

Education Connections in the Bryson City Cemetery

Don Casada

Friends of the Bryson City Cemetery

Originally developed December, 2018

Latest update: August 2021

Sources

Swain County Early History and Educational Development, Lillian Thomasson

Swain County Heritage

Census and deed records

Ancestry.com

Newspaper accounts – mostly Asheville Citizen

Branson's Almanac

Obituaries and death certificates

Personal knowledge

Family sources

Commodore Casada's handwritten list of fellow graduates in his school textbook *New Handbook of Composition*

"Where They Teach The Coming Year" – clipping in Pete Prince Special Collection at the University of Tennessee. Likely from Bryson City Times, 1916 or possibly 1917.

Convention

All names in blue (or underlined in red) are buried in the BC Cemetery

Teachers buried in the Bryson City Cemetery

Iris Abbott	A.J. Franklin	Newell S. Seay
Clarence Angel	Sallie Keener Franklin	Helen Angel Sherrill
Jennie C. Angel	Mattie P. Fry	Jon Sossamon
Ethel Hyatt Ashe	Jake Heffner	Leroy Sossamon
Nell B. Brown	Jean C. Heffner	Ora Lee D. Sossamon
Herbert Brown	Lytle Hickerson	Kelly Styles
Judge T.D. Bryson	Nell F. Johnson	Clara Taylor
Zulia K. Bryson	Baxter Jones	Zenia Taylor
Nora Lee Davis Calhoun	Pauline Calhoun Kindley	Lillian F. Thomasson
Laura Church	Nell S. Leatherwood	Rollins Thomasson
Dessie C. Coffey	Helen B. Marr	Kelly Underwood
I.B. Conley	L. Lee Marr	Mary Frances Underwood
Lyndon Conley	Weaver McTyeire Marr	Gilmer Welch
John Constant	Essie N. Myers	Daisy F. Wilkes
Inez M. Debord	Jim Myers	Vivian P. Williams
Ora H. Dougherty	Clover M. Queen	J.H. Wilson
Louis Eckstein	Lillie A. Quiett	Ellen Black Winston
John Everett	Lula D. Sandlin	Richard Winston
Gola Ferguson	Carol M. Saunooke	Mildred P. Wood
Ila S. Ferguson	E.M. Scruggs	Cora W. Woody

Note: It is quite likely that the list is incomplete; others will be added as discovered

