

THE BEGINNING OF SCHOOLS IN DUPLIN

Original Set-up

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REGISTER OF DEEDS

An announcement has appeared in the county papers concerning the opening of schools for the 1950-51 season.

This is the one hundred and ninth year of public schools in Duplin and it has been announced that the schools will play a prominent part in the coming mid-century showing of Sam Byrd's "Duplin Story" drama. Therefore the following outline of Duplin's early schools should be appropriate at this time.

During the years 1839 and 1840 the General Assembly of North Carolina provided for a state-wide system of schools. The counties were authorized to name a board of school superintendents, lay off districts, appoint committeemen, levy a tax, build houses, employ teachers and start the schools. It was provided that county taxes be supplemented by funds from the State Literary Fund. That fund had been created for school purposes. Judge Archibald D. Murphey of Orange County was generally regarded as the father of the entire plan, due to his untiring efforts in that respect, but he did not live to see the beginning of the system. Prior to that time only those who were able to pay for private instruction or for board and tuition at an academy had any educational advantages.

Under the Acts of the Assembly the question of schools or no schools was made optional with the counties. Duplin County promptly fell in line with the plan and the County Court proceeded to set up machinery and levy a tax for schools. The Court met in April, 1841, with the following named members present, to wit: Benjamin F. Grady, Chairman, Cornelius McMillan, Nicholas Hall, Thomas Stanford and Jesse Swinson. A majority of the Justices being present it was ordered that a Board of Superintendents of Schools be appointed consisting of the following named persons, to wit: John E. Hussey, Archibald Maxwell, David Sloan, Atlas J. Grady, Joseph T. Rhodes, Benjamin Lanier, Daniel Jones, Cornelius McMillan and James G. Stokes. Capt. David Sloan was made Chairman of the board and gave bond in the sum of \$2500, with Owen R. Kenan and Halstead Bourden as bondsmen. The first school tax was levied in January, 1841, at the rate of five cents on the one hundred dollars valuation of property and ten cents on the poll. School districts were designated and committeemen were appointed, substantially as follows:

First district in the neighborhood of the Meadow meetinghouse with Thomas Burton, Nathan Murray and John James as committeemen.

Second district in the Fountain neighborhood near Capt. John Fountain with Capt. Fountain, Howell Brown and Mathew Brinson as committeemen.

Third district in the neighborhood of Dennis Pickett with Dennis Pickett, James Lanier and Jesse Batts as committeemen.

Fourth district in the neighborhood of Col. John E. Hussey with Gregory Thomas, John Bostic and Jesse Brown, Jr., as committeemen.

Fifth district in the Sandlin neighborhood with Henry Sandlin, Drew Hall and Thomas P. Hall as committeemen.

Sixth district in the neighborhood of Joseph T. R. Miller with Joseph T. R. Miller, William H. Rhodes and James L. Smith as committeemen.

Seventh district in the neighborhood of Capt. Jones Smith with Dr. James H. Jarman, William Williams and John Smith as committeemen.

Eighth district in the Grady neighborhood with Sherwood Grady, James P. Davis and Daniel H. Simmons as committeemen.

Ninth district in the Outlaw's bridge section with Capt. William Outlaw, Bryan K. Outlaw and Edward Outlaw, Sr., as committeemen.

Tenth district in the neighborhood of James Winders with Giles T. Loftin, James Sullivan and James Winders as committeemen.

Eleventh district in the John Carr neighborhood with Dr. James G. Dickson, Benjamin Oliver and John Carr as committeemen.

Twelfth district in what is now Glisson Township with Harget Kornegay, William Herring and Mark Keithley as committeemen.

Thirteenth district near the home of Calvin J. Dickson with James Gillespie, Levi Swinson and Calvin Dickson as committeemen.

Fourteenth district in the Faison section with Elias Faison, James Hicks and Joseph B. Hurst as committeemen.

Fifteenth district in the neighborhood of Dr. Buckner L. Hill with Col. C. D. Hill, William W. Faison and John Shine as committeemen.

Sixteenth district in the neighborhood of Alfred Guy with A. T. Stanford, Daniel Newton and Alfred Guy as committeemen.

Seventeenth district near the home of Col. James K. Hill with Colonel Hill, Daniel Swinson and B. Williams as committeemen.

Eighteenth district in the neighborhood of Jonathan Gere with Capt. John Blanchard, John Pol-

Private Institutions

ock and Patrick Ezzell as committeemen.

Nineteenth district in the neighborhood of James Patterson with Rolin Best, John Frederick and Michael Boyette as committeemen.

