

A HISTORY OF

Robersonville Public Schools

1878 - 1959

By Mrs. Thelma M. Smith

Robersonville, North Carolina

1959

STEPHEN AND SUSAN

Educational Servants, Martin County, 1850-1900



Professor and Mrs. Stephen W. Outterbridge

PREFACE

Out of the tedium of writing a history of our Robersonville Schools there had to be inspiration. There was much inspiration. This was derived from records and conversations with many persons several of whom have memories of the earlier days of which we have no records. There was real encouragement and helpful assistance from Mrs. William Gray, Robersonville Township Historian for the Martin County Historical Society; Mr. V. J. Colombo, District Principal of Robersonville Schools District 2, who requested this history; Mr. J. C. Manning, Superintendent, Martin County Schools, who furnished information and loaned valuable records of the County Board of Education; and Mr. Warren Biggs who from his vast store of knowledge of Martin County history filled in and set the record straight on many events of importance. Acknowledgement is made to these people and to others too numerous to mention here. Let it be borne in mind that this history has been requested by the principal of the local high school as partial requirement of the school's application for membership in the Southern Association of Colleges and Secondary Schools. The submitting of this application has been a part of the school's anticipated program for the past several years.

The writer can truthfully say that the facts and events which have unfolded from records and interviews have inspired a wonderful sense of progress of our schools. This progress moved me to pen my inspiration. I trust you,

who are interested in Robersonville Schools, will appreciate its revelation of truth in the lives of thousands of people who have made her history. It follows:

Walk and Talk Higher and Higher
You are a fragment of a whole.

You shall in your own time
Do your part.
You shall leave on earth
Your share of eternity.

Thus were you created -
A part of a whole
To be readied to make bold.

Posterity moves to walk
On feet of little children.
Let us take care
How they shall talk.
Each for another
Shall talk and walk
As he has been taught
And has caught
Our walk and talk.

On goes the river,
On roll the sands.
Whither do they go?
Whither do they roll?

They seek their level;
Together they seek their level.
Men seek a level,
But theirs can be higher
If a man has paused
Before he seeks,
Before all seek together.

Man's level shall be higher,
Higher than the river,
Higher than the sands.
Walk and Talk
Higher and Higher.

INTRODUCTION

A history of Robersonville Schools has been needed for several obvious reasons: 1) that the future of the schools may be guided by the best in the past; 2) that appreciation for the progress that has been made may be expressed; 3) and that a better interpretation of the past in our local schools may be made in the light of facts available from records and in the invaluable memories of older citizens who have made these facts come alive.

This history is not complete. It is hoped patrons of the district will make known any added knowledge for the record. The writer has kept in mind the immediate need of a history of the high school, but at the same time, endeavored to meet the pertinent needs of people interested in seeing that the Martin County Historical Society has its own history for posterity. It will be noted in some instances that the record of Negro schools will appear along side that of the white. It is to be borne in mind that the present district comprises 3 white and 4 colored schools. The teachers have been key persons in the success of our schools, and their names are being given in a separate section. The roster for 1923-59 is the only one that makes an attempt at being correct from records of the local board of trustees. Effort has been made to include much interesting history of former schools in the district. At all times the writer has endeavored to verify this history.

This paper consists of six main divisions: 1) Early beginnings from Colonial times to the 1880's;

2) Many free schools from 1880's to 1902; 3) A mental picture of early schools and teachers; 4) Graded School Movement from 1902-23 and Beginnings of High School Movement; 5) High School Consolidation Movement from 1923-35; and 6) Robersonville Schools on the March 1935-59.

Sources of Information

First, facts are taken from the census of 1790, 1840, and 1850. Second, copies of Mr. C. B. Hassel's county treasurer records from 1876-79 and an excerpt from his autobiography, 1840, are sources. One of the most valuable of these is a **Memorandum of School Payments**, 1879, all of which are in the possession of Mr. Warren Biggs, Williamston, North Carolina. Third, there are the minutes of the Martin County Board of Education beginning December 1, 1884. Those of this date are the first. The Martin County Court House burned in 1882 and was rebuilt in 1885. In the meantime all official business of the county was conducted in the upstairs of the late S. R. Biggs' store, which also burned in 1884. Fourth, a few records of Professor Stephen Outerbridge are in hand from Mrs. Vada (Joe) Manning. Fifth, **The Weekly News**, published and edited by Charles Hunter, formerly of Hillsboro, North Carolina, July 31, 1903, Vol. 1, No. 24, a full copy of which has been preserved by Mr. Vernon Page. Sixth, **The Enterprise**, tobacco editions, 1930-45 owned by **The Enterprise Publishing Company**, Williamston, North Carolina. Seventh, **The Tarborough Southerner**, July 1877 issue, from which an article was

reprinted in **The Enterprise** was valuable. Eighth, there were pictures, letters, news items, family records, and tokens in homes. Ninth, the history of the schools back of 1876 is being pieced together from information in the above mentioned list, from state records in texts and from knowledge handed down and in the memory of living persons. The writer has had to rely for general facts on the history of public schools in North Carolina, and for some Martin County information, from three reliable authors. The titles of these books and their authors are as follows: **Public School Education in North Carolina**, Ed-

gar W. Knight, Ph. D., **History of the Public Schools of North Carolina**, M. C. S. Noble, and **Tar Heel Editor**, Josephus Daniels. Tenth, Mr. Lacy Waverly Anderson, Principal of Robersonville Schools 1937-44, through a thesis toward the degree of Master of Arts in 1941 from the University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill, came to the aid of the writer with facts. These were for a period in which minutes of the local school committee are missing. Eleventh and finally, the minutes of the Robersonville Board of Trustees and the Robersonville Schools Committee from 1923-59 have proved indispensable.

SECTION I

Early Beginnings from Colonial Times to the 1880's

Prior to the formation of Martin County in 1774 from Tyrrell and Halifax counties, there were laws in the Royal Colony of North Carolina regulating the estates of orphans and guardians. These laws, based on the laws of the Virginia colony, mark the beginnings of public school education in North Carolina and Martin County. Public school education is the primary concern of this paper. These laws set the pattern of State responsibility in education instead of church responsibility. They were to mark a trend toward separation of Church and State.¹ Based on the Virginia law of 1643, they directed that the county courts "enjoin the overseers of the poor and guardians of orphans to educate and instruct them to their best endeavors in Christian religion and in the rudiments of learning and to provide for them necessities, according to the competence of their estates. . . ."

A bill looking to the establishment of free schools was introduced in North Carolina in 1749, but no bill calling for public schools was passed. Following the revision of the Constitution in 1835, the first public school law was enacted.² This provided that, 1) for every one dollar (twenty dollar minimum) raised in a school district in a county, two

dollars would be forthcoming from the library fund of the state established in 1825; 2) Five and not more than ten persons were to be elected as superintendents of common schools in each county; 3) One was to be elected chairman; 4) Each county was to be divided into school districts "containing not more than six square miles, but having regard for the number of white children in each."; 5) The superintendents were to number the districts. "They shall appoint not less than three and not more than six school committeemen in each district."; and 6) "If any refuse or show negligence, he shall forfeit and pay the sum of fifty dollars to be recovered by action of debt, in any court of record in the State", the amount to go to the literary fund. The twenty dollars matched by the forty dollars from the literary fund was to go "where the school houses have been erected to accommodate at least fifty scholars." This law carried in Martin the first time a general state election was called. It did not carry in Edgecombe, a neighboring county.³

At that time, according to the census of 1840, one-third of our adult whites, by their own statements, were unable to read and write. The people at this time were "tenacious of old habits, conservative to the point of stubbornness, with no neighboring precedents or examples, and no persons trained under such sys-

¹The laws of 1775, 1760, and 1777.

²Extract from defection fragment of Wheeler's Reminiscences - 1884. Mr. Asa Biggs (1811-78) was a member of the Convention to amend the Constitution in 1835.

³Edgar K. Knight, *Public School Education in North Carolina*, (Cambridge: The Riverside Press, 1916), p. 140-44.

tems."¹ Before this time the teachers of primary subscription schools were called "old field instructors."

Mr. C. B. Hassell (1809-1880), Martin County citizen, father of Elder Sylvester Hassel, his illustrious son, and himself renowned as an educator, author, merchant, and divine in the Primitive Baptist Church, speaks of one of these early schools in his autobiography, written in 1840. The particular one he attended was three miles from Williamston. Speaking of himself he says, "His disposition to rudeness remained with him at least until he reached his third year, when it was agreed by all hands, crazy Luke Bennett, the school master, included, (he was deranged only at times) that the chap must go to school in order to be kept out of mischief. To this proposition the child had no serious objection, and he was often seen afterwards with his basket on his arm, trudging over the fields and along the road to the school house, in company with a large-sized friend who, once for all, carried a pillow for our youthful hero, because it was understood from the first that he should be allowed to take a nap near the master's chair whenever he became sleepy, and so he did. It was soon discovered that he was a little apt and his master recommended that he lay aside his 'Primer' and take a spelling book. This was accordingly done, and that spelling book, as strange as it may appear to the present

generation of leaf-tearers and book-spoilers, was kept by him until he was grown."²

Evidence of school organization as early as 1840 is also found in Mr. C. B. Hassell's autobiography. He says that he was "chosen one of the committeemen for School District Number 5 in 1840, and went to work by getting subscriptions for a house to the amount of \$100."³

On December 4, 1852 a law was passed creating the office of State Superintendent of Public Instruction. Dr. Calvin H. Wiley, Guilford County, was elected the first superintendent. This act authorized a state system of common schools, known as public schools today. Dr. Wiley, speaking of this period, said, "No people can or will be free who are unable or unwilling to educate their children." Dr. Wiley also said that North Carolina in 1860 had the best system of primary schools in the United States.

The evidence just given and further evidence to be given will indicate there was a district school at Robersonville at this early pre-Civil War period. However, there was no incorporated town until 1872. It was known by name and number, Robersonville 22 as was Powell 24 as early as 1878. From a copy of Mr. C. B. Hassell's treasurer records for that year he indicates there was a total of \$73.84 or \$1.04 per capita to be divided between the two districts. Powell district was between Gray's Upper (Gold Point)

¹Ibid p. 147.

²By permission of Mrs. William Glover (Great- Granddaughter of the author).

³Ibid.

and Hurst's. Everetts was organized. By deed in July 1878 S. P. Everett granted "free use of a well situated on my land in front of my dwelling house near the railroad to the school . . . in district number 13."¹

Mr. Jessie A. Bynum Cooper who became second county superintendent sometime after the Civil War reorganized the school districts in 1878. But we have from Hassell records in 1877 the following names and numbers of districts comprised in the present district: Number 3, W. L. Hurst's in Williamston Township; number 4, S. P. Everett's in Williamston Township; number 7, Cross Roads, Williamston Township; and number 8, Leggett's, Williamston Township. One earlier record from the same source, 1876 lists three townships — Hamilton, appropriated \$237; Williamston, \$358; and Jamesville, \$469. Everetts and Coffields colored, Williamston Township is listed for 1877. Committeemen for W. L. Hurst were W. W. Purvis, W. W. Hurst, and Jessie Griffin; for S. P. Everetts, Daniel Clark, Thomas Lanier, and N. Thomas Gurganus; for Cross Roads, James Mobley, Amelic James (Ed., Will., and Neal James' father), and A. P. Barnhill (Jule, Gid., and Sam Barnhill's father); and for Leggetts, Joseph B. Leggett, John B. Leggett, and Robert Robuck. State records show that in 1858 there was a school in every district and a school house for nearly every district.

There are only a few persons now living who have a memory of having attended any of the

above named schools. Mr. Johnnie L. Whitfield, 93, attended a school in 1871 at the late Sid Barnhill place near Reuben Everett's on the Robersonville-Cross Roads highway. This district was not known as Keel's until formed between 1879-85. His teacher was Miss Annie Lynn Stokes, Pitt County. Mr. Whitfield knows of the existence of two schools, one near the first he attended in front of Mrs. Ab Ausborn's home and the toher, a log structure, at Cross Roads. Crosses are named in the 1790 census. Mrs. Allie Roberson (W. E.) Page, 89, attended at Everetts in 1875 under Simon Peter Everett. "This school building was replaced by 1886", says Mrs. Gertrude Everett (Gid) Barnhill. Mr. J. H. (Jim) Roberson, Sr., attended his first school in Robersonville in 1875 under Mr. John Henry Johnson. The school was located diagonally across from the Adkins and Bailey Warehouse. Mr. Johnnie Whitfield and the late Mr. Gilly Gray walked into town to this school. In 1877 it was moved by Mr. Roberson's father, George, to his place diagonally across from the First Baptist Church. Mrs. H. A. (Betty) Gray attended the first remembered school in Smith's district number 21 in 1882 under Miss Betty Guilford (Mrs. John Croom, Lory Croom's mother). It was known in the late 1800's and early 1900's as the Stanley E. Brown School and was located on the Robersonville - Stokes highway five miles south of Robersonville on the present Hugh Roberson farm. Mr. Abram Roberson says that this very small school, re-

¹C. B. Hassell county treasurer records. The railroad bed had been laid at that time, but the first train was not to run from Tarboro to Williamston (all the way) until October 19, 1882.

placed in 1883, was used as a carriage house by his father. The first full record, listing 32 white and 22 colored school districts in 1879, gives names and numbers in consecutive order.

Wilson Academy, located on the late Billy Wilson farm between Everetts and Gold Point (Vance L. Roberson farm), was established by Mr. Billy Wilson soon after the Civil War, when he moved to this place from Beaufort County. He was Dr. J. M. Kilpatrick's grandfather. Since the academy was a forerunner of the high school, the existence of Wilson Academy would further indicate there were "old field" or common schools, or both, in the Robersonville area before and up to the Civil War. The only other known academy in the upper end of the county was Mimosa Grove at Butler's Bridge near Hamilton. It was established and taught by Mr. Stephen W. Outterbridge (Born Jan. 23, 1825-Died Jan. 28, 1915) before the Civil War and maintained by him for a number of years after he returned from the War. Mrs. Allie Page says that he taught three generations of her family — her parents (Elder George Daniel Roberson and Sally Luvenia Smith), herself, her husband (John Clayton Roberson), and their children. Mr. Outterbridge taught both public and private school (by record) at Robersonville beginning in 1885 in the oldest building on Main Street (1871), and continuing through 1896. He then taught pri-

vate school next door to his second home in Robersonville on what is now Outterbridge Street, to 1900. His home was the present Grady E. Smith home and his school was the back section of Donnie Hardison's house.

School was first held, said to be private, in the Masonic Hall in 1881 according to Mrs. Kate Piver Tripp. She attended this session of school under Miss Mattie Noble, Trenton, North Carolina. She says that Dr. W. H. Watson, (born around 1830—died around 1890) a highly educated man and second medical doctor in this area following Dr. J. L. Teel, taught in the Hall in 1882.¹ At the same time, or in 1883, Mr. Lemuel Ross, a bachelor from Beaufort County, was teaching free school in the school house across from the First Baptist Church.

