

TENACITY

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A wave of revivalistic fervor swept Northcentral West Virginia just prior to World War I and continued well into the 1920's. Evangelists, sponsored by the united effort of churches, held mass meetings in tents, sessions "protracted" to last as long as the fervor remained high. The most spectacular of the revivals in the history of Harrison County occurred in 1915, when at the Hamilton Tabernacle in Point Comfort services continued in a tent for weeks in the spring. The theater of the thing helped keep enthusiasm high: on May 25, 1915, a special train carried people from Salem, fourteen miles west of Clarksburg, to attend the meeting; on May 29, 1915, businesses in the City of Clarksburg closed at 5 p.m. in order that workers might have time to be seated in the tabernacle by 7:30 p.m. The total number of converts, "the soul-saving harvest", during the series of meetings was 2,766.¹

The church during this period was the center of community and all social activities. Ministers and dedicated church laymen were the vanguard of the campaign to improve society, a movement which culminated nationally in the passage of the amendments to the U.S. Constitution outlawing spirituous drink and giving women of the nation the franchise. Life consisted of the workaday world six days a week and church much of the day on Sunday with any time left over dedicated to good works.

A few months before the Hamilton Tabernacle pitched its tent, James D. and Harriett² (Hattie) C. Hill, with their little daughter Pauline, left Williamson, WV, bound for Clarksburg, where they planned to establish their home.³ On the train Mrs. Hill heard a youth ask the conductor: "Is there a Y.M.C.A. in Clarksburg?" When the boy heard "No" in reply, he muttered, "I thought it was a good town."⁴ The Hills disembarked at the railway station in Glen Elk in Clarksburg. They walked from the station platform to the waiting room of the depot and out the south door of the station to Baltimore Avenue. There they climbed on the trolley car which took them a few hundred yards south on North Fourth Street to the door of the Waldo Hotel, where they registered.

Next morning Mrs. Hill looked out the window onto the lawn which stretched from West Pike Street several hundred feet north to the 1839 mansion "Waldomore" which in 1915 was the home of Richard and Mae Goff Lowndes. Catching Mrs. Hill's eye was a high board fence that ran from Pike Street along the west side of North Fourth Street and the east boundary of the Lowndes property. She saw a dozen or so boys leaning against the fence idling away the time. "Those boys should have something to do," she thought.⁵

Mrs. Hill's penchant for seeing a need fit the tone of the city to which the Hills had come. She signed on as teacher of a Sunday School class consisting of nine adolescent boys at the First Baptist Church on the corner of Sixth and West Pike Streets in Clarksburg. The boys complained of "nothing to do" for recreation during the weekdays. So Mrs. Hill wrote the International Sunday School Association to inquire as to an organization with which the boys could affiliate. The association told Mrs. Hill of the Knights of St. Paul which operated under the name of Kappa Sigma Pi.⁶ Mrs. Hill organized a chapter with the nine boys in her Sunday School class as charter members on July 15, 1915. The group met in rooms at the First Baptist Church for three years at the end of which time forty-five boys had joined Kappa Sigma Pi.⁷

Mrs. Hill's sense of mission made her uneasy sponsoring a club which had aims limited to devotional services and recreation for its members, for she had arrived in Clarksburg at the height of a boom which had hit the city around 1900, when 4,050 people lived in the town, and had caused the population to swell in 1910 to 9,201 and by 1920 to 27,869 citizens.⁸ Spur lines of the railroad built in the early 1900's from the main line of the Baltimore and Ohio Railroad, which ran through Clarksburg, let operators open coal mines in rural areas of West Virginia. The tracks over which coal moved toward Clarksburg carried in the opposite direction boxcars filled with merchandise from wholesale houses in Clarksburg. The city became a distribution center supplying all of Northcentral West Virginia with goods. Discovery of oil and gas brought glass factories and carbon black plants to use the cheap natural gas of the new petroleum fields. Workers came from everywhere. Agents of coal operators sometimes signed up most of the men in a village in Italy and sent them with their families to Clarksburg, where coal mine operators met them and moved them on to company towns which had been built near mines.

Mrs. Hill saw the need of people beyond the "saved souls" in the center of town; she saw the need of people isolated from their native culture and adrift in a new world. She called the attention of the members of the Big Boys Brotherhood of Kappa Sigma Pi to the opportunity to help and urged the boys to do something for the newcomers to the area. One group of boys chose to work with nonchurch young people two miles east of Clarksburg in Anmoore to which the boys traveled on the trolley to teach Bible classes. The Kappa Sigma Pi members hired a dramatic coach to put on plays and pageants in Anmoore and found among Kappa Sigma Pi members coaches for various kinds of athletics. They soon had two hundred young people in Anmoore taking part in the activities they sponsored.⁹ Another group of Mrs. Hill's boys rode the trolley toward Bridgeport, left the trolley before it reached the town and walked over the hills to Ocean Mine,¹⁰ where Philadelphia capitalists had built more than 60 houses near the mine in 1919 and 1920.¹¹ Here the boys taught Bible classes and sponsored athletic events.

