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Glorious Success was the County Commencement

TEN THOUSAND PEOPLE WITNESS SPECTACULAR PARADE.

Over Eighteen Hundred Children in Line—The Declamers Contest, Athletic Events and Girls' Games.

Well, they came all right, from granddaddy down to the little man. Just the biggest, happiest, best looking, most interesting and interested crowd that ever got into Louisburg.

Nobody knows how many there were. Guesses range from 4,000 up to the enthusiastic imagination of the young fellow who told his father when he got home that there were 20,000.

Anyhow, there were 1,801 by actual count in that line which stretched from the graded school gate to the courthouse and back again.

And as the children marched going down the street with the band playing in front and school by school passed along till it seemed an unending procession, why, a fellow didn't know exactly whether he wanted to holler or to cry or just to stand up and be proud of ourselves.

There were plenty details, the speaking, the dinner, the contests, and all that, but when one thinks of the day, he is not conscious of details. There is just the sense of a tremendous impression. If he follows it up, he will find back of it all that long line of little children trudging down the street under the waving school banners.

One man who has reached his three score and ten gazed upon it for a long time without a word. Then he turned and pointing, said, "In '61, I drilled right out there in the first company that went from Franklin County. I have thought that was the greatest day in our history. Maybe I has been, but it will not be any more, for this is."

It was such a genuinely human crowd. The children were a band of sympathy that brought all together.

On the march back up the hill, some of the very little fellows were growing tired, but it only made one love them all the more.

Everything passed off in the happiest way. Late in the afternoon the buggies and wagons with their loads of precious human freight started homeward.

They left behind an abiding impression, a band of union which unites the county as a whole in a way we have never had before.

Friday was a big day for Louisburg. Possibly the biggest since the Centennial in 1875, and without a doubt the biggest ever of its kind. The demonstration of the interest in the public schools throughout the county was evident on every hand, and so strong even the pessimist could not doubt the great revelations that had been and now are taking place in the public school work all over the county. The day had been well advertised and our people were all eager to see that it was a great success and showed their interest by their presence and participation in the exercises. The day was beautiful and all that could be asked for, Providence having added her approval of the occasion in the lovely day. It was neither too cool or too warm and the sun dodging in and out between the clouds as if to add smiles to the occasion and record its gratifications at the work that is being done.

Early in the morning the crowds began to gather and long before the hour for the exercises the entire of Main Street from the bridge to the College Hill was like unto a big metropolis, numbering at least six thousand. The line of march was formed at the graded school building headed by the J. T. Bailey Concert Band of Rocky Mount, and guided by Chief of Police J. C. Tucker and Mr. J. W. Mann, marching down Main Street around the courthouse square and back to the grove. The line was composed of pupils of the several schools in the county, in double file, and was sufficient in length to reach from the college grove down the street five blocks and back and contained eighteen hundred and one. A more beautiful and impressive sight cannot be imagined than those little children, ranging in age from about five years up, in this line of march demonstrating to the older people the value of the public school to them.

It was such a forcible presentation of the question of public school we don't believe any man or woman living in this age will ever allow themselves to criticize anything that will in any way add to the perfection of the system. It was a great day, not so much for the real exercises, but for the interest manifested by so many little folks. The procession lasted for at least an hour and after the line had all arrived the crowds were invited around the graded school building to the front of the historic academy building which, with its glorious record of usefulness and superiority in the days of our esteemed and beloved Matthew S. Davis, had been moved to one side to make room for the more modern and commodious graded school building where a rostrum had been provided of the front porch and many seats made for the little folks where the exercises began. The exercises were opened with prayer by Rev. G. M. Duke, one of Franklin County's most honored citizens, and a great friend to education. After prayer the audience joined in singing that beautiful and soul-inspiring hymn, "America," which was masterly led by Mr. I. N. Price, of Chattanooga, Tenn.