Record should be made of one other very early "old field" or common school which sat on the fringes of the present Robersonville School District 2. Martin County Board of Education minutes for 1888 record the formation of Roanoke District Number 40 (Spring Green). In outlining the boundary, named as a point in the line was the "Mac Gilbert Taylor old school house" (Leroy Taylor farm Hamilton-Williamston highway). This school must have been built before or during the Civil War if built by Mac G. Taylor. He was the grandfather of the writer's husband, Claude T. Smith, and from family records—a deed, the farm had been bought by his

¹Mr. J. A. Teel, son of Dr. J. L. Teel (home and office on present Mrs. John Powell farm on Robersonville-Everetts highway No. 64) taught in 1887, according to S. R. Biggs' county treasurer record, in Turkey Swamp district number 15. He was paid \$37.50 per month, the highest salary commanded at that time in free school. Mr. Teel later became Register of Deeds of Martin County around 1892.

father, Irving Taylor, and deeded to his son. He came from Edgecombe County in 1858 to settle on the farm where the school was located. Brick from the chimney still remain on the site. The house has been moved to another place on the farm and is being used.

The 1850 census of Martin County lists only 900 pupils, 25 tax supported schools and four private schools or academies. The academies known to be in existence at that time but not named in the census were Williamston (1817), Jamesville (), Horner (Hamilton) in existence before 1945, and Mimosa Grove, Butler's Bridge.

In the very early years before the Civil War and following, it was a fixed habit to have school every year or two in the common schools. The average terms were four months; the average salary \$24; and the average attendance forty pupils with one teacher. By 1860 the per capital expenditure for each pupil was \$1.25. Up until 1860 the county superintendent was called county supervisor. He was also called supervisor for a short period from April 1898 to July 1901. At this latter time there was a board of directors serving with the supervisor, Mr. R. J. Peele. At the same time, provision was made for ten districts in the stead of the three—Williamston, Jamesville and Hamilton that had prevailed from 1876 and before. The two for the Robersonville area were Cross Roads No. 6 and Robersonville No. 7. There were five committee-men appointed to each of the ten

new districts or townships in the stead of the three that had been for each school district before. The only part of this new organizational set up which continued beyond July 1901 was the ten districts, the county board returning to the old school committee set up of three to the individual districts in the townships.

According to available records, Mr. Archibald H. Coffield was the first superintendent of common schools in Martin. His term of office began in 1859 and continued until sometime during the Civil War. Mr. Coffield lived on his own farm now owned by Mr. Andrew Clark. In 1846 and again in 1848 he was a member of the Legislature. In the North Carolina Assembly of 1866 James E. Moore, Representative or Senator from Martin County, backed a bill by inserting an amendment to appropriate funds for the support of common schools from the state treasury. This bill failed due to the uncertainty of the times.¹

The movement toward free public and universal education gained impetus through Superintendent Wiley's "North Carolina Reader" used before and through the War. It is to be remembered, however, that during the war years the common schools in Martin County as well as over the State, ceased to function, or, we do not know much about them until around 1879. After Mr. Cooper's reorganization in 1878, he received a letter in 1879 from Mr. J. C. Scarborough, State Superintendent of Public Instruction. The letter (Mr. Warren Biggs')

¹M. C. S. Noble, *History of the Public Schools of North Carolina*, (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 1930), p. 280. The Moores from around Everetts at this time were not many years removed from Ireland.

informed him that no funds from the State would be forthcoming that year.

The Reconsruction Period, rather than the War, was to prove the greatest hindrance to public schools. The Constitutions of 1868 and 1876 aided by forming a new basis for state taxation for education. The public endowment or literary fund continued but was not to be the main source. The carpet bagger and scalawag were to adversely affect the economy and the collection of funds for education, both state and county.

It is to be remembered in this connection that at least five main hindrances to public education had been at work since Colonial times. These were, according to Edgar W. Knight: 1) Legislative aid to private schools and academies; 2) Fear of taxation; 3) Intrusion of the state into parental obligation; 4) Lack of common interest in education; and 5) Lack of teacher qualifications.

From the full list of thirty-two school districts in 1879 there were nine within the general confines of the present Robersonville District No. 2. A thirty-fourth, Keel's, was formed between 1879 and February 2, 1885. There were by 1885 thirty-seven white and twenty-four colored districts. The Constitution of 1868 had provided for separate schools. Robuck's No. 35 was organized in 1885. Wynn's No. 38 in the Everetts area was formed in September 1887. Eborns' No. 47 and Parmele No. 48 were formed in 1895. There were now fourteen districts, the total number for this general area before consolidation was to begin in 1903. A listing of the districts, the year of formation, and the

year of consolidation follows:

District:

Hurst No. 12, 1878—With Roanoke No. 40 (Spring Green) 1920. Spring Green consolidated with Everetts in 1931.

Everetts No. 13, 1878 — High school with Robersonville in 1934.

Cross Roads No. 16, 1878—Everetts in 1931.

Leggetts No. 17, 1878 — Bear Grass.

Smith's No. 21, 1878—Robersonville in, 1931.

Robersonville No. 22, 1878—Became district No. 2 in a reorganization of eight districts in the county in 1933.

Pages No. 23, 1878—Parmele in 1905.

Powells No. 24, 1878 — Grays (Upper) (Named Gold Point in 1906) in 1924.

Grays (Upper) No. 25, 1878—Ninth Grade in 1926-27; eighth grade in 1927-28; seventh by 1939-40; and remaining six grades in 1946-47, all with Robersonville.

Keels No. 34, 1879-85—Robersonville in 1928-29.

Robucks No. 35, 1885—Cross Roads and Leggetts in 1903.

Wynns No. 38, 1887—Consolidated with Everetts, from which it had been formed, in 1915.

Eborns No. 47, 1895—Gold Point in 1906.

Parmele No. 48, 1895 — High school in 1907; elementary in 1934.

SECTION II

Many Free Schools from 1880's to 1902

The organizational picture for the thirty-seven white and twenty-four colored school districts in 1885 may be had by a look at the minutes of the county board of education. There were 2421 white children; 2551 colored. On December 1, 1884 the board members present were Jos. D. Biggs, chairman, William A. Haislip, Ben R. Jenkins (Robersonville), W. B. Mangum and S. L. Wallace. At a meeting in June, 1885, the board appropriated to each school \$1.10 for each child listed in the school census, fifteen cents less than in 1860 in a state average. In 1889 state records show the average appropriation through counties per pupil was two cents. This was on paper only as it had been in 1879. Not until 1899 did the public schools receive any legislative appropriation from the state treasury. Two years before this, 1897, the Martin County appropriation by a new and improved method was \$1.53. The per capita method of appropriating school funds had prevailed until 1885 when the new method was adopted. It provided for two-thirds to be paid on a per capita basis and the remaining one-third to be "apportioned in such manner as to equalize school facilities in all the districts without favor or to the prejudice of either race."

On June 1, 1885 the board of county commissioners and justices of the peace met in joint session in accordance with Section 2545 of the School Law of 1885 and elected a County Board of Education: Jos. C. Smith, Stephen

W. Outterbridge (Robersonville), and Thos. B. Haughton. On July 6, 1885 the board of education elected Mr. Haughton, chairman, and Jesse A. B. Cooper, superintendent. In 1887 Mr. Cooper was made chairman and T. B. Haughton, superintendent. Mr. Outterbridge was still on the board. The Rev. Mr. Haughton consented to serve and did so until his death on Nov. 28, 1894. The Rev. Mr. Haughton was a chaplain in the Confederate Army. After the War he moved to Williamston to become rector of the Episcopal Church. According to a fragment of **Wheeler's Reminiscences, 1884**, Mr. Outterbridge was a member of the State Legislature in 1856 and again in 1864. Mrs. Vada Manning says that he served as a teacher in Arkansas during the War years. Teachers were supposed to be exempt from active service. Mr. Jesse A. B. Cooper (Hamilton area) served in the Legislature of 1825 and again in 1842. He was a member of the Constitutional Convention of 1835.

On December 7, 1894, Mr. Sylvester Hassell, noted educator and minister in the Primitive Baptist Church, was elected county superintendent. Mr. Hassell was awarded the highest honorary degree from the University of North Carolina in 1861. He served as superintendent through July 3, 1895, when Mr. J. B. Coffield acted as superintendent and served to July 5, 1897, at which time Mr. R. J. Peel (Miss Eva Peel's father) was elected supervisor. When Mr. Peel resigned in May 1914 to become Clerk of the Martin County Superior Court, Mr. Asa J. Manning was elected. He remained superintendent until August

1923 when Mr. R. A. Pope was elected and served to July, 1931. At this time Mr. J. C. Manning, son of Mr. Asa Manning, was elected and has served to the present time.

The records show that the average size of the new schools built in this area between 1885 and 1905 was "thirty feet long by twenty wide, twelve feet between the joists." Land and contributions of money were given to schools. At the same time land was condemned when needed and not offered as a gift, in which case a value was set to determine the price to pay the owner. Some times land was lent to a school committee.

A deed, recorded in the Register of Deeds' office in 1883, shows that Stanley E. Brown and his wife, Anne E. Brown, gave "one fourth acre to the Public School Committee out of good will for the public schools" in Smith's district. There was an unusual exception made in the deed, "... it is given upon condition that no parties or any kind of revelling shall be held in the house allowed by committee at any time or this deed is null and void." Stanley Brown signed his name; his wife made her mark in signing the deed. In 1891 they gave together another one-fourth acre to adjoin the first. Mr. Aaron E. Smith and his wife, Lizzie Taylor Smith, (the writer's father and mother-in-law) lent a tract which was a part of his farm "at a point eighty-five yards eastwardly of the crossing of the Washington and Williamston County roads..." (Robersonville-Cross Roads-Williamston road). A state law was passed around 1901 which forbade the county board to take title to

any lands having exceptions in the deeds.

During the years from 1885-1905 there was much transferring of pupils from district to district. At times the boundary lines were changed to accomodate the transfers. Teachers were paid thirty dollars per term (about two months) in 1885. Five dollars only might be added if permission had been obtained from the county superintendent. The teacher boarded in the home of a patron, paying eight to ten dollars per month. Record was made in at least one instance in the county when money was paid from the school fund of Hardison district No. 9 (Jamesville area). Six dollars was paid to Miss Susanna Fisher in 1889 for tuition for teaching Mr. H. P. Noland's children who were of said district. This area was on the old Jamesville-Washington railroad, now taken up, and at Dymond City, now a dead town.

Parents sent their children to free school, beginning around July or August, before the days of growing tobacco, in the late 1890's, and continuing two months. Then, beginning in October or November, private school was conducted for about four months, possibly longer, though not all the pupils enrolled for the entire time. Everetts and Robersonville held private school in extra sessions. About two to three miles northeast of Everetts on Simpson Hill was another private school conducted in the area. This was the John D. Simpson School. The teacher was paid fifty dollars to teach around fifteen pupils for five months during the years 1880-84. Mrs. Kate Tripp and Mrs. Allie Page attend-

ed this school at this time under the Misses Betty (taught first) and Lula Jenkins. The daily fee at Everetts and Robersonville was five to ten cents. The Everetts free school enrollment in 1885 was ninety-seven; Robersonville, 78. There were enrolled in the county, 2891 white pupils in 1891; 2866, colored. Appropriated to each pupil was only \$1.13.

The county paid half the cost of constructing new school houses and half the cost of repair beginning in the 1880's. The county board governed the removal of school houses or their location in another area of a district for a school session. This was a natural request in view of the times, most every child walking to school. It meant the same children would not always be the nearest or the farthest from school.

There have been in consecutive use four known buildings at Everetts; two in Hursts, north of

Everetts; three at Gold Point; one, Eborns; two, Parmele; three, Smiths; three, Keels; three, Cross Roads; two or more Leggetts (just beyond Cross Roads at the juncture of the Everetts-Bear Grass road); and six, Robersonville. At Robersonville these include the two brick (grammar and high school, but not gymnasium), the Masonic Hall where both entered and free school was conducted from 1881-1902, the free school moved by Mr. J. H. Roberson, Sr.'s father from the warehouse area to the First Baptist Church area, and one other free school used one known year in Mr. Roberson's, Mr. Alonza Roberson's and Mr. George Crofton's memory, around 1877. The last named still stands as a colored home in front of the colored Baptist church. It was used as an entered school as late as 1899 when Miss Alice Grimes (Mrs. A. R. Dunning, Williamston) taught there.

¹Mr. Simpson petitioned the Martin County Board of Education in 1886 to create a new district for his school which did not prevail.

SECTION III

A Mental Picture of Early Schools and Teachers

A mental picture of the inside of the early one-teacher schools in the Robersonville area shows long unbacked homemade benches in rows, a book shelf along a side wall with wall-desks for the practice of Spenserian writing with pen and ink on foolscap paper, and sometimes a twenty-by-thirty inch blackboard. Later, but before 1900, homemade backed benches were used. There were slates for individual use. A few pupils brought cloths with which to erase the chalk. Left to the imagination of the reader, is the erasing with mouth-wetted fingers. The common dipper or gourd at the well-bucket was possibly more sanitary. The writer can remember the hard introduction by the teacher of hand-coned paper cups in the early 1920's at Mewborn's two-teacher school in Greene County, North Carolina. There were so many who failed to bring their aluminum folding-cups.

Sometimes the inside of the weather-boarded building was not entirely sealed inside, and the rafters often showed. The common practice of painting the school inside and outside was not adopted until the early 1900's. The Robersonville Masonic Hall downstairs section (thirty-six by twenty-four feet), lent, perhaps for a fee, did afford a small stage at the eastern end where classes were heard. The north-west corner was reserved for the assisting teacher, often an older scholar, for instructing the younger ones to read from the Blue Back Spell-

er (Webster's). Miss Leona Moore, 89, teacher in Robersonville from 1915-42, tells of the difficulty her younger brother had in learning to read in the early years at Old Sparta, North Carolina. This, no doubt, happened in Robersonville to some equally harassed scholar. She says that her brother wore out four to five Blue Back Spellers (10c each retail) on about the fifth or sixth page from having held his thumb so long between the lower leaves of the book. Since his pappy sold the school books at his country store the hapless little fellow had no difficulty securing another copy from an eager father. No wonder there was so much difficulty when a six-year-old had to learn his A B C's and to spell before he was permitted to read. Under Mr. Outterbridge in the Masonic Hall, Mrs. Kate Tripp studied in Davie's Reader, which was followed by Holmes' Reader. Not many got beyond the fifth reader or the sixth and last of this series. She went from the Blue Back to Townsend's Speller. Town's Speller followed Townsend's.

Mrs. H. A. Gray refers to the pretty picture her first teacher, Miss Betty Guilford (Mrs. John Croom), presented in 1882 at Smith's (Brown's) School. She wore a spotless white-ruffled, big-bowed apron. "Miss" Betty says that the older brother or sister sat beside the younger to help teach. There was the continual standing up of the younger to look over the back of the bench in front to see what a fellow classmate was doing.

Children found humor in life then as they do now inside or out-

side the school. The folk games of the centuries — "The Fox, the Goose, the Gander" and "Drop the Handkerchief", and others were enjoyed at recess. Mrs. Wiley Rogerson, Sr., recalls the older scholars were allowed to study outside, on their own, on warm spring days at Cross Roads. Mr. Jim Roberson remembers in 1875 at Robersonville how an older boy paused to watch through the window and to talk with his farmer friend who was plowing with oxen. He also remembers the whipping the fellow received at the hands of his first teacher, John Henry Johnson. Mr. Johnnie Whitfield tells that in the early 1870's his first teacher, Miss Annie Lynn Stokes, Bethel, required a young chap who misbehaved to slide back and forth on a see-saw so he would bump himself. He laughs now at the "whee" sound the boy uttered over and over from a-bumping. These incidents may seem insignificant in themselves, but they do help to create a true picture of that day of beginnings in our schools. Women were just beginning to teach. Because teaching was not considered "proper" work for women, the few in the South immediately after the War had been imported from the North. Many missionary-minded ones taught in the Negro schools.

