

# THE PATHFINDER

*The Historical Preservation Journal of Westlake*

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of the Westlake Historical  
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## *The view from the Timbers ...*

### EDITOR'S PAGE

Ordinarily, I begin this column with a singular view of the landscape, and sometimes wax poetic about it. With this issue—Westlake's first annual—I share the view with E.I. Wiesman, whom we call Jack, associate editor of the journal. You'll find out more about him in detail later. But suffice it to say that Jack's view of the Timbers informs every detail of the journal. His view is more realistic than mine, grounded literally in the dirt. That's a compliment. He knows about plants and trees, when to plant or



Arthur McWhirter

*Thus, the journal continues with the story, beginning with a bit of history of the early school system, or lack of it.*

graft, how to preserve and nurture. He can identify wild things and has a few on his property—among them an occasional golden eagle. Jack is knowledgeable about geography and weather; is enamored of locations and maps—can use them, draw them, read them—and does all three for the editor who is only sure of up and down as far as directions go. His place of some forty acres is crowded with trees and plants native to the Cross Timbers. It also contains vestiges of the wagon road that ran from Jellico to Bransford.



Never heard of Jellico, now gone, but once a thriving community near the intersection of Highways 1709 and 1938? Or Bransford, which became Colleyville? Jack wrote a book, privately published, about Jellico and was responsible for getting a historical marker there. Moving wider still, he is a gatherer and researcher of facts but also of folkways. He travels—wants to see the world and name its history, examine its riches, fit himself into time and place. About all these matters, he is tenacious as a bulldog in the historical pit, and that's a compliment too. He can see the forest but also the trees. Jack rescues antiquities from parts and pieces of relics of the past to old buildings and houses, some of which lie in numbered pieces in his yard waiting reconstruction. And he shares his research with other historical groups, going to their meetings, providing documentation for historical markers, speaking and teaching. He is more responsible for the contents of the journal than anyone else.

And, the publication could not be printed without the help of sponsors—this time Maguire

Partners—who, in addition to other enterprises, enhance the landscape with trees and plants native to the Cross Timbers region in which we live.

The journal moves back to the theme of early schools, begun in the last issue but jumping ahead to current and singular history with the opening of Westlake Academy—the first granted a charter by the state to a town.

Much school history of the Cross Timbers in our Westlake arena in Northeast Tarrant County remains to be told. Thus, the journal continues with the story, beginning with a bit of history of the early school system, or lack of it. There is information about the earliest schools in our area, dates and years, where located, how built and supported, who some of the teachers and students were, curriculum, what it was like in those early years.

Mounds of written records are available, but first had to be located, then sifted through in order to fit together what amounts to a giant jigsaw puzzle—and many pieces are still missing. Most of the information came from Leon Mitchell, Jr., curator for the Billy W. Sills Center for Archives, Fort Worth Independent School District, who worked with Jack Wiesman to select and organize the material. Susan Pritchett, archivist for Tarrant County Historical Commission, found verification about an election in 1882. Carol Roszell, in charge of the Methodist archives at West Library, Texas Wesleyan University, Fort Worth, searched for records verifying the territory of a circuit rider in the 1880s. And, as always, the Lyda White Collection was a treasure house of area family histories that added remembrances about schools and teachers. You'll be reminded often of Lyda and her lasting contribution to local history. The very personal portrait of one teacher, Jennie Nance, is viewed

through letters written to her family between 1881 and 1884. The letters and photograph of her were loaned by Jerry Craft, the mayor of Jacksboro, Texas, who was her great, great nephew. Jennie's description of teaching as well as life and times of the period breathe life into the static facts, and her story constitutes the most heartwarming piece in the journal.

Education for African-Americans, such as there was of it, is not neglected. Colored Schools, as they were called, appear occasionally. But an oral history interview with Lennia Johnson, who died just last year at age 96, recalls how bad things were – and not all that long ago—but how she made the difference in education for her children by moving here. Her daughter, Lennie McAdams, testifies to the power of being able to read.

So as not to get completely away from my usual view from the Timbers, I will report at this writing, a cool, promising almost-fall morning, unusual for this time of year. Vegetation is lush and verdant; grass is wet with dew; an influx of mourning dove scramble over their share of seed in the feeder, but their soft cooing is not mournful at all. Three new trees have made it safely through the summer—two red oaks and a river ash transplanted from a seedling by, who else but Jack Wiesman. ■

Joyce Gibson Roach



# PARTNERS IN HISTORY—PAST, PRESENT, AND FUTURE

## *Maguire Partners*

This issue of the Pathfinder is sponsored by Maguire Partners.

A supporter of the Westlake Historical Preservation Society since its inception, Maguire Partners is the developer and owner of Solana, an internationally acclaimed multi-use project located in Westlake and in the adjoining city of Southlake.

Solana takes advantage of the natural beauty of the Cross Timbers region, providing innovative and high quality work spaces in harmony with the rolling topography and the intimate character of the 900-acre site. Outlying oak groves and rolling fields have been left largely in a natural state, while more formal orchards and greenery surround the building areas. Many buildings overlook a waterway which flows through the complex; cottonwoods and willows are planted along the stream banks and pedestrian walkways wind beneath the trees. A variety of wildflowers are spread throughout the site and enhance the natural beauty of the landscape.

Solana companies enjoy the convenience and excitement of the Solana Village Center, which includes the Solana Marriott Hotel, the Solana

Club, a childcare and development center, an education and conference center, and numerous restaurants and shops. These facilities and each of the Solana buildings are connected by a fleet of shuttle buses operated by the Solana Property Maintenance Association, a non-profit corporation that provides common area services to the project.

Solana has received extensive recognition for its planning, architecture, and employee-oriented environment, and has received numerous awards, including BOMA International's "In Pursuit of Excellence" award, signifying its recognition as the best large-scale suburban office park in the world.

To date, 2.7 million square feet of commercial property has been developed at Solana, and approximately 4.5 million square feet of additional space can be constructed on the remaining Solana land. ■



# SCHOOLIN' UNDER THE LONE STAR

**A**t least as far as our territory is concerned, it seems in order to remind the reader that the world here in North Central Texas in general, and Northeast Tarrant County in particular, was termed unexplored at the time of the beginnings of a system of education. A treatise written by W.B. Parker entitled *Notes taken during the expedition commanded by Capt. R.B. Marcy, U.S.A., through unexplored Texas in the summer and fall of 1854* (Texas State Historical Association, 1990) makes it clear that our neck of the woods was little more than a “howling wilderness,” as the Puritans referenced all early America. Parker, a New York City businessman invited by Marcy to accompany him on an expedition through the “frontier Southwest,” as it was labeled, described mostly the landscape of the Cross Timbers—there were few settlements to note and none here—this at the same time frontier people were trying to get a grip on carving a place for themselves, still defending themselves from natives, getting by, making do, and, yes, trying to give the basics of reading, writing, and “ciphering” to their children.

It is in such a setting that the Texas school system was born. Much of what follows in this journal about teachers, teaching, curriculum, organization, and the like is informed by Thad Sitton’s and Milam C. Rowold’s book, *Ringing the Children In: Texas Country Schools* (Texas A&M Press, 1987). The authors remind us that much of what they know is grassroots history—information gathered from incomplete and miscellaneous court records, school minutes and record books, family and local histories, and educated guessing.

## *Beginnings of the Texas School System*

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Sitton and Rowold

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**T**he earliest attempt at formal education in Texas began with the Spanish mission schools near the end of the seventeenth century. The first such mission was built in Nacogdoches sometime around 1690, and the concept spread to other centers of population. The purposes of these institutions were primarily religious and political. Missions were designed to initiate the Texas Indians into the Catholic faith and to train the native populations to become loyal and productive Spanish citizens.

After the Mexican Revolution in 1810 the influence of the mission schools declined, as did significant progress in developing a system for schooling the young. The small population, the great size of Texas, the geographical distance from cultural centers, and the more pressing concerns of survival in a frontier environment delayed the rise of education as a public priority. During the early decades of Anglo settlement in Texas the wealthy class sent their children to boarding schools in the United States and most of the general populace taught their children at home. Education in Texas, then, was informal and private.

Two years after the Texas Revolution, public education became at least a symbolic priority of the administration of Mirabeau B. Lamar, the second president of the Republic of Texas. In his inaugural speech

of 1838, Lamar listed public education as the highest priority of government. The land grants of 1839 and 1840 were swiftly legislated for the purpose of financing a national educational system. However, no system of general education was implemented until after Texas had been admitted to the Union in 1845. The Permanent School Fund was established in 1854 from the ten-million-dollar indemnity paid to Texas by the United States government to settle the dispute over the boundaries of the state. Interest from the fund was used to establish a state school fund and to initiate a statewide school system.

Two types of educational organization evolved in Texas during the last half of the nineteenth century: the “community school” and the common school. The community schools were part of a larger social and political movement, a volatile reaction by Texas citizens against the Radical Reconstruction government of the post-Civil War period. When the state constitution of 1876 returned Texas to full statehood and restored all rights of citizenship to the voting public, sweeping political changes occurred. One of the first casualties of the ongoing regime was the lightly centralized state school system headed by State Superintendent for Public Instruction, Herbert De Grees. As Frederick Eby, the major chronicler of the development of Texas schools, observed, “The new constitution abolished the office of state superintendent for public instruction, together with all supervisory functions. . . . eliminated compulsory [school] attendance . . . all provisions for districting counties . . . and local taxation for establishing and maintaining schools was rendered impossible.” This angry legislative response swept away the support structure for public schooling in the state and returned education to a status resembling that of the 1840s. Once again schooling became the total responsibility of parents. Many reform provisions of the Radical Reconstruction era would return to Texas public education only in the middle of the twentieth century.

As stated in Section 29 of the School Law of 1876, a community school could be initiated by “parents or guardians, or next friend of any minor resident of any county in the state.” A petition of intent to open a community school, including the names of children expected to attend, was filed with the county judge. In granting the petition, the county judge appointed three members of the community as school trustees for the school term, and the school thus formed was eligible for a pro-rated share of the school fund. The community school had no district boundary lines, could not levy a local school tax, and was authorized for only one school year.

Monies received from the state school fund were used to pay the teacher’s salary. A building, furniture and equipment, maintenance and upkeep of the facilities, instructional materials, and general school supplies were the responsibility of the parents of children in attendance. As can be seen, the local community assumed a large share of the financial responsibility for schooling. Because local school taxation was prohibited, much of the support for schools was by voluntary subscription and the contribution of various support services. Interestingly, the early school legislation does not use the word “free” to describe public education.

Although the community school organization allowed a maximum of local control, school reformers almost immediately began to complain about its shortcomings. For one thing the community school was impermanent. One-year charters for a three-to-six-month school term discouraged the construction of permanent facilities and serious attempts at long-range educational planning. Nor did the absence of school boundary lines contribute to a strong sense of parental affiliation. “It [the community school] offered a means by which petty jealousies, prejudice, and sectarian bitterness rather than community cooperation [could disrupt the process of schooling].” Almost at once reformers

began a movement to reinstate some elements for centralized control of schools, a movement that culminated in the School Law of 1884, which gave birth to the Texas common schools.

The law of 1884 revived many of the bureaucratic supports for schooling initiated by the Radical Reconstruction government. For one thing the 1884 statute reestablished the office of State Superintendent of Public Instruction and began the movement toward supervision of public schools. Allowing counties once again to establish permanent school districts within their boundaries, the law returned to individual school districts the right to elect trustees. However, significant reform of the state's schools hinged on one final provision of the

rural school districts were quite rare. School charters for common school districts were now granted on a permanent basis, but as before, new districts were formed regularly by means of the political pressure parents exerted upon county commissioners and (at a later date) county school boards. Instead of stabilizing the number of school districts as reformers had hoped, the School Law of 1884 proliferated the number of communities seeking to establish local schools and draw from the state school fund.

A major stabilizing factor in school reform was the construction of permanent school facilities; but the rush to erect buildings as predicted . . . did not occur. Rural children often attended a district school with the same name at several different

*Contrary to conventional wisdom, the major day-to-day duties of the early rural school trustees were not administrative but were these menial chores of school maintenance.*

1884 law: the right of local districts to levy taxes to support local schools. The reform goal of stability and permanence in the system of public schooling required a dependable source of money, and a local taxing authority provided ready access to additional funds. . . . However, while some accomplishments of the School Law of 1884, particularly the establishment of independent school districts in urban areas, met the expectations of reformers, the rural common school did not differ greatly from its predecessor, the community school.

Beneath the surface the new organization retained the same qualities of indeterminacy and local control that characterized the community system it had replaced. For example, although the School Law of 1884 authorized counties to form independent districts with permanent boundaries, the former arrangement of establishing schools by parental petition remained in place. Independent

locations during their school years, frequently in buildings temporarily recycled from other purposes. District stability was still dependent upon the whims of nature, the rural economy, and most of all upon personal relationships among adult citizens of the community. Breakdown of consensus could move the location of the school or cause the creation of a new district, just as in the community school system. In fact the rural common school may be seen as simply a more permanent form of the community school. . . . Common school districts had the legal authority to levy local school taxes to support the local rural school, but at least in the early days 'few districts voted a local tax.' . . . Rural school patrons did not withhold support from the local school; they simply refused to provide that support in the form demanded by the reformers. The rural schools maintained their own identity and thwarted reform aims by the simple expedience

of refusing to exercise many of their lawful rights. In retrospect . . . the School Law of 1884 had created a Frankenstein's monster—a legalized and highly popular version of the old community school chaos [at least in the view of school reformers].

School communities, of course, viewed the matter very differently. . . . The evidence makes it clear that local patrons contributed much in the way of time and money to the local rural schools. The establishment and maintenance of a common school required the participation and contributions of the entire rural community. From a historical perspective the longevity of the rural school may best be examined by the extreme personal commitment of rural people to the education of the young, a commitment that considerably exceeded the simple payment of taxes.

Once a rural school charter was issued, the community responsibility began in earnest. A suitable building had to be found and refurbished or

constructed from scratch. When the school became operative the community was responsible for maintenance, which included cutting and stack firewood, providing a well or other source of drinking water on the premises, constructing toilet facilities, and taking care of ongoing repairs to the building. Contrary to conventional wisdom, the major day-to-day duties of the early rural school trustees were not administrative but were these menial chores of school maintenance.

