Northern Kentucky Views Presents:

Progress of the Carroll County Schools

[Taken from the files of the Kentucky Historical Society. No author is credited; no publication data is cited. It appears to be circa 1967]

Carroll County Schools Have Made Progress Slowly Since Start In 1867

On July 1, 1965, for the first time since before 1867, all of the schools of Carroll County and Carrollton, were united under one system and one head. At that time the Carrollton Independent school district merged with the Carroll County school system; a move that had been recommended by far-sighted citizens for more than two decades.

The merger, which named former Carrollton City School Superintendent Robert Ison, as Superintendent of the United system, eliminated a double set of services for many of the taxpayers. Both systems were too small to cope with modern problems of additional pay for the teachers; more modern school buildings and diversified courses in the high school. United, they have provided a greatly improved system and when the new high school, adjacent to the Carroll County War Memorial grounds, is completed late in 1968--Carroll County will have as good a school system as may be found anywhere.

The system now includes only three elementary schools, junior and senior high school. In past years there were as many as 32 rural school districts; as well as Carrollton, English and Ghent; high schools at Carrollton, Sanders, Ghent, Worthville and two year highs at English and Locust.

In 1867, the present county school system was started by act of the Legislature. The schools were to be directed by a commissioner to be appointed by the County Court (Fiscal Court) who controlled the several districts who were in turn governed by a set of trustees (as many as three). These trustees recommended the teachers, kept the schools in repair, arranged for footbridges across the creeks and were supposed to visit the schools frequently to see if the teachers were doing a good job.

If these district schools wanted a better school or wished to consolidate with neighboring districts they were empowered to do so by voting to issue revenue bonds for that purpose based on additional ad-valorem taxes above the legal tax rate. Few districts took advantage of this before 1915, and the final consolidation was not accomplished until the 1930's or really until the Carroll County Elementary and Junior High School was completed in 1963.

In 1867, the county court appointed W.B. Gullion and L.B. Wilson for the purpose of setting up boundaries of the common school districts in Carroll County and approved by T. J. McElrath, educational commissioner.

The districts included: Dist. No. 1 (Carrollton)-Commencing at the Kentucky River, up the Ohio River to the foot of an alley between 3rd and 4th Streets, thence out the alley to the town limits.

No. 2-Commencing on the Kentucky River at the DeMint house, thence to Muddy Fork of White's Run; thence up the same for enought to include Ayliffe, Jack Hayden, Joseph Whitehead; thence to Frank Mitchell; thence to Hambrick, including his farm and excluding the farm of Robert Craig; thence in a straight line to the foot of the hill on the line between Hofford and Masterson; thence with line of district 26 to the Ky. River and thence up the river to the start.

No. 3-BLOSSOM HILL-Commencing on the Kentucky River at the farm of Dr. Ellis and then to Muddy Fork of White's Run; up the same, excluding Ayliffe and Hayden and thence to Mrs. Chadwell's; then to Thomas Searcy; then to Thomas Whitehead; thence to George O'Neal; thence to Wolf's Run to McBurney thence to Kentucky River, excluding C.T. Dean and down river to the beginning.

No. 4-Ghent: Commencing at Froman's upper line on the Ohio River-thence with said line to Jerry Craig's bridge; thence to upper line of James F. Lyons farm; thence to include Robert Ellis farm to McCool's Creek; thence in a straight line to the brick house on South Fork, including land of O'Neal Craig and Wise; thence to line between Hawkins and Brown farms; thence with said line he river, and up the river to the beginning.

No. 5-Hickory Thicket: Commencing at Jack William's gate on the pike, thence with the county line, including Thomas Hopkins; thence including Bledsoe's and William Tandy; then to L. Gardner and to forks of Indian Creek and to the beginning.

No. 6-INDIAN-Commencing at the mouth of Lick Creek; up same to line of Jack Williams' gate on the pike, including him; thence to the mouth of the south fork of Indian Creek, thence up same to Duvall road; with this road to Duvall's gate; thence to east line of J.W. Rosell; thence to Eagle Creek and up the creek to the beginning.

No. 7 - (Brick and Frame): Commencing at J.L. Tandy's; thence to Samuel Tandy; then to J.W. Searcy and to Moses Spicer; thence to Granville Tandy's place; thence to Mrs. Gardner's and then to George Davis, William Davis, James Hoagland's and thence to the beginning.

No. 8-White's Run--Beginning at Robert Tandy's; thence to R. Forsee; thence to old Lester place and then to Julius Bersot, Jr., and then to William Ohne's; thence to B.F. Bond's; thence to John Duvall and thence to Jonn Montgomery's home farm; thence to William McBurney's and thence to the beginning.

