

Dr. Davis Discusses School Bond Question

(By GEORGE DAVIS, M. D.)

Ladies and Gentlemen:

Under date of March 1, 1925, of N. & O. Gov. A. W. McLean is reported to have made the statement, that "A Democracy cannot father in its educational advancement, yet, the cost must be kept within the ability of the tax-payers to pay."

On next Tuesday March 17th, 1925 you will vote for or against Bonds for \$100,000 to buy land etc for School purposes—Those in favor of the bonds have stated to you publicly and privately that we do not own any land in Beaufort sufficient to add to the present Graded School building or to build a separate building.

Several years ago before the Graded School building was erected this same argument came up but the facts were not distorted as in this campaign, and knowing that we did own land, I want to give the records. I have records leading back to the Session of the Legislature of 1816—but I did not have the Act, hence I went to the Court House and asked Mr. L. W. Hassell, the Clerk of Court for Act of 1816 Chapter 97. We searched for it fully but the book was not found. Some kind person had removed the book. Through the kindness of Wm. T. (Billie) Delamar, Deputy Collector of Internal Revenue, Raleigh, N. C., I secured copies of the Act of the Legislature of 1816 and ask you to carefully read same, to-wit:

Chapter XC VII Laws of North Carolina.

An Act to conform an accurate survey of the town of Beaufort, in the County of Carteret, and for other purposes.

Whereas disputes have arisen concerning the true lines of the streets and lots in the town of Beaufort in consequence of which the inhabitants have employed Jonathan Price to survey and make an accurate plan of said town.

Be it therefore enacted by the General Assembly of the State of North Carolina, and it is hereby enacted by the authority of same,

That the lines and plan of the town of Beaufort as surveyed and established by Jonathan Price, shall hereafter be considered in all cases as the true lines and plan of said town of Beaufort, in the County of Carteret, any law to the contrary notwithstanding.

II. And be it further enacted, that one copy of the plan of said town of Beaufort made by the said Jonathan Price, shall be deposited by the Commissioners of said town in the register's office of Carteret County.

III. And be it further enacted, That the Commissioners of the town of Beaufort are hereby authorized to sell at public auction after advertising at least one month, all the lots of ground laid off in the town, except those reserved for public buildings, and also all the lots of ground in the old and new town, as formerly surveyed, and which have not been entered, paid for and decided to the purchasers agreeable to law, and the said Commissioners are hereby authorized and empowered to make and execute deeds of sale in fee simple to the purchaser or purchasers of said lots.

IV. And be it further enacted, That the lots No. one hundred and twenty-seven and one hundred and thirty-five, shall be reserved as public property, on which to erect a court-house, that lot No. one hundred and fifty-one shall be reserved as public property on which to erect a jail; that lot No. one hundred and twenty-eight, one hundred and thirty-six, one hundred and forty-four and one hundred and fifty-two shall be reserved in like manner for the use and benefit of an Academy; and that lot No. one hundred and forty-three shall be reserved for such public building as the county may think proper to erect.

V. And be it further enacted, That the Commissioners of the town of Beaufort shall pay over all monies by them collected from the sale of the lots above named to the Clerk of the County Court of Carteret to be disposed of as a majority of said court may think proper, any law to the contrary notwithstanding.

You will note that under section IV we own all of the Western lots 30 feet from the Court House and on Turner Street, that the Court

owns all of the Eastern lots and can only be accurately made by a surveyor. The School building does not begin on the southern line of lot 144, hence it on part of lot 152, being about ten (10) feet on lot 152 North of the School building, that is from the North side of the building to Cedar street they are 100 feet wide by 198 feet deep. The front of the School building is 35 feet from Turner Street. I tried to step the whole section off carefully but to be accurate it will require a survey—however on the vacant lot 152 we have 100 feet by 198 and a building equal or larger than the one we have could be easily placed on that vacant lot 152 and estimating the building to be 75 feet wide, we would have left for sunlight and ventilation, air etc. twenty-five (25) feet between the buildings. The School owns the two Southern lots 136 and 128 and 136 could be used for the playground instead of the County lot 151. The playground is there and enough land to build suitable building for the next 50 or 100 years—depending upon how high you wish to go upwards.

