

# **Religion, Community, and Relaxation: Religious Assemblies in Black Mountain, North Carolina and Their Connection to the Chautauqua Movement**

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## **Abstract**

Since the turn of the twentieth century, religious assemblies have been important to the town of Black Mountain, North Carolina. The different religious assemblies in Black Mountain, including Montreat, Ridgecrest, and Christmount, played an essential role in the development of the town. Even before this, however, religious movements such as the Chautauqua Movement had a significant impact on the United States. The Chautauqua Movement was a national religious movement that played a key role in American society, culture, and politics. Scholars have looked at the significance of religion on a localized scale through the establishment of religious centers. Although they have examined these centers individually in terms of their origins and development, scholars have overlooked the influence of the Chautauqua Movement on these Black Mountain assemblies. To help fill this gap, this thesis seeks to explore the importance of several of the religious assemblies to the town and their connection to the Chautauqua Movement.

## **1. Body of Paper**

It is an intellectual center -- for the dissemination of Christian intelligence relating to God's word and His work. It is a training school for Christian workers. It is a center of spiritual power which radiates in concentric circles to the uttermost bounds of our church and on to the uttermost parts of the earth. Montreat is a haven of rest for the weary -- a retreat for the enjoyment of pure and delightful Christian fellowship.<sup>1</sup>

Reverend Jas O. Reavis wrote this in a letter to Reverend Dr. R. C. Anderson of the Montreat Conference Center on September 27, 1911. Robert Campbell Anderson was a Presbyterian minister and President of the Mountain Retreat Association of Montreat from 1911 to 1946. Many viewed him as the developer and builder of the modern Montreat Conference Center.<sup>2</sup> Rev. Reavis wrote this letter to congratulate Rev. Dr. Anderson on his call to the presidency of Montreat. He then applauded the religious conference center for its past successes for the Church and all Christians. He finished his letter by writing about his excitement for Anderson's upcoming presidency and all that he would do for the "efficiency and growth" of Montreat by his "presence and leadership."<sup>3</sup> This letter became part of a booklet put together by Anderson that explained what Montreat was and why it was so remarkable. It is also an example of just how life-changing religious assemblies and conference centers were for those who visited.

Since the turn of the twentieth century, religious assemblies and conference centers have been important to the town of Black Mountain and everyone who has taken part in their conferences, programs, and other activities. The numerous religious assemblies in Black Mountain, including Montreat, Ridgecrest, and Christmount, have played an essential role in the development of the town. Even before the twentieth century, however, religious movements have had a significant impact on the United States. The Chautauqua Movement, which began in New York in the late-nineteenth century, influenced many religious communities in parts of the United States, including those religious centers in Black Mountain.<sup>4</sup> According to Richard D. Starnes, Chautauqua assemblies played a key role in American society,

culture, and politics by “emphasiz[ing] current events, religious education, and cultural programs such as poetry readings, concerts and art classes.”<sup>5</sup> The Movement influenced religious denominations throughout the country to establish permanent assemblies and gather for worship, devotion, and leisure both in the summer and year-round. In *Chautauqua: A Center for Education, Religion, and the Arts in America*, Theodore Morrison stated that the Movement also provided “an example of institutional continuity” in a “world wrenching itself with change.”<sup>6</sup> This explains how, as the nation went through depressions, wars, and other social and political changes, the Chautauqua Institution remained steady and supported those who followed it. This was important to smaller religious communities, who looked to the Chautauqua for support on what to do in times of need.

In the North Carolina mountains alone, there were once more than one hundred religious conference centers, assemblies, and summer camps. Beginning in the 1890s, Western North Carolina became home to a number of religious retreats, conference centers, camps, and summer meeting grounds. These centers combined religion, leisure, and mountain scenery. By World War I, the region was home to popular resorts for southern Methodists, Baptists, and Presbyterians, some of the South’s largest religious denominations. The greatest challenge for these centers was separating religion and recreation. Although both were important, the leaders of the centers worked to make sure that religion remained the main part of assembly activities. These centers became necessary means of shaping Southern religious life, especially concerning social reform policy, controversies within denominations, and civil rights.<sup>7</sup> According to Starnes, these centers became sites where faithful visitors could “come, relax, and enjoy the same kinds of experiences as secular tourists in the company of fellow believers.”<sup>8</sup> The religious assemblies in Black Mountain are similar to, and in some ways modeled after, the Chautauqua Movement, even though some of the leaders resisted basing themselves on the national movement from the very beginning.

Scholarship on the Chautauqua Movement and Black Mountain religious assemblies is significant when looking at the connections between the two establishments. Scholars view the Chautauqua Movement as a national religious movement that played an influential role on American society, culture, and politics. Scholars have also looked at religious institutions on more localized scales, such as those that occurred in Black Mountain, through the establishment of religious centers. There are a number of academic works regarding both the different religious assemblies and conference centers in Black Mountain, specifically, as well as the religious movements that took place in the United States more broadly.

The Chautauqua Movement was a highly influential religious and educational movement that developed throughout the United States in the late-nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. The cultural reforms and politics surrounding the Chautauqua Movement have been especially important to scholars such as Theodore Morrison, Joseph E. Gould, and Andrew C. Reiser. The difference between education and entertainment are important aspects of the Chautauqua Movement. In *The Chautauqua Movement*, Gould analyzes the significance of adult education to the Movement from its inception in 1874 to the end of World War I. He explains that “the Chautauqua Movement is best remembered...for the faintly gaudy era of the tent circuits” in which groups pitched big brown “tents of righteousness” and gave presentations on Chautauqua culture.<sup>9</sup> According to Gould, these presentations were more entertaining than educational for many people. While Gould claims that the Chautauqua Movement was more entertaining than educational, Rieser argues that it was successful in educating the public. In *The Chautauqua Moment*, Rieser looks at the Chautauqua as the center of cultural and political history at the turn of the twentieth century. He explains that the role of the Chautauqua was to “educate the public, inform and enlighten the people, and instruct them in the loftier aspects of citizenship.”<sup>10</sup> He asserts that the Movement reached millions of adults through its education programs, summer assemblies, reading clubs, and traveling tours. Debates on whether the Chautauqua Movement was more educational or entertaining are important when analyzing the social impact of the Movement on the United States both nationally and locally. The Chautauqua Movement not only influenced the nation through its educational and entertainment programs, but served as a model for the establishment of smaller religious communities over the years, such as the Black Mountain conference centers.

Richard D. Starnes wrote about the local significance of these religious centers to Black Mountain and the greater Western North Carolina community as well as the connection of these centers to the Chautauqua Movement. Starnes, author of *Creating the Land of the Sky: Tourism and Society in Western North Carolina*, describes religious assemblies and conference centers in Black Mountain as “religious tourism.”<sup>11</sup> He connects the Chautauqua Movement to the religious assemblies that developed in Black Mountain, specifically those of Ridgecrest and Montreat. According to Starnes, “over time and by degrees, each resort broadened its programs and entertainment, becoming more like Chautauquas but maintaining their strong religious focus.”<sup>12</sup> He writes that the founder of Ridgecrest did not want his assembly to become like the Chautauqua, which focused more on entertainment than religious education. The founders of Montreat, however, were “more comfortable with the Chautauqua label,” but “agreed with their Baptist brethren about the supremacy of religion over entertainment at their retreats.”<sup>13</sup> This source is helpful when analyzing the

significance and history of religious tourism in Western North Carolina. Starnes' brief discussion of the Chautauqua is an effective local case study of Chautauqua influence on Black Mountain religious assemblies.

