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## An Historical Survey of the Growth of Education in Prince George County, Virginia.

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AN HISTORICAL SURVEY OF THE  
GROWTH OF EDUCATION IN PRINCE GEORGE COUNTY,  
VIRGINIA

RICHARD WATSON COPELAND

SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT  
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OF  
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## Chapter I

### HISTORICAL BACKGROUND OF PRINCE GEORGE COUNTY, VIRGINIA

Shortly after the establishment of the little colony of Jamestown an exploring party set out and followed the James a few miles to the point at which it met the river "Appomattuck", as it was called by the Indians. The high bluffs of land jutting out in triangle-shape at this point appeared to them to be an ideal spot for another settlement. Accordingly, houses were built, and in 1613 the little settlement was one of the most thriving in the colonies. The town was called Charles Cittie, and was a part of Southampton Hundred. Sir Thomas Dale became much interested in this section and established his residence at Shirley, across the James at this point.

When Virginia was divided into counties this section, which embraced land on both sides of the James, was named Charles City County. It was one of the original eight "shires" of Virginia. In 1702 Charles City County was divided and that part lying on the south side of the James was called Prince George County, after Prince George of Denmark, husband of Queen Anne.

The year 1619 was a significant one in the history of America. It was in that year that plans were made to erect the first free school in America, the East India School, in the town of Charles

Cittie, later known as Prince George County.

It was in that year, too, that the first truly democratic form of government was instituted in Virginia. Howe in his "Collections" says:

"The moment the colonists began to take an interest in the country, by the enjoyment of their own labor, and the possession of property, it was right that they should have some share in that government and the prudent conduct of which they were most interested. Yeardley was aware of this, for without any authority from home which we can trace, he called together a general assembly consisting of two members from every town, borough or hundred, besides the governor and council that met at Jamestown near the end of June, 1619..... This was an eventful year to the colony, for in addition to their assembly a college was established at Henrico, with a liberal endowment....."<sup>1</sup>

Howe further states that Virginia "was the first state in the world composed of separate townships, diffused over an extensive surface, where the government was organized on the principle of universal suffrage."<sup>2</sup> Charles Cittie had its representation in this first democratic assembly.

Thus in the short space of one year did education and a democratic form of government have their beginnings in the young colony, and Charles Cittie had its share in these dramatic and important happenings. The history of the struggles of the colonists of this section, therefore, in striving to perfect a democratic form of government and to build an educational system, may be considered typical of what was done and thought along these lines in America from the beginning.

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1. Howe, Henry, Historical Collections of Virginia, Charleston, S. C., Babcock & Co., 1845, p. 41.

2. Ibid., p. 67.



Efforts to provide education in Virginia were made while the early colonists were suffering all the buffets of a hard existence in a strange land. Trouble with the Indians, starvation, and all the exigencies of building a new empire necessarily delayed its progress. In spite of their hostility the education of the Infidels, as the Indians were called, was attempted by the colonists. The children of the poor were given education of sorts at the expense of those better off, and those who were able managed to educate their own children by hiring tutors, afterwards sending them to England to complete their training.

Later small schools, called "Old Field Schools", sprung up in almost every neighborhood where enough children could be enrolled to pay a teacher.<sup>1</sup> Prior to 1748 the vestries took entire charge of binding out poor children for indenture and making provision for their education.<sup>2</sup> After this date the county courts were charged with this duty.

In Prince George County the Academy movement, beginning in 1801 with the establishment of its first academy, resulted in making this type of education available in several sections of the county.

The War Between the States delayed public efforts toward education. A new beginning was made after the War, and since that time schools of Prince George County have faced the many problems common to the South in trying to educate its white and Negro children under the dual system.

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1. Maddox, William Arthur, The Free School Idea in Virginia Before the Civil War, Teachers College, Columbia Univ., 1918, p. 6.
  2. Wells, Guy Fred, Parish Education in Colonial Virginia, N.Y. City, Teachers College, Columbia Univ., 1923, pp. 78, 79.

It has been very difficult to eliminate, as not coming within the scope of this survey, much interesting historical data of this section which the author, to his delight, as found in the course of the preparation of this thesis. That which has been included was selected because it appeared to have a vital influence on the peoples' efforts to provide education, or because it seemed to effect successive changes in their attitude toward their responsibility in providing education. Because the struggles of the colonists to obtain and to preserve a democratic form of government were bound up with their efforts to educate their children to live in the democratic way, many events of stirring interest could be touched upon with benefit in the development of this thesis. The author has tried, however, to restrain the use of references to other than educational topics, using only enough to indicate the background and trends of the times.

The loss of many valuable records when the Prince George Court House was moved and later when it was destroyed in the War Between the States has made the task of presenting authentic data of this period exceedingly hard. Unfortunately almost all school records for the years prior to 1923 have been either lost or destroyed.

In the following pages the growth of the educational system of Prince George County will be briefly traced from its beginning to the present day.

## The East India School

The Minutes of the Virginia Company of London give a fascinating picture of the earliest efforts to establish schools. The quaint language of these old documents gives the flavor of those times so truly, and thus gives perhaps an added appreciation of the efforts then made, that selections from them are here included to tell their own story.

On December 5, 1621, the following was entered upon the Minutes, under the title "Council of the Virginia Company. Letter to the Governor and Council in Virginia":

"There is one thing likewise that hath lately hapned unto use, not great in itself but of great good hope; the gentlemen and Mariners of the Royall James belonging to the East India Company, being met at Cap Bona Speranza by some English Shipps outward bound, and certified of the prosperitie of Virginia, did there (Upon the exhortation of Mr. Copland their Minister) bestow the sume of 70 pounds towards the building of a free schoole in Virginia; which pious giuft hath lately received an addiccon of 30 pounds by an unknowne person. The maner of employeing the mony which the Company hath resolved uppon, we send you here inclosed, desiringe that you would likewise take it into your considerations; ....."<sup>1</sup>

This is the first entry to be found concerning the free school in Virginia.

In June, 1622 a list of persons donating to the free school was published under the heading "A Declaration how the monies were disposed which was gathered by M. Patrick Copland (towards the

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1. Records of the Virginia Company of London, The, Edit. by Susan M. Kingsbury, Govt. Printing Office, Wash., D.C., Vol. III, p. 531.

building of a free schoole in Virginia .....)." This record includes the following:

"Which 70. pound 8. shillings 6. pence, together with the 30. pound added thereunto by an unknowne person, for the furtherance of the said free Schoole, was paid unto the Right honourable Henry Earle of Southampton, for the honourable Company of Virginia, at their great and general Quarter Court, held the 21. of November, 1621. And the Quarter Court, for the better maintenance of the said Schoole, Schoolmaster, and Usher intended there to be placed, granted 1000 acres of land to the said free schoole, to bee at Charles Cittie, as the most commodius place for health, security, profit and conueniency; And appointed that with the said 100. pounds 8. shillings 6. pence, there should be sent over presently an Usher, for the instructing of the Children there, in the principles of Religion, civility of life, and humane learning; as also that five persons (besides an overseer of them) should be forthwith sent in the condition of Apprentices, to manure and cultivate some part of the said land, for the use and benefit of the said Usher till God stirred up the hearts of others to be further helpfull to the said Schoole.

"Likewise the said honourable Virginia Court, thought fit in honour of the said East-India Benefactors, the said free Schoole should bee built, and the said 1000 acres set out in Charles Cittie, to be called The East-India Schoole; and that the East India Companies servants, should have precedence before any other, to preferre their children thither, to be brought up in the rudiments of learning." <sup>1</sup>

On July 25, 1621, as if under a premonition of the coming catastrophe, the Virginia Company wrote to the Governor and Council in Virginia this warning note:

"We exceedingly approve your course in takinge in of Indian families as beinge a great meanes to reduce that nation to Civility and to the imbraceing of the Christian religion; the blessed end wee have proposed to ourselves in this Plantation and wee doubt not of your vigilancie that you be not hereby entrapp'd, nor that the Savadge have by this accesse means to surprize you." <sup>2</sup>

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1. Ibid., p. 539.

2. Ibid., p. 487.

On December 19, 1621, a school-book was published called in part A Consolation for our Grammar Schools. The full title, which was a page long, further stated that it was written for "those of the inferior sorts and all ruder counties and places, namely, for Ireland, Wales, Virginia, with the Somer Islands...." The author of this book was a young Puritan Minister, one Mr. John Brinsley, called by the writers of that period "a painefull schoolmaster." Neill concludes, on account of the interest in England at that date in the East India School, that this book was written with the East India School particularly in mind.<sup>1</sup> A copy of this book is preserved in the Library of the University of Dublin.

It so happens that Governor Dale is not mentioned in the minutes quoted above, so mention must be made of him here, as his was the forward-looking vision which was responsible for the first idea of the school.<sup>2</sup> For it was he who inspired the Reverend Mr. Copeland to work for a school in Virginia with his stirring stories of the young colony. "Virginia was ever the darling thought of his dauntless old heart," writes Gordon; "Far away under Eastern skies his heart was ever in the West, and in one of his last letters, penned at Jacastra in the summer of 1619, he says wistfully: "I shall be glad to hear how Virginia prospers."<sup>3</sup>

Governor Dale would have been much encouraged by reports from Virginia at that time. The settlement at Charles Cittie with its splendid harbor was a busy place. For three years the colonists had braved disease, starvation, and the attacks of the Indians. At

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1. Neill, Edward Duffield, Memoir of Reverend Patrick Copeland, N.Y. C. Scribner & Co., 1871, pp. 36, 37.
  2. Gordon, Armistead Churchill, Memories and Memorials of William Gordon McCabe, Richmond, Va., 1925, Vol. II, p. 302.
  3. Ibid.

last they had attained some proficiency in the raising of tobacco, as well as food crops for their own provision. They were hopeful that the silk worms which they had imported would thrive in this locality and that this would prove to be a profitable business for them. Plans for the iron works at Falling Creek were going forward and work for the production of glass and salt were underway. The Indians were at last apparently on friendly terms, and came and went through the homes of the settlers with the greatest freedom and friendliness.

The Virginia Company was most anxious to cooperate with the Adventurers, as the colonists were called in England, in the matter of establishing schools, and in the Minutes of those years are many references to the College, the University at Henrico, and the East India School. According to Alexander Brown, in his Genesis of the United States, approximately forty-eight hundred dollars was contributed by various people, many of them anonymously, toward the East India School.

Mr. Copeland was appointed Rector and Mr. Dike, Usher, of the school. In June Leonard Hudson, a carpenter, with his wife and five apprentices, was sent to begin work on the school, and in July a fund was given for "laying foundation of East India School."<sup>1</sup>

With the arrival of the news that nine ships, containing eight hundred people, had safely arrived in Virginia there was great joy

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1. Records of the Virginia Company of London, Edited by Susan M. Kingsbury, Gov't. Printing Office, Wash. D.C., Vol. III, p. 650.

in England. The Virginia Company, wishing to give thanks to God, and at the same time to honor the Reverend Mr. Copeland, invited him to preach a public sermon of Thanksgiving. Accordingly on April 17, 1622, at Bowe Church in Cheapside "the eloquent and enthusiastic Copeland" made an inspiring address which was afterwards printed under the title "Virginia's God Be Thanked, or, A Sermon of Thanksgiving on Ps. CVII, 23, for the Happie Successe of the Affayres in Virginia This Last Yeare." "The effect of this sermon was an increased interest in the welfare of the colony and education," says Neill.<sup>1</sup>

In reward for his interest in the colony Mr. Copeland had been appointed Rector of the College in Virginia. He was making his preparations to leave for Virginia to assume his duties at the school when the dreadful news reached England that on the day after the Thanksgiving Sermon had been preached in England, on April 18, 1622, the Indians had turned upon the colonists and in a few hours had wiped out the little settlement.<sup>2</sup>

This massacre effectually put a stop to the East India School, as the little settlement of Charles Cittie was completely destroyed and the colonists horribly murdered, among them Mr. George Thorpe and "seventeen of the college people." A year after the dissolution

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1. Neill, Edward Duffield, Memoir of Reverend Patrick Copeland, N.Y. C. Scribner & Co., 1871, p. 79.
  2. National Cyclopaedia of American Biography, N.Y., 1893, Vol. III, p. 231.

of the Virginia Company in 1624 another effort was made to erect the East India School.<sup>1</sup> The author has been unable to locate information about this second attempt, and it may be that it was never actually erected.

The free school idea did not die out, however. A short while later William Whitehead, of London, bequeathed twenty pounds sterling to a school, provided that

"... the school had been built within the first three years following his decease; should it not have been built within that time, the sum was to be spent in erecting a church on a site somewhere within the boundaries of Martin's Hundred."<sup>2</sup>

(Martin's Hundred is a few miles down the James from the site of the East India School.)

The Reverend Patrick Copeland, discouraged over the outcome of his plan, never came to America, but went to Bermuda, where he made enemies on account of his out-spoken conviction that there should be absolute separation of Church and State. According to Neill he did not abandon his crusade for education, but tried to establish a free school there.<sup>3</sup>

Copeland then went to a small island in the Bahamas where he established a non-liturgical church, and to which he invited the oppressed of all lands. He died there, - it was thought at an advanced age, - a crusader for public education, freedom of religion, and separation of church and state.

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1. Neill, Memoir of Reverend Patrick Copeland, p. 80.
  2. Bruce, Philip Alexander, Institutional History of Virginia in the Seventeenth Century, G. P. Putnam's Sons, N.Y. and London, 1910, pp. 348, 349.
  3. Neill, Memoir of Reverend Patrick Copeland, p. 91.



Copeland's crusade is significant to us because it marks a first step in separation of church and education, -- which separation was later written into the Constitution of Virginia.

## Chapter II

### TUTORIAL SYSTEM; PARISH EDUCATION IN PRINCE GEORGE COUNTY

In 1671 Berkeley made the oft-quoted speech about there being no free schools in Virginia, and it was many years before it was generally understood that he could not have meant this literally. His speech was in answer to a query of the Lord Commissioners of Foreign Plantations, who asked, "What course is taken about the instructing the people within your government in the Christian religion....?" Berkeley replied:

"The same that is taken in England out of towns; every man according to his own ability instructing his children. But I thank God there are no free schools nor printing, and I hope we shall not have these hundred years; for learning has brought disobedience and heresy and sects into the world, and printing has divulged them and libels against the best government. God keep us from both!"<sup>1</sup>

Dr. Tyler suggests that Berkley had in mind only such a school as Eton or Harrow, and calls attention to the fact that in 1660 the colonial Assembly had passed an act for the "founding of a 'college and free schoole', to which Berkeley and all the members of the Council and the Assembly subscribed."<sup>2</sup>

The tutorial system was the answer to the rich planter's problem of education for his children, and this system existed from the very beginning in Prince George County. Since huge grants of land were made to individuals, neighbors were necessarily separated by

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1. William and Mary Quarterly, (1), Edited by L. G. Tyler, Williamsburg, Va., Vol. 6, p. 74.
  2. Ibid., Vol. 6, p. 83.

great distances, and children were not able to meet together for instruction. For instance, the average area of a plantation acquired by patent previous to 1650 was about four hundred and forty-six acres; and after the middle of the century about six hundred and twenty-eight, according to Bruce.<sup>1</sup>

In many cases indentured servants served as teachers in the homes, and wealthy planters were able to employ tutors who had received their education at English and Scotch Universities. Apparently there was no dearth of teachers.

Bruce says:

"Not infrequently, the tutor in a private family was a person under indentures. In the vicissitudes of those times, whether political or otherwise, many men of no common acquirements were compelled to earn a subsistence by hiring themselves out for the performance of different kinds of service. In the great body of agricultural laborers drawn to Virginia from the Mother Country, there were individuals who had failed in higher pursuits, or who, having become involved in trouble in their native land, were induced to seek a new home over-sea. Among these men, and even among the convicts, there were found some who had received an excellent education in the most respectable English schools, and who were, therefore, fully competent, from the point of view of knowledge at least, to instruct the young."<sup>2</sup>

The sons were often sent to England at an early age, and we find records of this being done in many cases by parents in Prince George County during those days.

The will of William Byrd, probated in Charles City County, provided that his son William Byrd, Jr., be sent to England

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1. Bruce, Philip Alexander, Economic History of Virginia in the Seventeenth Century, N.Y. and London, Macmillan & Co., 1895, Vol.I, p. 528.
  2. Bruce, Philip Alexander, Institutional History of Virginia in the Seventeenth Century, G. P. Putnam's Sons, N.Y. & London, 1910, p. 328.

to be educated. Later, he was sent to Holland, which country, according to Bruce, "possessed a high reputation especially for the opportunities it offered for a training in business."<sup>1</sup> No doubt the elder Byrd thought that this business training would be helpful to his son later in the management of the plantation.

For many years the colonists continued to send their children to England to be educated. Young Theoderick Bland, Jr., born at City Point in Prince George County in 1742, was sent to England at the age of eleven. After studying for almost twelve years, he received a medical degree from Edinburgh and returned to America, where he was one of the earliest pioneers in medicine in Virginia.<sup>2</sup> He was the son of the Theoderick Bland referred to so many times in the Vestry Book of Bristol Parish.

Wealthy landowners of this period usually left specified sums in their wills for the education of their children. The will of Nathaniel Harrison, who owned Brandon and Merchant's Hope, in Prince George County, provided that his sons Nathaniel and Benjamin should be kept constantly at school until the age of 21 years.<sup>3</sup>

George Harrison, born in 1797, whose family occupied a house on the Brandon estate, attended several grammar schools, one of them in Petersburg, before being tutored for college. He then entered

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1. Bruce, Institutional History of Virginia in the Seventeenth Century, Vol. I, p. 321.
  2. The Bland Papers, Edited by Chas. Campbell, Petersburg, Va., Printed by E. & J. C. Ruffin, 1840 - 43, Vol. I, p. xix.
  3. Virginia Magazine of History and Biography, Va. Historical Society, Richmond, Va., 1900, Vol. VII, p. 357.

