

SOME HIGHLIGHTS IN THE HISTORY OF EDUCATION IN GREENVILLE COUNTY

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The history of education in Greenville County, South Carolina, includes many examples of great courage, unusual vision, strong determination, sacrificial service, unselfish giving and deep faith. It is an inspiring story beginning with the "Little Red Schoolhouses" which dotted the villages and the countryside nearly two centuries ago and closing with a glimpse of the vast array of modern school buildings which house the educational program of the School District of Greenville County today. The story also includes solutions to problems arising from conflicting viewpoints concerning education, indifference to the educational needs of the community, slow acceptance of the belief that education includes all children, bitter opposition to change, shortage of qualified teachers, and lack of financial support. However, as these problems were recognized, met and solved, the story reveals the character of some great men and women, the devotion of many dedicated teachers, the leadership of a number of capable school administrators and able trustees and the deep concern of the majority of the people for the educational welfare of their children.

The earliest settlers of Greenville County were concerned about the education of their children. In her thesis, "Education in Greenville County Prior to 1860," Miss Antoinette Williams states that provision for child education was made in at least nine wills of Greenville citizens prior to 1820.¹ Three of the oldest wills on record in the office of the Probate Judge of Greenville County are those of John Dewey Chew, dated February, 1780, John Ford, dated October, 1795, and Jesse Carter, dated May, 1801. An excerpt from the will of John Ford reads as follows:

I will that one tract of land lying on Waggon Road . . . together with a tract of land joining the last mentioned . . . together with stock not otherwise disposed of and one rifle gun and rifle barrel molds and wipers be sold at public or private sale for cash, and the money arising from the sale of my present crop of brandy together

¹Antoinette McLane Williams, "Education in Greenville County Prior to 1860," a thesis, submitted to the faculty of the University of South Carolina in partial fulfillment of the Master of Arts Degree, University of South Carolina, 1930, p. 8.

with money that may be collected for the debts due me to be applied to paying my debts and schooling my children.³

Schools in the low-country were established before the up-country was settled. Consequently, the lower part of the state possessed considerable culture and wealth while the upper section was passing through its pioneer period. After the Revolutionary War, the up-country soon became the more populous section, but it was peopled with farmers of moderate holdings. These people were "frugal and industrious in habits, lovers of liberty and opponents of taxation."⁴ But because of the need for the labor of their children, up-country yeomen tended to limit the time that could be spared for education.

During the early days, there came into existence schools known as the "Old Field Schools." They received their name because they were housed in abandoned log huts located in clearings on "exhausted" land. In such places the itinerant teacher might open a school with no expense other than the labor of cleaning the cabin. "Old Field Schools" lacked permanence; they were seasonal; a teacher was not always available, and only the more progressive communities afforded a situation in which a school supported by private tuition could be organized and kept operating. In general, however, these schools supplied the rudiments of learning for the masses of white children in the late 1700's and early 1800's.⁴

The first attempt to establish a general system of free schools in South Carolina came with the passage of the Free School Act of 1811, despite "... bitter opposition by some of the up-country members of the Legislature."⁵ The act provided for elementary instruction to be imparted to all pupils free of charge, with preference given to orphans and to children of indigent parents. Each school was required to teach the primary elements of learning, namely, reading, writing and arithmetic,

³Ibid., p. 9.

⁴John Furman Thomason, *Foundations of Public Schools in South Carolina* (Columbia, South Carolina: State Company, 1925), p. 121.

⁵Ibid., p. 122.

⁶Colyer Meriwether, *History of Higher Education in South Carolina* (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1889), p. 111.

and such other branches of education as the Commissioners directed. For the support and maintenance of free schools, \$300 per legislator per year for each District was paid out of the treasury of the state. This was the first state aid provision for general educational purposes in South Carolina.⁴

The free schools in Greenville District were under the supervision of nine commissioners appointed by the Legislature for a term of three years. They had the authority to determine the location of schools in the District, to appoint masters for each school and to remove them at pleasure and to decide on the admission of scholars. The early free schools were not too successful because they lacked general supervision, adequate financial backing, and public acceptance. People of the upper classes would not send their children to so-called "pauper schools," and the poor had enough pride to resent being referred to as paupers; therefore, many indigent parents would not allow their children to attend.⁵ Thus the tuition academy became the most common educational institution.

