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Greensboro, North Carolina

HISTORY OF GREENSBORO HIGH SCHOOL, CHAPTER I

Greensboro Breaks the Ice.

In 1840, Rev. Calvin H. Wiley, of Guilford county, was elected the first superintendent of Public Education in North Carolina. He realized the great need of better education in the state, for, as today, North Carolina was far behind the other states in education. So, Rev. Wiley made an energetic effort to get the better towns of the state interested in the matter.

His plan was an excellent one for that time. Each city was to organize graded schools and provide one teacher for each room. Each city adopting the plan was to provide a tax sufficient to run the schools eight or nine months a year.

Greensboro was the first city in North Carolina to try the experiment. Quite a number of citizens signed a petition to enlarge the city limits to include two square miles and to start a system of public graded schools. Mr. James W. Albright, a member of the Board of Aldermen, drafted the amendment, which contained this clause:

"Sec. 74, that the corporate limits of the city shall constitute a school district, and that all taxes levied upon the citizens by the state for school purposes, shall be expended in conformity with the regulations of the state, in establishing graded schools within the city, and should the amount thus realized not be sufficient to keep the schools open eight months in the year, in that event the commissioners shall appropriate a sufficient amount of money from any funds on hand belonging to the city to supply the deficiency."

The amended charter was sent to the legislature. Mr. Alexander McIver, who was then superintendent of Public Institution, went before the law-makers in Raleigh and put up a stiff struggle for clause 74. There was quite an argument, but the amendment was ratified March 28, 1870.

The hardest struggle was yet to come, however, when the amendment was up for adoption or rejection in Greensboro. Numbers of prominent citizens followed the greatest debate ever held in were for graded schools, and they did their utmost to put the law across. There were others who saw no good in the plan. They declared that such a plan would ruin the city. It would make a lot of stuck-up lazy people, it would bring the best and most cultured children in contact with the seum of society, and it would be unfair to tax a man to raise money for educating

some one else's children were their chief objections. So the contest waged at white heat up to, and even during, the election. Little though we may realize, it the issue at stake had a direct bearing on our lives and future. We owe our present educational advantages, to a large extent, to the passage of that amendment on that eventful day in May, 1870. It is interesting to note that, in spite of the strong and determined opposition put up, the measure was carried by an extremely large majority.

There was a free school building on the site of the present Lindsay Street Grammar School. It was a little brick building containing only one room. The city took control of the building and called for bids on enlarging it. The contract was given to one of the Aldermen, Symoure Steele, and C. N. McAdoo. They made it into a two story building containing five rooms and a chapel. At that time it was considered quite an up-to-date structure.

September 6, 1870, Greensboro opened the doors of the first graded school in the state. Jesse R. Wharton was the first principal and superintendent. The first teachers were Misses Sallie Brent, Priscilla Macon, and Annie Litchford. There were two hundred pupils enrolled in the eight grades of the school. Which fact only goes to say that from the first the experiment was a decided success. Among the pupils were sons and daughters of the best and bluest blooded citizens of Greensboro.

Mr. Wharton and his faculty felt a great responsibility. They knew that the eyes of other cities were watching to see how the plan worked. They felt it was up to them to make it work. So no matter what difficulty loomed up on the horizon, they went bravely on with their work. Soon Raleigh, Winston-Salem, Goldsboro, Wilson, and Charlotte, who had been waiting to see if the plan would work, one after another, fell in line and followed Greensboro's example. Now there are graded public schools all over this state.

Professor Wharton laid a good firm foundation for educational growth and expansion in Greensboro. He was popular with the patrons of the school because of his sincerity in his work. He died March 5, 1904, at the age of seventy.

Myrtle Ellen LaBarr.

LITERARY DIGEST CLUB HOLDS FIRST MEETING

The second meeting of the Junior Literary Digest Club was held January 14th, with Doris Stinnette as chairman. She called for a discussion of the poetry in that week's issue. The leader of the 2nd group, Wilbur Sharpe, then took charge of the program.

Discussion: Topics of the Day—Pauline Fitzgerald.

Talk—New football—Emil Cline.

Paper—Business English—Bryan Stack.

Spice of Life—Vallie Dillon.

Talk—Child Labor—Margaret Thompson.

The chairman then called for a general discussion of the Irish question and other current topics. She asked Sula Beall to read some of the topics in brief, which are always interesting. Wilbur Sharpe brought the following statement before the club: North Carolina spends per day \$100,000 for automobiles, and only \$300 for schools. Critics Report—Myrtle Ellen LaBarr.

The Junior Literary Digest Club decided to hold its meeting on Thursday, last week, so that they might combine it

WATCH FOR US

This is

our space

We will be here

until the finish

If you wear anything

come to us for it

We have it from

Toe to top knob

Clothes, Shoes and

everything else

DONNELL & MEDEARIS

"Cash System Saves"

with a celebration of Lee. Jackson Day. The meeting was called to order by the chairman, Myrtle Ellen LaBarr. She stated that there would be no general discussion of current topics since the program was rather lengthy and so the meeting was turned over to Blanche Mann, the leader. The program follows:

Description and illustration of the various kinds of posture correct and incorrect. Horace Lamberth.

An account of Gladys's Beggars's Opera and Why it has been revived. Helen Stack.

Discussion of cartoons. Roy Broadnax.

A sketch of Stonewall Jackson. Blanche Mann.

Poem. Robert Edward Lee. Lucile Pettit.

Jokes. William Erickart.

Original poem and talk. Jackson and Lee as citizens, soldiers, and Christian patriots. Myrtle Ellen LaBarr.

Recreation—Stonewall Jackson's way—Pauline Fitzgerald.

There was some discussion over the two to send to chapel. It was finally decided that three ought to go, so Blanche Mann, Pauline Fitzgerald and Myrtle Ellen LaBarr were decided upon.

The club felt highly pleased to have as their guest superintendent Frederick Archer. They like to feel that the superintendent is interested enough in them to pay them a visit and see how they are doing things. They regard Mr. Archer as their friend and are looking forward to other visits from him in the future.

As she looked in the mirror

She had to confess

That the end of her nose

Was a shining success.—Ex.