Scholars have also written about each conference center individually. Although these pieces are more celebratory in nature, they contribute to existing scholarship on the different religious assemblies and conference centers in the Black Mountain area. In *A Flowing Stream*, Elizabeth Maxwell discusses the history of Montreat from its origins to the late twentieth century. Maxwell asserts that the founders established the conference center in Montreat because they believed it was a suitable place for "Christian retreat, inspiration, study, and relaxation."<sup>14</sup> According to Maxwell, those who participated in church retreats, study seminars, and other church-sponsored programs allowed Montreat to thrive and grow.<sup>15</sup> *A Flowing Stream* is important when looking at the development and progress of the Montreat Conference Center. Kenneth McAnear wrote *Ridgecrest: Mountain of Faith* for Ridgecrest's seventy-fifth anniversary. He writes about what drew Ridgecrest's founders to Black Mountain by asserting that the area's climate and scenic beauty made the valley known for its spiritual, mental, and physical healing.<sup>16</sup> He also explains the significance of religion to the center as well as the different programs at Ridgecrest over the years and says that the purpose of the religious assembly "always was envisioned as an educational experience, a time of training and learning to endow church members with the ability to serve better in their churches."<sup>17</sup> Although there is little scholarship on the Christmount Christian Assembly, Rose Shivar wrote about the history of the assembly and its significance to Black Mountain. In *A History of Christmount Christian Assembly*, Shivar discusses the origins of the assembly and influential figures who helped the assembly develop and grow.<sup>18</sup> Scholarship on Montreat, Ridgecrest, and Christmount as individual conference centers is significant when looking at the effects these centers have played on their members as well as the town of Black Mountain. These works are also important when comparing the development of the assemblies to the Chautauqua Movement.

Although there is less scholarship concerning religious assemblies in Black Mountain, the fact that scholars have taken the time to write anything about the different conference centers in the town show that these centers are important to the development of religion on both local and broader terms. There is a large amount of information about local and national religious movements, but there is little scholarship about the two combined. Richard Starnes is the only scholar who has looked at the Chautauqua in conjunction with the Black Mountain religious centers. In his research, however, he does not give an in-depth analysis of the influence of the Chautauqua Movement on Ridgecrest, Montreat, and Christmount, which is what this thesis aims to do. This research will showcase the influence of one major national religious movement, the Chautauqua Movement, on more localized religious groups like those in Black Mountain, as seen through the establishment of a number of different religious assemblies and conference centers.

Montreat, Ridgecrest, and Christmount have played a significant role in the development of Black Mountain and their respective religious communities by blending faith and leisure in order to allow Christians to spend time with God in the mountains. As programs evolved and facilities improved, attendance at the retreats grew, allowing the assemblies to create temporary communities that mixed religion and recreation.<sup>19</sup> Starnes claimed that, although these centers faced many financial crises and changes in leadership over the years, "they remained important centers of religious education and missionary training while maintaining their role as places of rest and renewal" and making substantial contributions to Black Mountain's tourist economy.<sup>20</sup> Presbyterians built the first church retreat. The Mountain Retreat Association (MRA) founded the Montreat Conference Center in 1897.<sup>21</sup> The Ridgecrest Conference Center, established in 1907 by B.W. Spilman, is a Southern Baptist facility located on the outskirts of Black Mountain. According to *The Ridgecrest Story*, "Southern Baptists have gone up to Ridgecrest for fellowship and for refreshment of body and spirit. It has become a symbol of their high ideals of Christian brotherhood, missionary endeavor, Bible study, and dependence upon God for personal guidance."<sup>22</sup> The Disciples of Christ founded Christmount in the 1940s as a retreat, camp, and conference center for the Church of Christ. It is now the national camp and conference center for the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ).<sup>23</sup> These three religious centers were set apart from the secular world. They were not public places, open to anyone and everyone, but were meant to be places where followers of Christ could meet with other Christians and learn about God while relaxing and enjoying the fresh mountain air.<sup>24</sup>

The founders of Ridgecrest, Montreat, and Christmount created the assemblies to be places where people could gather to worship God as well as to relax and rejuvenate. According to Starnes, for southern churchgoers, the mountains and religious conference centers located there "were a place of quiet reflection where people could grow closer to God and prepare for His work."<sup>25</sup> The purposes for establishment of Ridgecrest, Montreat, and Christmount had strong similarities to those of the Chautauqua. As Vincent wrote, the Chautauqua Movement had the purpose of "improving methods of Biblical instruction in the Sunday School and in the family."<sup>26</sup> It worked to promote religious education for all men, women, and children so that they could become more informed and thoughtful Christians as well as better members of society.<sup>27</sup>

The Chautauqua Assembly opened as a Sunday School institute in Fair Point, New York on August 4, 1874. The founders of the Institution meant for it to be a place where people could learn about religious culture and how to be

true worshippers and teachers of God's Word. According to John Heyl Vincent, one of the founders of the Chautauqua Movement, "the basis of the Chautauqua work was in the line of normal training, with the purpose of improving methods of biblical instruction in the Sunday school and the family."<sup>28</sup> The first meeting opened with a two-week session of religious-based lectures, meetings, conferences, practicums, and other programs.<sup>29</sup> The conferences grew so large in popularity that many people who lived too far away from the original assembly banded together and created their own assemblies, known as "little Chautauquas." Private groups, communities, and religious denominations founded hundreds of self-styled Chautauquas. Although the Chautauqua did not support these assemblies itself, they had the same basic features as the group.<sup>30</sup> These "little Chautauquas" spread throughout the United States, showing the influence the original Chautauqua Institute had on the nation.

Although these assemblies' purposes of establishment were like those of the Chautauqua, the Black Mountain conference centers did not always intentionally pattern themselves after the Chautauqua Movement. In fact, some of the leaders rejected the similarities. Although all of the centers had purposes of establishment similar to the Chautauqua Movement, the founders of Ridgecrest were the only people who explicitly rejected Chautauqua ideals. The founders of Ridgecrest had purposes of establishment similar to those of the Chautauqua, including the promotion of religious education and the Christian community, but did not base their ideas on the Chautauqua, as did Montreat and Christmount. Ridgecrest started as a revelation from God with a specific purpose. B. W. Spilman had a revelation that Southern Baptists should have a place where they could meet throughout the summer "to discuss in a quiet, restful, congenial, spiritual atmosphere their problems...within the realm of the thinking and doing of the Baptist people as [they] attempt to set forward the Kingdom of God on Earth."<sup>31</sup> He was afraid that Ridgecrest would become 'merely a summer resort,' however, and wanted people to have an enjoyable time while also taking part in the primary purpose of the assembly, which was to work for the Kingdom of God.<sup>32</sup> This fear of becoming merely a summer resort shows some rejection of the Chautauqua Movement because many believed that the Chautauqua Institution was too secular and more of a place of vacation than a place to learn about God. In *Ridgecrest: Mountain of Faith*, McAnear wrote that the purpose of Ridgecrest "was always envisioned as an educational experience, a time of training and learning to endow church members with the ability to serve better in their churches."<sup>33</sup> This connects to the Chautauqua Movement because, like the Ridgecrest founders, the Chautauqua founders said that the institution was meant to "exalt education."<sup>34</sup> This is important because, even though the leaders of Ridgecrest did not want it to be a summer resort like the Chautauqua Institution, they did have positive views towards education that were similar to the national movement.

