

Blackstock

The WPA Life Histories Collection

[Dr. Samuel B. Lathan]

W11060

Beliefs and Customs - Folkways.

Accession no.

W11060

Date received 10/10/40

Title Dr. Samuel B. Lathan 96 years old (white)

Place of origin Winnsboro, S. C.

Date 6/28/88

Project worker W. W. Dixon

Project #1655

W. W. Dixon

Complete file under WPA histories

children knew by rote the Shorter Catechism. Nearly every home in our community had family worship night and morning.

"There's something I now call to mind as strange. Funerals were never conducted inside of the churches. The ceremonial rites took place at the grave. Yes, I am a surviving Confederate soldier. I was a member of Capt. W. C. Beaty's company, in Governor John Hugh Means' regiment. I was wounded in the battle of South Mountain (Antietam). I was carried a prisoner of war to Baltimore. That was the conclusion of so much that was important in my military career.

"When I was a boy, my home town was Blackstock, named for its first postmaster, Edward Blackstock. The boundary line separating Chester and Fairfield Counties runs through the center of the town. Sometimes the post office is in Fairfield and sometimes in Chester. Now the line runs right through the post office, Kennedy's store. I have lived through the following wars in which my country has been engaged: The Mexican War, the War Between the States, the Spanish-American War, and the World War. I have been a constituent of the following Congressman: W. W. Boyce, W. H. Perry, A. S. Wallace, John H. Evins, J. J. Hemphill, T. F. Strait, D. E. Finley, Stanyarne Wilson, Joseph Johnson, W. H. Stevenson, Gen. John Bratton, Paul McCorkle, and the present one, J. P. Richards.

"I do not consider the military occupation and rule of South Carolina, just after the Civil War, unwise or oppressive. The country was demoralized. Disbanded soldiers, Confederates and Federals, passing through the State would have raided the homes of the residents and taken off every mule, horse, and ox, and left them without means of tilling the soil. The provost martial of this district was Capt. Livingston. I never joined the Ku Klux. Yes, there were shortages of food and clothing during the war. Molasses was a substitute for sugar; parched meal and parched ground okra seed were used for coffee; and sassafras roots were used to make tea. Flour and meal sacks were made into men's, women's and children's clothing.

"The radical, carpetbag, scalawag government was inconceivably rotten and corrupt. An executive pardon could be bought; and stealings were put through the legislature by appropriations and issuance of fraudulent bonds. Under the Constitution of 1865, judges were allowed to state and comment upon the facts and to disclose their opinion of what the verdict of a jury should be. This

The WPA Life Histories Collection

[Cynthia M. Coleman]

W11061

Beliefs and Customs - Folkways

Accession no.

W11061

Date received 10/10/40 {End handwritten}

Title Fairfield county Cynthia M. Coleman, Ridgeway, S. C.

Place of origin Winnsboro , S. C.

Date } 6/28/38


Project worker W. W. Dixon

Project #1655

W. W. Dixon,

Blackstock

Complete file under WPA histories



"Horseback riding was a great diversion for the girls of our day. We had long riding skirts and sidesaddles; also a hitching post and a get on block at the front gate to assist us in mounting on the horse.

"On the first Saturday in May, there was an annual picnic at Catawba Falls, now called Great Falls. The Catawba River at this point was full of shad every year at this time. After enjoying the picnic dinner and the day, we would return home with the back of the buggy or wagon body full of shad, which lasted the family and all the Negroes on the plantation through Sunday.

"My parents were not rich planters and slave owners. We only had six hundred acres of land and about thirty slaves. I don't remember ever seeing one of the slaves whipped. My mother taught them the Presbyterian catechism, which was printed especially for slaves. They were distributed among slave owners in 1840, my mother told me.

"In 1870 I married Walter Francis Marion Coleman, a boy in the neighborhood that I grew up with and loved all my life. The greatest grief of my life was when old A. S. Wallace, scalawag Congressman, sent troops to the neighborhood to catch him for being a Ku Klux, but he evaded them by escaping to Texas for a time. When he returned, we moved out to Blackstock and lived there until my husband's death.

"Just before the coming of baseball, the annual event at Blackstock was the horseback tournament, with lances, and the crowning of a Queen of Love and Beauty and her two maids of honor. There were three posts erected on a field in a straight line and from there posts were suspended rings on a cross piece. Each rider was costumed as some knight. At a fast gallop they would successively race down the field and strive to gain each ring suspended. Each knight made the attempt three times. The maximum of rings caught on his lance could be nine rings. The one taking the greatest number of rings would have the honor and right to name and crown the Queen of Love and Beauty of the tournament. As each knight would take his place at the standing point, the announcer would proclaim the name of the rider. I remember some of the representations: Knight of Avenel, James Fitz James, Knight of Snowden, Knight of the Leopard, and Knight of Ravenswood. The others I can't recall. It was an exciting, thrilling scene of color, and the plaudit of the populace was deafening if the ring was successively taken by the knight and ran down

his lance. I remember Mary Wylie was crowned at one time, Lydia Mobley at another, and my husband's sister, Minnie Coleman once.

"In the little village of Blackstock, at that time about one hundred inhabitants, there were six barrooms, one church, and two policemen. Everybody was poor, everybody had credit, everybody played cards, (I mean the men), and everybody was happy.

"Matches were a luxury. Fire was covered with ashes over night to save one match. The price of them was twenty-five cents per hundred. Soap was made of ashes and hog grease.

"I have been the mother of eleven children, six of whom are living; the grandmother of twelve children, all living; and the great-grandmother of four children, all living. The Yankees didn't reach us in the route through this part of the State.

"One of my grandsons is a graduate of West Point Military Academy. He is a captain in the cavalry stationed at Fort Oglethorpe. His name is Capt. Logan Carroll Berry. He is a son of my daughter, Julia, with whom you danced fifty years ago. She is out on the porch now waiting to speak to you."

Ramage, (not Ramsey.) The Ramages still live in Laurens county. My impression is that Ramage was killed during the war.

Of course I do not intend to question Mrs. Cooley's statement, but to simply give the above with a hope of definitely settling the burying place of this heroine. There was two Musgrove families living near the mill during the revolution, and both may have had daughters named Mary. Hence the confusion. I would like, if possible, to unravel the mystery of Mary Musgrove, for if her burial place can be positively settled on, it should be marked. I have examined a number of histories, some written in the early part of this century, and all of them speak of Mary Musgrove as dying unmarried.

Now, I want our people to assist me with my historical sketches. I am glad to see them creating so much interest and attention. There is enough material in our county, if collected, to fill three or four columns in The Headlight, weekly, for a year. I am publishing those sketches not only to interest our readers, but for the benefit of posterity and therefore want exact facts. So go to work and examine your family archives, and send to me every incident that you can find connected with the revolutionary war. I am particularly anxious to have all the ----- points located and the sites of the homes and the burial places of those old heroes pointed out. I am now collecting a great deal of unwritten history, and if I can only get my friends interested in this work, it will be a success. Orders for back numbers of The Headlight containing those sketches continue to come in from every section of our State showing that they are attracting attention abroad as well as at home.

