

(Unavoidably Omitted Last Week)

EAST FRANKLIN CONSOLIDATION OF 4 SCHOOLS

Clark's Chapel, Holly Springs, Watauga, And Oak Ridge Merged

By MRS. FRED ARNOLD (Assisted by Mrs. Charlie Sutton and Mrs. James P. Wurst)

East Franklin Elementary School is a modern twelve-classroom building. It has a library, lunchroom, teachers' lounge, office, and an auditorium with a seating capacity of 400.

East Franklin School is the consolidation of four two-teacher schools and the eastern part of the Franklin Elementary School. The four small schools were Clark's Chapel, Holly Springs, Watauga, and Oak Ridge.

Having spent ten years in two of these smaller schools, it fell to my lot to collect facts of earlier days. The four of them were alike—each a small frame building with two ill-lighted, crowded classrooms, a few patent desks, open springs, small playgrounds, and the ever-present wood-burning heater with a pipe running into a flue.

The pipe always fell at least once during the winter months. It filled all eyes with tears and tried our tempers and stopped all learning for a time.

The water bucket and dipper had to be kept clean. Children did not drink from the dipper. Each had his own cup or glass and water was poured into the cups from the dipper. Hands were washed in the stream well below the spring. Other physical needs were cared for, as time went on, in small wooden out-houses. Much of the firewood was broken brush from nearby woodland. This was the duty of the primary children.

Older boys cut wood from plentiful oaks of generous farmers nearby. The classrooms were swept and cleaned by the older girls. (There was something "folksy" and wholesome about the division of labor in these small schools.)

These four schools enrolled all children within a radius of about ten square miles in the eastern part of Macon county.

Clark's Chapel

In 1883 land was donated by Lucius Cabe for the Clark's Chapel School. This land is now the cemetery of Clark's Chapel Church. The building was a one-room log house with dirt hearth and half chimney. The first teacher was Charlie Kinsley. School began late in the fall after all farm work was done and lasted for three months. It was supported by local tax funds. If the community wished to extend the school term, it was done by subscription. Patrons who wished their children to attend this school paid the teacher's salary, which amounted to about twenty-five dollars.

After eight years, a new school was built. This log building was located about a half mile north west of the first building, on the Billy Penland estate. The first teacher in this school was Jeff McConnell. When this building became too crowded, a new frame building was erected just across the road. This building was paid for with county tax funds. The school term at this time was five months; sometimes this was extended by subscription.

Some of the teachers were: John Fulton, John Arnold, John Mann, Joe Daves, Nellie Reece, Myrtle Bolick, Ruth Callahan, Nora Leach, Fannie Mae Arnold, Lola S. Kiser, Mary S. Byrd, Joyce J. Cagle, Hazel P. Sutton, and Lucille K. Wurst.

Holly Springs

The first school at Holly Springs was built before the memory of any present resident. It was on land now owned by Woodrow Franklin. It was attended by children of the earliest settlers—the Corbins, the Berrys, the Youngs, and others. It was a typical one-room log building heated by a big fireplace.

The second Holly Springs school was built about 1876 with funds from the Peabody Grant. (This grant was set up by George Peabody to further education in the impoverished South after the Civil War.) This was also a log building, which served as a church as well as a school. This building was located on property now owned by Earl Justice. This building burned and was replaced about 1892 by another log structure located on the ridge directly above Earl Justice's home. Some of the teachers who taught at this school were: Mack Led-

ford, Frank Murray, John Ammons, Elmer Johnson and a Mr. Griggs. This building was used for church services until the Junior Hall was built. It was sold to a Mr. Cox, who tore it down and built a house—the present Jesse Corbin home.

In 1915 the last Holly Springs school was built on land deeded to the county by J. R. Franklin. This was a two-room frame building, which served the community until the school was moved to East Franklin in 1951. It is now called the Community Building and is used for meetings of the Rural Community Development program, for Home Demonstration club meetings, box suppers, neighborhood parties, and other activities.

Some of the teachers who taught there will be remembered as Nora Leach, Vernon Higdon, Elizabeth Higdon, Mary S. Byrd, Sanford Smith, Elsie Franks, Mae McCoy, and Nancy Taylor.

A pupil recalls the double seats where good friends could sit together, taking the tin pails and dippers to get water from a neighbor's well, going into the woods for dry kindling and wood to build the next morning's fire in the big pot-bellied stove. Once the stove pipe fell, and lessons were suspended until it was fixed and the smoke had abated. The high point of the day was the one-hour lunch period when the children gathered under the trees to eat the lunch they had brought from home. That done, they joined joyfully in whatever games they fancied at the moment and played until the ringing of the bell summoned them back to work.

Watauga

Watauga school was one of the first schools established in Macon County. Land for the school was given by Joseph Brendle about 1872. Both a church and a school were built. The school was a wood building with a rock chimney, glass windows, and hand-hewn benches made of logs. A four-months school was held as early as the late 1800's. There was always a two weeks' stop for harvest or "to pull the fodder".