Unlike Ridgecrest, Montreat's founders established the conference center for reasons similar to those of the Chautauqua. In a letter to his friends written in 1897, John C. Collins, a congregationalist minister and one of the founders of Montreat, wrote that he wanted to develop a center that was firstly a place for the rest and well-being of the Christian people and secondly an assembly for religious and educational purposes.<sup>35</sup> The Spring 1907 *Mountain Retreat Bulletin* stated that the founders of Montreat wanted to make it "something of a Chautauqua."<sup>36</sup> This is significant because it is a direct reference to and acceptance of the Chautauqua Movement. A similar bulletin released later that year said that the main purpose of Montreat was for it to be a center of religious life, influence, and work. The authors of this bulletin wanted to build a large auditorium suitable for different types of entertainments and musical features.<sup>37</sup> This relates to the Chautauqua ideal that religious education could relate to entertainment in order to keep people attentive and ready to learn.<sup>38</sup> The founders of Montreat designed the center to be a year-round model Christian community, with a strong intellectual, moral, and spiritual atmosphere. Summer conferences were meant to be educational, unifying, inspirational, instructional, and helpful in spreading Christian truths.<sup>39</sup> This element of unification relates to the Chautauqua Movement. Vincent wrote that the purpose of the Movement was to join people "as worshippers together in Christ."<sup>40</sup> This notion of unification was a founding principle for both Montreat and the Chautauqua Movement, showing stark similarities between the two groups.

Like Montreat, the purpose of Christmount is also connected to that of the Chautauqua Movement. According to its Identity and Mission Statement, "Christmount is a gathering place for God's people serving Jesus Christ, the church, and the world through a camp, conference, and living" that is meant to "build caring relationships, provide opportunities for growth and change for individuals and groups...and expand the ministries of Christmount to all people while remaining deeply rooted in the heritage, vision, and ministry of the Christian Church."<sup>41</sup> Shivar said that the purpose of the Christmount corporation was "to provide training for workers engaged in mental and spiritual improvement of men and women with special emphasis upon work for young people, and to carry on and generally engage in other religious, charitable and educational activities."<sup>42</sup> The educational aspects of these purpose statements are similar to those of the Chautauqua Movement, even though the Christmount founders did not specifically refer to these ideas as coming from the Chautauqua. As Gould stated, the Chautauqua Movement was a response to a need for "something better" through education.<sup>43</sup> This relates to the purposes for all three religious centers, with the founders

wanting something more for their denominations and the Christian people and establishing their respective centers as a result.

The beauty and landscape of Ridgecrest, Montreat, and Christmount also connect to the Chautauqua Movement in terms of why the founders of these centers established their respective assemblies and why people visited once they were incorporated. Ridgecrest consisted of a wooded mountain environment with many springs and streams, an impressive landscape with high elevations, and peaceful and inspirational scenery.<sup>44</sup> This scenery allowed people to refresh their minds and connect with God. A Chinese exchange student who participated in the Ridgecrest Baptist Student Retreat in 1951 wrote, "Ridgecrest, with its hills and lakes, trees and buildings is such a beautiful place. The students coming from different states, all studied, worshipped, prayed, and played together with a congeniality which was amazing."<sup>45</sup> This shows the impact the scenery had on visitors to Ridgecrest. Although the Chautauqua Movement originated next to a lake in New York and not in the mountains, the appreciation of scenery is similar for both Ridgecrest and the Chautauqua Institution. Chautauqua leaders placed an emphasis on nature, calling it their "textbook," "laboratory," and "teacher." They used nature as both a means of moral growth as well as a place of relaxation and recreation.<sup>46</sup> This acknowledgement of the landscape as assisting in the purpose of religious movements is notable when connecting the significance the Chautauqua and Ridgecrest placed on scenery and nature.

The climate alone was a reason people came to Montreat. R. C. Anderson said that Montreat was one of the most beautiful spots in America because of its unsurpassed climate conditions, great religious and educational centers, and ideal community.<sup>47</sup> The summer climate was cool, with chilly mornings and evenings cool enough for small fires. Winters in Montreat were suitable for those wanting to escape the harsh winters of the North, but with a more refreshing climate than that of Florida.<sup>48</sup> In a short letter to Reverend R. C. Anderson, Montreat visitor R. A. Webb wrote, "I have been going to Montreat for five years. I classify its delights and benefits as (1) physical, (2) social, (3) intellectual, (4) religious. It is a sanatorium. Its air is worth \$100 an acre. Full of ozone and tonic, it sends the tired man, especially the tired preacher, back home with life-tides fuller and bolder."<sup>49</sup> This letter is one example of why people came to Montreat and why its founders established it as a center in the first place. It also connects Montreat to Chautauqua ideals because leaders of both the Chautauqua Movement and Montreat Conference Center not only focused on religious and intellectual growth, but on the physical and social gains of their centers as well.<sup>50</sup>

The aesthetic and practical aspects of the land drew people to Christmount. In November 1961, *The Christmount Voice*, Christmount's published newspaper, wrote about what drew people to the assembly. The newspaper said that the property had many native flowers and shrubs, soft spring water, a climate with cool summers and moderate winters, and that it was a good distance from the town of Black Mountain and other religious assemblies.<sup>51</sup> When establishing the Chautauqua Institution, the founders of the Chautauqua Movement made sure that their center would be in a suitable location. According to Rieser, "the railroad, the emergence of local manufacturing, and the rise of middle-class tourism infused [Chautauqua] county with new revenues and linked it to the larger web of urban markets and institutions."<sup>52</sup> Although the founders of Christmount were not focusing on the establishment of their center through an economic lens, like the Chautauqua, as much as through an aesthetic and practical lens, it is important to see the reasoning of establishment behind both groups.

Montreat, Ridgecrest, and Christmount have similar origins, which are significant when looking at the influence of larger national religious movements to their formations, such as the Chautauqua. The founders of Ridgecrest did not consider themselves a 'little Chautauqua,' although there are similarities between the origins of the center and the Chautauqua Movement. Dr. B. W. Spilman was one of the leaders of the southern Sunday School movement. Appointed in 1901, Spilman was the first field secretary of the Southern Baptist Convention Sunday School Board. He viewed the summer assembly as an essential place for Southern Baptists to train as teachers and missionaries, a place where ministers could reflect and rejuvenate, and a place of fellowship for all Christians.<sup>53</sup> According to McAnear, "each of the five years that he served as Sunday School Secretary of North Carolina, Spilman conducted mass meetings called Mountain Chautauquas...This too was training for developing Ridgecrest. It also convinced Spilman that a nationwide gathering of people for Sunday School work was urgently needed."<sup>54</sup> Spilman patterned the North Carolina Baptist Sunday School Chautauqua after the Chautauqua Movement, with meetings offering programs such as lectures, plays, operas, orchestra concerts, and classes for training Sunday School teachers.<sup>55</sup> This shows that the Chautauqua Movement had a direct influence on the founders of Ridgecrest from the very beginning, even though Spilman rejected many of its ideas. Spilman seemingly patterned the Sunday School aspect of the Ridgecrest institution after the Chautauqua Movement, even referring to the Chautauqua by name.