The story of education in Greenville County would be incomplete without brief reference to the founding of the Male and Female Academies in 1819. The land for these institutions was given by Vardry McBee, a liberal and public spirited citizen of Greenville, and the buildings were financed by public subscription. The thirty acre site deeded to the trustees by McBee was covered with native forest and great undergrowth of chinquapin bushes. This was a broad and beautiful domain dedicated in the infancy of the city to the cause of education.⁶ In the words of Colonel Stephen Stanley Crittenden:

There is no record within my knowledge that illustrates so fully the liberality, intelligence and far reaching wisdom of the first settlers of Greenville, or the sturdy manhood and womanhood of which the little village was composed eighty years ago, as that which shows the efforts and sacrifices made by them in establishing

⁴Ibid., p. 111. The "District" of the antebellum period was a judicial district and the unit of local government. The areas were designated "counties" after 1865.

⁵Ibid., pp. 115-116.

⁶Stephen Stanley Crittenden, *The Greenville Century Book* (Greenville, South Carolina: Press of the Greenville News, 1903), p. 29.

and maintaining for many years the Greenville Male and Female Academies.⁹

During the period from 1830 to 1860, other academies were founded, private schools were established and free schools became more acceptable and more numerous. A preparatory school known as the Furman University High School¹⁰ was opened in 1851, and the Greenville Female High School¹¹ was established the same year. By the end of this period "in Greenville County a school of some kind was operating in practically every settlement."¹²

During the early 1850's, the Male and Female Academies began to show a sharp decline in enrollment, and apparently for this reason, on December 26, 1854, the Board of Trustees of the Academies transferred the academy lands to the trustees of Furman University for the purpose of establishing in Greenville a Baptist Female College. But a goodly number of schools operated. Miss Antoinette Williams who made a thorough check of the Greenville *Mountaineer* from 1820 to 1860, found references to thirty-four private schools and academies, sixteen in the village and eighteen in the county.¹³ The following statements which appeared in the Greenville *Mountaineer* give some information concerning the private schools and academies of the early nineteenth century. In announcing to the public the continuance of his private school, Garland Walker announced:

In this school will be taught the common branches of an English education at \$2.50 per quarter, together with such higher branches as are commonly taught in good English seminaries on terms adapted to the present pressure of the times.¹⁴

Miss Cogswell's Seminary for Young Ladies in the village advertised that:

... the following subjects will be taught: reading, spelling,

⁹Ibid., p. 28.

¹⁰Robert Norman Daniel, *Furman University, A History* (Greenville, South Carolina: Hixson Press, 1951), p. 49.

¹¹Ibid., p. 49.

¹²Thomason, *Foundations of Public Schools*, p. 122.

¹³Williams, "Education in Greenville County Prior to 1860," pp. 24-26.

¹⁴As quoted in Ibid., p. 16.

writing, arithmetic, English grammar, geography, rhetoric, composition, natural philosophy, plain and ornamental needlework, printwork, embroidery, drawing and perspective, painting landscapes, fruit and flowers on paper and transparent painting on paper. Tuition will range from \$2.50 to \$8.00 per quarter. Miss Cogswell is grateful for past favors and hopes by her unremitting attention to manners, morals and improvement of her pupils, to secure a continuance of that patronage which she has hitherto received.¹³

After having studied the schools which operated in Greenville County prior to 1800, Miss Antoinnette McLean Williams concluded:

While there was no general school system for Greenville County as a whole prior to 1860, through the free schools maintained for those who were too poor to pay for an education, the private pay schools, the academies and seminaries, the opportunities of education were placed within reach of all.¹⁴

Another student of Greenville County history, James McDowell Richardson, made a similar conclusion:

Greenville County made little real progress in the education of her youth until near the end of the last [nineteenth] century. For nearly one hundred years after the organization of the county, no attempt was made to establish a public school system. Following the War Between the States, there was ten years of chaos, during which time no efforts were made to enlarge educational facilities. Education in the county reached a low state from which it did not fully recover until the late eighties or early nineties of the last century.¹⁵

In 1868, the General Assembly of South Carolina enacted legislation providing for a State Superintendent of Education, to be elected biennially, who would have general supervision of the state's public school system. Each county would have a Commissioner of Education elected by popular vote, and a local board of trustees for each school district. This new legislation put the people in control, and conditions in public schools began to show improvement.¹⁶

¹³As quoted in *ibid.*, p. 17.

¹⁴*Ibid.*, p. 44.

¹⁵James McDowell Richardson, *History of Education in Greenville County, South Carolina* (Atlanta: A. H. Cowson, 1930), p. 108.