In the session of Legislature 1887 Private Laws page 796, Chapter 18, we find an act to incorporate the "Beaufort High School Association." The General Assembly of N. C. do enact:

Section 1. That—J. E. Jones, W. S. Chadwick, Wm. Sabiston, J. B. Davis, John Forlaw, B. L. Jones and others, or any five of them be and the same are hereby created a body politic and corporate under the name and style of the Beaufort High School Association etc.

Section 2. For the purpose of more fully carrying out the intention of the General Assembly at its session in 1816 Chapter 97, the lease made and executed by the Board of Commissioners of Carteret County and approved by the Board of Magistrates of said County, at their regular meeting in June 1886 to Thomas Thomas, B. L. Jones, W. F. Dill and others for lots number 136, 144 and 152 of old town, be and the same is hereby approved ratified and confirmed—This the 8th day of February A. D. 1887. For this lease see Book NN page 504 Register Deeds office Carteret County.

The old Court House had been placed on lot 128 instead of 127 and we see how lot 128 was seemingly lost to the School.

Nineteen (19) years after or in 1906, '08 and '09 many of those boys and girls who attended the old Beaufort High School gave their votes and were assisted greatly by many of their girl associates of former days. Twice we went down in defeat and the third time in 1909, the election was carried May 20th for Graded Schools. We may call attention to the charter later.

Five years later or in 1914 Judge R. B. Peebles on Oct. 23rd, gave Judgement recorded in Book 5 office of Clerk of Court Carteret to wit: Board of Commissioners Carteret Co.

—vs—
The Town of Beaufort and the Board of Trustees for the Beaufort Graded School.

"That the Beaufort Graded School Trustees shall have and possess lots No. 152 and 144 upon which to erect and construct Graded School Building—etc."

The understanding as an agreement of parties, Judge O. H. Guion, attorney for plaintiff and Mr. J. F. Duncan, attorney for the Defendant the school Trustees—that no obstruction of any kind was to be placed in either School or county property. South of a certain line, no fence can be erected, the Southern Section to be known as Carteret Park. That the County Commissioners would cause to be removed the old Court House located on lot 128 in said square. That the square of eight lots, to be used for New Court House building and accessories a jail and Jailors house building, the Graded School building and accessories. The foregoing decree is approved and accepted.

This Nov. 2nd, 1914 —Signed
J. B. MORTON,
Chmn. County Commissioners.

and by
W. J. Wallace
Clerk of Board of Commissioners.

Just why this agreement was made in the face of the Act of 1816 is not given. But both parties seemed to have overlooked lot 136 while admitting lot 128, in ordering old Court House removed. However any way you turn all point to Act of 1816 which gave the school four lots 127, 136, 144, and 152 and the agreement was a mutual understanding not considering the Act of 1816 in their consideration.

The School building was built to correspond with the agreement to be IV we own all of the Western lots 30 feet from the Court House and on Turner Street, that the Court

owns all of the Eastern lots and can only be accurately made by a surveyor. The School building does not begin on the southern line of lot 144, hence it on part of lot 152, being about ten (10) feet on lot 152 North of the School building, that is from the North side of the building to Cedar street they are 100 feet wide by 198 feet deep. The front of the School building is 35 feet from Turner Street. I tried to step the whole section off carefully but to be accurate it will require a survey—however on the vacant lot 152 we have 100 feet by 198 and a building equal or larger than the one we have could be easily placed on that vacant lot 152 and estimating the building to be 75 feet wide, we would have left for sunlight and ventilation, air etc. twenty-five (25) feet between the buildings. The School owns the two Southern lots 136 and 128 and 136 could be used for the playground instead of the County lot 151. The playground is there and enough land to build suitable building for the next 50 or 100 years—depending upon how high you wish to go upwards.