Leaders at Montreat were comfortable with Chautauqua ideals, but like Spilman, they believed that religion should reign supreme at their retreat. In 1897, Reverend John C. Collins formed a partnership called the Mountain Retreat Association (MRA).<sup>56</sup> Collins bought a tract of land and established a resort for rejuvenation, recreation, education, and Christian work and fellowship on it. The Mountain Retreat Association was originally interdenominational and not connected or controlled by one single church.<sup>57</sup> People from all denominations visited the assembly, including

Methodists, Baptists, Reformed Presbyterians, Episcopalians, and Lutherans. Montreat welcomed all denominations as stockholders, members, guests, and residents.<sup>58</sup> The center did, however, work to keep Presbyterians in many leadership positions. This is similar to the Chautauqua Movement, which grew to become a multid denominational institution with Methodist leaders. Although the Chautauqua Institution began as a Methodist group, its leaders allowed people from all denominations to attend meetings.<sup>59</sup> Similarities between interdenominationalism at Montreat and the Chautauqua Institution are notable because they exemplified how different groups of people could come together and take part in the conferences and other programs at their respective assemblies.

Although Christmount originated many years after Ridgecrest and Montreat, the founding of the conference center has connections to the Chautauqua Movement. For the Christmount founders, the decision to purchase the Black Mountain property developed after the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) held meetings at Montreat and other assemblies in the town. After inspecting several sites in Black Mountain, they realized the need for their own assembly there.<sup>60</sup> By 1950, volunteers and guests enjoyed outdoor worship services presided over by Dr. Howard S. Hilley, the first Executive Secretary. Early planning meetings at Christmount took place in an old barn, the only remaining building on the property. Visitors sat on pews made of wooden planks and used a wooden pulpit and old piano for early conferences. As a result of this, many claimed that Christmount was literally born in a stable.<sup>61</sup> The Chautauqua Movement's founders also held early meetings outside. According to Rieser, they "focused on wilderness worship in which they could find and connect with God's presence in nature."<sup>62</sup> Although these outside meetings were not due to the same reasons, Christmount because of a lack of resources and the Chautauqua because of intentional worship of nature, it is notable to look at similar styles of worship between the two groups.

The growth and development of the Montreat, Ridgecrest, and Christmount conference centers are similar through the challenges and processes they faced, even though they originated at different times. These challenges brought them closer together and allowed them to develop into thriving religious centers. These developments also have connections to the Chautauqua Movement, which was still progressing at this time. In 1969, Ridgecrest officials began to make limited facilities available for year-round weekend retreats and small conferences, which marked the beginning of a whole new era of programming. Although there were many obstacles concerning this year-round programming, such as limited winter service personnel and a lack of promotion, it marked the beginning of what was to become a productive part of Ridgecrest just a few years later.<sup>63</sup> This year-round programming was originally a Chautauqua ideal, with assemblies and traveling tent circuits operating during every season so that they could reach as many people as possible.<sup>64</sup> Although Ridgecrest did not travel in circuits, its year-round operations were like those of the Chautauqua.

Although it did face challenges, Montreat had overall successful development in terms of conferences, leadership, and growth. Dr. Philip Howerton, President of Montreat from 1906 to 1911, had the idea of forming a company and buying Montreat from the Presbyterian Church. Once bought, Montreat leaders could use the center in the summer for "Bible Study, lectures, theological schools, Chautauquas, and the like."<sup>65</sup> Dr. Howerton specifically referenced Chautauquas in his proposal. The way and place in which he used this word, however, makes it seem as if the term Chautauqua meant something more specific than just a space for intellectual growth to happen, but a place specifically for secular education. Since he did not put theological schools and Chautauquas together in his proposal, these two institutions meant something different to him, with Chautauquas being more secular than theological schools. Dr. Howerton also envisioned that leaders could work on the church's behalf, even though the church would not own or control it.<sup>66</sup> Although this plan did not work out in Howerton's favor, causing him to resign, the fact that he saw Chautauquas as an important part of the assembly is significant on both a local and national scale because it shows the impact the Chautauqua Movement had on developing religious assemblies such as Montreat.<sup>67</sup>

The establishment of a newspaper for the Christmount Conference Center exemplified its successful development as well as publicized activities and garnered interest for visitors. Although Montreat and Ridgecrest utilized newspapers to some extent, Christmount's reliance on its monthly assembly newspaper to advertise conferences and circulate information was unbeatable. Established in March 1953, the purpose of *The Christmount Voice* was to "inform its subscribers as to the conferences being held here...to give information about the accommodations, to give publicity to the ways in which friends can help support and sustain the Assembly."<sup>68</sup> The newspaper also gave information about Christmount leadership. For example, after Christmount President L. T. New retired from his position as Vice-President of the Imperial Life Insurance company in December 1953 to focus solely on Christmount, assembly leaders released an article about their excitement to have President New at Christmount full-time.<sup>69</sup> *The Christmount Voice* not only allowed people to keep up with what was happening at Christmount, but it also advertised the assembly through its circulation. In September 1954, the assembly advertised for a weekend retreat that it would be holding that Fall.<sup>70</sup> In April 1970, officials released an article in the newspaper about the establishment of a new guest house that would allow the assembly to host more youth and adult conferences year-round.<sup>71</sup> Newspaper articles

like these allowed Christmount to advertise its assembly while also sharing important news and developments concerning the conference center.

Montreat, Ridgecrest, and Christmount have established a wide array of programs and conferences throughout the years, some of which are remarkably similar to those of the Chautauqua Movement, while others are starkly different. Religious training programs, including those for Sunday School teachers, women, clergy, and laymen were common in both the Black Mountain assemblies and the Chautauqua Movement. Black Mountain assembly and Chautauqua programs differed, however, in terms of their artistic offerings and youth programs. The Chautauqua focused a great deal on arts education, even establishing a Society of Fine Arts in 1885.<sup>72</sup> Although the Black Mountain assemblies often held recreational activities involving art, they never had specific programs solely for art education. In his book about his time as President of Montreat, Calvin Grier Davis only referred to art in terms of recreation and never in connection with established programs.<sup>73</sup> This is similar to Ridgecrest and Christmount, who never referred to art in terms of the programs that they established for visitors, but in terms of recreational activities that visitors could enjoy while not taking part in services or church-related programs.

Concerning programs and conferences, B.W. Spilman wanted to keep Ridgecrest from becoming a Chautauqua. He did not oppose the Chautauqua Movement and supported some of its programs, but argued that Ridgecrest should focus more on religious programs than secular entertainment.<sup>74</sup> Although the founders of the Chautauqua Movement based it on religious ideals, many of their programs and entertainment tended to be more secular. For example, according to Vincent, the Chautauqua Literary and Scientific Circle (CLSC) was a program meant to educate its members and “promote habits of reading and study in nature, art, science, and in secular literature, in connection with the routine of daily life.”<sup>75</sup> This explicit mention of secular literature shows the Chautauqua’s departure from Christian values in terms of one of its programs, which is one of the reasons why Spilman felt that Ridgecrest leaders should be careful when basing their programs off those of the Chautauqua. Some of the more popular programs at Ridgecrest included those concerning education, Sunday School, evangelism, missions, orphanage work, and various other lines of religious activity.<sup>76</sup> According to B. W. Spilman, one of Ridgecrest’s defining programs was its Sunday School program, in which the leaders in Sunday School work in the South could meet up, discuss their work, and decide what else they could do to better their program.<sup>77</sup> Ridgecrest also had an annual Bible Conference, with training workshops for church librarians, radio and television broadcasters, church historians, and other church volunteers or leaders who were not part of the clergy.<sup>78</sup> Educational programs were a key component for both Ridgecrest and the Chautauqua, showing connections between the two institutions. Ridgecrest even had a School for Religious Education, in which guests could visit and learn about how to be teachers of the Christian religion.<sup>79</sup> Although the Chautauqua Institution established more secular educational programs than did Ridgecrest, with programs such as the Chautauqua Literary and Scientific Circle, one cannot ignore the focus on education these two institutions established at their assemblies.