¹⁶Meriwether, *Higher Education in South Carolina*, p. 118.

In the first written report ever of a State Superintendent of Education, to the General Assembly of South Carolina, Superintendent J. K. Jillson made a strong plea for a thorough and liberal educational policy:

Let all legitimate and available means be used to enlarge and perfect our system of free common schools so that the time may speedily come when none need be without the rudiments of an education.¹⁷

He concluded his report with these challenging words:

A glorious and golden opportunity is ours; let it not pass forever beyond our grasp. It is our solemn duty and sacred trust to provide for the education of the future citizens of this commonwealth, a duty which we cannot conscientiously disregard, a trust that we cannot afford to betray.¹⁸

Although the state superintendents of education who served from 1868 to 1908 were able to provide only a few of the professional, supervisory and instructional services needed by the schools throughout the state due to limited funds, they did become bold advocates of public education in South Carolina. They were courageous spokesmen before the General Assembly and were able to persuade the law-makers to enact legislation that slowly but surely moved education forward in South Carolina. Superintendents J. K. Jillson, Hugh S. Thompson, Asbury Coward, James H. Rice, W. D. Mayfield, John J. McMahon and O. B. Martin were the men who laid the solid foundation upon which Superintendents James E. Swearingen, James H. Hope and Jesse T. Anderson built a modern, up-to-date state system of public education. As a result of their labors,

¹⁷*Third Annual Report of the State Superintendent of Education to the Honorable Senate and House of Representatives of South Carolina* (1870), no pagination. Jillson, a Northern white, had been Superintendent of Education since 1868 but had not been able to make a formal report before 1870 because the county organizations and the reporting system had not developed. See Jillson's letter-report to Governor Robert K. Scott, November 17, 1868, in *Reports and Resolutions of the General Assembly of the State of South Carolina* (1868-1869), pp. 221-222.

The reports of state officers and agencies are published annually as separate items. For convenience, all reports and some other state papers are bound each year in sizeable volumes under the title *Reports and Resolutions of the General Assembly of the State of South Carolina*. The reports of the State Superintendent of Education used in this paper were found in the appropriate annual set of *Reports and Resolutions*. For clarity, all citations herein are made to the appropriate *Annual Report of the State Superintendent of Education*.

¹⁸*Ibid.*

the incumbent, Cyril B. Busbee, has been able to continue the expansion and the enrichment of the educational services of the State Department of Education.

Following the action the General Assembly in 1868, the people of Greenville County elected a County Commissioner of Education biennially until 1896, but no official report from a Greenville County Commissioner appeared in the annual reports of the State Superintendent of Education until 1883. From time to time, however, a few facts about education in some of the counties were included. From 1870 to 1896 the names of the County Commissioners of Education were listed. According to these lists, each of the following men served at least one term as commissioner of education in Greenville County during this period: A. C. McGee, James H. Taylor, B. V. Thompson, J. W. Kennedy, W. D. Mayfield, John G. Capers, John C. Bailey and J. R. Plyler.¹¹

From 1870 to 1896, Greenville County had a Board of Examiners, usually composed of three members including the County Commissioner of Education who served as chairman. The only minutes of this Board that have been located covered the period from March, 1881 to October, 1883. The minutes of the meeting dated January 20, 1883 described the actions of the Board:

The Board of Examiners for Greenville County met this day with Commissioner Kennedy in the chair. Members present were Mr. Furman and Reverend Capers. The examinations of teachers were reported upon and certificates issued. On motion, the Board recommended to trustees of the school districts that they pay first, second and third grade teachers \$35.00, \$25.00 and \$15.00 per month. It was decided that the County School Commissioner be allowed \$3.00 per day for 200 days.¹²

Duties of the County Board of Examiners were not listed, but the minutes suggested that much of the time of the members was taken up with administering examinations for teachers'

¹¹*Annual Report of the State Superintendent of Education, (1870-1896; passim.*

¹²"Record Book of County Board of Examiners," dated 1881-1883, located in office of the School District of Greenville County.

certificates, hearing requests from district trustees, approving district lines and listening to complaints from patrons and teachers.