Without funds for repairs, this building became so dilapidated that it was uncomfortable on cold days, so the classes moved across a little stream to the church, which had all its glass windows intact.

Mr. E. Austin Snyder said, "In 1907 I taught my first school at Watauga. I remember that I had 80 pupils enrolled. I had nearly 40 in the first grade. A member of the local school committee told me I had to teach the ABC's, since the teacher before me had not done so. To oblige him, I tried."

Later a two-room frame building was built on the same spot. It was furnished with patent desks and black chalk boards. This building was in use when Watauga became part of East Franklin school.

Some of the teachers who served at Watauga were: John Cathy,

Marion Love, Mr. Ammons, Mrs. Vernon D. Higdon, Mrs. Maude Hudson Norton, Mrs. Vera Hudson Henry, Frank I. Murray, J. Blanchard Brendle, Mrs. Elsie W. Franks, Miss Thompson from Clay county, Mrs. Lola S. Kiser, and Mrs. Fannie Mae Arnold.

Oak Ridge

In 1896 Oak Ridge School district was founded. It was part of Rose Hill district in Cowee Township and part of Watauga District in Millshoal Township. It was deeded to the Macon County Board of Education by J. E. Calloway. For many years it was a one-teacher school. Then, by a special tax levied by the district, the school had two teachers. A new two-room frame building and two state-employed teachers gave the children more advantages. Later the special tax was discontinued, then box suppers were held to pay for the new "patent desks". The length of the term was the same as in other nearby districts. For many years Mr. Austin Snyder was principal of this school. Mrs. Vernon Dean Higdon taught the primary children. Later Mr. C. A. Tilley taught there with Mrs. Mary Ann Bryson Angel and after that, with Mrs. Gladys Pannell Kinsland.

East Franklin School

A county-wide school bond issue was approved February 21, 1950, by a five to one vote. Bids for a contract for the East Franklin building were opened on July 14, 1950. A year later the building was ready for use.

On September 4, 1951, East Franklin School opened its doors to the children for the first time.

In 1956, two additional primary classrooms were built. The total cost of this building was about \$175,000.

William G. Crawford is principal of the school and classroom teachers are: Mrs. Vernon D. Hig-

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Iotla Has Long Had Good Schools

By MRS. CLAUDE ROPER And MISS LOLITA DEAN

The schools of the Iotla Community began in the days of James Cansler—perhaps more than seventy-five years ago. He built the first schoolhouse, a one-room log building with a wood fireplace. The students brought in the wood.

As settlers came and multiplied, more schoolhouses were needed; districts were laid out, and in each district, a one-room log house was built.

The present location of the Iotla school was selected in 1900, and the land, about five acres, was given by the Ramseys. It became a high school, and among the first graduates were Mrs. M. L. (Bessie Barnard) Dowdle and George Maloney.

Fire destroyed this building in 1913. It was replaced by a block building, containing four classrooms, stage, and library. This structure was used until 1951, when it was torn down.

Between 1900 and 1951, much school progress was made in the

don, now retired, Mrs. Katherine A. Crawford, Mrs. Merle P. Dryman, Mrs. Nina Tippet McCoy, Mrs. Hazel P. Sutton, Mrs. Lucille K. Wurst, Mrs. Dorothy Wright, Mrs. Genevieve M. Barnard, Mrs. Elizabeth D. Higdon, Mrs. Louise B. Holden, Miss Amy H. Deal, and Mrs. Fannie M. Arnold.

The school recently was recommended for accreditation.

Iotla community. Citizens taxed themselves to add two extra months of school, when the state was paying for a term of only six months. A beautiful dormitory, to accommodate students from other districts and adjoining counties, also was built.

During the period of consolidation, Iotla high school students were taken to Franklin High School for graduation in the year 1926. There were eight in that class. Later, all high school students were assigned to Franklin, leaving only the elementary grades at Iotla.

Today the Iotla Elementary School is consolidated, serving the communities of Oak Dale, Burningtown, Olive Hill, and Rose Creek. Brought in by busses, the pupils enter modern classrooms,

Tommy Cole Spending Leave From Navy

Tommy Cole, son of Mr. and Mrs. Clint Cole, of Franklin, Route 3, is spending a 30-day leave at home.

He has been stationed with the U. S. Navy at Bainbridge, Md., and at the end of his leave (May 17) he will go to Norfolk, Va., to receive overseas orders.

He was married this month to Miss Betty Cabe.

well lighted and warm. At noon, they are served a delicious, wholesome lunch in the lunchroom. The auditorium is for play and entertainment.

Iotla Elementary School is one to be proud of. It has eight teachers, headed by Harry Moses, who has been principal since 1951.



Will you be worth your salt?

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