No. 9--Griffith's: Beginnin on the pike at Robert Ellis' ol farm; thence up the pike in cluding the old sawmill farn thence to J.H. Lindsay's a thence with the pike to Wi liam Parker's farm and then to Joseph H. Sanders and th to William Tandy's and then George Bersot's; thence to Jo Furnish farm; then to Aaron P tit's and thence to brick hou on South Fork (excluding and thence to pike near Robe Ellis'.

No. 10-Prestonville: Begi ning at the mouth of the Ke tucky River to the first bran below Samuel Carlisle's on Li tle Kentucky River; thence the foot of the hill to B. Elston's (excluding him) a thence to Kentucky River a down the river to the begi ning.

No. 11-Notch Lick: Beginni at the old Pulliam farm Ohio River; thence to Jam Craig's on Little Kentucky, cluding the farm of Andr McDowell, Sr. and continui to Jesse Carrico; to Le Rice's and L.B. Stockda thence on county road to D. Armstrong's; and thence on straight line to Anthony Bel on the Ohio River and up t river to the beginning.

No. 12-HUNTER'S BOTTO Beginning at the Ohio Riv at Okey Hoagland's and then down the river to the Trimb County line and thence with t county line to John Stogdal and thence to the beginnin

No. 13-ELLIOTT'S BRANC Beginning at the Little Ke tucky; thence to John Kring thence to Granville Shoo thence to Jesse Carrico (e cluded) and then to Fred Ohne's thence to the county line an with it to the Little Kentuck River and down its course to t beginning.

Cont

County School Page 2

No. 14-HISLE'S: Beginning at the mouth of the branch on the Little Ky. River; up branch to Nicholas Tharpe's and thence to Harrison McDowell; from there to Major's Run and thence down the run to the Kentucky River; thence on down the river to Darling's farm; thence to B.B. Elston's; thence branch below Sam Carlisle's on Little Ky. and up the river to the beginning.

No. 15-ADCOCK'S: Commencing at the first branch below Allen Wilson's; thence up the branch to Nancy Webster's, Stephen Coleman and to Robert Moon's and thence to the county line and from there to the east fork of Mill Creek, and thence down the creek to the forks and thence down Mill Creek to the beginning.

No. 16-Centreville. No. 17-Adjoining Adcock school at the mouth of Stephens' branch.

No. 18 - Worthville; at the mouth of Eagle Creek and continuing down the Kentucky River to C.T. Deans's. No. 19-Locust. No. 20- Sharon: Comprising all on the headwaters of Sharon and to the Gallatin County line. No. 21-Wilson's located on Ohio River back to district no. 7. No. 22-Jordan's: Beginning at Eagle Creek below William Dean's.

No. 23-Malin's Branch, on Little Kentucky River.

No. 24 - Buffalo - Beginning on Eagle Creek, including Oliver Searcy's.

No. 25-GULLION'S: At mouth of Mill Creek and running to Major's Run and the Kentucky River

No. 26: Carrollton: Beginning at foot of 6th street-- up to the old Masterson farm and to top of the hill.

No. 27: Bishop's: Adjoining the Wilson district.

The teachers were examined in the early days -- and were awarded three types of certificates: (1st class); Second class and probationary. All carried different grades of pay. Examiners were appointed by the county commissioner who reported the capabilities of the teachers.

J.A. Orr followed McElrath as Commissioner of Schools and J.A. Donaldson also served from Feb. 1873 until 1882 when E.A. Gullion took over the job.

Trustees of the several schools, elected on the first Saturday in April, 1873 included:

No. 1-same as the Carrollton Seminary; No. 2- Allen Donaldson, J. Dean, N.L. Thomas. No. 3-George Doane, J.W. Stephenson, T.E. Searcy; No. 4-Edward Scott, Peter Cosby, John Tandy; No. 5-E.J. Tandy, Cyrus Spier, R.H. Williams; No. 6-E.B. Mason, S. Griffith, G. Deatherage; No. 7-J.H. Spicer, R.W. Davis, T.C. Hanks; No. 8-Wesley Haines, H. Montgomery and Stafford; No. 9-Simeon Thompson, W.S. Griffith; No. 10-J.P. Ringo, W.C. Rutherford, H. Wetherill; No. 11-Jno. T. Simms, N. Spillman, George W. Adams; No. 12-Will White, David Giltner; No. 13-John Coghill, William T. Parks, Andrew Handlon.