Some interesting facts gleaned from the Annual Reports of the State Superintendent of Education between 1870 and 1882 are as follows:

In 1870, Greenville County reported seventy-eight free common schools with an enrollment of 2060 white pupils and 597 colored pupils. Subjects listed under curricular offerings included alphabet, reading, spelling, writing, mental arithmetic, written arithmetic, geography, English grammar and history of the United States. Greenville County erected twelve schoolhouses in 1870, eight of log construction and four of frame construction. The total cost of this building program was \$845.00. Men teachers outnumbered women teachers 57 to 29 that year.¹³

In 1873, Greenville County reported ninety-one schoolhouses valued at \$2,870.00. Forty-nine were of log construction, forty-one of frame and one of brick.¹⁴

Five years later, in 1878, Greenville County reported 136 schools with an enrollment of 5,274 white pupils and 2,697 colored pupils. Seven new schools were erected at a cost of \$780.50. Only one was of log construction and six were of frame construction.¹⁵

State Superintendent Hugh S. Thompson made this rather significant statement in his annual report of 1882:

Popular education in South Carolina is no longer an experiment. The results already accomplished have amply repaid the state for all the money expended in the effort to establish a system of free public schools. A public school system cannot be created; it must be the result of watchful care, of persistent trial and of patient labor.¹⁶

The first official written report from a Commissioner of Education in Greenville County came from J. W. Kennedy in 1883. He stated that:

¹³Third Annual Report of the State Superintendent of Education, (1870).

¹⁴Fifth Annual Report of the State Superintendent of Education, (1873).

¹⁵Tenth Annual Report of the State Superintendens of Education, (1878).

¹⁶Fourteenth Annual Report of the State Superintendent of Education, (1882), p. 597

The short term of our public schools has shut out the Board of Examiners from access to professional teachers; it has driven them to the necessity of issuing certificates to persons not qualified to teach, and has brought into competition a class of teachers (so-called) with whom the meritorious cannot afford to compete in prices. The only plan by which our schools can be placed upon a successful career is the one that will provide professional teachers to preside over our schools.¹⁷

In the same report Kennedy expressed the opinion that the County School Commissioner should be employed for 300 days and be required to give full time to the work. In his words:

A man competent to build up the system cannot afford to give up private work on a salary of \$600.00 Give him \$900.00 and he will accomplish the work. The extra expense is trifling while the benefits will be incalculable.¹⁸

In 1885, Thomas Claghorn Gower led a movement to establish a public school system in the city of Greenville. His first appeal was turned down, but Gower persevered, and the act creating the City School District of Greenville was passed by the General Assembly of South Carolina on December 24, 1885, and approved by Governor Hugh S. Thompson two days later.¹⁹ To understand the tremendous importance of this action, one must realize that up to this point school districts in Greenville County lacked organization, coordination, consistency and direction. The City School System under the leadership of a qualified superintendent would assure these essentials so necessary to the successful operation of an effective educational program.

The people of the city of Greenville established the first public school system on May 3, 1886, almost six months after authorization by the Legislature. The first school board was composed of T. Q. Donaldson, Chairman, F. W. Marshall, T. C. Gower, H. T. Cook and S. S. Thompson. It was not until September 14, 1887, that the trustees elected Professor W. S. Morrison to be the first Superintendent of Schools at a salary of \$950 per year

¹⁷*Fifteenth Annual Report of The State Superintendent of Education*, (1883), p. 569.

¹⁸*Ibid.*, p. 570.

¹⁹*The Greenville News*, January 26, 1962.

on a five year contract. Later, his salary was increased to \$1,000 per year provided he would move his family to Greenville. Professor Morrison was a native South Carolinian and earlier had organized the Spartanburg City School System and had served as superintendent there for two years before coming to Greenville.¹⁰

The first school bond issue was authorized by the people of Greenville City in late 1887 or early 1888. The amount was \$18,000 for the erection of two public school buildings, Oaklawn on Pendleton Street and Central at the head of Avenue Street (now McBee Avenue). These two buildings were opened in 1888.¹¹ In 1888, State Superintendent James H. Rice reported:

Greenville begins with \$18,000 and has located her magnificent schoolhouses upon the most commanding and beautiful situations in the city.¹²

The city school system grew under Professor Morrison's leadership. In 1887, 456 pupils were enrolled, and by 1890, the enrollment had climbed to 1071. This growth was an indication of public confidence in the new school system and in public education. Professor Morrison resigned in the fall of 1891 to become Professor of History at Clemson College.