When the building was prepared, a certified teacher had to be selected (sometimes enticed) to work in the isolated rural district for a three-to-six month school term. Once a contract was made the community had to locate a place for the teacher to room and board during the school session. Most often this was the home of a trustee or other community member. In the rural schools the teacher was likely to be an inexperienced young woman, often away from home for the first time, and probably younger than some of the pupils. More often than not the community was required to socialize the teacher into the adult world and to repeat the experiment time and time again as the teachers moved on to marriage or to higher-paying urban schools. (\*See, *Jennie Nance letters, November, 26, 1881, and April 6, 1882*, which illustrate such problems for teachers)

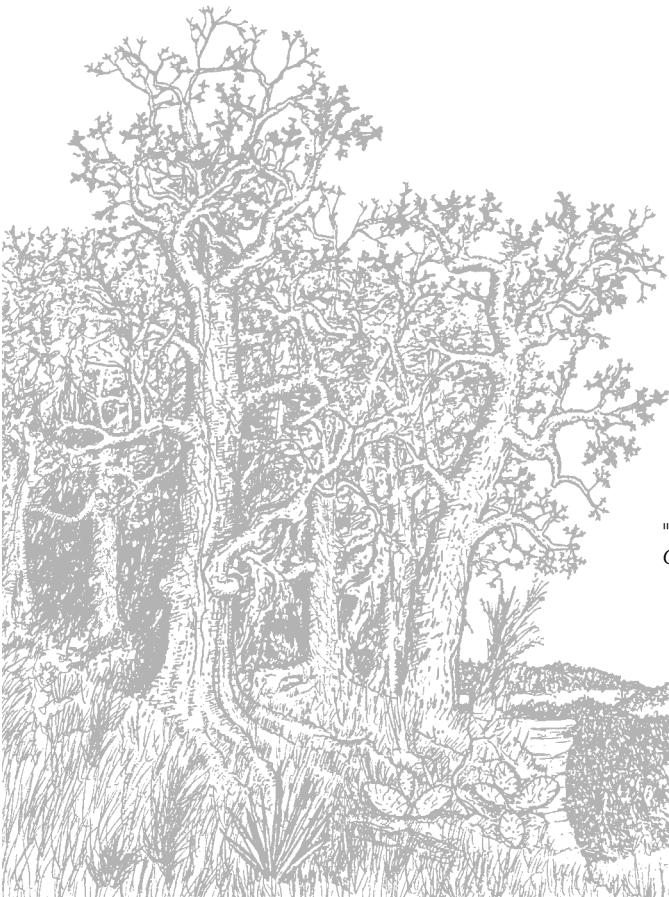
During the school year the new teacher had to endure the prevailing drabness associated with rural living, homemade furnishings, a varied assortment of teaching materials collected by families over the years and handed down from child to child, an absence of equipment and supplies for teaching, and a lack of stimulation from the world outside the community. But however unstable and vulnerable the common school organization appeared, the system proved to be highly resilient. Resisting every effort to change the structure for schooling the rural young in the state, the Texas common schools continued to exist as a viable educational institution for nearly half of the twentieth century.” (5-11) ■



# SCHOOLIN' IN THE TIMBERS



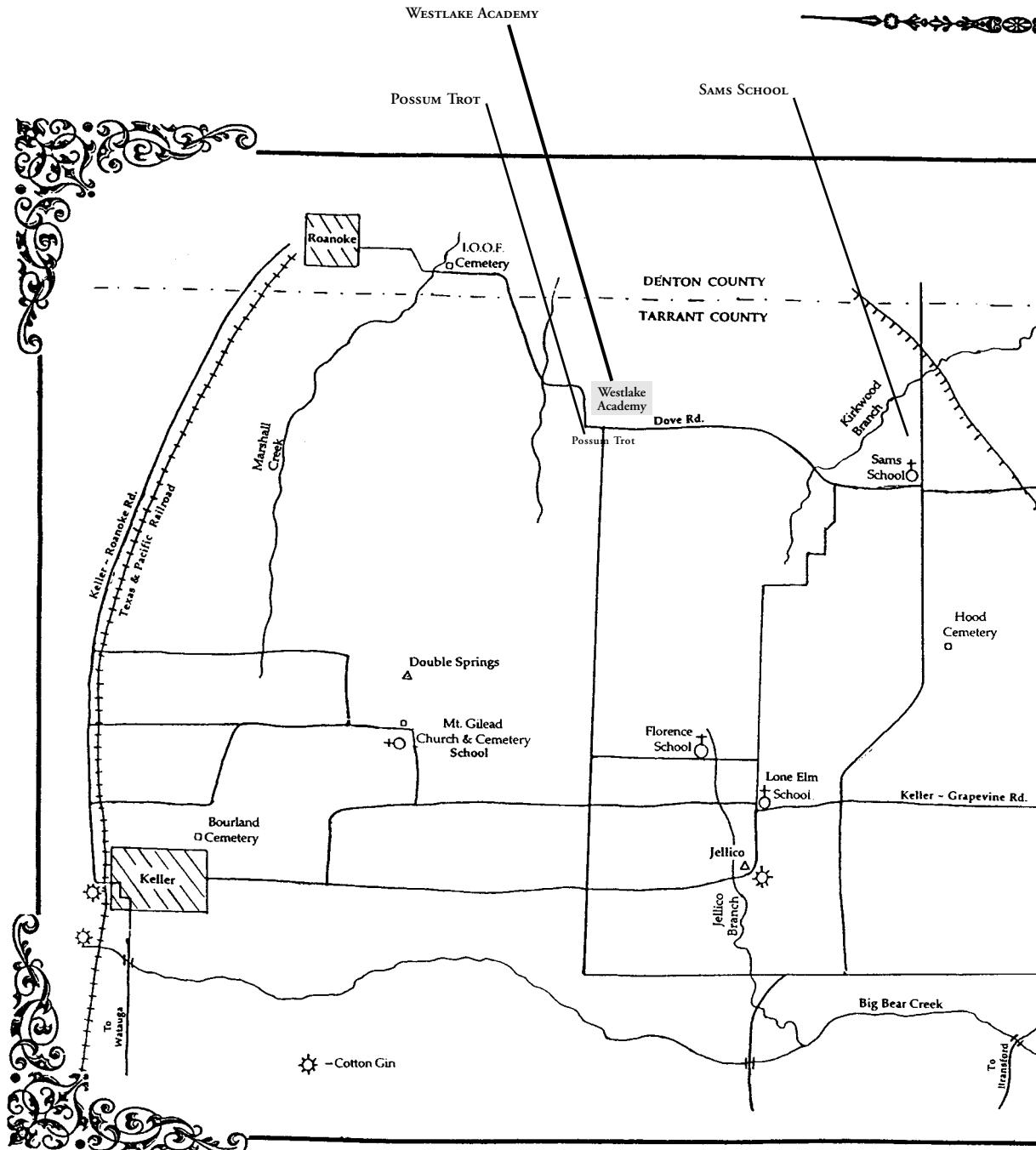
The earliest schools in Westlake's circle, which include some in Denton County as well as Tarrant County, are examples of community school organization in place between 1876 and 1900—the very period when the state's educational program was launched. School was often a hit or miss proposition—sometimes it went on and sometimes it didn't; teachers didn't stay long in one place, but seemed to move around, hoping to find better opportunities and benefits in other settlements. Both students' and teachers' lives were affected by the seasons, the weather and other vagaries. From records compiled by Leon Mitchell, Jr., curator for the Billy W. Sills Center for Archives, Fort Worth Independent School District, it is possible to see how county districts were formed and changed, who taught and how much teachers were paid. Other bits of information from the Lyda White Collection, newspaper articles, local histories, and such widen the perspective and breathe life into statistics. *JGR* (continued on page 12)



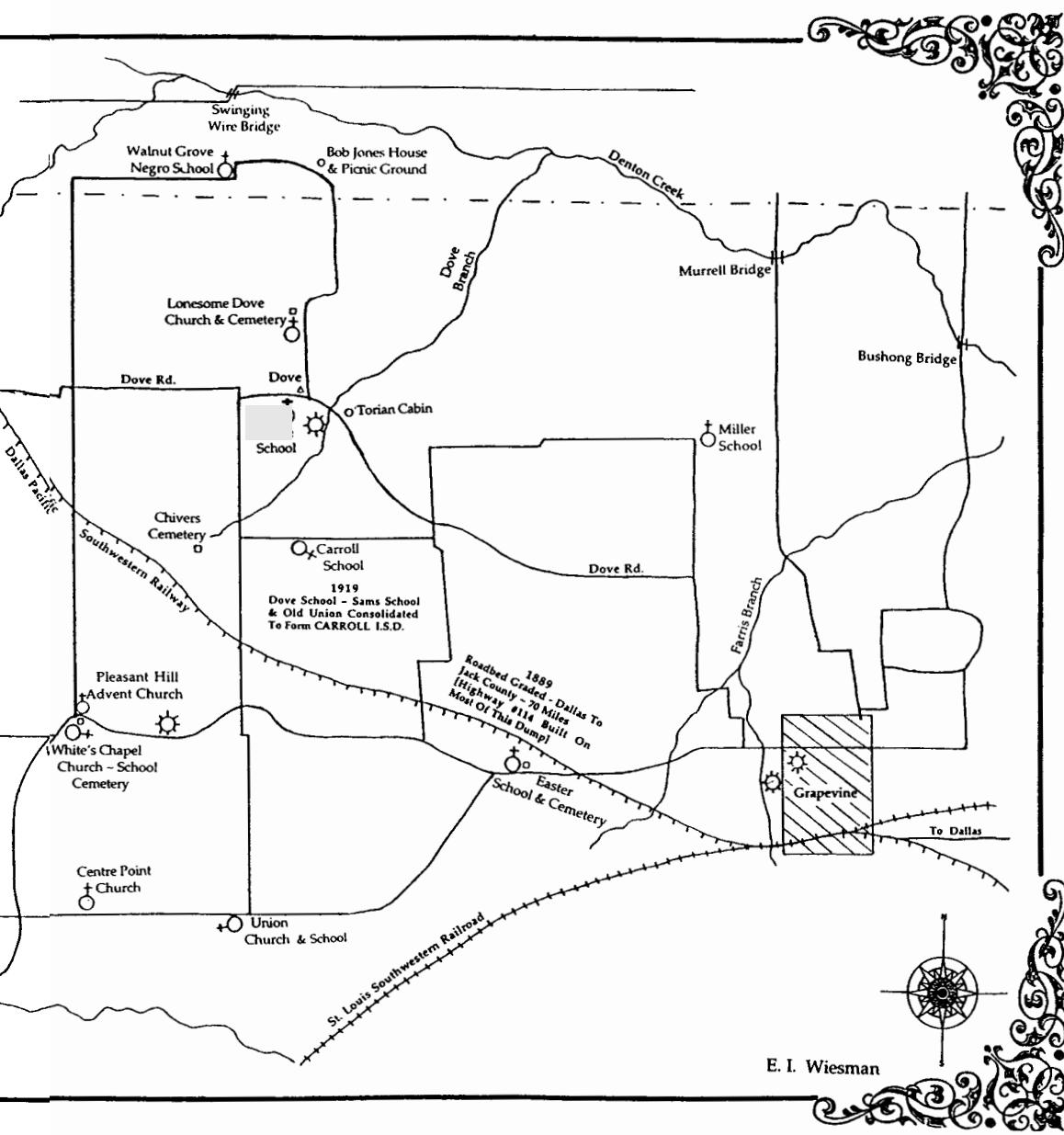
"Cross Timbers Vista, Indian Territory" by Richard V. Francaviglia, 1998, from *The Cast Iron Forest*, University of Texas Press, Austin, 1998; with permission.



# Northeast Tai 1846 ~



# arrant County 1920



*Easter/Union*

*No. 11*

## Expenditures in Easter/Union School District No. 11

Compiled for Jack Wiesman by Leon Mitchell, Jr. in December, 2003.

§ A state school system was created in 1870-71, which called for fixed-boundary districts. The Texas Constitution of 1876 and the School Law of 1876 did away with the state school system and established a system of "school communities." This meant a return to what were known as "Pauper schools." It was essentially a non-system. Scholastics were persons of age 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, and 13. Schools in our area were numbered by the county judge: #9 Mount Gilead, #20 Lone Elm, #21 Lonesome Dove, #34 White's Chapel, #62 Sams, #63 Double Springs, #78 Union, #80 Easter, #70 Big Bear Creek.

§ Tarrant County used this system from 1877 to 1884 when the School Law of 1884 permitted the Commissioners Court to draw fixed-boundary line school districts and thereby have a local school tax. In April and May of 1884 Tarrant County fathers drew off 80 school districts (outside the corporate limits of Fort Worth). They numbered them from No. 1 in the N.W. part of the county to No. 80 in the S.E. corner. Existing school communities largely shaped the work of the court, which was recorded on a large map of Tarrant County indicating original surveys in the County.

Leon Mitchell, Jr., Curator,  
Billy W. Sills Center for Archives

1888-89 (no complete survey was made, LMjr.)		
T. E. W. Scruggs	"as teacher"	was paid \$50 on Jan. 18 & other times.
Mattie Hudgins	"	was paid \$30 on Jan. 18
<b>1889-90</b>		
T. E. W. Scruggs	paid \$50 monthly for 4 mos, plus \$48.15	
Prudence Beall	paid \$35 for 3 months (60 school days)	
<b>1890-91</b>		
Fannie Miller	paid \$40, \$0, \$30, and \$17.90	
Prudence Beall	paid \$35.70 monthly for 3 mos.	
<b>1891-92</b>		
Lee Hammond	paid \$50 monthly for 5 mos.	
<b>1892-93</b>		
C. S. Steadman	paid \$30 monthly for 6 mos.	
Taylor Blevins	paid \$30 for "supplies" on Jan. 6, 1893	
<b>1893-94</b>		
C. S. Steadman	paid \$38 and \$38 as teacher	
Chas. C. P. Steadman	paid \$40, \$40, and \$7.30 as teacher	
Lisa M. Dye	paid \$28.50, \$30 and \$14.70	
This needs closer inspection.		
<b>1894-1895</b>		
J. M. Brown	paid \$40 monthly for 5 mos.	
Taylor Blevins	paid \$3.50 for census on Sept. 2, 1894	
Taylor Blevins	paid \$31.25 for "supplies" on 12-4-94	
McDonald & Lawson	paid \$18.75 for "supplies"	
<b>1895-96</b>		
W. B. Dwiggins	paid \$40 monthly for 5 mos.	
G. H. Guess	paid \$6.88 for "fuel"	
McDonald & Lawson	paid 20.62 for "supplies"	
<b>1896-97</b>		
W. B. Dwiggins	paid \$40 monthly for 6 mos.	
H. C. Blevins	paid \$5.95 for "supplies" on 1-13-97	
G. H. Guess	paid \$2.80 for taking school census	
Clopton & MacKay	paid \$13.26 for school furniture	
<b>1897-1898</b>		
Ella Youngblood	paid \$33 for 3 months, then \$41	

**1898-1899**

Riley Stroman  
G. H. Guess

paid \$50.75 and 45.82 "as teacher"  
paid \$1.08 for taking school census

**1899-1900**

Riley Stroman  
Riley Stroman

paid \$35, \$32.35 and \$32.65  
paid \$1.36 for taking school census

**1900-1901**

Kate Morris

voucher drawn 12-30-00 was paid \$35 as teacher,  
Same salary next two months, plus \$6.39

**1901-1902**

Kate Morris  
G. S. Blevins

voucher drawn 11-29-01 for \$42.50, others \$31.87,  
\$42.50, & \$19.12  
voucher dated 5-26-02 for \$1.88 for census

**1902-1903**

J. B. Jack  
G. L. Blevins

11-19-03 voucher \$45.00, then \$50 x 4, plus \$37.50  
6-1-03 voucher paid \$1.96 for census

**1903-1904**

J. B. Jack

11-27-03 voucher \$55 x 5 mos, plus \$21.75

**1904-1905**

Geo. M. Corbett  
I. Hutchins  
T. J. Andrews

12-5 voucher in amt \$35; paid \$33.25, \$43.75, \$35,  
\$35, \$35, plus \$17.50  
1-24 paid for census \$1.76  
5-29 " " " \$1.76

**1905-06**

Geo. M. Corbett

paid \$40 monthly for 5 mos. first dated 12-8-05

**1906-1907**

Pearl Turbeville  
John Little

paid \$35 for 4 mos. first voucher date 12-22 -06  
5-27 voucher drawn for "taking census" \$1.48

**1907-1908**

Laura L. Jackson  
R. A. Turner  
John Little

paid \$40 for 6 mos; first voucher dated 11-29  
census \$1.64 on May 26  
census \$1.46 on May 29

**1908-1909**

Pearl Black  
G. S. Webb

paid as teacher 11-29 - \$50; then \$37.50, \$50, \$50,  
\$50, \$50 12-28 for attending Institute \$12.50  
taking school census - \$1.16 on 6-5-09

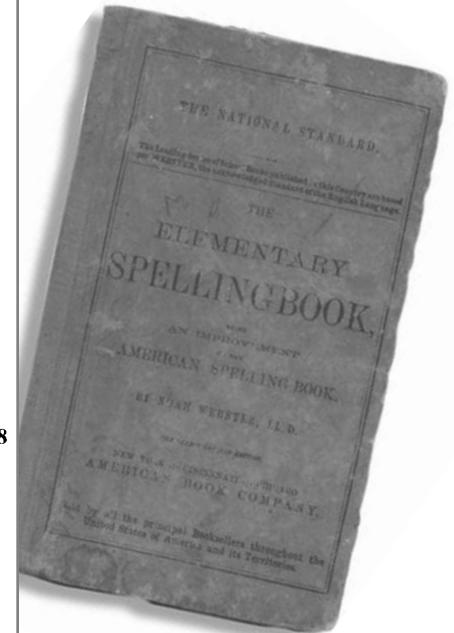
**1909-1910**

G. E. Greene  
John Little

paid \$40 monthly for 5 mos. 1<sup>st</sup> one dated 11-12-09  
census \$1.28 07-16

§ All men teachers were called professors then. There were no state supplied uniform textbooks in those days. There were no grades, but pupils were grouped into classes depending somewhat upon how far they had advanced in the reader or in the spelling book.

From *History of Denton, Texas, From its Beginning to 1960*,  
C.A. Bridges, 117



*Alt. Gilead*

*Vol. 5*

## Expenditures in Mount Gilead School District No. 5

### BEAR CREEK SCHOOL (MOUNT GILEAD)

§ Henry Alfred Pulliam was born November 15, 1887, on the Jarvis farm on Keller Smithfield Road. "He never forgot the day he received his first store bought suit of clothes, purchased at the General Merchandise Store owned by Bruno Lavoise. He rode on horseback with his father to be enrolled in the primer at the two-room school on Bear Creek. Mrs. Jennie Forgy was his first teacher. His seat mates were Willo Flemister and Ernest Haney. Other playmates included Green Bourland, Marion Cheney, Alice Keller, Donie Houston and Mary Ellen Pipkin. His teacher in the second grade was Miss Laura Price."