Carlisle College, in Pennsylvania.<sup>1</sup>

From about 1720 until 1748 in Virginia the Parish was the important agency as far as education was concerned, and Martin's Brandon and Bristol Parishes which were situated in the county of Prince George, took the lead in many affairs. To begin with, these parishes numbered among their vestrymen men of outstanding ability, who apparently gave freely of their time and energy for the conduct of parish affairs. The parish not only was concerned with religion and education, but "was a local governmental institution which administered both church and civil affairs without a distinction being made between the two fields of activity in either law or custom."<sup>2</sup> Many purely secular concerns were administered by the vestry also, such as the processioning of the bounds of land and the counting of tobacco plants.

One of the more important functions of the vestry was the binding out of children in indenture, as disclosed in the records over the period from 1720 to 1748. Since the educational needs of the children were taken care of in the articles of indenture, it is easily seen that in this way the vestry, upon which rested the responsibility of seeing that the articles were carried out, played an important part at this time in regard to education. A man taking a child for a period of years had to promise to teach him a trade, provide religious instruction, and at the same time see that he

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1. Virginia Magazine of History and Biography, Vol. 36, pp. 390, 391.  
2. Wells, Parish Education in Colonial Virginia, p. 3

learned the rudiments of the three R's. In case of failure on the part of the master to do this he was taken to account, in the early part of the century by the vestry, later by the county court.

The following record in the Vestry Book of Bristol Parish in 1720 is of interest, since it is a typical one:

"Ordered that the child Widow Bass now hath nursing for ye Parish, to be bound out by indenture to ye aforesaid Widow Bass by the Church Wardens."<sup>1</sup>

In this year also there is a record of two orphans and one illegitimate child being bound out for service under indenture. In 1722 James Lett, son of Elizabeth Lett, was bound out by the Church Wardens to Daniell Nance and his wife until James should come of age.<sup>2</sup> In October of the same year it was ordered

"That William Snelgrove, son of Jane Matts, wife of William Matts, Indian, the said Snelgrove be bound unto Robert Lyon to serve 16 years from date of indenture which is November 7, 1722."<sup>3</sup>

In 1728 John Puckett having run away, his daughter Elizabeth was bound out to Daniel Jackson and his heirs.<sup>4</sup> In 1747 William Eppes and Theoderick Bland, Church Wardens, put Instance Hall, an apprentice to William Studevart, to learn the trade of shoemaking.<sup>5</sup> In 1748 two mulatto children were bound out, this time by the Court on petition of the Church Wardens. In 1749, when Ann, the daughter of Robert Hudson, was bound out, it was by order of the Court, on petition of the Church Wardens.<sup>6</sup>

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1. Vestry Book and Register of Bristol Parish, Virginia, 1720-1789, Transcribed and published by C.G. Chamberlayne, Richmond, 1898, p.2.
  2. Ibid., p. 10.
  3. Ibid., p. 10.
  4. Ibid., p. 41.
  5. Ibid., p. 130.
  6. Ibid., p. 135.

There is a record dated March 13, 1738 of two children being bound out until the age of thirty-one years:

"Ordered that William Steward, a mulatto boy, and Ruth Anderson, a mulatto girl, daughter of Jane Anderson, a white woman, be bound out by the Church Wardens of Bristol Parish to William Eaton to \_\_\_\_\_ (not clear) \_\_\_\_\_ until they shall each attain to the age of thirty-one years." <sup>1</sup>

Much the same type of thing was done in the adjoining parish of Martin's Brandon. According to records in the Prince George County Court House, Benjamin Birtchett, a poor orphan boy, was bound out to Edmund Irby, "in the manner the law directs for poor orphans to learn the trade of carpenter." And in October, 1738, at the Court held at Fitzgeralds for Prince George County, the Church Wardens of Martin's Brandon were ordered to "bind James Bottes son of Edward Bottes to some proper person, in the manner the law directs for poor orphans." <sup>2</sup>

After the year 1748 the Church Wardens took less active interest in the indenture of children, since in that year it became necessary to petition the court for children to be bound out. The fact that until 1748 there was no mention of justices or county officials binding out children, but that in all cases only the vestry and church wardens were referred to in this connection, leads us to believe that it was upon the vestries that the responsibility of education for orphans and poor children devolved during those years. The vestry books show that ordinarily the vestrymen were much

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1. Records of Prince George County, Prince George Court House, Virginia.  
2. Ibid.

interested in the welfare of the indigent poor, but occasionally towards the end of the colonial period records like the following appear:

"Order'd that ..... the Church Wardens at the most convenient place put up the poor of this parish to the lowest bidder."<sup>1</sup>

Naturally no large number of children were educated under the indenture method. The primary purpose of the indenture system was to relieve the public from the burden of maintaining dependent children, while the upbringing and education of the children was only the secondary purpose of the system.

In 1755 an act was passed by the Legislature of Virginia similar to the English law of 1722 providing as part of the scheme of poor relief work houses for the purpose of trade education.<sup>2</sup>

Bristol Parish led the way for all of Virginia in taking action under this law. A meeting was held in November, 1756, at which time it was directed that the Church Wardens apply to the "Vestries of Martin's Brandon and Bath Parishes to know if they will join with our Parish towards building a workhouse, to keep the poor of the three parishes."<sup>3</sup> It was further ordered that Theoderick Bland apply to the Vestry of Brandon Parish to join the Parish in the building, and in December a committee was appointed to meet the committees from Brandon and Bath Parishes to agree in settling the terms of the poor house. The joint committee met, and at the Vestry

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1. Vestry Book and Register of Bristol Parish, Virginia, p. 168
  2. Hening's Statutes, Vol. VI, p. 475.
  3. Vestry Book and Register of Bristol Parish, Virginia, p. 160.



meeting of February 23, 1757, their report was accepted. "This report is of special significance as it presents the only description of educational conditions of the poor children in Virginia in the eighteenth century which has been found."<sup>1</sup>

The report, signed by Richard Bland, says in part:

"It is the opinion of the committee that a Convenient House ought to be Rented for Entertaining the poor of the said Parishes, if to be had, But if not, that then land ought to be bought and Convenient Houses to be built for the joint uses of said Parishes in proportion to the number of Tithables in each of the said Parishes; This committee having taken under Consideration the unhappy and indeed miserable Circumstances of the many poor Orphans and other poor children, Inhabitants of the said Parishes, whose parents are utterly unable to give them any Education and being desirous to render the said House as Beneficial as possible and that such poor Children should be brought up in a Religious, Virtuous and Industrious course of Life so as to become useful members of the Community, Have Resolved earnestly to recommend it to their Respective Vestries that they should join in a Petition to the General Assembly to procure an Act to enable the said Parishes to erect a Free School for Educating the poor Children of the said Parishes in Reading, Writing and Arithmetic at the joint Expense of the said Parishes, and Uniting the same to the said Poorhouse under such Rules, Orders and Directions as shall be most just and proper for perfecting so useful and Charitable a work, And in Order to facilitate the obtaining such Act to propose that the said Vestries should unite in opening Subscriptions that the Rich and Opulent and all other well-disposed people may have an opportunity of Contributing towards so pious a design out of that Store which the Father of Bounties have bestowed on them."<sup>2</sup>

Apparently no further action was taken in this matter until 1774, when there is a record of the appointment of the Reverend Mr. Harrison and the Churchwardens Robert Bolling and Theoderick

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1. Ibid., p. 164.

2. Ibid., pp. 165, 166.

Bland to meet with the Vestries of Brandon and Bath Parishes for the purchase of a place to erect a poor house for the joint use of the three parishes.<sup>1</sup>

There is no record of the poor house ever being erected. Nevertheless, the fact that Theoderick Bland was chosen to bring the matter before the legislature, and that he and other influential members of the community were so vitally interested in the subject, must have had a decided effect upon the evolving public opinion in regard to education for the indigent.

Another duty of the Parish in providing education was the support and administration of the "Parson's Schools". As pointed out before, the plantations were very large. Parish churches and schools could, therefore, serve only a very small part of the population.

But the condition of the Church improved as tobacco brought greater prosperity to Virginia. Glebes were provided for the ministers, with land and indentured servants, and if a minister could adapt himself quickly to the life of a planter, he could make a comfortable living, and his lot was a pleasant one. He held school in his own home on weekdays, where he maintained a strict discipline by using a birch rod on all occasions. If he was unmarried he usually taught in the nearest "great house". His social position was a fairly good one.

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1. Ibid., p. 244.

Bristol Parish suffered probably less than most in the general dearth of ministers and glebes, and the enterprising little settlement of City Point was considered an important port. According to Howe it was during these years "a better site for commercial town than Richmond, and it is said would have been the seat of government, had not its owner, a Dutchman, refused to sell on any terms."<sup>1</sup>

In regard to parish schools, the following is enlightening:

"In most parishes are schools (little houses built on purpose) where are taught English and Writing; but to prevent the sowing of seeds of dissention and faction it is to be wished that the masters or mistresses should be such as are approved or licensed by the ministers or the vestry of the Parish or justices of the county, the clerks of the Parish being most proper for this purpose or (in case of their incapacity or refusal) such others can best be procured."<sup>2</sup>

In addition to the Parish Schools small rude buildings called "Old Field Schools" came into existence during this time. Land was cheap, so that after a field had been used time and again, it was left by the owner to "sweeten", or lay fallow and enrich itself. Upon these abandoned fields a small log house would frequently be built and used as a school for the few children in walking distance of it. Prince George had several of these old field schools, one of which is described in the next chapter.

We may say that government and education paralleled each other during this period, since the vestries had broad civil duties, as well as administration of education for the poor.

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1. Howe, Historical Collections of Virginia, p. 440.

2. Jones, Hugh, The Present State of Virginia, N.Y., J. Savin, 1865, p. 70.

## Chapter III

THE EFFECT OF THE LITERARY FUND AND  
OTHER SCHOOL LEGISLATION UPON PRINCE GEORGE COUNTY

The need for the establishment of public education was never lost sight of by the colonists. We find that as soon as it was practicable to do so, laws dealing with the establishment of a program of education were passed.

One of the first of these was the Literary Fund of Virginia, which was established under a bill passed by the House of Delegates in 1809, and passed by the Senate in January of the following year.<sup>1</sup> In brief, this fund, into which had gone the proceeds from "escheats, confiscatures and forfeitures", became the foundation of all future school legislation. It brought the educational system directly under the control of the state, and was expressly to be spent for the benefit of the various counties.

In 1816 a happy solution to the problem of increasing the Literary Fund was found by depositing to its credit a refund from the United States Government. This refund was part repayment of a loan made by Virginia to the Federal Government for the prosecution of the War of 1812. The bill further provided that future refunds would be deposited in like manner.<sup>2</sup>

This provision seemed to insure a fund large enough for a

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1. House Journal of Virginia, Feb. 8, 1810; Acts of Assembly, 1810.
  2. House Journal of Virginia, 1816.

definite plan for the establishment of a school system.

The earliest record of Prince George County's participation in the Literary Fund which could be found was the following:<sup>1</sup>

"Edmund Ruffin, Treas., to the School Commissioners, Dr.

1821. Dec. 11 To \$100. received of the Admr. of the late Treas.	\$100.00
1882. March 2 To quota of 1822 (recd. by N. Colley)	232.28
	<u>\$332.28</u>

(The "quota" referred to was the Literary Fund quota.)

In 1818 an Act was passed providing for the appointment of school commissioners in each county. Maddox calls the Act "typical of a laissez-faire policy."<sup>2</sup> Apparently under the Act the school commissioners could administer school affairs pretty much as they chose; there was no auditing of accounts called for, nor were there regulations in regard to school-houses, teachers, or pupils. If the school commissioners were capable and conscientious, it was well and good, but the law provided no recourse to the citizens where they were lax and uninterested. It was up to the citizens to get together and decide if a school was wanted; a subscription list gave the basis of what could be expected in the way of tuition, a teacher who pleased the amjority could be hired, and a petition presented to the commissioner to supplement the deficit by adding the necessary number of names of poor children, who were paid for at the rate of four cents a day.

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1. Records of Prince George County, Prince George Court House, Va.  
 2. Maddox, The Free School Idea in Virginia Before the Civil War,  
 p. 76.

There were two types of schools operating under this law in Prince George County. First, the schools operated under the general supervision of the Overseer of the Poor, and second, those operated as private schools where bills were rendered for poor children to the school commissioners by the teacher. Under date of January 13, 1824 an entry states that the sum of \$2.50 was paid by the County Treasurer "To Thos. B. Bryant for books and stationery for children at poor house, he being Supr. Overseer Poor." The following is typical of the bills rendered by the teachers for poor children:

Names of Children	Ages	Names of Parents	Dates of term	No. of days attend.	Price per day	Amount	What branches of learning
Mary A. Fowlkes	12	Nancy Fowlkes	Jan.3	136	4¢	5.44	Reading and Arithmetic
Virginia Fowlkes	9	Nancy Fowlkes	Jan.3	140	4¢	5.60	Reading and Arithmetic
Drury W. Birchett made oath before Saml. Perkins, Notary, that above is true, 6th October, 1832.					Jno. H. Batt, S. C., orders Treas. to pay to Birchett		

(There was a column also captioned "School Books Used", but in this particular record there was no entry under this heading.)

On the reverse of the sheet is a receipt signed by Birchett. Another bill lists under "what branches learning", spelling, reading, writing, and arithmetic, and also states that  $3\frac{1}{2}$  quires of paper and one slate were furnished the children. These bills were frequently

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1. Records of Prince George County, Prince George Court House, Va.

written on scraps of ruled paper, some of them even having memoranda on the back. The writing in all cases completely covers the paper, probably for the reason that paper was not so cheap or plentiful as it is now, even for the use of official documents. There was a marked similiarity of handwriting in all of these documents. Of Spencerian type, the handwriting of many different men, over long periods of years, was so similiar as to look, with a few exceptions, as if written by the same man. This would seem to prove that in those days writing was considered a specialized art.

The Act of 1823, which required an annual report from the Second Auditor to the General Assembly, was framed in an attempt to make the former school laws work. These reports of the Auditor give valuable information as to what was done in the counties during these years.

For instance, we find in Mr. Brown's report from September 30, 1826 to September 30, 1827, that there were twelve schools operating in Prince George County; that out of two hundred poor children in the county, twenty-seven were being sent to school; and that a total of \$159.03 was spent for tuition and books for poor children in this county during that year.<sup>1</sup>

Ten years later there were one hundred and seventy-five poor children in the county, according to Mr. Brown's report for 1837,

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1. Documents Virginia Education, 1827 - 1847.

and sixty-one of them were being sent to school, showing some increase in the percentage of poor children attending school over the ten-year period. Four cents a day was the rate of tuition paid all over the state during this year.

The next important piece of school legislation, a permissive rather than a compulsory statute, was the Act of 1829, giving counties optional authority to supplement their Literary Fund quotas for the purpose of erecting school-houses. The author was able to find no record of school-houses being built as a result of this legislation in Prince George County. In the Second Auditor's Report for the year ending September 30, 1837 (which follows the report of 1827 in Documents of Virginia Education, 1827 - 1847) the number of common schools is unreported. Under "School Quotas Undrawn" it is reported that the sums of \$198.91 in 1835 and \$321.45 in 1836 were not used. Also in the same report \$277.07 is listed as "Surplus quotas appropriated to academies." The next report, in 1844 gives the number of schools as seven, a reduction of five since 1826. From these facts it would appear that Prince George County, like so many other Virginia counties, was not ready in the early part of the nineteenth century to take the step of meeting state appropriations with funds raised by local taxation.

The report of the school commissioners of the county as published in the Second Auditor's report of 1837 gives a clear picture



of the schools of that year:

"Prince George. The Commissioners consider the term "indigent" as applicable to all that class of children whose parents or guardians are not able to bear the expense of sending them to school, but who can do so by the aid of the fund set apart for the use of primary schools. The children are sent without regard to their ages, and no preference is shewn to either sex. It is probable that the increased fund will be sufficient under the present system to send a large proportion of the poor children in the county to school. They cannot state with certainty what improvement has been made by the children, but believe it is equal to that of other children sent by those who pay for their tuition. Most of the children they believe are taught to read and write, and some of them the elementary principles of arithmetic. The teachers, it is believed, are respectable men, but no examination has been made as to their moral character or qualifications. They have no suggestions to make as to alterations or modifications of the existing laws and regulations. They however state, that if the fund would justify the alteration in the existing laws, they believe the district system under the management of trustees, would be more beneficial."

The above report shows that the school commissioners themselves realized that the schools were not having the proper supervision and care. The commissioners were not paid for their services; therefore, they were unable to give the necessary time to a proper discharge of their duties. Indeed, they were probably not equipped to render the sort of supervisory service that was needed.

The percentage of county poor children being sent to school in 1844 shows a slight increase. Tuition was paid for sixty-four of the one hundred and sixty children. The amount paid for tuition in the county was increased to five cents a day. This is a little better than the average for the state, which was  $4 \frac{1}{6}$  cents in

that year. This report also showed that Prince George was one of the counties in which the majority of the schools were in operation for five months and upwards.

Total expenditures in the county for 1844 were \$633.80. The reasons set forth in the report of the commissioners for the fact that so few children were being educated were: insufficiency of the fund and sparseness of the population. The commissioners stated that they had not visited the schools, but that in their opinion the teachers were deserving of the additional compensation allowed them under the Act of March 20, 1841.

It can be seen from these last two reports that the matter of school districts was being considered as a possible solution of the difficulties of providing education. The "Education Convention"<sup>1</sup> had recommended that the counties be laid off into school districts.

Two important Acts known as the "Twin Acts" were passed by the legislature in 1846. Under the first Act,<sup>2</sup> county superintendents were to be elected by the boards of school commissioners, these superintendents to supervise the schools. The counties were to be divided into districts, and a school trustee was to be elected from each district, all the trustees together to form a board of education. The second of the two acts<sup>3</sup> provided that one fourth of the voters could call an election for the purpose of deciding upon a system of free schools.

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1. Maddox, The Free School Idea in Virginia Before the Civil War, p. 154.