Edwin Leon Hughes became the second Superintendent of the young Greenville City School System, and his fruitful administration continued for twenty-five years. Professor Hughes, in many respects, was an aggressive schoolman and he laid the foundations for the modern public school system of the city.¹³

On June 17, 1896, the *Greenville News* in reporting the Commencement Exercises, paid tribute to Professor Hughes:

The guiding genius of the school system is Superintendent E. L. Hughes. He has put forth his best efforts for the schools, and now has the proud satisfaction of knowing that the Greenville City

¹⁰Abner Darden Asbury, "The Little Red Schoolhouse," a paper presented to the Thirty-Nine Club of Greenville, March 16, 1961. Copy filed in South Carolina Room, Greenville County Library.

¹¹*Ibid.*

¹²*Twentieth Annual Report of the State Superintendents of Education*, (1888), p. 8.

¹³Asbury, "The Little Red Schoolhouse."

Public Schools are unsurpassed in the state.¹⁴

James Lewis Mann succeeded Professor Hughes in 1916. Dr. Mann, a native of Abbeville County, began his teaching career at age fifteen in a one-room log cabin in Oconee County. He later taught in Darlington, and served as Superintendent of Schools in Lancaster, Florence and in Greensboro, North Carolina, before accepting the superintendency in Greenville. During Dr. Mann's administration, the enrollment increased from 4,000 in 1916 to more than 10,000 in 1940. Twenty new buildings were constructed including the senior high school on Vardry Street. Free textbooks were furnished to all pupils, elementary supervisors were employed, the eleventh grade was added, the school day was lengthened, and a school lunch program was begun.¹⁵

Dr. Mann was an individual of strong character and deep convictions. He was a firm disciplinarian; he believed in law and order. He was a scholar, an educator, a leader, a Christian gentleman and a loyal friend. He was highly respected by teachers, patrons, pupils and fellow administrators. Behind his stern expression, Dr. Mann possessed a gentle spirit and a warm heart.

William Francis Loggins became the fourth and last Superintendent of the Greenville City School System. Dr. Loggins, a native of Pickens County, began his teaching career at Greenville High School in 1921, later served as principal of Hayne Elementary School and from 1928 to 1935 was principal of Greenville High School. In 1936, Dr. Loggins left Greenville to be the superintendent of the Sumter City Schools. However, in 1938, he returned to Greenville as Assistant Superintendent and Director of Secondary Education. Therefore, Dr. Loggins was no stranger to the Greenville City Schools when he became superintendent in 1940.¹⁶

During his tenure Dr. Loggins increased supervisory services,

¹⁴*The Greenville News*, June 17, 1896.

¹⁵*The Greenville News*, Tenth Anniversary Special, Greenville High School, Greenville, S. C., October 1, 1937.

¹⁶*Ibid.*

improved instruction through an enriched curriculum, brought in educational consultants to work with teachers and principals, involved teachers in planning, established a special services division to cope with the problems of children, added special education classes for the mentally retarded and the physically handicapped, encouraged the organization of a Parent-Teacher Association in every school, and stressed the need for community support for public education. On August 23, 1951, the Greenville City Schools became a part of the School District of Greenville County, and Dr. Loggins was elected to serve as the first superintendent of the newly formed county-wide district.

During the late 1880's and early 1890's, other public school districts were established in Greenville County. By the turn of the century all of the towns and the majority of the large rural communities in Greenville County had established public school systems, each with its own superintendent and board of trustees. In 1892, Greenville County reported 169 public schools of which 23 were log, 143 were frame and 3 were of brick construction. Ninety-six of these schools were owned by school districts while 73 were owned by other parties.¹¹

By the 1890's the proliferation of county schools was a matter of state-wide concern. State Superintendent James W. Rice reported to the General Assembly:

It is well understood that we now have too many schools. The tendency to multiply teaching places is natural and has not been sufficiently guarded by law. Under stress of political influence, school houses have been sought, and too often located, without regard to the greatest good of the greatest number.¹²

Three years later, State Superintendent W. D. Mayfield reflected growing concern about inequities in educational opportunity when he observed:

Schools in the towns and cities, in the main, are supplying the educational needs of the people . . . because the people have voted an additional tax for the purpose of operating them. As a rule, such is not the case with country schools . . . These schools are in-

¹¹*Twenty-Fourth Annual Report of the State Superintendent of Education*, (1892), p. 374.

¹²*Twenty-Second Annual Report of the State Superintendent of Education*, (1890), p. 4.

adequate, many of them inferior, some of them almost worthless, and it is impossible to improve them to any appreciable extent without more money . . . The graded schools [in towns and cities] run about nine months in the year, while the country schools will not average more than three. This is a burning shame and a cruel wrong to boys and girls of the State who live in the country."

