

# Grand Jury Report

North Carolina,  
Perquimans County.

In The Superior Court  
April Term, 1946

We, the Grand Jury, duly sworn and empanelled for this term of court, respectfully report:

We have passed upon all bills of indictments sent to us by the Solicitor. We have inspected all of the County Buildings and offices and submit the following recommendations.

**Clerk of Court's Office**  
This office is in urgent need of repair to floor. This floor has been in need of repair for six years and recommend that this work be ordered done at once. The vault of the Clerk's office urgently needs to be enlarged to take care of filing of books and records, for the preservation of such books and records.

Justice of Peace has made reports. Elizabeth Hudgins Admx. of A. L. Hudgins failed to file report according to law.

**Court House**  
We urge the court house floor be examined for damage from termites or damage from any cause; if damage is found, immediate steps be taken to remedy same.

**Register of Deed's Office**  
The vault urgently needs to be enlarged. Steps should be taken immediately to have the vault damp proofed, for the preservation of the records of this office from damp rot and damage.

**Accountant's Office**  
In very good condition and all records O. K.

**Sheriff's Office**  
This office needs the following: A new typewriter, typewriter desk and regular desk as well as a new stove.

The Courthouse lawn looks somewhat like a Junk Yard. We urge the immediate removal of all unsightly junk from the courthouse lawn, that a coal bin be built, that the Jail yard and courthouse lawn be given a general cleaning and that it cease being used as a parking lot and that the shrubbery be trimmed or pruned.

**County Jail**  
Two cells on the second floor of Jail need to have toilet facilities. Two toilets on the first floor of the Jail are out of order, not usable, and should be replaced.

Three cells out of the eight or ten cells have toilet facilities and we urge the installing of additional toilet facilities. We are strong in our protest against the placing of Negroes and white persons in the same cell, and we urge the immediate separation of these prisoners.

On the third floor of the Courthouse open switch box should be checked and repaired, completed or taken out. The third floor needs a general cleaning as it constitutes a distinct fire hazard—papers scattered all over the floor—these papers are old records that should have a place to be stored away from the general public.

**The Prison Farm**  
This prison farm was found to be in excellent condition with a grade A safe, excellent rating by the Board of Health, courteous officials, and a credit to the community.

**The County Home**  
The County Home was found to be in very good condition, clean and well kept, the inmates well and happy.

**School Building**  
A committee was sent to examine the several school buildings in the county, and the report follows herewith:

**Perquimans County High School**  
The committee reports that this handsome building is not yielding its full use to the children and taxpayers of the county for that those charged with its care and administration have been derelict in their duty to say the least, if indeed, they are not guilty of nonfeasance and probably misfeasance in office, in the following particulars, viz:

1. That three, and in real severe weather, four rooms on the second floor are not usable in winter because of the inadequacy of the present heating system. It is our advice that students and faculty members have repeatedly complained to no effect, but no action has been taken. Of course, we understand the lack of materials for the last several war years, but this should have been attended to long before war came. We are further advised that many of the rooms which are used are inadequately heated for substantial periods of the school day on many days during normally cold weather. We recommend that the Board of Education employ competent heating engineer and see that an adequate heating system is in place at High School without delay.

2. The roof has been in a poor condition for many years, and has leaked until many rooms of the building are a direct physical hazard to occupants thereof; for that water coming through has caused the plaster to rot and loosen itself from the lath, and hangs threatening to fall on who and what is beneath. Of course, this water has circled nearly every wall in the house, especially the auditorium, as well as causing plaster to drop from the ceiling and walls in many places.

In our judgment this condition is excusable. We understand that efforts have been made to patch the roof, but we know from personal experience of several members of the

Grand Jury that competent, and we emphasize that word competent, roof men are available in this area and if contracted and employed could have fixed this roof and preserved the building. It can be fixed.

In this connection we especially note the auditorium in which numerous public meetings are held. Largely because of inefficient roof maintenance, this hall is a disgrace to the county and a hazard to those called upon to use it.

We recommend that competent roofers be retained and the roof fixed. They are obtainable now within several weeks after they are formally retained to do a job.