And when I complete these revolutionary sketches, I intend next to turn my attention to the late war, and write up a history of every company that left Spartanburg county, with all the incidents that I can collect, and individual deeds of valor. This will be far more interesting than politics, and at the same time make The Headlight a historic as well as a live newspaper.

T. L. G.

* * *

Remeniscences of Blackstock

Editors Headlight: In transcribing the sketch, "Historic Blackstock," in my book of records, (as you know I do not use the paste-pot in such important matters), I recall to memory many incidents which occurred in my earliest childhood, and will relate them as they appear to memory, which may be the cause of your obtaining facts which would otherwise be lost.

The family of BLACKSTOCKS, there seems to be but one family of that name who ever resided in that section of the country, and he was known as "Rue" Blackstock. He was a man of mixed blood, however, his mother was a white woman (never married). Rue was a heavy built man, weighing from 180 to 200 pounds, a bright mulatto of powerful strength. He was a miller by profession (and a good one at that), could gather up a sack of wheat under each arm, containing three bushels each, and mount the steepest steps with his burden. His physical strength was surprising to all observers. Rue was a jovial, good fellow, full of mirth, and a good singer, and delighted in singing the old war songs. I can recall but one of his

favorites, "The banks of the Brandywine." He married a white woman at Hill's Factory, named Canzada Belot, a daughter of William and Nancy Belot. Canzada is still living. Her oldest son, William, is a miller, and has charge of the old Musgrove mill at this time. The Belot family lived in an old still house, just below the bridge at Hills Factory. Both of the old folks died in this house, and were buried in the old graveyard at that place more than fifty years ago. Nancy Belot was reputed to have been endowed with supernatural powers, and was known throughout that whole section as a witch. I remember to have held her in awe, as did all the children of that entire section, and many grown up people in that day and time were very superstitious. To illustrate, would say it was certainly reported that one Mr. James J. Simmons, a fine penman, drew the portrait of Nancy Belot and a silver bullet was shot into the portrait, to destroy her supernatural powers. I can now, while penning these recollections, recall to memory, the physique of the old lady. It seems to have made an indelible impression on my memory. However, I deny being superstitious or give much credit to the theories.

And again, you mention in an incidental way, the name of the Rev. Benj. Wofford, the founder of Wofford College, an institution which has, and is now accomplishing, much good--an institution in which we centre all our hopes--a grand and noble institution, and the family of Woffords now living in this section are an honorable, intelligent, honest people, and in the late war were true patriots, many of whom surrendered up their lives on the field-of-battle for the lost cause. But in time of the revolution the Wofford family was true to the crown heads, and were classed as Tories and a bitterness of feeling existed between them and the Whigs for long after the old war, but all this feeling has now died out, and they have been called to fill many places of honor and trust in the Old Iron District. Some feeling existed at the time of this magnificent donation by the Rev. Benj. Wofford. He was a very wealthy man at that day and time, and was a money lender, and it was alleged by some extremists in the Whig party, that this noble institution was erected with money obtained by usury, etc., etc. Rev. Benj. Wofford lived and died half way between Burnt Factory and Hills Factory, on the west side of Tyger river, at the place now known as Evinsville. Mr. B. L. Allen now resides in the old dwelling house. If ever Rev. Benj. Wofford resided at Blackstock I have no knowledge of the fact. The old claim of titles to the old Blackstock lands on the east side of Tyger river will fully explain the matter.

I am not ready to cast aside my old hero's skull from Blackstock fort, until further investigation is had. He looks ferocious at the insinuation of being termed a negro instead of a hero of the revolution where he no doubt fought, bled and died for his country. I admit that it is a somewhat tangled hank, but all I ask is that justice be done my trophy. If it is proven to be a negro skull without any doubt, I will consign it to a grave of oblivion, and hunt some more appropriate reminder of my esteemed friend and editor. There are other notes I have made in the transcription, but will give them to you in detail, to dispose of as you may think best. I know your object is to get a true and exact statement of every detail obtainable, and as tradition among the pale faces are always conflicting, you can but compare statements, weigh facts, and make as authentic a sketch a circumstances will admit.

Yours most respectfully
Wm. A. Hill.

P.S.--William and Nancy Belot had only one son, John, who was a soldier in the Mexican war, and a big barbecue was given him at Hills Factory for distinguished bravery in battles.

From an article in THE PIEDMONT HEADLIGHT, SPARTANBURG S.C., NOVEMBER 12, 1897. Submitted by Mike Becknell.

LETTERS FROM THE PAST

This is a letter that was given to me by my dad's cousin. It is copied exactly as it is written. There are MANY names here and I hope some connects are made. ADAMS are not my direct line, but I have something with several ADAMS listed in it:

Jacksonville July 4th 1874

pg 1

Dear Daughter I am trying to comply with your request in riting out the history of my ancestors. Which I find it hard to do as I never practice riting much for many years. Therefore you will find many blunders and miss spelt words and mistakes, all these will be an error of the head and not of the hart for I find the task much moore trublesom to rite and to think. As to my great grand father Simpson he came from Wailes about the fifteenth (17th?) centruy. Raised a family wich my GrandFather was oldest and according to the English law at that time was the legal heir. But his maring contrary to his fathers will, was disinhereted and he left Massacheusetts and came to North Carolina, McLinburge County and livd their. His first wife died their and their he married GrandMother, a young woman her maden name was Elizebeth Hawkins(Hockings?), a tall spar bilt lady and by her they had six children and then moved to South Carolina when they had six children and then moved to South Carolina when their children was most grown. Their first Born was a girl and called her name Nicy. She married Reuben Adams (cosin) and they raised 9 girls one son Ruben in the State Georgia.

pg 2 Family Record

Reuben Adams girls all mared the oldest Elizebeth called for grand mother married John Cheek they movvd to Georgia had a large family Polly Adams married a man by the name James Elliot & raised a large family Sally Adams married Solomon Adams and raised a family. Sintha Adams married man by the Haris? and raised a family. Sinay? Adams married Joel (died before to children grown) Adams raised a family DumAan? Adams married Richard Befs raised a family. Reuben Adams married widow Warters raised

CAN YOU READ
PRATTS PASTIME PUZZLE.



IF YOU CANT READ THIS
 ASK

A. MACDONALD & CO,
 GENERAL STORE.

BLACKSTOCK, S. C.

**BITS OF AUTHENTIC CHESTER COUNTY HISTORY;
ARTICLE 11**

Reminiscences of Blackstock, S. C.

