

First School Had Three Rooms

Article from Sampson Independent August 3, 1978

Mrs. Calhoun Owens has a picture of the town's first public school which is printed in this section of the paper. It was a wooden three-room school which stood on the site of the present Roseboro-Salemburg Middle School on Pleasant Street. Mrs. Owens went to school there in the first grade in 1908-09. A Mr. Cranford was the principal. Early teachers were Mrs. Annie Watson and Mrs. Lucy Cahoon, both of whom previously taught in the Baptist Church building, though Mrs. Watson later taught at the new school house. Dr. O. L. Parker of Clinton was also principal here for a year or so before going to medical school.

The three room schoolhouse, built in the shape of a T, housed the primary, middle grades, and high school. Probably the growing enrollment caused the wooden church building formerly used by the Baptists to be moved and joined to the side of the new schoolhouse, where it was pressed into service for two extra classrooms. Before its addition to the school proper, it had been used for several grades, as Mrs. Owens went there in the fourth grade while it was also being used as a church. Mrs. Lucy Cahoon was her teacher.

The picture Mrs. Owen has of the school was made in 1908-09. The principal then was Mr. Tom Sloan. His wife taught the primary grades, another teacher whose name she does not recall had the middle grades, and the principal acted as the high school teacher. The late Mrs. Hettie Hall was the music teacher, her studio an enlarged cloakroom off the high school quarters. A partition that could be removed for commencement exercises and public speakings was between the high school and that of the primary grades. The middle grades occupied the large front room, on either side of which were halls leading to the rooms behind. Chapel was held every morning in the high school classrooms.

Around 1913-14 this old wooden structure was torn down and a brick school built on the same site. Mrs. Owens attended the seventh grade in the newly constructed building. This building burned in 1939 near commencement time and graduating exercises were held in the new Methodist Church. The building that replaced it is now the Roseboro-Salemburg Middle School.