Kappa Sigma Pi now had one hundred fifty workers drawn from churches throughout the city and had moved its headquarters from the First Baptist Church to the workrooms of a millinery store on Court Street near the courthouse in the center of the city and then to the building on the corner of Court Street and Mechanics Street [Washington Avenue], both sites so handy to the high school that the boys could hold noonday prayer meetings during the lunch hour. When the Clarksburg Dairy Company moved into the building at Court Street and Mechanics Street, Mrs. Hill invited the boys to make her home¹² their headquarters. And after the First Baptist Church purchased a residence on Sixth Street, the Kappa Sigma Pi moved there.¹³

Mrs. Hill's dedication, enthusiasm, and ability to organize attracted the attention of adults in the community. When she led a movement to incorporate Kappa Sigma Pi with the objects "to promote by education and active cooperation a higher public spirit and a better social order and to that end to organize groups or chapters of young people for training in Christian citizenship; to provide and maintain a home, or houses, for care. . . of dependent, homeless. . . delinquent children under 21; to buy, own, erect buildings", twenty-one leading citizens, in addition to Mrs. Hill, signed the articles of incorporation on February 14, 1921.¹⁴

The objects of the organization as stated in the certificate of incorporation were a portent of what Mrs. Hill had in her head for her work several years in the future. At the time she signed the articles of incorporation she was busy with arrangements to rent what had been known as the Camden Sommers estate at Spring Hill, a few miles south of Clarksburg on the West Fork River, for the summer of 1921. Here her "young men [might] spend the weekend or as much time as they wish¹⁵. . . under the control of the churches of the community in entertainment approved by the church. Parents may know young people will be well cared for and chaperoned at all times. Entertainment will include music, pageants, stunts, parties, picnics, swimming, tennis, croquet, baseball."¹⁶ At the end of the newspaper story announcing the opening of the house at Spring Hill on July 15, 1921, were the statements: "Dancing will not be permitted as reported in yesterday's paper; [and] all who are interested are invited."¹⁷

In the spring of 1922 an evangelist, who visited the city to conduct a revival, chose as a subject for this last sermon "That Boy of Yours". He pleaded for financial help for Kappa Sigma Pi and at the close of the sermon members of the audience pledged \$2,058 toward the purchase of a house for the organization. Ella Curtin, wife of Harry B. Curtin, volunteered to match any sum raised dollar for dollar. The audience named Mrs. Curtin president of the committee to find a house; O. C. Wilt, treasurer; and Mrs. J. D. Hill, secretary.¹⁸ The committee purchased for \$20,000 the Frank Reynolds House, 648 West Pike Street, Clarksburg, on May 29, 1922.¹⁹

Mrs. Hill told the event which caused the first step toward turning Kappa Sigma Pi into a social service agency: "We got into welfare when somebody brought a 12-year-old boy whose mother had died and whose father was a drunk, and wanted us to take care of him until something could be worked out. During the night I heard the boy thump on the floor and I got up and went upstairs and here was that boy stretched out on the floor. I asked him what he was doing on the floor, why didn't he get in bed, and he said he didn't want to because it was so white. I told the boys in the club about it and they said they never heard of a boy who thought a bed was too white to sleep in and they decided to see if there were more like the boy in the neighborhood. So we started taking in boys."²⁰

Another reason the purchase of the house large enough to room and board youths signaled the beginning of a change in Kappa Sigma Pi from a recreational youth organization dedicated to social service to an out and out social agency was a change in the times. The age of the flivver had arrived and middle class young people were off on weekends to the country club, to one of the several artificial lakes built in the early 1920's near Clarksburg, or off on an automobile tour of the area with a picnic to be eaten along the road. They no longer needed a Hattie Hill to direct recreation for them and thus the number of those volunteering for social service decreased.

Yet in 1926 Mrs. Hill still had a group of young social service volunteers who, organized into groups of nine, sponsored activities that reached from 500 to 700 young people each week. Thirteen boys stayed at the Kappa Sigma Pi home; twenty-six boys used the Kappa Sigma Pi house for temporary housing. The organization sponsored a summer camp at Avalon Country Club near West Milford and volunteer workers had paid into the home fund \$435.75 to keep more boys in school.