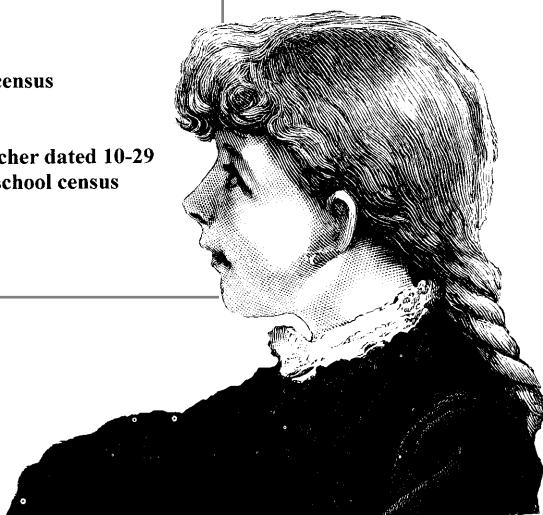
Bear Creek School met in the Mount Gilead Church. Noble Hamilton filed his teaching certificate there in 1896 and F.P. Hamilton filed his in 1898.

Price file, Lyda White Collection

Compiled from Treasurers Annual Statements by Leon Mitchell, December, 2003 for the  
Billy W. Sills Center for Archives

1888-89	Jan. 25 - one entry names a teacher for District No. 5 - can not read.	
1889-90	Jeanie L. Curtis	paid "as teacher" \$40 for 4 mos., plus \$16.75
1890-91	Jennie L. Curtis	paid \$45 monthly for 4 mos.
1891-92	R. L. Wallace	\$ 30 each for 3 mos, then \$27, \$28.45, ?
1892-93	Miss Ora Smith	paid \$38 monthly for 4 months, then \$18.50
1893-94	J. E. Forgy Donahue & Hemelberg	paid \$40 for 3 months, plus \$3.75 paid \$21.25 for "furniture" on 11-14-93
1894-95	T. A. W. Scruggs Donahue & Hemelburg T. A. Neace	paid \$38, \$40 & \$39.80 as teacher paid \$24.60 on "furniture" paid for taking census \$1.85
1895-96	T. E. Scruggs Thos. A. Neace	paid \$40 per month for 3 mos, then \$12.03 paid \$2.05 for taking school census
1896-97	Miss Ora Smith H. G. Musick	paid \$40, \$34, \$36, \$30, \$36, & \$24.22 collected \$6 for "wood" on 1-11-97
1897-98	Eliza Price E. J. Warren	paid \$40 x 5 mos, plus \$28.05 paid \$2.10 for taking school census
1898-99	Eliza Price R. L. McLain	paid \$40 for 6 months paid \$1.52 for taking census
1899-1900	R. B. Gragg R. L. McLain	paid \$45 monthly for 5 mos, then \$16.01 paid \$1.72 for taking school census

1900-1901	Florence Short R. J. McCain M. L. Brown	paid \$40 monthly for 5 mos. plus \$38. 1 <sup>st</sup> vouchr drawn 12-14 paid \$2.08 for taking census, voucher drawn 9-24-00 paid \$2.12 " " " " dated 5-14-01
1901-1902	Mrs. Eliza Keller M. L. Benton	paid \$33.75 on 12-26, then \$45 for 3 mos, then \$56.25 paid \$1.88 for census, voucher drwn 5-10-02
1902-1903	Beatrice Putman M. L. Benton	paid \$45 on 11-28, then \$31.50, \$45, \$40.50, \$22.50. \$33.75. \$22.50. \$29.25 paid \$1.68 for census on 5-11-03
1903-1904	Beatrice Putman Beatrice P. Barden Minnie H. Ozee M. L. Benton	paid \$36 on vouchr drawn 12-4-03, then \$24, then paid 1-16-04 \$20, \$30, \$30 & \$20 then paid 4-15-04 the amount of \$32 paid \$1.88 on 5-21-04 for taking census
1905-1906	Dora Lawrence W. A. Bates	paid \$50 on 12-1-05; \$50, \$50, \$50, \$55, plus \$50 5-21 paid \$2.20 for taking census
1906-1907	Dora Lawrence Ethel Rumfield William Alexander	paid \$50 for 6 mos, 1 <sup>st</sup> voucher dated 11-30-06 paid as teacher \$30 for 3 mos. beginning Jan 5 paid \$2.12 for taking census, dated 5-28-07
1907-1908	Laura Price Dora Bates R. L. Tomlin	paid 11-29 \$50 for 5 mos., then \$27.50 paid as teacher \$45 for two months paid \$2.24 on 8-10-08 for taking census
1908-1909	W. S. Ely J. P. Martan	paid 12-11-08 \$60 for 5 mos., plus \$30 paid 5-29-09 \$2.82 for taking census
1909-1910	O. Z. Gulledge O. Z. Gulledge	paid \$60 for 7 mos., plus \$15; 1 <sup>st</sup> voucher dated 10-29 paid 5-31-10 \$2.44 for taking school census



## White's Chapel School District No. 12 - Expenditures

## of Public School Funds, 1889 - 1911

Compiled by the Billy W. Sills Center for Archives, FWISD, by Leon Mitchell, Jr. in August, 2003  
 from Records in the State Archives. The same records for more recent years  
 Should be Held by County Officials Who Do Not Care to Locate Them

§ Schools were comparatively rare and lasted only two or three months each year, usually in the summertime. Pupils paid tuition at the rate of about \$1.00 to \$3.00 per month. *McGuffey's Readers, Webster's Blue Back Spelling Book and Smith's Grammar* were standard and sometimes the only books used. One of the general qualifications of a good school teacher was to be able to cut a goose quill pen. Paper was not too plentiful, and each child had a slate. Benches were logs split in two and mounted on two pegs stuck in auger holes on the bark or underside. These benches were placed against the wall of the schoolroom and slanted a little toward the seat which was made like the benches except that they had four shorter legs. The tops of the benches and seats were hewn as smooth as possible on the upper side. The undersides were left unfinished. Sometimes the bark was not removed."

from *History of Denton, Texas, From its Beginning to 1960*,  
 C.A. Bridges, 42

1888-89	J. M. Brown (?) paid \$50 a month for teaching; paid 1-26, 3-1, 3-1, 3-25 20 days made a month (so \$2.50 daily) sch yr - 4 mos
1889-90	J. D. Currie paid \$33.75, \$45, \$45, \$45, & \$11.25 as "teacher" Crass & ? paid for purchase of furniture \$7.85
1890-91	F. E. W. Scruggs paid \$50 monthly for 4 mos. plus \$25 as "teacher" payment for "furniture" on 1-1-91 - \$42.12
1891-92	Mrs. K. Bradley paid \$50 on 2-8, on 3-7. and \$25 on 3-28 as "teacher" J. O. Prince ? paid \$2 for "fuel" on 3-1-92
1892-93	F. E. W. Scruggs paid \$50 each on 12-14; 2-20; 3-20 & \$33.13 on 4-15 which indicates a sch yr from about Nov 14 to early April
1893-94	Suzie Hudgins paid \$42.70, \$45, \$45 & \$58.50 as "teacher"
1894-95	Q. A. Owen paid \$8 on Jan. 4, 1894 for "wood" Mary Deen paid \$31.50 each for 3 months as "teacher"
1895-96	McDonald & Lawson - paid \$20.62 on 9-7-94 for "supplies" M. M. Austin paid \$1.40 for taking school "census" in No. 12
1896-97	Katie Gillis paid \$35 for 3 mos plus \$42.75 as "teacher" McDaniel & Lawson - paid \$22.40 for "supplies" Annie Gray paid \$30, \$30, \$30 & \$28.10 as "teacher"
1897-98	W. A. Satterwhite paid \$25, \$25, \$25, \$25, \$25 & \$1.25
1898-99	Allen Whittenberg paid \$25 monthly for 4 mos as "teacher" - SAME TEACHER in No. 13 ???
1899-00	Kate Gillis paid \$35 monthly for 6 mos as "teacher"
1900-01	C. F. Craig paid \$33.28, \$17.50, \$40.25, \$35, \$35, \$35 & \$14
1901-02	Riley Strsner paid \$34, \$50, \$30, \$38, \$50 as "teacher"
1902-03	Maud Wilson paid \$36, \$21.60, \$32.40, \$43.20, & \$51.95
1903-04	Lucy Rupard paid \$30 as "teacher" Lucy Warren paid \$30 & \$30 as "teacher"
1904-05	H. Lowrance paid \$47.50 per month for 6 mos as "teacher" John Lowe paid \$1.48 on May 31, 1905 for taking "census"
1905-06	C. O. Austin paid \$50 monthly for 4 mos plus \$24.60
1906-07	C. O. Austin paid \$50 monthly for 6 mos (120 days) C. M. Tinsley paid \$2.32 for census; drawn May 27, 1907
1907-08	C. O. Austin paid \$57.50 per mon for 4 mos. then \$71.85 & 28.75 R. J. Higgins paid \$1.70 for taking census, vouchewr drawn 5-1

White's Chapel

No. 12

Page 2 - White's Chapel

1908-09	A. McKilbur ?	paid \$60 each on 11-29, 12-20, 2-7, 3-14, 3-14, and \$43.48 on April 12
1909-10	Lacy Boone " "	paid \$15 on 1-4-10 for attending "Institute" paid \$60 each on 11-21, 12-19, 1-4 7, 3-29, and \$15 on 3-29 " 1 to 25
	J. R. Nasbison	paid \$1.52 on 5-20 No. 1 to 25

No. 12

Form G.—County or City.  
TO THE STATE SUPERINTENDENT OF PUBLIC INSTRUCTION, AUSTIN, TEXAS:

## ANNUAL REPORT

Of the County Superintendent ~~and~~ of Public Instruction of the ~~City of~~  
September 1, 1896, and ending August 31, 1897.  
NOTE.—Use separate forms for white and colored schools.  
(Under this head the County Supt. will discuss in a general way the condition and needs of the schools of his county.)

### GENERAL REPORT.

*Fallant*  
Affidavit on 4<sup>th</sup> Sheet.

- I Uniform System of Grading Schools.  
Will have it next year.
- 2 Better work on the line of increased efficiency of teachers.  
Have plans for that purpose now.
- 3 Do away with the "transfer".  
It obliterates district lines.
- 4 The great need is some way to keep the advanced pupils in school longer.
- 5 The County is not properly divided into School Districts.  
I have made some improvement and am still working at it, but it is difficult to make changes.

1896-7

I have combined all in a general Summary + on Sheet No. 4 for a



*Sams School*

*1896*

### Expenditures in Sams School District No. 6 - Tarrant County

Compiled by Leon Mitchell, Jr. from records in the State Archives for the Billy W. Sills Center for Archives

§ The primary reason that school had only a five-month term was because children were needed for farm work and bringing in crops. Everyone in the family helped with farm chores. The young girls were usually responsible for feeding the chickens, collecting the eggs and making certain that the chicken house was securely closed at night to keep out predatory animals. Maintaining the vegetable garden and assisting their mother in the canning process, which provided food that would sustain them through the long winter months, also fell to the girls.

§ The boys usually took care of the larger animals. Milking the cows, however, was usually divided between both the boys and the girls. The older boys worked in the fields, assisting their father. In the late summer or early autumn, crops had to be harvested, corn collected and put in the crib, cotton picked and hauled to the gin where the seed was removed from the lint. The ginned cotton was compressed, banded and put into a bale that usually weighed approximately 500 pounds. Both the seed and the bale were returned to the farmer. When advertisement came announcing when cotton brokers would be in either Keller or Smithfield, the farmers would haul their bales of cotton to town where the broker would bid on and/or buy the cotton. Cotton was one of the largest cash crops grown by local farmers.

Jack Wiesman, *Jellico, Texas*, privately printed

School Year	Name of Person	For what	Amount date
1888-89	J. Breeding	Teaching	\$46, \$40, \$6
1889-90	Mary Dean	"	\$35 monthly x x 3
1890-91	Geo. F. Hussey Thos. Kane & Co.	" Furniture	\$50 x 4 plus \$3.40 10-3-90 paid \$27.81
1891-92	Thos. Kane & Co. B. M. Cauthum ?	Furniture Teaching	10-1-01 pd. \$17.81 \$35 & \$14
1892-93	F. D. Kennemer	Teaching	\$50 x 6 mos & \$5.00
1893-94	M.... Prince M.... Prince	" for rent	\$40, \$40, \$38, \$38 & \$4 \$11.63
1894-95	Wm. L. Harris	Teaching	\$33, \$16.90, \$10.50, \$23.22
1895-96	Geo. Carruth	" Census Supplies	\$40. \$40, \$38 \$1.65 \$23.75
1896-97	Miss Ola Anderson	Teaching	\$37.50 x 3, plus \$11.00
1897-98	W. P. McGinnis	" Sch. census	\$30.40, \$\$32, \$32, \$24 \$1.60
1898-99	Elizabeth Gillis	Teaching Census	\$32 x 3 plus \$30.40 \$1.00
1899-1900	Mary C. Lundry E.T. Brown E. T. Brown C. C. Estill	Teaching taking census "repairs" "	begin 11-20 \$32 for 4 \$ .92 \$10.60 paid from local \$14.45 " " tax
1900-01	Londa M. Pickett	Teaching	\$32 x 3, plus \$20
1901-02	Londa M. Pickett W. J. Foster M. V. Huggins	" taking census " "	\$35 x 4, plus \$17.50 \$1.00 pd 12-30-01 \$1.32
1902-03	Charles Killian W. J. Woods	Teaching "	\$30 & \$22.50 \$38.35, \$38.35, \$26.85
1903-04	M. V. Huggins W. G. Hardin	taking census Teaching	\$1.16 pd on 7-31-03 \$50, \$50 & 61.59
1904-05	Bessie Smith W. G. Huggins	" census	\$40 x 3, plus \$24 \$1.40 pd Nov. 21
1905-06	T. M. Mallett	Teaching	\$40 x 3 mos.

*Sams School*

*Loc. 6*

**1906-07**

**W. S. Ely**

**H. W. Jenkins**

**Teaching  
Lumber**

**Page 2 Sams No. 6**

**1907-08**

**Eula J. Parkey**

**D. O. Simmons**

**Lipscomb & Weatherby**

**D. O. Simmons**

**D. O. Simmons**

**G. W. Warson ?**

**Eula J. Parkey**

**Pearl Turbeville**

**as teacher  
repairs &c**

**supplies**

**library**

**repairs &c**

**tacking census**

**attending Institute**

**as teacher**

**for attending Institute**

**as teacher**

**1908-09**

**H. McCain**

**1909-10**

§ On February 8, 1917, the Tarrant County School Board decided to split the territory of Sam's School between the two new districts of Carroll #99 and Florence #100.



This school was in what we now know as Westlake.

LONE ELM SCHOOL DISTRICT No. 13 - TEACHERS  
 (As shown in TREASURER'S ANNUAL STATEMENT ... of SCHOOL FUNDS of the COUNTY of  
 TARRANT, STATE OF TEXAS, in box 4-23/217 of State Archives, Austin Texas.)