Those who care to do so may check up on some of the old letters we sent out in election of 1909. You will remember we had a great many speakers here and it was costly and tiresome. We had letter heads as follows printed:

M. L. Davis, Pres. C. R. Wheatly, Sec.

Headquarters Ex Com. Graded School Campaign in Beaufort

and Mr. Edward Martin was kind enough to secure for us a list of all the property owners on the tax books, as taken from the registration and we sent to each a circular giving the cost as we then honestly believed, on each \$100 valuation, but we were badly mistaken. Look over your tax receipts and you will see that it is dangerous to promise that taxes will not be over 30c, when we on less than \$20,000 bonds for school indebtedness are paying 40c on each \$100. We wrote a letter under date of May 15th 1909 and Mr. George Norcom carried same to each registered voter and in that letter we stated over the name of Ex. Com. Graded School Campaign that—
"It will mean so much for us; it will mean the bringing of industries to Beaufort of financial enterprise of all kinds etc. This matter will be left to the people to look over those old letters and compare with your receipt now, and with the enterprises that have come here, etc. We made an error in the statement, honest, yet only a belief and that belief has not materialized.

When the question of building on land as reported to be owned by Mr. U. E. Swann, ended a bond issue in 1922 came up, I wrote the State Supt. of Public Instruction and under date of Dec. 13th 1922 he wrote that "The Beaufort Trustees are selected in accordance with an Independent Charter granted the Beaufort School District by the Legislature. The Beaufort City Schools are operated independently of the County and State system, in so far as control and administration goes, for that is controlled by the Charter and by the local board of Trustees."

In 1909 Carteret County had a population of 11,811, in 1920 about 15,344. Beaufort in 1900 had 2,195, in 1920 3,190 or practically 1600 increase in 20 years. The saw mill came and many have these counted in the census and when the mill quit it is estimated that 200 or more left, hence we can only count about 800 increase in 20 years, or 40 per year of men women and children and therefore the population is not increasing enough to call for \$100,000 in bonds for land when we have four (4) lots 128, 136, 144 and 152 for School purposes.

The real estate valuation was \$165,278 and the tax rate on all property was 40c on the \$100 and there was a normal increase so that as estimated the property valuation in the School District in 1914 was about \$800,000 and in 1919 came the Board of Appraisers and Revisers with Mr. D. W. Morton, as Chairman and land values were inflated. It was raised in different places 2-1-3 times more or less, and today the valuation of the School District is estimated to be \$2,500,000 on the same land with no increase in factories and very little increase in the general

population.

The town of Beaufort had a property valuation in 1924 of \$2,050,000 with a bonded indebtedness of 570,000 and of this, an assessment 445,000 Light, Streets etc. An ad tax rate of \$1.75 on each \$100 A Great Deal of the Street assessment is to be paid direct by property owners and the remainder assumed by the Town, and to raise this; your taxes must be increased.

Carteret County has a valuation in property less than \$13,000,000 with a bonded indebtedness of \$800,000 plus bond enacted by the Legislature 1925 \$150,000

total of \$750,000

with privilege in the hands of the Commissioners granted to them by the Legislature 1925 for an additional bonds of \$700,000 for roads and bridges as understood with the location for said roads and bridges undetermined. With a tax rate of \$1.85 on each \$100 and in the Beaufort Graded School District and for Beaufort you are paying \$1.13 out of the \$1.85 for Schools of this for Special of Graded School 40c and for General School Fund 73 cents.

This bond issue for \$100,000 at 5-1-2 per cent for 20 or more years will cost over \$200,000 and you will be called upon for greater bonds to satisfy the few. You have been given the facts and it is your duty to check these facts and vote in accordance with facts and not theories.

The hope of education is to make it easier for boys and girls to succeed in life but if their success depends upon the loss of the homes of the poor on account of bonds and high taxes, with no hope in sight for reduction in expenses, it would be far better for these boys and girls to remain uneducated.