"And now Mr. Editor, as I was on my native soil where my boyhood days were spent, while waiting for the train, as Bill Arp would say, I ruminated a good deal on the past and lived over my boyhood days in memory. Blackstock got its name from a family of this name who formerly lived there and one of them was postmaster and had his office in his dwelling. This was before any railroad was through in this section. The mails were carried by stage coach lines. North of town near the Methodist Church was an old field known as the muster ground. Here one Alexander Skelly, who was a school master, poet, and captain of a militia company, assembled his men once a month on Saturday and instructed them in the art of war. One very amusing thing occurred in connection with Captain Skelly's men of war in 1832. A report was circulated in the neighborhood that the negroes were going to rise and massacre the whites. There was not over one negro to five whites in a radius of five miles. Nevertheless, Captain Skelly thought it wise to be on guard with his company and ready for any emergency. So one night he had his company on duty near where the Baptist church now stands. About ten o'clock they heard something running through the woods. They quickly ran--as the thing moving got nearer they beat a hasty retreat and formed a line of battle near where Mrs. Bell lived, and waited the approach of the enemy, but to their great relief they heard some dogs barking and hunters cutting down a tree for an opossum.

Near if not on the very spot where the depot now stands was a wood shop run by Joe Fullerton, in which was made and repaired spinning wheels. I remember visiting it in 1849 with my mother, and how wonderful it appeared to me. Whatever became of Fullerton, or his factory I don't remember. The land in and around Blackstock formerly belonged to J. Walker, and was sold by him to David Hemphill, father of the late Mrs. Margaret Gaston. In 1852 it was sold by the Hemphills to George Hooper and by Hooper to Thomas Boulware. In 1849 and '50 the railroad was graded through this place. The contract for the part running through Blackstock was given Dr. J. L. Douglas, who did the work by slave labor from his own plantation under Hugh Bruce as overseer. The road was completed to Blackstock about the first of July, 1851. When the first passenger train ran that far the whole country for miles gathered around it for a general inspection. When one old lady leading a small boy by the hand got opposite the engine the engineer gave two loud blows of the whistle. The boy jerked loose from the

President's Page



I wish to thank the President for allowing me to use his page. Thanks to each of you for using the Renewal form.--it is a big help to the staff and especially for the Treasurer. Now if each would look at the address label to make sure it is correct. Please note some have paid their dues twice. Your label should look something like this:

[Exp/Dec/94/101]

Exp-Expiration: Dec-Month Ending:

94- Year dues are paid to: 101-This means you have ordered the surname book. IF YOUR LABEL IS NOT CORRECT, PLEASE LET US HEAR FROM YOU. It costs us between .95 to \$1.25 for returned Bulletin due to an incorrect address. Postage is \$1.25-\$1.45 to remail it plus an envelope (manila folder .15-.25). We have been averaging around \$40.-50. each mailing of the Bulletin due to returns. Sometimes the post office has no forwarding address. Therefore, we thank those of you that let us know and hope that those who for one reason or another failed to do so will help.

I wish to thank those of you who wrote such nice compliments on your renewal notice about the Society. I have turned these over to our editor, Jean Nichols. These are our "pep" pills for those days when moral gets a little low.

Now, we have to apologize to you for the December Bulletin being late and also the March Bulletin. The lady that does our typing has been sick - we have found another typist--the June Bulletin should be out on time. Thanks for bearing with us. Also, the Treasurer did not look at any mail from the last week in December till February as he had grandchildren visiting him from California. Sorry about any inconvenience it might have caused.

George Moore
Treasurer

* * *

old lady and made for the tall timbers. She followed calling, 'stop John, stop John'. The crowd took up the call, 'stop, John', and for a while all interest was directed to the race. John was never overtaken. Shortly after the completion of the railroad to this place DeVaga and DeGraffenreid of Chester opened a store in a wooden building where the Durham Mercantile Company is now doing business. D. Fant ran the business for them. In about one year DeVaga and DeGraffenreid sold out to D. Fant and Henry Pratt, who did business under the name of Fant and Pratt.

George Hooper who owned all the land continuous to the railroad station opened up a barroom, not far from Fant and Pratt's store. This was the occasion of much rowdying and fighting, as drunk men have always been the same. On the elevation near where Mr. Sigmon's barn is located, Hiram Steele built and ran a carriage factory. He built up a large business. Afterwards he moved it to the John Mackorel place. In 1856 George Hooper sold out all his real estate. He sold it to T. M. Boulware who moved to Blackstock and made his home there. Soon after Fant and Pratt closed out their store and Hiram Steele moved his carriage factory. The only thing left of the place was the railroad depot and Boulware's home and it continued thus until after the Civil War. Up to this time there was neither church or school in the place. Hiram Steele being a devout Methodist had the circuit riders of that day and time preach once a week at his factory, generally on Wednesday evening. A. C. Elder ran a large high school at the Jack Morrison place. Mr. Steele organized a lodge of the Sons of Temperance, which somewhat counteracted the influence of Hooper's barroom. One young man who was fond of imbibing determined to change his manner of life, joined one night, the next morning in relating his experience to a friend, remarked, 'Sam I saw the grandest sight of my life last night, fifty grown men sitting in a row with white gloves and aprons on, and all sober.' The war came on and the lodge was broken up.

I had intended when I commenced this to give an account of some of the people that lived around in the early part of the nineteenth century whose names are forgotten or unheard of by the present generation, but find it will take up too much of your space.

(Signed) S. B. Lathan

SKETCH OF S. B. LATHAN

Mr. Lathan, who was born within the bounds of Hopewell A.R.P. Church, says he was reared on the Shorter Catechism, the memorising of which was part of his Sabbath routine. He became a scholar and a teacher. During the Civil War he

fought among other battles, and at Manassas where he was wounded, taken prisoner at the end of the war he walked home from Greensboro. He taught school in York, Gastonia, and Union City, Tennessee. He came to Chester in 1872 where he afterwards made his home. He was a bookkeeper and later cotton broker. The degree of Doctor of Letters was conferred on him by Erskine College. He died in 1939 at the age of ninety-seven. He was Chester's "Grand Old Man."

* * *

This letter was written to J. C. McFadden, Esq. in 1901 from his cousin, Esther Norman, daughter of Peter Culp and Elizabeth McFadden Culp of Smithton, Ark.

Smithton, Ark.
September 9, 1901

My dear cousin,

You will please pardon my delay in answering your last letter, which was highly appreciated; also the papers sent. I have clipped the Confederate Rolls to paste in my scrap book. So many names that sound familiar from hearing my parents speak of them, besides our own families of McFaddens and Culps.

C. W. McFadden, I take it, is the son of Uncle William McFadden. He visited us and was at my father's house when my two sisters married February 3, 1850. They are both living and widows, sister Mary Parks lives in Fayette Co. Tenn. and sister Jane Hill Meadow, in her second widowhood, lives in Clark Co., Ark. We are all that are left of my father's children.

I will now try as best I can, to give you a short history of our uncles, the McFaddens who came out West. First, in 1827, Uncles Candor and James, younger brothers of my Mother, migrated to West Tenn. and settled in Fayette Co. They were all pleased and wrote such glowing accounts of the West, that in 1829, my father decided to break up and move, so Uncle James came all the way to S. C. on horseback to drive a five horse team far farther over the mountains. I have heard my father say, Mother and her four youngest, one only 6 weeks old, were passengers on board. When, within three days travel on horseback, Uncle Candor met us, overjoyed to see his relatives arrive safely. This was in March 1829. Our two uncles, being bachelors, made their homes with us.