1889-90	J. E. Forgy	Paid \$50, 50, 50, 50 & \$37.50
1890-91	Lizzie Hudgins	Paid \$38, 40, 40, 40 & 40
1891-92	Ora Smith	Paid \$40, 36, 38, 40, 40 & 6
	W. O. Hightower	Paid \$20 on 11/12/91 for school supplies
1892-93	A.S. Kennamer	Paid \$50, 50, 50, 50 & 11
	W. O. Hightower	Paid \$20 on 12/01/92
1893-94	D. R. Murray	Paid \$50 each for 5 months; also payments to furniture - \$21.25
		Paid \$38, 42 & 40;
1894-95	M. C. Lindsey	Paid \$78.77 for schoolhouse repairs 12/08/94
	S. H. Thompson	Shropshire & Shropshire paid for School furniture - \$64.80 on 06/03/95
1895-96	W. T. Mackie	Paid \$51.75, \$42.75, \$45, & \$40.50
	C. E. Miesse Co.	Paid \$18.75 supplies on 01/27/96
	S. H. Thompson	Paid \$11.75 for repairs
1896-97	Miss Louise Medlin	Paid \$190 total
	S. H. Thompson	Twice paid \$20 for lumber; supplies \$18.75
1897-98	Louise Medlin	Paid \$40, 40, 40, 40 & 10
	S. H. Thompson	Paid \$7.50 for repairing school house
1898-99	W. A. Satterwhite	Paid \$35 on 11/28/98; \$35 on 12/28/98; \$29.75, \$35, 28 on 04/14/99; & \$24.50 on May 5th - Teacher for a total of 5 months.
	W.A. Satterwhite	Paid \$11/17/99 \$40 & monthly thereafter \$40 each
1899-00	W. A. Satterwhite	Paid \$202 for 5 months - Teacher
	C. J. Thompson	Paid \$15 for supplies - \$3.12 for Census
1900-01	Lewis Newton	Paid \$200 for 5 months - Teacher
	C. J. Thompson	Paid \$5 for fuel; \$1.60 for Census
1901-02	W. A. Satterwhite	Paid \$25 for 2 months - Teacher on 02/12/02
	Alyce McClelland	Paid \$160 for 4 months - Teacher
1902-03	C. J. Thompson	Paid \$2 for Census on 05/11/03
	R. E. Wilson	Paid \$3.80 for supplies on 03/05/03
1903-04	W. A. Satterwhite	Paid \$289.25 for Teacher
	C. J. Thompson	Paid \$1.92 for Census
1904-05	W. A. Satterwhite	Paid \$311.50 for Teacher
	C. J. Thompson	Paid \$2.20 for Census
1905-06	W. A. Satterwhite	Paid \$442.80 for Teacher

cont'd

§ Just north of the Jellico General Store, approximately 150 yards . . . on the east side of what is now Precinct Line Road, John Grimes and wife, A.J. Grimes, granted three-fourths of an acre of land to the school trustees in 1877 for a school. The school was a one-room construction with clapboard siding and wood shingle roof. The school was named Lone Elm School, and rightly so, for the large lone elm that stood on this property. This school had an election box and was used for voting in local elections. The children that attended this school carried drinking water, from the flowing spring adjacent to the gin, in pails. Sams School which was located approximately three miles north of Jellico and the Lone Elm School were consolidated into the Florence School District in 1917; thus ceased the existence of the Lone Elm School.

From E.I. Wiesman's *Jellico, Texas*, privately printed

Phillips School District No. 84

1890 - 1905

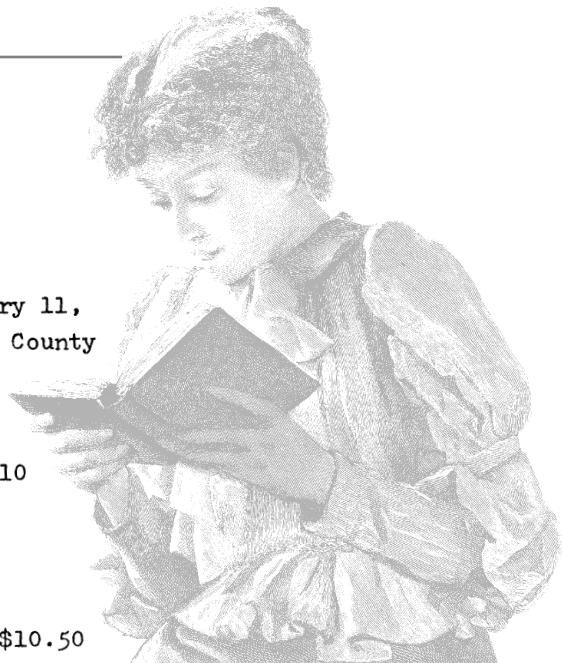
Phillips School District No. 84 was created on February 11, 1890, on petition of J. T. Prather and others to the Tarrant County Commissioners Court. Minute Book 6, pp. 321-2.

Teachers, as shown in the Treasurer Records, were:

1890-91	P. S. Manire	Paid \$30, \$30, \$30, & \$10
1891-92	P. S. Manire	Paid \$30 & \$30
1892-93	Mattie Kennamer T. E. W. Scruggs	\$35 x 3 mos. \$45
1893-94	Etta Flemister	\$30 x 4 mos, plus \$10.50
1894-95	G. J. Buck	
1895-96	Nori Brown	\$30 times 3 mos.
1896-97	T. E. Scruggs (I.)	\$45 x 3, plus \$12.70
1897-98	Ida Cowan	\$35
1898-99	Florence Short	\$30 x 3 mos.
1899-00	Fannie Cantrell	
1900-01	Fannie Cantrell	\$30, \$15, \$45, \$20
1901-02	I. W. Bewell, Jr.	\$30, \$30, \$36
1902-03	No school	
1903-04	No school	
1904-05	No school	

Possible Trot School

On May 10, 1905 commissioners were petitioned by the citizens of Phillips School District to break the district, giving some to Mount Gilead No. 5 and some to Sam's School Dist. No. 6. Minute Book 19, pp. 287-8.



§ Most of the public school teachers in 1894 had no better than a second grade certificate. A teacher who held a first grade certificate could justly be proud of it, and teachers with degrees were extremely rare.

From *History of Denton, Texas, From its Beginning to 1960*,  
C.A. Bridges, 216

This school was in what we now know as Westlake.

§ A number of sandy fields in the area grew peanuts. This legume crop was a source of both hay and nuts, and offered excellent forage for the animals during winter. Peanut farming involved laborious work, requiring hoeing, tilling and weeding. After the bushes with nuts were dug, they had to be shaken by hand to remove the sand. Wheat and oats were harvested by hand with a scythe and a horse drawn binder.

From E.I. Wiesman's, *Jelllico, Texas*  
privately printed



### Florence Short at Possum Trot School, 1898-1899

Compiled by Leon Mitchell from material provided by E. I. "Jack" Wiesman and information in the Billy W. Sills Center for Archives, FWISD, August, 2003, for Mr. Wiesman.

	Boys	Girls	Total
<b>Number of Children Assigned to the school, including transfers:</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>20</b>
<b>Number of scholastics who actually attended</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>16</b>
<b>Number over age</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>Number under age</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Total enrolled</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>17</b>
 <b>Total days attended (scholastics)</b> (The underage girl attended for 44 days.)	 <b>490</b>	 <b>300</b>	 <b>790</b>
 <b>Total number of days school kept open</b> (3 months, considering twenty days in a month)	 <b>60</b>		
 <b>Teacher's certificate</b> - 1 female teacher - 3 <sup>rd</sup> grade county certificate			
 <b>Paid by the district</b> (The teacher would have received some sort of remuneration for The two under aged girls.)			
<b>Vouchers drawn</b>	<b>Amount</b>	<b>Paid</b>	
12 - 6 - 98	\$30	1 - 4 - 99	
1 - 10 - 99	\$30	3 - 4 - 99	
2 - 10 - 99	\$30	3 - 4 - 99	
 <b>Paid for taking school census in District 84 - Hiram Adams</b> can't read			
		<b>Paid</b>	<b>12 3 - 98 - \$1.20</b>

### School House

County Superintendent Duncan McRae thought the site owned by deed and the wooden school house was listed as in "good" condition. Perhaps an error on his part. He felt the structure worth only \$100 and did not assign any value to the benches, etc. inside the building.

## Tom W, Buell, Jr. at Possum Trot School, 1901-1902

Compiled from information from I. E. "Jack" Wiesman and material in the Billy W. Sills Center for Archives, FWISD, August, 2003 for Mr. Wiesman.

	Boys	Girls	Total
<b>Number of Children Assigned to the School including Transfers:</b>	11	9	20
Number of scholastics who actually attended	6	9	15
Number over age	0	0	0
Number under age	0	2	2
<b>Total Enrollment</b>	6	11	17
Total days attended (scholastics)	289	425	714
Total for two girls under age		74	74
<b>Total days attended</b>	289	499	788
Total number of days school kept open			64
Teacher's certificate	1 male teacher - 2 <sup>nd</sup> grade certificate		
<b>Paid by the district:</b>			\$ 96
Vouchers drawn	Amount	Paid	
1 - 3- 02	\$30	1 - 4 - 02	
1- 28 - 02	\$30	3 - 4 - 02	
2 - 26 - 02	\$36	3 - 4 - 02	\
<b>Paid for taking school census in the district:</b>	Hiram	Adams	
	"	"	
	Drawn	Drawn	
	10 - 20 - 01	6 - 20 - 02	
			.88
			.64
		<b>Total</b>	<b>\$ 1.52</b>

### School House

County Superintendent Milton H. Moore thought the site owned by deed and the wooden school house was in "bad" condition. He placed a value of \$75 on the structure and \$20 on the furniture within.

*Possum Trot was the popular name for the schoolhouse in the Phillips School District No. 84 (1890-1905) created out of the Mount Gilead School District No. 5. In 1905 the district was divided again, giving some to Mount Gilead and some to Sams' School District, No. 6. Conjecture is that the district was separated either as a way to avoid a local tax or because of religious differences.*

§ A teacher had enrolled 37 students (ages 8 thru 13) and reported such to Judge C.C. Cummings prior to April 12, 1877. The judge evidently considered the Salem area as the twenty-ninth community. Judge Cummings devoted much energy to organizing "school communities" which numbered 52 when a list was printed on that date. In the fall of 1878 the community was given the number, 30. Scholastics enrolled for the years 1879-80 and 1881-1882 were 24 and 26. The fact that a school organized does not mean that a school was actually conducted.

From Leon Mitchell, Jr.,  
Curator for Billy Sills Center

§ One student [in Denton County] described the building as a "one story schoolhouse facing west, had two front doors, one for the boys and one for the girls." The traditional gourd dipper hung on the wall by the water-pail."

From *History of Denton, Texas, From Its Beginning to 1960*,  
C.A. Bridges, 159

## SALEM SCHOOL DISTRICT Number 25 Teachers

### 1900 – 1911

Compiled by Leon Mitchell, Jr. Aug. 2003 I do not have all of the annual statements of the county Treasurer, but the state archives should have the missing information.

#### 1900-1901

Gertrude Thornton paid \$32.90, \$32.90, \$30.90, & \$32.00 "as teacher"  
W. G. Nuckler paid \$1.32 for taking school census in No. 25

#### 1901-1902

A. H. Harris paid \$30, \$30, \$30 & 23.96 "as teacher"

#### 1902-1903

Nettie Smith paid \$30, \$27, \$30, \$30 & \$30 "as teacher"

#### 1903-1904

No school

Mrs. J.A. Hovencamp - took sch census & paid \$1.30 on 5-30-04

#### 1904-1905

Sybil Akers paid \$35 monthly for 5 months  
J. A. Hovenkamp took sch census - paid \$1.48 on Nov. 1, 04

#### 1905-1906

Geraldine Payne paid \$35 x 3, plus \$31.50, \$38.50

#### 1906-1907

#### 1907-1908

#### 1908-1909

Hattie McCain paid \$40 (on vouchers drawn on) 12-4-08; 1-8-09 - \$40; 2-5 - \$32, on 3-5 - \$28.24 as teacher; paid \$10 on 1-9 for attending "Institute"

W. G. Nuckalls paid \$2.12 for taking census 9-10-08

Colored School

Mary J. Poe paid "as teacher" \$35 on 2-26-09

#### 1909-1910

A. B. Jolley paid "as teacher" \$60 each for 3 months

M. J. Blevins paid \$1.5? for census on 5-24-10

Colored School

H. F. Randle

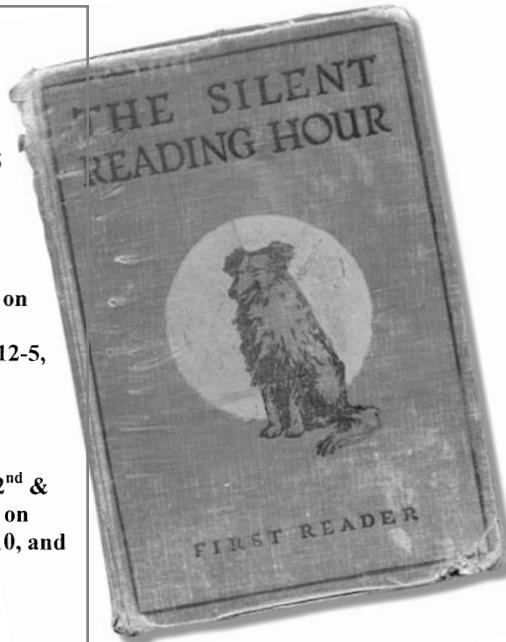
paid "as teacher" \$35 monthly vouchers drawn 12-24; 1-22, 2-25, 3-26 and \$5.25 on voucher draw 3-26

Doue

No. 7

1901-1902	-	W. B. Dwiggins Mattie A. Brown	\$55 paid \$55 for 4 1/2 mos. \$30 paid \$30 x 3 plus 22.50 & \$15
1902-1903		W. A. Satterwhite Mattie A. Brown	\$55 per month \$30
1903-1904		B. C. Dyess Emma Hodge	paid \$68.15, \$60.50, \$68.15, & \$55 on 12-5, 1-4, 2-18, & 3-16 paid \$22.50, \$33, \$37.50 & \$15 on 12-5, 1-9, 2-18, & 3-16 W. L. Ratliff paid \$2.64 for taking census - 4-12-04 " " " \$2.52 " " " 7-28-04
1904-1905	-	Ulrich H. Pool Emma Hodge	paid \$50 on Dec. 2, Emma \$35 on 2 <sup>nd</sup> & thereafter Pool drew for both; \$85 on Jan. 6, \$85 on Feb. 3, \$89.25 on 3-10, and \$38.50 on 3-24 School census taker paid \$2.84 - date not clear
1905-1906		J. P. Scott Kate Gulledge	\$60 per month \$30 per month for 5 mos & 5 days
1906-1907		J. P. Scott T. M. Mallett A. E. Dwiggins	\$60 per mon for 5 mos, begin 12-14 \$22.50 on 12-14; \$30 per mon thereafter for 4 months (started a week late) taking sch. census \$3.08 - voucher drawn 6-17
1907-1908		W. S. Eby Ethel Rumfield	\$55 monthly, 1 <sup>st</sup> voucher drawn 12-6 for 5 months, plus one voucher for 27.50 beginning 12-6 drew \$ 30 for 4 mos, then Paid \$35 & \$17.50
1908-1909	-	James Olson J. R. Higgins Mildred Noble	paid \$3.84 for taking school census paid \$60 for 5 mos, 1 <sup>st</sup> voucher drawn Dec. 19, then final \$39 on April 28 paid \$40 on Dec. 21, for 5 mos, then \$26 Both teachers paid \$15 & \$10 for attending Institute on Vouchers drawn Jan. 18, 1909
1909-1910	-	James Elson T. F. LaRosh L. Cook F. ? Lowrance	paid \$3.28 for taking census, voucher drawn 5-25 paid \$60 for 5 mos beginning 11-26 paid \$40 for 4 mos beg. 11-26 & \$28 /3-18 paid \$3.32 for school census, voucher dated 6-7-10

Leon - Very interesting as to what a large  
Scholastic population this district had! Leon Oct. 7, 2003





**Keller Independent School District**

To  
The Public

Order Declaring Result of Election  
Dated April 22, 1911  
Recorded in Vol. 22, Page 185  
Commissioner's Court Records,  
Tarrant County, Texas.

(Certified Copy recorded in  
310, page 88, Plat Records,  
Tarrant County, Texas)

Whereas, an election was duly held in the Town of Keller, in this County, on the 22nd day of April, 1911, to determine if said town should form an incorporation for free school purposes only within the boundaries hereinafter described, and returns of said election have been duly made to and canvassed by me, from which returns it appears that at said election Sixty-Six votes were cast for "CORPORATION" and Fifty-One Votes for "NO CORPORATION".

Therefore, I, R. E. Bratton, in my capacity as County Judge of Tarrant County, Texas, do adjudge that said election resulted in favor of such incorporation and I do hereby declare the inhabitants of said territory hereinafter described, duly incorporated for free school purposes only within said boundaries, the name of the incorporation being Keller Independent School District.

And, whereas, on the 22nd day of April, 1911, there was also held in said town an election for seven trustees of said Keller Independent School District, and I find from said returns that at said election there cast 117 votes, of which

J. T. Adams received 48 votes  
J. B. Merrill received 49 votes  
H. D. Griffin received 48 votes  
W. A. Satterwhite received 49 votes  
Jack Yates received 48 votes  
J. F. Lavy received 48 votes  
J. E. Bourland received 48 votes

Therefore, I do declare the said J. T. Adams, J. B. Merrill, H. D. Griffin, W. A. Satterwhite, Jack Yates, J. F. Lavy and J. E. Bourland duly elected as trustees of said Keller Independent School District.

This order is made and entered by me on the records of the Commissioners Court of Tarrant County, this the 24th day of April, 1911.

.... R. E. Bratton, County Judge of  
Tarrant County, Texas.

(Here follows Certificate of R. E. Bratton County Judge certifying that on the 22nd day of April, 1911 he made entry upon the records of the Commissioners' Court of said county, declaring the Keller Independent School District duly incorporated for free school purposes only.....