When Hattie Hill reported in 1926 that five workers in Kappa Sigma Pi attended business college and gave twenty or more hours a week in work in exchange for board and room,²¹ she described the pattern she had followed in education. Born Harriett C. Fowler in Harrisville, WV, on August 22, 1880, Mrs. Hill's schooling would have ended after she had graduated from the public schools in Harrisville had not a Methodist minister pointed out a way she could earn advanced training. She traveled to Parkersburg, WV, entered nurses' training in the Parkersburg City Hospital. She lived in Grace Hall and earned by working, before and after hours in school and the hospital, funds for all of her tuition, housing, and board during the nurses' training period. After graduation she married James D. Hill and moved to Williamson.²²

Mrs. Hill knew the value of being inspired and being shown how to help oneself; and when she incorporated Kappa Sigma Pi "to provide a home for the care of dependent, homeless children under 21",²³ she put in words the nature of the work she would do for the next fifty-three years. Every child who lived under Mrs. Hill's care could read a motto she had hung on the wall: "Your best helping hand is at the end of your own arm."²⁴

One of Mrs. Hill's boys, who as an adult was sheriff of a West Virginia county and drove each month from the Northern Panhandle of the state to serve as a member of the board of directors of Kappa Sigma Pi at monthly meetings, described the way Mrs. Hill handled him and his two brothers when they came to her agency as children: "She grabbed us and all other kids who came to her at the front door and pushed us out the back as she said, 'work!'"²⁵

"We must teach a child that work isn't a nasty word", said Mrs. Hill. "That there's no other way of getting by in the world and keeping out of jail or the poor house.

"But work isn't everything. Manners are important. Once Pete Koblegard paid the bill to send the Home band to a folk festival in Tennessee. No hotel wanted the kids, but one finally gave in and took them. After they had left, the hotel manager wrote to Mr. Koblegard. He had never in his life seen children who were so careful of property, so kind and considerate, so easy to please. 'I didn't know that children like that existed in the world', he wrote."²⁶

Not long after she had moved into the house at 648 West Pike Street, Mrs. Hill had in addition to adolescent schoolboys, children of both sexes in all ages. She could not turn away a homeless child. One time a mother came leading two pre-school youngsters and carrying a baby in her arms. The mother laid the baby on a bed, by which stood her other two youngsters, and walked out the door alone. Mrs. Hill raised all three and guided two of the children through training to be beauticians. Often Mrs. Hill would be given five- or six-year olds who had not been toilet trained. Mrs. Hill soon had the children as disciplined as the others in her home. And those "others in her home" might number eighty to one hundred boys and girls.

When one hears that the agency from the start was very much a one-woman operation including raising funds for the operation of the home, he asks how anyone could do the work: "That is what all of us who worked for her wondered", he hears in reply. "Hattie Hill was everywhere; she knew everything going on everywhere even in the town house when she was at Avalon; she never took a vacation; she did not flinch in any dire situation."²⁷ At age eighty-six Hattie Hill reported that she had never consulted a physician.²⁸

Carrying out the building program of the agency through the years and raising funds to meet current bills would demand the work of three or four were the responsibility anyone's but that of a Hattie Hill. Of course, Mrs. Hill started her work in the 1920's when boom times in Northcentral West Virginia made many Clarksburg citizens wealthy and when the moral tone of society made people generous. So long as they lived, Kappa Sigma Pi was the chief interest in the lives of two of the 1921 incorporators: Ella D. Curtin and E. Vernon Smith.

In 1928 Ella Curtin gave Kappa Sigma Pi a farm of 105 acres, including farm buildings, on the West Fork River six miles south of Clarksburg at Avalon.²⁹ Now Mrs. Hill could have at Avalon more than a summer camp for her children and adolescents. She could follow her philosophy of the necessity of hard work by putting the boys to work in the fields and at the same time raise a portion of the food needed in the kitchen where the girls prepared the meals and canned surplus vegetables.

In 1936 Mr. and Mrs. L. L. Loar gave Kappa Sigma Pi "Ethelhurst" in the same area as the farm as a memorial to their daughter Ethel.³⁰

Sometime in the 1930's the organization added a floor atop the town house in Clarksburg. It may have been lack of safety measures in case of fire that caused the West Virginia Department of Public Assistance to object to any of its clients being cared for in the house. The result was a hullabaloo in November 1937 during which the founder of Kappa Sigma Pi came from the Cincinnati headquarters of the organization and a trustee came from New York City to inspect the Clarksburg housing unit and the Avalon one. While they were at the Clarksburg house, two buses with representatives from the West Virginia State Children's Bureau and a nurse drove up to take the children to Camp Fairchance run by the Department of Public Assistance near Madison, WV. Of course, that act would have been carried out over the dead body of Mrs. Hill, who was saved when E. Vernon Smith arrived with the news that friends of Kappa Sigma Pi had called Homer A. Holt, governor of West Virginia, who gave orders for the removal to stop until after an inspection of the facility scheduled for late in November 1937. The head of the national offices of Kappa Sigma Pi assured local citizens that none of the children would be taken away and that a drive for money would soon start because \$4,000 in outstanding bills must be paid plus additional funds for repairs to meet D.P.A. Standards. Attempts to meet those standards had caused the indebtedness.³¹