The song was followed by one of the best addresses we have ever heard. Supt. White has an enviable reputation as a speaker but in this if possible, he excelled his possibilities. However, we might not have expected less as it was about a work beloved, one that he had given a large part of his life and fortune to, and one that he has the credit of having lifted up from a mere trifle to a strong organization, doing a great work and not being lead by any other counties in North Carolina.

We herewith produce his speech in full that those who failed to hear him may read, however, its value cannot be measured in print. It takes his speaking when he is full of the life he has lived with the schools and the system. His speech follows:

Speech of Supt. R. B. White, Delivering Diplomas to the County Graduates.

We have gathered here to celebrate our County Commencement. To join in it have come the children from our schools, and while it will always be impossible at any one time to get all of them together, still I know that enough were present in the line that marched along the street just now to give you older ones a new perception of the pressing importance of the work that is being attempted in the schools of our county.

There is no tomorrow for childhood. What is not done today may not be done hereafter. The water that passes the dam may not return, and the days of youth will never come back to the call of age.

The chief agency which through all time has kept alive the spark of educational interest has been the mother's heart which saw her child in the flesh and in the spirit and through that sight saw life in its true perspective.

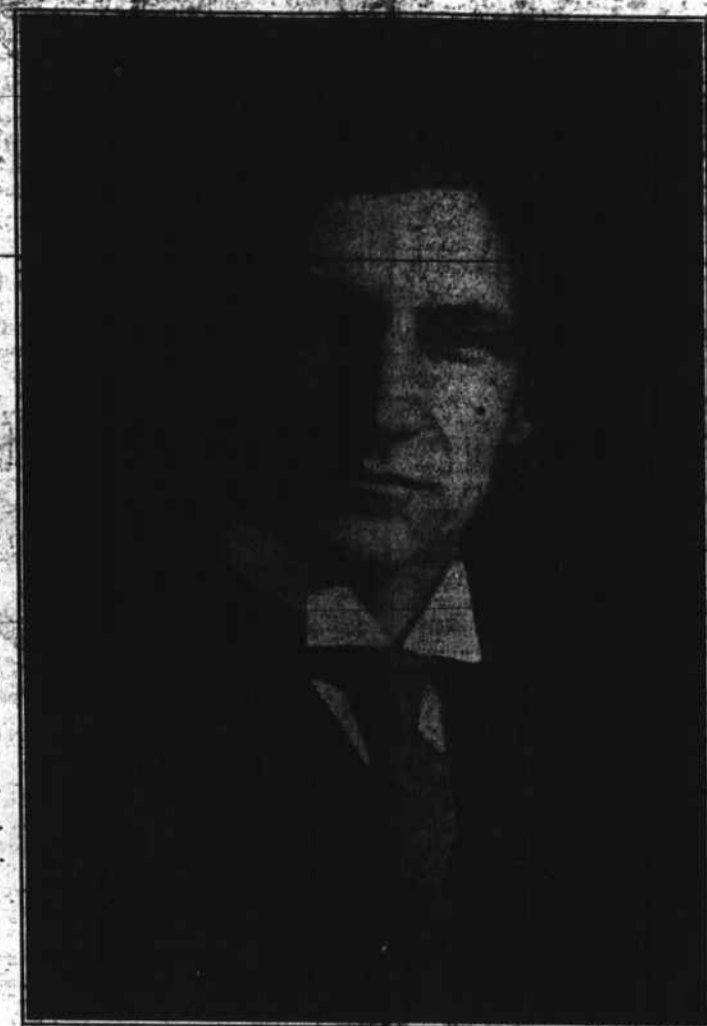
And knowing as I do the hearts of the people of this county, I have felt that if you could once see spread out before you this panorama of possibility, then you would begin to understand with mind and heart and strength the peculiar need and value of the public school over and beyond any other aim or activity of our government.

For you men and women of Franklin County who are met here today, this day, seen the very glory of our kingdom and the greatness of our hope. Before you have passed in battle array the beginning and end and purpose of all life.