§ Edward Everett Dale, author of *The Cross Timbers: Memories of a North Texas Boyhood* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1966; reprinted University of Oklahoma Press) grew up between Roanoke and Keller in the late 1880s. He left in the early 1900s to get a degree from Harvard and to teach at the University of Oklahoma. His remembrances about the two-room school in Keller, which was on the corner of Elm and Olive, reveal school days typical of many of the period.

§ Dale recalled that a Professor Moore taught the older children and Miss Jennie Curtis taught the younger ones. The subjects consisted of "algebra, grammar and diagramming sentences, geography and physiology." Roll was not called until the end of the day. Those who had not misbehaved in any way—not even whispering to a fellow student—would respond, "Perfect." Anyone else replied with "Tardy" or "Imperfect." The perfect students got a token; five tokens were turned in for one representing fifty tokens which in turn was traded for a large and beautifully decorated card.

## FLORENCE Common School District No. 100

1917 – 1950

Compiled by Leon Mitchell, Jr. August, 2003, from Public School Directory(s) of Tarrant County, located in the Billy W. Sills Center for Archives.

1918-19 - District had not been named yet. Should be in Commissioners Court Minutes.

TEACHERS - who list Keller P. O. as their address.

G. C. Perry	Bonded Indebtedness - not given
M. J. Stephenson	State apportionment - \$ 1,050
Property Valuation, Tax Rate & Expected Tax Receipts	
Not given	

Trustees (all Roanoke, Rt. 1) - J. D. Fawkes, E. M. Newton, I. N. Shockey

1919-20 - Florence School District No. 100

TEACHERS - who list Keller P.O. as address

Miss Lela Ingram	
Miss Anna Belle Robbins	State apportionment - \$ 937.50
Property Valuations, Tax Rate & Expected Tax Receipts for 1919	
\$ 138,110	.50 cents
	\$ 737.95
Trustees for No. 100 -	
J. D. Fawkes, Roanoke, Rt. 1	
R. H. Knox, Keller, Rt. 1	
S. O. Van Burkelow, Keller, Rt. 1	

1920-1921 - Florence School District No. 100

TEACHERS -

J. B. Heider, Roanoke, Rt. 1	Scholastic census - 90
Miss Ruth Knox, Keller	State apportionment - \$1,305
Angie Griffin	

Property Valuations, Tax Rate, & Expected Tax Receipts  
(There would have been a small tax rate for paying funds into a sinking fund to retire bonds.)

\$165,100	.50 cents
	\$ 825.50

Trustees for District No. 100

Not included on my copy at home

1921-22 - Florence School District No. 100

TEACHERS -

E. B. Sutton	Roanoke, Rt. 1	Bonded indebtedness - \$3,000
Elsie McNeal	Roanoke Rt. 1	Scholastic census 117
Mrs. Ruth Knox	Roanoke, Rt. 1	State apportionment \$1,352

Property Valuations, Tax Rate, & Expected Tax Receipts

\$162, 840	.50 cents
	\$ 814.20

Trustees for District 100

Alex White,	Smithfield, Rt. 1
J. D. Fawkes,	Roanoke, Rt. 1

1922-23

§ Edward entered school in 1887 and had Miss Julia Leverett as his teacher. Her brother, called Professor Leverett, taught the older ones. As did the other students, the boy carried his lunch in a tin bucket which might have contained at various times sandwiches made of "large biscuits cut in half and buttered with maybe a couple of slices of bacon or a fried egg between the halves. Or it might be a slice of ham or a cake of sausage, hard boiled eggs, cookies or a piece of cake, pie, gingerbread or a fried pie. In some cases there might be a teacup half full of sorghum or a bottle of milk."



§ The students read from McGuffey's Readers. He recalls that the later readers had selections from Shakespeare, Dickens, Scott, Southey, Tennyson, Byron, Goldsmith, Wordsworth, Gray, Bryant, Longfellow, Poe, Irving, Whittier, and Beecher.

§ Fridays were special days when students were expected too "speak pieces," poems or prose which they had memorized; or there were spelling and 'ciphering' matches.

## CARROLL Common School District No. 99

1917 - 1959

Compiled by Leon Mitchell, Jr. August, 2003, from Public School Directory(s) of Tarrant County, located in the Billy W. Sills Center for Archives.

1918-19 - District had not been named yet. Should be in Commissioners Court Minutes.  
TEACHERS - who list Grapevine P. O. as their address.

Isola Lightfoot	Bonded Indebtedness -	not given
Laura Bogard	State apportionment -	\$ 857.50
Florence Maxwell		
Mattie Mae Glover		
Property Valuation, Tax Rate & Expected Tax Receipts		
Not given		
Trustees (all Grapevine) - E. E. Higgins, F. M. Berry, E. A. Carney		

1919-20 - Carroll School District No. 99

TEACHERS - who list Grapevine P.O. as address

Edd Lowe, Superintendent		
Miss Valda Livingston	State apportionment -	\$ 780.00
Property Valuations, Tax Rate & Expected Tax Receipts		
(There would have been an additional tax to pay into a sinking fund for retirement of bonds.)		
\$198,850	.50 cents	\$ 994.25
Trustees for No. 99 - P.O. is Route 1, Grapevine		
E. E. Higgins, J. R. Shivers		

1920-1921 - Carroll School District No. 99

TEACHERS -

E. L. Lowe, Grapevine, TX	Scholastic census -	122
Valda Livingston, Grapevine, Route 3	State apportionment -	\$1,769
Property Valuations, Tax Rate, & Expected Tax Receipts		
\$226,080	.50 cents	\$ 1,130.40
Trustees for District No. 99		
Not included on my copy at home		

1921-22 - Carroll School District No. 99

TEACHERS -

E. L. Lowe	Grapevine	Bonded indebtedness -	\$ 6,900
Valda Livingston	Grapevine, Rt. 3	Scholastic census	125
Virginia Sloan	Grapevine, Rt. 3	State apportionment	\$1,625
Property Valuations, Tax Rate, & Expected Tax Receipts			
\$183,320	.50 cents	\$ 916.60	
Trustees for District 99 (addresses all Grapevine, Route 1)			
E. E. Higgins, J. R. Shivers, W. C. McPherson			

1922-23

**CERTIFICATE**

I hereby certify that the foregoing report is true and correct.

*Geo D Ramsey*  
County Sup't Public Inst. *Tarrant* County.

\* County Judges will insert here ex-officio.

—

County Sup't Public Inst. *Tarrant* County.

**GENERAL REPORT**

The schools of the county did very well considering the hand of winter. The average attendance was much lower than it would have been under ordinary circumstances.

There was a general malnutrition on the part of the patrons over the county, to have better buildings, better furniture, and a longer school term. Col. 85-886 of this report is left blank. To save time and trouble the County Superintendent's salary is paid out of the County Fund. This before the Co. tip is made. Then what balance remains is apportioned equally to all children of school age in the county. The Co. Sup't's salary amounts to about 707.9 per capita.

Very respectfully submitted  
*Geo D Ramsey*



Teachers at Bear Creek School

# A TEACHER IN THE TIMBERS

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## *Miss Jennie Nance*

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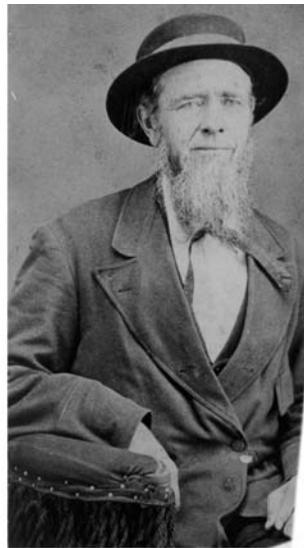
The ways of history, even local history, are mysterious, indeed, wherein coincidence sometimes plays a major role. Discovering, or rather stumbling upon, the life of Miss Jennie Nance, a teacher in various locations near Westlake, is a case in point.

Three years ago while visiting my hometown of Jacksboro, I talked with the mayor, Jerry Craft, a valued friend since childhood. In the course of conversation, I mentioned the name of Double Springs. Jerry stopped me. “Where exactly is Double Springs? I have some letters written back and forth between my great-grandmother, Donnie Nance Ventioner, and her sister, Virginia—known as Jennie—Nance, who was a teacher at Double Springs.” There was some concealed excitement on my part, although I couldn’t put the feelings in any context. It was simply folk-history that touched on places important to me—Jacksboro and Northeast Tarrant County. I told Jerry where Double Springs was and that the school where she taught would be Mount Gilead Baptist Church, established since the early 1850s, which doubled as a school as was the custom of early times. Double Springs was close by and a settlement with a few stores and a post office.

He then asked if I had any use for the letters—he had copies of the letters, as well as typescripts. I said yes, of course, not knowing at that time there would be a journal devoted to schools and teaching. Over the course of several months, Jerry supplied both letters between the two sisters and their father, Reverend Drury Smith Nance, and two photos. Research in a Jack County history book, *Ninety-Four years in Jack County*, by Ida Lasater Huckabay, another acquaintance of my growing-up years in Jacksboro, revealed information about Miss Jennie’s sister, Donnie, who married J.D. Ventioner, a pioneer in both Jack and Tarrant Counties. Consulting the Methodist archives at Texas Wesleyan University in Fort Worth turned up nothing about Reverend Drury Smith Nance—a mystery. According to Craft family records, he was born in 1806 and died in 1883 in either Double Springs or Keller, and that he had land holdings in Parker, Palo Pinto, and Young Counties. Albany in Shackelford County appears to have been another location with which he was associated. Jennie was born in 1860 and died in 1885, just two years after her father, at the young age of twenty-five. How did she die? From what did she die? Another mystery. The letters cover only four years but seemingly are written at the time she first started teaching.

Beyond glimpses into teaching and schools, there are other bits and pieces about life in general. The social life, what there was of it, characters with real names that can be identified, lawlessness, elections, personal grooming, fashion, morals, opinions, gossip, family relationships, and more are sparsely revealed in the letters. But there is enough to give us a window into the life and times of Miss Jennie Nance, a teacher in the Timbers.

The letters, written between 1881 and 1884, are offered with notes found at the end of the letters which explain some of the information in the letters, although much of the writing of a personal nature about names and events cannot be interpreted. Spelling and grammar are presented as written.



Rev. D. S. Stance:

Yours,

Dear Father  
I received your letter of the 31<sup>st</sup> ult. was  
to hear from you, but sorry you were not in,  
well; it seems that something has been  
ail you all the time. I was sick all  
last week, but managed to keep up:

I am feeling very well now.

Has brother George lost horses?

you said to see if you could  
from hunting his horses. I never hear  
from them unless you happen to see  
something about them.

My school will be out next  
Friday (Feb. 10) Double spring is enclosed  
in a field now. I can't get to the school  
house without opening gates. Black has

you  
soon  
Your loving daughter  
Jennie Stance

Double Spring, TX  
Saturday, Nov. 26<sup>th</sup>, 1881

Mrs. Donnie Ventioner

Dear Sister,

Your most welcome letter of the 23<sup>rd</sup> instant was received yesterday; I was very glad indeed to hear from you, for I had come to the conclusion that you did not intend to write and had been scolding terribly.

I wish you had sent Pa's card in your letter. I think I could have read a few words and then guessed at the rest.

I am satisfied that you have a good husband, but I would pity any man who could not be good a few weeks until the six weeks honeymoon was ended anyways ... but buying a saddle without stirrups, just completely beats me. How can you ride it? <sup>1</sup>

I think you might have sent me one of your pictures. Be sure to save the best one for me. I suppose you will send one of yours to Mr. Ventioner's sister Jane. I wrote her a letter on the 14<sup>th</sup> of Nov.

The next day after I came here we all went to Roanoke to preaching. I met Mattie and John Clark there, took dinner with them at Mr. Greens and John told me if I could stay until after evening services he would bring me home. So I stayed. Mattie was going back to her school and he took her that far so I rode her pony home, and have never been off the place since. All day last Sunday I stayed at home and will have to tomorrow. This is the lonesomest place I ever saw. We go nowhere. I wanted to go home today so bad that I was nearly crazy but could get no way to go. Miss Emma and I walked all over this desolate looking town today trying to pacify ourselves, but would be lonesome do what we might. I want to go home to preaching tomorrow but there's no use to think of it. <sup>2</sup>

Parson Mosaly came down this morning and told me goodby. He is going to leave in a few days. I am almost sick. I guess that was what made me so lonesome.

Miss Florence Pride and Mr. Griffith have married at last. Also Miss Emma Bailey and Mr. Self. Mr. Raines is not married yet.

I have heard no news from the neighborhood since I left it. The Parson nor Miss Mollie either could tell me none. <sup>3</sup>

Mr. Briley was down the other day. He is calling for money already. Says he is obliged to have wire to keep the cattle out. They are about to eat him up. I gave him pa's address and told him to write him about it.

John Clark passed here today and looked at the house but did not stop.

Yesterday ended two weeks of my school. I have 18 scholars. Hope to have a good school though. <sup>4</sup>

I do not know yet whether I will get to take Christmas or not but I am sure that if have to take it here I shall take it in the schoolroom. If I could have neither Saturday nor Sunday while I remain here, it would be better for me. <sup>5</sup>

It is getting dark. I must quit. I think I will write a postal to cousin Susan tonight. I have never heard from her yet. This leaves me well hoping it may find you the same, and also to hear from you soon I remain as ever your loving Sister

Jennie.

Rev. D.S. Nance:

Double Springs, TX  
Feb 6th '82

Dear Father,

Yours of the 31st—it was received last Saturday: I was very glad to hear from you, but sorry you was not well: it seems that something has to ail you all the time. I was sick all last week, but managed to keep up: I am feeling very well now.

Has brother George lost horses? You said as soon as he got back from hunting his horses. I never hear from them unless you happen to say something about them.

My school will be out next Friday (Feb. 10) Double Spring is enclosed in a field right now. I can't get to the school house without opening gates. Black has moved to Mr. Waldens house. Mr. Miller is here now tearing down the Black house. Mr. Foster will give possession Wednesday after school is out.

Jennie Robinson sent me word yesterday that they wanted me to teach two months at Henrietta for \$30 per month. They have a great muss amongst them some way, but I can't hear exactly what it is. Zeke Lambkins sent me word that they wanted me at the Point also, but did not say on what terms. Don't know yet what I'll do.<sup>1</sup>

I had a card from aunt Mary a few days since. She says she is trying hard to get you to come home by there.

I have had two letters lately from Donnie. She has been West. Likes splendidly, but can not get possession until April, and will stay where they are until then. Joe and his wife have moved away and Donnie is considerably relieved; but says they are "too thick yet to thrive well."

If I were in their places I would leave there if I had to go into a tent. I am thinking of going down next week, but will not stay there long; I'm satisfied.

What did you mean on the slip of paper about Silver and greenbacks. I can not understand it.

Be careful about exposing yourself to smallpox. It is very plentiful.

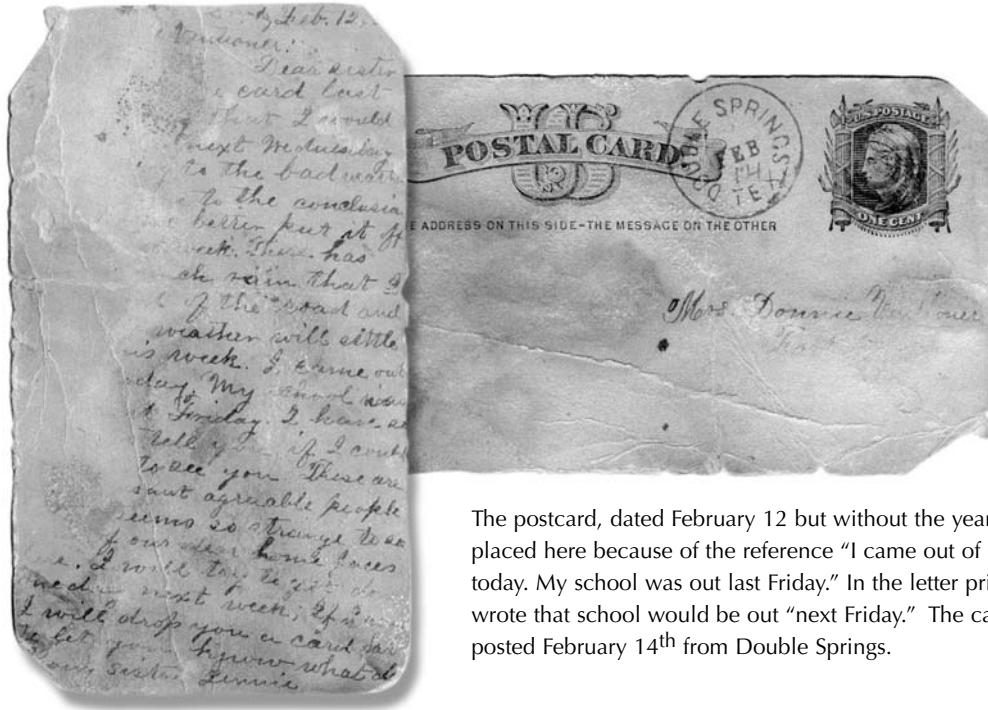
Mr. Foster carried us to Gilead to church yesterday. I want to tell you about it but can't: Wait till I see you.<sup>2</sup>

Tell Sister Addie I am expecting a letter from her; I have a good deal to tell her. If I could only see her. I wrote her a postal a few days since but haven't heard nothing from her yet.

