

## FALCON: A UNIQUE COMMUNITY

### Its School Problem—Falcon Youth Not Sharing in Public High School Funds

Falcon is a unique community. On a recent visit I asked Mr. J. A. Culbreth, superintendent of the Orphanage and leading spirit of the community, to jot me down some of the facts about the community and its development, and its present school problem—a problem that deserves the attention of the school authorities of the State. When the data arrived, I found it made such an interesting story that I decided to run it practically without change, merely supplying subheads.

Mr. Culbreth is a man of business training. He was cashier of the First National Bank of Dunn during its prosperous days. He knows what he is talking about. For one of Cumberland county's best school buildings to be deserted right in the heart of the village would be a serious blow to the Falcon community. But if you read the article, as you should do, you will get the whole disturbing situation at first hand.

#### The Story of Falcon and Its Present School Problem

##### Falcon's Beginning

The name of the place was formerly Starling's Bridge, so named because of the bridge over South River at the crossing here on the Fayetteville and Smithfield road. The activities of the place centered about a large turpentine distillery and country store run by Captain J. L. Antry and William Culbreth, which was later purchased and continued by Culbreth, while Antry acquired and continued, in his name, the firm's business in Sampson County at Clement.

The name of the place was changed to Falcon, as the name of the post-office established here, because there was already a postoffice in the State by the name of Starling's Bridge. There was no significance or consideration given to the new name other than to find a name differing from other postoffices in the State, and the name was suggested from the end of a little box on a shelf in the store bearing the name "Falcon Pens!"

##### Religious Activities Carry Fame Far

Later activities and developments were based upon religion, education and the social uplift and welfare of society. The place was eventually given a town charter, and the little town has become known to the world, in places even where the large cities of our great State are not known.

There are two denominational churches in the town: Antioch Baptist Church, which was located here from the beginning of the town's history, and the Falcon Pentecostal Holiness Church, which was organized about thirty years ago. The Falcon Work, as it would be distinguished, however, from denominational religious activities, has always been, and is still an inter-denominational and independent movement. There is an organization known as The Falcon Camp Meeting Association, and anybody is eligible to membership in the association who approves of the work that is being done, regardless of what denomination he may be a member of, and is willing to contribute \$1.00 annually to the expense of running the annual camp meeting. The membership in this association would represent all the prominent denominations of the South, yet does not concern itself with the church relationship of any of its members, or in any way, take the place of church membership.

##### Ten-Thousand Attend Meeting

The Falcon Camp Meeting has been held annually for thirty-five years in succession, the meeting this year, from August 16th to 26th, constituting the thirty-fifth annual session. This camp meeting has an average annual attendance of approximately 10,000 people from most of the States of the nation, and sometimes visitors from other countries.

Out of the activities of this camp meeting there originated The Falcon Orphanage, which has been running for twenty-five years, and has cared

for 225 orphan children during that time. The orphanage has an average population of fifty, a physical plant worth about 40,000.00 which has been built and supported by free-will offerings from its friends, and its own farm, garden and dairy. It has no soliciting agents in the field, no organized group to assume financial responsibility for it, either religious or fraternal, and yet its needs have been sufficiently supplied to perform a most creditable work through faith in God and the voluntary loyalty of a great host of friends.

##### How the High School Originated

The Falcon High School also grew out of the camp meeting, seven and one-half acres of ground being donated for the purposes of development by a friend of the work. This school has been running for thirty years, first as a private school, but it later was placed under County and State supervision, and became a State accredited high school. Seven years ago, the original building used for school purposes was burned, and a modern ten-room school building, with a 50x80 auditorium was built by private subscription, and we have a school property equal to any State-owned property costing \$40,000.00.

When the town of Falcon became a special tax school district, and the County and State school authorities

and other members on the Board, of course, did not feel like over-riding the action of the District member.

##### Sacrifice Too Great

We lost the benefits due us by the State in the new responsibilities assumed by it under the new school law, as the abandonment of our school property would, you see, not only have meant the loss of our high school facilities, provided without cost to the State, by private subscription and years of effort and sacrifices; but would have left our buildings to decay unused, and us without any ground of appeal to our friends for funds to pay off the balance due to our creditors. We might have suffered the loss of our thousands of dollars already spent, but to sacrifice our credit by defaulting our debts, and our reputation for honesty and worthiness of trust by those whose confidence had been won by years of efforts and sacrifices, was entirely too great to allow.

There was nothing left for us to do, but to undertake to operate a private high school at our own expense in order to preserve our efforts of the past, and to provide high school facilities for our orphanage and community. We undertook to finance the school through the orphanage, and the loyalty and co-operation of the community was almost 100 per cent and our friends elsewhere responded in a wonderful way. We maintained a standard eight months high school at a cost of over two thousand dollars, providing for our regular orphanage and community population, together with about ten other fine young girls and boys that had been so handicapped in their earlier years that they would have

tributed largely to the development of our locality from outside sources; and yet our efforts and their results do not seem to be appreciated by some people as they deserve to be.