District No. 14 - Samuel B. Lacefield, Marshall Tharp and W.H. Hisle; No. 15-W.C. Coleman, T.D. Evans, Thornton Green; No. 16-Feland Vories, Strother Dunaway, C.S. East; No. 17-J.D. Darnold, John Adcock, James Adams; No. 18-J.H. Myers, J.P. Lewis, H.B. Lewis; No. 19-Davis Wright, Allen Robinson; No. 20-Richard Orr, Carter Carlisle, G.W. Chamberlin; No. 21 - B.L. Gaines, Henry Ogburn, William Brightwell; No. 22-B.S. Adams; No. 23-H.S. Foree, C.S. Wiginton, J.M. Webster, No. 24-W.O. Gullion, Flornay Baxter; No. 25-Ben O'Neal, Ben Gullion, D.N. De Mint; No. 26-J.G. Troutman, W.B. Eblen; No. 27-James Young, John P. Jones; No. 28-Jesse Carraco, Lewis Wright; No. 29 - M.L. Thompson, Granville Deatherage, R.T. Vories.

By 1895 there were 32 elementary schools in Carroll County for white children and five for colored children. The colored schools were operated separately from the others, with their support coming from advalorum taxes from colored land-owners and taxpayers.

Schools and their census (all children between the age of 6 and 18 years) at this time included: Carrollton 538; Cox's 86; White's Run Creek 77; Ghent 111; Fairview 93; Upper White's Run 71; Lower White's Run 59; Worthville 65; Prestonville 101; Notch Lick 75; Hunter's Bottom 73; Independence 30; Mound Hill 61; English 82; Centerville 81; Jericho 61; Green Hill 81: Locust 79: Sharon 34: Four Mile 44; Eagle Station 92; Malin's branch 89; Buffalo 64; Beech Grove 73; South Fork 49: Gullion's 57; Ford's 64; Sanders 144; King's Ridge 78; Bersot's 31; Gilgal 32; Colored: total of 327 in districts A, B, C, D and E.

When the school laws were changed under the new constitution of 1891, the County School Superintendent became an elective office and the superintendent was elected by popular vote; even the women being allowed to vote for school board, and trustee members as well as for the superintendent. Before 1919, when women's suffrage was voted, these were the only elections the feminine citizens could participate in. E.A. Gullion who had held the post of School Commissioner since 1882 and was elected Superintendent and served until January 3, 1898.

On Jan. 3, 1898, Lucia Smith became superintendent and served for four years when Ernest Lewellyn was elected and was then reelected for two more terms and completed his tenure on January 1, 1902 when Miss Sallie Ford, who had been elected in 1901, became superintendent and served for a four year term. Clay Tharp was elected in 1917 and took over the superintendent's post on January 1, 1918.

First progress toward consolidation of schools was made during the administration of Tharp, which continued until May 31, 1937, he having been elected by the Board after the superintendent's office by popular election was discontinued in 1920.

Instruction in the early one room schools was good usually, although the pay was poor. Teachers took an examination and were issued certificates of three classes, according to their proficiency. A salary schedule adopted on February 25, 1910 by the Carroll County Board of Education shows the low payscale for teachers. Third class certificates - $30 per month; second class certificates $35 per month; First class certificates - $35 per month for first year, $40 per month for second year and $45 per month after second year.

Books used in the county schools were selected by a board of examiners and from their report of July 1, 1874, it may be seen that the subject matter was sound. Texts were: Davis' American Primer, Butters' spellers, McGuffey's readers, Ray's arithmetics, Butters' grammar, Mitchell's Geography and outline maps,

Bonnell's Composition, W.S. Stephens' U.S. History; Electic penmanship and Gow's Morals and Manners.

The first recorded election of a district attempting to vote a tax for school improvement was in Prestonville in July, 1874 when the district voted an advalorem tax of 25¢ per $100 assessed valuation to build a school building. Vote was 21-1.

After 1900, the County Board of Education was concerned over high school education and made plans for sending their students to some of the high schools already established in Carroll County--at Ghent, Carrollton and Worthville, and later Sanders. On August 2, 1911, the board entered into an agreement to set up a county high school at Worthville and on August 22, 1912, entered into a similar agreement with the Ghent school district. The Worthville colored school needed a new building and the board purchased a tract of land from Mollie D. Pollard and E.O. Pollard for $100.

At a meeting on February 15, 1921, the school board decided to close the Worthville colored school because of low attendance and the children were to be transported to the Carrollton colored school via the Carroll and Worthville railroad.