2. Ibid., p. 155.

3. Ibid., p. 156.

The following was the action taken under the Act of 1846  
in Prince George County:

"1851. The Court, June term, 1851 doth appoint the following persons school commissioners for the following year, viz: for District # 1, William A. Temple, District # 2, Peter C. Marks, District # 3, Julian C. Ruffin, District # 4, Charles Friend, District # 5, William Gee, District # 6, George E. Rives, District # 7, Charles D. Rives, Teste, R. Gilliam, Clk." <sup>1</sup>

In accordance with the further provisions of the Twin Acts, the school trustees elected C. H. Friend Superintendent of Schools of Prince George County in 1853. <sup>2</sup> He was succeeded in 1856 by Matthew W. Raney. <sup>3</sup>

The duty of the county superintendent was to make reports on the condition of the schools to the State superintendent, together with an accounting of the expenditure of the Literary Fund quota.

"There was on the eve of the Civil War," writes Maddox, "a superintendent and a county board of school commissioners in every county in the state. In 1861 every superintendent in the state gave at least a financial report on local expenditures of the Literary Fund." <sup>4</sup>

This type of education came to an end with the outbreak of the War Between the States, when the Literary Fund was diverted to military defense.

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1. Prince George County Records, Prince George Court House, Virginia.
  2. Ibid.
  3. Ibid.
  4. Maddox, The Free School Idea in Virginia Before the Civil War, p. 166.

In discussing the difficulties of the establishment of a school system, Maddox writes:

"Virginia fought with the other states the same battles for the democratization of her institutions, and by the time of the Civil War had evolved the foundations, at least, of free schools. And this remarkable progress was hampered at all times by the economic burdens of negro slavery, by the social system that slavery entailed, by a sectionalism which Virginia's peculiar land conformation determined from the outset, and finally by a dramatic political controversy over ways and means of realizing a democratic state, the first fruit of which was the persistence of customary thought and the defeat of a concerted school legislation which might have placed the Old Dominion first among the free school states."<sup>1</sup>

Since during this period the most thickly populated areas were used as bases for military operations and fortifications, no schools were in existence in this area. However in the sparsely settled areas of the county, notably in Brandon District, a few schools existed. Chief among these was the small school operated with funds given by Miss Belle Harrison, a charitable and wealthy lady of this district. This school was free to all pupils who were unable to pay tuition.

An "Old Field School" was still in use in Prince George County during the War Between the States. It was located near Disputanta, was built of logs and had windows on both sides and a clay chimney. An old resident remembers attending this school. She remembers seeing bands of Union soldiers passing by during the War, and she remembers the excitement that occurred when Wade

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1. Ibid., p. 10.

Hampton made his cattle raid, which took place in sight of the school. Soldiers of both sides often stopped by the school, she says, looking for information of opposing troops. She states that after the War the school lost practically all of its pupils, as the parents were unable to pay the small tuition charges.

## Chapter IV

### ACADEMIES IN PRINCE GEORGE COUNTY

From advertisements and notices in old newspapers and information given by old residents of the county it appears that the county had at least three academies during the early and middle part of the nineteenth century.

Of the first, the Aaron Burr Academy, there is little known. Morrison gives the date of the founding of the academy as 1801, and says:

"This academy incorporated in 1801, and endowed with funds arising from the sale of glebe lands in Prince George County, had a brief career. The act of incorporation was repealed in 1806, and the funds diverted to the overseers of the poor of the county. Burr Academy may have been named for Aaron Burr, and its significant dates were also important years in his history." <sup>1</sup>

Two other academies, the Prince George and the Oak Grove Academies, apparently operated over a long space of time. The first record the author found concerning the Prince George Academy was the record in the Court House of a deed dated January 16, 1852, between David Harrison of the County of Prince George and Dr. Robert Harrison, Philip B. Thweatt, Edward W. Marks, Richard M. Harrison, Alfred Butts, Edmund Ruffin, Peter C. Marks, John H. Marks and William C. Harrison, Trustees of the Prince George Academy.

In 1854 there appeared an advertisement in the Southside

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1. Morrison, Alfred James, The Beginnings of Public Education in Virginia, Richmond, D. Bottom, Supt. Public Printing, 1917, p. 134.

Democrat, as follows:

"Prince George Academy. The next session of this institution will commence on Monday the 8th of January next, under the charge of Mr. George P. Keating, a gentleman that has had several years' experience in teaching and has given general satisfaction.

"The Academy is located near Garysville, about 14 miles east of Petersburg, in a healthy, intelligent and agreeable neighborhood.

"Instruction will be given in all the studies usually taught in academies, and the charges for tuition will be payable at the end of each session.

"Terms of tuition: For the languages, mathematics and higher branches of English, per 10 months \$40.00. For primary English branches, \$30.00.

"Address the subscriber at Garysville P.O., Prince George County, Virginia. Richard M. Harrison, Pres't." <sup>1</sup>

Mrs. Judith Bernard, a resident of Prince George County, whose father, Mr. Benjamin Fenner, attended the Prince George Academy, and who was afterwards superintendent of schools of Prince George County, gave the following information about this school:

"I have often heard my father, my uncle and Mr. Robert C. Ruffin talk of their school days in the old Prince George Academy, which was near old Garysville, across the highway from the present site of Mr. Eugene Cummings' store. The building, I think, was of logs. The school masters were said to be very strict and to 'rule by the rod'. There is a group of oak trees standing to mark the location.

"My father was born in 1855 and went to this school when quite young; I imagine for a short time soon after the war."

This school was reopened after the war as a public school. An interesting story is told about this school by another old resident

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1. Southside Democrat, Petersburg, Va., Monday, December 25, 1854.

of the county as follows:

"Several pupils of the Prince George Academy, wishing to enter William and Mary College, applied for admission. They were asked to write a letter giving full particulars about themselves, their preparation at the Academy and their plans for college work. These letters were used as a basis for judging the applicants' capabilities. Several pupils of this Academy were said to have been actually admitted to William and Mary College in this way."

Another Academy in operation during these years was the Oak Grove Academy. The Press, issue of February 3, 1859, contained a notice that the services of Mr. William H. Bass had been secured as teacher of the Oak Grove Academy. "No one having children to educate can place them with one more competent to give them instruction in all the various branches constituting a finished education. Students will be prepared for any college," reads the notice. It further states the terms, which were \$150.00 per term of 10 months for board and tuition.<sup>1</sup>

An advertisement for a teacher "of good character and moral habits to take charge of a small school in Prince George County, Virginia, that can teach a thorough English Course with Latin," is interesting, as it further states that the salary will be \$250.00 a year and board.<sup>2</sup>

About 1857 there were at least two private boarding schools for young ladies in the county. According to the Petersburg Daily Democrat in 1857 Mr. W. C. Cooke opened his residence "Aberdeen"

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1. The Press, Petersburg, Va., Feb. 3, 1859.
  2. The Daily Express, Petersburg, Va., August 29, 1859.



at Garysville on October 1, 1857, as a select school for young ladies. The terms were two hundred dollars a year of ten months, for English, French, and Music.

From another old resident of the county it was learned that the home now owned by Mr. W. H. Figg was once "Mrs. George W. Butts' Private School for Young Ladies;" that here Mrs. Butts taught her own children, and for several years after the war took young ladies as boarding pupils.

Another academy, short-lived on account of the war, was "Old Hickory Academy" located near the present community of Woodlawn. Mr. George L. Munt, who was born in 1848 and is now ninety-one years old, and whose memory is remarkably clear, told some interesting stories about this little school. According to Mr. Munt, who attended this Academy, it was a one-room log house, and the first teacher was a Mr. Calhoun, who had the reputation of being "the meanest man in the world." His punishments were severe and administered upon very slight provocation. He did restrict his punishment of the girls, however, to whipping upon the hands.

The next teacher, according to Mr. Munt, was Mr. Giles Cooke, afterwards a major in the Confederate Army. Mr. Cooke was popular with everyone, and taught there two and a half years. The fee for schooling here was \$40.00 a year, and the teacher's salary was \$800.00 a year, paid by the parents of the pupils. Mr. Munt remembers that he used the Scholars' Companion (similar in make-up to Swinton's Word Analysis). When war broke out, Major Cooke called the students

together under the oak trees (which are still standing on this site) and bade them farewell. He then joined General Lee's Staff. This school never reopened.

The academy movement was the result of a need for schools operated solely by private funds. In these schools were educated the children of parents who could afford to pay tuition. The academies were the forerunners of the private schools of the present day.

## Chapter V

### THE DEVELOPMENT OF PUBLIC SCHOOLS IN PRINCE GEORGE COUNTY

The Public School system in Virginia began in 1870, after the ratification of the Constitution framed by the Convention of December 3, 1867. Article 8 of the Constitution, entitled "Education" set forth in detail a plan for the establishment of a public school system. It provided, among other things, for the election of a State Superintendent of Public Instruction and a Board of Education. It provided that the Board should elect all county superintendents, have charge of funds and supervision of all schools, and should be responsible for the uniformity of text-books and for furnishing school houses.

Under this section the General Assembly was enjoined to set aside a permanent literary fund. Taxation for school purposes was also provided for, and the school age set from five to twenty-one years. Districts and counties under this section were permitted to tax property for school purposes.<sup>1</sup>

Under the provisions of this section on March 2, 1870, Dr. W. H. Ruffner was elected the first superintendent of public instruction of Virginia. He served for twelve years, and under his able management the schools of Virginia made an auspicious start.

Prince George County did not lose any time in getting its public school system started; evidence of this is found in the fact

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1. Virginia School Reports, Vol. 6, Part II, p. 105.

that on September 18, 1870, two months after the ratification of the Constitution, the Board of Education appointed Mr. Matthew W. Raney to serve as superintendent of schools for Prince George and Surry Counties.

On November 29, 1870 a meeting of the district board was held in Rives District, at which time plans for a future meeting were made, and the duties of the district members were discussed. On December 8, 1870 Mr. Raney presided over a public meeting held at the court house for the establishment of a public school. On January 21, 1871 Miss Hattie Boissean, who was afterwards the wife of Mr. H. C. Britton, superintendent of schools in 1885, was elected teacher for this school. It was designated "School Number 1, Brandon District."

In regard to the school system and the position of the superintendent in those days Mr. Britton writes:

"The first public school met and organized at the court house, presided over by the county superintendent, who, it might be said, did not about that time hold an enviable position, as he was called a 'black radical, a negro-lover and hater of his race' -- and that by some of the men who afterwards aspired, if they did not actually apply, for the same position... The system met with much opposition at first in some districts; prominent citizens fought it; the poor and ignorant, who should have rejoiced, fought it; but it steadily grew, and as Supt. Ruffner said, 'It was born a giant, and has grown with giant vigor.'" <sup>1</sup>

Mr. Britton goes on to explain that "after 1871 opposition gradually began to die out", and continues:

"The term of 1870 -71 was characterized by bickering

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1. Virginia School Reports, Vol. VI, p. 128.

generally on the part of the whites and a quiet satisfaction on the part of the blacks. The amount of tax required for school purposes was estimated at 25 cents on the \$100, which was as much opposed by the majority of the whites as it was favored by the blacks, who quietly went to the polls and gave the amount asked for by a popular vote. The superintendent about that time was almost unaided in his efforts to put the system in operation, as most of the trustees were not staunch 'school men' as they might have been, as they were 'school men' only when with school men, and when with its opponents would not uphold it, but allow it to be abused without defending it." <sup>1</sup>

In the year 1870 - 71 there were 13 schools operating in the county, with an enrollment of 437 pupils. The school census for that year was 7820. There was decided improvement to be noted the second year. The number of schools increased to 22, and the enrollment in this year was 825, with an average attendance of 459.

In connection with their annual statistical reports, superintendents were requested to make written statements on eleven points. In 1872 Superintendent Raney reported on the Prince George County Schools as follows:

1. Public sentiment concerning public schools:

"'Tis difficult to ascertain what is public sentiment concerning public schools. It is believed that the white tax-payers are not generally more favorably disposed than formerly, but they make fewer public complaints. A majority of the voters favor the system."

2. Have the colored people continued to manifest a great desire for education?

"They have, but they do not furnish their children with suitable books, or sufficient clothing, in some cases."

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1. Ibid., p. 128.

3. Views as to the probable working of the present mode of raising local school funds:

"The present mode of raising county and district school funds is much preferable to raising them by a resort to a popular vote; but the maximum rate of taxation, as fixed by law for both county and district purposes, is very far below the wants of the schools and the wishes of a majority of the friends of popular education."

4. Is it desirable that the required minimum of school attendance should be reduced? If so, to what number?

"No. The present minimum can be maintained, in a number of schools, greater than the money subject to school purposes is sufficient to support."

5. Has any improvement been observed in the qualifications of teachers?

"None worthy of remark."

6. Brief account of teachers' institutes or other educational meetings held during the year:

"Teachers' institute held at Bishop's Court House, July 4th, 1872; rather thinly attended. Teachers, male and female, and other school officers present; took much interest in the exercises. Several short addresses were made by the county school superintendent and other friends of the system."

7. To what extent has uniformity of text books been secured?

"Teachers' monthly reports fail to give satisfactory information on this point. They have been notified that hereafter a receipt will not be issued for a monthly report which is unsatisfactory on the subject of text books or vaccination."

8. Are the records of the District and County Boards properly kept?

"They are not. This failure produces much disorder in this business."

9. Any improvement, or prospect of improvement, in school houses?

"It is expected that the district tax, soon to be collected, will be spent chiefly in building new school houses and repairing those now in use."

10. Any litigation grown out of taxation for school purposes?

"None."

11. Any school property destroyed by violence?

"None." <sup>1</sup>

The total amount expended in the county that year for public education was \$7,764.19. The per capita cost per month was \$1.46.

By the next year public sentiment in the county towards the public school system had evidently improved, as in that year Superintendent Raney reported:

"Public sentiment is believed to be undergoing a change somewhat more favorable to the public school system in this county. This gratifying change is being shown amongst parents of children within the school age to a greater degree than amongst any other class of persons. Opposition to the system has not ceased to exist, but it is less open and violent than formerly." <sup>2</sup>

This document also reports an improvement in qualifications of teachers and the addition of one more school. The report contains an interesting sidelight on the acute race problem under which democratic institutions had to labor at that time. Superintendent Raney concludes "The co-education of the Races Improper, as well as Impossible." <sup>3</sup>

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1. Virginia School Reports, 1871-72, Vol. I.  
 2. Virginia School Reports, 1873, Vol. I.  
 3. Ibid.

By the year 1873 there were 17 schools, 15 of which were frame and 2 log houses. There were 17 teachers, whose average monthly salary was \$30.

Superintendent Raney died in 1874, and his place was taken by Mr. W. H. Harrison, who served as superintendent for five years. The schools suffered a serious set-back upon the death of Mr. Raney, as shown by the fact that they decreased in number to 14, -- 7 white and 7 colored, the following year. But Mr. Harrison succeeded in overcoming this handicap, for under his leadership the system gradually took new life, so that from then until 1877, when the school funds began to be diverted, there was a continual increase in the growth of the schools. No consolidation was attempted at this time, however.

By 1875 the schools had increased in number to 21, with a total school population of 2,648. The term was for 5.83 months. Mr. Harrison's annual report stated that in public opinion there was a gain, but that school houses were in bad condition. There were no teachers' institutes that year, but the following year he reported a teachers' institute, and that teachers were being graded according to certificates. \$5,505.39 was expended during 1876.

The next two years were marked by successive declines in revenue expended in Prince George County, -- \$4,711.66 in 1877 and \$3,942.81 in 1878.



In his eighth annual report State Superintendent Ruffner reports:

"The diversion of school funds complained of in my last report has increased. Previously we had lost at the rate of about \$80,000 annually, but last year over \$250,000 of school money was used for other purposes, or about one half the proceeds of taxation for school purposes. The result, of course, is a breaking down of the usefulness of the school system. The financial prospect is so gloomy that there must be an immediate and very large curtailment in our school operations." <sup>1</sup>

Prince George was affected by this diversion to the extent of having her schools reduced to 20 in the year 1879. The attendance declined to 467.

This was a discouraging time for the "school men". Mr. Britton, who was then superintendent of schools of Prince George County, comments upon their difficulties thus:

"..... the diversion of the school fund caused it to suffer and go backwards, as before mentioned. It can be said of this county (and few can boast as much) that teachers' warrants were never hawked around or discounted by shavers and barkers. Our county treasurer did all in his power to save the teachers from inconvenience and loss, paying them out of any funds that came first into his hands, and not unfrequently closing a school year with the districts indebted to him. Such disinterestedness on the part of an officer deserves special mention, especially as at that time public opinion was so much opposed to even paying out the public funds.

"..... Some trustees are satisfied to let the schools take care of themselves, and there the 'electoral boards' have been at fault; for, unless trustees did something to be removed for, they could always hold office, for it is rarely the case they are removed for not doing anything. The consequence is, that there are trustees holding office that were never in a school room; but the majority do their duty faithfully, and considering the fact that they get no pay, they are to be much commended." <sup>2</sup>

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1. Virginia School Reports, 1878.  
2. Ibid.

With the passage of the Henkel Act on March 3, 1879, \$459,515.95 was appropriated in Virginia for the use of the public schools of the state. This amount was to make up for the funds which had been diverted to other governmental functions during the previous several years. Under the impetus of these added funds school operations began to increase.

Nevertheless, it was difficult to get the county schools back upon a growing basis after the serious set-back of those years. Mr. Harrison had succeeded in bringing the schools through the crisis, and had just gotten the system restored when he died, in 1880, to be succeeded by Mr. Timothy Rives.

Mr. Rives' appointment took place in August, so that he was able to begin the school year with no diminution in the number of schools. This was made possible by the fact that funds were again being restored, and the old trustees were doing their utmost to keep the schools going. The school reports in that year do not list Surry and Prince George Counties together under one superintendent as heretofore, and from that year until 1909 Prince George had its own superintendent.

Although Mr. Rives was serving as superintendent when the Legislature met, his appointment was not conformed by this body, and Mr. H. C. Britton was elected to fill this place in 1881.

At this time all of the schools in the county were one-room schools, some of the buildings being of logs. Very few desks or

outhouses were available. Children sat upon rough benches without backs. Stoves were provided, but the pupils had to cut and bring the wood from adjoining woods. Pupils also tended the fire and swept the room, and did whatever janitor service was required by the teacher. Most of the buildings used as schools were donated or rented, and the nominal charge for rent was from two to three dollars a month per room.