In November 1896, the people of Greenville County elected Mr. Wade H. Barton to serve as their first County Superintendent of Education, under the new state constitution of 1895, this office replaced that of County Commissioner of Education. From January 1, 1897, until all school districts in Greenville County were consolidated in 1951, five men held this important position. In addition to Mr. Barton, who served from 1897 to 1900, they were James B. Davis, 1901-1916, M. C. Barton, 1917-1922, Robert L. Meares, 1923-1929, and James F. Whatley, 1929-1951. The office of county superintendent of education in Greenville County was abolished soon after the formation of the School District of Greenville County; however, Mr. Whatley remained with the newly organized School District as Director of Transportation, Attendance, and Textbooks until his retirement in 1957.⁴⁰

Although not directly in charge of the administration of the various school districts in the county, the County Superintendent of Education was responsible for several important educational functions, including: authorization of school funds from the county treasurer's office to the respective school districts and supervision of the school transportation system, the school lunchroom program, and school attendance records.

In 1897, the County Board of Examiners was replaced by the County Board of Education. For many years, this board consisted of three members including the County Superintendent who served as secretary. During Mr. Whatley's administration the size of the Board was increased on two occasions, first to five members and later to seven members.

In 1903, County Superintendent James B. Davis reported:

⁴⁰*Twenty-Fifth Annual Report of the State Superintendent of Education*, (1893), p. 235.

⁴¹"Minutes, County Board of Education, 1897-1951," filed in Office of School District of Greenville County, passive.

The outlook for the public school in Greenville is very encouraging. The increase in receipts, the number of pupils enrolled, the longer school terms, together with special levies made and the supplementing of public funds, all go to show that there is increased interest in this county for the welfare and betterment of public schools.⁴¹

During the late 1890's and early 1900's, the textile industry developed rapidly in Greenville County, especially on the west side of the city. Employees and their families moved into communities where mills were located in order to be close to their work. Each mill provided a schoolhouse for the elementary grades, but there was no organized school system and there were no high school facilities available. In the early 1920's, the people living in the textile communities began to feel the need of a high school for their children, and Lawrence Peter Hollis, who had worked with the people in the textile communities for many years, was chosen to lead the movement. Under his wise and able leadership, together with the wholehearted cooperation and support of the mill authorities, the Parker School District was formed with Dr. Hollis as the superintendent. The district was named for Thomas F. Parker, who came to Greenville in 1900 to become president of Monaghan Mill. Mr. Parker was a philanthropist whose vision included not only the larger textile community but the entire Greenville community as well.⁴²

The Parker High School, which opened in 1924, was quite different from the other high schools in the area. In discussing the beginnings of Parker High School, Dr. Hollis said:

We were starting from scratch, so we did not have to conform to educators' prejudices. We were determined to have a school that started with people; therefore, we worked from their interests and from their needs.⁴³

Educational experiences were planned around the vocational interests of the community, so in addition to the basic subjects and responsibilities of citizenship, classes were offered in

⁴¹*Thirty-Fifth Annual Report of the State Superintendent of Education*, (1903), pp. 437-438.

⁴²Laura Smith Ebaugh, "The Cotton Mill Village in Retrospect," *The Proceedings and Papers of the Greenville County Historical Society*, 4 (1968-1971) p. 32.

⁴³*Greenville News*, October 28, 1970.

textiles, machine shop, carpentry, auto mechanics, typewriting, cosmetology and homemaking. The high school program also included evening classes for adults thus bringing the community into the school. Dr. Hollis, a tireless worker and a man of unusual talents, built a school system that attracted national attention. Educators came from far and wide to observe this unique educational program in operation, and Dr. Hollis and his staff were invited to many conferences and conventions to share with others their working philosophy of education.

During the first half of the twentieth century, public education in Greenville County continued to grow in pupil population, teacher competence, administrative leadership, instructional improvement, public acceptance and financial support. However, it must be said again that this growth was mainly in the towns and cities; schools in the rural sections of the county left much to be desired. Also, it must be said that Negro schools were far from equal to the white schools. Greenville had some of the best schools in the state and some of the poorest.

Following World War II, some very significant educational milestones were reached in South Carolina. Among those affecting education in Greenville County were: the addition of the twelfth grade, revision of certification requirements for teachers, approval of a state retirement system for teachers and a state sales tax for educational purposes. The sales tax, levied by the General Assembly, made possible a substantial increase in salaries, the consolidation of many small school districts, a state operated school transportation system, and a massive school building program.