Bit by bit the Avalon unit of the agency grew into headquarters with the Clarksburg house used only to board and room older young people in school. The shift required a two-room school at Avalon built in a way described by Mrs. Hill: "One of the things that helped us most here at the home was a fellow named Bob Edge. He was a West Virginia University student and he worked for a radio station. He called up one day to see if he could do a radio feature on us. I invited him out and when he came he was astonished. He couldn't believe what he saw. He did a fine feature on the home. Then he went back to school and one Sunday he came to see me to ask what his fraternity could do. Well, we were building the school house then. Pete Koblegard had come out from Clarksburg to look around and had a man with him. He talked awhile and asked me what I was doing, and he said for me to put him down for twenty thousand dollars. That was a lifesaver, but I am not impressed with money; I know how quick it goes. I said to the college boy that there was plenty to do digging footers, things like that. So next week he brought twenty fellows from Morgantown and they worked like horses. Then when he got out of school he came back to work in Clarksburg for the radio station, and I said to him how much money was he making, and he said fifty a week, I believe it was, and I said would you work for me for forty, and he thought for awhile, and he said he would. So he came to work for me steady going out to clubs and telling about the work we were doing and pretty soon he had a lot of attention directed our way. He was with me two years. Then his wife got sick and needed special attention, and he went away and got a job and didn't come back. But he was the beginning of our building, of our pulling out of being a helpless king of something, to a something that people wanted to help with. Bob Edge's way of operating was to get on a civic program and make a pitch or get the school's band booked for an engagement.

"When our children come here they come without foundation. They need something solid under them. The regular school can't do that, because it must grow from a foundation. We have to give the foundation, and the structure has to be developed by us from then and there. Schools don't have foundationless children long enough to do for them the best possible job."³² The Harrison County Board of Education hired two teachers to teach Kappa Sigma Pi children in the school nine months of the year. Several small dormitories, "cottages", were built for sleeping quarters. The main building, Curtin Administration Building furnished office space, dining room, and kitchen plus rooms for administration housing on second floor.

Mrs. Hill moved aggressively when she needed funds for her boys and girls. She would ask someone to drive her to Clarksburg,³³ where she called on a friend of the agency to ask for money for shoes, farm equipment, or maybe money to pay someone to teach a class in music. She usually returned with the money. Mrs. Hill's agency received funds from the Clarksburg United Fund. A Clarksburg physician cared for the Kappa Sigma Pi boys and girls free of charge.³⁴

Hattie Hill possessed the natural ability to command respect and to win the devotion of those who worked for her. She knew how to get along with all kinds of people. She hired house parents to live in the cottage dormitories with the children and to supervise the work of the children in the kitchen and the dining room. "Sometimes Mrs. Hill was not too choosy as to whom she hired. One day after a house parent had showed her authority by ordering a child to wait on her at the table, the child answered the house mother in rough language. Sent to the superintendent for the offense, the child went to Mrs. Hill's office. A chastened child reentered the dining room along with Mrs. Hill who said to me: 'I feel the way the child does, but I can't let her know it. I can't let children grow up talking impudently to adults. When house parents get authority, they want to use it.'³⁵

Two women, both devoted to Mrs. Hill, worked with the superintendent for so many years that they were like Mrs. Hill's right hand. Mrs. Wamsley ran the town house in Clarksburg, where in addition to supervising the young people who stayed there in cooking and cleaning, ran one of Mrs. Hill's money-making projects. Known as the "Kappa Quilters", groups of adult women for twenty-five years came regularly to the house at 648 West Pike Street in Clarksburg to quilt. After the workers had taken the quilts out of the frames and had bound them, they sold the quilts and deposited the money in the treasury of Kappa Sigma Pi.

When the interviewer asked who purchased supplies for the Avalon installation, he was told, "Sometimes Mrs. Hill went, but most often Mrs. Margaret Longworth took care of that."³⁶ Mrs. Longworth for years carried a great deal of the responsibility at the Avalon headquarters.

