus sketch. All of the functions of the school occurred in this main building. Dixie College opened in 1912 and closed in 1915.



WILLIS BAXTER BOYD

b. 1 February 1876, Bledsoe Co., TN

d. 14 August 1945

Wife: Nan Denton (Ford) Ranchfuss md 29 April 1911.

Father: William J. Boyd

Mother: Margaret Howard

Buried: Cookeville City Cemetery, Putnam Co., TN

NAN DENTON (FORD) RANCHFUSS BOYD

b. 21 July 1872, Cookeville, Putnam Co., TN

d. 18 May 1946

Husbands: md 1st Oscar Rauchfuss, 14 June 1893 - md 2nd Willis Baxter Boyd, 29 April 1911.

Father: Charles Randolph Ford

Mother: Henrietta Pheobe Draper

Buried: Cookeville City Cemetery, Putnam Co., TN

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DR. WILLIS B. BOYD DIES OF HEART ATTACK AT HUMBOLDT

Putnam County Herald, Cookeville, TN

16 August 1945, front page

Dr. Willis Baxter Boyd, well known educator, lecturer and religious worker, died Tuesday, August 14, of a heart attack in Humboldt, where he had made his home for the past few months while serving as secretary of the Humboldt Chamber of Commerce. Becoming ill shortly before noon while at his office, he was taken to a Humboldt hospital where his death occurred about one o'clock.

Dr. Boyd was born and reared in Sequatchie Valley near Pikeville. He received his education in the community schools, Burrett College, at Spencer, and the University of Chicago, Chicago, Ill. Following elementary teaching he was president of Mount Vale College, in Celina. He resigned this position to accept the presidency of Dixie College, coming to Cookeville in 1911. he was dean of Milligan College in East Tennessee for a

period of sixteen years, and for an number of years was connected with the Tennessee Conservation Department and during this time, assisted in issuing a splendid pictorial history of Tennessee, "March of Progress in the Upper Cumberland of Tennessee" was among his latest publications. An eloquent speaker, he devoted much of his time to lecturing and for a period of two years, was located in Leesville, La., with the Chamber of Commerce. He was actively engaged in various phases of church work and for many years had been a member of the Christian Church.

Funeral services were conducted on Thursday afternoon in Cookeville at the Whitson Funeral Home chapel with Dr. Charles Sharpe, Lieutenant, United States Naval Chaplain Corps, officiating. Burial was in the City Cemetery.

He is survived by his widow, Mrs. Nan Ford Boyd. Other survivors are four brothers, Walter Boyd, of Nashville, Leslie Boyd of Chattanooga, Brown Boyd of Pikeville, Edwin Boyd of Los Angeles, Calif.; and a sister, Mrs. C. W. Carey of Colorado Springs, Colo., and his stepmother, Mrs. Frank Boyd, of Doyle.

Putnam County Herald, Cookeville, TN
1 March 1942

Dr. Willis Baxter Boyd, secretary of the Chamber of Commerce here, put out an appeal for apartments for TVA engineers and their families. Quarters for at least 20 people are needed. They're coming to help build power lines running from Dale Hollow and Center Hill dams. Completion of the dams will be a boon to the area, he predicts.

Putnam County Herald, Cookeville, TN
23 May 1946, Thursday, front page

Rites for Mrs. Nan Denton Ford Boyd, widow of Dr. Willis Baxter Boyd, who died at her home Saturday were conducted Sunday afternoon at the Whitson Funeral Home by J. B. Potter, pastor of the Central Ave. Christian Church of Humboldt. Burial was in the Cookeville City Cemetery.

Death came to Mrs. Boyd 2 days after she suffered a paralytic stroke. Her parents were the late Charles R. and Henrietta Draper Ford, pioneers of Cookeville while her husband was dean of the Christian Church Institution. She was a member of that religious denomination.

Her husband, who died 1 year ago, was also commissioner of the Tennessee Department of Conservation at one time, and was one of the founders as well as the first president of Dixie College, forerunner of Tennessee Tech.

Mrs. Boyd's survivors include 2 sisters, Miss Cora Ford and Mrs. Herbert Watson both of Cookeville; and a brother, James F. Ford of Chatam, Ala. One of Mrs. Boyd's nieces, Miss Charlotte Watson, had lived with her for some time.