BLACKSTOCK ACADEMY, DISTRICT 24
LATER, BLACKSTOCK SCHOOL

Most of the following information was secured with the help of Mr. M. T. Patrick, a grandson of Mr. W. Banks Thompson, who served as head of the Blackstock Academy from 1881-1886.

Miss Eliza J. McCully, a graduate of Columbia Female College, was the first teacher at the Blackstock School, known as Blackstock Academy, which opened in March, 1880. From 1881-1886 it was headed by Mr. W. Banks Thompson. Mr. Thompson held a Master's Degree from Davidson College. He was born and grew up in the Richburg area. During the years of his teaching in Blackstock, he and his family lived in what is known as the "Blackstock Boarding House" and boarded students who lived too great a distance from the school to come each day. Classes were held each day in a two room school building on property owned by the township. From Mr. Thompson's ledger, the following information about the school: "It was of wood and in tolerable condition." As in so many of the early two-room schools, one was raised slightly so as to serve as a stage when needed. This raised room was used for the younger children while the other room served as a classroom for the older children.

Mr. Thompson later served as Superintendent of Chester County Schools, being followed in that office by Mr. W. D. Knox.

A fee of \$75 was charged, to be supplemented. The number of students varied from 20 to 40 plus. In the years when the number of students warranted it, the number of teachers was increased. Assistants at different times were: Miss Nettie Johnson, James A McCrory, Miss Kate Douglas and Miss Marion Durham. The teachers' salary was given as \$30.00 per month. Other teachers in the early days of the Blackstock School were Miss Janie Thompson, daughter of the head of the Academy, Miss May Grace Douglas, Miss Annie Smith and Mrs. J. S. McKeown.

Names of some of the Chester County families which appeared in the 1881 ledger are still well known in the Chester area. Some of these were: Douglas, Shannon, Lathan, Bell, McCarley, Robinson, Blaine, Mobley, Wylie and Coleman. Sadly, many of the other family names of the 1880's are no longer represented in the area.

The two room building housed the school until 1923 when a new brick building was completed with six rooms and an auditorium.

The Blackstock Academy, being a county "line school" served students from both Chester and Fairfield Counties. When the new school was authorized, a number of small schools in the surrounding area were closed and the students given transportation to Blackstock.

From the Directory of Schools in Chester County 1925-26, it is learned that the following schools had been closed and the children transported to Blackstock: Hazelwood District 4; Hopewell District 26; Bethlehem District 30.

The eleventh grade was added. A gymnasium was built and an addition made to the classroom building. Operated as both elementary and high school, the Blackstock School offered a curriculum that included Home Economics, Agriculture, and Typing classes as well as the traditional English, Math, Latin, French, Science, etc.

In 1955 the High School students were transported to Chester and the High School dropped because of lack of enrollment. The elementary school was continued until 1963 when it too was closed and all area students transported to Chester or Winnsboro.

The school property was bought by the Young Farmers Organization and is currently used by them as a meeting place, voting place, and to fill various other community needs.

Mrs. Lawrence Harrison Gamble contributed the following: "I began my education in 1905 in a two room, two teacher school at Blackstock. The Principal and all students above the seventh grade occupied the "big room" and the other teacher and all students in the lower grades occupied the "little room."

Both were heated with "pot belly" coal stoves. In a corner of the room there was a shelf holding a water bucket and dipper. This is where we quenched our thirst during an hour long midday recess. This time was spent eating lunch, which we carried from home in wicker lunch baskets, and playing games, including jump rope, drop the handkerchief and crack the whip.

"My mother decided that the distance of one mile was too far for her two little girls to walk to school, so she bought Louise and me an Indian pony from Oklahoma. We named her Daisy. Besides being our mode of travel to school, she was our pride and joy and delight. During Daisy's long life, Louise and I were graduated from Blackstock High School and from Columbia College. I feel that she was a very important part of my early days. These were very happy, rewarding days."

* * * * *

The following is a list of the Student Body of Blackstock School, the two room building known first as Blackstock Academy.

| | | |
|---------------------------|----------------------|-------------------|
| J. C. Haltiwanger, Supt. | Janie Mae Montgomery | J. T. Hedgepath |
| Miss Annie Smith, Teacher | Catherine Foutz | A. Wylie Douglas |
| Joe Robinson | Nannie McDonald | Roy Montgomery |
| Malcolm McDonald | Clairborne McDonald | Emma Hamiter |
| Edward Kennedy | Willie Lathan | Mable Holder |
| Stuart Montgomery | Annie Hamiter | Edward M. Shannon |
| Marshall Robinson | Demmie Shannon | Mary Hamiter |
| Stuart Montgomery | Robert Coleman | Hall Ragsdale |
| Willie Foutz | Mamie Lathan | Marion Shannon |
| David Coleman | Frances Holder | Nannie McDonald |
| Caroline Douglas | Harry McDonald | |

* * * * *

ROOSVILLE SCHOOL - - GREAT FALLS DISTRICT 6

Robert Stevenson of the Roosville Community recalls a one teacher school which sometimes had too many students for one teacher. Miss Roxie Dixon, who taught her first class in the Roosville School, reported that her one year there was such a year. Another teacher was secured, a man. The two teachers held classes in the one room building in bad weather. When the weather permitted, one class went outside. "It was a bit hectic at times."

When some consolidation brought in more students, the Ebenezer Methodist Church was used for a year with three classes. Then a Stevenson home, which was a two-story house, was used for the school. The family lived on the first floor and boarded the teachers. The three classes were held in rooms on the second floor. About 1924, the brick building (which is now used as a community center) was built and there was adequate space for all classes.

Rossville was in the Great Falls District, and when it became expedient, the high school students were sent to Great Falls High. Eventually all students were sent to Great Falls, and the Roosville School building became a Community Center. It was no longer listed as an active school in the 1939-40 school report.