To the emotion of that moment, when you heard the tramp, tramp, tramp of eighteen hundred school children and saw their young faces lifted to the land of knowledge, I can by words add nothing. If there were not brought to you a new throb of your heart and a new prayer from your soul, nothing that I might say would reach your understanding.

They in themselves are the future. They shall conquer where we have striven, they shall know where we have walked in doubt, and through them and in them shall we live again and again.

To me just now, as the line swung round the old courthouse, came the



HON. R. B. WHITE
Superintendent of Public Instruction for Franklin County, who has done much to advance the cause of education.

picture of 53 years ago when on that same spot stood the young men of the Franklin Rifles in their smart new suits of grey, and before them flashed out upon the air in all its beauty a flag till then unknown, the "Stars and Bars."

It was history for us. I wonder if these, the Junior Guards of our civilization, may not mean for us growth into an even higher achievement.

In the old days, there was a man who looked upon a little child—the Christ friend of little babies ever since. He took the child up in his arms and the fullness of all vision came upon him and out of the greatness of it he cried:

"Mine eyes have seen thy salvation, which thou hast prepared before the face of all people; a light to lighten the Gentiles and the glory of thy people Israel."

Somehow, in this hour, I feel that you too have caught the fullness of vision which will never be wholly lost, that unto you has been given the courage of faith and the faith of courage, and that henceforth come what may of storm and stress and change, you will be content to follow where a little child shall lead.

And if that, or even part of that be true, then, I too, am content, and to all who have contributed to the success of this day I give my heart felt thanks.

And now, to you, young ladies and gentlemen, the first accredited graduates of the public school system of Franklin County, I am to give these sixty-five diplomas. This marks a distinct step in the life of the county that does in your life. It gives to the work of our public schools a definite aim, and we trust, a definiteness of purpose. It is a public declaration of what should be true—that in her public schools, the county offers to every child an established course in the essentials of knowledge which will get him ready to take and adapt to his own use the higher education of the working world.

We neither claim nor wish to claim that this course prepares anyone for any profession, but we do claim that, honestly completed, it will enable one to use the knowledge that comes from work and contact with other folks, to acquire knowledge, and to apply that knowledge to the needs of his own situation.

So this diploma is both a Goal and a Gate. Nor is it any mean goal. Less than one-tenth of the white children of North Carolina ever reach it.

It is the first goal that every parent should set for his child and every child resolve to reach. To do this much even means in many a case, as I know full well, self-denial on the part of somebody. But never yet has

there been the sincere denial of self but soon or late it bore a beautiful flower.

Also, it is a gate open and possible to every child in Franklin County. There is no home so poor but if due place be given to the imperative need of knowledge, the child in that home some day may not take one of these for his own. Let no one set his standard lower than this.

Then, when you have reached this far, you will find that it is not only a goal won and well worth the winning, but that also it is a gate, and that will be best of all.

For, having attained this much, you will find a latch there and you will have gained the strength to lift it and the gate will swing open before you and your young eyes will look into another promised land. And then I shall envy you with all my heart. For you will see new worlds waiting for your feet. It may be a path of further study, of living with and thinking again the great thoughts of men who have striven and overcome. Or it may be the path of the everyday, workaday world, with its wonder of things to be done and friends to be made and life to be lived.

But, whatever it be, walk in it, with your head held high, your heart kept clean and your faith fresh as a little child's.

And as you pass along the way, I shall be wishing for you joy and achievement and all the peace of right thinking and rightdoing.

After Mr. White had finished he announced that Mr. Frank B. McKinnis, president of the Louisburg Chamber of Commerce, in behalf of that body, would present the prizes offered. The presentation, which was done in a very nice and witty manner by this efficient officer were as follows:

First prize, \$25.00 in gold, to Pearce's school in Louisburg Township, which had a percentage of 100 in the parade.