Programs at Montreat are important when analyzing connections between the assembly and the Chautauqua Movement. Montreat’s original programs included training classes for people to learn how to do work for Christ. The founders of Montreat believed that “every Christian should do personal work for Christ among his fellows,” but realized that many did not do this because they did not know how.<sup>80</sup> The purpose of these original programs was to teach Christians how to fulfill God’s Word by going forth and telling others about Him. Other programs included conferences to discuss problems of the Church and Christian life. These problems included issues with “the Country Church, the City Church, and all other branches of Church enterprise” as well as those problems concerning how to help church members best live Christian lives.<sup>81</sup> Between 1985 and 1995, year-round use of the conference center increased. After the summer conference season ended, Montreat encouraged smaller groups to visit for special events or meetings. The center hosted church retreats, study seminars, summer staff reunions, board and committee meetings, and community events. These programs helped keep the Montreat facilities in use and to maintain the conference center’s public profile.<sup>82</sup> The Chautauqua Movement started as a summer-only facility as well. When its leaders saw its success, however, they began to hold year-round programs and conferences, which were also highly successful.<sup>83</sup> Like the Chautauqua, Montreat leaders noted the successes of their summer conferences, leading them to establish year-round events.

Throughout the twentieth century, the General Assembly of Montreat organized, promoted, financed, and administered conferences and programs. These programs included the Men’s Conference, Leadership Conference, Faculty Conference, and Music Conference.<sup>84</sup> A handout from the Montreat Leadership Conference stated that the general courses would “help the teachers, leaders and superintendents of small schools with their problems” as well as “be devoted to discussion of various phases of the program of religious education.”<sup>85</sup> Montreat’s Music Conference was similar to the Chautauqua’s orchestra program, in which a group called the ‘Chautauqua Symphony’ performed at Sunday evening services as well as special events throughout the week.<sup>86</sup> Like the Chautauqua Symphony, the Montreat Music Conference taught music to visitors and held performances throughout the week and during Sunday services. In a letter discussing the benefits of all that Montreat had to offer, Montreat visitor James I. Vance wrote,

“Church workers, Christian laymen and ministers, missionaries from the home field and the foreign field, church people of all ages, gather there in large numbers, and listen to leaders in the various departments of our church work.”<sup>87</sup> This shows one visitor’s realization that Montreat had many programs to offer for a large variety of people.

Christmount conducted many inspirational and instructional programs that had stark similarities to the Chautauqua Movement. For example, Christmount Week celebrated the religious center by offering a week of spiritual development.<sup>88</sup> For Christmount leaders, spiritual development involved helping visitors become stronger in their faiths by learning about God and how to teach others about Christianity. Spiritual development was a key aspect of the Chautauqua Movement as well. According to Vincent, the institution worked to build the “mental, social, moral, and religious culture of all people.”<sup>89</sup> Like the Movement, Christmount Week was dedicated to building up people mentally, socially, morally, and, most importantly, religiously. This focus on spiritual and religious development for both Christmount and the Chautauqua Institution were key to their developments and the establishment of religious programs.

The Chautauqua Women’s Club had a large influence on the Chautauqua Institution through its social, educational, and political programs. In 1882, women began meeting on the grounds of the Chautauqua Institution to study the Bible and discuss subjects of importance to them. In 1889, the Chautauqua Board of Trustees voted to establish the Chautauqua Women’s Club, which would have its own constitution, elect officers, and prepare its own programs. These programs included those with topics of personal improvement, temperance, suffrage, and philanthropy.<sup>90</sup> On July 25, 1889, the Chautauqua Women’s Club held its first meeting. Over 200 women attended the meeting, which Bishop Vincent both opened and endorsed.<sup>91</sup> The Chautauqua Women’s Club also had a large political influence on the Chautauqua Movement. During the season of 1933, the Women’s Club invited Eleanor Roosevelt, a life member of the Club, to deliver an address on the role of women in a changing world and how to deal with issues of impending world war, economic crisis, and social transformation. This was a time when the Nazi regime in Germany was persecuting Jews and many American Christians were questioning what to do to help. Mrs. Roosevelt claimed that “all change probably arose in the first place because of women,” and said that women had a responsibility in directing some of the changes that were occurring. She also claimed that educational missions should not stop and that women should keep working to help those in need.<sup>92</sup> This was a very strong statement from an influential political figure, showing that programs involving women were important to the Chautauqua Institution.

Although operating on a smaller scale than the Chautauqua Women’s Club, the Black Mountain assemblies also had programs for women that influenced the conference centers. The Ridgecrest Women’s Missionary Union had a large influence on the assembly.<sup>93</sup> Every year, Ridgecrest would host a Southern Baptist Women’s Meeting in which women could come together to learn about God and meet other women with similar beliefs as them. Aside from taking part in conferences and programs, women would play games, go on nature walks, and do other activities that helped them grow closer as women in Christ.<sup>94</sup> Montreat also had programs for women. Organized in 1913, the Women’s Auxiliary grew to be one of the most powerful programs at Montreat. Representing the entire church, attendees numbered anywhere from 600 to 1,200 women annually.<sup>95</sup> According to the Advance Announcement of the Woman’s Summer School of Missions Program, meetings usually lasted eight to ten days and “represented all branches of the church’s work” by looking at politics, social issues, and finances.<sup>96</sup> Programs for women were also popular at Christmount. In 1951, women from North Carolina and other southern states organized the Women for Christmount movement. This was a group meant for “any woman who had the purpose of Christmount at heart.”<sup>97</sup> Women for Christmount carried out service activities for the center, such as working to raise money for an all-purpose building on the assembly grounds through a project called “Miles of Dollars.”<sup>98</sup> According to *The Christmount Voice*, Women for Christmount also established a program in which the assembly hosted overnight retreats for imprisoned women from the Black Mountain Correctional Center to spend the night with their children.<sup>99</sup> Programs for women at the Black Mountain assemblies had obvious similarities to the Chautauqua Movement, through the purposes of unification and bringing women together to achieve specific goals for their respective institutions.

A stark difference between the Black Mountain assemblies and the Chautauqua was their interest in youth programs. Chautauqua leaders did not focus on youth as much as leaders at Ridgecrest, Montreat, and Christmount did, with no programs dedicated solely to children or youth development. The only time the Movement worked with youth to any extent was when looking at connections between juvenile delinquency and drug use, a topic the leaders tried to tackle in the 1960s. Despite this brief focus on youth, Chautauqua leaders did not focus on children themselves, but on how to fix problems within America.<sup>100</sup> Since the Chautauqua Movement focused very little on youth programs, the religious assemblies in Black Mountain had to create their own programs for children and teens. Programs for youth were especially important at Ridgecrest. In the 1930s, leaders at Ridgecrest developed Camp Ridgecrest for Boys and Camp Crestridge for Girls. These programs were counselor-supervised summer camps in which children could experience nature, fun, and religion.<sup>101</sup> According to Middleton in a program for Ridgecrest’s fiftieth anniversary, “The only reason a boys’ camp exists is in the interest of the development of the boy physically, mentally, morally,



and spiritually.”<sup>102</sup> In this same piece, Middleton said that the purpose of Camp Crestridge was, “while the girls play, camp out, work, and live together...to give each camper opportunity to ‘lift her eyes unto the hills.’”<sup>103</sup> This shows the significance of youth camps to the Ridgecrest as a whole, as a place where youth could grow and develop in a safe and religious environment.