I will be so glad when you get home but I don't want to hurry you. I want you to stay long enough to be satisfied when you get back here.

Hoping this may find you well and also to hear from you soon,

I remain, Your loving daughter  
Jennie Nance



The postcard, dated February 12 but without the year, is placed here because of the reference "I came out of school today. My school was out last Friday." In the letter prior, Jennie wrote that school would be out "next Friday." The card was posted February 14<sup>th</sup> from Double Springs.

Sunday, February 12, 18—  
Donnie Ventioner:

Dear Sister,

I told you in the card last week that I would stay until next Wednesday but owing to the bad weather I have come to the conclusion I had better put it off until next week.

There has been an inch of rain that am afraid of the road and hope the weather will settle down this week.

I came out of school today. My school was out last Friday.

I have so much to tell you if I could get to see you.

These are just sweet agreeable people here. And it seems so strange to see some of our dear home faces here.

I will try to get done one day next week; If I can I will drop you a card Saturday to let you know what to do.

Your Sister Jennie

Double Springs, Tex  
Thursday April 6<sup>th</sup> 1882

Mrs. Donnie Ventioner,

Dear Sister your letter was gladly received this evening, also the one you wrote me when you got home from Henrietta, together with the package of cards. They came all right, and were exactly what I wanted.<sup>1</sup>

Donnie, you know before you left West Fork that Mr. Millers were going to Keller. People tells me they are here now, and that Mr. Miller is going to build a dwelling and a business house at Keller. So I suppose they are "settled again."<sup>2</sup>

I am so sorry you broke your looking glass. I suppose it was the bureau glass. Are you trying to get it filled again?

People up there don't know that they ought to make the first call, and here where I am if you treat them politely they call you "proud" and "stuck up." And say you put on so which is the worst. Mrs. Moore says I must learn to do as the people here do or they will do worse than make mouth at me; they will run me out—Well I'll go before I will do as they do here. The girls don't how to talk about anything but the "boys."<sup>3</sup>

Well I went to preaching the fourth Sunday and heard Mr. Bob Grimes preach.<sup>4</sup> There was but few out. Last Sunday night we went up to Mr. Caleb Smiths to singing. Everything has gone on peaceably so far. The boys around here are afraid to move almost. The Sheriff has caused Ike Keller to hide out considerably and at last to borrow money and pay a \$50.00 fine for carrying a pistol, and the other boys are shy.

Miss Lizzie Curtis commenced teaching last Monday at Gilead at \$1.25 per scholar. Don't know how many scholars she has.<sup>5</sup>

John Dale applied for the Henrietta school again but failed: The old maxim says "try try again" but if I were John I would stop trying and rest awhile.<sup>6</sup>

What do you think I got-a valentine! You know I had some of my mail sent to Ft. Worth but the old valentine laid there until I came down here and then I got it.

Parson Hayes I understand is assisting in the school at Smithfield. I suppose he teaches and preaches both.<sup>7</sup>

How does the old store do? Was it worth the hauling? Do you know what that new Briley did or does he still stay there?<sup>8</sup>

I have so much cold it seems sometimes that I will never have any less. I reckon it must be the house I am living in. So you see you are not the only one who lives in a bad house: and feel tired all day. I do not know why but suppose it is because I was sick and weak before I commenced school and Spring helps me so.<sup>9</sup>

I don't want to stop but guess I had better as I did not sleep much on account of gun firing close to the house and guess you are tired of reading. Tell brother Jim not to let you forget yourself and go wild because you live up there.

P.S. Much obliged for the pen. Prof. Moore gave me one so now I have two good ones.<sup>10</sup>

Jennie

Lone Elm Tex.  
Nov. 20<sup>th</sup>, 1882

Dear Father, brother and sister:

I will write to all at once as this is all the paper I have; I came down here yesterday and this morning went down to commence school. There were only six scholars present—owing to the fact that people are not ready to send and they wish the school postponed for two weeks. I do not know yet what I will do about it. I do not want to postpone if I can help it.<sup>1</sup>

I am boarding with Mr. and Mrs. Wilson at \$9 (nine dollars) per month. Think I will have a good place. I have the new room and it is fixed up so nicely with a good warming stove, and they are like a great many sill people, break their necks to wait on a boarder; I am not grumbling. I don't care how much they do. Mr. Miller's hotel has not paid expenses since I was there before and they had to get rid of Tom. Mr. Miller is to begin canvassing the County the first of January selling fruit trees for a nursery man in Denton. Thinks he will make about \$60.00 a month. Mr. Moore has not begun school yet—Will not begin until the first of December. He is to have a music department in connection with the school. I told him last fall I would go all I could if he got it but I suppose Miss Bettie Knight is to teach it—and I don't think I should go to her if I ever learn. That one-eyed Keller is to teach at Mt. Gilead sure enough. He came out from Ft. Worth with me. He had been examined that day and showed me his certificate. He stood a very good examination and got a second grade certificate. Mr. Russell Cowan is teaching at Henrietta. Roanoke College completed its first month last Friday night and gave a monthly entertainment—as usual if it had not been bad weather we Kellerites would have been there.<sup>2</sup>

Donnie, Walter Maddox was elected by nearly 1,000 majority. Wm. Ferguson was beaten this time. Dr. Boyner elected by about 80 I believe. Tobe Johnson was defeated by about 500. Frank Ellison elected. You just ought to see the defeated candidates stand around with their lips hanging down.<sup>3</sup> Didn't any of them know (rest of sentence missing).

How do you like my new dress? Send me 6 or 8 hooks and eyes that I left there to put on it in your next letter. I will tear it to pieces pinning it. I made it with a plailed porora waist-overskirt-sash a wide ruffle collar and ph! don't laugh it is the prettiest dress I've got and I look better in it than anything else.<sup>4</sup>

Miss Lizzie Curtis is to teach near Mansfield. Mr. Bailey that had his arm taken off and the hole eaten in his back by erysipelas is dead.<sup>5</sup> Ophelia had a tooth pulled on Saturday and it made her so sick for awhile that evening she stayed in town and Will went for her Sunday. That was the hard spell of sickness she had last summer. Cousin Sis has her new teeth. Mr. Miller has to go for my trunk today. I don't know whether he went or not.

I'll write soon. Yours, Jennie Nance



An early settler in Double Springs, William A. Lopp, appointed as the first postmaster there in 1871, was known as a master farmer, a builder in wood and stone—he is responsible for many of the headstones in the Mount Gilead Cemetery—and an unlicensed and unpaid doctor in the area. He kept a journal for the express purpose of writing down remedies and cures for many ailments, among them erysipelas. Following is his remedy, copied down as he wrote it by Lyda White.

Lopp Files, Lyda White Collection

for Erysipelas  
2 grane doses of Sugar lead  
1m lard spoonfull At a time  
green well reduce the Sistom  
with purgative medison  
continus till cured  
Wm Lopp

Erysipelas is an acute disease of the skin and subcutaneous tissue caused by a streptococcus and marked by spreading inflammation. It is also called "St Anthony's fire".

Following is a partial letter. Although no year appears, there is a reference to sending a hair piece. The hair is mentioned again in the letter that follows this fragment; therefore it appears that the letters come one after the other and the year would be 1884.

Evidently, Donnie Ventioner has written her sister, Jennie, and told her she is considering holding church services at her home in White's Prairie, Jack County. Jennie writes:

*"Well, if you begin it, you will have to keep it up, or make someone mad; So I think you are very wise in not consenting to give one: and as for singing I would not allow that at all, unless they come on Sunday evening for as sure as they come to sing they will then play: No polite person will go into another's house and play when they know they are not wanted and no decent girl! Yes, I remember Law well, and you'd remember him, too, if I could see you. He wouldn't preach at my house and I don't think he would preach at yours but once. I think the time of preaching at private houses should be remembered as among the "things that were" as long as we have schoolhouses to preach at. <sup>1</sup> I have never heard of Mattie Dale marrying although she may be. John does not get along as well with his school; does not keep good order. <sup>2</sup> Where does Mrs. Peoples/Miller live?*

*I know Jim must have been mad to fight Duke. <sup>3</sup> I would love to see Jim fixed up in his new clothes and watch; is it gold? Uncle Billie is down, but Joda prefers going home. I think Uncle Billie has decided upon going up in Young County on Salt Creek, where cousin Nannie's ranch is.*

*I will send you some flower seeds in the box with your hair."*

Birdville, Texas  
Feb.

Mrs. Donnie Ventioner

Very dear Sister:

Yours of the 5<sup>th</sup> received last Tuesday glad to hear you are enjoying yourself so well: probably, I would like Jack County too if you could find so much to go when I am there. But when I am up there, there can be nothing heard of until it is over.

I went to church last Sunday week at 11 and at night; but last Sunday it rained all day and today it is so muddy that we could have no Sunday School. You never saw such a place as this, for mud. It rained here for the last eleven days with only one days sun during that time and to end it all it snowed, but now it is fine weather again excepting the mud. Birdville is almost impassable. You never saw the like. I have taught school all the time but do without my dinner rather than come home for it; Mud is shoe mouth deep out here in the road and up the lane to Mr. Harley's school it is almost knee deep. The third month of my school will be out next Friday. I don't know how much longer it will last, but so far, the interest is very good. I am told though, that when crop times come, I will lose most of them, both girls and boys. <sup>1</sup>

I suppose sister Addie is very likely to send you their pictures without your writing for them.

I will send you your hair and I am sure if I were there I could fix it so you could wear it now. The hair around your head, and then put the braid around like you want have it and pin it by running the hair under the band. <sup>2</sup>

That you will write soon to  
Your sister Jennie Nance

Fort Worth Texas  
July 22<sup>nd</sup>. '84

Very dear sister,

What can be the matter with you all. I looked all the while I was in Brazos for a letter from you and seeing none I wrote Miss Mattie V. a card concerning you and hoped to hear this morning but went to the P.O. and got nothing from it from you.<sup>1</sup> Did Jim get the money? It seems like he would have let me know—I have been very anxious about it. I sent a P.O. order for \$100 and deposited the \$175 in the Trader's National for him and have never heard one word about it since. I drew the \$100. I let cousin Nannie have this morning and I do not know whether to send the other \$65 to Jim or not. I would if I knew he would get it all right. I guess I will be in Sunset tomorrow. Wish I could see you but I'll live next year either in Sunset or Corsicana. I hope in Sunset. I don't want to go to Corsicana. Donnie I have not seen Parson Mosaly yet. I would like to see him for you, but it costs me so much to be stopping over, so when you come down you come by there, so if he can't pay you then he can get it ready by the time you go back. It may be he has moved into Rhome (New Aurora) if not he lives on Jim McCarty's place.<sup>2</sup>

I put J.E. Vicker's note into the hands of Harris and Wean Ft. Worth for collection. I don't care if I never get a cent of it just so Jack has to pay.

I saw Sterling Clark this morning. Mattie is in town too, attending the Normal; They will call to see me this evening at three.<sup>3</sup> I have at last got the fence put around pa's and ma's graves. I wish I could go and see it. I can't tell you how it looks. I got cedar posts and galvanized netting and work and all it costs \$15.00. I have just been interrupted by Miss Mattie Ventioner coming in. An agreeable interruption to be sure. I was so glad to see her, but sorry she knows nothing from you. She says tell you if you don't want to write to her she don't want to hear from you. And it will be a month yet before fruit is ripe. I think I saw cousin Nannie drive through town this morn and if so, she will come to see me this afternoon. Would you like to hear from Mrs. Millers folks. I left Mrs. Miller sick, and Arthur shot himself through the hand with an old pistol Sunday morn last. It was paining him very much when I left. If it had only been a little lower down, his forefinger would have had to be taken off. I wish I could tell you all we saw, said and did while there, but that would take always. I tell you we had a gay lively time. I was very sick while in Roanoke and Mr. Foster was mad because I left while sick. But I was sick no more while in Brazos. I wish I could live where people have life all the time. I enjoy it. Well, I could write a great deal more but guess I will not now. Guess you will write sometime want you. I think you treat me awful mean. I looked every day for a letter while at Brazos.

Jennie Nance

## Notes

### Page 32

<sup>1</sup> Description of the saddle without stirrups suggests a sidesaddle. Women usually rode sidesaddle during this period, at least in populated areas, if they rode at all. But on the frontier, women riding astride was not uncommon. Perhaps Jim wants Donnie to be more "proper" when she rides. Jennie is obviously puzzled, but she mentions farther down in the letter that she rode Mattie's pony home. Since she doesn't say in what manner she rode and doesn't seem to know anything about a sidesaddle, we presume she rode astride. Because skirts were voluminous and long, riding astride didn't present an insurmountable obstacle. If John is taking Mattie back to her school, it sounds as if she is a student, but where?

<sup>2</sup> Jennie posts the letter from Double Springs, yet she talks about Roanoke—and not in glowing terms. She is lonesome; the town is desolate. Parson Mosaly, whoever he is, is leaving and this makes her all the more lonely. His name comes up again later, making it seem that she knows him well. She speaks of going home and it sounds as if it might be close by and of getting no time off for Christmas. A Mr. Briley is asking for money to fix a fence, but it appears that her father is not there at the time. Could it be that Mr. Briley is renting land from Reverend Nance or looking after his place? In a later letter, a store is mentioned.

<sup>3</sup> Since Parson and Miss Mollie can't give her any news of the neighborhood, it would seem that both are from her old home, perhaps. In this paragraph, Jennie takes note of those who have married. She may be thinking of herself and the fact that she isn't married yet.

<sup>4</sup> Jennie has eighteen students, but by adding that she hopes to have a good year, *though*, indicates she anticipated more students. We are not told if she is paid by the student, one method of payment, or by the term, regardless of the number of students, which was another means of compensation.

<sup>5</sup> It is evident that poor Jennie is terribly homesick, that she may not get any time off for Christmas and that she'd rather stay at school than be at her quarters, wherever they are.

### Page 33

<sup>1</sup> The offer from Henrietta school, called Lone Star more often than Henrietta, for \$30.00 may mean an improvement over being paid by the student. The Pointe isn't identified and there were several places called by the name—Price's Pointe northwest of Keller, for instance. There was also a Boone's Point and others. Regarding Price's Point: "William Wiley Price and his wife, Eliza Ann Mason Price, came from Missouri to the area in the 1880s and located their farm on Price-Wall Road west of Keller. Two sons, William Allen and Daniel Richard, went to Bear Creek School.\* The log church at Mount

Gilead served as a place of worship on Sundays and a schoolhouse on weekdays. It was here that the two boys began their study of the three Rs. The school term, which lasted only three months, was scheduled to begin after the crops were gathered and to end before planting season. On winter days, the two little boys began their five-mile walk at daybreak, and hurried to get home before dark. Their dog, Bulger, made the daily trip with them, and served as their protector against predatory animals. On one occasion, Bulger fought an attacking cougar while the boys ran for their lives. No one expected to see Bulger alive again, but eventually he came limping home."

Price files, Lyda White Collection

"By 1880, William W. Price decided his grandchildren and others of the community needed a more conveniently located school. On August 15, 1881, he sold one acre of land for ten dollars to 'R.E. Beckham, Country Judge of Tarrant County, and his successors in office, for a public schoolhouse for Bear Creek School.' This acre was one-quarter mile west of the home site on a hill covered by some twenty acres of timber known as *Price's Point*. The school was often referred to by this name. Normal attendance was eight or ten pupils. The first teacher was J.T. Forgy. When he decided to give full time to the ministry, his wife, Miss Jennie, took over the duties as teacher. Finally, the school was abandoned in favor of a two-room school at Keller."