Twentieth district in the neighborhood of Joseph Groves with Jacob Wells, William Wells and Jacob Taylor as committeemen.

Twenty-first district in the neighborhood of Capt. Stephen Williams with James K. Williams, Zack Williams and John Peterson as committeemen.

Twenty-second district in the neighborhood of Solomon Turner with Col. Wright Boney, Capt. Boney Wells and William Usher as committeemen.

Twenty-third district in the neighborhood of Wimbrick Boney with Wells Boney, Hiram Murray and Henry Teachey as committeemen.

Twenty-fourth district in the Ward neighborhood with Alfred Ward, Stephen Williams and John W. Boney as committeemen.

Twenty-fifth district in the neighborhood of James Mallard with John Mallard, Joseph Brooks and John Powell as committeemen.

Twenty-sixth district in the neighborhood of Capt. John Whitehead with Captain Whitehead, James Maxwell and John Dobson as committeemen.

Twenty-seventh district in the Carroll neighborhood with John D. Carroll, William Carr and Osborn Carr as committeemen.

Twenty-eighth district in the neighborhood of the Grove church near Kenansville with Capt. James Carroll, Henry Moore and John Forlaw as committeemen.

Twenty-ninth district in the neighborhood of Dark branch with Maj. George E. Houston, William D. Pearsall and Richard Miller as committeemen.

Thirtieth district in the neighborhood of Beaverdam church, now Magnolia, with Thomas Stanford, William Swinson and John Swinson as committeemen.

A list of the first teachers would be very interesting but that information has not been found. Only three deeds were given for school sites during the year 1841. The first was by Mary Heath and others for a site on a branch of Beaverdam, dated September 23, 1841. The second was by Daniel Swinson for a school at Friendship, dated September 29, 1841, and the third was by Owen West for a site adjoining the Carlton meeting house, dated October 18, 1841. A number of sites were given during the next year. During recent years the consolidated schools somewhat take the place of the original system.

It is also an interesting fact that prior to and even after the beginning of public schools, Duplin County ranked among the foremost counties of the State in the number of private educational institutions. Many of North Carolina's most distinguished sons were students in Duplin's early institutions. Some of these institutions operated for only a short time and others lasted until recent years. A list of them, possibly incomplete is as follows:

GROVE ACADEMY. Located near the present town of Kenansville, was established during the year 1785. The original trustees were Colonel Thomas Routledge, General James Kenan, Colonel David Dodd, Colonel William Dickson, Major James Gillespie, Major Thomas Gray, John James, Israel Bordeaux and Joseph Dickson. It will be seen that this old academy was established prior to out-State University. With few intermissions, it was in operation until about forty years ago.

ANGEL ACADEMY. Located on Blake's Mill, a branch of Rockfish in the southern part of the County near the present town of Wallace. The date of organization and the names of trustees cannot be given. In Book 3A, page 149, of Duplin County Registry, it is referred to as "Angel's School House," dated 1794.

GREENE ACADEMY. Location at present unknown and no definite information is at hand concerning it. It was organized about the year 1813.

GOSHEN ACADEMY. Located in the upper Goshen section of the County and near the home of Benjamin Hodges. It was organized about the year 1813-14. No further information.

About the year 1814 there was an Act of the General Assembly "To establish a free school in Duplin" but no definite information can be given at this time.

FRIENDSHIP ACADEMY. Located in the Friendship Community, was established by an Act of the General Assembly in the year 1823. The original trustees were Colonel David Hooks, Colonel James K. Hill, Marshall H. Hooks, Henry Winders, Robert McGowen, Andrew Hurst, Thomas Molton, Robert Middleton and David Wright.

WILLIAMS ACADEMY. Located in the neighborhood of the Cooper old mill, was established during the year 1825. The trustees were General William L. Hill, John Cooper, Benjamin Cooper, Blaney Williams, Branch Williams, Francis Williams, Robert Middleton, David Middleton, Libeus Middleton, James Middleton, Benjamin Best, Sr., Benjamin Best, Jr., Heraldo Blackmore, John Boyette and Thomas Phillips.

LINE ACADEMY. Located in Sampson County just across the Duplin-Sampson line and was really a Duplin-Sampson institution. It was established

Distinguished Persons

during the year 1825. Six of the original thirteen trustees were citizens of Duplin, as follows: Colonel Thomas Kenan, Daniel L. Kenan, John W. Whitfield, James M. Nixon, William Wright and John Beck Wright. The others of the original trustees were citizens of Sampson, as follows: Thomas K. Morrissey, William Morrissey, Daniel Joyner, Curtis Thomson, Wright Faison, Thomas I. Faison and John Haywood Hicks.

