

COUNTY SUPERINTENDENT'S COLUMN

Edited by O. S. DILLARD

EDUCATIONAL PROGRESS IN WESTERN NORTH CAROLINA

No section of North Carolina, perhaps, has felt the stimulus of the great educational movement that has been sweeping the state for the past few years more than Western North Carolina. This region long isolated for lack of roads has at last broken its shackles, and now fully aroused, is determined to keep pace with the rest of the state. Ten years ago there were no roads in the counties lying west of Buncombe. From November till March what few automobiles there were in the west were put in storage waiting for the March winds to come and dry the roads and thaw the creeks and make them fordable. Under such conditions, communities were isolated, each looking to its own little red schoolhouse as its temple of knowledge, not daring to hope for anything better because of the impassable and impossible roads.

But with the coming of good roads within the past five years conditions have changed remarkably in every western county. Where ten years ago no bonds of social intercourse existed between adjoining communities, good roads, like bands of silves, have knitted them into one large happy group, making conditions favorable here and there for large and well equipped and well managed schools. Where only a few years ago there was isolation and illiteracy, today there is a broadness of vision and a quickened pulse of a people who are alive to the opportunities offered them with the coming of the highways.

Looking backward ten years, we find that, in the nine western counties of the state lying west of Buncombe including Madison and Transylvania, within this large territory containing thousands of square miles and a school population of 29,955, only \$230,810.48 was spent for all school purposes. In the nine counties of Cherokee, Clay, Graham, Haywood, Jackson, Macon, Swain, Transylvania and Madison an average of \$7.67 was spent for all purposes to educate the children within their borders. This year these same counties will pay more than four times as much per pupil.

Not only have these western counties more than quadrupled their expenditures on a per pupil basis, but they have gone into the matter of providing better buildings and equipment. Ten years have wrought a wonderful change in the school plant in the West. Ten years ago, the valuation placed on the school property by the superintendents was \$566,485. Today a conservative estimate would place this valuation more than \$2,000,000.00. Ten years ago the nine counties named above spent on buildings, sites and equipment the

sum of \$57,328.87. During the past two years more than one million dollars has been spent in the same counties. Today, as one motors from Asheville to Murphy or Franklin or Brevard, magnificent brick buildings greet his appearance at almost every village. Every county seat boasts of its beautiful new school building which it has recently erected or which will soon be erected, many of these costing far more than the county court house, and rightly so. Plying to and fro from these buildings, large commodious trucks carry hundreds of children daily to places where they can make the most of their talents. Scores of one-room schools have been abandoned in these counties within the past three or four years. Ten years ago these counties had 263 one-teacher schools. Last year the number had decreased to 175, a loss of nearly 100.

With better buildings have come better high school facilities. In 1914-15 there was not a single high school in these counties that was accredited by the State University. At this time only fourteen units were required for graduation, whereas the requirement today is fifteen. Last year every county in this section was 733. Last year this enrollment had passed the 2,000 mark. Ten years ago the state boasted that it had 8,000 enrolled in high school. Last year these counties spent approximately \$100,000 for high school instruction and maintenance. This is more than half as much as was spent for all purposes ten years ago even including outlay payments. In the quality, character and type of work done there can be no comparisons because of the meagerness of the work offered at that time. Western North Carolina has been made within the past ten years so far as its high schools are concerned.

Along with better building and more adequate high school facilities have come increase in enrollment, average daily attendance and length of school term. The average length of the school term has increased 15 days. The enrollment has increased more than 2000 in spite of that fact that there has not been a great increase in the school population. The average daily attendance has increased from about 64 per cent to around 73 per cent.

Along with the increased enrollment and better school facilities has come the desire for more and better trained teachers. The teachers themselves, always eager to take advantage of opportunities to improve themselves, have kept pace with the other improvement noted above. There has been an increase from 246 teachers ten years to 951 last year. The average preparation has increased from one year of high school training to one



(THE ABOVE CUT IS INSERTED IN THIS PAPER BY COURTESY OF THE ASHEVILLE CITIZEN)

MEMBERS OF THE MARSHALL BASKETBALL SQUAD

This team has played many games this season, having a successful year. Those appearing in the picture are: (Squatting, Bon White.) Front row, left to right: James Baley, staff correspondent, W. (Billy) Redmon, Max Roberts, Hugo Wild, Ernest Teague, and Clyde Redmon. Back row, left to right: Prof. Kanoy, Ralph Phillips, and Everett Frisby.