In his reports to the State Superintendent of Public Instruction during the term of his office, Mr. Britton reported progress in several directions. In 1882 the amount of school funds available had risen to \$7,277.95. Male teachers in the county were receiving \$21.37, women \$23.20. This was below the average for the counties of the state, which was in that year \$27.21 for male and \$25.48 for women teachers. An increase was effected in 1883, and a further one in 1884, so that in that year male teachers in this county were receiving \$28.48 and women \$27.84.

In 1883 State Superintendent John E. Massey devoted part of his report to a tabulation of those counties which had paid their teachers promptly, and Prince George was listed among those which had done so. Only a few more than half of the counties were able to do this.

A teachers' institute was first reported in the county in 1883. One was held in 1884 also, and a Negro institute in 1885. But after this for a number of years the State Superintendent's report listed no institute in Prince George County.

In 1884 the county superintendent's salary was raised to \$300.00 a year. In commenting on "sentiment about the schools" in that year Superintendent Britton reported, "Very favorable; only a few of the more wealthy and ignorant oppose them." <sup>1</sup>

By such stages as enumerated above did the schools progress, slowly but surely, each stage of their progress being the result of a constantly awakening public consciousness in regard to public education.

#### The Development of the One- and Two-room Schools

Mr. Britton was followed in 1886 by Dr. J. W. Stephenson as superintendent of the county schools. During the next years small gains were made. Teachers' salaries showed a small increase, and school funds available increased to \$9,216.66. Two more school houses were added. The report for 1889 gives the first information we could find on cost of tuition per month per pupil. This amount was reported to be .89¢ for Prince George County in that year. The report on "sentiment about the schools" was simply "good". <sup>2</sup> In 1888 the first two-room or graded school was started at Disputanta.

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1. Virginia School Reports, 1885.  
2. Virginia School Reports, 1889.

In making his annual report in 1891 Mr. Comer, Superintendent of Schools of Prince George County, reported to the State as follows:

1. Any improvement in condition of schools?

"Yes. Discipline and results that follow. It may have been caused by the average attendance having been reduced to 10. I have heretofore stated that very many of our school buildings are uncomfortable and miserably furnished, and until these obstacles are removed, we can scarcely expect any marked improvement in our schools."

2. Have you undertaken any plans for the improvement of your schools?

"Yes. We approve of normal training and new methods, endorse the Peabody Institutes and urge teachers to attend. Have succeeded in collecting omitted taxes on railroads for four of our districts for years 1881 to 1888 inclusive, amounting to about \$2,000. Expect trustees to expend this sum in buildings and furniture."

3. What school legislation in your judgment is needed?

"Present laws sufficient if executed....." <sup>1</sup>

Under this question Mr. Comer recommended doubling the tax on liquor licenses and giving it to the schools, and putting back into force the capitation tax.

It seems that the expectations of Mr. Comer were realized in part, namely, the expenditure of the \$2,000 in buildings and equipment. For in 1891 a two-room school was built at Garysville and the following year a two-room school was erected at Newville.

In 1891 Mr. Benjamin Fenner was elected superintendent of

1. Virginia School Reports, 1891.

schools, in which position he served until 1908. Several one- and two-room schools were built in the next few years.

In 1898 we find evidence of the objection of a patron to the closing of a small one-room school. A letter written to Mr. Fenner in 1898 and preserved by his daughter, Mrs. Judith Bernard, shows that patrons fought the establishment of larger schools and wanted their own community school, no matter how small it was, nor how small the enrollment. The letter follows:

Burrowsville,  
February 22, 1898

Dear Ben:

I lament to have to write you that unless you divert yourself of the suspicion that you are harboring an intention to act unfairly against the school in Brandon Neck, that you will split the democratic party wide open in this part of the county. It is alleged that you permitted Miss Stevens to keep her school without an average because there was factious opposition, when you shut the school up in Brandon Neck for the very reason you permit Miss Stevens to keep hers open. I hope when you reflect about this matter you will see that the danger of driving a man like Alec Livesay to the wall, when there is money to run the county schools, is a mistake. Livesay has been a faithful democrat and should be upheld in any laudable ambition. He has a large family, and a group of friends right around him are incensed by seeing their families denied the privilege of schooling, when the negroes enjoy the right. The school trustees are willing to open the schools and you will have them at your back.

If I had time to write you a private letter I would have done so, but had no time for I only knew of the trouble yesterday and my friend, Alec Livesay, feared Miss Johnson will take another school and so they would lose her.

They say that if they have notice when the school will open that Miss Johnson can enroll not less than 16 or 17 scholars.

Sincerely your friend,

There was a general decrease in teachers' salaries, school funds available, number of school houses and length of term in the years from 1898 to 1904. Although the decrease in school funds was a slight one, teachers' salaries were reduced from \$26.94 for male and \$24.19 for women teachers in 1898 to \$20.20 for both male and women teachers in 1904. According to the State Superintendent's report for that year the term of the Prince George County Schools was shortened from 6.09 to 5.89 months per year, and there was a reduction of two in the number of school houses (not due to consolidation).

In 1904 the General Assembly passed an act authorizing the State Board of Education to appoint a board for the examination of teachers and the inspection of schools. Prince George was placed in the second circuit and Mr. Willis A. Jenkins was the first Examiner and Inspector. Dr. Massey, the State Superintendent, considered this to be "the most important and far-reaching act of the State Board of Education in many years."<sup>1</sup>

Apparently Mr. Jenkins immediately concerned himself with his new duties in the Second Circuit. His report on Prince George in 1907 was not a good one, however. It was as follows:

"Prince George is one of the few counties that has no high school. No consolidations have been made. A two-room school has been completed and takes the place of what would have been two one-room schools.

"The tax rate is unchanged, there have been no private contributions. The teachers' pay has been increased

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1. Virginia School Reports, 1905-06, p. 66.

five dollars per month and the term lengthened. This has come for the most part from the increase in State funds. The county itself has not responded as have other counties in this circuit. The sum of \$1,200 was spent in buildings in 1907 against \$315 in 1905." 1

To this we might add that the total valuation of school property in 1905 was \$6,025.

Interest in public school education was given an impetus in 1907 when the State Department decided to have prepared a large display for the Jamestown Exposition. Mr. Willis Jenkins was made superintendent of this display, and most of the schools of the state sent work done by the school children for exhibition.

Prince George made a contribution to which Mr. Jenkins referred in his report as follows:

"The Prince George Exhibit consists of two neatly bound volumes of miscellaneous school work, testifying to the creditable work of Virginia rural schools." 2

These volumes were recently presented by Mrs. Judith Bernard, who has preserved them, to the superintendent of schools of Prince George County, to be kept as a permanent record for the Prince George County School Board. These volumes are especially prized in view of the fact, pointed out in the first chapter, that practically all county school records prior to 1923 have been lost.

One of these volumes contains a letter written by Dewey Warren, a pupil of the Carson School in Prince George County, which is particularly interesting as it points a vivid contrast between the Carson

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1. Ibid., p. 70

2. Virginia School Reports, 1906-06; 1906-07, p. 539.



School as it existed then and the modern brick building later built there. The letter follows:

Carson, Virginia,  
March 9, 1907

Dear Friend:

My papa owns a farm near the village of Carson. I am my papa's oldest boy. He calls me his man, but I am only eight years old. I have two sisters and one brother. My sister and I go to school near our home. It is a rented house, and was once a dwelling. It has rough blackboards, and old seats that fall down often. Our mamas and papas say that it is fine to what they used to have. Just wish I could see where they went to school. But we will be better fixed another year for the Board says it is going to give us a new house and everything new. And won't we children be glad to have so many new things.

Your friend,

Dewey Warren.

Minutes of the district boards of Templeton and Blackwater districts in regard to the Disputanta Graded School give a picture of many difficulties. Apparently one of the major difficulties in those days was the matter of discipline. In 1908 there was a meeting at the court house, at which the following action was taken:

"At the same time the district board of Templeton and Blackwater District was called to consider the Disputanta Graded School of having bad order in school. The two boards decided to close the Disputanta Graded School on the 15th, and instructed Mr. D. A. Harrison to notify the teachers of action of the board and instructed him to state to them both why the boards closed the school, -- the teachers having been instructed two or three times to keep better discipline in their school and have failed to obey the two Boards." <sup>1</sup>

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1. Minute Book District Boards of Templeton and Blackwater Districts (Handwritten, covering period September 1906 to July, 1914) In office Prince George County School Board.

At this time it was customary to have the boys' and the girls' playgrounds separated:

"July 25, 1908 - the two boards decided to put a wire fence in front of school house and put a petition fence of boards to divide the boys' and girls' playgrounds." <sup>1</sup>

In this year the boards of Rives and Templeton districts decided to move School # 8 in Templeton, and Gary's School in Rives and provide a two-room or graded school for the two districts.

In July, 1909, Mr. W. W. Edwards was elected superintendent of schools, to serve both Prince George and Sussex Counties. In that year at a called meeting of the district boards the first steps for the building of a high school in Prince George County were taken. A rapid growth in schools took place in the next few years.

The Disputanta High School was built at a cost of \$9,000, -- \$5,000 of which was borrowed from the Literary Fund, \$2,000 provided from local funds, and \$2,000 borrowed locally. The new building, located at Disputanta, was used during the session 1910-11, and was the first consolidated high school in Prince George County.

With the establishment of this school the seed was sown for a high school movement in Prince George County.

Under Mr. Edwards' administration a school building program was undertaken which lasted for several years. In 1910-11 a two-room school was erected at Burrowsville on one acre of land, at a cost of \$450. The Prince George School, having four rooms and built at a cost of \$4,236.71, was erected in 1911. A school was also

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1. Ibid.

built in Rives District in 1911-12 on a site containing two acres of land. It was called the New Bohemia School, and cost \$936.18. It had two teachers.

In Bland District in 1911 a graded school was built and called the Rosewood School. A small school in City Point which had been closed for a number of years was reopened in that year also. Several pupils who had attended this little one-room school in former years later occupied prominent places in the business world, notable among whom was General William H. Cocke, born at City Point, and for many years Superintendent of the Virginia Military Institute.

In 1912 the City Hill Farm School, another one-room school, was built in Bland District. This school and the Rosewood School were operated until the government began the development of Camp Lee in 1917, when they had to be closed. Four rooms were then rented in the Presbyterian Church in the section now known as Woodlawn, and here make-shift class rooms were curtained off and four teachers were placed in charge. It was not until March, 1924 that this condition was remedied, when a contract was let for a nine-room building to be built at Woodlawn.

The next high school to be built in Prince George County was the Carson High School in Templeton District, which was built jointly by the Templeton District School Board of Prince George and the Rowatan District Board of Dinwiddie County. The operation was left to the district board of Templeton in Prince George County. This school

was built with the understanding that the patrons would raise \$1,500, the board would borrow \$1,500 and the district board of Dinwiddie County would furnish \$1,500. The contract price for this building was \$4,881, and the contract was let on March 6, 1913.

The Hopewell High School was built in 1915. This was a frame building located in the section of Hopewell known as "B. Village." At that time the schools of Hopewell were under the administration of the Prince George County Board, as the City of Hopewell had not established its own school board.

In 1916 Mr. J. W. Bristow was appointed superintendent of schools and held this position until 1920, when he resigned and Mr. W. W. Edwards was appointed in his place.

By 1920 the county had three high schools, located at Disputanta, Carson, and Hopewell, and twenty-five one- and two-room schools in the following districts: three in Templeton, seven in Brandon, five in Blackwater, four in Rives, and six in Bland. The high schools were accredited, but they were accessible to less than 50% of the school population. The one- and two-room schools had inadequate equipment, poorly trained teachers, and ran for only short terms.

It was not possible to divide the enrollment so that there was an equal distribution of children. The result was that one teacher had an average daily attendance of 8.6 while another had 39.8. The distances between schools made it necessary for some children to walk six miles to school.

A careful study of conditions soon convinced the school officials that consolidation of schools and transportation of pupils were essential to equalization of educational opportunities. A meeting was held, attended by the retiring superintendent, Mr. Edwards, the superintendent-elect, Mr. R. K. Hoke, and the members of the district board of Brandon. At this meeting it was decided to undertake a program of consolidation of schools in that district.

This program was extended to other districts under the leadership of Mr. Hoke.

#### The Development of the District High School

At the time of the establishment of the public school system Prince George County had five school districts, -- Blackwater, Bland, Brandon, Rives, and Templeton. The schools of the districts were given the district name and designated by numbers; for example, "Templeton # 1", "Templeton # 2", etc. Later however these schools began to be known by other names, usually the name of the nearest town, and the old district names were dropped.

Each school district had its own district school board composed of three members, -- the chairman, the clerk, and a member. Records of all district school affairs were kept by the clerk of the district board.

Once a year all of the district school boards met together at the court house, at which time they appeared before the board of

supervisors to secure the levy for the schools for the next year. This meeting had a dual purpose, since both county and district levies were laid at that time.

When a program of consolidation was undertaken in 1920, the schools of the county were still operating under the district school board plan; therefore, the district was used as a unit for organization.

One- and two-room schools were closed and a four-year high school established in each district. Motor trucks brought the children in to the large consolidated schools. Three small schools were continued in operation due to bad roads and other causes, but the high school students were all brought to the district high schools, where they were given the benefit of the larger schools.

#### Consolidation of Schools

Up until 1922 each of the five districts of the county had a school board of three members. The administration of the schools was therefore in the hands of fifteen board members and the superintendent of schools. This plan was unwieldy, and rivalry and petty jealousies caused small but annoying difficulties. More important, however, was the fact that as long as each district had its separate board it was impossible to provide children in different districts with equal educational opportunities.

With the abolition of the district boards on September 1, 1922, a county board of five members, one from each district, was set up. This board had charge of the disbursement of all funds obtained by levy or cash appropriation on a county basis instead of a district basis. Under the new plan all school affairs were administered upon a county-wide basis, so that old district lines were gradually done away with. This was an important step in school progress.

With the development of a high school in each district and the transportation of pupils to these schools, it was to be expected that difficulties of administration would arise with the expansion of the system. The superintendent, Mr. R. K. Hoke, after conferring with the school board, requested the State Board of Education to appoint a committee to make a survey of the whole county system, and to submit recommendations for the adjustment of certain difficulties and the future growth and development of the system.

In the spring of 1925 a survey of the schools was made by the following staff: Dr. M. L. Combs, State Supervisor of Secondary Education; Dr. K. J. Hoke, Dean, College of William and Mary; Mr. W. S. Deffenbaugh, Chief City School Specialist, U. S. Bureau of Education; Mr. E. E. Windes, Rural School Specialist, U. S. Bureau of Education; and Mr. C. K. Holsinger, University of Virginia.

This survey is of great interest to us, as it resulted in changes which were a decided improvement in the system. The first recommendation was as follows: "That all high school work at Rives and

Prince George High Schools be discontinued and the pupils be transported to Disputanta, Carson, Hopewell, and Petersburg." <sup>1</sup> This recommendation was carried out that year, the high school work at Rives and Prince George being discontinued and the pupils being transported to Disputanta and Carson.

The second recommendation was that two years of high school work be continued at Burrowsville until such time as it should be practicable to transport the high school pupils to Disputanta. The board did not feel that it was possible to follow this recommendation until 1932, when the junior high school department was transferred to Disputanta.

The third recommendation was that when additional buildings were needed in Prince George County, the school board consider the advisability of bringing all seventh grade pupils to the Disputanta and Carson schools for the purpose of reorganizing the work in these schools on the 6-5 plan. It was not possible to do this due to lack of building space for several years, but in 1939 the change was made.

The fourth recommendation was that adequate physical equipment be provided for home economics, art, agriculture, science, and commercial work in the Disputanta and Carson High Schools. Under this recommendation more adequate equipment for home economics and agricultural work was provided at Disputanta and the same type of work started at Carson in 1925-26. Commercial work was approved for the Disputanta School in September, 1926.

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1. School Survey of 1925 (In office of Prince George County School Board)



Due to lack of space it was not possible to offer commercial work in the Carson School until 1938-39, when the building was enlarged. During that session part-time commercial work was offered, and the following year full-time courses were offered.

The fifth recommendation, that the course of study offered in the high school at Burrowsville be under the general direction of the principal of the Disputanta High School, was complied with.

The first part of the sixth recommendation advised regarding the secondary program of studies as a county program under county administration. This was complied with. The recommendation further advised that teachers of art, home economics, and agriculture in the Disputanta High School teach these subjects also in the Burrowsville High School. Since the board was most anxious to move the entire high school department from Burrowsville to Disputanta, this part of the recommendation was not complied with.

The seventh recommendation was in regard to supervision of elementary and high schools of both county and city upon a cooperative basis. This resulted in the employment of a supervisor for the county in 1929.

The eighth recommendation was for a continuance of the home demonstration work. In 1927 it was necessary to discontinue this work, but it was renewed in 1937.

The report of the Survey Committee contained the following in regard to consolidation of schools:

"Prince George has probably done more in the way of

consolidation of schools than any other county in Virginia. As a matter of fact, the survey has little to recommend with reference to consolidation other than the carrying out of the program which is already under way. Insofar as the topography of the county and roads are concerned, the question of consolidation in Prince George County is very simple. As a rule the roads are in excellent condition and high school children can be transported in most cases fifteen or twenty miles, if necessary, with no evil results."

Taking the recommendations of the Survey Committee as a guide, the board made changes whenever and wherever possible so as to have the system conform to these recommendations. These changes have contributed greatly to the improvement of the schools.

#### Transportation of Pupils

No transportation was offered by the district boards in Prince George County prior to 1914. In some cases families hired wagons and drivers to take their children to school, the expense being shared by the several families. But this method of transportation served only a small part of the school population, since most children were unable to pay for this service.

The first action of a district board in regard to furnishing transportation was taken by the Templeton and Blackwater District School Boards in the summer of 1914 when it was decided that two transportation routes would be provided to carry the children of these two districts to the Disputanta School. A large wagon drawn by a mule was furnished for each route. These wagons were covered with canvas and had seats arranged on each side.

The transportation system began to grow very gradually. In 1918-19 \$1,225.26 was spent for transportation and the following year the amount had increased to \$2,175, as other routes were established.