Teaching briefs

Name	Birth yr	Death yr	Notes, documentation (sources)
Iris Abbott	1915	1969	Taught elementary school in Bryson City for more than a decade (personal knowledge)
Clarence Angel	1900	1931	Taught high school classes in 1920s (15 Jun 1924 Asheville Citizen).
Jennie Cooper Angel	1868	1963	Per a BC Times article (29 Mar 1895), she took a position in the "Indian Training School."
Ethel Hyatt Ashe	1906	2002	Public school teacher (1930 census); taught at Ravensford and Alarka during World War II (obituary)
Nell Brevard Brown	1898	2000	Taught piano (SC Heritage)
Herbert Brown	1901	1992	Taught at Piedmont Bible College (SC Heritage)
Judge T.D. Bryson	1873	1950	Professor of law at Duke from 1927-47 (SC Heritage)
Zulia Ketchie Bryson	1892	1986	Taught a couple of years in Bryson City (included in "Where They Teach.....") and also in Rowan County (1920 census) Married Judge Bryson, widower, in 1921
Nora Lee Davis Calhoun	1887	1979	Taught at Wayside (SC Heritage)
Laura Church	1871	1889	Taught in Bryson City (Branson's Almanac, 1890)
Dessie Cunningham Coffey	1889	1979	Taught at Almond from at least 1909, when she acquired state certification, to 1916 (Thomasson, "Where They Teach.....")
I.B. Conley	1855	1893	One of the early teachers when school was held in the court room (Thomasson)
Lyndon Conley	1895	1966	Taught at Almond, Whittier, Principal at Alarka (7 Aug 1950 Asheville Citizen, Betty Sandlin and Talmadge Wiggins personal knowledge)
John Constant	1836	1915	Taught Institute classes (to teachers) - Thomasson.
Inez Martin Debord	1916	2010	Taught at Proctor and Bryson City for 41 years (obituary)
Ora Hughes Dougherty	1892	1981	Taught in a one room school for several years before moving to Black Mountain, where she met her husband Walter (SC Heritage, which also includes a copy of a summer institute certificate for Mrs. Dougherty)
Louis Eckstein	1934	2007	Taught business at WCU, ECU and Presbyterian College (obituary and Beth S. Eckstein)
John Everett	1857	1937	Taught early subscription schools on Bryson and Jenkins Branches & in the county court room (Thomasson)
Gola Ferguson	1887	1962	Taught school on Kirkland Creek and was teaching principal at Ela, 1913-1917 (SC Heritage, obituary).
Ila Sherrill Ferguson	1896	1980	Listed as a teacher at Ela in "Where They Teach....."
A.J. Franklin	1865	1940	Taught at Lands Creek (Thomasson)
Sallie Keener Franklin	1873	1960	Taught at Qualla (Thomasson, SC Heritage)
Mattie Pender Fry	1879	1958	Taught prior to marriage to Frank Fry. Likely taught at Hewitts, since she met Fry when he became superintendent of the Carolina Talc and Mining Company. (granddaughter Jean Douthit and SC Heritage)
Jake Heffner	1920	1957	Taught at Swain High (1953 high school annual)
Jean Conley Heffner	1919	2016	Many years at Bryson City Elementary (personal knowledge, 1959-60 elementary school album)
Lytle Hickerson	1884	1944	Teacher, principal and superintendent at multiple locations: Rockingham, Stokes, Wilkes, Haywood, Swain Counties. Taught & principal at Proctor (multiple newspaper accounts, student Helen Cable Vance)
Nell Franklin Johnson	1909	1967	Taught music (death certificate); president of Bryson City Music Club (6 Feb 1941 Asheville Citizen)
Baxter Jones	1886	1948	In 1920 census, he was boarding with the family of A.L.Epps and listed as High School (Almond) Principal
Pauline Calhoun Kindley	1910	2003	Taught in Public School (probably Proctor) in 1930, per census.
Nell Shank Leatherwood	1883	1965	Taught in Bryson City (Thomasson) and Andrews (21 Dec 1914 Asheville Citizen). See letter to Santa from Sam Roane in 1909 included in slides.

Teaching briefs, continued

Name	Birth yr	Death yr	Notes, documentation
Helen Brown Marr	1895	1982	Taught in High Point School system prior to marrying Weaver M. Marr (his obituary).
L. Lee Marr	1865	1932	Taught free short subscription schools at Maple Springs, Brush Creek and Lower Alarka. He was (twice) superintendent of schools (SC Heritage, Thomasson)
Weaver McTyeire Marr	1888	1965	Taught, was superintendent of schools in High Point (obituary)
Essie Norton Myers	1893	1989	Taught at Cullowhee Normal (WCU), Eagle Creek (Fontana), and at Cary, NC (grandson, John Myers)
Jim Myers	1926	2001	Taught at Swain High (1953 high school annual)
Clover Meadows Queen	1895	1922	Listed as teacher at Indian Creek in "Where They Teach...."
Lillie Quiett	1892	1985	Taught at Kirkland Creek elementary school (grandson Jack Casebolt)
Lula Ditmore Sandlin	1890	1990	Taught English grammar and literature in several NC and Florida schools (obituary)
Carol Myers Saunooke	1949	2011	Taught at Woodstock, Ga and Whittier (Classmate Beth Sossamon Eckstein and husband Charlie Saunooke)
E.M. Scruggs	1829	1895	Taught at Charleston (4 Mar 1934 Asheville Citizen); also 1884 Branson's Business Directory
Newell (Cotton) Sherrill Seay	1911	2001	Taught at Alarka (7 Aug 1950 Asheville Citizen)
Helen Angel Sherrill	1902	1986	School teacher, per her obituary
Jon Sossamon	1940	1989	Substitute teacher in biology and chemistry at Swain High (his sister, Beth Sossamon Eckstein)
Leroy Sossamon	1912	2005	Taught in Troutman and Barium Springs (SC Heritage).
Ora Lee Dougherty Sossamon	1917	2013	Taught at Barium Springs (SC Heritage)
Kelly Stiles	1898	1941	Taught at Emma (26 Apr 1925 Asheville Citizen)
Clara Taylor	1873	1962	Taught at Bushnell (SC Heritage)
Zenia Taylor	1876	1900	Taught at Bushnell (SC Heritage)
Lillian Franklin Thomasson	1900	1995	Taught at Barnardsville in 1921-22, and at Swain High for 42 years (SC Heritage)
Rollins Thomasson	1873	1946	Taught subscription schools 1892-1902; married a former student, Josephine Welch (SC Heritage)
Kelly Underwood	1890	1966	Taught at Birdtown Elementary (per Evanel Thomasson, in SC Heritage)
Mary Frances	1891	1942	Taught at Birdtown Elementary (per Evanel Thomasson, in SC Heritage)
Gilmer Welch	1880	1955	Taught in WNC public schools before beginning law practice (obituary)
Daisy Franklin Wilkes	1902	1978	Taught piano at Mars Hill (23 Sep 1923 Asheville Citizen). In charge of all music training at Western Carolina Teacher's College (25 Apr 1939 Asheville Citizen).
Vivian Penland Williams	1923	2012	Taught at Bryson City Elementary for several decades (personal knowledge)
Joseph Henderson Wilson	1883	1948	Taught at multiple schools – Whittier, Almond, Proctor (SC Heritage)
Ellen Black Winston	1903	1984	Taught high school English in Raleigh before grad school. Head of the Sociology Dept. at Meredith College, Visiting Prof at UNC-CH (SC Heritage)
Richard Winston	1897	1969	Started teaching at NC State in 1926; head of the Sociology Dept from 1933 to 1963; also taught classes at Peace and Meredith Colleges (biographical sketch, Sanford Richard Winston Papers Special Collection, NCSU)
Mildred Penland Wood	1915	2005	Taught at Almond, Bryson City Elementary (personal knowledge)
Cora Wilson Woody	1895	1966	Listed as teacher in Bryson City in "Where They Teach...."