Mrs. Kate Tripp recalls the Friday afternoon speech making in the early 1880's in the John D. Simpson (private) School. Mr. Whitfield recollects how Mr. Net Hammond, teacher at Flat Swamp (Pitt County, front Mrs. J. R. Jenkins) in the late 1870's, determined the time to let out the long school day. He measured the

needed hour before sun-down by the span of his hand against the tree-tops. Mr. Whitfield walked the four or more mile distance more often than he rode the mule and cart. Mrs. Allie Page remembers Mr. Simon Peter Everett, teacher at Everetts in the late 1870's, going to school in the morning dressed in his bleached white and starched linen pants. This special dress caused the children to say, "Watch out. He's going to whip somebody today." His farm encompassed the present town of Everetts. Commencement for the Robersonville school was conducted in the Masonic Hall in the 1880's and 1890's and later had to be held in the upstairs of what is now R. L. Smith and Sons store when attendance grew.

A July, 1877, issue of **The Tarboro Southerner** provides an interesting and enlightening bit of news of Robersonville at that time when the memory of our few oldest citizens is only a child's memory. A correspondent for this newspaper writing under the pen name "Alexis", and his "pardner" visited the town as they were on their route into Martin going to Hamilton, on to Williamston and Robersonville and back to Tarboro. He termed Robersonville "a thriving little village." For Henry Daniel Roberson, who greeted him in such a friendly manner, he had only praise. Arriving late in the afternoon, Henry D. showed him around to the new stores and homes going up. He referred to the mercantile establishments as thriving. The first two stores and a "grog" were located a block below the first Baptist Church on the same side of the street. "Alexis" made partic-

ular mention of a "handsome piece of architecture, one church, which is nearly completed, beautifully embellished, with frescoed walls, and is to be dedicated on the third Sunday in this month, so I was reliably informed." After such hospitality, being shown around by Henry D., he invited "me and my pard" in to tea. The table was sumptuous, laden with "delicious viands of meats of all kinds . . . and samples of the vineyard." It was a day of special entertainment. "Tableau at Robersonville-Guilded Sunshine and Rosebuds of Glory" was presented in a house he did not name, but noted was "literally crowded almost to suffocation." When the curtains were drawn aside, the stage appeared, decorated artistically with greenery and was fragrant with "roses and jasmin." He was delighted with the program put on by the adults and young folk "in so short a time." A hilarious part of the evening was the anticlimax to the next announced tableau—"The Sleeping Beauty." Sleeping Beauty was a jet black reclining figure dressed for the part.

When the tableaux closed at 11:30 p. m., the young adults repaired to the school for a dance. Miss Maggie Andrews (Mrs. Vada Manning's aunt) was, in his eyes, the "belle of the evening." He was also attracted to the "Misses Gainors, Miss Everett, Miss Roberson and Miss Nannie Williams, Williamston." The men furnished plenty of lively music, presumably fiddle music. The dance over at 2:30 in the morning, "Alexis" and his pard went on their way, arriving in Tarboro in the wee hours of the morning.

Music was taught by an assisting teacher, Miss Minnie Whitaker, Halifax County, in the Masonic Hall in 1885. This may have been the first instance of music-piano being taught in the public schools. Miss Whitaker used the Disciples of Christ Church next door to the Masonic Hall. In this same year, and at the Hall, Mr. Outterbridge was continuing his teaching of advanced pupils. The year before he had taught Mr. Johnnie Whitfield at Hamilton Preparatory Institute. The year before that, in 1883, Mr. Johnnie had studied under Prof. John Duckett. Prof. Duckett was an outstanding teacher who went to Greenville to teach at the end of that school year. Mr. Whitfield himself taught his first free school in 1884, and 1885, July and August, in Keel's district, but continued his studies under Mr. Outterbridge in Robersonville in the fall of 1885.

In 1891 a ruling was made by the county board of education that when an area was incorporated into a district, the teacher was requested to obtain a certificate from the county supervisor. The supervisor was being paid one dollar per examination in 1897. Teacher certificates had continued in three grades in 1881 following a state ruling, although effort had been made to improve this situation. There had been before 1881, five grades of certificates. The applicant was examined to determine whether he was "proficient in spelling, reading, and the four fundamental rules of arithmetic."

Elder Sylvester Hassell, "a noble gentleman and profound scholar," examined Mr. Stephen Outterbridge in 1895. He missed

a few questions but Mr. Hassell passed him. Pupils of these two were equally proud to say, "We studied under Mr. Outterbridge" or "We studied under Mr. Hassell." Many could say they had studied under both.

County institutes for teachers were held in the 1890's for Martin County teachers. Money from the Peabody Fund paid for the services of those coming into the county to assist. The county board paid for the local expenses. County institutes continued into the 1920's for colored teachers. Separate institutes were held in September and October 1893. One for white teachers was held in August 1899. Gradually training schools and colleges assumed this responsibility of training teachers.

Mr. Outterbridge was elected to the county board of education in June, 1885, and served until 1889. In 1891, he returned and on July 3, 1899, tendered his resignation. The following, for that date, appeared in the minutes: "Considering his most valuable services in the past and the great need of them in the future, (the board) could only accept it with sorrow, but knowing that he is in extreme old age and very poor in health, they had to become reconciled to the same, hoping they might be able to fill the vacancy with a just and noble man."

Mr. Outterbridge was greatly beloved by the citizens of Robersonville. His 81st birthday and fifty years of teaching were celebrated with a special speaking in January 23, 1906, at the insistent suggestion of Mr. Justice Everett, Palmyra, and others of his old students. The program for the day was as follows: "Welcome

Address — J. D. Everett; Response — Rev. (Eld) M. T. Laurence; Introduction of Speaker—A. R. Dunning; Address—Hon. F. D. Winston; Planting of tree in front of academy in honor of Prof. and Mrs. Outterbridge." Two trees were planted. One was named Stephen and one Susan. Mr. William Gray, Mr. Thomas House and Mr. C. Abram Roberson, senior students, helped to plant these trees. "Mrs. Outterbridge was as fine a person and as beloved as Mr. Outterbridge," says Warren Biggs. He boarded in their home in 1894. His father had sent him to school under the Professor to get him away from a wrong crowd of boy companions in Williamston, his home town. Prof. Outterbridge's boarding students remained at the dinner table when it was cleared around seven and he supervised their studying from the head of the table, peering now and then over his glasses from reading to answer a question. At nine, all went to bed carrying a candle.

Mr. and Mrs. Outterbridge kept at their home as "handy-boy" a young Negro boy, Henry Roberson, during these years when he had boarding students. He was treated as a son, though never adopted. The young students and adults living at the time said that he was a good and a smart boy. In their home he gained the rudiments of learning and even learned to knit. His widow, Annie Bell, living in Robersonville at the present, is held in highest respect.

From the same issue of the *Enterprise* which featured the birthday program, appeared the following lines: "They were both too modest and retiring to desire

this public recognition, but they yielded to the wishes of their friends and former students who desired to meet them on this occasion, and to acknowledge their debt of gratitude for the wholesome instruction and lofty example of their old teachers. Their example of righteous living and devotion to duty are worthy of imitation for all peoples in all ages. Their lives are blameless before man and, we believe, before God. . . . His influence has always been on the side of advancement in education, knowing as he did, that it is the trained mind and sterling character that make citizens and honorable history for a state." Mr. and Mrs. Outterbridge were members of the Primitive Baptist Church and devoted to the church. He was ordained a deacon in the Church at Spring Green in February, 1870. He attended James Horner Military Academy, then in Hamilton around 1845, and known in the 1880's as Hamilton Preparatory Institute. They had under their care many children, but none of their own.

In a brief history of Robersonville appearing in *The Weekly News*, July 31, 1903, Vol. I, number 24, Prof. Outterbridge stated that "with teacher after teacher having been employed at short intervals, indicating no permanency . . . about eighteen years ago a board of trustees was organized and a teacher employed of over thirty years experience at a salary, since which time the school has been permanent and self-sustaining, and the town has been gradually building up and street after street added." This teacher was Prof. Outterbridge.

Since the economy of a com-

munity is so closely tied to the march of progress of our public schools, and our private schools as well, note should be made of the town's founding fathers. Henry Daniel Roberson, mentioned in the July, 1877, issue of *The Tarboro Southerner*, was one of three brothers owning the land of the town and living here before its incorporation in 1872. Staton Everett built what was known as the John Stevenson big house on his farm in the northwest section of the town. Part of the farm is now owned by Robersonville Development Corporation and occupied by Austin Farms, Inc. and the town-school athletic field, bought by the school for \$9050 in 1949. The old vacant Stevenson house burned in 1954, taking one life, that of Harvey Perkins, colored, whose body was found in the remains of the fire. The Roberson brothers were George Outlaw, born Dec. 1, 1821—died Aug. 27, 1887), father of Mr. Jim Roberson, Sr., Henry Daniel (born Oct. 10, 1824—died Sept. 14, 1884), and William (Billy) Wynn (born Sept. 1, 1819—died May 11, 1845). The home of Billy on highway No. 64, near the high school, and known as the Johnny Edmondson house which he recently sold, is believed to be the oldest house in town. It has tiny windows. The next oldest is the late Willie Roberson two-story home flanked at either end with brick chimneys, and is located two doors from the First Baptist Church. This was Henry D's home where "Alexis" dined in 1877. The Jesse Ben Roberson house on the edge of town, Flat Swamp Road, was George's home. Henry D. remained at home during the Civil War to look after the widows. He was

the father of the Atlantic Coast Line Railroad, then incorporated as Seaboard and Raleigh Railroad Company. He introduced a bill in the Legislature of 1879 on March 13 making it possible for the railroad to be completed. He has therefore, been named father of the railroad from Tarboro to Williamston. Mrs. Kate Tripp, Mr. Henry D's step-daughter, saw him shed tears of joy at a well on Main Street when he witnessed the first train roll through going from Tarboro to Williamston. The train made the complete run on October 19, 1882. Mrs. Tripp remembers the many occasions when her mother, Mr. Henry D's second wife, was hostess to numerous railroad officials here on business for the railroad.

A religious scrap book of Mr. Outterbridge's reveals a few facts about the private school he conducted at the Masonic Hall. The book had been his roll and record book, but it is almost pasted over with his religious clippings. Mrs. Vada Andrews Manning inherited his scrapbook from Mrs. Winnie Briley Benjamin. Ten cents must have been his daily tuition fee. Spelling, reading, arithmetic, grammar and geography were taught. Alonza Everett paid 30c for one speller, and Allie Everett, 90c for one North Carolina History, and James Roberson, 75c for one Speaker. School opened in 1885 on October 12th and continued eight weeks. A spring session began January 11, 1886, and ran

for twenty weeks. This would make seven months' private school, but not all the pupils enrolled for the full time. Among his mottoes were these taken also from his scrapbook. "Education is to the mind what grinding is to the ax." "To utilize dry putty is to pour in the oil and hammer well." "A finely equipped ship without a rudder is soon wrecked." "Promptness is the life of business." "Study to be obedient." "Determine to do right and govern thyself."

Mr. J. A. Whitley, first Master of Stonewall Masonic Lodge No. 296, Robersonville, was appointed to the county board of education from this area in 1899. Later he was elected chairman and served "long and faithfully" with real worth until 1906. At that time he was elected to the General Assembly. Mr. L. B. (Lamm) Wynn, Everetts, was elected to fill the unexpired term of Mr. Whitley's and did so until he resigned in 1916, at which time Mr. W. H. Holliday was appointed to the board.

A map showing the various districts of the public schools in the county was requested by the State Superintendent in September 1892. It is presumed this map was supplied. The County Board of Directors, organized in April 1898-July 1901, laid off the county into ten school districts. The two for the area of the present district were Cross Roads No. 6 and Robersonville No. 7.

SECTION IV Graded School Movement from 1902-23 and Beginnings of High School Movement

While the surrounding area of Robersonville moved forward from 1885 to create new school districts that every child might be within walking distance of a school, a consolidation movement was also under way. Mr. John C. Scarborough, State Superintendent of Public Instruction, 1875-85 and 1893-97, was discouraging the tendency to increase the number. It decreased the amount of money for each school and shortened the length of the term. In 1881, taxes for schools were only eight and one-third cents on the hundred dollars worth of property, and twenty-five cents on the poll. In 1885 only 52% of the school population was enrolled.

From 1889-1900 there was a real awakening of the State and Robersonville to the need and desire for education. Illiteracy in the Robersonville area was being fought through 1910 and beyond. Keel district No. 34 and Parmele No. 48 were the only two reporting any illiterates from enrollees—seven males and one female. The county took steps in 1913 to enforce attendance by appointing officers for each of the ten districts. L. L. Roberson was appointed for Robersonville and G. D. Gurganus for Cross Roads.

The graded school movement which had begun in the towns and cities after the Civil War was continuing. It was pointing the way to local taxation, for progressive rural communities all over the state. It was arousing in them the spirit to vote special

taxes for the education of their children. Local citizens could thank Edwin A. Alderman and Charles D. McIver for having waked up the state through their holding county institutes which reached many more besides teachers in county mass meetings. They were to thank Governor Charles B. Aycock (1901-04) for his stumping the state with his gospel of education: There is the "right of every child born on earth to have the opportunity to burgeon out all that there is within him." They could thank the Legislature of 1904 for making provision for the first state loans in 1903 when Dr. J. Y. Joyner made these. Robersonville was among the first districts in the county to vote a special tax in 1900. Mr. John Dawson Everett, local citizen teaching in Bethel, around 1900, came over to Robersonville to lead her graded school movement. The vote for a county school tax in 1897 had failed. Dardens voted a tax in 1905. There were eighty-one colored and white districts in ten townships in 1897.

The growing of tobacco, the establishing of a tobacco market in 1900 linked to the A. C. L., encouraged the town to file a special deed in the Register of Deeds office May 6, 1902. It was made by Real Estate Company to Robersonville High School Company and was signed by A. S. Roberson. An article on education in Robersonville appeared in *The Weekly News*, July 31, 1903. It states, "The community that does not look well into its educational interests must take a back seat in all matters of progress and industry." Mr. J. C. Andrews, accord-

ing to this paper, took the lead in establishing Robersonville's tobacco market in 1900 and in the building of the first warehouse, "Old Carolina."

Note should be made at this point that local board of trustee records for 1902-23 are lost if any were made. These were the first twenty-one of twenty-four years during which the school operated under private charter. Any details that would have been here are not recorded in the county board of education minutes.

Robersonville is listed in county board minutes as a graded school in 1905. Williamston had become a graded school in 1904. In 1907, Robersonville colored graded school was created. It had had been known as Willow Springs. The academy referred to by Mr. Outterbridge in his short history of Robersonville in 1904 is what local citizens now call the first graded school. It was built in time to be occupied in 1902. When Robersonville obtained a private charter from the State, it was following the patterns of towns and cities in the state securing charters for the operation of graded schools or high schools or both. This same charter permitted a high school also. This meant Robersonville Graded School was not under the jurisdiction of the county board of education.

Mr. C. H. McLaurin was the first principal of Robersonville Graded School, 1902-04. The above mentioned **Weekly News** mentions that under Mr. McLaurin there was a noticeable increase in enrollment. There was better attendance and discipline. It continues, "Mr. C. H. McLaurin's

ample qualifications, clear head, good judgment, conscientiousness and tact have been a dominant item in its present prosperous condition." Students came in from the surrounding area to board and room and go to school here. Mrs. Ora (Silas) House, the Wynn sisters from Everetts and a Mr. Harper from Parmele boarded at Mrs. Arch S. Roberson's in 1902 and went to Mr. McLaurin. His assisting teacher the first year was Miss Neva Hassell (Mrs. Stephen Ross); and the second year his assistant was Miss Leyta Carter. Miss Janie Mason was his piano teacher. Miss Allie G. Little (Mrs. N. C. Everett) was one of the more advanced pupils. She entered North Carolina College for Women, Greensboro, after attending under Mr. McLaurin.

