

# School Levy Was Voted Down in 1897

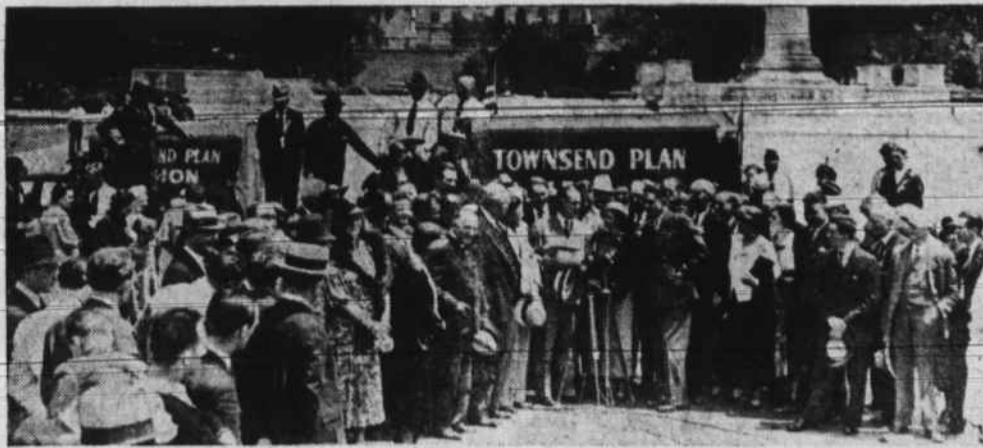
## Was Hard To Get Favorable Vote for Schools Until 1908

While this county and state are now recognized as education conscious, so to speak, they were not always that way, according to old records found in minutes of the Martin County Board of Education and in old books carrying election returns of near 40 years ago. At that time three out of every four voters in the county were against education other than the four months term, and there is some doubt if that much schooling would have been made available had it not been for the constitution requiring it.

In 1897, the public school issue was placed before the people of the county or those in 8 of the 10 political divisions. A special tax was proposed to finance the extended term, the amount of the tax not being mentioned in the old records. The school people were turned back at the polls by a vote of 1,204 to 468, the proposed measure failing to carry in a single one of the eight districts. In two or three districts, the vote was solid against the schools.

As far as it can be learned, no effort to better the educational system in Martin County was made until 1905. In September of that year citizens of District No. 1, Dardens, petitioned the board of education for a special tax of 25 cents on the \$100 property valuation and an additional 75 cents on each poll. Apparently the election failed to carry at

## Townsend Caravan Arrives in Washington



Members of the Townsend plan caravan which traveled from California to Washington presenting to Representative Tolson a bundle of petitions to congress signed by a million persons who favor the scheme.

that time, for it was in July, 1908, before any record was entered showing a vote favorable to the schools. However, that district was not the first to vote a special tax. Outerbridge district, in Jamesville Township, voted 18 to 1 for a special tax the month before, and as far as it can be learned that district was the first in this county to vote a special tax for its schools. It is said that there was little valuable property in the district at the time, and the time, and the tax was aimed at the Atlantic Coast Line Railroad tracks and other property. Poplar Run, in the same section of the county, voted 11 to 4 for a special tax in September, 1909.

A month later, citizens in the Hamilton district voted 47 to 3

for a 20-cent rate and a 60-cent poll.

About two years later Goose Nest and Jamesville voted special taxes. The vote in Goose Nest was 32 for and 12 against, while the Jamesville vote was 56 for and 18 against. Parmele favored a special tax, 61 to 34, in May, 1913, and two years later Biggs district voted 14 to 3 for a special tax.

While it is generally understood the extra taxes were levied to extend the term from four to six months, the records make no mention of that fact.

In 1916, a combination vote on a special tax levy was arranged with Wards, Riddicks, and Smithwicks school districts. The vote, favoring an extended term, also

approved the consolidation of the three schools and gave rise to the first transportation system in the county. George Coltrain, then a resident of Williams Township, is said to have hauled children on a wagon to the central school after it was built.

Special charter schools at Williamston and Robersonville already had their extended terms, and each year saw more of the units in the county system getting extra taxes for better schools the action during that period reversing the decided stand taken against the schools in 1897.

Along with the consolidation program that was to follow a short time later, or after 1923, special tax elections were held in nearly every district of the coun-

## Supply of Cotton And Consumption

The cotton price averages for 1934 and 1935 clearly indicate the stabilizing effect of real crop control, in spite of rayon and silk competition. The production of these two years was the lowest since 1923. Stocks on hand are higher than at any period prior to the 1930 crop. The high stocks and fairly low consumption largely account for the present price. The low production and prices in relation to years since the world war bear out the low consumption or low exports since 1933.

## Hamilton Railway Once Considered

According to the Martin County Times, a newspaper published in Williamston in the eighties, a railroad from Scotland Neck to Hamilton was considered in 1883. The paper carries very few details, however, limiting its comment to the following: "It is reported that somebody has commenced making a survey for a railroad from Scotland Neck to Hamilton."

Hamilton was a flourishing town in those days, probably commanding a greater trade volume than any other town in the county.

ty to vote bonds for the construction of new school buildings.

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