Price file, Lyda White Collection

\*Notice that Mount Gilead school is called Bear Creek School. The school Price established, he also calls Bear Creek School. David Brown, in *History of Mount Gilead Baptist Church*, (Privately printed, 1995) notes that in about 1880 some "discord entered the Mt. Gilead Church" and some members left and relocated "to a site at the present-day intersection of Elaine Drive and Bear Creek Drive along Big Bear Creek." Further, "the church constructed a building which was used as a school during the week and church on weekends." According to local tradition, this school was also called Bear Creek School. Within two years, Mount Gilead church returned to its original location and built a new and larger church, which presumably was used as a school again, too. A little later, there was yet another school of two-room size located at the southwest corner of Olive and Elm in Keller dubbed Bear Creek School in narratives in the Lyda White Collection. This is not to say that such places may have had other names, but folk designations die hard. The repeated use of Bear Creek School, poses problems for local historians in trying to determine locations and correct names. Jennie Nance taught at Mt. Gilead at just the time the church was moving to the banks of Bear Creek west of Keller. It would seem, however, that she must have taught at Mt. Gilead while it was still located adjacent to Double Springs, where she has quarters.

<sup>2</sup> Jennie seems to want to tell her father something about going to church at Mt. Gilead but doesn't want to say anything in a letter that might be seen by others. The Nances are Methodists and Mt. Gilead was a Baptist Church. It might have had something to do with differences in ritual and doctrine between the denominations, but Jennie doesn't seem to want to gossip about it as she might have, had she been writing to her sister.

#### Page 35

<sup>1</sup> Henrietta refers to the town, just north of Jacksboro in Jack County, not the school on Henrietta Creek in our area.

<sup>2</sup> West Fork is the west fork of the Trinity River that runs through parts of Jack County.

<sup>3</sup> Jennie is having some trouble fitting in. She is accused of being "uppity" because she is friendly and speaks, a curious reversal of what she considers polite. She doesn't wait to be spoken to first. Mrs. Moore is apparently the wife of Professor Moore, teaching at Mt. Gilead (Double Springs).

<sup>4</sup> Something of the history of Bob Grimes is known.

<sup>5</sup> Paying a teacher per student is clarified.

<sup>6</sup> Is John Dale the same "John" referred to in a later letter? If so, he is having difficulty finding a teaching position, possibly because of troubles also mentioned in a later letter—he can't keep order and doesn't get along.

<sup>7</sup> Parson Hays does double duty as preacher and teacher, which means he is not a circuit rider but remains in one congregation.

<sup>8</sup> Mention of moving the old store and Briley may be a clue that the earlier reference to Briley wanting money to keep cattle out had to do with running a store for the Nance family rather than renting or taking care of land.

<sup>9</sup> Jennie's mentioning her health—having a cold she can't get rid of—and how tired she is all the time may foreshadow her early death in 1885.

<sup>10</sup> Jennie mentions the name of Moore who taught in the area and later became County Superintendent.

#### Page 36

<sup>1</sup> The pace of Jennie's life has obviously picked up. Perhaps it has to do with changing schools to Lone Elm. There was no post office at Lone Elm, but rather at Jellico. She is "full of herself," to use an old phrase. We find out about school and her "scholars," the name given to students, and that she has only six. Teachers were sometimes paid so much per scholar and to have so few meant less money. The reason for putting off school until a later time may well have had to do with children being needed at home to get crops in.

<sup>2</sup> Jennie is boarding with the Wilsons, a well-known name near Lone Elm; in fact the place was known as Wilson Springs by settlers of Jellico, an adjacent community. Evidence of the spring is still there at the southwest corner of Davis Boulevard (Hwy. 1938) and Southlake Boulevard (Hwy. 1709). Reference to Mt. Gilead

identifies where she is teaching. Double Springs had no school but a post office and other businesses. It was apparently a thriving settlement of 200 people or so, although many, if not most, lived out from the town itself, as was the custom. Mt. Gilead was established by the same name in the 1850s. Typical of the times, the church house was also used as a school house.

Does reference to Miller not having paid indicate he had not paid for his child or children to go to school.? Is the fact that he is going to sell fruit trees an effort to meet his obligation?

Mr. Moore's name appears in many school records as having taught at various locations, Double Springs among them, from 1876 to 1882. The fact that he will employ a music teacher indicates that he is more than a teacher; perhaps a principal as well—often both jobs were combined. The May 10, 1887 issue of the *Fort Worth Daily Gazette*, p. 8, reports that Professor R. F. Moore becomes the County superintendent of public schools.

Mention of a man with only one eye by the name of Keller has no connection with the name of the town. Jennie notes that he has passed his teacher's exam and received a second grade certificate. Three certificates were given—third, second and first, with third the lowest and first the highest. Second was often the highest level of certification achieved. Few teachers in the area had first certificates.

Henrietta identifies Lone Star School on Henrietta Creek. According to early school records, Lone Star was designated as a District Four and was known as Henrietta School.

Schools offering curriculum beyond the eighth grade were often identified as colleges—therefore, Roanoke College.

Jennie's reference to herself and others as "Kellerites" is interesting. Does she live in Keller and teach at Lone Elm? The date of the letter is 1882, less than a year after Keller changed its name from Athol to Keller.

<sup>3</sup> Susan Pritchett, archivist for the Tarrant County Historical Commission, researched the election in question and finds that in the county election in 1880 Walter T. Maddox was elected sheriff, William T. Ferguson was elected County Treasurer, and H.C. (Tobe) Johnson, elected collector. In 1882, Maddox was re-elected sheriff; J.B. Boyd replaced Ferguson, and Frank Elliston replaced Tobe Johnson.

<sup>4</sup> Jennie launches into the description of a dress with which she is very pleased. Exactly what the dress is made of or what it looks like is impossible to decipher except that it has an overskirt, sash, and ruffled collar. "plailed porora"

might be some kind of material; could "plailed" be plaid or plaited?

<sup>5</sup> She closes with information about illnesses among those she knows and reports that erysipelas has taken the life of Mr. Bailey. The disease was a deadly kind of infectious skin streptococcus characterized by fever and inflammation, especially rampant during the Civil War, the result of unsanitary conditions when men were crowded upon each other. Many soldiers from both sides brought the disease home and sometimes infected members of their families with it. See *folk remedy for the disease on p. 37.*

#### Page 38

<sup>1</sup> By "play" Jennie probably means that the crowd who come to sing will stay around after just to visit, talk and make a social occasion out of serious church time. Remember, Jennie and Donnie's father is a minister and they have been raised in a home where religion is serious business. If they come any other time but Sunday evening, it may appear to be a get-together. Her comments about "no decent girl" would go to another's house just to "play" makes it appear that any time but Sunday might make it seem a time to be courted—a chance to meet boys. The reference to Law indicates that he is the preacher who wants to hold services in Donnie's house. Again, because the girls have grown up as minister's daughters, they would be in a position to know other preachers and something about them. It is interesting that schoolhouses were the appropriate places to preach, if no church was available. Yet, it was generally the case that churches allowed schools to meet in the building, and not the other way around. Jennie perhaps sees things differently.

<sup>2</sup> This is probably the same John, called John Dale, identified in the letter of November 6, 1882—he can't seem to find a place to teach.

<sup>3</sup> I am assuming that Jim is Donnie's husband and that he has been in a fight!

#### Page 39

<sup>1</sup> Jennie is teaching in a Mr. Harley's school in Birdville. She alludes to school lasting until it's time to get crops in when the children are needed at home.

<sup>2</sup> Jennie is helping her sister to wear her hair in a fashionable way for the times. Apparently, Donnie has sent her some of her own hair from which Jennie fashions a hair piece.

#### Page 40

<sup>1</sup> Brazos, located in Palo Pinto County, never incorporated, but had a post office in operation from 1890 to 1967. Prior to 1890, the place was called Angoria. Operations were moved to Santo after 1967. Palo Pinto County is next to Jack County where Jennie's sister and brother-in-law ranched. The location was also close to Parker

County from which Jennie's father had come. Research on this location was done by Gerald Saxon, Director of Special Collections, University of Texas at Arlington, from the Walter Schmidt Texas Postal History Collection; also from E.I. Wiesman.

<sup>2</sup> Sunset is north of Decatur in Wise County. Corsicana is southeast of Fort Worth on Highway 45. Rhome is on the county line between Tarrant and Wise as is Aurora. Interesting that Rhome has become New Aurora. Jennie is teaching farther away from the Westlake area. Parson Mosaly is mentioned once again, whoever he is.

<sup>3</sup> The Clark family is mentioned again, this time Sterling Clark, and Mattie, who is attending Normal School, meaning that she intends to become a teacher. By this time, Jennie's and Donnie's father has died and is buried with their mother, although the location is not given. Jennie mentions her own health again.



# “THERE WAS NO SCHOOL”

*On July 14, 2002, Kelly Bradley and Wanda Haskins interviewed, then, ninety-four year old Lennia Johnson who lived in Roanoke (now Southlake) for many years. Mrs. Johnson died in September of 2003. What she had to say about schooling—without rancor or complaint—for African-Americans is the way things were in 1948 when she came to this area and well beyond that time, too, both here and in many other places in this country. Mrs. Johnson begins talking about school. She is joined by her daughters, one of whom, Lennia McAdams, does much of the talking in an effort to explain about reading and its importance.*

*There is no attempt to edit Mrs. Johnson's words that provide the rich, natural and rhythmic flavor of her speech, but in some instances to delete words, phrases and sentences and rearrange parts of the dialogue so that the subject of schools and schooling remain together. The complete interview is available on video.*

Lennia Johnson (hereafter LJ): [In Lake Dallas] there wasn't any school—none of my children had never been in the schoolhouse before and the oldest boy was twelve years old. A schoolteacher there stopped by my house one evening—I believe when she was coming from school—and she saw my children and she asked me where they go to school. She said, “Can I bring ‘em some books and teach ‘em?” And I said “sure thank you” and she brought me books. Two years, I believe it was, we was there and when the school would be out she would pick them books up and take them back to wherever they came from. And when the school started again she brought ‘em back. Not the same books but different books.

Kelly Bradley (hereafter KB): Were you the one that actually taught them how to read? And

how did you know how to do that?

LJ: Yeah. I don't know if I'd know how to teach someone to read—do you all remember? (asking her daughters)

Lennia McAdams (hereafter LM): What she did was, she just read the book to us and there were three of us—it wasn't like now when you would have taught the very youngest child. But there were three of us that she was intent on teaching to read because we were old enough. Even then there was a bit of sexism until the two boys got to the side—one on the right and one on the left. I, being the mere girl, got to sit in front of her. I looked at the book upside down (CHUCKLES).

Well, really, it's just quite the nicest thing that really happened to us I guess. And none of us knew enough to appreciate it at the time and I've always wished that I knew Mrs.—don't remember her name—or some of her family or something so that we could say to them how much we appreciated it because that made such a difference in our lives, You know we were totally isolated—there were no other children there for us to play with or anything. We were just there with each other and that's all—and very little outside contact at all. We had a battery-operated radio. I remember a huge battery and the thing I remember most about was that, obviously batteries run down, but every time the battery ran down Daddy got mad and so then he would go for a long period and he wouldn't buy another battery. Of course we didn't get to listen to the radio like the kids do now days—Daddy had what he wanted to hear and mother had what she wanted to hear; and we had to listen to whatever that was, and that was it! And we didn't subscribe to any kind of magazine or newspaper or anything during that time so we really were very, very much isolated, but people

would give us their old newspapers or old magazines and things like that; so, once we did learn to read, then, for me, that was a Godsend. As Marie (a sister) says right now, she must read to remain sane. It was the only thing—well, it was kind of like our window to the world for me because it was the only way I got to know anything other than the confines we were in. We just knew nothing and were exposed to almost nothing except for those rare visits when relatives or someone like that might come out. Then we would get that little bit, but basically we were very isolated and one can say that it has its positives and its negatives because you didn't get to experience some things that were good, but also you missed out on some bad things, too.

KB: Did you all teach your younger family members?

LM: No, no you see we moved over here then and when we moved my next sister was eligible then to go to school. She started a little bit early I think. Didn't Anna May start school [when] she wasn't quite six?

LJ: Yes, yes they let her in. Her birthday is in September; that's when school started. Then Frances went to school before she was of age.

LM: But you see it was just a one-room school—literally a one-room school. It was off of Bob Jones Road. *[The school had the official name of Walnut Grove, County School District No. 73; see map for location]*

KB: So that's the reason you moved here because they did not have a school in Lake Dallas—and how did you find out that there was a school here?

LJ: From the Jones's. This was the last year at that time that their children would be going to school here. There wasn't no high school or nothing for them to go to.

LM: They weren't all finished. Bobby and Billy were both still in school. And when it was time for them to get in high school, there was no high

school here for them. In Fort Worth and Denton [there were schools] for colored people, but there weren't any out here.

LJ: Old man Jones had done passed, you see, and he didn't build a school for high school. It was just a one little room, and they were just teaching all the grades that were here. Whatever ages kids and grades—they were just teaching it all in that one room.

LM: I can remember that and, you know, [it] had its advantages and disadvantages. You had to sit through the older kids reciting their lessons, responding to questions and that sort of thing. And that might be disturbing to you when you are trying to study yours, but on the other hand you are also learning by hearing those things even though they were not part of what you were studying. So, I learned quite a lot from that. I was ten when we moved over here and yet I managed to catch up. If I had just gone to a regular school I might not have caught up, but as it was, I was able to catch up.  
*(Linnie explains about how and why they came to Roanoke.)*

Sometimes I'd go to Dallas (from Lake Dallas) on Sundays to visit. Emry and Jinks Jones, the ones that had the children, come over that Sunday whiles I was gone and I think their wives was with them. I believe my husband said so. And when I got in that evening, he said some people came here today and they got a place where we can move where children can go to school. I said, where is the farm. He said, Roanoke where he had been doing some work—day work and anything that needed doing like when people needed a ditch or something dug. Said for us to move over there; that there is a house that the man will rent you and your children can go to school within walking distance.

KB: That says so much about your family and that the whole reason they moved here was for education for you all. *(The conversation turns to Bob Jones annual party.)*

LJ: He would have them every year in September I believe

LM: No, that was in August—before school started and that was a big event that lots and lots of people came to. He would have a barbecue and lots of people would come to it. And they had a dance floor.

LJ: They would fix a platform or whatever and people would dance.

KB: And it was blacks and whites?

LJ: Uh huh, but I didn't do no dancing.

LM: Sometimes people played baseball too and we would get to go to a baseball game. The blacks would play baseball. A lot of those were from Grapevine but still there was a little bit more here and you weren't totally isolated; you got to see other people and to talk to other people.

KB: And you got to go to school and church.

LM: Yes, and going to school was like a life-saver. Lord, other kids were looking forward to summer and you are hating it coming because it meant you were going to spend another summer of nothingness, so you looked forward to school.

KB: Well how many children did you have?

LJ: I had eight children git grown—seven are still living. They all graduated from high school, all but one from I.M. Terrell in Fort Worth. Sandford graduated from Northwest High School.

KB: You were bussed to those places?

LM: Yes, Yes.

KB: But yet, was that a window of opportunity for you all?

LM: Oh, my God, you should have seen me the day I learned about the book mobile! They brought the book mobile to our school and you could walk down the aisle of this bus and there were just all these books; and they would let you pick out whichever ones you wanted. I thought I had died and gone to heaven

We could go into Grapevine to a movie theatre there if you had transportation to get there—

but when we were in school way back then there was still very little out here and that is why in summer time when school was finally out it was not a happy time for us.

We read but not a lot but we didn't have a lot of things to read. Life was very hard when we were here. When we were first here we didn't have water and indoor plumbing. We did finally get butane gas, but before that we had a wood stove and the chores were for us to do. I can remember chopping my big toe chopping wood. And we were busy with chickens. And, taking the cow down the road to stake her out to get some grass.

LM: We had to do the laundry when we were first here. We were washing by hand; washed the clothes in a big tub with a rub board. We made lye soap that we washed the clothes with so there was a lot of work to be done. Usually, wash was done one day a week; then you had to iron. We didn't have electricity. We had those irons that you set on the stove and did the ironing. We had to cook the starch to starch the clothes. So we weren't just sitting around lollygagging even though we were, to a large degree, isolated; still there were many chores and we picked cotton, we chopped peanuts, we did farm work whenever that was to be done;

[We did a lot of canning.] [We] would go out and pick bushels of stuff—snap beans; we did blackberries, we did grapes, grape jelly; canned tomatoes, beans. We had bushels of peaches [and canned them]. I remember those hot jars coming out of the big water vat.

And I have vivid recollections of killing hogs, cleaning them. And chickens—ringing the neck off the chickens. We chopped their heads off. We would have to go out and catch that chicken. Mother would send us out to catch the chicken and we'd take the ax and chop the chicken's head off and then you had to put it in that hot water and pluck all the feathers.