Mr. George Washington Mewborn, with his wife, Mrs. James Beatrice Mewborn, as assistant, and young daughter, Esther, piano teacher, was the principal 1904-05. He went the following year to Hamilton to teach and remained there until his death in 1908. He was a relative of the writer. By county record there were in 1904 in Robersonville 140 pupils. There is no record that the local trustees had taken out insurance on the new school, but it is interesting to know that the county minutes show no school under county jurisdiction had taken this step before 1905. This came with the much increased school building program in the county in 1906. Gold Point and Cross Roads were the two districts in the Robersonville area to be appropriated building funds in that year, Gold Point receiving \$312.50 and Cross Roads \$265. The

pay-as-you-go support of school houses took a turn in 1909. Dardens was the first district in the county to acquire a loan of \$600. In 1907 Everetts floated a loan for a new building.

Mr. John Dawson Everett, Robersonville native and a graduate of Peabody College, came from Bethel in 1905 to become principal and remained through 1909. He and Mrs. J. D. Everett (Miss Lelia Thornton), and Miss Dora Mae Krider (Mrs. (Dr.) R. J. Hargrove) taught the first high school studies in the eighth and ninth grades. The high school was well under way in 1907 with Miss Krider's coming. **The Weekly News**, July 31, 1903 referred to the school at that time as a high school but it must have been in name only. There were only three teachers in the school, including the music teacher. Miss Krider taught the first Latin and Mrs. Everett the first art. Mrs. Everett also taught elocution and English. There was an eight-months term. There were six teachers in 1910-11 and judging from the roster of teachers supplied from the memory of persons acquainted with these years, there must have been five to six teaching each year. Funds for the operation of the school, supplied by the county superintendent, were turned over in a lump sum without individual teacher vouchers; consequently, the county has no record of Robersonville teachers. Miss Ethel Peele (Mrs. Edgar Brockwell) was the first woman graduate in 1908, and Mr. C. Abram Roberson was the first man graduate.

In the interest of good parent-teacher relations, Mr. Everett was

known to have instructed his teachers to remember that every person in Robersonville was related or kin. "Interested in students as people . . . Mr. Everett's chief aim was to become a good teacher and to develop Christian men and women." After he left Robersonville, his life, until his death, was devoted to teaching in the Department of Education and Psychology at Carson-Newman College, Jefferson City, Tenn. He was head of the department from 1919-42.

Mr. W. C. Allen followed Mr. Everett as principal in 1909-10. There is evidence that he was the same Mr. W. C. Allen who had been principal of Vine Hill Academy, Scotland Neck, in 1889. If so, he later became principal of Wake County Schools. Mr. J. D. Eason served as principal in 1910-11. In the second year of Mr. W. H. Mizzell's seven-year interim as principal, 1911-17, the tenth grade was added. In his last year the eleventh grade was added. The county was supporting six months of the school term. Outstanding students were produced under Mr. Mizzell. One was W. H. Gray who represented Martin County in debating at Elon College. He later attended Elon College. Another was Mr. Turner Grimes, now of Miami, Florida, and a business man. He was a debater in one of the two county commencements in either 1915 or 1916. A special train was run from Oak City via Parmele and Robersonville and back for the all-day occasion. Thereafter, Robersonville held its own commencement. Graduates receiving the first diplomas for the completion of eleven grades in 1917-18

were eight in number. It was the first year of Mr. Barbee as principal. They were Walter Dee Taylor, Rocky Mount, N. C., Inez Manning (Mrs. Thomas Hughes, Wilmington, N. C.), deceased, Lurlene Ross (Mrs. Arthur Johnson), Hattie Green (Mrs. Ralph Sadler, Whiteville, N. C.), Martha Dell Gray (Mrs. Jim Gray, Sr.).

A Miss McNeill, Ellerbe, N. C., taught art in private lessons at the school. She taught Mrs. Maybell (Hugh) Roberson, talented and trained artist, who is herself teaching art lessons in her home studio.

Mr. F. Q. Barbee, Benson, N. C., served as principal 1917-19. Debt on the school building was liquidated in February, 1916. For this purpose \$400 was paid by the county board. The school, a frame building, had added rooms since it was built in 1902. It was located on the site of the present Outterbridge (brick) Grammar School and sat behind the cedar trees, Stephen and Susan. A valuable high school teacher, Miss Eva Irene Peel, joined the faculty in 1917. Her teaching of English and Latin through 1937, with the exception of two years, was to be recognized by college teachers of her former students. She was one of the few teachers paid a supplement in the 1920's for "talent and special fitness." The State was beginning to make the change of salary based on certificate at about this same time. Miss Peel was to make the first beginnings of a high school library in the latter 1920's. The Martin County Rural Library Movement which had begun in the nation in 1879 was launched in Martin County in the early 1900's. Mr. H. D. Ev-

erett was rural librarian for Robersonville in 1907 and was paid a supplement. Mr. B. D. Tew was the librarian at Parmele, it being the first school in this area to adopt this service by raising the necessary \$10 to have county funds added thereto. While Mr. Barbee was still principal in 1918, five hundred dollars was appropriated by the county board for the erection of two additional rooms.

A resolution, which was never challenged and which reflected the extreme patriotism of the times, was passed by the county board in 1918. It reads as follows: "Our government is involved in a great war, and all our resources and powers are taxed to the limit, requiring the unlimited and patriotic cooperation of all our citizens, therefore no teacher shall be allowed to teach in the schools in Martin County who is not in sympathy with the aims and purposes of our government."

Mr. P. E. Shaw served two years as principal, 1919-21. French was introduced in the curriculum and the high school unit system of teaching by subjects put into effect. Miss Hattie Wilson was the first teacher of French. Eight were graduated in this first class under the new system in 1920-21. They were Myrtle Taylor (Mrs. Nathan Roberson), Myrtle Green (Mrs. Vance L. Roberson), Evelyn Barnhill (Mrs. S. L. Roberson), Katie Mae Roberson (Mrs. A. P. Barnhill), Lillian Everett (Mrs. Edgar Johnson), Lelia Green (Mrs. Oscar P. Smith), Irving L. Smith, and Espy Manning.

Mr. G. W. Rhodes was principal from 1921-24. In January of his last year the new brick building

was occupied. In 1919-20 a misunderstanding arose between the teachers and the board of trustees concerning pay for the rather long period in which school was closed on account of bad roads and the influenza epidemic. The result was that the principal, Mr. Shaw, went to Parmele to teach and some of the teachers went to Oak City to teach. In that year at Oak City a young student by the name of Marvin M. Everett was inspired under the guidance of Miss Eva Peel, teacher, to go to college. He is, and has been, a teacher in Robersonville High School and the seventh grade from 1931. He became building principal of the Outterbridge Grammar School in 1932. It is interesting to note that Mr. Everett was the first driver (but not regular) of a school truck (bus) in the county at that time. Robersonville was to acquire its first two trucks (buses) in 1927. They were first mentioned in the minutes of the local board of trustees on March 7, 1927, but the drivers are not named.

While the resolution of the county board of education concerning World War I went unchallenged, World War I, nevertheless affected the schools. Affecting its economy in 1920, the county found it necessary to renew its note taken in 1919 for \$25,000 in order to maintain the six months term for teachers. In spite of these stringent measures, the county was maintaining in its budget in 1918-20 funds 1) for increasing the school term; 2) vocational work; 3) teacher training; and 4) Home Demonstration and Club work. Evidence of the first auditing of county treasurer rec-

ords through state action came in 1922. The county treasurer reported for education cost \$40,121.85 in 1922 and the books were audited "as per Act of the General Assembly." State Superintendent E. C. Brooks reported to the county superintendent that a \$5,000,000 bond issue, authorized by the General Assembly, had been adopted by the State Board of Education.

Effort was made in 1919 to have indoor toilets in one-fourth of the county schools. Twenty sets were ordered, but they never arrived due to some default of the company from which they were ordered. After the enactment of the Smith-Hughes Act in 1917, Farm Life applied for and obtained agriculture and home economics teachers in 1922. Oak City obtained a home economics teacher at the same time. Robersonville was to have its first home economics teacher in 1926, and its first agriculture teacher in 1939.

By 1923 Parmele Training School, colored, and the other colored schools of the county were having the services of a rural supervisor. Thirty dollars per month had been apportioned in the county budget. Mary S. Gray was a colored supervisor in 1931. The white schools were to have their first supervisor of elementary education in the first years following World War II. This supervisor was Miss Lissie Pierce, Princeton, North Carolina. In 1923 Parmele Training School had the eighth and ninth grades of high school. Vocational work for both boys and girls was being taught. Financial assistance was coming from the Slater Fund and had been from 1916. There was

a dormitory for girls at the school.

The name of the school had been changed from that of Parmele Institute in 1913. At that time in a special session of the county board of education, the principal of the Institute, W. C. Chance, had presented to the board the aims of the school. The board "agreed to apportion annually for the next two years the sum of \$250 for the maintenance of the school, provided he secures sufficient funds and does build and equip a suitable building for the school, provided further that said school shall be under the supervision of the county board of education." Negro schools shared in the special tax for schools at that time. Parmele Institute Trustees offered twenty-three acres of land in the town of Parmele for the sum of \$1000 with the promise that the Phelps Stokes Negro Education Building would furnish to the Board of Education the sum of \$2000 upon the erection of a school building on said lands in Parmele." The board accepted the offer and received the deed for said lands. Record was not found of the establishing of Parmele Institute in county board minutes, but Mr. George James, Parmele, says that it was around 1900.

The little town of Parmele has interesting beginnings. The rail-

road project from Tarboro to Williamston, designed as part of the means of tying more closely together eastern and western North Carolina, was incorporated Albemarle and Raleigh Railroad, February 1883. Around this time a Mr. Parmele from the North came down, having connections with a lumber company. He established Parmele - Eccleston Company, which later became a planing machine company. Before 1896, there was also established North State Lumber Company, for, according to **The Scotland Neck Democrat**, published at that time, a dynamo was put in by these companies for electric lights in and around the premises. These were the first electric lights in Martin County. However, the first school, white, at Parmele, formed from Page's when it was abolished in 1895, did not have the services of this dynamo. This first school was built "on the south side of the Albemarle and Raleigh Railroad."

In keeping with nearly all the school districts in the county in 1922 and 1923, Robersonville was to vote a special tax for a new school building. Evidence of the need for consolidation at this time is shown by the fact that in 1916 there were fifty-one white schools in the county. By 1943 there were to be only ten (eight large) in the county.

SECTION V

High School Consolidation Movement from 1923-35

A) A New Brick Building

In 1919 a resolution by the county board of education was passed adopting a plan of consolidation for the country one-teacher schools. The first two schools consolidated in the county following this action were Wards No. 32 and Smithwicks No. 5 in June 1916. The Legislature of 1931 eliminated quite a few including Smiths No. 21 to Robersonville and Cross Roads No. 16 to Everetts. The 9th grade at Gold Point No. 25 combined with Robersonville in 1927-28, the 8th in 1926-27. The 7th grade from this school was coming in in 1939-40 and by 1946 was entirely consolidated. Parmele elementary consolidated with Robersonville in 1934. High school (8th and 9th grades) were consolidated in 1907. Everetts high school (8th, 9th, 10th, and 11th grades) combined with Robersonville in 1934.

The way was paved for putting this plan into operation in the Robersonville area in June 1923. The board of trustees called for a special tax levy in Robersonville Township of thirty-three and one-third cents on all taxable real and personal property. This tax carried following much discussion pro and con and writing through the **Weekly Herald**. The June 2, 1922 issue offered a poem, "More Sales Than One" by Mrs. A. O. Roberson, and an article "Food for Thought" by Mrs. Vernon A. Ward, Sr. Each was in favor of the tax. Ten per cent of the tax was deducted for school purposes. Mr. Arch Roberson, tax collector,

was appointed to deduct the school's part. Bonds were let and a contract for a new building was also let in June 1923.

Members of the board of trustees in 1923 were: Mr. J. H. Roberson, Jr., Mr. Johnnie L. Whitfield, Dr. V. A. Ward, Mr. Eli Rodgers, Mr. H. C. Norman, Sr., and Mr. J. W. Bailey.

The old frame graded school building was sold in two sections for \$600, one section being sold to E. G. Armstead for \$200 to be used as the Robersonville Graded School (colored) district No. 23, and the other to Mr. H. C. Norman. This building had been used for Robersonville Graded School since 1902. In 1924 a loan of \$500 was secured by the trustees to complete the colored school and to pay the teacher's salary. The total cost of this school was \$3,269.24. Telephone service for the colored school was installed in 1926.

The new white building, built at a cost of \$62,406, was occupied in January 1924 with six grammar school and four high school teachers on the staff, including the principal, Mr. G. W. Rhodes. Improved facilities not enjoyed before included electric lights, running water, inside toilets, and janitor service. Telephone service was installed in 1926.

Under a new principal in 1924-25, Mr. R. I. Leake (1924-37), the school reported to the trustees that it was meeting the state's requirements for an accredited school, and that the state was providing for three-fourths of the teacher's salary or six months of the eight months term. The trustees sold a lot in 1925 for \$500. It was sold to J. E. Page and was

located on the corner of Roberson and Academy Streets.

At the beginning of the 1925-26 school term there was such a large first grade the trustees ruled that all children under six years of age be excluded. In this year the high school went on the state minimum requirement list. Science was introduced with Miss Emily Gayle, Farmville, N. C., teacher in the spring term when the enrollment warranted. Enrollment on April 16, 1926, was 398, enough to hire five high school teachers for 1926-27 year. One of these new teachers was to be Miss Alma Murray introducing Home Economics with state and federal aid. Miss Irene James (Mrs. Dixie Roberson) was the first George Reed teacher beginning in 1937. 1945 saw the beginning of F. H. A.—Future Home Makers of America.

Although the state basic salary schedule, according to certificate, was being followed in 1926-27, exception was made to Miss Eva Irene Peele who was paid \$145 per month. In this year Mr. H. C. Norman who had been secretary-treasurer of the local board from 1925, resigned to assume his duties on the Martin County Board of Education. Mr. G. H. Cox and Mr. J. R. Morris were to serve the unexpired terms of Mr. Norman and Mr. Lester House who had been elected to the board in 1925. Mr. Eli Rodgers became the newly elected secretary-treasurer and served ably in this capacity until 1933. Mr. J. H. Roberson, Jr., who had been elected chairman of the board in 1925, was re-elected chairman and served well until 1926.

In the spring of 1926 the Robersonville Graded School district

No. 22 surrendered its charter and \$2,145.75 on hand to the Martin County System of Public Schools. The local trustees requested at the same time that the money turned over be put aside as a sinking fund reserve which the county so ordered. An additional \$3,000, acquired from the sale of one and two-thirds acres of land, was placed in the sinking fund also. This money was from land given by Mr. and Mrs. J. B. Rawls.

"In this aligning process of attaching to the county board the following privileges were to be enjoyed: 1) annexing outlying territories to present school system; 2) permanent provision for transportation of school children; 3) permanent provision for a County Training School for teachers." Now Martin County Board of Education was assuming full jurisdiction and administration of Robersonville School District No. 22. The colleges were able to assume responsibility for the training of teachers, so there was not a permanent County Training School.