Second prize, \$15.00 in gold, to Moulton school, it having a percentage in the parade of 95.

Third prize, \$10.00 in gold, to Bunn school, it having 88 1-2 per cent. in parade.

At this point President McKinnis stated that there being another school present with such a splendid showing he would take the responsibility of awarding a fourth prize of \$10.00, on the part of Chamber of Commerce and would award this to the Pearce school in Dunns Township, which had a percentage of 93.

Assisted by the music from the band and Mr. Price, the audience sweetly sang that always welcome anthem, "The Old North State."

At this point Supt. White in presenting the diplomas made many strong and beautiful remarks pointing the honor in being the possessor

Young Mens' Christian Association for Louisburg

of one of these certificates. This was the first year diplomas had been issued and to be successful in attaining one represented both study and interest on the part of the pupil. The audience being so dense he only read out the names at this point and presented the diplomas in the graded school auditorium. Those who were successful in completing the work in the seventh grades satisfactorily and were entitled to the diplomas were as follows:

- Wilder.—Robert Layton, Erma Wilder.
- Mitchner.—Allie Pruitt.
- Wood.—Lena Hamlet.
- Pine Ridge.—Bernice Beddingfield, Hickory Rock.—Fannie Macon, Arthur Inesco.
- Flat Rock.—Robert Wiggins, John Gill.
- Pilot.—Ora Bunn, Dollie Massey.
- Prospect.—Bessie Lee Beal, John D. May.
- Popes.—Loomis Suit, Numa Suit.
- Mapleville.—Clyde Harris, Jr., Maggie Macon.
- Seven Paths.—Annie Strickland, Minnie Gay, Sallie Wilder.
- Justice.—Langdon Stallings, Stella Hays, Ollie Harris.
- Cedar Rock.—Eula Dean, Eleanor Uzzell, Mary R. Stallings, Myrtle Parrish.
- Ingleside.—Herbert R. Johnson, Annie J. Johnson, Bessie Smith, Lillian Beasley.
- Pearce (Dunns).—James Ray, Luther Perry, Addison Pearce, Rosa Lee Pearce.
- Laurel.—Billie Williams.
- Youngsville Graded School.—Nora Pearce, Kenneth Tharrington, Eula May Massey, Maud Winston.

Franklin Graded School.—Minnie Ransdell, Bessie Whitaker, Ruth Whitefield, Lallie White, Mildred Frye, Lizzie Wilder, Marguerite Davis, Eleanor Winston, Louis Rose, Fred Morris, Norma Moore, Zelma Wester, Felix Joyner.

Louisburg.—William White, Edwin Alston, Arch Perry, Florence Jones, Samuel Pernel, Phillip Wilson, Eulalia Cooper, Willie Tharrington, Louise Cooke, Wilmat Brown, Leslie Perry, Ruby Spencer.

Although the time had gone rapidly by the crowds were deeply interested and showed no signs of tiring as each part of the program bore its relative part and none seemed complete without the other. Therefore, the announcement of the next number, the declamation contest was received with enthusiasm. With Supt. White acting as master of ceremonies and the judges, Mrs. John O. Wilson, Mrs. G. B. H. Stallings, Mrs. Ora Winston, Rev. J. F. Mitchner, G. B. West, being in place he announced the declaimers and their subjects in the order below as each one time arrived.

Miss Bessie Smith, of Sandy Creek Township, "A Child's Dream of a Star."

Miss Irene Mitchell, of Youngsville Township, "Asleep at the Switch."

Miss Thessie Bell Pearce, of Dunns Township, "Naughty Zell."

Miss Pattie Lamb, of Cypress Creek Township, "Betsy Hawkins Goes to the City."

Miss Maude Gupton, of Gold Mine Township, "The Curfew Must Not Ring Out."

Mr. Cecil Sykes, of Cedar Rock Township, "Southern Chivalry."

Miss Louise Cooke, of Louisburg Township, "Billy Brad and the Big Lie."