With the institution of the program of school consolidation beginning in 1921 the transportation system had to be rapidly expanded. In 1923-24 there were twenty-three transportation routes operating under contract in the five districts of the county, at a total cost of operation of \$14,610.17 annually. The cost the previous year, before the final consolidation, had been \$6,227.52.

In 1925-26, 697 pupils were transported to and from school in Prince George County. In this year there were twenty-eight different vehicles used, including twenty-three trucks (four of which were owned by the school board), four automobiles, and the electric cars operating between Petersburg and Hopewell.

By 1932 there were twenty-nine buses and one chartered street car being used and the cost of operation had risen to \$19,657.74.

This was more than the county could afford, and consideration was given to the necessity of lowering this cost.

Excessive repair bills, caused by the obsolete nature of the four county-owned buses, seemed to be a logical starting point to cut expenses. The question of the advisability of county-ownership of vehicles arose. School officials and citizens preferred the contractor plan, in spite of the fact that contractors furnished very poor vehicles, yet continually raised the contract price.

The school board asked the State Department of Education to make a survey of the Prince George County schools, and to submit recommendations for the improvement of its transportation system. The survey was completed in May, 1932, and contained the following recommendations:

1. Change to county ownership and operation as rapidly as possible.
2. Use larger, modern, buses.
3. Reroute buses by combining and eliminating routes where possible so that maximum service is given by each bus. This involves:
  - a. Some buses serving two or three schools.
  - b. Some buses making a second short trip.
  - c. All drivers living near the ends of routes.
4. Use the savings through county ownership to finance the purchase of new buses. <sup>1</sup>

These recommendations were discussed at a joint meeting of the county school board and the board of supervisors, when a lengthy discussion of the transportation problem was held. The school board proposed consolidation of two routes then under contract, and the purchase of a new chassis and body with the savings effected by the consolidation. The recommendation was carried in spite of the fact that most of the members preferred the old plan.

A modern new bus was purchased and put on the route in September, 1933. When the bus had been in operation only three weeks, it collided with a Peninsula bus on its regular run. The school bus was turned over, all the window lights broken, and the body damaged.

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1. School Survey of 1932 . In office of Prince George County School Board.

Several of the children were taken to the hospital for first aid, although none were seriously hurt. Hospitalization was provided for one boy who remained in the hospital two weeks.

The Peninsula Line assumed all liability, paid hospitalization bills and a substantial sum to the boy, besides paying one hundred and fifty dollars for repairs to the bus.

The accident had two good results: the board took out bus insurance, and everyone immediately became convinced of the advisability of operating only strong, safe buses. It was apparent that if one of the other buses had been in such a collision the children would undoubtedly have been killed or seriously injured. It appeared from this accident that the only way to insure safety was to operate modern, county-owned buses, or to require contractors to furnish buses which met all safety standards.

The economy of operating its own buses having been demonstrated, the county planned the gradual purchase of vehicles and equipment. Additional equipment was bought with the savings effected as additional routes were taken over from the contractors, and drivers for these vehicles were hired upon a yearly basis. Strict standards for contractor-owned vehicles were set up also.

Thirty dollars was established as a monthly salary for the driver of a county-owned bus where the county furnished everything. A scale for additional pay was decided upon for those drivers who furnished all or part of the vehicle or equipment used.

The board continued to replace buses owned by contractors

with county-owned vehicles and equipment, until in 1935-36 the county was able to take over its last contract.

New standards were set up by the board. These changes had to do with choice of a standard make of chassis, size of body, size of wheelbase, type of wheels, types of tires, seating capacity, and arrangement of seats. The changes in standards required a constant improvement in buses from the standpoint of both safety and comfort.

Regulations for trade-in of vehicles were adopted, competent mechanics were hired upon a yearly basis, and everything that could be done to insure the care of equipment and its safe handling was required.

Drivers were examined by a representative of the State Motor Vehicle Commission at the beginning of each school year. In the operation of their vehicle they were required to observe strict safety precautions.

The county is being efficiently served in the school year 1939-40 by 13 bus routes. Before this could be accomplished, however, consolidation of schools had to be brought to its highest point and all routes had to be laid off in the most economical manner possible. The total cost of operation for these bus routes for the year 1938-39 was \$14,264.83.

One of the most important factors in the growth of the schools of Prince George County has been its transportation system. By this means children of all sections of the county are provided with equal educational opportunities. Although some of them live in

sparsely settled sections of the county, they nevertheless have the advantages offered by a large and well-staffed school. They have the advantage of more highly qualified teachers and more varied curricula than could be offered in very small schools. In addition to this, very decided social benefits for both pupils and parents are achieved.

#### Certification of Teachers

When the public school system was inaugurated in 1870, it was very hard to secure teachers of any kind. According to Mrs. Judith Bernard, a daughter of the Mr. Benjamin Fenner who was superintendent of the Prince George County Schools, "the main requirement in the minds of the school trustees was whether or not the applicant for a teaching position was a daughter or a son, or was otherwise related to a Confederate veteran. If the applicant was a relative of a veteran, he or she was given preferment over all who were not so related, without regard to other qualifications."

In 1872 in his annual report to the State, Mr. Raney, Superintendent of Schools of Prince George County, replied to the question "Have any improvements been achieved in the qualifications of teachers?" by saying, "None worthy of remark."<sup>1</sup>

By 1876 teachers were being graded according to certificates, but apparently their classification had no bearing upon the salary

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1. Virginia School Reports, 1872.

received. In 1879 Mr. Britton, Superintendent of Schools of Prince George County, reported:

"The school trustees have as a general thing been efficient -- one fault however -- they have been too willing to fix the teachers' pay at a small figure, thereby driving the best teachers from us, and accumulating those less capacitated. This in a measure, however, was counteracted by annual examinations, which deterred, to a great extent, the inefficient from offering themselves. And here it is well to say, for it is a well-known fact, that sometimes those standing the best examinations make the poorest teachers...." <sup>1</sup>

Up until this time there was in the annual reports of the State Superintendent of Public Instruction a lamentable lack of reports from Prince George County of a reasonable number of teachers' institutes, or any other special attention being paid to teacher training. In State Superintendent Massey's report of 1894-95 it is therefore interesting to note that in 1894 two white and seven Negro teachers were listed from Prince George as attending normal schools, while in 1895 two white and twelve Negro teachers were listed.

In 1896-97 Dr. Massey issued a circular to the superintendents in which he said, in part, "The time has come when we can no longer afford to neglect the professional training of teachers." <sup>2</sup> In his report for that year the first listing of teachers' certificates issued by the superintendent of Prince George County is made.

Evidently the slow progress made in Prince George County was no slower than that made in other counties of the state. In his

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1. Virginia School Reports, 1879.
  2. Virginia School Reports, 1896-97.



report for 1900-01 State Superintendent Joseph W. Southall, in urging the need of more high schools and listing the benefits to be derived from their widespread establishment, said:

"We need them also to prepare teachers for the common schools..... The great majority of our teachers have had no training other than that which they received in the district schools."<sup>1</sup>

With the establishment of a State Board of Examiners and Inspectors in 1905 the matter of teacher certification began to be stressed, and in the next few years an improvement began to take place in Prince George County.

At this time examinations were made out by the division superintendents. In 1907-08 there was only one teacher in Prince George who held a professional or life diploma, and she was a Negro teacher.

The following two tables will give a picture of the improvement in teacher certification. In the first, a comparison between 1896 and 1906-07 there is little change. Table No. II shows the improvement which took place after 1906-07, when the State Board of Inspectors and Examiners began to function.

Table I

Certification of Teachers

	<u>1896</u>			<u>1906-07</u>		
	<u>White</u>	<u>Negro</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>White</u>	<u>Negro</u>	<u>Total</u>
Collegiate Professional or Life	0	0	0	1	0	1
Special	0	0	0	0	0	0
1st Grade	16	3	19	12	8	20
2nd Grade	4	10	14	7	8	15
3rd Grade	1	5	6	1	0	1
Emergency	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>3</u>
Total	21	18	39	21	19	40

1. Virginia School Reports, 1900-01.

Table II  
 Certification of Teachers

	1909-10		
	<u>White</u>	<u>Negro</u>	<u>Total</u>
Collegiate Professional or Life	5	4	9
Special	0	0	0
1st Grade	10	3	13
2nd Grade	7	9	16
3rd Grade	2	3	5
Emergency	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>
Total	24	19	43

In 1919 the Virginia Education Commission, directed by Alexander J. Inglis of Harvard University, made a report to the Assembly of Virginia. In this report teacher certification was referred to thus:

"Until the past year Virginia probably had the doubtful honor of issuing more kinds of certificates -- about thirty-six separate varieties -- than any other state. In 1918 that practice was abandoned and the number of licenses to teach in the public schools of the state reduced to eight." <sup>1</sup>

The eight certificates were as follows: collegiate professional, collegiate, normal professional, elementary, special, first grade, second grade, and local permit.

The demand for better instruction for the children of Prince George County resulted in standards of teachers' certificates being raised, in 1921-22. In that year we find the board going on record as being in favor of better preparation for teachers, when they decided that after that session no teacher holding only a first grade certificate would be appointed.

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1. Virginia Public Schools, Education Commission's Report to the Assembly of Virginia, 1919.

In May, 1923 the board went further and required all teachers in the high school to have a normal professional certificate. By this year teachers in Prince George County held certificates as follows:

Table III

## Certification of Teachers

	<u>1923</u>	<u>White</u>	<u>Negro</u>	<u>Total</u>
Collegiate		3	0	3
Special		8	0	8
Normal		9	4	13
Elementary		6	15	21
Provisional - 1st		4	2	6
First Grade		<u>5</u>	<u>4</u>	<u>9</u>
Total		35	25	60

In 1925-26 there were 43 white teachers employed in the county, 16 or 37% of whom held collegiate professional certificates.

In 1926 qualifications were further raised when the board passed a regulation that "No new white teacher will be appointed holding less than a normal professional certificate."<sup>1</sup>

A decided improvement had taken place by the year 1929-30. The number of white teachers holding the higher certificates in that year had increased to 33, or 66%, with a consequent diminution of the number holding the lower certificates.. In this year the teacher personnel numbered 50.

In September, 1930 the board further raised the qualifications by requiring that all white teachers in the elementary schools have

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1. Minutes of the Prince George County School Board, 1926-27.

a normal professional certificate, and those in the high schools a college degree by September 1, 1933. Thirty, or 75% of the teachers in the elementary schools at that time had a normal professional certificate, or its equivalent.

It may be of interest at this point to state that at the end of the school session in 1933 the teacher having the longest teaching record in Prince George County resigned. She had taught for fifty years on a first grade certificate.

In 1934 the board ruled that all white teachers employed after September 1, 1935 should have at least a collegiate or collegiate professional certificate, and added that the applicants with masters' degrees would be given preference. As a result of this action the teachers' qualifications had been brought up, in 1939-40 to the following point:

Table IV

## Certification of Teachers

	<u>1939-40</u>	<u>White</u>	<u>Negro</u>	<u>Total</u>
Collegiate		6	2	8
Collegiate Professional		18	7	25
Special		1	1	2
Normal professional		22	17	39
Elementary		—	5	5
Total		47	32	79

From the above it can be seen that by 1939 teachers' qualifications had been raised to the point where all white teachers in the county could be classified under four of the higher types of certificates. To accomplish this teachers had attended summer school and

taken correspondence courses, and some had obtained leaves of absence to do the necessary work. The board made a further requirement in 1932 that teachers attend summer school or take a trip abroad once every four years.

Under this plan of teacher certification instruction in our county schools has shown great improvement.

#### Summary

The first public school in Prince George County was established on January 21, 1871. The first superintendent did not hold an enviable position as he was called a black radical and Negro-lover. He received very little support from the school trustees, many of whom were afraid to work for the schools.

The amount of taxes estimated for school purposes was 25 cents on the \$100 valuation. This was much opposed by the majority of the whites but favored by the Negroes, who voted for the tax. This feeling on the part of the white tax payers continued for a long time, but gradually the number of public complaints decreased. By 1884 "only a few of the more wealthy and ignorant opposed it."<sup>1</sup>

By such stages did the schools progress, slowly but surely, each stage of their progress being the result of a constantly awakening public consciousness in regard to public education.

The school buildings were small, uncomfortable, and miserably furnished. The first building of any size was a two-room school which was built in 1888 by the joint efforts of the patrons and the school trustees. Immediately a desire on the part of the citizens for more adequately equipped buildings was manifested, with the result that

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1. Virginia School Reports, Vol. VI, p. 28.

several one- and two-room buildings were built before 1909.

An ambitious building program begun in 1910 resulted in more adequate schools than the county had ever before enjoyed. Under this program a high school was built in each district. The development of the district high schools was an important step toward the consolidation of schools which was later carried out.

In 1922 the five district boards, of five members each, were abolished, and a county board of five members was elected to take their place. This change resulted in greater unity and economy of administrative effort.

In 1925 a Survey of the county schools was held, and the recommendations of the Survey Committee toward consolidation of schools and other improvements were carried out with great benefit to the system.

Another important contributing factor to the growth of the schools has been the demand for better teacher training. As early as 1876 teachers were being graded according to certificates in Prince George County, but for many years the number of teachers who had had any normal training whatever was few indeed. A continual revision upward of the requirements for teachers, particularly in recent years, has resulted in all county teachers being classified under one of four approved types of certificates.

The present school system of Prince George County can boast of modern, well-planned school buildings with large playgrounds, a full-length term, an adequate number of well-trained teachers, and a transportation system which enables children in sparsely settled areas to attend the large consolidated schools and enjoy the attendant advantages.

## Chapter VI

### NEGRO EDUCATION IN PRINCE GEORGE COUNTY

Before the War Between the States nothing whatever was done toward providing education for Negroes, other than that provided by masters for their slaves. In such cases the teaching was usually done by the mistress herself, in her own household.

Public sentiment was against offering the Negro any educational advantages, or even the right of free assemblage. In 1851 the Prince George County Grand Jury found as follows:

"We present Thomas Andrews Sr. of this county (a free negro) for having an unlawful assemblage of slaves and free negroes in and about his house at City Point in this county and allowing public preaching therein by a slave on the 18th day of May last. Upon the information of Robert Gilliam, sworn and sent to the Grand Jury."<sup>1</sup>

After the war two white ladies came down from the North and rented a small house in City Point, where they opened a school for Negroes. They taught all Negroes who would come, and charged them no tuition. This information was given the author by Mr. George L. Munt, who lived here as a boy during the war and who remembers this school, although he has forgotten the names of the teachers. Apparently there exists no written record of this school.

Another pioneer of education for the Negro race was the late J. H. Lamb, who was born at City Point, Prince George County, about

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1. Prince George County Records, Prince George Court House, Virginia.

1856. Lamb attended Hampton Normal Institute when about sixteen years old, and was a classmate of Booker T. Washington. He returned to City Point from the Institute and taught here for fifty years. This information was given to the author by S. L. Perry, a Negro minister of Hopewell, who was associated with Lamb in his later years and who knew him well. When Lamb died in 1933, the author attended his funeral, which lasted for several hours, due to the number of friends who wished to speak a testimonial to his intelligent devotion to the cause of education of his race.

Five schools for Negroes were in operation in this section by the year 1870. The equipment was meager, with only the barest necessities in the way of benches and stoves.

The growth of the Negro schools in the County between the years 1870 and 1920 showed an increased awareness on the part of our citizens of the necessity to provide adequate educational facilities to our Negro children. The result was that by 1920 there were twenty buildings, with much better and more adequate equipment. These were all frame, one-room buildings.

The first consolidation of Negro schools in the county took place in 1921, when, through the help of the Rosenwald Fund, a two-room building was constructed in Bland District. This was a small gain, yet it was an encouraging sign of the increasing interest in Negro education in this county.

In 1922 a report on the high schools of Virginia contained the following criticism (which criticism was entirely justified by con-



ditions in this county at that time):

"There is ample explanation for the limited secondary school opportunities for the Negroes in the State, but the condition is one that should not be tolerated any longer. At present there are not enough high schools in the State to educate the teachers who are needed for the Negro elementary schools, to say nothing of providing for those who will not become teachers. Were it not for the privately supported high schools for Negroes, it would not be possible for the State to conduct the elementary schools without importing teachers!"<sup>1</sup>

In 1923 Negro patrons of Burrowsville asked the school board to erect a two-room school in Brandon District. This was done, but not until the patrons had agreed to furnish lumber, hauling, and labor, and the Rosenwald Fund had also given substantial help.

On November 4, 1924, the Burrowsville Negro School, a modern two-room building, was opened. It was the second modern Negro school building in Prince George County.

Another modern frame building was opened in 1924. This building also was made possible through the assistance of the Rosenwald Fund.

A county training school for Negroes was completed in October, 1924. This was a two-room building. Mr. W. A. Walton, Principal of the Disputanta (white) school was appointed to supervise the school and to arrange the schedule. Under this schedule two assistant teachers taught two sections of pupils each day, one in the morning and one in the afternoon.

On September 23, 1928, an addition of two rooms was authorized for this school. The following year, with assistance furnished by

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1. Annual Report of Public High Schools of Virginia, 1922,23.

the Rosenwald Fund, the school term was lengthened to nine months. The training school was at this time a frame building of four rooms. It had been constructed with funds from several sources, as stated above, namely, the county school board, the Negro patrons, and the Rosenwald Fund. This little school, built under such difficulties, and filling such a real need, was destroyed by fire in 1930. It was the only Negro school in Prince George County offering high school work.

The board was faced with a real emergency, for they felt that somehow the school should be replaced. The insurance on the building amounted to only \$3,000, and we were in the midst of the depression. A temporary building was constructed. It had tar-paper sides and roof, and there were no windows in front. Nevertheless, it was the best that could be provided under the circumstances.

In 1934 the superintendent sought the assistance of Mr. Arthur Wright, President of the Slater Fund, who promised that if a loan of \$8,000 could be secured from the Literary Fund, the Slater Fund would provide the interest and curtailment on the loan for five years. Application was accordingly made to the Literary Fund, after permission had been granted by the Prince George County Supervisors. The funds were granted and a modern four-room brick building was built and called the Disputanta Training School. This was the first brick building to be provided for Negroes in Prince George County. It offered both elementary and high school work.