3. That all outside doors in the building are in a sad state of repair, and many will have to be replaced. We recommend that competent mechanics be retained and the woodwork of the building exposed to the elements be put in first class condition, painted and kept that way.

4. That the several water tanks in the several rest rooms need new fixtures installed. Many of them are out of commission and everyone of them should be kept in good operating condition at all times.

5. The entire plumbing in the building needs a thorough overhauling and bringing to a state of first class repair.

6. The workshop and fence around the athletic field ought to receive two good coats of paint in the immediate future. We recommend that it be put in good condition and kept that way. After it is put in good shape receipts from athletic contests will amply provide for the maintenance without excessive cost to any Board.

7. The wood retaining walls along the highway are rotten and should be immediately replaced with a concrete wall to preserve the beauty of the grounds and money spent in grading and providing a lawn thereon.

8. We recommend that the County purchase a power lawn-mower and that a man be employed to keep the several county lawns like a lawn should be kept. We mean the High School lawn, the Central Grammar School lawn, and the Court House lawn.

**Hertford Grammar School**  
We noted on the west side of this building where the buses unload a large oak tree that was split down the middle of the trunk, and is dangerous to the children as well as the buildings nearby. We urge that this tree be felled immediately and the stump removed.

We recommend that a concrete walk be built from the East and West doors of this building to the front walk, and from the said doors to East and West Academy Streets respectively. And, we urge that a wide walk be built to the lunchroom from the West door at once. Children now have to wade through large and fairly deep puddles of water to get to the lunch room in rainy and snowy weather.

We further urge the building of new, Adequate, modern lunch room connected with the school building proper replacing the present dilapidated, outmoded, inadequate building used for this purpose.

We found that window cords need replacing in several windows. Water fountains need repairing or replacing.

We also find that an additional stool is badly needed in the rest room provided for the first grade. And, that lockers are badly needed in rooms 3, 4, 5, 6, and 7 inclusive.

We find that the children in the primary grades, that is one through three, have to carry chairs from downstairs up the steps to the class room in order to have a seat while attending class and then carry the chairs back down again when they go to their rooms. In our judgment this is inexcusable and adequate seats should be provided for these grades in all class room without delay.

We likewise urge that additional dirt be hauled to this school yard to cover up cinders that now cover a substantial area upon which the children play, and that the whole yard be graded, and seeded to good grass after it is graded; and that curbing and sidewalks be built the entire length of the school property on East and West Academy Streets respectively, and this without delay. Without the sidewalks and curb the additional dirt and grading will be of no avail.

**Poplar Neck Colored School**  
We find this alleged school house in such condition that it is a definite disgrace to any county and not fit to house cattle and hogs much less human beings. We recommend immediate general overhaul and repair of this entire building.

**Hertford Colored School**  
This building has recently had a new roof put on, but that work was so long delayed the interior has definitely deteriorated in that the ceiling of the entire building is virtually rotten; beam across the center of the auditorium is sagged; the curtains at several windows have been ruined by rain and wind; the walls severely punished by the elements. We recommend that the walls and ceiling through the entire building be repaired at once and given two coats of paint immediately after they have been structurally repaired. Also, that new blackboards be installed throughout the school, and out modeled benches be replaced with modern school chairs; new stove mats put in and the stoves repaired so that they may be safely used. The outbuildings should be brought to a good state of repair and painted.

**School Buses.**  
We have inspected the School Buses,

and drivers. We find all drivers duly certified by the Division of Highway Safety of the Department of Motor Vehicles of North Carolina.

We find that the county needs at least five new buses to replace five in present use that are so deteriorated and worn as to be positively dangerous vehicles for the transportation of children. We were told that at times the New Hope bus has on it as many as seventy-five children at the time.

We urgently recommend that the New Hope section be allotted another bus to help get their children to school; and, that a copy of this section of our report be certified to the proper state authority having in hand the allotment of buses to the various county units, under the seal of this court. We also recommend that the Winfall Colored School be allotted another bus. Likewise we urge that at least two reserve buses be provided so that when a regular bus is in the shop the children can come to school on time. Under the present set up frequently children on a route have to wait until a bus on another route completes its round and then comes for them, as happened yesterday. The two reserve buses usually on hand are being used as regulars, and the regulars have been discarded, because they are worn out.