The boys at the farm raised vegetables, mowed the meadows and lawns, and cared for the chickens and the cows. To supervise them Mrs. Hill had Mr. Fowler, a brother of Mrs. Hill who lived in a little house which had stood on the place when it was bought in 1928. After Mr. Fowler's death, a Mr. Davis lived in the house formerly occupied by Mr. Fowler and supervised the boys at work.³⁷

Everyone worked at Kappa Sigma Pi; everyone who showed a bent for it, had training in music. Mrs. Hill one way or another found funds to hire a music teacher. Several of her proteges were proficient musicians. In the late 1930's a Kappa Sigma Pi lad, who was one of the five Kappa Sigma Pi boys at the time enrolled in Salem College,³⁸ developed into a skilled xylophonist who gave concerts before clubs and civic groups over much of Northern West Virginia.

Determined to have a harmonica band which could give a musical experience for a high percentage of her children, Mrs. Hill worked years securing the instruments and arranging for the training of the members of the band. At one time a group of Clarksburg women each contributed money for a fund to hire a resident instructor for the band and other projects in music.³⁹ The band, thirty strong, rode the agency bus to put on programs and one time was invited to the Henry Ford Museum-Greenfield Village at Dearborn, Michigan, for a week's cost-free stay during which time they presented concerts. For programs to which children could be delivered and returned a few hours later to the Kappa Sigma Pi Home, Mrs. Hill instituted a policy of not allowing the children to be served food, a ruling probably started because Mrs. Hill knew she sent too many youngsters for organizations in dinner meetings to afford to supply food.⁴⁰

One could use Carl Sandburg's metaphor "an iron fist in a velvet glove" to describe Hattie Hill's talent as an administrator and counsellor. She was hardheaded and flexible at the same time. A fundamentalist, she allowed no dancing of any kind on the premises of her agency; yet after one of her music instructors, who had a private dancing class, sent her tickets for a dance recital, Mrs. Hill attended and enthusiastically converted to the idea of instruction in dance for her children.⁴¹ One time she let a boy who attended Salem College take the agency automobile to Salem. When the car stalled on the railroad track in Salem, the boy, and the girl with him, jumped out leaving the car to be demolished by the oncoming train; another time a girl in Mrs. Hill's charge missed the approach to the Laurel Park Bridge leading to Avalon and climbed out of the agency vehicle unscathed after running the automobile into the river. On both occasions Mrs. Hill said only to the youths: "I am glad you were not hurt."⁴²

A resident music instructor, concerned about a five year-old who would not speak, asked if she could teach for a time a kindergarten class. Mrs. Hill replied, "I had hoped someone would do that!" One day the little boy followed the voice of the child before his turn and said "chair". In a few hours the former speechless boy ran out to E. Vernon Smith, who was working in the flowerbeds he tended carefully, and said: "Mrs. Hill wants you!" Mrs. Hill and Mr. Smith were elated.⁴³

In the 1960's a college student who wished to write a term paper telling the history of the agency, lived a few days at Avalon and when the weekend came, took two of the boy residents home with him without asking permission. While in the home of the college student, one of the Kappa Sigma Pi boys stole his host's watch. The finished term paper contained nasty remarks about the kind of "inmates" at the Kappa Sigma Pi Home. Mrs. Hill, ever the realist, remarked: "I knew our boy was a kleptomaniac. One just does not put him in a place where he can take things. I did not give permission for that boy to leave our grounds."⁴⁴

Mrs. Hill's doors swung open at all times. A member of the board of directors stated that during the troubled times in the sixties he dropped into the dining room unannounced at mealtime over and over. Food well cooked and in abundance was served to residents and any visitor who popped up.⁴⁵ During World War II, when gasoline was rationed, a Kappa Sigma Pi boy who attended Salem College invited fourteen of his friends for a weekend at Avalon. The youths rode the bus to Clarksburg, the trolley to Mt. Clare, and then walked through the country to Avalon. One of the Salem College guests remembers, in 1982, a healthful country atmosphere at Avalon with children engaged in farm work; a stern Mrs. Hill who spent a great deal of time in the kitchen, vesper services for everyone each evening. "After the little children went to bed, we college kids built a fire in the fireplace, sang songs, and had a party."⁴⁶

Mrs. Hill's strength was her religion, as natural to her as the air she breathed. She founded Kappa Sigma Pi as an agency to train young people in Christian citizenship and every act was directed toward that goal. She followed no set creed; she admitted all creeds to her non-sectarian agency. But every child had instruction in the basic precepts of religion each day. A little church stands near the Koblegard Building and the Curtin Administration Building at Avalon and through great sacrifice, Hattie Hill secured for the chapel an organ so that her children could hear "church music". She invited ministers of the area who came to instruct weekly Bible classes. She gave her religion credit for her good health and energy at eighty-six: "I believe the Lord provides the physical strength to one who tries to work his will."⁴⁷