It has been aptly said that the Negro schools are just about

twenty-five years behind the white schools. This is surely true in our own county, for we find that while a gradual improvement began to take place about 1910 in the white schools of our system, it was not until about 1935 that improvement began to be marked in the Negro schools.

With funds available under the Works Progress Administration two additional rooms and other improvements have been added to the original building which housed the Disputanta Training School. The three rooms of the original building have been converted into modern class rooms, and an Agricultural and Home Economics Building has been built. In September, 1939 the school was accredited.

The patrons have purchased three additional acres of land to enlarge the playground of this school. The investment in this school plant represents at present an outlay of approximately \$40,000.

With the inauguration of the Civil Works Administration program a blanket project for building, re-building, and improving school buildings for Negroes throughout the county was granted. The Works Progress Administration later provided money for continuance of these projects. As a result of grants under these programs all of the buildings have been thoroughly remodeled and several new buildings built. Slate blackboards, sanitary privies, modern wood-and-coal houses have been built, good wells have been dug and much grading and draining has been done to provide playground space.

Under this program four two-room frame elementary school buildings have been constructed: Harrison Grove, Old Academy, Cedar

Level and Providence Schools. New one-room schools have been built at Bland and Camp Lee, and other schools have been completely remodeled. All buildings, though of frame construction, are modern in all respects.

Consolidation of schools since 1933 has resulted in the closing of the following one-room schools: Rives, Blackwater # 1, Blackwater # 6, Bland # 1, Blairs, and the Election House Schools.

Transportation for Negro pupils was begun during the school year 1937-38, when one bus was provided to transport the pupils of Templeton and Rives Districts to the Disputanta School. During the session 1938-39 an additional bus was provided to transport the pupils from Brandon District to Disputanta. During the session 1939-40 another bus route was added to transport pupils from parts of Bland, Rives, and Blackwater Districts to Disputanta. These buses are provided by the County and are operated in the same manner as the buses for white pupils.

It can be seen from this that the Disputanta Training School is serving high school pupils of the rural districts of the county. Children living in the county adjacent to the City of Hopewell and to Petersburg attend the Carter G. Woodson Negro School in Hopewell, and the High School for Negroes in Petersburg. Tuition is paid for them by the school board of Prince George County.

A five-room school was completed in Arlington subdivision, in Prince George County, and an addition made to the Cedar Level School, so that at the beginning of the session 1939-40 county

elementary children living near Hopewell who had previously attended the Carter G. Woodson School were transferred to these county schools.

The trend in this session of 1939-40 is to close all of the one-room schools for Negroes, and to establish consolidated two-room schools.

## Chapter VII

### FEDERAL AGENCIES OPERATING AS AIDS TO SCHOOLS OF HOPEWELL AND PRINCE GEORGE COUNTY

In Prince George County federal aid had been received prior to 1933 in vocational agriculture and home economics; in Hopewell aid had been extended in home economics and trade and industrial education. Although federal funds were used to assist in these programs, all funds were disbursed to the local school divisions through the State Department of Education. All personnel was employed by the local school board, which paid one-third of the teachers' salaries, the remainder being paid by state and federal funds. Shop equipment and building aid were rendered on a basis of one-half furnished by the local school board and one-half by the State Department of Education.

A new type of federal assistance came into effect as a result of the depression in 1933, when several new agencies were set up. These agencies will be discussed very briefly.

#### Civil Works Administration

The first Federal Works Program began on November 7, 1933, and the first school projects were started under this program in Hopewell and Prince George on December 15, 1933.

This program was created primarily to give work to unemployed persons and to assist business recovery. It was a boon to local

school boards, which had little or no funds for maintenance or improvements.

Under the Civil Works Administration the government furnished all labor and an amount for materials equal to 30% of the total amount expended for labor. No building of over two rooms could be built under C. W. A. regulations. Therefore most of the work done under this program was remodeling, improving, and additions to existing buildings, and developing athletic fields and school grounds.

The projects submitted for Hopewell provided for improvements in all the schools. The interior of the Hopewell High School was completely remodeled, with terrazo floors and vitrotile wainscoting in all corridors, cafeteria, and lavatories, maple floors in all class rooms, walls plastered throughout, and all woodwork painted. All electrical and plumbing work was changed and repaired, and gutters and sidewalks were provided. Extensive repairs were made to all of the other buildings also, and all school grounds developed or improved.

In Prince George County a project was submitted for improvements to all the schools. New roofs were provided at Disputanta and Rives Schools, plastering done, a two-room addition provided at Carson, and curb and gutters provided at all of the schools.

The Negro schools of the county, which were in a terrible condition, were remodeled completely, inside and out. Slate black-

boards were installed and concrete sidewalks and steps provided. Four one-room schools were built.

#### Public Works Administration

Under the Public Works Administration, another governmental agency which started about the same time, large projects were initiated and developed. The largest elementary school in the City of Hopewell, the Patrick Copeland School, was built under this program. No P. W. A. projects were developed in Prince George County.

#### Federal Emergency Relief Administration

In 1934 the C. W. A. program was supplanted by the Federal Emergency Relief Administration. This program was primarily a labor program, as the maximum allowance provided for material was ten per cent. Most of the labor used was unskilled. Therefore in both county and city grading projects were undertaken. Athletic fields, playgrounds, and landscaped school grounds were the results.

#### Works Progress Administration

The Federal Emergency Relief Administration was supplanted by the Works Progress Administration on October 5, 1935. Projects were submitted as heretofore, all labor and approximately twenty-five per cent of material costs being provided. This program is still operating (1939-40) with excellent results in this division.

The largest projects developed under this program in the City



of Hopewell were those for the concrete wall around the athletic field, the grading necessary for the development of the stadium, and the building of the auditorium and cafeteria for the new Patrick Copeland School. Additional projects provided for concrete stands, a field house, and tennis courts in the stadium.

In Prince George County small schools have been built and other schools have been improved by the addition of lunch rooms and other facilities. Home Economics cottages have been built at Carson and Disputanta. The largest project in the county was the building of a modern four-room building, with auditorium and cafeteria, at Burrowsville.

#### National Youth Administration

This program may be divided into two classes:

a) Youths between the ages of 16 and 24, who are not in school.

These young people are given various jobs in accordance with their capabilities. Girls are used in the school libraries and lunch rooms, while the boys work on the play grounds and assist with W. P. A. projects.

b) Youths in high school between the ages of 16 and 21. These youths are given assignments of work by the principals and teachers. In this way these young people can earn enough to pay for their school lunches and books, and help toward buying their clothing and other expenses.

### Nursery Schools

The Nursery School program in Hopewell was begun in 1933 when two of these schools were established in two of the elementary schools of the city. Children from two to six years of age from families on the relief rolls were accepted in these schools. Here they were given a hot lunch in the middle of the day, followed by a rest period. They were taught good manners and simple health rules, their rest and play were supervised, and improvements along many lines were realized.

Salaries for personnel were provided by the government, and an appropriation of twenty-five dollars monthly was made by the local school board to pay half the expense of food for the children's lunches. The staff consisted of a head teacher, assistant teacher, cook, and maid. Thirty children were enrolled in these two classes. In 1936 the two were combined into one school.

### Emergency Education Program

This has been primarily a works program, and has been used to assist needy teachers in Hopewell and Prince George County. Under this program classes for adults in reading, writing, and citizenship were provided. Teachers were also given employment in teaching music and in supervised recreation, and some have been employed in school libraries.

### Summary

The various agencies operating under the government program have been responsible for alleviating much suffering. By means of the nursery schools, and assistance given to high school pupils and out-of-school youth, young people have been helped to develop into useful citizens.

In adult classes and home-making centers the quality of home life has been lifted to a higher plane. Men let out of employment during the depression have been able to save their homes, in many cases, with the help of these agencies, and they have been able to provide their families with the necessities of life.

The various works programs have put our schools far ahead of what we could have hoped a few years ago. In this connection the words of Dr. John W. Studebaker, United States Commissioner of Education, are significant:

"Our nation's renaissance in school construction during the past six years has been stimulated largely by the contributions of the Public Works Administration."<sup>1</sup>

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1. Bulletin, P. W. 93351, Federal Works Agency, December 26, 1939.

## Chapter VIII

### THE GENERAL ADULT EDUCATION PROGRAM

The General Adult Education program was made possible when the General Assembly of Virginia appropriated the sum of \$50,000 for the biennium in 1938, to be used for adult education. An allotment of one hundred and fifty dollars was made to the City of Hopewell and the same amount to the County of Prince George by the State. A requirement for receiving this fund was that it must be matched equally by the county and the city.

No work was done in the white schools of Hopewell or Prince George County under this program during the session 1938-39. However, elementary classes in reading and writing were provided in four of the county Negro schools. These classes were well attended and a number of adults learned to read and write. The fund was used entirely in this manner in an effort to wipe out illiteracy. No illiterates could be found in Hopewell and therefore the entire amount was expended in the county.

During the present session (1939-40) adult classes have been organized in the schools of Disputanta, Carson and Woodlawn. These classes have been well attended and the instruction has been provided by the regular teachers. The classes have operated one night a week for ten weeks. The following courses have been given: citizenship, current events, religious education, electrical wiring, blueprint reading, problems of adolescence, and elementary school work.

The only requirement was that as many as ten people must elect a course for it to be given.

Under this program it is hoped to bring the schools closer to the public, utilize the school buildings more extensively, and to carry the educational program beyond the school room by making it available to adults.

## Chapter IX

### THE DEVELOPMENT OF A PUBLIC SCHOOL SYSTEM IN THE CITY OF HOPEWELL

Due to a lack of authentic records in Hopewell, an account written by Miss Manie Cook about the schools of Hopewell is particularly valuable. Miss Cook taught in the Hopewell schools for many years, and was teaching here in 1923 when she wrote this account, in the preparation of which she interviewed many old residents.

There follow several extracts from this account:

"As nearly as can be gathered from information obtained from an old resident of City Point, a public school has been in existence continuously in this place since about 1873. During this period there was an interim of one session in which there was no school. Mrs. Charles Nelson, a native of Isle of Wight, Virginia, who after her marriage made her home at City Point, became active in securing the number of pupils required to maintain a public school. An average of twenty pupils was required and the enrollment numbered from twenty-five to thirty-five pupils for many years, the teacher's salary being fifty cents a month per pupil.

"A site of land, which is now the terminal of the City Point Car Line, was donated for public school purposes by Dr. Richard Eppes. A one-room building was erected and used for several years. This building was afterwards torn down and was replaced by a more comfortable one-room building which was used until 1914. During the last years of the life of the one-room school its enrollment decreased from twenty to ten. Failing to secure pupils to make this average, the school was closed during the session 1910, but resumed work in 1911, and continued until 1914." <sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Cook, Manie, Account of the Hopewell Schools, a typewritten account in the Hopewell High School Library.

Development Under the Control of Prince George  
County School Board (1914 - 1923)

Until 1914 this one school was sufficient to meet the needs of the small village of City Point. The magnificent deep-water landing facilities and other natural advantages attracted the Dupont Company, which established a huge plant here. The company built homes for its workers and by the summer of 1915 a city was established. The new city was called Hopewell.

The rapid increase in population put a terrific strain upon the existing school facilities. With the efforts to build more suitable structures as homes and business buildings, thought was given to providing proper school buildings. We may say that the present system of schools started in 1915.

People flocked into the city from all over the United States, until in 1917 the population was said to have been 40,000 people.<sup>1</sup> This was due to the large munition plant then in operation. People had come to the new "gold mine" by the thousands. Tents were pitched, shelters of tar paper, corrugated iron, slab-wood, or anything that could be obtained were thrown together to house the extra thousands.

Naturally there had been no paved streets in the little village of City Point. Now there was no time to build them in the newly-born city of Hopewell. Boards were hastily laid end to end for sidewalks. The streets became churned-up mud in bad weather, so that riding horseback was the surest and best means of transportation through the streets of the city.

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1. Records, Chamber of Commerce, Hopewell, Virginia.

In 1917 two frame school buildings were built, a six-room frame building at City Point, and a twenty-room building on the National Cemetary Road, near the residential section known as "B. Village." These two buildings, with two rented rooms in South B. Village and two rented rooms in James River Village, were the only buildings used for public school purposes until 1923. So crowded were conditions that two sections of children were taught in each room, one in the morning and the other in the afternoon -- and then the same class room was frequently used for adult classes at night.

People continued to move here to work in the plants, until the school enrollment reached 2,007 in 1918-19.

Hopewell continued to grow. The day the Armistice was signed it possessed four banks, many blocks of permanent buildings and a retail trade amounting to about \$4,000,000 a year.<sup>1</sup>

By the close of the year 1919 the large munition plant had entirely ceased operations, and most of the war-time population of 40,000 people had moved away. During the year 1918-19 the annual school enrollment decreased from 2,007 to 733, and there were only 350 children on active roll at the close of school in June, 1920.

During the next few years several permanent industries were established here with the result that by 1921 the population had increased to approximately 7,000.

A high school building was then needed. A large frame building used as a Y. M. C. A. building by the Dupont Company was purchased from them by the Prince George County School Board and converted into

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1. Records of Hopewell Chamber of Commerce.



a high school. At the same time another building which had been used as a warehouse was also purchased. This was converted into a school for the Negroes and called the Carter G. Woodson Negro School. In 1923 the Highland Park School was established. This was not a regular school building either, but was housed in four rented cottages.

During this time all the Hopewell schools were owned and operated by the school board of Prince George County, due to the fact that the larger part of the residential and industrial area of Hopewell was not incorporated as a part of that city. On July 1, 1923 this area was annexed to the City of Hopewell. A school board was appointed for the newly-enlarged city. The City School Board immediately purchased all school buildings within its territory from the Prince George County School Board, and assumed control of its own schools. The purchase price was \$75,000.

A table showing the sharp increases and decreases in school population which took place in short spaces of time in Hopewell is given in Table V.

Table V

## School Population Changes in Hopewell City, 1918 - 1924

<u>School Year</u>	<u>School Enrollment</u>
1918-1919	2,007
1919-1920	733*
1920-1921	920
1921-1922	1,253
1922-1923	1,559
1923-1924	2,285

\*At the end of the school year in 1920 there were only 350 actually enrolled.

### Development as a Separate School System (1923 - 1939)

The first annual report of the public schools of Hopewell was issued by Mr. R. K. Hoke, the superintendent, in 1923-24.

From this report we find that the school enrollment at that time was 2,285 pupils, and that these pupils were served by three elementary schools and one high school for white children and one Negro school for both elementary and high school Negro pupils.

There were fifty day school teachers, seven night school teachers and six summer school teachers, or a total of sixty-three teaching positions held in that year. Teachers' salaries ranged from \$300 to \$999 per year. A salary schedule was adopted during that year to take effect in 1924-25 which provided for the gradual increase of salaries based upon qualifications, years of experience, and excellence of work.

Total expenditures of the school system in 1923-24 amounted to \$118,892.54. The per capita cost of instruction was \$45.81.

With the erection of the Woodlawn School in Prince George County by the county board, many county children who had previously attended the Hopewell Schools were transferred to the Woodlawn School. This caused a drop in enrollment in Hopewell from 2,285 in 1923-24 to 1,972 in 1924-25.

In 1923-24 there were four elementary school buildings and one high school building in Hopewell. All of these were temporary buildings, but fairly well equipped.

### The Hopewell School Survey of 1925

In 1925 the State Department of Education, upon the request of the Hopewell School Board, undertook a survey of the Hopewell Schools. The object of the survey "being to set forth as accurately as possible the present status and future needs of the Hopewell schools."<sup>1</sup>

The members of the Survey Committee thoroughly surveyed the schools, from standpoints of instruction and physical equipment, training and experience of teachers, and the present status and future needs of the school system. Their report contains much interesting data on the school system of Hopewell.<sup>1</sup>

Among the facts brought out by this report were the following:

- a) That Hopewell teachers were being paid very low salaries in comparison to other cities of its size, but that the recently adopted salary schedule was a step in the right direction.
- b) That the per capita cost of instruction in Hopewell was about \$10 a year less than that for other cities of the state.
- c) That school plants and equipment were hopelessly inadequate.

Many other interesting findings were recorded, and recommendations of a constructive nature were made.

The first recommendation was:

"1. That in September, 1925, the school board inaugurate an organization in the Hopewell Schools which shall consist of five years in the elementary schools, three years in the junior high school, and three years in the senior high school. This will affect the program in the present sixth and seventh grades."

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1. Survey Report, Hopewell, Virginia, Schools, 1925.

This type of instruction was introduced at the beginning of the session 1925-26 in the three elementary schools, namely, the Patrick Copeland, B. Village and John Randolph Schools.

"2. That individual development of elementary education in Hopewell -- the work-study-play plan -- be inaugurated as new elementary buildings are planned to take care of the educational needs of the city of Hopewell."

This type of work was started in the fourth and fifth grades of the John Randolph School in 1925-26.

"3. That a special study of all twelve-year-old pupils in the grades be made with a view of promotion to the junior high school."

This study has been made continuously since that time, and by removing these pupils to groups near their own age very beneficial results have been obtained.

"4. That the present policy of making studies of exceptional pupils, and making provisions for their needs be continued in the elementary, the junior, and the senior high schools."

This policy has been in continuous operation since that time.

"5. That day and evening part-time classes be organized in consultation with the State Supervisor of Industrial Education."

This recommendation was followed and evening and part-time classes have been in operation continuously since the time of this recommendation.

"6. That the Boards of Education of the City of Hopewell and of Prince George County employ a supervisor for the elementary schools and a supervisor for the secondary schools in the City of Hopewell and in Prince George County."

A supervisor for the elementary schools of the city was

provided on a part-time basis in 1926. A full-time elementary school supervisor was provided in 1934-35 and has been continuously employed since that time.

"7. That the present plan of distributing supplies through the superintendent's office be continued."

This plan has been continued as recommended.

#### The Building Program

In the fall of 1925 the first permanent building, the Hopewell High School, was occupied. The building was large enough to accommodate 700 pupils, and was situated upon a spacious site containing twelve acres.

Much dissatisfaction was expressed over the location of this building, as being too far away from the majority of the people. In a short time the city had grown, however, until the high school was situated at about the center of population, and the center of the metropolitan area which it served.

