

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	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	

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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.

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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110 YEARS AGO - THE FAIRFIELD HERALD, WINNSBORO, S. C. MARCH 8, 1876.

On the Charlotte, Columbia and Augusta Railroad there is a station twelve miles below Chester called Blackstock. The depot took its name from the post-office in the neighborhood. The line of division between the counties of Fairfield and Chester runs through the growing town of Blackstock. The depot and postoffice, as well, perhaps, as most of the business houses, are in Chester county. Blackstock post-office was so named in honor of Edward Blackstock, generally called "Old Ned Blackstock," Originally, it was located about a quarter of a mile above where the widow of Clarence Bell now resides, two miles above Blackstock depot. Afterwards it was moved down to the place now belonging to the estate of Charles Bell. When the post-office was established at this point we were not certain. This much may be merely said: it was in existence early in the beginning of the present century. Old Ned Blackstock was attended by a gentlemen by the name of Law, who afterwards removed to Columbia. Law was succeeded by John F. Debardelabon. When the

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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100 YEARS AGO - THE NEWS AND HERALD, WEDNESDAY EDITION, AUGUST 7, 1883.

A Run To Blackstock; It was last Wednesday evening on Capt. Sprinkle's train that the run was made to our sprightly southern neighbor, Blackstock. A plentiful shower had, only an hour before, filled furrows, vitalized vegetation and cheered countenances. Smiles were among the faces of our Blackstock friends as we stepped from the train. This vicinity has escaped the drought which heretofore seems always to have gone to Blackstock, if it went anywhere. We found the place in the midst of the midsummer serenity which now rests upon all localities. Signs of activity and thrift are not wanting, however. The interest manifested for several years past in the important matter of education does not lag: on the contrary, it grows. Some doubt and dispute having arisen as to the conditions of the tenure of the lot which the academy stands, friends of the great cause of education have combined and purchased a very desirable lot, upon which they design erecting a new and improved school building. The greater part of the money necessary for the purpose has already been subscribed, it is intended that the new academy shall be ready for use at the opening of the next regular session in September. ... In view of the meeting of Bethel Presbytery at this place about the middle of September, substantial and tasty improvements are being made on the Presbyterian Church, windows furnished with blinds, pews to be painted and the interior to be fitted up and freshened throughout. The church is one of the most commodious and best arranged in the upcountry. It has a seating capacity of five hundred persons, a room for the meetings of the sessions: in winter the house is made comfortable by means of stoves: in the summer, the large and numerous windows afford all needed ventilation. The church stands on the highest point of land about the town. Rev. J. C. McMullan has been pastor of the church from time of its organization... Other improvements are projected for the near future. Work will begin on a new dwelling house for the Rev. John A. White, in the upper end of town. Mr. A. B. Douglass will shortly build a residence near the depot, on the western side of the railroad. Mr. Walter Coleman expects to build a dwelling in the town at an early day. We were told that several inquiries for houses have been made recently by persons wanting to move to Blackstock... There is something of an epidemic in well digging raging about Blackstock. They are opened on the auger stock. Five wells have been bored in a few days.

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

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 "Devillette", 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 taufgt 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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