For the school year 1926-27 two trucks (buses) were operating in the Gold Point areas at 7c and 6c a day per pupil. These areas close by Robersonville had been included in the district voting of special tax in 1901 and in 1923. Now the average daily attendance was 397. The school was complying with the state requirement of classifying teacher certificates in this year of 1926-27. The year 1927-28 saw high school math (higher algebra and geometry) and chemistry added to the curriculum. Mr. T. R. Jenkins was employed to teach science, biology and chemistry.

In July 1927 Mr. S. T. Everett, Mr. Jasper Johnson, and Mr. T. H. House, school committee men of Keel's District 34, petitioned the admission of their district to Robersonville School District No. 22. When instructed to secure a special tax to cover the seventh and eighth months of teaching, they did so and were admitted in 1928-29. Mr. R. S. Crisp, Faulkland, North Carolina, high school teacher was the first athletic coach with salary supplement. The constitution of Robersonville Athletic Association, adopted in this year, stipulated "no training or games shall have precedence over classroom instruction or home study."

In the year 1930 another innovation in the curriculum was public school music. Miss Stella Etheridge, Selma, No. Carolina, was the first teacher. Music in private piano lessons had been taught in the schools almost consecutively since its beginnings in 1885. By state requirement the public school music teachers would be teaching in all the grades. Miss Etheridge was given permission to teach private piano lessons also.

A nucleus of interest in what was to develop into a first quality band and band program in 1958-59 began in the years between 1927 and 1931. Mrs. C. L. Wilson contributed a music lover's interest and enthusiasm, herself being a mother and a piano teacher. Young adult musicians, just home from college, gave inspiration through their dance band. Mr. Fred Rogers, barber, taught the first private lessons in trumpet and saxophone. Mr. Charles McCullers, band leader from Williamston, North Carolina, followed Mr. Rogers and gave group

lessons. Mr. and Mrs. William Gray, Mr. and Mrs. C. L. Wilson, and Mr. and Mrs. Nun C. Everett lent interest by providing lessons for their children. When Mr. McCullers went to Edenton, Mr. Nun C. Everett manifested the real interest and backing necessary to bring the first band leader. Mr. J. E. Aiken (1936-42) was endorsed to organize a band and promised cooperation in his work."

During the years from 1938-42 his 36 piece band entered the North Carolina State High School Contest Festival in Greensboro and Greenville. In Class I for one year it rated a I in field drilling. Another year in Class C it received a rating of excellent in performance. Three instrumentalists won certificates of award, honoring I and II in 1938-42. These were Ned Everett, saxophone, James Robert Daniel, trombone, and Gene Taylor, baritone. When Mr. Aiken entered World War II in 1942, Mrs. Aiken carried on valiantly and ably through 1944 when she joined her husband and the band disbanded. Mrs. Aiken was adept on the trumpet and as a tap dance instructor.

The key to the success of the band was in the material cooperation given by the patrons and parents. The patrons aided through the Robersonville Chamber of Commerce. It needed the band's participation in town festivals and parades in the surrounding area in support of the local tobacco market. The band participated at a bridge opening, a tulip festival and responded to many other out-of-town invitations. Mr. Ben Dixon McNeil, North Carolina Journalist, paid the band tribute.

He said, "I do not claim to be a music critic, but I do know the Robersonville Band does make a mighty pretty noise." The band members wore blue and white uniforms, blue and white being the school's colors.

The Betterment Association, forerunner of the Parent-Teacher Association, had had its beginnings in 1917. It had begun by 1925 to press its organized weight behind many influences for better schools including the cause of a band. Miss Eva Irene Peele was the first president of the Betterment Association and Miss Millie Roebuck, the first secretary-treasurer. The first record of action of the association in the minutes of the local school committee was in December 1924 when it was refunded \$49.89 for playground equipment. At the same time \$150 was appropriated to this group. On January 6, 1925 funds in the amount of \$225 were set aside for curtains for the auditorium. Around 1926 the ladies of the Parents-Teachers set \$60 worth of shrubbery around the front of the grammar school which was paid for by the Woman's Club. A Woman's Club member was typical of women in the years to come when she assisted in the setting of the shrubbery on a cold winter's day. Mrs. H. T. Highsmith, a past president of the P.-T. A., was Director of District 9 of the North Carolina Congress of Parents and Teachers from 1955-58.

B) A High School Building

A thirty-three foot street was opened up on newly acquired land for a new high school between Rail Road Street and highway No. 64 in April 1928. Then a building committee composed of

G. H. Cox, V. A. Ward, and Eli Rodgers from the local school committee began to work with the Martin County Board of Education to build a new school. This building was occupied in September 1929. The first commencement exercises in the new high school auditorium were held in April, 1930.

The year 1929 was momentous for the grammar school. The school committee asked that the required equipment for making the elementary school standard be supplied. This standard also called for A-certificates for all teachers. Both standards were met.

The local committee ruled in 1929 "any teacher marrying during the school term is requested to resign for the following year and at the same time give thirty days notice." The depression was dictating one paycheck to a family. In 1930-31 the state committed itself to only six months support and the local district assumed the entire cost of the seventh and eighth months. The lost paycheck during the year 1931 was made good through county funds in May 1932. The salary for the public school music teacher in 1930-31 was set at only \$30 per month and \$3 tuition per month for each piano pupil. It was further restricted in 1931-32, there being no guaranteed provision for music in either grammar or high school.

The School Lunchroom Program had its humble beginnings in 1930 or 31 in the old home economics room of the grammar school building. This was begun by Mrs. H. A. (Betty) Gray and an assistant for the express pur-

pose of supplementing the diet of needy children. They were sponsored by the Woman's Club in 1933 when the school was in need of a sponsor in order to have labor paid by the Works Progress Administration. Soup at 10c had been served but now more varied and balanced meals were undertaken. In its beginnings the idea of hot lunches must have appealed to the patrons. Without a market for their produce many were glad to exchange chickens, eggs, ham, milk, etc., for meals for their children.

Under the guidance of the Woman's Club with Mrs. Vernon Ward, Mrs. Haywood Wilson, and Mrs. Betty Gray at the helm, summer garden and canning projects went forward for the lunchroom. In 1939-40 more than 110 lunches were furnished daily, about 95 of which were free. Mrs. Betty Gray worked regularly in the lunchroom for five years, lending much to its management and never accepting pay for her services. Mr. Marvin Everett, Building Principal of the Outterbridge Grammar School, assumed the business management of the lunchroom in 1938-48. A ruling was passed in 1944 requesting pupils of the grammar school to bring lunch and eat in the lunchroom. An important by-product of the lunchroom was the group feeling that was created by all eating together.

A high school lunchroom was maintained for two years, 1944-46, under the management of Mr. A. L. Hendron, principal. When vocational agriculture was resumed in the teaching program following the War in 1947-48, the agri-

culture building being used at the time as a lunchroom, had to be vacated. The high school students now bought tickets in advance and ate in the grammar school lunchroom. Some surplus foods were available from the federal government through these years and continue to the present. A new graded school lunchroom, built in 1948, continued to be used for both schools until the high school gained its own new lunchroom in 1954.

To return to 1930-31, the tax rate was lowered from 25c to 23c. The total taxes for white and colored schools as of September, 1950, was \$8,196.72. The cost to operate for that year was \$7,872.67, leaving a balance of only \$324.05.

The second vocational subject—commerce including typing and bookkeeping—was begun in 1931 with Mrs. J. M. Dean, Selma, N. C., teacher. This department was run on a tuition basis.

In 1931 Mr. H. C. Norman was elected to the local committee and succeeded Mr. G. H. Cox as chairman, Mr. Cox moving to Washington, North Carolina.

The first recorded report of a health program for the school is that of a clinic for the removal of tonsils in April, 1933, at the school. This health program was continuing in 1941 in pre-school clinics, school health check-ups and dental clinics.

Following an absence of the minutes of the local committee from June 30, 1933, to May 24, 1935, the board was recognized on the latter date with the following members present: William Gray, made chairman, I. M. Little,

made secretary, J. M. Dixon, N. C. Everett, and G. W. Taylor. There had been a reorganizing of districts in the county in 1933. Robersonville Schools District became No. 2 in this year 1933.

By this date the major consolidation moves had been made. Only one more elementary school, Gold Point, was to come in in 1946-47. In a reorganization of the school district by the county board at this time nine schools

were included under a supervising principal, (R. I. Leake). The schools at that time are as follows: Robersonville elementary, 9 teachers, high school, 8; Everetts elementary, 7; Gold Point elementary, 2; Robersonville elementary colored, 6; Parmele elementary colored, 6, high school, 3; Gold Point elementary colored, 4; Everetts elementary colored, 4; and Smith's elementary colored, 1.

SECTION VI

Robersonville Schools

On the March

A) 1935-46 World War II Interrupts March

With major consolidating already done, Robersonville Schools began to march forward. Much progress was made by 1945 in spite of World War II. They were to get on the march in earnest by 1951 when a number of major moves were in process of completion as the result of the special 20c local tax voted in 1946-47.

Mr. R. I. Leake's resignation, submitted in May, 1937, was accepted with regret and thanks was expressed for his long and faithful services and it was so recorded in the minutes. Mr. L. W. Anderson, Principal of Williamston Schools, who had been serving a two year interim for the principal on leave, was elected principal in May, 1937. He was to serve through 1943-44.

Evidence of the high school gymnasium-auditorium not serving school and community needs is shown by the following decision recorded in the minutes of the local committee for May, 1937. "No town athletic team will be permitted to play basketball in the high school gymnasium."

With the construction in 1939 of a vocational agriculture building with state and federal aid at a cost of \$6,000, the third vocational course could now be added to the curriculum. The first teacher was Mr. Conner Winchester. Mr. Frank Meacham, now of the State Museum of Natural History, taught agriculture during the years of World War II, 1943-45.

He was loaned by North Carolina State College.

On October 12, 1938, a resolution was presented to the Martin County Board of Education to obtain permission to contract for the construction of a community building to be in front and across from Outterbridge Grammar School. The labor was proposed from the W. P. A. This community building, our teacherage, was constructed in 1942 at a cost of \$14,000. Before that time teachers had boarded and roomed in private homes, the Wilson Hotel, and in the Paul D. Roberson apartment house (old Edward Roberson home.)

Minutes are again missing from January, 1939, to January, 1944. This period covers part of Mr. L. W. Anderson's seven year interim as principal and the first four months of Mr. A. L. Hendron's three year term, 1944-47.

The following data is available from a handbook, 'Cultural Life of Robersonville and Vicinity', compiled by Mrs. Vernon A. Ward, Sr., and edited in this portion by Mr. L. W. Anderson: In 1939-40, 340 pupils were enrolled in the elementary school, 310, high school; around 800 books in the elementary library, and four sets of encyclopedias, 2000 high school; radio victrola and motion picture machine; 35-piece high school band; a number of high school students in Robersonville Symphonic Chorus, directed by Lewis Sidney Bullock, a graduate of Westminster Choir School and a resident of Greenville, North Carolina. There were among extra-curricula activities in the high school, 17 different clubs—Senior Dramatics, Junior Dramatics,

Boys Athletics, Girls Athletics, Debating, 4-H, Home Economics, F. F. A., Beta, Junior Red Cross, Rocking Chair Athletic, Newspaper, French, Band, Interesting Books, Monogram and Hostess Clubs.

A Graduate Thesis 1941—A Study of the Robersonville Post School Youth for the Period 1937-38 to 1940-41 and In-School Youth During the 1940-41 Term, by Lacy Waverly Anderson submitted to the Faculty of the University of North Carolina in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Arts in the Department of Education, Chapel Hill, in 1941 is revealing of this period. It deals in a Youth Survey made at a time when there was a shift in emphasis in education for living. Mr. Anderson states that while the study "is limited in scope (195 students), it did furnish considerable information, some of which was used by the faculty in revising the curriculum offerings the following year (1941-42) in the high school." It marked the beginning of a guidance program. "The program of studies meets the needs of only a small percentage of its students who plan to enter college, and contents of courses of study include quantities of academic materials with little place being given to the practical and little attention heretofore given to interests of its pupils."¹ There was an impetus of interest in expanding the courses of study beginning with the economic depression of the early thirties.

"In an effort to reach all the

students the following withdrawals are noted: 1937-38, 26; 1938-39, 17; 1939-40, 18 and 1940-41, 22 making a total for these years of 93 withdrawals and 118 graduates. Graduates over a period of four years entering college were 4 in 1937-38; 10 in 1938-39; 7 in 1939-40 and 5 have made application so far for 1940-41. Sixty-seven percent of the courses are of an academic nature; only 33 percent are vocational. More training is needed for democratic living. There is insufficient intelligent vocational guidance activity. There is very little tie-up between school and community." The foregoing are five of twelve points which Mr. Anderson had for consideration through questionnaires submitted to students.

The tie-in of the community with the school is noted by Mr. Anderson in his thesis: "The civic-religious organizations and their sponsorships are indicative of the public spirit among a small but aggressive group of Robersonville's citizens. The Rotary Club subsidizes the Boy Scouts, contributes to school organizations, and has a student loan fund. The Senior Woman's Club sponsors, with the aid of the W. P. A., gardens, canning projects, and the school lunchroom. During the session of 1940-41, the lunchroom served needy school children 15,000 free lunches. The Junior Woman's Club (and the Senior Woman's Club, say the living members) sponsors the town library and is making preparation to cooperate with the State in order to participate in the library fund set up by

¹In 1890 in the nation nine courses of study were required for entrance to the professional colleges.

the State General Assembly. Through this program Robersonville and its surrounding community will be served weekly by a bookmobile and a trained librarian. There is an active Chamber of Commerce and many of the farmers are members of the Farm Bureau. The two secret fraternal organizations are the Masons and the Junior Order. The cultural interests of the town are served by two book clubs, a music club, and an International Relations Club. The community is unusually sensitive to its spiritual needs and possesses three active churches: the Methodist, Baptist, and Christian."

The spiritual sensitivity of Robersonville is still true. On Sunday, March 15, 1959, 768 members of the Sunday Schools of four of its five white churches - the Christian, First Baptist, Pentacostal Holiness, and Methodist—attended a mass Sunday School in the high school auditorium. This service climaxed a ten day Stewardship-Evangelism Crusade led by the Leet Evangelistic Team of Houston and Dallas, Texas, Rev. L. O. Leet and Mrs. Idalee D. McCullar (ordained minister).

In the Robersonville School District, Mr. Anderson continues to say, "There are four white schools; an eight-teacher grammar school at Everetts, five miles east; a two-teacher grammar school at Gold Point, three miles north; and a nine-teacher grammar school in Robersonville. This (the high) school has a faculty of eleven teachers. The high school is a brick building with sixteen rooms including an auditorium and gymnasium, a suite of rooms set aside for home economics, a

music room, principal's office, a library, and classrooms. The plant also includes an agriculture building of two master rooms in a separate but nearby unit. There are ample and safe water facilities.

"The School Curriculum until 1938 was the traditional limited to the present college preparatory courses and few elective courses. In order to graduate every student had to hurdle two years of foreign language, four years of English, two years of algebra, and one of geometry as borne out by records in the principal's office. Withdrawals were numerous. A study of the local interests and needs of Robersonville High School students convinced the faculty that certain changes needed to be made and committees were selected to make recommendations for 1) a more selective curricula and 2) a guiding philosophy of education. As a result, the curriculum was revamped to permit students more freedom in the choice of their subjects. On entering high school students were permitted to follow a general curriculum requiring no foreign language, algebra, geometry and allow the substitution of dramatic art or speech for junior or senior English; or they could follow the old traditional curriculum if they planned to enter college. Students were allowed to change from one curriculum to another if the need arose. Certain shifts of subjects were also made to other grade levels with electives also being placed in the ninth grade preceded by a general course in mathematics in the eighth grade. Courses in band music, Democracy (civics), and agriculture, along

with the dramatic arts and speech courses just mentioned were added to the curriculum to give the students a total of thirty three subjects from which to select.