In 1949, upon recognizing the urgent need for equal educational opportunities for all children, the Greenville County Legislative Delegation appointed a committee of fifteen citizens to study the administration of schools within the county. At this time there were eighty-six school districts in Greenville County, ranging from small districts having only a one-room school to the two largest, the Parker District and the Greenville City District. The children from two-thirds of the county's popula-

tion were served by these two large districts.⁴⁴ After a thorough study, the committee of fifteen recommended that consolidation of the school districts be given serious consideration. There was mixed feeling about two alternative plans: a single unit plan for the entire county, or a division of the county into three or four school districts. On July 11, 1950, the people of Greenville County were given an opportunity to vote on whether or not to reorganize the existing system of administering education in the county, and the people voted against making any change in school organization at that time.⁴⁵

However, the General Assembly of South Carolina took a different view of school district organization. Feeling that the existence of a great number of school districts in the state made it extremely difficult, if not impossible, to carry out the policy of equal opportunity for all children, the General Assembly in 1951 passed the General School Law, Act. No. 379. This law recognized county boards of education and empowered them to consolidate school districts.⁴⁶

By this legislative action the Greenville County Board of Education was charged with the responsibility of working out a school building program in the county that would equalize school facilities and educational opportunities for all children within the county. The question was: Could this mandate be carried out within the school districts as they then existed? Careful and thoughtful study convinced the members of the County Board of Education that they could not equalize school facilities and educational opportunities within the existing administrative organization of schools; therefore, on August 23, 1951, the Greenville County Board of Education ordered the consolidation of the eighty-two school districts into one district, to be administered by one board of trustees and one superintendent.⁴⁷

⁴⁴"*Greenville's Big Idea, A Report of a Self-Survey of Conditions Affecting the Negro Population of the Greenville Area*," Community Council of Greenville, May, 1950.

⁴⁵*Ibid.*

⁴⁶"*Some Pertinent Questions and Answers Concerning Growth and Progress of the School District of Greenville County*," Board of Trustees, March, 1958.

⁴⁷"*Report of Greenville County Board of Education to the Greenville County Legislative Delegation, May 16, 1951*," signed by J. B. League, Chairman.

It was a fearless County Board of Education that made this momentous decision, and it was a bold County Legislative Delegation that placed the stamp of approval upon this far-reaching action. Members of the County Board of Education in 1951-1952 were: J. B. League, Chairman, James F. Whatley, County Superintendent and Secretary of the Board, Clifford Anderson, Fred Crow, Sherwood Guest, Glen McCollough and R. Lewis Martin. The members of the County Legislative Delegation in 1951-1952 were: Ray Williams, Senator, and Clarence E. Clay, Jr., Frank Epes, Charles G. Garrett, W. M. Gresham, T. Manly Hudson, Sam W. Hunter, James R. Mann, James A. K. Roper and Charles V. Verner, members of the House of Representatives. These men will long be remembered because they had the vision that enabled them to take the long view of Greenville County's educational needs and because they had the courage to act and to stand firmly upon their convictions. August 23, 1951, marked the dawn of a new and better day for education in Greenville County.

The first Board of Trustees of the newly established school district consisted of nine members appointed by the County Board of Education to serve until elections could be held. Members of this first Board were: Abner Darden Asbury, Chairman, C. R. Babb, Harley Bonds, Wayne Hiott, James F. Howard, Conway Jones, Brown Mahon, H. S. Richardson and Charles L. Tidwell. Subsequently, in response to popular demand, the County Legislative Delegation, in 1951, recommended and the General Assembly passed an act dividing the district into seven election areas from which would be elected seventeen members to the Board of Trustees. In February, 1970, the Board was reduced to nine members to be elected from five election areas in the district.