Miss Burnice Baker, of Harris Township, "High Culture in Dixie."

To do justice in criticizing these declaimations in particular is too much of a task for us. They were all fine. They were more than well prepared and the several teachers of each of these young ladies and gentlemen must necessarily feel proud of them. Their ease of speaking and graceful manner enhanced by the pretty faces and figures of the young ladies, was evidence of a training that is only attained through many hours of toil both upon the part of the teacher and pupil. However, we feel that the opportunity should not be allowed to pass without making some special mention of the declaimations of the successful prize winners. Mr. Sykes, the only young man in the class, was awarded the first prize, not merely because of the fact that some of the

(Continued on Page Six.)

MOVEMENT NOW ON FOOT TO ESTABLISH ONE.

Committees Appointed From All the Churches—Central Committee Organized—Banquet Friday, April 17. State Secretary Invited.

A brighter day for Louisburg is about to dawn from the deep interest the people of this town have shown in the revival meeting that has been in progress at the Methodist Church for the past two weeks or more, and the movement now on foot to establish a Young Men's Christian Association. There has been a spiritual awakening; an arousing of the conscience of the masses of the people; a realization of the responsibility resting upon those who are supposed to exert an elevating and ennobling influence, heretofore unknown. That the culmination of this quickening of conscience and spiritual awakening should be crowned with the establishment of a Y. M. C. A. is most fitting. There is no finer field for such an institution than here in our midst. Nowhere are there any finer specimen of young manhood than in this community, and the business men and the people as a whole could make no better, no finer and no wiser investment than to put their money into an institution that would throw around the young men and boys of this town and influence that would protect them from temptations that lure and ensnare; that would inspire them to nobler and cleaner living. It has been said that once the people have become interested and aroused to a situation that the conditions could be met, and in the words of the President of this nation, "Back of all reform lies the means of getting it." It is true, and Louisburg is not going to prove an exception to the rule.

Following the prayer meeting in the Methodist Church Sunday afternoon a meeting was called for the purpose of discussing the establishment of a Young Men's Christian Association, many inspiring talks were made, and were received with warm interest. At the close of the discussion the following committees were appointed and the movement was launched for a Y. M. C. A. for Louisburg.

Methodist Church.—G. W. Ford, Malcolm McKinnis, Jas. A. Turner.

Baptist Church.—W. H. Allen, Dr. A. H. Fleming, T. W. Watson.

Episcopal Church.—W. H. Yarbrough, Jr., Wm. H. Ruffin, M. S. Clifton.

All of the above committees met in the office of W. H. Yarbrough, Jr., Tuesday and organized as the Y. M. C. A. committee of Louisburg, electing Wm. H. Ruffin chairman and W. Watson secretary.

After thoroughly going over the details of the matter and looking over a number of buildings for suitable quarters, it was practically decided to erect a building especially planned and designed for the home of the Association. A committee composed of Messrs. G. W. Ford, M. S. Clifton and W. H. Yarbrough, Jr., was appointed to report on the matter of location and probable cost of building.

It was decided at the meeting of the central committee to have a banquet on next Friday night, the 17th of April, and invite the State secretary to be present on that occasion. Mr. W. H. Yarbrough, Jr., was requested to telegraph the invitation to the State secretary. There will be several good speakers on hand for the banquet and an interesting time is promised.

Thus the campaign for a Y. M. C. A. for Louisburg has begun and it is to the interest of each and every citizen to give it his greatest support, morally and financially, and not let this greatest of all opportunities for making our town a better place to live, pass unheeded.

At Mapleville Tonight.

The biggest event Mapleville has had this year will take place tonight in the new building at 8 o'clock. A large number of old fiddlers are going to give the crowd a sample of what music really is. You will miss the thine of your life if you fail to hear these fiddlers.

The ice cream supper will also add much to the evening. Be sure to come and bring all your friends.