Somehow Mrs. Hill found time to be a writer. She edited a twenty-page magazine The Pi Magazine which came out several times a year. Much of the writing in the magazine, which also carried letters from Kappa Sigma Pi alumni and religious-oriented feature stories by contributors, was from the pen of Mrs. Hill. These selections are typical of the ones she wrote:

**OUR SENIOR CITIZENS
NO RETIREMENT FOR THE CHRISTIAN**

...Be thou faithful unto death and I will give thee a crown of life. . . . -Revelations 2-10

The Bible nowhere tells us to watch, wait or look for anything else but the coming again of Jesus. Watching and looking does not mean a life of inactivity and stargazing. The best proof of our looking for His return is keeping busy for Him every moment. Since each day may be the last we must be occupied that day with things we would not be ashamed of should He suddenly come. Jesus said to the servants in Luke 19. . . "Occupy till I come." Literally it means, "keep busy" till I come. It means keep to be in your place of business for Him.

Those who have lived and worked through their four-score years⁴⁸ have witnessed too much attainment to discount further possibilities. Personal memory bridges the gap from pony express to flying monsters. It recollects Rockefeller's humble start and Carnegie's modest beginning. Bell had just invented the telephone, and Edison the incandescent arc. America had not heard of antiseptics, nor paved country roads, nor sanitary plumbing, nor workman's compensation. Just a lifetime ago typhoid, scarlet fever and malaria roamed from coast to coast; physicians neither knew their cause nor understood their cure.

Common labor then received a dollar a day. Skilled store clerks averaged ten dollars a week. Thousands of towns hadn't a sewer, running water was a rich man's luxury. Every look behind heartens one to push boldly ahead. There isn't a cloud in sight, with God's help, that brooms cannot sweep away.
HAPPY NEW YEAR!

BEAUTIFUL WEST VIRGINIA

There's no use denying it, if you're
West Virginia born
You long for sweet potatoes, and the
tall waving corn.
You miss the sweet persimmons, and
cane molasses too;
You even miss the chiggers that use
to riddle you.
You long for the old fishing hole,
above Hughes river dam, 49
A long hickory pole, with worms
in a can;
Just to see the bobber bobbing, when
a fish is on the hook
Helps keep West Virginia first place
in my book.

OUR TASK

Each day brings to us its share of duties, opportunities, and responsibilities. The spirit in which we accept the work and activities of the day will vitally affect the results. Go forward with large confidence and high expectation. Let us be faithful to our obligations, and discharge every duty with promptitude and thoroughness. Be alert to fresh opportunities of each day, and advance our highest and best interests. Stimulate our minds with clear strong uplifting of what we wish to accomplish, and realize the immense powers and resources at our command. Let us make each day a distinct advance in our state and life ideal. 50

In the mid-1960's, when she was fourscore years and five, Hattie Hill suffered almost as many afflictions as Job and, like Job, she refused to curse God and die. She stood up to her assailants.

One group of plagues that hit Hattie Hill could fall under the heading of bureaucracy. The state fire marshal demanded extensive installations to buildings as safety measures. The health department demanded modern dishwashing equipment; additional screening against flies; elimination of cows, dogs, and cats from the premises and roaches from the kitchen. The department of public welfare told Hattie Hill that she could no longer care for pre-school children; that she could no longer admit any child herself but would have only children "processed" by the state agency and then sent to Kappa Sigma Pi; that Kappa Sigma Pi Home was a self-contained unit which did not give children experience in the outside world in which the children should be prepared to live; that Kappa Sigma Pi demanded too much work from the children; that house parents needed time off from their twenty-four-hour-a-day jobs. The three agencies, each working independently, often made rulings working at cross purpose. "But", said a former member of the board of directors, "we realized that the world had changed and that we must enter the age in which we lived."⁵¹

The agency sold the farm animals; farming ended. The Koblegard School closed and alteration to the building started so that it could be used as a dormitory. The agency bus carried the boys and girls to the Laurel Park Bridge across which they walked to board a Harrison County school bus for a trip to West Milford Grade School, where they enrolled; later a county school bus came to the buildings of Kappa Sigma Pi for the children. Mrs. Hill handled the health department by ordering its workers off the premises. She could only grieve at no longer being able to take in any homeless child who came to her door; and she was baffled by a ruling which implied that humankind was not intended to work around the clock.⁵²

Then, a religious fundamentalist might say, the Lord saw that Hattie Hill met all the problems, somehow in good grace, and decided to send the "boils". Kappa Sigma Pi board of directors had always been filled with social-service-minded individuals of the ilk of Ella Curtin, who steadily supplied funds for the agency, and E. Vernon Smith, who from 1922 to 1967 served as secretary for the board⁵³, and who, after retirement from the workaday world, gave most of his time to helping Mrs. Hill with the magazine of the agency, caring for plantings around the buildings, etc. One member of the board in the 1950's regularly reported to Avalon in summer to supervise the canning of surplus vegetables from the garden.⁵⁴