Immediately following the formation of the School District of Greenville County, the newly appointed Board of Trustees elected Dr. William Francis Loggins to the position of superintendent. He was faced with a challenge unparalleled in school administration in South Carolina. Eighty-two independent school districts had been brought together very abruptly. These districts varied greatly in size, facilities and financial support. Educational opportunities for boys and girls in some of

the districts were at an extremely low level. Many buildings were without central heating, plumbing, or lunchrooms. Salaries of teachers varied widely, with many receiving only the sum provided in state aid. Several thousand pupils were without adequate textbooks and other instructional materials.⁴⁸

Naturally, such a sudden change in school organization and administration caused much public reaction. Although the logic for the formation of the single district was obvious to the County Board of Education, the County Legislative Delegation, and to other groups and individuals closely associated with the educational problems of the county, this logic was not understood by a large number of people in the many local school communities throughout the county.⁴⁹

In spite of many problems, the wise, patient, efficient leadership of Dr. Loggins was felt throughout the school district during his nine years as chief school administrator. Some of the major accomplishments of his administration were:

- Elimination of 102 small, uneconomical, inefficient schools
- Construction of twenty-four new buildings and renovation of many others
- Establishment of a district-wide salary schedule for all teachers
- Supervisory services made available to all teachers
- Special services made available to any child in the district who required help with special educational, social and emotional problems
- Establishment of a sound fiscal system which assured a balanced budget
- Development of a program of education that more nearly equalized educational opportunities for all pupils regardless of geographical location
- Laying of the foundation for a unified, cohesive school district organization which would operate with efficiency and effectiveness

This statement taken from this letter to the Board of Trustees following his announcement to retire, gives one of the secrets of Dr. Loggins' success:

As chief administrative officer of the Board of Trustees, I have

⁴⁸Letter, Supr. William Francis Loggins to Board of Trustees, October 13, 1959

⁴⁹William M. Albergetti, "Public Understanding by Acquainting Taxpayers with the Financial Operations of Their Schools," October 11, 1960.

directed all of my efforts toward providing maximum and equal educational opportunities for all children. Not once has a decision been made based upon where a child lives or who his parents are. The one criterion for decision has always been what appeared to be best for the child.⁵⁰

Marion Thomas Anderson, who had served in the Greenville School System since 1937, succeeded Dr. Loggins on July 1, 1960. This was at a time when Greenville County was changing phenominally in population, industry, business, transportation, communication, production, payrolls, retail sales and standard of living. Furthermore, the citizens of Greenville were demanding an educational system that could match every other aspect of Greenville County's growth and development. Therefore, the period ahead presented the new superintendent with unlimited opportunities and unprecedented responsibilities.

Some of the highlights of the decade from 1960 to 1970 were:⁵¹

Thirty-nine new buildings constructed at a cost more than \$27,000,000

Operating budget increased from \$9,000,000 to \$28,000,000

Teacher-pupil ratio was reduced significantly

Average salary of teachers doubled

State and regional accreditation of all school achieved

Millage for operational purposes increased from 42¼ mills to 82¼ mills

Favorable response received from the voters of Greenville County in three referenda

Annual per pupil expenditure increased from \$184.00 to \$503.00

Local multi-channel educational television service for instructional purposes installed

Desegregation of schools in the district was begun in 1964

Transition to a unitary school system was implemented in February, 1970

M. T. Anderson retired in July, 1970 and was succeeded by J. Floyd Hall, a native of Alabama and a highly successful superintendent of schools in Oak Park, Illinois. Dr. Hall's

⁵⁰Loggins to Board of Trustees, October 13, 1959.

⁵¹"The Process of Change, 1951-1960-1970," Annual Report, The School District of Greenville County, Office of Public Information, November, 1970.

excellent educational background, his rich administrative experience and his strong personal qualities equipped him for the tremendous leadership role required of the superintendent of South Carolina's second largest school district.

During the past three and a half years, the school district has made remarkable progress. A few of the accomplishments are listed below:

Successful adjustment to the unitary school system

Reorganization of the school district using a five-three-four plan

Introduction of the middle school to the school district organization

Adoption of a strong code of discipline applicable to all students

Expansion of the administrative staff to provide for additional services

Establishment of the Piedmont Schools Project through the receipt of a multi-million dollar federal grant

Plans completed for the development of a fine arts center for the school district

Plans in the making for the development of an environmental science center on Roper Mountain

With Dr. Hall at the helm and with continuing positive support from the citizens of Greenville County, the School District has a promising future. In the words of Finis E. Engleman, Secretary Emeritus of the American Association of School Administrators:

It is to the future that I would turn your attention. The past, at best gives only temporary footing. Only as we stretch our reach for tomorrow will we express the faith our obligations and responsibilities as administrators and citizens demand.³²

³²Finis E. Engleman, *The Pleasure Was Mine* (Danville, Illinois: The Interstate Printers and Publishers, Inc., 1971), Foreword by Forrest E. Connor.

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