LM: Isolation made it difficult for us, but

you know that the positive side was that once we did learn to read, there was nothing else to do. You then read everything that came through—any old newspapers. I can remember that people daddy worked for, they would give him magazines and that sort of thing. The thing that we saw the most of was *True Detective*. I can remember lots of *True Detectives*. I can also remember *True Story*—whatever came. We didn't have novels, only magazine type things but whatever came to the house. Way back then I remember somehow we got some *Hardy Boys*, so once I got to the library I read all the *Hardy Boys*. But whatever you got your hands on you read because you didn't have anything else to do. There was no other way to pass the time. There was no other way to kind of have a window to the world that was out there.

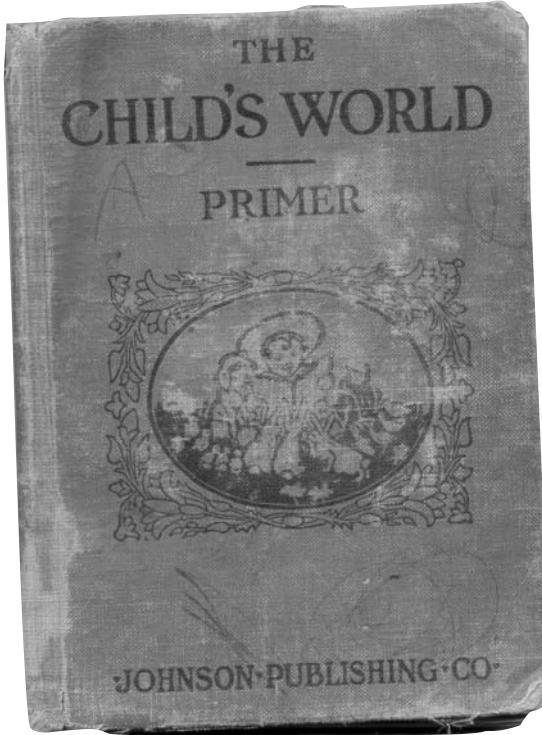
LM: It was a wonderful thing and when my kids were born, [I read to them]. I am sorry now that I didn't keep their books, but they had lots and lots of books and all kinds. I said I don't care what they read as long as they read. If they preferred a comic book, or whatever, we would buy the books. My thinking was that there were lots of other kids like me who didn't have any books so we needed to pass these books on so that's what we usually did. We'd box up their books and donate those to somebody else so somebody else got the books and as a result I don't have any little children books.

The thing is, I think it makes an incredible difference in a person's life. There is just nothing like learning to read for yourself and to think—to be able to think. I think that's largely what is wrong with people these days that they don't read anything and they can't think and they listen to TV and they get a one liner, you know, and off they've gone and they don't know half the story and they can't think. That statement that reading is fundamental; it really is the best thing that anybody can do for their child is to get them reading as early as possible, [no matter what] it is. You know, some people would say well I don't want them reading that trash like comic

books. But there's something—either comic books or funny things—that practically any child could get interested in that's relatively clean. I still am shocked at my age when I see what there is.

KB: But you know, one thing I remember reading when I was going through school is that education sets you free and I never quite understood it until one day it was clear to me what it meant. It does open that door and lets you know so much more. It sets you free.

LM: It makes a world of difference so that's why I always think of that teacher and think what a wonderful thing she did, because she could have ignored us. She didn't have to do that at all. She had no responsibility for us. She was just driving down the road past our place and she did that wonderful thing and stopped to bring us books so that we could learn to read.



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“SOUTHLAKE WOMAN LIVES KING’S DREAM”  
Dave Lieber  
*Star-Telegram* Columnist

Last year, on Martin Luther King Jr. Day, I went to my local dry cleaners and the woman behind the counter said, “I don’t like this holiday. I just don’t think Martin Luther King did anything.”

“He did a lot,” I said.

“No, he didn’t.”

I noted how he preached nonviolence when others wanted to incite a race war. He never spoke in favor of preferential treatment for minorities. He wanted everyone to be treated equally.

“Well, I never met the man,” she snapped.

In the weeks before this exchange, I had heard others say they didn’t believe that King’s birthday should be celebrated as a holiday.

Tomorrow is the 13th annual celebration of King’s birthday. Still, some in greater Northeast Tarrant County, such as the woman at the dry cleaners where I used to take my clothes, do not take the holiday seriously.

Roanoke, Watauga, Haslet and Denton are the only cities closing their city offices. This is shameful. Public officials make an excuse about not wanting to give city employees another paid holiday. I could easily re-tell the story of King’s life and death to show that there is no excuse. But a better way to honor the man is to tell the story of Linnia Johnson, one of the oldest black residents of Southlake.

The 90-year-old woman has lived there for 50 years. And she may be the first person who ever moved to Southlake so her children could attend a good school. Long before there was either a Southlake or a Carroll school district, before thousands moved to town for the district’s excellent

schools, Johnson showed the way for the thousands who have.

Texas schools were segregated in the 1940s, and there was no school for black children in Lake Dallas, where Johnson lived. But the land that would eventually become Southlake boasted Walnut Grove School, a one-room schoolhouse for blacks operated by Bob Jones, a large landowner in the area between Grapevine and Roanoke.

“I learned how to read and write,” Johnson told me last week. “I wasn’t going to let my children get by without doing that.” But there were many things Johnson and her family couldn’t do because of their skin color.

They couldn’t wash their clothes at the whites-only coin-operated laundry at Carroll Avenue and Texas 114. The Johnsons had to travel a good distance to Mosier Valley.

They couldn’t attend the whites-only churches in the area. They couldn’t sit wherever they wanted at the Roanoke movie theater because there was a special upstairs section for “coloreds.” And their relatives had to be buried in the coloreds-only portion of Medlin Cemetery.

When Jones closed his schoolhouse in the 1950s, Johnson’s children had to travel to segregated schools in Fort Worth, rather than attend schools in nearby Grapevine or Roanoke, which did not accept blacks.

“I didn’t think it was right, but there was nothing I could do about it,” she said.

In 1955, a woman named Rosa Parks was arrested for refusing to give up her seat to a white man on a bus in Montgomery, Ala. And a young black minister began leading a boycott of city buses.

The young minister preached nonviolence and led the blacks to victory after the U.S. Supreme Court ruled that operators of city buses could not discriminate based on skin color.

Martin Luther King Jr. continued to work on other peaceful protests and, eventually, Linnia

Johnson and her family didn't have to travel far to wash their clothes or to attend church. They were allowed to sit wherever they wanted in a movie theater.

Her youngest son, Sanford II, enrolled at Northwest High School near Roanoke. He was a handsome young man, a football player and popular among his classmates. He was the first of Johnson's eight children allowed to attend a local high school. Sanford II graduated from Northwest High in 1968. He was voted by his classmates as one of the most popular students in his class.

"Well, I was proud," Johnson remembered. "Proud as a person could be."

Just one year later, Sanford was killed in a car accident on Dove Road.

But six of her seven other children also earned their high school degrees. One daughter graduated from college. They more than justified their mother's move in search of a good education.

In Johnson's living room, photographs and paintings of four men hang on the wall—President Kennedy, Moses, her late husband, Sanford, and King. "All he wanted was for people to be treated equally," she said of King. "There's nothing wrong with that. We're all human beings. We just have different colored skin."

"Plenty of people say, 'This is a white man's world,' and that we ought to be sent back to Africa. But I don't come from Africa." Linnia Johnson comes from Southlake. Long before most of us, she saw the opportunities to better her family by moving there.

She wanted something that she couldn't find elsewhere. Surely, she found it when her youngest son, given the opportunity, showed that he could become the best of the best.

That's what Martin Luther King Jr. had hoped to prove all along.



#### LINNIA JOHNSON OBITUARY

SOUTHLAKE—Linnia Johnson, 96, died Sunday, Sept. 28, 2003, at her home in Southlake. Funeral: 11 a.m. Wednesday at J.E. Foust & Son Memorial Chapel in Grapevine. Burial: Medlin Cemetery in Trophy Club. Visitation: 7 to 8 p.m. Tuesday at the funeral home.

She was born May 24, 1907, in Mount Enterprise, the sixth of eight children. On May 11, 1933, she married Sanford Johnson. She was a member of Bayside Church of the Living God in Dallas.

She was preceded in death by her husband; stepson, Forest Johnson; youngest son, Sanford II; and all her siblings.

Survivors: Children, Jack and Sandra Johnson, Robert and Ann Johnson, Linnie McAdams and Bill Warde, Ada Flemons, Mae F. Mitchell, Retter and Norman Williams and Marie and Chester Jordan; 21 grandchildren; 20 great-grandchildren; five great-great-grandchildren; and a host of cousins, nieces, nephews and beloved friends.

# RECIPIENT OF CROSS TIMBERS LEGACY AWARD

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*E. I. Wiesman*

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*This year, the Westlake Historical Preservation Board marks an important change of name to Westlake Historical Preservation Society. From its inception in 2001 as a board, occupying equal status with other town boards, to the first bi-annual publication of the PathFinder in 2002, the group has increased its scope to include such activities as participating in Gallery Day and Bandana Bonanza in connection with Westlake Academy and organizing a community Memorial Day service at Roanoke I.O.O.F. Cemetery, located in Westlake. This will become an annual event and referred to as Decoration Day.*

*Support from the town of Westlake and sponsorship funding from corporations such as Fidelity Investments, Daimler-Chrysler, Hart Howerton Architects, Manhattan Construction, Kaleidoscope Educational Consultants, Vaquero Residential and Golf Community, and Maguire Partners encouraged the board to reach for wider community participation through membership in the group. The board voted to become a society which now has more than seventy-five members in this the charter year. One of the first orders of business was to create an award honoring someone for contributions to historical preservation of our region of the Cross Timbers. The name given the award is the Cross Timbers Legacy Award and the first recipient is E.I. Wiesman whose background and historical interests are noted in the editor's page and continue here from his daughter, Sandra Bagwell.*

Elmer Irvin Wiesman was born at home in Muenster Texas to Frank and Mary Wiesman October 9, 1932. He has a brother, Albert, exactly ten years older than he, and a twin sister, Ella Mae. He is known to friends as Jack.

Jack's father delivered the twins before the doctor could get there. The babies, weighing only two pounds each, were placed in shoeboxes near the stove to keep them warm.

Jack and Ella Mae went to Coopers School at age three. It was a one room country school, and, as it turned out, they were short two students that year, and the teacher asked Mary Wiesman if they could go. The school was near a railroad and the grass would sometimes catch fire. Since the twins were so small they were in charge of pumping the water so the other students could put out the fires

with their lunch pails used as buckets.

The children went to 1<sup>st</sup> grade at Sacred Hearth Catholic School in Muenster. Their teacher was Sister Anastasia who also taught their parents and brother. 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> grades were at a two-room country school, Fairview School, and 4<sup>th</sup> through 8<sup>th</sup> grades at St Thomas Catholic School in Pilot Point; then to Pilot Point High School from the 9<sup>th</sup> thru the 12<sup>th</sup> grade. He graduated in 1951.

Their's was a farming family and one of Jack's chores as a small child was herding the turkeys.

Jack enlisted in the United States Marine Corp during the height of the Korean War in 1953 and was discharged in 1961 after two years of active service and six years of inactive service.

He started his flying career as a First

Officer with Trans-Texas Airways in June of 1959, and was later promoted to Captain. Trans-Texas Airways became Texas International Airlines; then was purchased by Continental Airlines. He retired from Continental Airlines in November 1992. He was the first pilot to depart out of Dallas/Fort Worth International airport.

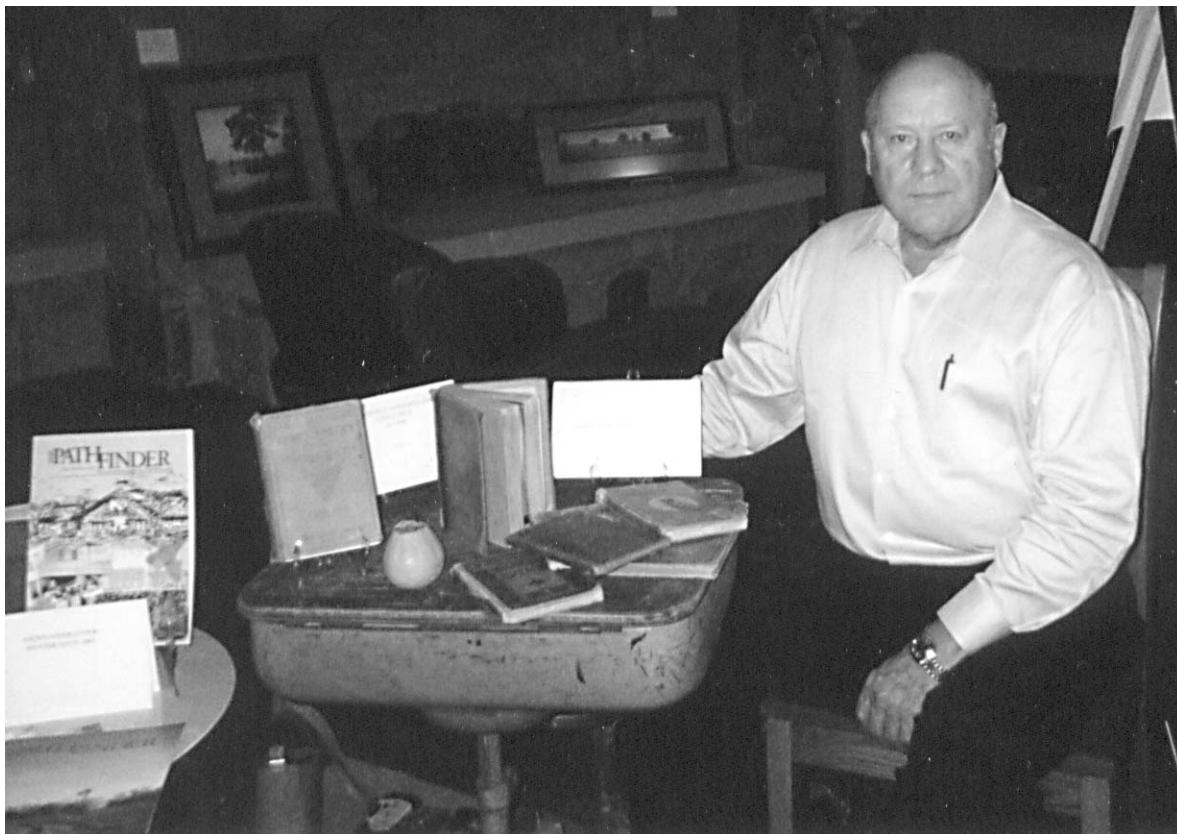
Jack met Glenda Daigle in 1960 and they married on August 26<sup>th</sup>, 1961, in Port Arthur, Texas. They have three children—Renee, Eileen and Sandra. Renee is married to Mark Eiserman and lives in Lewisville. Eileen is married to Noel Murphy and lives in Charlotte, North Carolina. Sandra is married to Troy Bagwell and lives in Decatur. Elmer and Glenda purchased their

property in Southlake in 1963 and moved into their home in 1968.

They have 5 grandchildren—Austin who is 13 (Renee's son), Eileen's girls—Mickaela (7) and Mackenzie (5). Sandra's children are Grace (5) and Sam (3).

Jack became interested in family history in the early 70s after meeting distant relatives from Germany. He has traveled to every continent in the world.

Information provided by Sandra Bagwell



**2004 MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION**  
**WESTLAKE HISTORICAL PRESERVATION SOCIETY**

Annual dues of \$25.00 will entitle members to Westlake's historical journal, **The Pathfinder**, published each fall. Membership benefits also include an invitation to special events hosted by the Westlake Historical Preservation Society. All who join in 2004 will be considered Charter Members of the Society.

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Street \_\_\_\_\_

City, State, Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Phone Number: \_\_\_\_\_ Fax Number: \_\_\_\_\_

*If you would like to receive notices of special events via e-mail, please include your address below. Your e-mail address will not be shared outside the Society.*

E-Mail Address: \_\_\_\_\_

**THE WESTLAKE HISTORICAL PRESERVATION SOCIETY, A NON PROFIT ORGANIZATION,  
GRATEFULLY ACCEPTS DONATIONS TO FURTHER THE WORK OF  
HISTORICAL PRESERVATION. YOUR CONTRIBUTION IS TAX DEDUCTIBLE AND  
YOUR NAME WILL BE ENTERED ON A PERMANENT SCROLL AS EVIDENCE OF  
YOUR SUPPORT OF LOCAL HISTORY.**

❖ \$150.00      ❖ \$100.00      ❖ \$50.00      ❖ OTHER \_\_\_\_\_

Please mail this form along with your check for membership, plus whatever donation you wish to give to The Westlake Historical Preservation Society, 2650 J.T. Ottinger Road, Westlake, Texas 76262.

*For more information call 817.490.5710  
or e-mail Ginger Crosswy at [gcrosswy@westlake-tx.org](mailto:gcrosswy@westlake-tx.org)*

