

## **Elizabeth College** <sup>[1]</sup>

### **Elizabeth College**

by Stewart Lillard, 2006

See Also: [North Carolina Women's Colleges](#) <sup>[2]</sup>

Elizabeth College, a four-year college for women, opened in [Charlotte](#) <sup>[3]</sup> in 1897 under



NC 1909 Elizabeth College, Charlotte. Photo uploaded from Flickr. <sup>[4]</sup> the auspices of the Evangelical Lutheran Church. The aim of the institution was "to afford a broad and liberal culture for women; to furnish to young women an education in the classics, mathematics and sciences." Seeking a site for a Lutheran college for women, Lutheran Synod trustees Charles Banks King and C. L. Fisher sought bids from Columbia, S.C., and Charlotte. Charlotte offered 20 acres of land known as the old Torrence homestead on a hill overlooking the city. Against Charlotte's pledge of \$12,800 in cash, the trustees of the institution agreed to spend between \$50,000 and \$75,000 toward the improvement of the property. King named the new campus Elizabeth College, in honor of his mother-in-law, Ann Elizabeth Watts, wife of Gerard Snowden Watts of Baltimore, Md. Later, the Gerard Conservatory of Music was given by Charles King's brother-in-law, [Durham](#) <sup>[5]</sup> tobacco magnate [George W. Watts](#) <sup>[6]</sup>, in memory of his father. The Watts family provided most of the money for the college.

In 1915, King, suffering from ill health, moved the college to Salem, Va., where it was consolidated with Virginia's Roanoke College for Women. At the time of the merger, each institution enrolled about 200 students. In 1921 the Virginia institution burned to the ground, and most of Elizabeth College's records were lost. The college property in Charlotte at Elizabeth and Hawthorne Avenues was purchased by Presbyterian Hospital, which moved into the main brick building. This building continued to serve the hospital and the School of Nursing until it was torn down in 1980 to make room for a major building expansion. As late as the 1950s, the Elizabeth College Alumnae Association continued to meet in Charlotte.

#### **References:**

LeGette Blythe, *Hornets' Nest: The Story of Charlotte and Mecklenburg County* (1961).

Mildred M. McEwen, *Queens College: Yesterday and Today* (1980).

#### **Additional Resource:**

Elizabeth College Yearbooks: <https://lib.digitalnc.org/search?In=en&p=691:%22Elizabeth+College%22%20AND%20655:%22Yearbooks%22&sf=year&so=a> <sup>[7]</sup>

#### **Image Credit:**

NC 1909 Elizabeth College, Charlotte. Photo uploaded from Flickr user Snapshotsofthepast on July 20, 2008. Available from <https://www.flickr.com/photos/oldeyankee/2686360002/> <sup>[4]</sup> (accessed May 2, 2012).

#### **Subjects:**

[Education](#) <sup>[8]</sup>

[Universities and colleges](#) <sup>[9]</sup>

[Women](#) <sup>[10]</sup>

#### **Authors:**

[Lillard, Stewart](#) <sup>[11]</sup>

#### **Origin - location:**

[Charlotte](#) <sup>[12]</sup>

#### **From:**

[Encyclopedia of North Carolina, University of North Carolina Press.](#) <sup>[13]</sup>

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## LINKS

[1] <https://www.ncpedia.org/elizabeth-college> [2] <https://www.ncpedia.org/education/womens-colleges> [3] <https://www.ncpedia.org/geography/charlotte> [4] <https://www.flickr.com/photos/oldeyankee/2686360002/> [5] <https://www.ncpedia.org/geography/durham-city> [6] <https://www.ncpedia.org/biography/watts-george-washington> [7] <https://lib.digitalnc.org/search?ln=en&p=691:%22Elizabeth+College%22%20AND%20655:%22Yearbooks%22&sf=year&so=a> [8] <https://www.ncpedia.org/category/subjects/education> [9] <https://www.ncpedia.org/category/subjects/universities-and-> [10] <https://www.ncpedia.org/category/subjects/women> [11] <https://www.ncpedia.org/category/authors/lillard-stewart> [12] <https://www.ncpedia.org/category/origin-location/piedmon-24> [13] <https://www.ncpedia.org/category/entry-source/encyclopedia->