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HOPEWELL SCHOOL -- DISTRICT 26

As remembered by Mrs. Cora Weir: The Hopewell School was located across the highway from the Hopewell A. R. P. Church. The building consisted of one

large classroom and a cloakroom. Just inside the front door (the only entrance) there was a shelf on which was a water cooler. It was kept filled with water brought from the nearest neighbor's well by the older boys. The pupils were asked to bring their drinking cups in their lunch boxes. In the classroom, which was well lighted by a number of windows on the left side, there were desks suitable in size for pupils from the first grade through the seventh. On the right side of the room was a long blackboard and a teacher's desk. School began at 9:00 A. M. and closed at 3:00 P. M. with forty-five minutes for lunch. The school was closed about 1925 and the pupils were sent to the Blackstock School. A list of pupils were as follows:

- | | | |
|--------------------|----------------------------|-------------------|
| Grace Nichols | Clarence Tennant | Margaret Nichols |
| Minnie Lee Hudson | John Strong Sterling | Alice Tennant |
| Elizabeth Sterling | J. K. McDaniel | James McDaniel |
| Loy Weir, | Edward Nichols | Charlie Pearson |
| Rachel Sterling | Lillian Weir | Katherine Nichols |
| Elizabeth Boyd | Elizabeth Curry | Carrie Curry |
| Mary McDaniel | Miss Fannie Mills, Teacher | |

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HAZELWOOD - - DISTRICT 4

The earliest school known in the Hazelwood section, bordering Fairfield County, was affectionately known as "Miss Lizzie Mills", or more properly as The Mills' Academy. The school was housed in a small building behind Miss Mills' home, in what is now a remote section so far as inhabitants are concerned. Students who attended the Mills School occasionally boarded with her during the week, going home on Friday. Two such were mentioned by Miss Roxie Dixon, who recalled that her mother, Mary Mabry Mobley, attended the Mills School. The two she mentioned as boarding students were Lizzie Mobley and Lizzie Douglas. The names of Dixon, Douglas, Mobley, Thorne and Bigham were well known in the section. After Miss Lizzie's death, the school was moved to nearby property known as the Dickey Place and lost it's identity as Mills Academy or Miss Lizzie's School. Miss Sue Thorne taught classes in her home for a time but eventually a small building was built "on the road" and Miss Thorne also taught there for a time. Older members of the Jim Shannon family recall attending classes in the Thorne home as does Clarence Douglas. This big house, fine for its' day, was known as Mons Escalapius, and still stands, although it has been empty for a number of years. Hazelwood School was closed before 1925 and the children were sent to Blackstock to school.

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Charlotte and Columbia Railroad was completed, the post office was moved from Debardeleben's, now Bell's place, to what is known as Blackstock Depot. Some, from the similarity of the name, have been led to suppose that Blackstock Depot and Blackstock's battle ground occupy one and the same locality. This is not correct. Blackstock's battle ground is on the Tyger river in the western portion of Union county. Whether Blackstocks, from whom the name of the battle is derived and old Ned Blackstock were related or not, we are not able to say. There is a difference in the orthography The former terminated with s whilst the latter did not. The name Blackstock, or Blackstocks, has, so far as we know, disappeared from the county, but once it was not unusual to meet persons bearing that name. By examining the old graveyards in the up country of South Carolina, tomb stones will be found which silently bear testimony to the existence of a family now almost, if not entirely extinct. Ned Blackstock, from whom Blackstock Depot derives its name, was a Scotch-Irishman. The precise date of his coming to America we have no means at hand by which to ascertain. It was, however, shortly after the Revolutionary War. Perhaps it was in the year 1794. There were four of them. The mother, two sons - the Rev. William, and Edward - and one sister, the wife of Alexander Skelly. The father had died some time before, leaving the children already named and one other son, Samuel, whose tragical end drove the mother and her children to America...

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This is very well: it is well to have plenty of wells.... The Blackstock and Rocky Mount Narrow Gauge is taking something of a nap just now: it will, no doubt, rouse itself from its slumber when that cotton factory with ten thousand spindles at Catawba Falls finished.... Blackstock has three churches, six stores, two blacksmith and wagon shops, a telegraph station, a post office, and some of the cleverest men in the state. About four thousand bales of cotton are shipped annually from this place.

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BLACKSTOCK HAS INTERESTING AND COLORFUL HISTORY TO TELL - - The Chester Reporter - - - Wednesday, January 14, 1970.. By Catherine Irwin, as told by the late Dr. S. B. Lathan.....Many years ago Ned Blackstock, an Irishman, set sail from his native land and after a voyage of three months - then considered very rapid - landed at the United States and found his way to the present site of Blackstock. Blackstock established a postoffice at his home, and he became postmaster. At this time the mail was carried by stage coaches. As the stage-coach paused in front of his home, the master of the house dumped out all of the mail, took out those letters addressed to him and put the rest back into the bag, together with letters he wished to be delivered. The postage for one letter was fifty cents.... In a few years, Ned Blackstock died. The postoffice was then moved to a red house approximately one-half mile north of the present site of Blackstock. A man named John Strong became postmaster. The postoffice remained there until his death and was then moved to the present home of Mrs. Bell. At that time Frank De Bardeladen ran a store and a house of entertainment. After his death, the place was bought by Mrs. Bell and still continues in the family.... In 1851 the railroad was built and a depot established. The postoffice was moved to the present site of Blackstock and T. M. Boulware became postmaster. The mail was now transferred from busses to railroad. Up to this time all the land near Blackstock had been owned by Jerry Walker, who now sold a large portion to David Hemphill. It was he who donated the land to the railroad for a depot to be built... In the immediate neighborhood of Blackstock there lived an Alexander Skelly, a school teacher, surveyor, Captain of Militia Company--one of the outstanding citizens in many ways. One of Captain Skelly's pasttimes was writing poetry--of all types and on all subjects. Among one of his queerest notions he conceived the idea of inventing a machine with perpetual motion. For two long years Skelly worked on it unceasingly. Then at last his dream seemed about to be realized. He felt that he was on the verge of completing the only machine with perpetual motion. One day he invited all of his friends and acquaintances in to witness his machine in operation. When everyone had collected, Skelly pulled the lever--the machine ran--a few minutes--the band broke--and that was the end of "Skelly's Folly"...Skelly's next exploit occurred in 1883. At this time there was great talk of negro uprisings and nullification. Skelly, with his militia, stood guard every night to be ready for trouble. One night the company was on duty, stationed near the present Baptist Church of Blackstock. For a long time they stood there, not hearing a word. Suddenly they heard a great commotion in the near-by woods, shouting and crying. The company moved forward stealthily, prepared to fire, and upon arriving in an open space saw the cause of the excitement--a 'possum in the top of a tree, a dog, and two or three men. Naturally the company was very embarrassed and felt that they should do something to save themselves from being the laughing stock of the countryside. Again the company was called to order. Each man promised that as long as two members of the company were living in Chester County, he would never disclose the happenings of that night. And these promises were kept. Many years afterward only one member of the militia company was living in the county, an old Irishman. It was he who finally disclosed the secret. A few years after this incident, Skelly moved to Indiana and was soon lost track of completely....After the railroad was built, Blackstock began to be built up. T. M. Boulware built the first house, which was later burnt by Sherman. The first store was operated by Dr. D'sVega, who ran it for two years. His clerks were David Fant and Henry Pratt, who later bought the store.

Until the War Between the States, they ran a dry goods and grocery store and had a flourishing business. Several other stores soon sprang up. A large academy was located near Blackstock and received pupils from all over the state. It lasted until the war. One April, thirty-four young men departed to enlist in the Army. The school degenerated and was never revived. Thus was the end of what was known as "First Blackstock," for Sherman soon invaded the neighborhood, leaving only destruction in his pathway.... After the war, "Second Blackstock was begun, Alec and William Roseborough opened a store. Other buildings sprang up, Churches - - Methodist, Presbyterian, and Baptist were built. Since that time, the town has grown a great deal and is now almost equally divided between Chester and Fairfield counties: the magistrates have jurisdiction in both counties.