Suddenly circa 1965 the president and the vice president of the board of directors were rebels maybe inspired for the idea of turning the institution around by the changes instigated by governmental bureaucracy when the two first joined the board. And the two men were mean to Mrs. Hill. They closed her chapel and sent the children to West Milford to Sunday School and church. They stopped the teaching of Bible classes by the minister who had donated time for weekly lessons. One time when the children in the harmonica band were ready to depart for a concert, Mrs. Hill found that the two men had locked the door to the room where the musical instruments were stored. Mrs. Hill could fight: "She held up her end of it when [the two men] accused her of taking things."⁵⁵

Mrs. Hill carried on with confidence and when a worker at the agency told her that two directors were trying to fire her for incompetence, Mrs. Hill laughed and said, "Oh, I know about that", as she handed the worker a copy of the latest issue of the agency magazine. When Mrs. Hill heard from the worker: "Why don't you give up; you have done a life's work already", Mrs. Hill replied: "If I leave here, they may sell it to somebody and it won't be the same."⁵⁶

In two years, after the board had passed a ruling that at the end of six years' term a director must drop off the ruling body for a year before being again elected, the rebels had ended their careers as directors. E. Vernon Smith retired from the agency and was named "Honorary Board Member".⁵⁷ And Mrs. Hill suddenly was forgetful.

Through the suggestion of a Kappa Sigma Pi alumnus, a woman who had run a county home for the indigent in another part of the state came to Kappa Sigma Pi, with her husband as gardner for the agency. Mrs. Hill kept the title of superintendent, her office on the first floor of Curtin Administration Building, and her suite of rooms on the second floor of the administration building. Mrs. Hill ate her meals in the dining room and spent her hours in her office editing the magazine of the agency. "Funny thing", said a former member of the board of directors,

"as soon as the children came into the administration building, they made a bee-line for Mrs. Hill."⁵⁸ Mrs. Hill's daughter, Pauline Wright of Hamilton, Ohio, came frequently to visit her mother.

When Mrs. Hill was ninety-two years old a new administrator came to Kappa Sigma Pi. Mrs. Hill met the man with insouciance. She moved from her sleeping quarters to her office, where she edited copy for the agency magazine, seemingly ignoring the goings-on in the running of the agency. She ate her meals in her office or in her private suite of rooms. At ninety-four she became so ill she was sent to the United Hospital Center in Clarksburg. Two members of the board of directors visited her on March 2, 1975. She was alert and happy.⁵⁹ On March 3, 1975, she died.⁶⁰

Fifteen alumni of Kappa Sigma Pi from distant cities and from sites in West Virginia, plus many, many alumni in the Clarksburg area, came to her funeral on March 6, 1975. Every one of them said these words or spoke thoughts expressed in these words: "She was the only mother I ever knew!"⁶¹ Hattie Hill was buried in the Bridgeport Cemetery, Bridgeport, WV.⁶²

