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Six scholarly siblings

From left: Mary Chapman, Doris Mims, Abbie Arrants, Alice Beckham, Margaret Campbell, Betty Brown

Cheaper by the half dozen

Ligon family made big contribution to education

By RON WENZELL
State Staff Writer

The six Ligon girls from Fairfield County have more in common than kinship — all have taught school in South Carolina. The last two retired in 1984.

Ranging in age from 63 to 77, all live in South Carolina and are extremely close-knit. They visit frequently and take turns as hosts of a family reunion each year.

The sisters, ranked according to the number of years they taught, are: Elizabeth Ligon Brown of Great Falls, 39 years; Margaret Ligon Campbell of Chesterfield, 37 years; Mary Ligon Chapman of Winnsboro, 31 years; Doris Ligon Mims of Summerton, 30 years; Abbie Ligon Arrants of Columbia, 29 years; and Alice Ligon Beckham of Winnsboro, 17 years.

Another sister, Ruby Ligon Barnum

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of Columbia, worked as production manager and supervisor at the Southern Maid Co. in Winnsboro and with Palmetto Insurance Co. in Columbia.

The sisters were born and raised in the Greenbrier community near Winnsboro. Their father, William Walter Ligon, was a prominent cotton farmer and merchant and their mother, the former Ruby Platt of Orangeburg, was a school teacher in Branchville and Winnsboro before her marriage.

“My father was determined that all

us would go to college and become teachers, like our mother,” said Mrs. Brown. “He wanted us to have the very best and that didn’t include farm work. None of us was ever permitted to help with the farm chores.”

All except Mrs. Chapman, who graduated from Winthrop College, attended the University of South Carolina.

Mrs. Brown’s teaching assignments included schools in Fairfield County, Chesterfield and Great Falls. She was librarian at Great Falls High School the last 12 years. She has a son, and her hobbies are oil painting, needlepoint, gardening and reading.

“Our starting salary was about \$60 a month and during Depression times we were paid in vouchers some months instead of money,” she said.

Mrs. Arrants was a teacher and assistant principal in Fairfield County and Ware Shoals and taught for a number of years in Massachusetts. She has two children and six grandchildren. Her hobbies are reading, needlepoint and gardening.

Mrs. Mims taught at Salley, Summerton, Alcolu and Manning. She has two children and five grandchildren and likes to travel and meet people.

Mrs. Campbell taught in Lexington County, Fairfield County, Chesterfield and Ruby. She has two children and two grandchildren. Her greatest interest is her family.

Mrs. Beckham taught in Richland County, Winnsboro and Great Falls. She has one son and two grandchildren and her hobbies are reading, traveling and volunteer work with Meals on Wheels.

Mrs. Chapman taught at Great Falls and in Fairfield County where she was a reading coordinator and assistant principal. She has three children and six grandchildren and her hobby is camping.