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MEMORIES...BLACKSTOCK SCHOOL COMING DOWN, By Faye Johnson - - 1981

Eighteen years have passed since the sound of children's footsteps were heard treading the halls of Blackstock Elementary School, and twenty-six since high school students attended classes there..But if one listens closely on a quiet fall day, whispers of those earlier busy years still linger in the air...Not for long however; the two-story building is being torn down, closing out an era for those who attended it from 1923 until the door closed for good in 1963. A victim of old age, the building's roof collapsed recently, making it a safety hazard for anyone who might enter. Blackstock School, the Gym and another building, are owned by the Young Farmers Organization of Blackstock and the group meets now in the old gym. Only the school building itself is being torn down...Robert Shannon, who lives just across the street from the school, remembers when it was built. On Monday he sat on his front porch and reminisced about those earlier days, when the Georgia red brick used for the building cost just over right dollars a thousand. The roof, he recalled always presented a problem. Before the 1922-23 building was finished, Blackstock children attended classes in a two-room, two teacher frame schoolhouse. Each teacher was in charge of five grades. Then several small school districts were consolidated and a large facility was needed. Blackstock School sits just a few yards from the Fairfield-Chester line, and Fairfield picked up the cost for the building and Chester helped with other expenses, and children from both counties were enrolled there...For a number of years, children from the White Oak area attended the school, Ivor Patrick Stephenson and her twin sister, Hannah Phillips, rode the bus from White Oak to Blackstock for five years before transferring to Mount Zion in Winnsboro for the sixth grade. Ivor recalls that in her first grade class, 50 percent of the students were twins, as she and Hannah and another set of twins made up half the class of eight, taught by Miss Sue White Mills, "the best teacher in the world". Miss Mills taught both the first and second grades, and Ivor says while the teacher worked with the second grade, the first grades played in a sandpile in a corner of the big classroom. I enjoyed my five years there, Ivor says now, "and I thought my life had changed when we came to Mount Zion"...At the time the Patrick children attended Blackstock School, there were perhaps 25 to 30 children from White Oak enrolled there, and the principal was B. R. Geddings, known as "Professor" Geddings...Miss Kathleen Lemmon remembers even further back at Blackstock School, where she taught in high school for two years. Miss Lemmon says she was forever getting up plays to raise money for indoor plumbing! Mr.Shannon says the school was built without electricity, which came to Blackstock in the late thirties, and without plumbing facilities....Another person who remembers the haleyon years at Blackstock School is Mrs. Kitty Shannon, whose husband, Edward M. Shannon, was Superintendent there from 1947 until the school was closed. Two of the Shannon's children graduated at Blackstock and the third at Chester High School...On Monday, Mrs Shannon displayed a scrapbook with names of those who attended school reunions. Among the names were Banks, McKeown, Beam, Weir, Knox, McCarley, Sanders Campbell, Traylor, Montgomery, Bigham, Shirley, Mills, McDonald, Bankhead, Shannon, DeHart, Cassels, Brice, Durham, Lewis, Jeter, Cornwell, Hall and Kennedy - a virtual roll call of the inhabitants of that section of Fairfield County.

The list included two former sheriffs of Fairfield County - Leroy Montgomery and Fred Robinson - a deputy sheriff, Jimmy McDonald, and a pianist with the Syracuse, New York Symphony Orchestra, Mary Shannon Boyd....The reunion records included one person who graduated from the old two-room school, Kenneth Kennedy of the Class of 1916. Edward Shannon, Blackstock School's last superintendent, was also an alumnus of the earlier school....Apparently, those who attended Blackstock School retained a fondness for it: The Chester NEWS reported that in 1970, 500 persons turned out for a reunion. Mrs Shannon remembers that Blackstock always had highly competitive baseball and basketball teams. The 1947 yearbook, the "Devilette", records scores of games against the likes of Louisville, Whitmire, Jenkinsville, Monticello, Blythewood, Boiling Springs, and Winnsboro. The baseball coach that year was Marion Stevenson, now a member of the Fairfield County Council. Another person prominent in the history of Blackstock School is A. Grady Williams, who retired in June of 1981 from the public school system. Mr. Williams was the agriculture teacher at Blackstock. Other names that echo down the through the years are those of Miss Annie Smith, who taught in the frame building, F.Stanhope Gale, Ruth McLurkin, Roxie Dixon, Willie Montgomery, Sue White Mills, Mrs. J. D. Simpson (the dietitian) and lunch room helper Mrs. R. S. Banks..... The building will soon be gone, but to those who attended school there, it will live on in memory.

The above was thought to be taken from
THE NEWS AND HERALD, Winnsboro, S. C.

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BLACKSTOCK ACADEMY, DISTRICT 24
LATER, BLACKSTOCK SCHOOL

Most of the following information was secured with the help of Mr. M. T. Patrick, a grandson of Mr. W. Banks Thompson, who served as head of the Blackstock Academy from 1881-1886.

Miss Eliza J. McCully, a graduate of Columbia Female College, was the first teacher at the Blackstock School, known as Blackstock Academy, which opened in March, 1880. From 1881-1886 it was headed by Mr. W. Banks Thompson. Mr. Thompson held a Master's Degree from Davidson College. He was born and grew up in the Richburg area. During the years of his teaching in Blackstock, he and his family lived in what is known as the "Blackstock Boarding House" and boarded students who lived too great a distance from the school to come each day. Classes were held each day in a two room school building on property owned by the township. From Mr. Thompson's ledger, the following information about the school: "It was of wood and in tolerable condition." As in so many of the early two-room schools, one was raised slightly so as to serve as a stage when needed. This raised room was used for the younger children while the other room served as a classroom for the older children.

Mr. Thompson later served as Superintendent of Chester County Schools, being followed in that office by Mr. W. D. Knox.

A fee of \$75 was charged, to be supplemented. The number of students varied from 20 to 40 plus. In the years when the number of students warranted it, the number of teachers was increased. Assistants at different times were: Miss Nettie Johnson, James A McCrory, Miss Kate Douglas and Miss Marion Durham. The teachers' salary was given as \$30.00 per month. Other teachers in the early days of the Blackstock School were Miss Janie Thompson, daughter of the head of the Academy, Miss May Grace Douglas, Miss Annie Smith and Mrs. J. S. McKeown.

Names of some of the Chester County families which appeared in the 1881 ledger are still well known in the Chester area. Some of these were: Douglas, Shannon, Lathan, Bell, McCarley, Robinson, Blaine, Mobley, Wylie and Coleman. Sadly, many of the other family names of the 1880's are no longer represented in the area.

The two room building housed the school until 1923 when a new brick building was completed with six rooms and an auditorium.