At the time of the completion of the high school the various 6th and 7th grades were housed in rented houses and apartments in several different sections of the city, and rented rooms over a drug store in the downtown section. When the high school was opened it provided a place for all pupils of the 5th, 6th and 7th grades, as well as all of the high school students.

The following year, 1926-27, all pupils in the high 5th grade were removed from the high school and sent to the John Randolph School.

The organization at this time was as follows:

Hopewell High School: All high school pupils, and  
all 6th and 7th grades  
Hohn Randolph School: 4th and 5th grades  
B. Village School: 1st, 2nd and 3rd grades  
Patrick Copeland School: 1st through 5th grades

In 1926 another Survey of the Hopewell Schools was conducted, this time a building survey. Members of this committee appointed by the State Board of Education were: Dr. M. L. Combs and Dr. K. J. Hoke, who had served on the previous survey, and Mr. R. V. Long, State Supervisor of School Buildings. In reporting existing conditions the Committee had this to say:

"Two members of this Committee were also members of the staff that made a comprehensive survey of the schools of the City of Hopewell in 1925 and were pleased to find that the recommendations of that study are being carried out almost in detail."<sup>1</sup>

Six recommendations were made by the Survey Committee for a building program of schools for the City of Hopewell. The first recommendation was as follows:

"1. That the total sum of \$100,000 now available be used in the erection of an elementary school plant on a lot between Nineteenth and Twentieth Avenues in the Battle Ground Addition."

A school was completed on the designated site in September, 1929, and called the Dupont School. This school has nineteen class rooms, auditorium, cafeteria and the usual auxiliary rooms. The total cost, including equipment, was \$105,000.

"2. That the proposal for an overhead bridge over the Norfolk and Western tracks between Highland Park and the Buren Sub-Division near Twelfth or Thirteen-

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1. Survey Report, Hopewell, Virginia, City Schools, 1926. (In office School Board, City of Hopewell)

th Street be carried out by the time the new school building is ready for occupancy."

This matter was brought before the City Council several times, but this bridge was never constructed.

"3. That the proposed five-year plan of financing municipal improvements in the City of Hopewell in which there is specific provision for school building be adopted and carried out."

In 1929 a joint bond issue of street improvements and schools was approved by the voters and \$100,000 was included for construction of school buildings.

"4. That proper school facilities for the territory known as Highland Park and South B. Village be provided from the resources of this program at the earliest possible date."

A building of thirteen rooms, library, principal's office, auditorium, and cafeteria was completed in time for the pupils to enter school in September, 1930. It was called the Highland Park School.

"5. That the proposed reorganization with reference to the junior and senior high school plan be carried out as soon as possible, and that ample provision be made for try-out courses and for vocational and pre-vocational work.

Ten acres of ground were purchased for a junior high school, but the building was not erected, due to the depression, and other factors later made it impractical to do so.

In the high school a general shop course was started in the session 1936-37. The shop work was divided into two parts, the morning classes being devoted to general shop work and the after-

noon classes to day unit work. In order to provide the class in day unit work the following procedure was followed: All of the pupils above the age of fifteen in elementary grades were put into a separate class and given individual instruction in reading, writing and arithmetic. In the afternoon these pupils were given shop work. A part-time teacher was provided for these pupils for their morning classes.

"6. That the Board of Education, the Superintendent of Schools, and the City Manager be commended for their co-operative and unceasing efforts to improve the educational system of Hopewell and for the effective work that has already been done as demonstrated by the great improvement in buildings, equipment, and quality of instruction within the last three or four years. In this connection it should be kept in mind at all times, particularly by the citizens of Hopewell that their city is a very difficult place in which to provide an adequate system of public education since it presents many complex and serious problems that are not found in the older cities that have enjoyed a normal growth."

The Dupont Elementary School, completed in 1929, and the Highland Park School, completed in 1930, were well-located and offered ample accommodations. There were still three frame buildings left, -- the Patrick Copeland School, the B. Village School and the Carter G. Woodson Negro School.

In 1932-33 all 6th grade pupils housed in the high school were transferred to the various elementary schools, and the next year it was necessary to remove the 7th grades from the high school building.

In 1932 the largest plant in Hopewell had been forced to close down, and the depression settled upon the city, strangling all efforts toward building expansion. As a result of these conditions



there was an appreciable dropping off in the enrollment of the elementary schools and an increase in the enrollment of the high school.

By 1937 the school board was able to consolidate the B. Village School and the Patrick Copeland School, two frame buildings, by building a new building at a point midway between these two schools. A beautiful river-front lot, with approximately eight acres of ground, was secured for this school, and in 1938 the new Patrick Copeland School was completed. It had twenty rooms, auditorium and cafeteria.

Conditions in Hopewell, as pointed out in the last Survey, were so changeable, and the problems it had to face were so peculiar, that many difficulties arose here which more settled communities do not have to face. Due to economic conditions a sudden shift in population took place about this time in the Highland Park area. There had been an influx of Negroes into South B. Village, adjoining the Highland Park section, which caused many white residents to move out. With the vacating of a large number of houses in Highland Park, the enrollment of the Highland Park School fell off very suddenly, so that only sixty pupils were attending this school in the session 1937-38.

The school board accordingly closed the school and transferred the pupils to the Dupont and Patrick Copeland Schools. A proposal was made to close the Carter G. Woodson School, due to its thoroughly bad condition, and to turn the Highland Park School into a Negro

school. Many white residents living near this section objected very strongly to this, and they were supported by a clause in the deed to the property against Negro occupation. Therefore the proposal was not carried out.

By 1938-39 all of the white pupils of the city were housed in modern, fire-proof buildings, with ample class room facilities, adequate playgrounds and a sufficient number of teachers. The Hopewell High School was overcrowded during that session, but from all indications the peak of enrollment was to be expected in the session 1939-40, after which conditions could be expected to improve.

The Negro school building was inadequate, but the teaching staff was satisfactory, and the class rooms not overcrowded.

#### The Revised Curriculum

With the initiation in 1931 of the Virginia Curriculum Program plans were immediately made for participation by the Hopewell teachers in the first period of study and orientation. The principals, the supervisor, and 100% of the elementary teachers took advantage of the opportunity offered for study of the program under the guidance of the department of education of William and Mary College.

When the second phase of the State program began, the elementary teachers continued their studies under the plans and procedures of the State Department of Education. This phase dealt with the production of curriculum material. Language Arts was chosen by the

Hopewell teachers as their part of the production program, with their consultant and curriculum center at the College of William and Mary. Units of work developed in the classroom of the Hopewell schools were written up in detail and sent to the state Language Art Chairman.

In preparation for the publication of the Virginia Course of Study, committees of Hopewell teachers and the supervisor worked at the several teachers colleges. The supervisor and several teachers worked with the committee in Williamsburg six hours a day for six weeks preparing material for a try-out and evaluating material sent in from all over the state in the Language Arts. Three Hopewell teachers served on the committee which prepared the material in the form used in the experimental edition of the elementary course of study. Hopewell was chosen to participate in the "try-out" program in 1933.

The Tentative Course of Study for the Virginia Elementary Schools was distributed in September, 1934 to the teachers of Hopewell. Since that time the Revised Course of Study has been used for a basis of instruction in all the schools of the City.

#### Summary

Prior to 1915 City Point was a small village. The children of the village and of the few surrounding large farms were served by one small school.

With the advent of the Dupont plant many hundreds of people

flocked in and a new city was born. This city was incorporated in 1915 and named Hopewell. By 1917 the population was 40,000.

In the year 1917 two frame buildings were built, one containing six and the other twenty rooms. Rooms in houses and over stores were rented in various sections of the city and used as school rooms. It was necessary to operate two shifts in order to accommodate the rapidly increasing number of children.

In 1921 a frame building which had been used as a Y. M. C. A. was purchased from the Duponts by the Prince George County School Board. This building was converted into a school building and used for the high school pupils. At the same time a frame warehouse was also purchased and converted into a Negro elementary school. There were no Negro high school pupils, so that it was not necessary to provide a Negro high school. In 1923 the Highland Park School was established in four rented cottages.

Providing facilities for pupils when the number of children enrolled increased so rapidly was most difficult. The Prince George County Board met this problem as best it could and provided facilities for the children of Hopewell until 1923, when Hopewell took over the operation of its own schools.

In November 1925 the first permanent building was completed, the Hopewell High School. All high school pupils as well as pupils of the fifth, sixth and seventh grades were transferred to this school. A Survey made in this year was of the greatest assistance in making plans for the future, both from the standpoint of instruc-

tion and of school plants.

In 1929 the Dupont Elementary School, a modern brick building was completed. This was followed in 1930 by another of the same type, the Highland Park School. In September, 1937 the remaining two frame buildings were abandoned when a large brick building was built midway between these two schools. This was the Patrick Copeland School.

At the present time all of the white schools have ample class room facilities and large playgrounds, and are staffed with a sufficient number of well-trained teachers. The Negro School building is in bad condition; however, the classes are not over-crowded and the teaching staff is well-trained.

Hopewell teachers had an important part in the work of preparation of material for the Revised Course of Study, and this course of study has been used from the very beginning as a basis for instruction in all of the schools of the city.

## Chapter X

### SUMMARY

The efforts of the colonists in Prince George County to establish a democratic form of government and to build an educational system paralleled each other. Charles Cittie County, as Prince George County was called in the early days, had its representation on the first democratic assembly in America, and within the year a site was chosen here for the first free school in America, the East India School.

Since the plantations in Prince George County were large, the rich planters depended upon private tutors for the education of their children. In the early years of the colony the children, upon being prepared for college, were sent abroad to the universities; later they attended the College of William and Mary and the colleges of Pennsylvania and New York.

From 1720 to 1748 the vestries of Martin's Brandon and Bristol Parishes bound out many poor children and orphans for indenture. The articles of indenture always specified that the child should receive education at the expense of the master. After 1748 the courts had charge of the indenture of children. The first attempt in Virginia at trade education for children was made in Bristol Parish in 1756.

Administration of the "parsons' schools" was another duty of the parish. In the early days the church was closely allied with education and the state, as the vestries had broad civil duties

as well as those pertaining to the church.

Funds allocated to Prince George County from the Literary Fund furnished the means for the first steps taken here in the development of public education. Although the number of children receiving the benefits of education increased steadily, the citizens fought local taxation for the support of the schools for many years. Other school legislation was responsible for awakening public opinion and obtaining added support, but the outbreak of the War Between the States put a stop for a time to all efforts to establish a system of public education.

Several academies and "Old Field Schools" flourished in Prince George just prior to the war. But most of these schools were closed at the outbreak of the war.

Prince George County began the establishment of its school system in 1871, and the superintendent of schools fought to develop a public opinion favorable to schools. This was at times a bitter struggle and the schools suffered from the lack of interest from the citizens generally. But as time went on and public education became more popular, an increasing amount of revenue was granted to the schools.

The high school movement, resulting in the establishment of the first high school at Disputanta, and soon afterwards the establishment of several graded schools marked successive steps forward.

Consolidation of schools and the development of a transportation system assured to children living in sparsely settled sections

of the county the same advantages as those enjoyed by children in more thickly populated centers.

Another forward step was taken with the abolition of the five district school boards, and in their place the establishment of a five-man board which had representation from each district of the county. A more efficient consolidation program could then be undertaken, and the instruction brought up to its highest point of efficiency. This was done.

A program for the improvement of teacher certification was instituted and followed, extensive study of the Revised Curriculum was made by the teachers, school plants were modernized and put into first class condition, playgrounds developed and improvements along many lines realized.

In regard to Negro Education it must be said that public sentiment delayed the institution of public education for Negroes for many years. With the change in the attitude of the people, however, schools were established, consolidated and improved, and transportation provided. Facilities are offered to all Negro children, both elementary and high school. With the institution of a better type of teacher, transportation of pupils, high school instruction and a nine-months school term, the educational facilities offered to Negroes in Prince George County have been greatly improved.

After the depression, when there was no money for school improvement and school boards were pressed for money to maintain the



schools, various federal agencies began to operate to relieve the emergency. Under the Civil Works Administration much-needed improvements were made. These programs were continued under the Public Works Administration, the Works Progress Administration, and the Federal Emergency Relief Administration.

The National Youth Administration came to the rescue of the young people who were not able to go to school and for whom no jobs were available. These agencies operating through the public schools made it possible for many boys and girls to continue their schooling in the time of economic stress.

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L. G. Tyler.)

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APPENDIX - Statistical Tables

I. Prince George County

II. City of Hopewell

Table No. 1

Prince George County Schools  
Enrollment and Number of Schools

Year Ending	Number Pupils Enrolled			Number School Buildings		
	White	Negro	Total	White	Negro	Total
1871	230	207	537	8	5	13
1872	367	459	825	12	10	22
1873	285	307	592	10	7	17
1874	249	454	703	7	7	14
1875	439	445	884	13	8	21
1876	454	564	1018	14	9	23
1877	432	502	932	13	9	22
1878	365	575	940	11	9	20
1879	266	261	467	7	5	12
1880	446	634	1080	14	10	24
1881	370	767	1137	13	15	28
1882	526	910	1436	16	17	33
1883	564	848	1412	18	17	35
1884	580	1017	1606	19	17	36
1885	625	1048	1673	18	17	35
1886	773	1029	1802	18	17	35
1887	667	1172	1839	18	18	36
1888	637	1138	1775	19	18	37
1889	776	1240	2016	18	18	36
1890	746	1269	2015	19	18	37
1891	783	1330	2013	19	18	37
1892	660	1153	1813	20	18	38
1893	604	1158	1762	20	18	38

Table No. 1 (Con't.)

Prince George County Schools  
Enrollment and Number of Schools

Year Ending	Number Pupils Enrolled			Number School Buildings		
	White	Negro	Total	White	Negro	Total
1894	614	1158	1772	20	18	38
1895	646	1168	1814	21	18	39
1896	624	1079	1702	21	18	39
1897	648	1043	1691	21	18	39
1898	622	968	1590	22	19	41
1899	642	1083	1725	22	19	41
1900	595	906	1501	22	19	41
1901	591	947	1583	21	19	40
1902	574	996	1570	21	19	40
1903	348	968	1516	20	19	39
1904	567	959	1626	20	19	39
1905	573	884	1457	20	19	39
1906	575	849	1424	20	18	38
1907	568	906	1474	20	19	39
1908	562	861	1423	19	19	38
1909	593	925	1518	18	19	37
1910	658	1049	1707	25	18	43
1911	754	897	1651	29	18	47
1912	746	733	1479	21	19	40
1913	738	926	1664	21	19	40
1914	825	969	1794	21	19	40
1915	939	797	1736	25	21	46
1916	1927	860	2787	25	22	47

Table No. 1 (Con't.)

Prince George County Schools  
Enrollment and Number of Schools

Year Ending	Number Pupils Enrolled			Number School Buildings		
	White	Negro	Total	White	Negro	Total
1917	2597	1007	3604	23	25	45
1918	2976	1086	4062	23	25	47
1919	3093	1085	4178	20	25	45
1920	1768	1190	2958	20	25	45
1921	2064	1185	3240	23	23	46
1922	2122	1408	3530	18	22	40
1923	2444	1606	4050	12	22	34
1924	874	1293	2167	8	22	30
1925	1169	1205	2374	8	21	29
1926	1146	1184	2330	6	22	28
1927	1146	1167	2313	6	22	28
1928	1222	1099	2321	6	21	27
1929	1364	1093	2457	6	21	27
1930	1384	1137	2521	6	21	27
1931	1349	1141	2490	6	21	27
1932	1350	1118	2468	6	21	27
1933	1372	1050	2422	6	21	27
1934	1369	1013	2382	6	20	26
1935	1351	1026	2377	6	20	26
1936	1321	982	2303	6	20	26
1937	1227	973	2200	6	19	25
1938	1195	930	2125	6	17	23
1939				6	14	20



Table No. 2

Prince George County Schools  
Number Teachers Employed

Year Ending	White			Negro			Total White and Negro
	Males	Females	Total	Males	Females	Total	
1871	5	7	12	0	1	1	13
1872	14	8	22				22
1873	12	4	16	1	0	1	17
1874	10	4	14	None	Reported		14
1875	12	7	19	0	2	2	21
1876	10	11	21	1	1	2	23
1877	9	12	21	0	2	2	23
1878	10	18	28	2	0	2	30
1879	4	6	10	2	0	2	12
1880	12	10	22	1	1	2	24
1881	12	11	23	3	2	5	28
1882	12	13	25	5	3	8	33
1883	10	15	25	5	5	10	35
1884	4	16	20	9	7	16	36
1885	3	16	19	7	9	16	35
1886	4	15	19	8	9	17	36
1887	3	16	19	7	9	16	35
1888	4	15	19	8	9	17	36
1889	2	17	19	8	10	18	37
1890	2	17	19	6	12	18	37
1891	2	17	19	4	14	18	37
1892	1	18	19	6	12	18	37
1893	4	16	20	5	13	18	38

Table No. 2 (con't.)

Prince George County Schools  
Number Teachers Employed

Year Ending	White			Negro			Total White and Negro
	Males	Females	Total	Males	Females	Total	
1894	3	17	20	6	12	18	38
1895	3	18	21	7	11	18	39
1896	3	18	21	7	11	18	39
1897	4	17	21	6	12	18	39
1898	3	19	22	6	13	19	41
1899	4	18	22	7	12	19	41
1900	1	21	22	6	13	19	41
1901	1	20	21	6	13	19	40
1902	6	26	32	0	13	13	45
1903	5	27	32	0	13	13	45
1904	1	19	20	4	15	19	39
1905	0	20	20	3	16	19	39
1906	0	20	20	3	15	18	38
1907	0	20	20	4	15	19	39
1908		22	22	3	16	19	41
1909	1	31	32	0	16	16	48
1910	2	22	24	2	17	19	43
1911	1	27	28	2	16	18	46
1912	1	30	31	2	14	16	47
1913	1	32	33	2	16	18	51
1914	1	32	33	2	16	18	51
1915	1	36	37	2	14	16	53
1916	5	51	56	2	15	17	73

Table No. 2 (con't.)