CONTRACT LET FOR NEW SCHOOL BUILDING ON ISLAND

Mr. Mack Sprinkle of Marshall Gets Contract

Wall To Be Built By Mr. W. H. Morrow, Costing Not To Exceed \$10,000.00

The contract for the new Marshall school building was let by the Board of Education last Monday, Mr. Mack Sprinkle of Marshall making the lowest and accepted bid for the building. The cost of the building, exclusive of heating, plumbing, and furnishing, is to be \$56,800. The building is to contain 20 rooms and an auditorium seating 1000. Work on the building is to be begun by the first of April, and it is hoped the building will be ready for the next school term.

The contract for the heating of the new building was let to McDermot & Co., of Durham, N. C. The heating system to cost \$6,135.00, a vapor heating system to be installed. The plumbing was let to the Powers

Plumbing Co., of Hendersonville, N. C., to cost \$2,665.00.

These contracts seem to be quite satisfactory to those in charge, and the people of Marshall and vicinity are looking forward to seeing the work get under way.

Wall To Be About 14 Feet High

Work on the wall which will protect the school building from unusual floods is also to begin at once and the contract for building the wall was let to Mr. W. H. Morrow. It is to be approximately 6 feet at the base, 2 feet below the earth and taper up to 14 feet, being about 18 inches thick at the top, which will make it about 12 feet above the present high-water. The wall is not proposed to encircle the island, but merely to protect the building from the onward rush of unusual freshets.

The cost of constructing the wall is not to exceed \$10,000.

FORESTER MAKES INSPECTION TRIP

(From ASHEVILLE CITIZEN) W. C. McCormick, assistant Forester, recently made an inspection trip covering certain sections of four-forest counties in Western North Carolina, embracing portions of two of the State Forest service districts, the headquarters of which are at Lenoir and Asheville. Mr. McCormick said that a great number of buyers of land here are here to stay. Not "boomers," but people who have found what they want—a place where living conditions are ideal.

Speaking further on the growing potentialities of this section Mr. McCormick said: "From Caldwell and Burke counties, west to Cherokee there is a big land development that appears to me to be far from a 'mush-room boom.'"

"I have watched many counties develop, and North Carolina surely has a future ahead of it that is inconceivable in its full extent. With Florida on one side and the 'Frozen North' on the other, this state represents a happy medium in climatic conditions.

"The mountains of our state are surpassed in beauty by none. Their individualistic value cannot be measured. Here is not only an ideal summer climate, but perfect year-long living conditions. Add to this the wonderful road system, and you will look far for competition.

"The natural beauty of these mountains is the main drawing card. Half of the money paid for land here goes for scenery and the other half for climate.

"The scenery consists, in the main, of the forests with their carpet of green, covering these hills and valleys. These forests not only offer shade and beauty but regulate the flow of the

many clear, cool streams coursing through the mountains, abounding in game, fish and utilized in the lower country in the development of power for operating many of our manufacturing plants.

"As this scenery represents capital there comes to us an added obligation in protecting these mountains from the ravages of forest fires.

"To allow this timber, foliage and forest floor to burn will do more toward checking the present development of Western North Carolina than any one thing that could possibly happen. Every fire starting in these mountains will represent many thousands of dollars loss to the state, not from the damage done to the timber alone, but for the appearance of the place after the loss of the timber. For who wants a blackened, fire-scarred, eroded waste land upon which to erect an expensive summer, or year-long home?

"As can readily be seen the development of the mountain section will bring in more people. Increased population increases the forest fire risk. Lands must be cleared for construction projects and road building. The brush from such clearing must be disposed by burning. Steam shovels, branch railroads, construction camps must follow. These all create a very high forest fire hazard.

"To meet this increased hazard added precautions must be taken to guard against destructive forest fire outbreaks which will do great damage to timber lands."

"The State Forest service stands ready to cope with this situation where funds are made available for such work. We are ready to co-operate with counties and individual timber land owners in keeping forest fires down to the minimum, but to do this we must have cooperation, as a lack of funds prohibit our carrying on this work without financial assistance."

"The spring fire season is now here. Our men are reporting forest fires daily. As warmer weather ad-rips covering certain sections of four-forest counties, the hazards increase. Our force is small and we are unable to cover the timbered sections of the state as it should be covered. We must, therefore, depend largely upon the assistance and cooperation of the public spirited citizens within the timbered sections of the state to assist us in every way in keeping forest fires from doing great damage.