The Blackstock Academy, being a county "line school" served students from both Chester and Fairfield Counties. When the new school was authorized, a number of small schools in the surrounding area were closed and the students given transportation to Blackstock.

From the Directory of Schools in Chester County 1925-26, it is learned that the following schools had been closed and the children transported to Blackstock: Hazelwood District 4; Hopewell District 26; Bethlehem District 30.

The eleventh grade was added. A gymnasium was built and an addition made to the classroom building. Operated as both elementary and high school, the Blackstock School offered a curriculum that included Home Economics, Agriculture, and Typing classes as well as the traditional English, Math, Latin, French, Science, etc.

In 1955 the High School students were transported to Chester and the High School dropped because of lack of enrollment. The elementary school was continued until 1963 when it too was closed and all area students transported to Chester or Winnsboro.

The school property was bought by the Young Farmers Organization and is currently used by them as a meeting place, voting place, and to fill various other community needs.

Mrs. Lawrence Harrison Gamble contributed the following: "I began my education in 1905 in a two room, two teacher school at Blackstock. The Principal and all students above the seventh grade occupied the "big room" and the other teacher and all students in the lower grades occupied the "little room."

Both were heated with "pot belly" coal stoves. In a corner of the room there was a shelf holding a water bucket and dipper. This is where we quenched our thirst during an hour long midday recess. This time was spent eating lunch, which we carried from home in wicker lunch baskets, and playing games, including jump rope, drop the handkerchief and crack the whip.

"My mother decided that the distance of one mile was too far for her two little girls to walk to school, so she bought Louise and me an Indian pony from Oklahoma. We named her Daisy. Besides being our mode of travel to school, she was our pride and joy and delight. During Daisy's long life, Louise and I were graduated from Blackstock High School and from Columbia College. I feel that she was a very important part of my early days. These were very happy, rewarding days."

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The following is a list of the Student Body of Blackstock School, the two room building known first as Blackstock Academy.

| | | |
|---------------------------|----------------------|-------------------|
| J. C. Haltiwanger, Supt. | Janie Mae Montgomery | J. T. Hedgepath |
| Miss Annie Smith, Teacher | Catherine Foutz | A. Wylie Douglas |
| Joe Robinson | Nannie McDonald | Roy Montgomery |
| Malcolm McDonald | Clairborne McDonald | Emma Hamiter |
| Edward Kennedy | Wilie Lathan | Mable Holder |
| Stuart Montgomery | Annie Hamiter | Edward M. Shannon |
| Marshall Robinson | Demmie Shannon | Mary Hamiter |
| Stuart Montgomery | Robert Coleman | Hall Ragsdale |
| Willie Foutz | Mamie Lathan | Marion Shannon |
| David Coleman | Frances Holder | Nannie McDonald |
| Caroline Douglas | Harry McDonald | |

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ROOSVILLE SCHOOL - - GREAT FALLS DISTRICT 6

Robert Stevenson of the Roosville Community recalls a one teacher school which sometimes had too many students for one teacher. Miss Roxie Dixon, who taught her first class in the Roosville School, reported that her one year there was such a year. Another teacher was secured, a man. The two teachers held classes in the one room building in bad weather. When the weather permitted, one class went outside. "It was a bit hectic at times."

When some consolidation brought in more students, the Ebenezer Methodist Church was used for a year with three classes. Then a Stevenson home, which was a two-story house, was used for the school. The family lived on the first floor and boarded the teachers. The three classes were held in rooms on the second floor. About 1924, the brick building (which is now used as a community center) was built and there was adequate space for all classes.

Rosseville was in the Great Falls District, and when it became expedient, the high school students were sent to Great Falls High. Eventually all students were sent to Great Falls, and the Roosville School building became a Community Center. It was no longer listed as an active school in the 1939-40 school report.

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HOPEWELL SCHOOL -- DISTRICT 26

As remembered by Mrs. Cora Weir: The Hopewell School was located across the highway from the Hopewell A. R. P. Church. The building consisted of one

large classroom and a cloakroom. Just inside the front door (the only entrance) there was a shelf on which was a water cooler. It was kept filled with water brought from the nearest neighbor's well by the older boys. The pupils were asked to bring their drinking cups in their lunch boxes. In the classroom, which was well lighted by a number of windows on the left side, there were desks suitable in size for pupils from the first grade through the seventh. On the right side of the room was a long blackboard and a teacher's desk. School began at 9:00 A. M. and closed at 3:00 P. M. with forty-five minutes for lunch. The school was closed about 1925 and the pupils were sent to the Blackstock School. A list of pupils were as follows:

- | | | |
|--------------------|----------------------------|-------------------|
| Grace Nichols | Clarence Tennant | Margaret Nichols |
| Minnie Lee Hudson | John Strong Sterling | Alice Tennant |
| Elizabeth Sterling | J. K. McDaniel | James McDaniel |
| Loy Weir, | Edward Nichols | Charlie Pearson |
| Rachel Sterling | Lillian Weir | Katherine Nichols |
| Elizabeth Boyd | Elizabeth Curry | Carrie Curry |
| Mary McDaniel | Miss Fannie Mills, Teacher | |

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This is very well: it is well to have plenty of wells.... The Blackstock and Rocky Mount Narrow Gauge is taking something of a nap just now: it will, no doubt, rouse itself from its slumber when that cotton factory with ten thousand spindles at Catawba Falls finished.... Blackstock has three churches, six stores, two blacksmith and wagon shops, a telegraph station, a post office, and some of the cleverest men in the state. About four thousand bales of cotton are shipped annually from this place.