Youth programs were also extremely important to Montreat. The Club Program, which began in 1918, was meant for children and young people.<sup>104</sup> Club workers, often college students, spent their summers going on hikes, swims, picnics, conference events, and doing other activities with young campers. According to a Montreat Young People’s Conference Program from 1922, despite the many recreational activities, club workers still made sure to keep the main focus of the camps on Bible study, devotion, and conference themes.<sup>105</sup> In the summer of 1956, more than 1,800 children and youth enrolled in this program.<sup>106</sup> Montreat Camp for Girls was a program in which Christian counselors could teach young girls about the Bible and train them in how to go about their daily lives as Christians. According to President Anderson, “This camp has been one of the finest Christian influences in Montreat. Bible instruction was emphasized, Christian training was embodied in the daily life, and the spirit was one of love, kindness, and friendship.”<sup>107</sup> This shows the importance Montreat leaders placed on youth programs during its conference season.

Like Ridgecrest and Montreat, Christmount also focused on youth, especially children with special needs. According to a newspaper article in *The Christmount Voice*, Camp Carri-On, founded in 1971, was a camp for underprivileged kids who might not have the opportunity to attend camp otherwise. This newspaper article described types of children who may not be able to attend camp, such as those from “the mountain coves and the inner-city neighborhoods and the housing projects” and explained why it was important that they have the opportunity to go to camp.<sup>108</sup> According to *The Christmount Voice*, Christmount also hosted specialized camps for deaf, autistic, and intellectually disabled youth as well as underprivileged boys. Counselors taught the participants of these camps life skills, game participation, and group singing.<sup>109</sup> As with Ridgecrest and Montreat, youth programs played a large role in the Christmount Christian Assembly.

The establishment of religious assemblies and conference centers in Black Mountain, North Carolina has played a significant role in the religious communities of which they are a part of. There are a number of factors that show the importance of these centers, including community building, religious programming, and recreational activities. Although religious fellowship and recreation played a major role in getting visitors to the religious centers in Black Mountain, many used these assemblies as “place[s] where they felt the presence of God.”<sup>110</sup> Conference leaders wanted their assemblies to be religious havens where visitors could come to learn about God, expand their knowledge of Christian work and fellowship, and rejuvenate themselves before returning to their regular lives.<sup>111</sup> The Chautauqua Movement had a significant impact on these assemblies, as evidenced by similarities in their purposes of establishment, developments, programs, and other means of operating. For both the Black Mountain assemblies and the Chautauqua Institution, educating people about God and how to fulfill His Word was the main purpose of their assemblies, as seen through their focus on religious programming over recreational activities. Although some of the leaders of the assemblies failed to recognize or accept the influence the Chautauqua Movement had on their centers because they saw it as too secular, the obvious similarities between the establishments show that ideas from the Movement were intertwined in the assemblies from the beginning.

## 2. Primary Source Annotated Bibliography

### 2.1 Manuscript Collections

Early Montreat 1897-1960 Collection. Presbyterian Heritage Center Archives, Presbyterian Heritage Center, Montreat, NC, 28711.

This is a small collection of items from the beginnings of Montreat up to 1960. Although this collection only consists of one box and covers a wide range of time, the more useful documents for this thesis are from Montreat’s early years. Items in this collection included in the research for this thesis are Mountain Retreat brochures, summer assembly booklets, evangelistic and mission work handouts, and bulletins from the late 1800s through the early 1900s. The Presbyterian Heritage Center numbers its boxes in a unique way, so the author of this thesis has cited the sources as closely as possible to the Turabian citation guide.

Mountain Retreat Association: Conference Materials 1900-1933 Collection. Box 12. Presbyterian Heritage Center Archives, Presbyterian Heritage Center, Montreat, NC, 28711.

This is a small collection of items concerning the Montreat Conference Center in the first third of the 1900s. This collection only consists of one box and thirty-three folders. Items in this collection include brochures about the Christian Worker's Bible Conferences, Layman's Conferences, Young People's Conferences, and Student Conferences. Items also include registration statistics by denomination programs, letters, and manuscripts, which were helpful when looking at the different programs run by Montreat. Many of these sources were useful when looking at the Montreat Conference Center and its history. The Presbyterian Heritage Center numbers its boxes in a unique way, so the author of this thesis has cited the sources as closely as possible to the Turabian citation guide.

Shivar, Rose U., comp. *Christmount: The Best Kept Secret*. 1997. Christmount Archives, Christmount Christian Assembly, Black Mountain, NC.

This collection of primary sources, compiled by Rose U. Shivar, offers a glimpse into each decade of the Christmount Christian Assembly from the 1940s to the 1990s and even briefly into more contemporary times. Divided into decades, the material in this collection includes photographs, articles, minutes, letters, and bulletins found in the many scrapbooks compiled by Christmount Historians. Shivar transcribed all of these manuscripts into one source, therefore there are some errors in transcription, especially concerning where sources originated. For this purpose, and based on further research, the author of this thesis has had to make the assumption that many newspaper articles originated from *The Christmount Voice*, which the Christmount Christian Assembly has no copies of in its archives. The author found other unknown articles in the *Black Mountain News*, but many are still unknown. These scrapbooks are in the possession of the Christmount Christian Assembly. This collection of primary sources was helpful in the analysis of the entirety of the Christmount Christian Assembly.

### 3. Published Materials

Anderson, R. C. *Montreat and Some Facts*. Charlotte, NC: Washburn Press, 1913. Presbyterian Heritage Center Archives, Presbyterian Heritage Center, Montreat, NC, 28711.

This booklet gives general information about Montreat from its founding to 1913. It discusses the origins, design, government, finances, and physical features of the conference center. The booklet also describes Montreat in terms of its religious ideologies, Christian community, and relation to the Presbyterian Church. Anderson's booklet was helpful when looking at Montreat's early years in a more general sense.

Anderson, R. C. comp. *Montreat: What Some Write and Thousands Think*. Charlotte, NC: Washburn Press, 1912. Booklet. Box 1, Folder 21, Presbyterian Heritage Center Archives, Presbyterian Heritage Center, Montreat, NC, 28711.

This booklet consists of a collection of letters to R. C. Anderson about Montreat. Many of the people writing these letters are praising the assembly and all that it does for the religious community. These letters also explain the reasons people come to Montreat, including fresh air, amusements, and abundant space. These letters were useful when looking at the impact of Montreat on Black Mountain and the greater religious community as well as when answering the question of what drew people to settle their religious centers in the area. Anderson also wrote a brief introduction and conclusion in this booklet that explained the purpose of his publication as well as his thoughts on the letters.

Anderson, Robert Campbell. *The Story of Montreat From Its Beginning, 1897-1947*. Montreat, NC: Rev. Robert Campbell Anderson, D.D., 1949.