##### The Community Pays School Taxes

We have a fine community of law-abiding citizens, and have exerted such influences upon a wide area of our great State, that our efforts have made large contributions to morality and character building, and have retarded crime and reduced the expenses of criminal prosecutions in our State. We have paid the levy of taxes imposed upon us in all forms, except none of us have to pay income taxes; and these taxes have contributed to the general school fund of the State to help other community schools. And after furnishing our own adequate school building and equipment without cost to the State or County, and offering to them without cost for rent, it seems most unfair and unjust to abolish our school for consolidation with another of so much lower rank, involving the cost of transportation and risk of same, without saving the State a penny, and probably increasing expenses. The action of the Education Commission last year did not reduce the cost to the State one penny in the operation of the high schools in this end of the county, and at the same time imposed upon us and our friends the unnecessary expense of more than \$2,000.00 in addition to our taxes.

Aroused by the recent ways of lawlessness, leaders are expected to offer to the next Texas legislature bills simplifying and speeding up procedure in criminal court cases.

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as the relief agencies are concerned. That kind of cattle will one day find that their source of free rations has dried up. That will be a sad day for those sluggards who will do nothing either for themselves or for those who in the long run must foot the bill for their free provender. No able-bodied man or woman who has no helpless dependents should receive a cent of relief funds during the next three months. A little time put in cultivating a garden, if with only a hoe, will provide much of the food needed. And there will be plenty of farm work for several months. Uncle Sam will have need of every cent he can raise to feed and warm the needy when there is no chance for them to help themselves.

#### Are You Interested In How Far You Can See Clouds?

You have perhaps wondered how far distant looming thunder heads were. Of course, the distance any cloud may be seen depends upon its height. Also, the height from which one views the clouds has its effect. Well, Wednesday evening, just out from Siler City, while returning to Dunn, we saw five thunder heads lifting themselves in the southeast. I remarked to the driver that Dunn was probably having different weather from the fine sunny day up in Chatham. I could scarcely conceive that those clouds could be more remote than Dunn. But when we reached Dunn we were still miles and miles from the cloud. I judge that it must have crossed lower Sampson—say by Ingold and over by Turkey and into Duplin. That cloud must have been 60 to 75 miles away as the crow flies. By highway it is 68 to Siler City from Dunn; it was probably as much as 25 miles further on beyond Dunn. At Jonesboro the thunder heads loomed almost as high as they did anywhere on the journey.



MAYOR GEORGE ISELEY  
of Raleigh, N. C.  
Now Serving His Third Term.



Mrs. Iseley to Left.  
Mrs. George Iseley, Recent Manager  
of Pou Congressional Campaign.

supervised the school and paid our teachers, we co-operated to the extent of furnishing adequate buildings and equipment free of rent, and maintained the standards of State requirements without the use of any busses. We stood at the head of rural schools of Cumberland County for average attendance, and conducted the most economical school in the county. The County authorities abolished our school three years ago, and ordered consolidation of the entire school with two other schools through the use of school busses, with all the dangers of such transportation involved. We made appeal to the State Equalization Board to restore our school, and the Board kindly granted our request, proving its good judgment and wisdom.

##### High School Abolished Again

Last year the State Education Commission, in re-districting the schools and revolutionizing the whole system, abolished our high school again, and consolidated our high school with another that ranked fourteenth in comparison with the other rural schools of the county, while we stood at the head of such schools of the county in our rank. We made several efforts to get the State Commission to restore our high school, making every conceivable proposition consistent with reason and fairness, even to the extent of proposing to deed our \$30,000.00 privately owned property to the State or County if they would give us the high school facilities needed and assume \$4,000.00 which we owed on the property. Mr. J. O. Carr, of Wilmington, who was our District member of the Commission, would not yield to any persuasion or reason offered by us or any of our friends;

been embarrassed in attending their community schools. In this service it was our privilege to extend our orphanage activities to educate some fine young men and women, whose lives and citizenship will make valuable and worthy contributions to society. We made no charge for anything in connection with our high school work, but every beneficiary of the school, whether directly or indirectly benefitted, was permitted to contribute voluntarily to the orphanage in cash or provisions, and be credited with the contribution as a gift rather than a charge.

##### An \$80,000.00 Investment

The camp meeting grounds and two buildings, one, a brick veneer auditorium 120 feet square that will seat three to four thousand people, and the other, a 48-room 3-story frame building for roomers at camp meeting, are conservatively valued at \$15,000.00. The total investment in buildings and equipment for the camp meeting and the other departments of the work that have developed from it, easily represents an expenditure of \$85,000.00, and the support of the work during the life of our operations for the past thirty years means that our friends have contributed at least \$200,000.00 to carry on the work. The camp meeting has brought to North Carolina and Cumberland County thousands of fine people who would never have seen this part of our country, and hundreds of thousands of dollars have been spent and invested in religious, educational and moral activities that have made the world a better place in which to live, and con-