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BLACKSTOCK HAS INTERESTING AND COLORFUL HISTORY TO TELL - - The Chester Reporter - - - Wednesday, January 14, 1970.. By Catherine Irwin, as told by the late Dr. S. B. Lathan....Many years ago Ned Blackstock, an Irishman, set sail from his native land and after a voyage of three months - then considered very rapid - landed at the United States and found his way to the present site of Blackstock. Blackstock established a postoffice at his home, and he became postmaster. At this time the mail was carried by stage coaches. As the stage-coach paused in front of his home, the master of the house dumped out all of the mail, took out those letters addressed to him and put the rest back into the bag, together with letters he wished to be delivered. The postage for one letter was fifty cents.... In a few years, Ned Blackstock died. The postoffice was then moved to a red house approximately one-half mile north of the present site of Blackstock. A man named John Strong became postmaster. The postoffice remained there until his death and was then moved to the present home of Mrs. Bell. At that time Frank De Bardeladen ran a store and a house of entertainment. After his death, the place was bought by Mrs. Bell and still continues in the family.... In 1851 the railroad was built and a depot established. The postoffice was moved to the present site of Blackstock and T. M. Boulware became postmaster. The mail was now transferred from busses to railroad. Up to this time all the land near Blackstock had been owned by Jerry Walker, who now sold a large portion to David Hemphill. It was he who donated the land to the railroad for a depot to be built... In the immediate neighborhood of Blackstock there lived an Alexander Skelly, a school teacher, surveyor, Captain of Militia Company--one of the outstanding citizens in many ways. One of Captain Skelly's pasttimes was writing poetry--of all types and on all subjects. Among one of his queerest notions he conceived the idea of inventing a machine with perpetual motion. For two long years Skelly worked on it unceasingly. Then at last his dream seemed about to be realized. He felt that he was on the verge of completing the only machine with perpetual motion. One day he invited all of his friends and acquaintances in to witness his machine in operation. When everyone had collected, Skelly pulled the lever--the machine ran--a few minutes--the band broke--and that was the end of "Skelly's Folly"...Skelly's next exploit occurred in 1883. At this time there was great talk of negro uprisings and nullification. Skelly, with his militia, stood guard every night to be ready for trouble. One night the company was on duty, stationed near the present Baptist Church of Blackstock. For a long time they stood there, not hearing a word. Suddenly they heard a great commotion in the near-by woods, shouting and crying. The company moved forward stealthily, prepared to fire, and upon arriving in an open space saw the cause of the excitement--a 'possum in the top of a tree, a dog, and two or three men. Naturally the company was very embarrassed and felt that they should do something to save themselves from being the laughing stock of the countryside. Again the company was called to order. Each man promised that as long as two members of the company were living in Chester County, he would never disclose the happenings of that night. And these promises were kept. Many years afterward only one member of the militia company was living in the county, an old Irishman. It was he who finally disclosed the secret. A few years after this incident, Skelly moved to Indiana and was soon lost track of completely....After the railroad was built, Blackstock began to be built up. T. M. Boulware built the first house, which was later burnt by Sherman. The first store was operated by Dr. DsVega, who ran it for two years. His clerks were David Fant and Henry Pratt, who later bought the store.

Until the War Between the States, they ran a dry goods and grocery store and had a flourishing business. Several other stores soon sprang up. A large academy was located near Blackstock and received pupils from all over the state. It lasted until the war. One April, thirty-four young men departed to enlist in the Army. The school degenerated and was never revived. Thus was the end of what was known as "First Blackstock," for Sherman soon invaded the neighborhood, leaving only destruction in his pathway... After the war, "Second Blackstock was begun, Alec and William Roseborough opened a store. Other buildings sprang up, Churches - - Methodist, Presbyterian, and Baptist were built. Since that time, the town has grown a great deal and is now almost equally divided between Chester and Fairfield counties: the magistrates have jurisdiction in both counties.

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MEMORIES...BLACKSTOCK SCHOOL COMING DOWN, By Faye Johnson - - 1981

Fifteen years have passed since the sound of children's footsteps were heard treading the halls of Blackstock Elementary School, and twenty-six since high school students attended classes there..But if one listens closely on a quiet fall day, whispers of those earlier busy years still linger in the air...Not for long however; the two-story building is being torn down, closing out an era for those who attended it from 1923 until the door closed for good in 1963. A victim of old age, the building's roof collapsed recently, making it a safety hazard for anyone who might enter. Blackstock School, the Gym and another building, are owned by the Young Farmers Organization of Blackstock and the group meets now in the old gym. Only the school building itself is being torn down...Robert Shannon, who lives just across the street from the school, remembers when it was built. On Monday he sat on his front porch and reminisced about those earlier days, when the Georgia red brick used for the building cost just over right dollars a thousand. The roof, he recalled always presented a problem. Before the 1922-23 building was finished, Blackstock children attended classes in a two-room, two teacher frame schoolhouse. Each teacher was in charge of five grades. Then several small school districts were consolidated and a large facility was needed. Blackstock School sits just a few yards from the Fairfield-Chester line, and Fairfield picked up the cost for the building and Chester helped with other expenses, and children from both counties were enrolled there...For a number of years, children from the White Oak area attended the school, Ivor Patrick Stephenson and her twin sister, Hannah Phillips, rode the bus from White Oak to Blackstock for five years before transferring to Mount Zion in Winnsboro for the sixth grade. Ivor recalls that in her first grade class, 50 percent of the students were twins, as she and Hannah and another set of twins made up half the class of eight, taught by Miss Sue White Mills, "the best teacher in the world". Miss Mills taught both the first and second grades, and Ivor says while the teacher worked with the second grade, the first grades played in a sandpile in a corner of the big classroom. I enjoyed my five years there, Ivor says now, "and I thought my life had changed when we came to Mount Zion"...At the time the Patrick children attended Blackstock School, there were perhaps 25 to 30 children from White Oak enrolled there, and the principal was B. R. Geddings, known as "Professor" Geddings...Miss Kathleen Lemmon remembers even further back at Blackstock School, where she taught in high school for two years. Miss Lemmon says she was forever getting up plays to raise money for indoor plumbing! Mr.Shannon says the school was built without electricity, which came to Blackstock in the late thirties, and without plumbing facilities....Another person who remembers the haleyon years at Blackstock School is Mrs. Kitty Shannon, whose husband, Edward M. Shannon, was Superintendent there from 1947 until the school was closed. Two of the Shannon's children graduated at Blackstock and the third at Chester High School...On Monday, Mrs Shannon displayed a scrapbook with names of those who attended school reunions. Among the names were Banks, McKeown, Beam, Weir, Knox, McCarley, Sanders Campbell, Traylor, Montgomery, Bigham, Shirley, Mills, McDonald, Bankhead, Shannon, DeHart, Cassels, Brice, Durham, Lewis, Jeter, Cornwell, Hall and Kennedy - a virtual roll call of the inhabitants of that section of Fairfield County.

The list included two former sheriffs of Fairfield County - Leroy Montgomery and Fred Robinson - a deputy sheriff, Jimmy McDonald, and a pianist with the Syracuse, New York Symphony Orchestra, Mary Shannon Boyd....The reunion records included one person who graduated from the old two-room school, Kenneth Kennedy of the Class of 1916. Edward Shannon, Blackstock School's last superintendent, was also an alumnus of the earlier school....Apparently, those who attended Blackstock School retained a fondness for it: The Chester NEWS reported that in 1970, 500 persons turned out for a reunion. Mrs Shannon remembers that Blackstock always had highly competitive baseball and basketball teams. The 1947 yearbook, the "Devilette", records scores of games against the likes of Louisville, Whitmire, Jenkinsville, Monticello, Blythewood, Boiling Springs, and Winnsboro. The baseball coach that year was Marion Stevenson, now a member of the Fairfield County Council. Another person prominent in the history of Blackstock School is A. Grady Williams, who retired in June of 1981 from the public school system. Mr. Williams was the agriculture teacher at Blackstock. Other names that echo down the through the years are those of Miss Annie Smith, who taught in the frame building, F.Stanhope Gale, Ruth McLurkin, Roxie Dixon, Willie Montgomery, Sue White Mills, Mrs. J. D. Simpson (the dietitian) and lunch room helper Mrs. R. S. Banks..... The building will soon be gone, but to those who attended school there, it will live on in memory.

The above was thought to be taken from
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