This book, written by the President of the Mountain Retreat Association, discusses the origins of the Montreat Conference Center through 1947. He writes about the different presidents and administrations of the conference center, including his own. Anderson offers an in-depth discussion of the finances behind Montreat that led to many great developments and progress made during his presidency. There are also a number of photographs scattered throughout Anderson's book that support what he is discussing. Anderson's book was helpful when analyzing the significance of Montreat from its origins to the late 1940s in terms of administration, finances, and developments made.

"Church Purchases Guastavino Estate for Summer Assembly Grounds." *Black Mountain News* (Black Mountain, NC),

March 11, 1948. Print.

This newspaper article discusses the decision of the Disciples of Christ to purchase Raphael Guastavino's Spanish Castle Estates property. The article explains that the group bought the land to establish an assembly ground there. It lays out the actual purchase of the property as well as the geography of the land itself. The article also addresses several of the other conference centers in Black Mountain, which was especially helpful when comparing the different religious centers in the Black Mountain area.

Davis, Calvin Grier. *Montreat: A Retreat for Renewal, 1947-1972*. Kingsport, TN: Arcata Graphics, 1986.

This book was vital in showing the significance of the Montreat Conference Center to the town of Black Mountain, the Presbyterian faith, and those who visit the center. This book discusses the reasons why Montreat was a suitable place for a conference center in the first place as well as the ways the conference center progressed between 1947 and 1972. Davis, the president of Montreat-Anderson College from 1959 to 1972, discusses the different conferences that took place in Montreat and highlights several of the more notable leaders. This source was useful when looking at Montreat after its founding, but before more contemporary times.

Middleton, Robert L. *A Dream Come True: A History, Ridgecrest Baptist Assembly 50th Anniversary (1907-1957)*. Nashville, TN: Convention Press, 1957.

This source is necessary when looking at the history of the Ridgecrest Baptist Assembly. Robert Middleton wrote *A Dream Come True* as a celebratory piece for Ridgecrest's fiftieth anniversary. He explains the 'dream' that Ridgecrest's founders had for the conference center as well as the ways that these men put this dream into action. Middleton also establishes the significance of Ridgecrest's spiritual values and the ways he has watched them play a role in the development of the assembly. Lastly, this source explains the difference between Camp Ridgecrest and Camp Crestridge, or the boys' and girls' camps. This primary source was vital when analyzing the history of Ridgecrest in its first fifty years.

*The Mountain Retreat Bulletin*. Montreat, NC: Mountain Retreat Association, March, April, May 1907. Presbyterian Heritage Center Archives, Presbyterian Heritage Center, Montreat, NC, 28711.

This bulletin offers a detailed history of the Mountain Retreat Association from its beginnings in 1897 to early 1907. It discusses the organization of the association as well as the first stockholder meetings and treaties made by the founders. The bulletin also examines the sale of lots, lease of hotels, summer meetings, and improvements needed. The bulletin also explains why the location of Montreat was suitable for a religious assembly. These reasons include the scenery, climate, health, water supply, and amusement.

*The Ridgecrest Story*. Nashville, TN: Broadman Press, 1955.

This print booklet tells the history of the Ridgecrest Baptist Assembly up to 1955. It discusses the establishment of the assembly and the reasons why the founders chose the Black Mountain area to settle. This booklet explains the significance of Christianity to the assembly as well as the assembly's impact on the Southern Baptist faith as a whole. Ridgecrest is highly based off Christian morals, which was important to its development. *The Ridgecrest Story* also has a number of original photographs dating back to the early 1900s. This print booklet is the main primary source for the Ridgecrest Baptist Assembly because it is full of information about the origins and peak of Ridgecrest.

Spilman, Bernard W. *Ridgecrest: Past, Present, Future*. Black Mountain, NC: Ridgecrest Southern Baptist Assembly, 1928.

This print booklet represents the address delivered by Reverend Bernard W. Spilman as president of the annual meeting of stockholders of the Ridgecrest Southern Baptist Assembly in Ridgecrest. Reverend Spilman's address discusses the history, key figures, educational opportunities, finances, crises, accomplishments, and values of the Ridgecrest Assembly. It also gives a look into the future of what Ridgecrest's officials hoped the assembly would look like in years to come. This booklet was useful when working to gain a better understanding of the origins of the Ridgecrest Southern Baptist Assembly.

Tucker, J. H., and B. W. Spilman. *Blue Mont: The Beauty Spot in the Land of the Sky*. Black Mountain, NC: Ridgecrest Conference Center.

This print booklet tells about the location, establishment, and early history of Blue Mont, or the Ridgecrest Southern Baptist Assembly. It also explains the purpose of Ridgecrest according to the president and general secretary, both of whom wrote the booklet. This source also offers a number of maps of the Ridgecrest land, which were helpful when obtaining a visual image of Ridgecrest in relation to Black Mountain and the other assemblies.

Vincent, John H. *The Chautauqua Movement*. Freeport, NY: Books for Libraries Press, 1885.

This book, written by one of the founders of the Chautauqua Movement, discusses the beginnings and development of the Movement. John Heyl Vincent tells the story of the Chautauqua Movement as an insider who watched the Movement take place and grow. He discusses the basic idea of the Chautauqua as well as its development, traditions, schools, clubs, press, and future goals. This source was useful when connecting the national Chautauqua Movement to the more localized religious institutions that took place in Black Mountain through the establishment of numerous religious assemblies and conference centers.

#### 4. Secondary Source Annotated Bibliography

Gould, Joseph E. *The Chautauqua Movement: An Episode in the Continuing American Revolution*. Albany, NY: State University of New York Press, 1972.

While this source is well over thirty years old, it is necessary in showing the influence of the Chautauqua Movement on American society. This monograph analyzes the significance of the Movement on adult education from its inception in 1874 to the end of World War I. He looks at the differences between religious education and entertainment in the Chautauqua Movement and discusses why both were important to the Movement. Gould argues that the Chautauqua Movement was not just a 'tent show,' but a platform for the discussion of important cultural issues as well as a means of introducing many new concepts. This monograph was helpful as part of the broader foundation for the historiographical essay when looking at the larger religious movements that occurred across the United States in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries as well as when comparing these religious movements to those that took place in Black Mountain, specifically Ridgecrest, Montreat, and Christmount.

Maxwell, Elizabeth. *A Flowing Stream: An Informal History of Montreat*. Alexander, NC: WorldComm, 1997.

This source contains a plethora of information about the Montreat Conference Center. Although the title of this source states that it is an 'informal' history of Montreat, Maxwell cites her sources and has a scholarly outlook on her research as a former professor at Montreat College. The familiar tone of her piece, however, makes it more informal than most. Maxwell discusses the history of Montreat from its origins to the late twentieth century. She looks at the different administrations and groups that ran Montreat as well as notable people who helped the conference center become what it is today. She also discusses the significance of Montreat to the Presbyterian Church and Christianity. This monograph was useful when analyzing the entirety of the Montreat Conference Center.

McAnear, Kenneth. *Ridgecrest: Mountain of Faith*. Nashville, TN: Sunday School Board of the Southern Baptist Convention, 1982.