We accepted the report of Patrolman Chas. E. Payne as to the condition of the buses so far as horns, lights, brakes, and doors are concerned. Mr. Payne's report shows several buses with defective brakes, lights, and doors. We recommend that Mr. Hampton charged with maintenance of the buses be given adequate mechanical help to maintain the buses in safe operating condition. And, this Grand Jury wishes to publicly commend Mr. Wade Hampton for the splendid job he is doing in connection with grossly inadequate help and facilities.

**Chapanoke School**  
Inspection of this building indicates that the ceiling and walls are in bad condition due to a leaking roof; part of the floor has given way due to rotten sleepers; four windows are in need of repairs; two screens are needed in front of toilets; remainder of this building is in fair condition.

**Woodville Negro School also known as Pool's Grove School**  
We find the floor in the vestibule in very bad condition, holes that a child can almost fall through. One of the school rooms currently used has a large hole in the floor near the door; also recommend a new stove for this school, as the one in present use is very unsafe and creates a distinct fire hazard. Likewise suggest new stove mat for safety. This school also needs new blackboards.

**Galatia Colored School**  
This building needs four new window lights; and pump needs minor repairs; the grounds are kept clean.

**New Hope White School**  
This building is in a good state of repair and the grounds are kept in good condition.

**Temple Colored School**  
This building needs repairs to the flue and several window lights need replacing. Otherwise the building and grounds are in good condition.

**Oak Hill Colored School**  
This school needs repairs to toilet door, several window lights and repair to door steps.

**Sanders Bottom School**  
We recommend new toilets for the boys, and repairs to the girls toilet. Several window lights are out, steps need repairs; ceiling needs repairs; blackboards in bad condition; a desk for teacher and several chairs needed here.

**Bethel Colored School**  
This school needs three new windows, the steps need repair; needs new seats, building needs paint inside and outside; also new blackboards needed, and likewise repairs to the toilet door.

**Burgess School**  
Arrived too late for inside inspection. Repairs to steps, several window panes out.

**Willow Branch School**  
The Willow Branch School was inspected and found in need of repair to roof and repairs to flue. New blackboard and needs painting inside and out. The toilets are in need of repairs and the pump needs repairing. The school grounds are being kept clean.

**Winfall Central Grammar School**  
This school is in very good condition with the exception of the following: The outside water fountain on the East side of the building has a stopped-up drainage pipe. This causes a muddy condition to prevail just about all the time during school hours around the fountain. This drain pipe should be repaired immediately. The lights and wiring in the 7th grade room are in need of repair. The light does not work and the electrical wiring is exposed to such an extent that it should have immediate attention.

**Winfall Colored School**  
This school is in very good condition except for the following: The building needs painting on the outside. The girls toilet is in very bad shape on the inside, and the faulty condition existing there should have immediate attention for health and sanitary reasons.

**Winfall Colored Annex (Jessup Building)**  
This building is in bad condition, but we understand that this is not county property, but is only being used temporarily. However there should be tin or some kind of fire-proof mat placed under one of the

coal heaters to reduce as much as possible the fire hazard.

**Bagley Swamp (Colored)**  
This building is in poor condition. It has a leaking roof, bad ceiling resulting from the bad roof; there are weak places in the floor; some window lights are out and window cords are broken. Also the door steps are badly in need of repair. This school is in better condition than the average school of the rural section, however the faulty condition mentioned above should have immediate attention. Also needing repair not mentioned above is the boy's toilet. This should have immediate attention.

**Bay Branch School (Colored)**  
This school building is in terrible condition. It should be a disgrace to any county or community. The Grand Jury of last year recommended that the floor of this building be repaired. This has not been done. The floor has holes in it with cracks as wide as one inch. The windows are about to fall out and the cracks between the sashes are big enough to push a man's arm through. If this building is to be continued in use as a school building there must be extensive repairs made, because in its present condition there

are better stables in the county.

**Nleanor School (Colored)**  
This building is in fair condition with the exception of the Ceiling. The ceiling is in very bad shape. Also this school is in need of a heater, and this equipment should be supplied at once. (Continued On Page 6)

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