Others with significant roles

School committeemen or B.O.E. members

R.P. Abbott	Epp Everett
A.M. Bennett	A.M. Frye
Kelly Bennett	D.G. Fisher
Stanley Black	W.A. Gibson
Bill Cable	T.I. Hughes
Granville Calhoun	J. Robert Long
Joshua Calhoun	L. Lee Marr
Mark Cathey	Doc Mitchell
Jack Coburn	Carey Morgan
J.H. Coffey	John Orr
R.L. Davis	R.J. Roane
Inez M. DeBord	Matt Taylor
McKinley Edwards	O.P. Williams

Other roles

A.M. Bennett
Marianna F. Black
Nora Lee Calhoun
Jack Coburn
D.K. Collins
Ora H. Dougherty
Verayle Franks
T.I. Hughes
Nell S. Leatherwood
Thurman Leatherwood
Robert L & Fannie S. Leatherwood
L. Lee Marr
Marie Shank
Ninon S Welch

Early days – 1870-1910

- 1870s: [John Everett](#) (1857-1937) was the first teacher paid from public funds; he taught in the court room of the original courthouse. He also taught subscription schools on Jenkins and Bryson Branches.
- 1870s: Civil War veteran [DK Collins](#) (1844-1924) was one of the early teacher “examiners” (first was Abraham Mingus).
- 1882: Civil War veteran [John J. Constant](#) (1836-1915) provided “Institute” instruction to teachers in History and Geography
- 1888: [L. Lee Marr](#) (1865-1932) taught at Mouth of Alarka School and [A.J. Franklin](#) (1865-1940) taught at Lands Creek; [Marr](#) later served two terms as the county superintendent.
- 1888: [Joshua Calhoun](#) led establishment of a school above Bone Valley
- 1890: Branson’s Almanac said there were 22 public schools in the county, plus an Academy at Whittier, Cold Springs Seminary, and High School in Bryson City
- 1900: [DK Collins](#) deeds original town lot 32, complete with the lower floor of a brick two story building, to District 1 School Committee – JL Broyles, [WM Taylor](#), and [RL Davis](#)
- 1904: [Robert L.](#) (1860-1907) and [Fannie Leatherwood](#) (1864-1942) sold 5-1/2 acres adjacent to the BC Cemetery to the Board of Education; price was \$206. [Dr. A.M. Bennett](#) (1861-1941) then oversaw construction of the “pebble-dash” school.
- 1905: Bryson City Graded School District incorporated by an act of the State Legislature, with four trustees appointed: [T.I. Hughes](#) (1861-1954), [S.W. Black](#) (1876-1965), [A.J. Franklin](#) (1865-1940) , and [A.M. Bennett](#) (1861-1941)