Remember you have school property lots 128, 136, 144 and 152, under the Act of 1816 and I believe after talking with and hearing from a majority of the voters that they will on Tuesday March 17, 1925 defeat this bond issue to buy land.

Respectfully submitted,
GEORGE DAVIS, M. D.
Beaufort, N. C.
March 11th 1925.

LOLA RIPPLES.

Rev. J. C. Griffin of Davis held his regular appointment here Saturday and Sunday. His little son J. C. Jr. came with him.

Mr. Norwood Lupton of Roe was a visitor here Saturday night.

Mrs. Sophia Lupton was the guest of Mrs. Nannie Day Sunday afternoon.

Mr. and Mrs. Earl Wade and children of Williston spent the week end here with Mrs. Wade's mother Mrs. Rittie Day.

Misses Beatrice Goodwin, Lucy P. Daniels and Mrs. John Lupton motored up to Roe Sunday evening.

Mrs. Ernest Goodwin, Cecil Harris and Norwood Lupton of Roe attended church here Sunday night.

There was Ladies aid and The Orphans League at the F. W. B. church Sunday night. A large audience attended.

Messrs Monnie Daniels, Eldon Smith and Baker Lupton were visitors at Roe Sunday afternoon.

Mr. Nowie Day left Monday for Williston where he will spend a few days with relatives.

Miss Verda Day entertained quite a number of her friends Sunday afternoon.

Mr. J. W. Goodwin, Sylvester Goodwin and Walter Goodwin returned home Sunday from Long Long Creek where they have been fishing.

Misses Kate Johnston, Evande Day and Emma Harris were business visitors at Roe Monday evening.

The school has been and is now busy preparing for group commencement at Atlantic.

Miss Ruby Daniels of Roe spent Saturday night with Miss Evandae Day.

Misses Mattie and Verda Day were the guests of Miss LeLona Day Sunday afternoon.

Mr. Ervin Lupton returned home Sunday from South River where he has been fishing.

Mr. Guy Lupton of Lenoxville was a visitor here Sunday.

Mr. Oscar Goodwin of Roe was a business visitor here Monday and Tuesday.

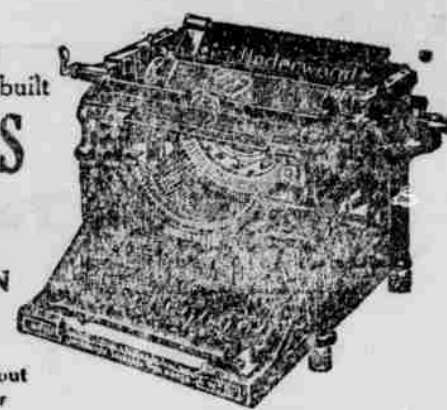
Quite a number of children from Roe attended Sabbath school here Sunday morning also church.

Misses Pauline Lupton and Mabel Lupton were visitors here Sunday.

A quid made from tobacco, leaves of cocoa plant, and wood ash paste, forms a bulge in one cheek of almost every Indian one sees in Bolivia.

Policemen at the White House must be six feet tall.

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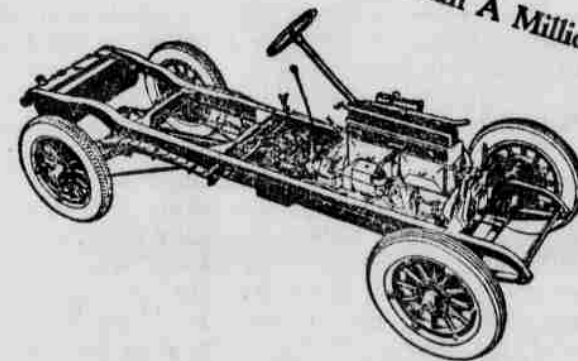
THE SHOE HOSPITAL

The Beaufort Shoe Shop

J. C. Chadwick, Prop.



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