While this source is over thirty years old, it was necessary when looking at the origins of the Ridgecrest Baptist Conference Center and its development. Kenneth McAnear wrote *Ridgecrest: Mountain of Faith* as a celebratory piece for Ridgecrest's seventy-fifth anniversary. In this piece, McAnear writes about what drew Ridgecrest's founders to Black Mountain. He focuses a great deal on the aesthetic and natural aspects of Ridgecrest, both of which were paramount to this thesis. He also explains the significance of religion to the center as well as the different programs Ridgecrest established over the years. Finally, McAnear discusses the future of the Ridgecrest Conference Center. He is very hopeful in his look to the future, showing that he expects great things to come from the religious assembly. This secondary source was useful when analyzing what brought people to Black Mountain in the first place as well as when comparing the proposed future plans to what actually took place.

Morrison, Theodore. *Chautauqua: A Center for Education, Religion, and the Arts in America*. Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 1974.

While this source is over thirty years old, it was paramount in analyzing the Chautauqua Movement in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. This book offers a history of this Movement from its beginnings as a Sunday School assembly in 1874 to its development as a summer community involving art, education, current events, and religion after World War II. Section One, "Origins and Early Development," discusses the beginnings of the Chautauqua Movement. Section Two, "World War, Economic Crises, and Social Transformation," examines art movements and the independent movements that developed throughout the country. Section Three, "Continuity in a World of Upheaval," examines the Chautauqua post-World War II. Section Four, "Chautauqua in Photographs," presents a photographic study of the Movement. This source was helpful as part of the broader foundation for the historiographical essay when looking at the larger religious movements that occurred across the United States in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. It was also useful when comparing these religious movements to those that took place in Black Mountain, specifically Ridgecrest, Montreat, and Christmount.

Rieser, Andrew C. *The Chautauqua Moment: Protestants, Progressives, and the Culture of Modern Liberalism*. New York, NY: Columbia University Press, 2003.

This book examines the development of the Chautauqua Movement, which began in 1874 in western New York as both a religious assembly and college summer resort. In his study, Rieser looks at the Chautauqua as the center of cultural and political history at the turn of the twentieth century. He explains that the Movement reached millions of adults through its education programs, summer assemblies, reading clubs, and traveling tours. Rieser also analyzes the Chautauqua's undemocratic practices concerning issues of class and race. This source was vital as part of the broader foundation for the historiographical essay. The book was useful when looking at the larger religious movements that took place across the United States at the turn of the twentieth century and comparing these movements to those that took place in Black Mountain.

Shivar, Rose. *A History of Christmount Christian Assembly: Conference Center for The Christian Church (Disciples of Christ)*. Black Mountain, NC: Christmount Christian Assembly, November 2005.

This source gives an in-depth analysis of the history of the Christmount Christian Assembly. Shivar discusses the origins of the assembly and influential figures who helped the assembly develop. She describes the ways that Christmount's founders established roads, buildings, sewage and water systems, and parks as well as created specific programs for visitors to take part in. Shivar also discusses the role of women to the development of the assembly. This source was advantageous when analyzing the origins and development of the Christmount Christian Assembly. It was also useful when fact checking information from the other Christmount sources used in this thesis, especially those that archivists transcribed from other primary documents.

Shivar, Rose. *For Days That Count...Come to Christmount: Fiftieth Anniversary Celebration*. Black Mountain, NC: Christmount Christian Assembly, 1997.

Rose Shivar wrote this work as a celebratory piece for the fiftieth anniversary of the Christmount Christian Assembly. She explains the mission and vision of the founders of the assembly as they established themselves in Black Mountain. Shivar describes the purchase of the Rafael Guastavino property for the Christmount Christian Assembly and lists out the accomplishments of the assembly in terms of land development over the years. She also lists out the presidents of the assembly and presidents of Women for Christmount from 1948 to 1998. Finally, she discusses the future plans of the Christmount Christian Assembly. This celebratory piece was useful when comparing the proposed plans of the Assembly members to what actually took place and continues to take place. It was also helpful when analyzing the first fifty years of the Christmount Christian Assembly.

Starnes, Richard D. *Creating the Land of the Sky: Tourism and Society in Western North Carolina*. Tuscaloosa, AL: University of Alabama Press, 2005.

Chapter Four, "The Fellowship of Kindred Minds Is like to That Above: Religious Tourism in God's Country," is about religious tourism and the different religious assemblies and conference centers in Western North Carolina. These assemblies include three that are in Black Mountain: Montreat, Ridgecrest, and the Blue Ridge Assembly. Starnes

discusses the reasons why Western North Carolina attracted a number of religious groups in the first place as well as the different religious sects that settled in the area. This source was vital when analyzing the significance and history of religious tourism in Western North Carolina. Starnes also briefly discusses the Chautauqua Movement, which was advantageous when comparing the Movement to Black Mountain religious assemblies in the historiography.

## 5. Endnotes

- 1 Jas O. Reavis to R. C. Anderson, September 27, 1911, in "What Some Write and Thousands Think," comp. R. C. Anderson (Charlotte, NC: Washburn Press. 1912), Box 1, Folder 21, Early Montreat 1897-1960 Collection, Presbyterian Heritage Center, Booklet.
- 2 Calvin Grier Davis, *Montreat: A Retreat for Renewal, 1947-1972* (Kingsport, TN: Arcata Graphics, 1986), iv.
- 3 Jas O. Reavis to R. C. Anderson, in "What Some Write and Thousands Think."
- 4 Andrew C. Rieser, *The Chautauqua Moment: Protestants, Progressives, and the Culture of Modern Liberalism* (New York, NY: Columbia University Press, 2003), 10.
- 5 Richard D. Starnes, *Creating the Land of the Sky: Tourism and Society in Western North Carolina* (Tuscaloosa, AL: University of Alabama Press, 2005), 101.
- 6 Theodore Morrison, *Chautauqua: A Center for Education, Religion, and the Arts in America* (Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 1974), 228.
- 7 Starnes, *Creating the Land of the Sky*, 92-93, 101.
- 8 Starnes, *Creating the Land of the Sky*, 187.
- 9 Joseph E. Gould, *The Chautauqua Movement: An Episode in the Continuing American Revolution* (Albany, NY: State University of New York Press, 1972), 72.
- 10 Rieser, *The Chautauqua Moment*, 125.
- 11 Starnes, *Creating the Land of the Sky*, 92-94.
- 12 Starnes, *Creating the Land of the Sky*, 102.
- 13 Starnes, *Creating the Land of the Sky*, 101-102.
- 14 Elizabeth Maxwell, *A Flowing Stream: An Informal History of Montreat* (Alexander, NC: WorldComm, 1997), 10.
- 15 Maxwell, *A Flowing Stream*, 125.
- 16 Kenneth McAnear, *Ridgecrest: Mountain of Faith*. (Nashville, TN: Sunday School Board of the Southern Baptist Convention, 1982), 7.
- 17 McAnear, *Ridgecrest: Mountain of Faith*, 31.
- 18 Rose Shivar, *A History of Christmount Christian Assembly: Conference Center for The Christian Church (Disciples of Christ)* (Black Mountain, NC: Christmount Christian Assembly, 2005), 5-8.
- 19 Davis, *Montreat: A Retreat for Renewal*, 154.
- 20 Starnes, *Creating the Land of the Sky*, 116.
- 21 Davis, *Montreat: A Retreat for Renewal*, 33.
- 22 *The Ridgecrest Story* (Nashville, TN: Broadman Press, 1955), 10.
- 23 Rose U. Shivar, comp., *Christmount: The Best Kept Secret* (Black Mountain, NC: Christmount Christian Assembly, 1997), 136.
- 24 Davis, *Montreat: A Retreat for Renewal*, 33.
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