FOOTNOTES

1. The Daily Telegram, Clarksburg, WV, May 26, 29, 1915.
2. The only place found where Mrs. Hill signed her name "Harriett" was in the articles of incorporation of Kappa Sigma Pi. Harrison County, WV, Articles of Incorporation, Vol. 7, p. 170.
3. James D. Hill held the position of assistant superintendent of right-of-way, Hope Natural Gas Co. in 1915; deputy sheriff of Harrison County in 1923, and owner of a garage on S. Third St., Clarksburg, in 1929. Clarksburg [City] Directory, 1915, 1923, 1929.
4. Dorothy Davis, History of Harrison County, West Virginia, p. 855.
5. Ibid.
6. Ibid.
7. The Sunday Telegram, Clarksburg, WV, October 3, 1926.
8. U. S. Dept. of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, Census of Population, (1900-1920).
9. Davis, History of Harrison County, p. 855.
10. In 1982 Ocean Mine is called "Lodgeville".
11. The Daily Telegram, Clarksburg, WV, October 21, 1919.
12. The James D. Hill family lived at 114 Lee St., Clarksburg, in 1917, 1919; 116 S. Sixth St., in 1921; 648 West Pike St., in 1923. Clarksburg Directory, 1917, 1919, 1921, 1923. The millinery store, where the Kappa Sigma Pi boys met, was owned and operated by Hattie Hill. Mary McAndrew in an interview March 17, 1982.
13. The Sunday Telegram, Clarksburg, WV, October 3, 1926.
14. Harrison County, WV Articles of Incorporation, Vol. 7, p. 170.
15. The Clarksburg Daily Telegram, Clarksburg, WV, July 11, 1921.
16. Ibid., July 12, 1921.
17. Ibid.
18. Ibid., May 2, 1922.
19. Harrison County, WV, Deed Book, Vol. 330, p. 121.
20. The West Virginia Hillbilly, Richwood, WV, July 31, 1965.
21. The Sunday Telegram, Clarksburg, WV, October 3, 1926.
22. Clarksburg Telegram, Clarksburg, WV, March 5, 1975.
23. Harrison County, WV, Articles of Incorporation, Vol. 7, p. 170.
24. Margaret H. Early in an interview March 11, 1982.
25. One of the brothers of the sheriff became the president of an oil company; the other, the owner of a factory that manufactured bricks. Aubrey O. Robinson in an interview March 13, 1982.
26. West Virginia Hillbilly, Richwood, WV, July 31, 1965.
27. Margaret Early interview, January 13, 1982.
28. Dorothy Davis, History of Harrison County, p. 857.
29. Harrison County, WV, Deed Book No. 393, pp. 128, 227. Between 1945 and 1969 Kappa Sigma Pi bought for sums ranging from \$30 to \$50 twenty-five lots, which had been bought in the 1920's by individual members of a projected "Avalon Country Club", to add to the original farm. Harrison County, WV, Deed Book No. 593, pp. 231, 247; No. 621, p. 365; No. 663, pp. 561-7, 569-80; No. 664, pp. 1-3, 198; No. 714, p. 220; No. 736, p. 469; No. 748, p. 388; No. 750, p. 396; No. 751, p. 245; No. 766, p. 66; No. 869, p. 249; No. 872, p. 118; No. 879, p. 253; No. 915, p. 568; No. 964, p. 271.
30. Davis, History, pp. 855-6.
31. Clarksburg Telegram, November 18, 1937.
32. The West Virginia Hillbilly, Richwood, WV, July 31, 1965.
33. The agency owned a car which was driven by students or members of the staff. Early interview, March 11, 1982.
34. In the 1960's the physician was Lawrence H. Mills, M.D.
35. Early interview, March 11, 1982
36. Ibid. "I think our knitting element here is music", said Mrs. Hill. "Mrs. Longworth came here for three month eighteen years ago to get a music program started. Her husband had just died. She needed to bury herself in something. She stayed, never went back. She is in charge of our music and directs the band." The West Virginia Hillbilly, Richwood, WV, July 31, 1965
37. Early, March 11, 1982.
38. Clarksburg Telegram, November 18, 1937.
39. Early, March 11, 1982.
40. Aubrey O. Robinson, in an interview, March 13, 1982.
41. Early, March 11, 1982.
42. Marie Burns Powell in an interview March 8, 1982.
43. Early, March 11, 1982.
44. Ibid., January 13, 1982.
45. A. O. Robinson.
46. Marie Burns Powell
47. Davis, p. 857. Mrs. Hill described how the Bible school started: "We got the idea of a Bible School when a man told us about a boy who was going to freeze to death if something wasn't done. The boy, he said, had been deserted by his parents, and was left in a shack without food and without heat. We got him and when Sunday came we told him to get ready for church. He hesitated and one of the children said, 'You never been in church?' He said no. Another said, 'Don't you know about God?' and he said, 'Who's he?' So I said to myself what kind of Knights of St. Paul are we to let this kind of thing go on? So we have a bus to pick up all the kids who don't go to church. When we have had them for a week, we tell the minister in their neighborhood and tell him to get next to them." The West Virginia Hillbilly, Richwood, WV, July 31, 1965.
48. Mrs. Hill was in her nineties at the time she wrote the words.
49. The Hughes River runs past Harrisville, Ritchie County, WV, where Mrs. Hill was born. Hughes River Dam is near Harrisville.
50. Kappa-Beta Youth Foundation, The Pi Magazine, Hattie C. Hill, editor, January-February 1975, pp. 14-5.
51. A. O. Robinson.

52. Ibid. The townhouse, 648 West Pike St., Clarksburg, was sold March 6, 1968. Harrison County, WV, Deed Book, Vol. 942, p. 380.
53. No record books of the agency were found in 1982.
54. Nina Ford Robinson in an interview March 13, 1982.
55. A.O. Robinson; Margaret Early.
56. Early interview, January 13, 1982.
57. Kappa Sigma Pi Home for Boys and Girls, "History".
58. A. O. Robinson.
59. Nina F. Robinson.
60. Harrison County, WV, Register of Deaths, Vol. 17, p. 119.
61. A. O. Robinson.
62. Clarksburg Telegram, March 5, 1975.

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Nina Ford Robinson, (Mrs. A. O.), Clarksburg, WV, March 13, 1982.