"The State Forest service appeals to the public for this cooperation and assistance in preserving the natural lands and keeping forest fires out of the woods."

"We are asking that every man, woman and child consider themselves a committee of one to spread the gospel of fire prevention. Preserve the natural assets of the state, for burned timber pays no dividend and is ruinous to the beauty of any section."

NOTICE!

The report of one of Revere correspondents of News-Record, in last week's issue of paper, to the effect that I was planning on marrying my former divorced wife, Mrs. Lillie Mae Wallin, is false. Neither am I planning to move to Walnut, N. C., as reported.

Yours truly,
FRANK E. LEAKE,
Revere, N. C.

THE PIONEER COMMUNITY CLUB MEETS NEAR PETERSBURG

THE COMMUNITY MEETING

The Pioneer Community Club of Madison County met at the residence of John Metcalf, Marshall, N. C., R. 2, March the 19th, 1926.

1. The meeting was called to order by its president, Mr. G. G. Roberts. Members present G. G. Roberts, John Roberts, R. C. Eller, Mr. and Mrs. G. R. Merrell and our County Agent, Earle Brintnall.

2. The minutes of last meeting were read and approved.

3. It was suggested that Mr. R. C. Eller confer with Mr. Earle Brintnall and get the best price on fertilizer.

4. Mr. Story, the editor of the News-Record, was present, and gave a nice address.

5. Next place of meeting to be at the residence of Mr. R. C. Eller on Friday after the second Sunday in

April at 1:30 P. M.

6. Invitation was given for new members and the following joined: R. G. West, J. L. Howell, and S. P. Rice.

Program committee for next meeting: R. C. Eller, Raymond Eller and Mrs. Robert Tillery.

7. Adjourned by regular order.
G. G. ROBERTS, Pres.
JOHN METCALF, Sect.

TWO INTERESTING EPITAPHS RECALLED BY JUDGE LEMMOND

(Monroe Journal)

Judge W. O. Lemmond has at hand always a good stock of stories but yesterday he was milling over two that especially pleased him. His mind was running on epitaphs. The first was this:

"Stranger, as you pass by, Remember, you are now.

So once was I.

As I am now, you soon will be.

So, prepare for death and follow me."

A stranger came along and read it. He pondered a long time and then took out his pencil and wrote under the epitaph:

"My dear friend, to follow you I cannot consent.

Without I first knowed which way you went."

The other one was this: A man lost his wife and was so much grieved that he nearly went crazy.

He erected a monument at her grave and after giving name, date, etc., added:

"My light has gone out."

In about three months he got married again and some one who heard of it came along and wrote on the tombstone:

"But I have struck another match."

year of college. Ten years ago, there were 221 teachers in these counties who could not qualify for the county first grade certificate, which at that time perhaps represented about two years of high school work. Last year there were only 188 teachers in these counties who had not completed the equivalent of at least a standard high school course.

All in all, the western section of the state has made wonderful progress of which we have noted better buildings and equipment, with longer terms, increased enrollment and average daily attendance, more high school facilities and better trained teachers. There is much to be done yet. The program must go forward until every child in the mountains shall have the opportunities offered him that other children have. Till every one shall have the opportunity to "speak out all there is in him."

FOR SHERIFF TO THE VOTERS OF MADISON COUNTY:

I hereby announce myself a candidate for the office of Sheriff of Madison County, subject to the Republican primary to be held June 5th, 1926. If nominated and elected I will endeavor, by the help and cooperation of the good people of the county, to enforce the laws and execute the duties of this office in a fair and impartial manner. Thanking you for your support in the past and asking for your vote and influence in the coming Primary.

WILLARD C. RECTOR

FOR SHERIFF TO THE VOTERS OF MADISON COUNTY LADIES AND GENTLEMEN:

I am announcing myself as a candidate for the office of Sheriff of Madison County, subject to the will of the majority of the voters at the Primary to be held June 5th, 1926. I am entering the race for sheriff at the earnest solicitation of friends from the various sections of the county. If nominated and elected, I promise to execute the duties of this high office in the most efficient way with fairness and in a courteous manner. I promise to call to my assistance if elected, the best men I can get as deputies and to enforce all the laws to the best of my ability.

Yours to serve,

R. R. RAMSEY