BETHEL ACADEMY. Located in the lower Goshen neighborhood and near where Wesley church now stands. It was established in the year 1828. The original trustees were Reverend David O. Shattuck, General Stephen Miller, Richard Miller, George Miller, Major George E. Houston, James Pearsall, Jeremiah Pearsall, James Chambers, Charles Chambers, John Chambers and Howell Best.

HANNAH MOORE ACADEMY. Located in the lower Goshen neighborhood and only a few miles from the Bethel Academy. The date of organization cannot be given. In a deed from James Pearsall, dated 1837, the following named persons were trustees: General Stephen Miller, Richard Miller, Jeremiah Pearsall, William D. Pearsall, Edward Hill, Thomas Hill, Heraldo Blackmore, Harper Williams, James M. Larkins and John Oliver.

WASHINGTON ACADEMY. Located in the Outlaw's bridge community. It was established prior to or about the year 1848. In a deed from Captain William Outlaw, dated 1848, the following named persons were trustees: Bryan K. Outlaw, Joseph W. Outlaw, Grady Outlaw, James Outlaw and George Outlaw.

DUNN-FAISON ACADEMY. Located in the neighborhood of the present town of Faison -organized prior to or about the year 1842. In a deed from James Dunn, dated 1842, the following named persons were trustees: G. W. Huffham, James Hicks, Kilby Faison and Isham Hicks.

WARSAW HIGH SCHOOL. Located at Warsaw, was established about the year 1855. In a deed from General William L. Hill, dated January 25, 1855, the following named persons were trustees: Colonel Abner M. Faison, Felix B. Millard and Curtis C. Oates.

MAGNOLIA MALE ACADEMY. Located at Magnolia, was incorporated March 31, 1858. The academy site was given by Milton K. DeVane, Leonard A. Merriman, Alfred M. Rackley and James B. B. Monk.

MAGNOLIA GRADED SCHOOL. Located at Magnolia, was authorized by an Act of the General Assembly of 1883, and operated for several years. Dr. M. K. DeVane, Dr. McMillan, G. W. Brinkley, Henry Hollingsworth and H. E. Newberry were the original Trustees.

LA PLACE ACADEMY. Located in the northern end of the County, was organized prior to or about the year 1861. In a deed from Benjamin F. Cobb, dated 1861, the following named persons trustees: Isham Southerland and Alexander S. Davis.

FRANKLIN MILITARY INSTITUTE. Located a few miles east of Faison, was organized a short time prior to the Civil War and was operated by Captain Claude B. Denson. Practically all of the students entered the service of the Confederacy in a company commanded by Captain Denson.

KENANSVILLE SEMINARY. Located in Kenansville, was organized about the year 1856 as shown by a deed from Dr. Needham W. Herring to the trustees, dated July 10, 1856. In the year 1861 the trustees were as follows: Osborn Carr, James Dickson, Dickson Mallard, James E. Hall, Robert B. Carr, James B. Carr, James M. Sprunt, Owen R. Kenan, Isaac B. Kelly, Chauncey W. Graham and William E. Hill. The seminary was later known as Webster Institute and was purchased by Prof. R. W. Millard who operated the school for many years.

OAK GROVE ACADEMY. Located in the Pollock neighborhood. In a deed from Alfred W. Pollock, dated August 28, 1898, the following named persons were trustees: L. C. Carlton, J. R. Wilson and R. F. Best.

JAMES SPRUNT INSTITUTE. Located in Kenansville. It was established in 1896 by Henry Farrow, Sr., and Dr. James W. Blount of Kenansville. In a deed from them, dated August, 1897, the following named persons were the original trustees: Henry Farrow, Sr., Dr. James W. Blount, Oscar Pearsall, A. F. Johnson, J. D. Currie, R. V. Lancaster, Peter McIntire, James Sprunt and B. F. Hall. This institute was in operation until a few years ago.

FAISON HIGH SCHOOL. Located at Faison. It was established during the year 1901. In a deed from Isham R. Faison, dated November 12, 1901, the following named persons were trustees: Dr. John M. Faison, I. L. Faison, B. B. Witherington, A. F. Johnson, W. M. Cummings, R. M. Williams, L. P. Best, S. H. Isler, Dr. H. L. Smith and D. W. McGeachey. This institution was in active operation for a number of years.

ELHANAN SCHOOL. Located at Charity. It was organized in February, 1904. In a deed from O. W. Moore the following named persons were

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