Prince George County Schools  
Number Teachers Employed

Year Ending	White			Negro			Total White and Negro
	Males	Females	Total	Males	Females	Total	
1917	5	71	76	2	15	17	93
1918	3	85	88	2	15	17	105
1919	3	76	79	1	17	18	97
1920	4	62	66	1	19	20	86
1921	4	66	70	1	24	25	95
1922	5	64	67	2	25	27	91
1923	6	61	67	2	27	29	96
1924	3	33	36	1	25	26	62
1925	5	38	43	1	26	27	70
1926	6	38	44	3	23	26	70
1927	6	37	43	5	23	28	71
1928	6	36	42	6	22	28	70
1929	5	40	45	7	21	28	73
1930	6	45	51	7	23	30	81
1931	6	44	50	5	25	30	80
1932	6	43	49	6	24	30	79
1933	6	37	43	5	25	30	73
1934	7	36	43	5	23	28	71
1935	7	38	45	5	23	28	73
1936	7	39	46	8	20	28	74
1937	8	38	46	6	22	28	74
1938	9	37	46	7	21	28	74
1939							

Table No. 3

Showing Type of Certificates Held  
by White Teachers  
in Prince George County  
(1925-1940)

Year Ending June 30th	Elementary Professional	First Grade	Provisional First Grade	Provisional Elementary	Elementary	Normal Professional	Three Year Special	Collegiate	Collegiate Professional	Total Number Teachers
1925	6	5	3	0	6	11	12	1	2	46
1926	5	5	2	0	7	10	8	4	1	42
1927		4			13	12	7	3	4	43
1928		2	1		14	13	7		5	42
1929		4			12	18	5	1	6	46
1930	2	3		1	6	18	6	2	13	51
1931				1	10	17	6	2	4	50
1932		1			9	20	3	1	15	49
1933		1			8	19	3	1	11	43
1934						27	2	2	12	43
1935					1	25	2	2	15	45
1936						26	2	4	14	46
1937						24	2	3	17	46
1938						24	2	6	15	47
1939						22	2	4	18	46
1940						22	1	5	19	47

Table No. 4

Showing Type of Certificates Held  
by Negro Teachers  
in Prince George County  
(1925-1940)

Year Ending June 30th	Second Grade	First Grade	Local Permit	Provisional Second Grade	Elementary Professional	Provisional First Grade	Provisional Elementary	Elementary	Normal Professional	Three Year Special	Collegiate	Collegiate Professional	Total Number Teachers
1925	5	11		2	3			7	5				33
1926	2	10	2	1	3	2	2	4	2				26
1927	3	11	4			2		6	2				28
1928	4	8	3					10	2	1			28
1929	1	5	2					15	4	1			28
1930			5		1		5	10	1	1	1		24
1931			2		1		2	17	4	2			28
1932			6					17	3	2	1	1	30
1933								16	8	2	1	1	28
1934			1				2	11	9	1	1	3	28
1935					1		2	6	12	1	3	3	28
1936					1		1	6	13	1	1	5	28
1937							1	7	15	1	1	3	28
1938							1	6	15	1	3	2	28
1939							1	5	14	1	3	4	28
1940							1	4	17	1	2	7	32

Table No. 5

Consolidation of White Schools in Prince George County  
by Years and Showing Number of Teachers

	1921-1922	1922-1923	1923-1924	1924-1925	1925-1926
<u>Blackwater</u>					
Disputanta High (7)	Disputanta High (8)	Disputanta High (9)	Disputanta High (10)	Disputanta High (11)	
Star Hill (1)	Star Hill (1)	Tar Bay (1)	Star Hill (1)	Star Hill (1)	
Cummings (1)	Tar Bay (1)	Star Hill	Tar Bay (1)	Tar Bay (1)	
<u>Bland</u>					
Hopewell High (11)	Hopewell High (9)	Prince George (3)	Gee (1)	Prince George (4)	Prince George (4)
City Point (4)	City Point (4)	Gee School (1)	Prince George (3)	Woodlawn (7)	
Court House (3)	Prince George (4)				
B. Village (14)	Gee (1)				
Rosewood (1)	B. Village (17)				
Gee (1)					
<u>Brandon</u>					
Burrowsville (4)	Burrowsville (5)	Burrowsville (5)	Burrowsville (4)	Burrowsville (5)	
Brandon Neck (1)					
<u>Rives</u>					
Crater (2)	Rives High (6)	Rives	Rives (5)	Rives (6)	
Watson (2)	Evergreen (1)				
Fairview (2)					
Estes (2)					
Evergreen (1)					
Rives (1)					
<u>Templeton</u>					
Carson (7)	Carson (7)	Carson (5)	Carson (7)	Carson (9)	
Woodside (2)					
Total No. Schools	19	12	8	8	6

Table No. 6

Consolidation of Negro Schools  
Prince George County

District	1919-1920 All One-room Schools	1922-1923	No. of Schools	1930-1931	No. of Schools	1938-1939	No. of Schools
Blackwater	Blackwater # 1	Blackwater #6	1	Blackwater #6	1	Old Academy	2
	Blackwater # 2	Blackwater #1	1	Blackwater #1	1		
	Blackwater # 3	Election House	1	Old Academy	1		
	Blackwater # 4	Old Academy	1	Election House	1		
Bland	Blackwater # 6						
	City Point # 1	Hopewell	4	Bland # 4	2	Harrison Grove	2
	City Point # 2	Bland # 4	2	Bland # 8	1	Cedar Level	2
	Hopewell # 1	Bland # 8	1	Bland # 7	1		
Brandon	Hopewell # 2	Bland # 7	1				
	Bland # 8						
	Bland # 4						
	Brandon # 5	Brandon # 5	1	Brandon	1	Brandon	1
Rives	Brandon # 6	Brandon # 7	1	Blairs	1	Newville	1
	Brandon # 7	Brandon # 6	1	Newville	1	Burrowsville	2
	Brandon # 8	Brandon # 8	1	Burrowsville	2		
	Rives # 1	Rives # 1	1	New Bohemia	1	New Bohemia	1
Templeton	Rives # 2	Rives # 2	1	Union Branch	2	Union Branch	2
	Rives # 3	Rives # 4	1	Johnson	1		
	Rives # 4	Rives # 5	1	Camp Lee	1	Camp Lee	1
	Rives # 5	Rives # 3	1	Rives	1		
Disputanta	Disputanta # 1	Disputanta	3	Disputanta	5	Disputanta High	9
	Templeton # 1	Templeton # 4	1	Training School			
				Templeton	1	Templeton	1
				Loving Union	1	Loving Union	1
Templeton	Templeton # 2	Loving Union	1	Mill Road	1	Mill Road	1
	Templeton # 4	Templeton	1	Providence	1	Providence	2
	Templeton # 5	Templeton	1				
			22				21
			25				14

(Note: All Negro schools in Prince George County in 1919-1920 were one-room schools. In 1930-31 the schools were designated by names instead of numbers. 1933-39 consolidation and establishment of two-room schools took place, and transportation was started. The High School pupils attend Disputanta, Hopewell and Petersburg.)

Table No. 7

## Division Superintendents of Schools

1870-1939

M. W. Rainey.....	September 18, 1870 - 1874 (Prince George and Surry)
W. H. Harrison.....	September 27, 1873 - December 9, 1879 (Prince George and Surry)
Timothy Rives.....	December 9, 1879 - December 13, 1881 (Prince George)
H. C. Britton.....	January 14, 1882 - June 30, 1886 (Prince George)
J. W. Stephenson.....	July 1, 1886 - June 30, 1889 (Prince George)
Charles Comer.....	July 1, 1889 - June 30, 1891 (Prince George)
Benjamin Fenner.....	July 1, 1891 - June 30, 1909 (Prince George)
W. W. Edwards.....	July 1, 1909 - June 30, 1916 (Prince George and Hopewell)
A. B. Bristow.....	July 1, 1916 - October 15, 1920 (Prince George and Hopewell)
W. W. Edwards.....	October 15, 1920 - June 30, 1921 (Prince George and Hopewell)
R. K. Hoke.....	July 1, 1921 - June 30, 1929 (Prince George and Hopewell)
R. W. Copeland.....	July 1, 1929 - (Prince George and Hopewell)



Table No. 8.  
 County Tax Rate  
 for Operation of Schools  
 Prince George County

Year Ending	District Levy					County Levy
	Blackwater	Bland	Brandon	Rives	Templeton	
1871	not listed					
1872	7½	8	0	5	1	5
1873	7½	0	5	0	5	7½
1874	10	10	0	10	0	10
1875	0	0	0	0	0	10
1876	5	5	5	5	5	10
1877	5	5	2½	5	0	10
1878	5	5	0	5	0	10
1879	5	2½	0	5	0	10
1880	5	0	0	2½	0	10
1881	0	2½	0	2½	0	10
1882	0	5	5	5	0	10
1883	5	10	5	5	10	10
1884	5	5	10	5	5	10
1885	5	7½	0	5	5	10
1886	7½	10	7½	7½	7½	10
1887	5	10	10	10	7½	10
1888	10	10	10	10	10	20
1889	10	10	10	10	10	20
1890	10	10	10	7½	10	20
1891	10	10	10	7½	10	20
1892	10	10	10	10	10	20

Table No. 8 (con't.)

County Tax Rate  
for Operation of Schools  
Prince George County

Year Ending	District Levy					County Levy
	Blackwater	Bland	Brandon	Rives	Templeton	
1893	10	10	10	10	10	20
1894	5	10	10	10	10	20
1895	5	10	10	5	10	20
1896	10	10	10	5	0	10
1897	10	10	10	10	0	10
1898	10	10	10	10	10	10
1899	10	0	10	10	10	10
1900	10	5	10	5	10	10
1901	10	10	10	10	10	10
1902	10	10	10	10	10	10
1903	10	10	10	10	10	10
1904	10	10	10	10	10	10
1905	10	10	10	8	10	15
1906	10	10	10	10	10	20
1907	20	20	20	20	20	15
1908	20	20	20	20	20	15
1909	20	10	10	20	25	15
1910	20	10	10	20	25	15
1911	20	20	15	20	35	15
1912	25	25	25	25	35	15
1913	35	35	25	15	35	15
1914	35	35	25	15	35	15
1915	35	35	25	15	35	15
1916	25	25	25	25	25	15

Table No. 8 (con't)

County Tax Rate  
for Operation of Schools  
Prince George County

Year Ending	District Levy					County Levy
	Blackwater	Bland	Brandon	Rives	Templeton	
1917	35	35	35	35	35	15
1918	35	35	35	35	35	15
1919	35	35	35	35	35	15
1920	35	35	35	35	35	25
1921	45	45	45	45	45	30
1922	85	75	30	30	85	25
1923	85	75	30	30	85	25
1924	District Levy Abolished					90
1925			Sinking Fund		10¢	1.00
1926			Sinking Fund		10¢	1.00
1927			Sinking Fund		25¢	.90
1928			Sinking Fund		20¢	Cash Approp.
1929			Sinking Fund		20¢	Approp.
1930			Sinking Fund		20¢	Approp.
1931			Sinking Fund		20¢	Approp.
1932			Sinking Fund		20¢	Approp.
1933			Sinking Fund		20¢	Approp.
1934			Sinking Fund		20¢	Approp.
1935			Sinking Fund		20¢	Approp.
1936			Sinking Fund		20¢	Approp.
1937			Sinking Fund		20¢	Approp.
1938			Sinking Fund		20¢	Approp.
1939			Eliminated			Approp.

Table No. 9

Hopewell City Schools  
Teachers and Enrollment  
White  
1924-1940

Year Ending	TEACHERS			ENROLLMENT		
	Elementary	High	Total	Elementary	High	Total
1924	35	10	45	1793	259	2052
1925	39	11	50	1471	254	1725
1926	39	11	50	1542	278	1820
1927	45	14	59	1594	340	1934
1928	51	19	70	1735	379	2114
1929	53	19	72	1940	456	2396
1930	58	20	78	1878	507	2385
1931	65	24	89	1935	556	2491
1932	62	25	87	1629	599	2228
1933	56	25	81	1531	710	2241
1934	55	26	81	1575	696	2271
1935	50	25	75	1453	768	2221
1936	47	26	73	1385	815	2200
1937	46	28	74	1333	794	2127
1938	46	29	75	1304	866	2170
1939	41	32	73	1250	896	2146
1940	39	31	70			

Full time librarian - Employed school session - 1930-1931  
 Elementary Supervisor - Employed school session - 1935-1936  
 Trade and Industrial Teacher - Employed school session - 1935-1936  
 Music and Art Teacher - Employed school session - 1938-1939

Table No. 10

Hopewell City Schools  
Teachers and Enrollment  
Negro

1924-1940

Year Ending	TEACHERS			ENROLLMENT		
	Elementary	High	Total	Elementary	High	Total
1924	5	0	5	218	4	218
1925	4	2	6	242	7	249
1926	4	1	5	231	5	236
1927	5	0	5	239	5	244
1928	6	0	6	311	12	323
1929	6	0	6	354		354
1930	6	2	8	340	26	366
1931	7	2	9	396	32	428
1932	6	3	9	358	40	398
1933	6	3	9	359	43	402
1934	7	3	10	407	57	464
1935	9	3	12	405	69	474
1936	9	3	12	370	67	437
1937	9	4	13	330	64	394
1938	9	4	13	351	67	418
1939	9	4	13	369	80	449
1940	6	4	10			

Table No. 11

Showing Types of Certificates Held  
by White Teachers  
in Hopewell City Schools  
(1925-1940)

Year Ending June 30th	Second Grade	First Grade	Elementary	Normal Professional	Three Year Special	Collegiate	Collegiate Professional	Total Number of Teachers
1925	2		6	29	7	4	3	51
1926		1	5	30	6	5	3	50
1927			5	31	6	3	8	53
1928			4	39	7	6	8	64
1929			4	42	6	7	12	71
1930			3	48	6	4	17	78
1931			1	50	8	8	19	86
1932				49	7	10	21	87
1933				45	6	9	21	81
1934				44	5	7	25	81
1935				42	5	3	26	76
1936				38	4	4	28	74
1937				38	5	5	25	73
1938				29	3	7	33	72
1939				28	3	4	38	73
1940				24	2	5	39	70

Table No. 12  
 Showing Types of Certificates Held  
 By Negro Teachers  
 in Hopewell City Schools  
 (1925-1940)

Year Ending June 30th	First Grade	Local Permit	Provisional First Grade	Provisional Elementary	Elementary	Normal Professional	Three Year Special	Collegiate	Collegiate Professional	Total Number of Teachers
1925	1		1		1	2		1		6
1926			1		1	1		1		4
1927	1	1	1			1		1		5
1928	1		1		2	1		1		6
1929	1		1		2	1		1		6
1930					3	3		1	1	8
1931	1			1	2	2		1	1	8
1932					3	4		1	1	9
1933					3	3		1	2	9
1934				2	1	2		1	4	10
1935						3		1	7	11
1936						5		1	6	12
1937						4		2	7	13
1938						3		1	9	13
1939						3			10	13
1940						3		1	6	10

Table No. 13

FEDERAL EXPENDITURES ON THE SCHOOLS OF HOPEWELL  
 UNDER THE VARIOUS GOVERNMENT PROGRAMS

(No City or State Funds Included)

	<u>Total Expenditures</u>
Civil Works Administration (C. W. A.).....\$	57,688.07
Federal Emergency Relief (F. E. R. A.).....	56,822.00
Works Progress Administration (W. P. A.).....	71,288.63
National Youth Administration (N. Y. A.)..... Out-of-School	40,000.00
National Youth Administration (N. Y. A.)..... School Aid	15,000.00
Emergency Educational Program.....	1,750.00
Nursery Schools.....	6,583.94
Patrick Copeland (P. W. A. Project)..... Main Building	44,000.00
Patrick Copeland (W. P. A. Project)..... Auditorium and Cafeteria	74,000.00
	<hr/>
Total.....\$	367,132.64



Table No. 14

Revenue for Operation  
of Hopewell Schools  
1924-1940

Receipts

Year Ending June 30th	Council Appropriation	State and Other Sources	Tuition Non Resident Pupils	Total all Receipts
1924	4,492.17	13,752.97	6,542.30	24,787.44
1925	61,649.16	13,088.35	1,607.58*	76,345.09
1926	50,179.29	19,423.69	1,977.82	71,580.80
1927	53,190.07	20,963.48	2,253.68	76,407.23
1928	66,524.65	19,528.08	3,753.68	89,806.41
1929	89,283.72	27,053.14	3,222.30	119,559.16
1930	112,235.42	27,257.25	4,290.06	143,782.73
1931	106,343.64	29,853.40	6,995.27	143,192.31
1932	103,933.86	28,679.02	8,859.31	141,472.19
1933	95,803.11	26,533.20	8,632.60	130,968.91
1934	89,993.01	20,718.08	11,264.60	121,975.69
1935	85,310.26	27,491.15	12,061.16	124,862.57
1936	86,039.93	28,855.80	12,443.16	127,338.89
1937	89,887.10	25,020.71	13,074.52	127,982.33
1938	94,010.14	26,124.51	14,788.68	134,923.33
1939	93,000.00	28,561.58	17,093.35	138,654.93
1940	91,000.00		18,136.50	

\*This change in tuition was caused by the Pupils in Prince George County in the vicinity of Woodlawn attended the Highland Park School. These pupils were removed to the County with the opening of the Woodlawn School for the session 1924-25.

## VITA

Richard Watson Copeland

Born at Hampton, Virginia, July 21, 1896.

Attended Hampton Elementary Schools. Graduated Hampton High School in June, 1914.

Attended William and Mary College, 1914 to 1917.

Officer Training Camp, Fort Myer, Virginia, 1917. First Lieutenant, U. S. Army, 1917 to 1919.

Attended Cambridge University, 1918.

Graduated William and Mary College, B. S. Degree, 1920.

Assistant Laboratory Instructor, William and Mary College, February, 1920 to June, 1920.

Assistant Principal and Athletic Coach, Hampton High School, 1920 to 1923.

Supervisor Physical and Health Education, Elizabeth City County, 1923 to 1926.

District Supervisor, Physical and Health Education, State Department of Education, 1926 to 1929.

Superintendent of Schools, Hopewell and Prince George County, Virginia, 1929 --

Major, United States Army Reserve Corps, 1940 --

Candidate for Master of Arts Degree, College of William and Mary, 1940.