"The twelfth grade also grew out of this study. There seemed to be a desire on the part of the students and parents for an additional year of work. Since the school employed three vocational teachers above the state allotment, the classes were not necessarily crowded. A twelfth grade was therefore added without aid from any outside source. Each year since (1939), the graduates of the eleventh grade have been invited to return to the twelfth grade. So far over 50 percent of the graduates have returned each year. They are given a supplementary diploma upon the completion of four units."

Robersonville High School had six graduates who gave their lives in the service of their country in World War II. They are as follows: Murray R. Cargile, died at Pearl Harbor, December 7, 1941; Nathan Thomas Edmondson, killed in a bombing mission over Tokyo Bay, July 17, 1945; James Robert Daniel, killed in airplane crash near Goodland, Kansas, July 18, 1946; Louis T. Holliday, died at Hoten Camp, Manchuria, December 7, 1942, as a prisoner of war; Reginald F. Rawls, killed in battle of Okinawa, May 17, 1945; Edward E. Bowers, Bethel, North Carolina, In Burma, September 23, 1944, and Roland E. Moore. A bronze plaque in the hall way of Robersonville High School reads: 'In Memoriam Roland E. Moore Personal aide to Col. James Roosevelt, Marine Raider Battal-

ion. He gave his life in the Pacific serving his country March 20, 1943."

The war years affected school attendance, the need for buses being one of the problems. A new bus was obtained in February, 1945, which immediately showed a pickup in attendance in March of 94 percent. A coal shortage had called for discontinuing the school's program of after school activities, including athletics. Mr. and Mrs. Cleveland Wilkie, high school teachers at the time, were giving of their time to the youth in the athletic program conducted during and after school hours. Mr. and Mrs. Wilkie were commended by the school committee in 1945 for their wholesome influence on the young people during these stringent years. They were presented a gift by the school board, this being the only recorded instance of a gift made to a faculty member. The local tax had been discontinued in 1933. Rev. Wilkie was pastor of the First Baptist Church from 1943-45.

Mr. Hendren made three major changes in the school in 1944-45: 1) Reorganization of the school system—Eight-Four Plan (8th grade in the first year of junior high school and 12th grade in the final year of high school) as recommended by the state was approved; 2) Institution of three curricula—college, general, and commercial; 3) Institution of a central financial accounting system.

B) 1946-59 On the March

Following the war in 1946-47, a special tax of 20c was voted in the local district to raise the standard of our school and to supple-

ment the minimum school program. Gold Point No. 25 was included in this and consolidated with Robersonville in 1946-47. The two teachers of that school at that time, Mrs. A. Pitt Roberson and Mrs. Alida (John) Tyler joined the faculty of the graded school at Robersonville. Mr. C. B. Martin was elected supervising principal in April, 1947. He remained through 1957.

The school committee worked very closely with the county and state program, asking Mr. J. C. Manning to meet with them in 1947. The following improvements were made: 1) \$10 per month supplement went to each state allotted teacher; 2) Public school music paid out of local tax at state salary her certificate demanded (Lightened the elementary teacher load); 3) \$120 allotted to Negro school; 4) Athletic coach hired with local funds, his supplement not to exceed \$30 per month, \$15 to a coach of basketball; 5) Librarian's salary paid half by district and half by county. Each principal of the several schools in the district submitted the list of teachers for his school for approval by the district committee.

In April, 1947, Dr. J. M. Kilpatrick was named to succeed Mr. W. H. Gray, chairman, who was resigning due to illness. Mr. N. C. Everett was elected chairman. Mr. I. M. Little was re-elected secretary. Mr. S. L. Roberson, who had been elected to the committee in 1947, was elected secretary in September, 1947, in the stead of Mr. Little. Resolutions of respect to Mr. Gray were written and attached to the minutes.

The trained librarian mentioned by Mr. Anderson in a county-state library service for the town of Robersonville became a reality in 1947 as the Martin-Beaufort-Hyde (BHM) Service. It began to serve the elementary school and does so to the present. BHM also serves the colored elementary schools of the county. The first trained librarian with a college degree in library science was Miss Jessie Richardson, Greenville, North Carolina, who came in 1937-57, serving faithfully and efficiently to the early fall of 1957. She was taken seriously ill at that time and died on September 18, 1958, at the home of her niece in Kinston, North Carolina.

When application was made for an All Purpose Department Home Making Unit for the high school in 1952, it was stated in the record of the committee minutes, "The new unit is to make more library room in the main building by vacating the present home economics department. The library meets standards as far as quality and methods as any of comparable size in enrollment." The present principal, Mr. V. J. Colombo, of Brockton, Mass., states, "An indication of the value of the library to the students was shown by the Iowa Tests of Educational Development in 1958-59. Tenth and twelfth grade students ranked in the 62 percentile in 'Use of Sources of Information.' This was based on national norms." Robersonville High School is proud to claim among its numerous outstanding graduates, Mrs. Elizabeth House Hughey, State Librarian.

A number of books in the li-

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EAST CAROLINA TEACHERS COLLEGE

brary have been given in the memory of school patrons. The McDowell Music Club in addition to giving a number of volumes on music remembered, with a book, the late Mrs. W. G. (Betty) Barnhill in 1949. The Book Lovers Club remembered in the same manner the late Mr. Nun C. Everett in 1958. Numerous individuals have given books to the library including the late Mrs. Vernon A. Ward. Mrs. Ward's son, Vernon, has a volume of his poetry, "Of Dust and Stars", 1958, first edition, in the town library presented by the Book Lovers Club. The high school library has secured its own copy. When Miss Joyce Long, high school senior in the class of 1958-1959, died in March, two books were given in her memory; one by Mrs. Wiley Rogerson's children, Betty Anne, Wiley, and Madge and one by Brayom Anderson and Fate Everett.

At the September, 1947, meeting of the local committee Mr. Martin gave a detailed report of his first quarter as principal. Enrollment, 616, was short from last year. At that time there were 11 high school teachers and 14 elementary. He announced a program of building a better school with the cooperation of the P.-T. A. and other school auxiliaries with a four point program offered as follows: 1) Better school spirit; 2) Physical education; 3) Better equipment; 4) Parents Day. At that time he submitted a financial report of the lunchroom. Mr. Marvin Everett, Building Principal of the Outerbridge Grammar School, turned over his business management of

the grammar school lunchroom in 1948.

It was not very difficult for the patrons of the school district to keep in mind the announced goals of Mr. Martin. They were following along and entering into expanding fields of community and educational betterment which the war had been holding back. His first goal—build a better school spirit—took root in an annual Halloween Carnival which had been operating under the P.-T. A. and began to expand in 1947-48. Men in large numbers joined the P.-T. A. The Halloween Festival has continued to 1958-59 and moved at an increasing gallop netting from \$1800 to \$2200 each year in increasing benefits to the school.

On December 17, 1947, plans for a new building—a gymnasium and lunchroom with added classrooms—were presented to the Martin County Board of Education. In January, 1948, \$700,000 was allocated to the colored schools of Robersonville District No. 2 for 1949-50. Mr. V. L. Roberson, chairman of Robersonville Town Commissioners, appeared as a visitor before the local school committee and explained the need for a community-school recreation and athletic field. He explained the need was so great it was retarding progress of school activities. He was supported by Mr. H. C. Norman, member of the county board of education. This resulted in the purchase of the present athletic field (part of the Stevenson land) at \$9500 in 1949. Total improvements from 1933-49 had been represented in \$78,650. This figure began with the agriculture building.

Mr. Cecil Powell (Gold Point) was elected to the Martin County Board of Education in April, 1949. At that time Mr. N. C. Everett, chairman, Mr. J. M. Dixon, and Mr. H. L. Roebuck, retiring from the school committee, were written letters of appreciation. Following Mr. Powell's death, June 12, 1953, the local committee expressed sorrow and regret at his passing and included resolutions in its minutes. Mr. S. L. Roberson resigned from the committee to become a member of the county board in the stead of Mr. Powell. Now Mr. Eugene Roberson became chairman and remains chairman. Mr. E. B. Whichard was elected secretary. The three other members serving at the present time are Mr. Oscar Ayers (Cross Roads), Mr. Irvin Davenport (Parmele), and Dr. J. M. Kilpatrick. Mr. Charlie Forbes (Gold Point), who had been serving on the board in 1955, was elected in 1956 to the county board.

In June, 1951, the motto of the school committee was declared to be "A better education system for the children of the schools in the district rather than the selfish interest of groups of individuals." By this date all procedures for school business were strictly by North Carolina State Board of Education laws. It was announced in July that Mrs. Vara Hairr Davenport, a teacher in special education—Hearing and Speech—will work part time in the system. She will be paid entirely by the state and supplies will be furnished by the county.

From the minutes of the local committee, April 24, 1951, is a

report of "Robersonville Schools on the March" covering the years from 1947-51 and respectively submitted by Mr. C. B. Martin. It follows

"Robersonville Schools on the March"

During the past four years the local schools through the cooperation and interest of the Parents, P.-T. A. and administration have attained a set of goals for the schools which it had anticipated would take several more years. A long range planning program which was worked out by the local school committee, the P.-T. A., Principal C. B. Martin, and Supt. J. C. Manning included an elementary cafeteria, athletic field, renovation of elementary building, public school music, physical education building, science lab, and curriculum revisions and a band. Since these plans were made in September of 1947 the local schools have made the following improvements. A new elementary cafeteria has been added to the Outerbridge Grammar School. This cafeteria has been fully equipped with all modern conveniences and modern furniture. This equipment was paid for by the local P.-T. A., including gas stove, steam table, hot water heater, booster heater, sinks, knives, forks, plates, all cooking utensils, twenty tables, one hundred sixty chairs, and various miscellaneous items. The lunchroom feeds about four hundred students and teachers each day. Five women including a supervisor operate the cafeteria and meals including milk are furnished the students for twenty cents.

At the cost of about \$10,000 five

acres of land was purchased for an athletic field. This land was put in shape for football, baseball, and outdoor basketball, and a fence was put around the land and a grand stand erected, also a field house providing hot and cold water was built. These improvements were made possible through the interest and cooperation of civic minded citizens. The field today is a credit to this school system and to the community.

During the summer of 1949 the Outterbridge school underwent a complete renovation. A new foundation was put under the building, a new top was added, a new system of lights were installed, and the building was painted on the inside. The county spent about \$25,000 on the job. During the meantime new furniture was added to the library, new desks were added in the grammar grades, and all the equipment necessary for teaching was added.

One of the first plans to be put in effect was the addition of Public School Music. Mrs. Norman Wilkerson was hired to conduct the music program in the school which included theory, harmony, writing, singing, glee club, toy orchestra, duets, trios, and assembly singing. The program has provided an opportunity for all students to participate in singing, and to share in the music contest of the state. This addition has been most helpful and enjoyable to the students. Concerts have been given at the school, in churches, and in most of the other county schools.

In the first stages of planning the necessity for a physical edu-

cation building which would include a cafeteria and band room was discussed and made a major item in the program. Today the contracts have been awarded and most of the material has been placed on the ground ready for work. However, steel seems to be the question holding up the project and according to our latest information the steel will soon be on its way and the building will get under construction. The building will provide for a cafeteria, band room, boiler room, dressing rooms, a gym, and one class room.

The addition of band will depend upon the completion of the present program, as there is no place available at present to conduct band classes. The auditorium is used to teach public school music, glee club, chapel, plays, and basketball, 4-H meetings. During the current school year a modern science lab has been installed by the county at a cost of about \$4000. The science department is now equipped to teach all the sciences and meets all the standards required by the State Department of Education. New science tables equipped with gas, electric current, and water were installed.

Added to our curriculum were journalism, extra courses in math, glee club, and guidance. The next course to be added will be band. We now have the three major vocational curriculum: Agriculture, Home Economics, and Commerce.

After having added the necessary instrumental supplies through local and county funds, it was necessary that our school added to its visual aid equipment

and hence the following equipment has been purchased: A 16 mm. projector, 3 film strip and slid projectors, 1 recorder, 1 phonograph, 2 pianos and 357 film strips, several new typewriters, and one new adding machine.

In the instructional program the school ranks as one of the 23 highest in the state. This rating means that the program of instruction in the school meets the standards of the best program being offered in the state. At the present time the Robersonville Grammas school is the only accredited Grammar school in the county.

Respectfully,
C. B. Martin"

Mr. Martin submitted a further report covering the period April, 1951-April, 1953, which is thus recorded in the minutes of the local school committee:

"Report to Robersonville School Board April 23, 1953

During the current year we have enrolled 490 students in the Elementary school and 242 in the High School. We have had 15 teachers in the Elementary school and 11 in the High School. Fourteen of the Elementary teachers were allotted by the state, 8 of the High school teachers were allotted by the state, one of which is teaching in the Everetts school, 2 are vocational teachers and one is a Band teacher.

During the current term the athletic facilities have been improved by adding lights to the athletic field. The physical education building was dedicated (including band room and cafeteria) and put to use on a full time basis. In December the services of Mr.

E. C. Black were acquired as a Band Director and the Band was organized with 45 members. Many library books, instructional supplies, a new victor projector, a new phonograph, and ten new typewriters have been added. We now have a full time librarian, a full time physical education course, and a full time music instructor. We offer vocational courses in Agriculture, Home Economics, and Business Education besides courses in Band and Music both vocal and piano.

As we look back upon such improvements as the addition of two lunchrooms, an athletic field, a gym, a band, a music teacher, an A-1 rating we feel that some measure of progress has been accomplished; as we look back and see that a good number of students are in college doing well, and a greater number are in jobs doing well we feel again that progress is being made, and as we look to the future we see many needs facing us. Among these are:

Gym seats, 40 new desks for high school, window shades, chairs and risers for the Band room, heat for the agriculture building, a Home Ec. unit, painting grammar school lunchroom, a urinal for grammar school boys, renovation for high school auditorium."

Following the loss by fire of the Parmele colored high school in the fall of 1953, the Robersonville School District Committee No. 2 and the county board decided to build a new high school at Robersonville on a site containing 15 usable acres. \$210,000 had been appropriated for the colored school in the local district for

1950-51. In 1954 the Gold Point colored school was consolidated with Everetts colored school and provision was made to build a new school. East End at Robersonville and North Everetts at Everetts have been completed and are in operation. N. W. Slade is principal of East End High School and E. L. Owens, North Everetts Elementary. Parmele elementary colored added toilet facilities, a heating plant and assembly room in 1954. At the same time Robersonville elementary colored added a heating plant, library room, and drained the school grounds.

In 1954 storage facilities for the lunch room at Everetts white elementary school were added, and shades and bulletin boards were provided for the rooms. The hazardous and dangerous situation still existing at each end of Outerbridge Grammar School called attention to in 1954 has been corrected. Need for two additional classrooms in this school was cited in 1954. Need for more playground space was expressed. The Johnson heirs property adjoining the school has been purchased for \$6,000 in 1959 and the old home is in the process of being cleared to make way for the playground space. In 1954 need for a home for the principal was voiced. Land available next to the teacherage has been set aside for this purpose. The request in 1954 for heat to be piped to the agriculture building from the gymnasium has been met. An intercommunication system for the high school was installed in January, 1954. The All-Purpose Home Making Unit, requested in 1952 and meeting the recommendations of the

Director of Vocational Education, has been built as has a foyer for the gymnasium at the same time at \$205,000.