One of the first signs of a good consolidated school system was reached at the August meeting of the school board in 1921, when it was voted to consolidate the Green Hill School with Worthville, with the pupils to be transported to Worthville. Plans for a consolidated school at Locust and English were planned on March 18, 1922 and at the April meeting, the Locust school was approved by merging Locust, Fairview, Hunters Bottom and Notch Lick schools. An election was called to provide an issuance of $8,000 in bonds to build the school. At this same meeting the board also called an election to take the sense of the voters to determine if the English grade school would continue to be an independent district or would become a part of the Carroll County schools. In the election at Locust, the voters turned down the consolidation proposal by 76-58.

Further consolidation came on Sept. 11, 1922 when the transportation of the children from the Bersot and South Fork districts to Ghent was approved.

Worthville's school needed improvements and on June 9, 1923, the school board called for an election to be held on June 23, 1923 to vote for issuance of $4,500 in bonds to add to the Worthville school. The bond issue was passed.

Attendance in the smaller schools having decreased it was decided by the School Board on June 9, 1927, that schools with less than 25 pupils be discontinued. These were: Mound Hill, Buffalo, South Fork and Bersot.

At the May 27 meeting in 1925 much business of interest toward consolidation of the schools was accomplished. At that time another election in the Locust precinct was called to consolidate the schools with an issue of $6,500 in bonds at stake. An election for consolidation of the Prestonville, King's Ridge, Malin's Branch and Mound Hill schools was called, with an election set for June 18, 1925 with a levy of 25¢ tax for the new district. The voters approved this proposition on June 18, 1925. The Locust consolidation was also approved on June 11, for a $6,500 bond issue.

Also at this meeting the county board approved the addition of the Sanders Independent district to the Carroll County system and taking the English Independent school into the county's schools and consolidating Beech Grove and Mill Creek Schools with English.

The site for a new consolidated school at Locust was reported by a committee of the board for $1,000, from J.B. and Phillip Alexander, which was protested by some of the board members. Also at this meeting on August 10, 1925, a contract was let for addition of two rooms at the Prestonville school to Gus Walters and Howard Persall for $397.00.

The Sanders Consolidated School No. 6 was created by the school board at the Nov. 9, 1925 meeting with Hickory Thicket School to be added to the Sanders district. An election to determine the issuance of $9,000 in bonds for building a new school building was ordered on Dec. 5, 1925 in the Sanders district (which then contained a part of Owen County across Eagle Creek). It was passed by a vote of 170-1. The old Sanders School was sold on Oct. 10,1927 to Jesse and Elmer Tharp for $800.

Authorization for the creation of Easterday consolidated school No. 7 to be composed of the Cox, Easterday, part of Rugby, and Grass Hill subdistricts was approved. An election of the voters in this district to approve a $9,000 bond issue was set for Feb. 20, 1906. An additional tax of 25¢ on each $100 assessments was to be collected. In 1925, the Carroll County school budget was set at $22,400 with the superintendent's salary fixed at $2,000 and total salaries of the teachers at $14,500.

John L. Tharp was the low bidder for the new Locust school with a figure of $7930 on April 12, 1926, which was over $2,500 allowed the district for this project but additional funds were borrowed by the board and the deficit raised mortgaging the building.

On May 12, 1926, Tharp was also the low bidder on the new Sanders school for $13,130 but was $5,000 over funds available, and the rest was borrowed.

Plans went ahead for consolidation and land known as "Tandy Woods" was purchased as site for the new Easterday school at a cost of $250 per acre. During a called meeting of the county board on August 16, 1926, the Easterday district was enlarged. Sale of the old Cox school to Thomas Butts for $300 and the Notch Lick school to William Supplee for $280 was approved.

An election to decide whether to issue $5,500 in bonds for building the Easterday school was held on March 4, 1927.

On July 11, 1927, the school board recommended that two year high schools be set up at English and Locust.

Need for a new school at English was apparent and on July 25, 1928, the school board called a special election of voters in the English and Gilgal districts to vote of an $18,000 bond issue for the purpose of erecting and equipping a new school. The site selected for the new school was three acres of land belonging to Miss S.T. Taylor. John L. Tharp was the low bidder on the new English school building, for $16,308. The old building and grounds at English was sold to Robert Good for $600.

The subdistrict system which had been in effect since the county school system was organized. The trustees were among our best citizens and served faithfully without remuneration. Some of the last sub-district trustees in the county were John Hehry, Locust; Everson Ashby, Prestonville; C.L. Wahburn, Worthville; Ben See, Eagle; R.H. Towles, Sanders; A.H. Robbins, Easterday; Searcy O'Neal, Tandy; Henry Cull, Four Mile and Stanley Kindoll, English.