The band which Mr. Martin mentioned in 1953, was organized in December, 1952 with Mr. E. C. Black director. Band parents and patrons have worked long and persistently in the years since in upholding the director, and in buying uniforms, instruments, and other equipment. The Robersonville Chamber of Commerce has aided yearly by subscriptions. The Band Boosters Club of band parents and patrons has raised through various projects an average of \$2000 annually. One hundred dollars has been given annually by the P.-T. A.

The present senior band has 71 members; the junior, 52. Mr. Joseph Secrest, present band director, has as the band's aim higher quality rather than increased size. In the North Carolina State High School Music Contest-Festivals for 1959, Greenville, the senior band was awarded honor rating superior in grade IV music. This band has never made a rating lower than excellent. This year the junior band also entered the Contest-Festival and received the honor rating of excellent in grade II music.

The history of music in Robersonville Schools would not be complete without mention of the six annual concerts of the North Carolina Little Symphony from 1947-53. These were sponsored by the McDowell Music Club of Robersonville with a co-sponsor, the P.-T. A., for several of these years. The public school music teacher capitalized on the annual event by

the special preparation of her pupils, beginning with the fourth grade. Everetts grammar school children shared in this experience. All school children were admitted free. The Band Boosters Club in 1959 sponsored the appearance of the Duke University Concert Band on March 24. The sixth, seventh, and eighth grades share in an annual county singing festival. This phase of public school music began around 1952.

Driver education which was begun in 1940 with Chief of Police, William Gray, sponsor, and taught by Patrolman Jackson (now Deputy U. S. Marshall, Wilmington, North Carolina), was taught that year only. It is to be continued this summer under a new state law. Mr. Joe Secrest is to be the teacher.

Since September, 1957, formal

steps toward meeting requirements for membership in the Southern Association of Colleges and Secondary Schools has been in progress. "The Evaluative Criteria" is being used as a basis for the evaluation. The faculty has been placed on committees to complete reports in the study.

On April 8 and 9 a visitation committee of educators representing the Southern Association of Colleges and Secondary Schools will evaluate the school program. The results of this evaluation will determine the further progress of Robersonville Schools.

Patrons of Robersonville District No. 2 believe they are not being unjustly proud when they claim "No community is so poor it can afford to neglect its children."

ROSTER OF TEACHERS

A Roster of Teachers of the Robersonville Schools, 1902-1959. Thanks is expressed to the many interested patrons who aided in this roster available in no other way. It follows:

D. Indicates deceased if known. C. H. McLaurin, **principal** 1902-04. Neva Hassell (Mrs. Stephen Ross) 1902-04. D.

Leyta Carter, 1903-04

Janie Mason, piano, 1902-04.

George W. Mewbern, **principal** 1904-05. From Greene County. D.

Mrs. Geo. W. (James Beatrice) Mewbern, 1904-05.

Esther Mewborn, piano 1904-05. The three taught at Hamilton Preparatory Institute until Mr. Mewborn's death in 1908.

John Dawson Everett, **principal** 1905-09. Math. 8th and 9th grades. D.

Mrs. J. D. Everett (Miss Lelia Thornton) 1905-09, Eng., elocution and art.

Mrs. Lorne Briley (Miss Maggie Manning), 1st 1905-15, 1920. D.

Alice Grimes (Mrs. A. R. Dunning, Williamston, N. C.) 1906-08, primary. Salary \$30.00.

Maggie Peele (Mrs. H. C. Norman) 1905-06, D. June 24, 1952. Attended Atlantic Christian College.

Lydia Roberson (Mrs. Heber Mumford, Ayden, N. C.) 1905-09, 5th and 6th.

Dora Mae Krider, Salisbury, N. C. (Mrs. R. H. Hargrove) 1907-10, 8th including the first Latin. Was graduated from Claremont (Lenoir-Rhine).

Robena Malone, Mebane, N. C. (Mrs. W. R. Jenkins) 1907-10, 2nd and 3rd.

Margaret Chandler, Mebane, N. C. (Mrs. J. C. Smith) 1908-11, 4th and 5th. Graduated from Bingham Academy, Mebane, N. C. The senior year there was the equivalent of the first year at the U. N. C., Chapel Hill.

Clara Salisbury (Mrs. W. Z. Morton, Greenville, N. C.) 1905-09, piano.

Mr. W. C. Allen, **principal** 1909-10.

Mr. J. D. Eason, **principal** 1910-11. high school.

Susie Chandler, Mebane, N. C. (Mrs. C. E. Correll, Chapel Hill, N. C.) 1910-11, 5th and 6th.

Anna Phelps, Lake Phelps, N. C., 7th, 1910-11. Her former pupils say she was an excellent teacher.

Lula Sauls, Norfolk, Va., 1910-11, piano. She became Mrs. J. D. Eason in 1911.

Margaret Hoard (Mrs. Orenda) 1911-12, piano.

W. H. Mizzelle, principal 1911-17. From Jamesville, N. C. There was already an eight months term; the 10th grade was added in 1912; and the 11th was added in 1912; and the 11th was added in 1917.

Mary Moye (Mrs. Sidney Eagles), 1912-13, English.

Miss Wilson, 1911, High School.

Bertha Krider, Salisbury, N. C., (Mrs. J. H. Roberson, Sr.) 1912-21, 1926-29. 5th and 6th. Attended Mont Amena Seminary, Mt. Pleasant, N. C. and Duke Un.

Addie Coburn (Mrs. H. L. Meador, Williamston, N. C.), 1913-15.

Marie Robertson (Mrs. Jasper Johnson), 1912-13 grammar.

Miss Susie Dailey, 1912-13 elementary.

Kate Moore, Old Sparta, N. C., 19-14-15, grammar.

Leona Moore, Old Sparta, N. C., 19-15-1942. Attended Hopewell Female Seminary, and East Carolina Teachers College.

Emma Robertson (Mrs. Dowell Burroughs, Norfolk, Va.) 1912.

Sally Alleen, 1914-17, 7th.

Vivian Roberson (Mrs. C. Abram Roberson), 1912-15, piano.

Miss McNeill, Ellerbe, N. C., 1915-16, art, private.

Elsie Gardner, Wilson, N. C., 1915-17, piano.

Gladys Jerome (Mrs. Herring, Thomasville, N. C.) 1915-16, 1st.

Faye Everett (Mrs. Will Salsbury, Ayden, N. C.) 1916-18, 1st.

Sally Whitley (Mrs. W. H. Mizzelle's sister) 1914-15,

Grace Pierce, grammar.

Stella Ward (Mrs. Quinton Roebuck, Farmville, N. C.) 1915-19, piano and voice. D.

Nolie Robertson (Mrs. Roy Hopkins, Plymouth, N. C.) 1915-19, piano.

Millie Roebuck, 1916-20, 1921-56, 3rd and then 4th and 6th grades. A. B. Degree in 1925 from East Carolina Teachers College, M. A., 1942, Peabody College, Nashville, Tenn.

Irene Hardison, Faison, N. C., 1916, art only. D.

Maude Hodges, Washington, N. C., 1916-18, 4th.

Frances Sessoms (Mrs. Ben Lon Reeves, Littleton, N. C., 1917-18, 6th.

Eva Irene Peele, Williamston, N. C., 1917-20, 1921-24, 1925-37, English, Latin, Labrary.

F. Q. Barbee, Benson, N. C., **principal** 1917-19. D. in Durham, N. C.

Bertha Riley, Wilson, N. C., 1919, piano.

Fanunie Bell Roberson (Mrs. C. L. Wilson) 1919-20, 1923-24, piano.

Trustees 1917-18: J. C. Smith, A. L. Roberson, R. L. Everett.

P. E. Shaw, **principal** 1919-21, math including geometry. Teaching by subjects for unit credit toward graduation began 1919-20. The first graduation class under the unit system was in 1920-21. Eight graduates named in main body of history. Mrs. P. E. Shaw, 1919-21, 1st grade.

Lucy Cahoon (Mrs. Bell, Greenville, N. C., 1919, 1st.

Frances Smith (Mrs. Durward Everett), 1920-21, 1st.

Geneva James (Mrs. Lynch Weaver), 1920,

Swanie Davis, Wade, N. C. (Mrs. Frank Crofton, N. C.) 1919, 4th.

Helena Frances Crofton, (Mrs. John Hadley), 1920, 4th. D.

Irene Horne, Yamassee, S. C., 1919, piano.

Rev. and Mrs. J. M. Perry, 1920, piano and voice.

Ruth Clarke, Weldon, N. C., 1919, high school.

E. B. Quillian, Ayden, N. C., 1919, high school.

Virginia Inge, Goldsboro, N. C. (Mrs. Johnson, Weldon, N. C.), 1920-22, 5th, and 1922-23, 4th.

Myrtle Morris, Atlantic, N. C., 1921-24, 2nd.

Clara Griffin, Pinetops, N. C., 1921-24, 5th.

Leona Tyson, Pitt County (Mrs. Kelly Rawls), 1921-22, 6th, and 1922-23, 7th.

Bessie Foye, 1921-23, 6th.

Hattie Wilson, Dunn, N. C., 1920-21, French and taught for first time.

Lou McMillan, Lumberton, N. C. 1920-21, English and history.

- Ruth Taylor, McCullers, N. C., (Mrs. Hilliard Massey, Benson, N. C.) 1921-24, French.
- Margaret Stevenson, Chesapeake, Va., 1921-22, piano.
- Sally Ferrell, 1922-24, 7th.
- Minnie Cochran, 1923-59, 1st. A graduate of Atlantic Christian College and Duke Un.
- Miss McDonald, 1922-23, 1st.
- G. W. Rhodes, **principal** 1921-24, high school subjects.
- Clara Griffin, Elm City, N. C., 1922-24, 5th.
- Lina Ruth Beck, Durham, N. C., 1923-24, 5th.
- Louise Johnston, 1923-25, math.
- R. I. Leake, Rich Square, N. C., **principal** 1924-37. Taught math. Now teaching Williamston High School.
- Louise Dixon, Elm City, N. C., 1924-29, 1932-52, 2nd grade. Taught thirty years. D. in 1952. The altar in the Robersonville Methodist Church was given by her family in her memory.
- Mary P. Shields, Windsor, N. C., 1924-26, 6th grade.
- Juanita Butler, Roseboro, N. C., 1924-26, 7th.
- Elizabeth Hunt, Oxford, N. C., 1924-26, as Mrs. R. K. Adkins 1927-28, French and history, and girls basketball Coach.
- Emily Gayle, Farmville, N. C., 1925-26, high school science, first time taught.
- Hattie Manning, 1924-25, English, Mary Adkins (Mrs. Murphy Smith), 1925-27, piano. D.
- Maybell Barnhill (Mrs. Hugh Roberson), 1924, 1925, art, tuition basis.
- Cook Perry, janitor, first named in local records, 1925-27.
- Ralph Aiken, Durham, N. C., 1925-26, math and coach of athletics. Records do not mention any salary supplement.
- Mr. Phillips, 1925-26, history.
- Annie Laurie Phillips, Lumberton, N. C. (Mrs. A. P. Roberson, 1926-27, history and French. 1946-59, 5th and 6th grades with exception one year when taught French in 1953-54. Working on M. A.
- Elizabeth Shaw, Lumberton, N. C., 1926-27, 7th.
- Alma Murray, Durham, N. C. 1926-1929, home economics. First time offered.
- Agnes Jenkins, Durham, N. C. (Mrs. Moore, Durham) 1926-27, 7th grade, 1927-29, history.
- Harold Haney, Canadian, 1926-29, high school and athletic coach. First time offered and under state salary.
- Ida Whitehurst, Pitt County, 1927-31, 5th grade.
- Mrs. T. R. Jenkins (Omah Wood, Durham, N. C.), 1927-32, 7th girls (first year division made in girls and boys of 7th grade)..
- Elizabeth Elliott, Hertford, N. C., 1927-31, 7th boys.
- Allen Jenkins, janitor, 1927-29.
- Essie Robinson (Mrs. Robert Beverly, Bethel, N. C.) 1927-29, piano.
- T. R. Jenkins, Durham, N. C. 1927-29, science. Entered ministry. Ruling went into effect in 1929 that only one member of a family could teach. Reason, depression.
- Maud Maness, Biscoe, N. C., 1927-30, 2nd.
- Ruth Best, Warsaw, N. C., 1927-28, 8th girls home room. English.
- G. P. Moore, 1928-29, history.

- R. S. Crisp, Faulkland, N. C., 1928-29, math and coach of athletics. Paid a supplement. Athletic Association organized. D.
- Gilbert Smith, 1929-30, coach of football. No salary. Not a teacher.
- Mary A. Gray, 1928-29, French.
- Minnie Hobbs, Magnolia, N. C., 1929-41, 1st and 2nd. Earned M. A. degree at Peabody College in 1941.
- Dorothy Schwab (Mrs. Wilbur Congleton, Rocky Mount, N. C.) 1929-30, history and math.
- R. E. Coburn, 1929-3- into depression years, janitor.
- Bernice House (Mrs. Bogue Gurganus, N. C.), 1929-38, 2nd and 5th.
- Margaret Womack, Bethel, N. C., 1929-31, 6th.
- Katherine Deaton (Mrs. Victor Meekins, Manteo, N. C.), 1929-30, piano and voice.
- Carrie T. Smith, Fountain, N. C., 1929-31, French and English.
- Stella Etheridge, Selma, N. C., 1930-32, public school music (first time taught) and piano.
- Ira C. Ainsley, Oak City, N. C., 1929-31, science and coach of athletics.
- Carrie Lee Roberson, Robersonville, N. C., (Mrs. C. B. Martin) 1930-31, 2nd, 1947-57, 1st.
- Myra Sales, 1931-32, 5th.
- Thelma Dail, 1931-32, 6th.
- Roy Roberson and Pete Bunting, 1931, coaches aides. Not teachers. No salary. Thanks expressed.
- James H. Smith, 1931-33, 7th. Became Baptist minister.
- Marvin M. Everett, 1931-32, history, 1932-59; 7th and building principal grammar school, from 1932; general business high school class 1959.
- Frances Smith, Greenville, N. C. (Sister of Katherine Smith), 1931-32, math
- H. A. (Betty) Gray, 1932-40, volunteer manager of first lunch room sponsored by Womans Club and W. P. A. No salary.
- Belle Hockaday, Fuquay Springs, N. C., 1931-32, French.
- Margaret E. Smith, Raleigh, N. C. (Mrs. Durward Williams, Washington, D. C.) 1929-32, 1933-35, home economics.
- W. Cecil Brake, Rocky Mount, N. C., 1931-37, science, math and coach of athletics.
- Katherine Smith, Greenville, N. C., 1932-33, home economics.
- Ruth Jones, Kenly, N. C., 1932-33, public school music, her salary to be what she could make of it. Special tax discontinued.
- J. M. Dean, Selma, N. C., 1931-33, business education. Tuition basis. First time offered.
- Ila Mae Bost, Shelby, N. C., (Mrs. Alfonso Roebuck), 1932-34, French and English.
- Mrs. Fred Rogers, Robersonville, N. C., 1932-34, piano.
- Josephine Wildman, Parmele, N. C., piano on own responsibility.
- Fannie Woodard, Warsaw, N. C., 1932-33, 5th.
- Margaret Gorham, Rocky Mount, N. C., 1932-33, 6th.
- Marjorie Smith (Mrs. J. R. Jenkins, Aulander, N. C.) 1933-34, business education.
- Ruth Modlin, Jamesville, N. C. (Dr. Ruth Modlin, East Carolina College), 1933-37, 6th.
- Margaret Riddle, Burlington, N. C., 1933-35, 5th. D.
- Holly Butler, Vanceboro, N. C. (Mrs. Leo Everett), 6th.
- Bertha Piland, Oak City, N. C., 1933-35, history.

- Susie Thrift, Plymouth, N. C., now Durham, N. C., 1933-41, math and history.
- Mr. Kennedy, Fayetteville, N. C., 1934-35, French.
- Mrs. Selma Meadows, Robersonville, N. C., 1935-59, piano.
- Mr. Barringer, 1934-35, high school.
- Eva Mae Whitley, Washington, D. C., 1935-36, 5th.
- Hilda Modlin, Jamesville, elementary
- Marie Nobles, Ayden, N. C. (Mrs. Melvin Morris, Richmond, Va.) 1934-36, French.
- Alice Irby, 1934-36, business education.
- Mrs. J. B. Usry, Oxford, N. C., 1935-36, 7th. In 1935 a first year teacher under state salary with A-certificate drew only \$84. Reason depression.
- Mary Louise De Bruhl, New Bern, N. C., 1935-36, home economics.
- Olivia Forbes, Greenville, N. C. (Mrs. Wesley Fowler) 1934-36, French and English, D. in N. C.
- Carrie Gardner, Wayne County, (Mrs. Brantley Speight, Winterville, N. C.) 1935-36, 6th.
- Ruth Jenkins, 1935-36, 6th and 7th.
- Kate Turner, Halifax, N. C., 5th and 6th.
- Lena Briggs, Asheville, N. C., 1936-38, 7th.
- Marie Palmer, Franklin, N. C., home economics.
- Hilda Spence, Goldsboro, N. C. (Mrs. Fred L. Guerin, Melbourne, Fla.) 1936-38, French and English.
- Mary Rolfe, Hertford, N. C., 1936-38, English, math and science.
- Maxine Clarke, Canton, N. C. (Mrs. Millard Hall, Lexington, N. C.) 1938-40, French and English.
- Katherine Alexander, Tarboro, N. C., 1936-37, business education.
- L. W. Anderson, Altavista, Va., **supervising principal district** No. 4, 1937-44, dramatic art and speech. Now Dean of Students Greensboro Senior High School, Greensboro, N. C.
- Rebecca Webb, Hertford, N. C., 1937-40, math and English.
- Irene James, Weeksville, N. C. (Mrs. Dixie Roberson) 1937-41, home economics, 1946-59, 8th grade. She was the first George Reed teacher, nine months work, now ten months in some counties.
- Raymond Wells, Elm City, N. C., 1937-39, science.
- Jessie Richardson, Greenville, N. C., 1937-57, Latin, English and library. Became full time librarian in 1946. Degree in library science, University of North Carolina. D.
- Thelma Mewborn (Mrs. Claude T. Smith) 1937-39, English and civics, coach of debating.
- Margaret Evans, Blenheim, S. C. (Mrs. Wiley Rogerson), 1937-40, 1951-53, business education.
- Helen Poole, Troy, N. C., 1937-40, 5th. Now teaches in Troy.
- Sally Mac Prevatte, Lumberton, N. C. (Mrs. Howard Peed-ed, Wagram, N. C.) 1937-40, 6th.
- J. E. Aiken (Lutz, Fla. RFD present add.), 1937-42, band. First organized.
- Georgia Sugg, Hookerton, N. C. (Mrs. (Dr.) Roy T. Parker, Duke Hospital, Durham, N. C.) 1939-41, English.
- Joe Lydia, 1938-39, history. Resigned. Mr. Raymond Snipes, Wayne County, filled vacancy.
- Reece Little, Altavista, La. (Dr. Reece Little, New Bern, N. C.) 1939-41, science and coach.

- L. Dennis Marlow, Sutton, W. Va. (Lawyer at 22 Elizabeth St., Delaware, Ohio), 1940-41, b. ed.
- Connor Winchester, 1939-41, agriculture. First time taught.
- Miss Brantley, 1941-42, high school.
- Ida McCracken, 1941-42, English.
- Mary Frances Ford, Nichols, S. C. (Mrs. Bill Phillips Nichols), 1941-43, home economics.
- Helen Davis, Enfield, N. C. (Mrs. R. T. Purvis, Hobgood, N. C.) 1942-45, business ed.
- J. E. Aiken, 1942-44, band.
- Dorothy Owens, Big Gap, Va. (Mrs. Fry), 1941-42, math?
- Josephine Mahler, Four Oaks, N. C., 1942-46, math.
- B. T. Wigley, 1942-43, agriculture.
- Frank Meacham, State College, Raleigh, 1943-45, agriculture. Now of N. C. State Museum.
- Mrs. Thelma Garr, Anchorage, Ky., 1943-45, Spanish and English. First and only time taught.
- Lady Dole and sister, 1943-44, 8th grade. First year as part of junior high school and nine months.
- A. L. Hendren, Roxboro, N. C., **principal**, 1944-47, high school subjects.
- In 1946-47 there were 12 high school and 12 grammar grade teachers including principal and piano.
- Mrs. A. L. Hendren, 1945-47, 1st and 2nd.
- In 1946-47 there were 12 high school and 12 grammar grade teachers including principal and piano.
- Mrs. A. L. Hendren, 1945-47, 1st and 2nd.
- Mrs. Rosalie (Ross) Froneberger, Williamston, N. C., 1944, 3rd.
- Anna Floyd, 1945-46, business education.
- Harriet Everett (Tom) Winslow, Palmyra, N. C., 1946-47, business education.
- Josephene Stevenson, Fuquay Springs, N. C., 1945-46, French.
- Maud Ketchum, Rocky Mount, N. C., 1943-46, home economics.
- Mrs. Janie Perry Day, Robersonville, N. C., 1944-46, 5th.
- Mattie Lyons, Oxford, N. C., 1944-49, 7th.
- Kemp Bunn, Zebulon, N. C., 1945-47, 6th and 7th.
- Reba Winstead, Whitakers, N. C., 1945-49, 3rd.
- Susie Jenkins, (Mrs. Jim Hipps), Eatonton, Ga., 1944-45, 1st.
- Mildred Hodges, Asheville, N. C., 1944-46, public school music. First since early thirties.
- Mrs. Sally Kitrell, Washington, D. C., 1943-45, matron of teacher-age.
- Evelyn White, Colerain, N. C., 1942-44, 1st and 2nd.
- Mrs. Cleveland Wilkie, 1944-45, science and coach of girls basketball without supplement.
- Rev. Cleveland Wilkie, 1944-45, 8th grade and coach of boys basketball.
- Mildred Everett, Robersonville, N. C., 1944-45, math. and English.
- H. H. Yates, 1945-47, math and basketball coach.
- Mrs. H. H. Yates, 1945-47, English.
- Lissie Pierce, Princeton, N. C., 1944-52, elementary supervisor of Martin County Schools.
- Agnes Ellis, 1945-46, 3rd.
- Mrs. John Tyler, Robersonville, N. C., 1945-59, 2nd and 3rd and 4th. Working on M. A.
- Meredith Tunnel, 1946, 49, 6th.
- Mrs. Doris (Jim) Roebuck, Robersonville, N. C., 1945-51, 7th.

- Florine Clark (Mrs. Walter Ellis Everett), Robersonville, N. C., 1945-46, science.
- Cleo James (Mrs. Beaman Whichard), Robersonville, N. C., 1945, 6th.
- Janice Eggleston, 1944-47, 8th.
- Marjorie Privott, Hertford, N. C., 1946-47, science.
- George McRorie, Robersonville, N. C., 1946-48, English and coach of girls basketball. Now Assistant Principal Greenville Senior High School, Greenville, N. C.
- Ruth Hollowell, Hertford, N. C., 1946-50, math and 8th.
- George Roberts, 1946-48, agriculture.
- Mae Bowen, 1946-47, English and French.
- Ellen Riddick, Hobbsville, N. C., (Mrs. Kelly Abeyounis, Bethel, N. C.) 1946-51, bus. ed.
- David K. Wood, 1946-49, 8th grade. Minister.
- Hilda Sumrell, Ayden, N. C., 1946-54, 5th grade, 1954-56, 6th.
- C. B. Martin, Jamesville, N. C., 1947-57, principal and history. Now superintendent Tarboro City Schools.
- Mrs. Beatrice Stalls (J. E.) Mullen, Robersonville, N. C., 1947-53, 1954-59, French and English and librarian since 1958-59. Was graduated from North Carolina College for women, and University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill.
- Kelly Abeyounis, Bethel, N. C., 1946-52, social science.
- James Wallace, Jamesville, N. C., 1947-51, science, math and debate coach. Now a teacher of history in the University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill.
- Queenie McGowan, Greenville, N. C. (Mrs. Garland E. Warren), 1946-53, home economics.
- Mrs. Elizabeth (Norman) Wilkerson, Greenville, N. C., 1947-49, public school music. Paid through special tax.
- Miss Lula Purvis Gray (Mrs. R. O. Clarke, Alameda, Calif.) 1947-48, 6th.
- Miss Nell Anderson, Tarboro, N. C., 1947-57, manager of lunchroom. Home part time in Bermuda.
- J. E. Mullen, Robersonville, N. C., 1948-49, agriculture.
- Mrs. Sophia (B. A.) Critcher, Williamston, N. C., 1949-51, public school music.
- Adrian Brown, Manteo, N. C., science and athletic coach. Supported by sp. tax.
- Jack Scott, Greenville, N. C., 1949-51, science.
- J. H. Dixon, Parmele, N. C., 1949-59, agriculture. Graduated from N. C. State College.
- Estell Scott, Greenville, N. C., 1949-50, elementary and library. First paid.
- Ila Warren, Newton Grove, N. C., 1949-52, English.
- Emma Lou Taylor, Williamston, N. C., (Mrs. Leigh Traylor, Norlina, N. C.) 1949-51, 3rd.
- Mrs. Evelyn Cherry, Stokes, N. C., 1948-59, 7th.
- Maylon McDonald, 1950-51, 8th.
- Mrs. Maylon McDonald, 1950-51, 7th.
- Charlotte Sasser, Greenville, N. C., 1950-51. (Western N. C.)
- Nancy Eller, 1950-51, English.
- Franklin Harrell, 1951-53, science.
- R. B. Lee, Robersonville, N. C., 1951-54, 1955-59, physical education.

- Frances B. Chandler, Plymouth, N. C., 1951-52, public school music.
- Frances Spruill, Columbia, N. C., 1951-53, elementary.
- John Roberson, 1951-56, 1957-59, math and science. Working on M. A.
- Truman Cherry, 1951-52, English.
- Mrs. Marie (Truman) Cherry, 1951-52, 2nd.
- C. C. White, 1951-52, 8th. Became principal in Bertie County.
- Penelope Bogart, 1951-52, business education.
- Clara Woolard (Mrs. J. H. Dixon), 1951-56, 1957-59, 5th.
- Jeanne Taylor, Robersonville, N. C., 1952-55, public school music. Now teaching p. school music in Laurinburg, N. C.
- Grace Whitehurst, Conetoe, N. C., 1952-57, English. Now teaching in Tarboro.
- Mrs. Vara Hairr Davenport, Jamesville, N. C., 1951-53, special education — hearing and speech.
- Addie Lee Meador, Williamston, N. C., 1953-59, speech therapy.
- L. H. Whitehurst, Greenville, N. C., 1952-59, 8th.
- Mrs. Polly Bailey Grimes, Everetts, N. C., 1952-53, 4th.
- Mrs. Ella (Eugene) Morrow, Swanquarter, N. C., 1952-59, 2nd.
- Mrs. Cora Guard, Ccinjock, N. C., 1952-55, 2nd.
- Mrs. Mary (Ottis) Woolard, Robersonville, N. C., 1952-59, 3rd, 4th, and 5th. M. A. from E. C. C.
- E. C. Black, 1952-54, band. First org. after W. W. II.
- Mrs. Paul Davenport, Pactolus, N. C., 1953-59, piano.
- Emma Dean Calfee, Belhaven, N. C., 1953-55, business education.
- Betsy Tyson, Selma, N. C., 1953-55, English and French.
- John Walker, 1953-54, social science.
- Mrs. John Walker, 1951-55, 3rd.
- Catherine Ingram, Taylorsville, N. C., 1953-59, home economics.
- Robert Craft, Beulahville, N. C., 1954-56, band.
- Ann Bynum, Farmville, N. C., 1954-55, business education.
- Mrs. Josephine (Wallace) Bullock, Robersonville, N. C., 1954-58, 4th.
- Mrs. Dennis Roberson, Robersonville, N. C., 1954-59, 2nd. Working on M. A.
- Elbert Moye, Farmville, N. C., 1954-55, physical education.
- Harold Brown, Robersonville, N. C., 1954-59, social science.
- Mrs. Elizabeth Wilson, Greenville, N. C., 1954-55, science.
- Carroll Jackson, 1955-56, science.
- Nicholas Garner, Newport, N. C., 1956-57, science.
- Patsy Smith (Mrs. Malloy Oowen, Greenville, N. C.), 1955-59, business education.
- Frances Smith, Robersonville, N. C., 1955-57, public school music.
- John Swart, Wilmington, N. C., 1956-57, math.
- Jean Cargile, Parmele, N. C. (Mrs. J. Wetaehrington), 1957-58, 1st grade.
- Durwood Bray, Elizabeth City, N. C., 1956-58, band.
- Willie Augusta Gee, Burlington, N. C., 1957-58, library.
- Mrs. Annette Plyler, Greenville, N. C., 1957-59, English.
- Suzanne Hardison, Jamesville, N. C., 1957-59, public school music.
- Mrs. William Warren Taylor, Robersonville, N. C., 1957-59, 6th grade.

Frances Jenkins, Robersonville, N. C., 1958-59, 4th grade.
Thomas Adams, Parmele, N. C., 1957-59, science.
Mrs. Mary Oakley Dilda, Farmville, N. C., 1958-59, English and civics.
Joseph Secrest, Morganton, N. C., 1958-59, band.
Evelyn Arlene Manning, Bethel, N. C., 1958-59, 1st grade.
Mildred Manning, Bethel, 1952-54, elementary supervisor, Martin County.
Mrs. Ann Carson (Fred) Cargile, Greenville, N. C., 1958-59, 7th grade.
Mrs. Hattie (Harvey Lewis) Roberson, 1957-59, manager of lunchroom.

ROBERSONVILLE GRADED AND
HIGH SCHOOL



1902 - 1923

Frances Jenkins, Robersonville,

N. C., 1900-01, 4th grade.

Thomas Adams, Farmville, N. C.,

1901-02, science.

Mrs. Mary Oakley Dyer, Farm-

ville, N. C., 1900-01, English and

Hygiene.

Joseph Everett, Hargettsville, N. C.,

1900-01, math.

Swaps Arlene Manning, Roberson-

v. N. C., 1900-01, 1st grade.

Mildred Manning Bethel, 1900-01,

elementary supervisor, Martin

County.

Mrs. Ann Carson (Hunt), Carolina

Grammerville, N. C., 1900-01, 7th

grade.

Mrs. Della (Harvey Lewis) Rob-

erson, 1901-02, manager of

auditorium.

ROBERSONVILLE GRADES AND HIGH SCHOOL