Consolidation went on apace. The old Hunter's Bottom school was sold for $100 to George M. McIntyre on Jan. 14, 1935. The Centerville school was discontinued and the pupils transported to English by order of the board on April 13, 1936. On May 11, 1936 it was voted to consolidate Four Mile with Easterday. The Tandy and Eagle schools were also discontinued; the Tandy children going to Sanders and those from Eagle to be divided between Sanders and Worthville.

On June 17, 1936, the Eagle school building and grounds were sold for $440, the Tandy school for $240 and the Four Mile school for $77.00.

The final consolidation of all of the schools in Carroll County, outside Carrollton came about in 1936 when the Carroll County School Board met with L.N. Taylor of the Kentucky Department of Education and members of the Ghent Independent Board of Education. The county board issued an invitation to the Ghent district to merge with the Carroll County system, when agreed upon by the Ghent board.

The Ghent board agreed immediately and the merger was effected with the members of the Ghent Board joining the Carroll County Board of Education. The Ghent Board included R.P. Tandy, Carey Riley, Pink O'Neal, Mac Smith and J.O. Bowle.

The devastating 1937 flood brought excessive damage to the school buildings at Locust and Prestonville which was estima-

Cont

Carrale County Schools Page 3

ted at $8,500. The Prestonville children were sent to English and Ghent. In June, 1937, the board decided to abandon the Prestonville school and send its pupils to Locust, English and Carrollton. At this time the Ghent High School was also discontinued and its students sent to Carrollton High School. 1937 also marked the closing of the Easterday school, with its pupils being distributed to the Ghent, English and Sanders schools.

The Carroll County schools also had a new superintendent in 1937, as Curtis Shirley was named to the post on June 15, succeeding L. Clay Tharpe who resigned on May 31.

The Worthville High School was closed on June 12, 1939 and the students transported to Sanders and Carrollton high schools.

After the old Ghent school building burned in 1940, the board authorized a vote on a bond issue of $12,000 in the Ghent subdistrict to finance erection of a new building.

Curtis Shirley resigned as Superintendent on June 10, 1940 and Richard B. Cartmell, who had been principal of the Sanders graded and high school for several years, was elected Superintendent. He continued to serve in this post until his resignation in June, 1965.

Upgrading of the county schools continued after World War II with a bond issue for repairs at Worthville and a building at Ghent through assistance of the Federal Public Works Agency in May, 1947. A lot for erection of a new colored school at Ghent was purchased from Thomas Brown for $800 on August 10, 1948.

A contract for building the Ghent colored school was let on May 21, 1949 to the True Construction Co. for $4,541.00 and it was completed within a short time and used for all of the elementary colored pupils in Carroll County. Colored high school students were sent to Lincoln Institute in Shelby County until the schools were integrated.

schools

As the schools were consolidated it became necessary to transport the children to the new centralized locations. In the first days, this was accomplished by means of wagons and horses, with the drivers paid to furnish the teams and the school board providing the wagons. Later, motor trucks were used, private cars and then contract buses. The present fleet of modern school buses has been developed within the past 20 years.

Woodson Robertson, former chairman of the school board recollects that for his first few years in school, he rode in a horse drawn wagon. Among the former contract drivers was Squire Quincy Mulliken, who for several years operated a route in the "below the river" area.

Carroll County's school board members have been down through the years a conscientious and devoted group--serving with little compensation and striving to give the children of the county the best education possible.

First members of the reorganized county system in 1911 were H.C. Phillips, C.A. Moore, Albert Shirley, H.C. Pulliam.

Other members of the board since that time included: Jesse Fothergill, J. Whitehead, J.S. Duvall, J.H. Carrico, Paul Gullion, R.L. Gross, Louis Coghill, Louis Gribbins, Tandy Welch, John Bond, M.B. Sanders, Perry Searcy, Dr. E.B. Driskell, Lawrence Adams, Roman Day, R.H. Towles, Perry Dean, James Sanders, R.W. Good, P.V. O'Neal, Mac Smith, B.F. Raisor, C.J. Riley, Paul Berkshire, Elmer D. Dunn, Howard N. Banks, Charles Wright, Harold Mefford, F.C. Sebree, W. Chester Hulett, Howard Jacobs, Densil Warden, Jr., Woodson Robertson, Donald Taylor, Robert Stewart, Ghent Raisor, Ellis B. O'Neal, Leslie Tomlinson, Harry Berge, G.O. Williams, Paul Smith, Mrs. Rosemary Duvall, Dr. E.S. Weaver.

Members of the county board when the merger was effected were: Woodson Robertson, chairman, Gene Raisor, Ellis B. O'Neal, Donald Taylor and Leslie Tomlinson.