Pebbledash School – first school building on Schoolhouse Hill circa 1911-12 (Long, Black and Bryson born in 1903, Fry in 1902)



Mary Long
Ellen Black

Harold Fry

Another photo at pebbledash school; unknown date (speculation is that the man at right is Eugene Harris; see next slide)



Source: Not recorded

BC High School Class of 1911 L-R: I.K. Stearns, Nina Gibson Messer, principal Eugene Harris, Ora Hughes Dougherty, Walter Mingus Hughes

(re-enactment at Pageant of Education, 1937)



Source: Carl Greuning, Jr

Early involvement – 1906-1940

- 1909: [Dessie Cunningham](#) (1889-1979) and Bessie Burnett (1891-1924) obtained NC State Certification – first in the county to do so
- 1911: first high school graduating class in the county (Bryson City) consisted of [Ora Hughes](#), Nina Gibson, [Walter Hughes](#), and [I.K. Stearns](#)
- 1917: first high school class at Almond; [Mary Campbell \(Sutherland\)](#) is one of five graduates
- 1919: New school building erected at Whittier
- 1921: Legislature amended the 1905 act, noting [L. Lee Marr](#), [K.E. Bennett](#), W.M. Wilson, [O.P. Williams](#), [A. Lyon](#), J.H. Harwood and N.H. Randolph were then the trustees. The amendment allowed the School Board to petition for an election for a school improvement bond.
- 1923: The Almond School burned two weeks into the school year
- 1924: New school buildings erected in Almond and Bryson City
- 1928: Almost 700 students enrolled at Bryson City; 1928 graduating class numbered 14
- 1929: Construction of a second new building in Bryson City begins
- 1930: Largest graduating class in Bryson City High history - 28
- 1932: High school established at Proctor; subsequently named Calhoun-Coburn School in honor of [Joshua Calhoun](#) and [Jack Coburn](#)
- 1933: Whittier School burns
- 1934: New Whittier School
- 1934: Largest graduating class in Bryson City High history – 40
- 1937: New WPA building at Alarka consolidates four Alarka elementary schools

A bit of area background from the Roaring Twenties:
June 15, 1924 Sunday Asheville Citizen

EIGHTEEN

THE SUNDAY CITIZEN, SUNDAY MORNING, JUNE 15, 1924

BRYSON CITY, LUMBER AND MINING CENTER

Natural Resources in Swain County Being Developed, But Surface Is Hardly Scratched

**BRYSON CITY IS
'UNDISCOVERED'
BEAUTY SECTION**

Highways and Schools
Bringing About Evolu-
tion in Development.

**SURROUNDED BY
HIGH MOUNTAINS**

Municipality and County
Are Taking High Rank
in Improvements.

New Lighting System

The aldermen have sold \$100,000 in bonds, following an overwhelming vote last fall, for the purpose of providing a modern lighting system. The contract for a dam that will furnish on the Ocumu Lufty River, six miles above town and on No. 10 highway, was scheduled to be let around July 1. This dam will provide 800 horsepower, sufficient to light the town, about 125 horsepower being needed for this purpose, with a surplus for any industries that may need power. C. E. Waddell, of Asheville, is the engineer.

The present system is supplied from a dam on Deep Creek, three and a half miles away, which furnishes 75 horsepower, about half of the amount needed at present, for lighting the streets and homes. Street lights are 100-watt lamps placed 300 feet apart. This system has been in operation for about 15 years.

The gravity system is used for the town's water supply, which is secured from 10 big springs high up on the mountain side. In addition to being about as pure as water can be found, it is treated by chemical process, making assurance doubly sure. A complete system of water and sewer lines covers the town.

Bryson City has an excellent volunteer fire department of 18 men, with a 50-gallon chemical tank truck and chemical hose, as well as 1,000 feet of water hose, long enough to connect to any part of the town from the numerous fire plugs. The 110-pound pressure is ample for fire-fighting.

The Bryson City Telephone Company furnishes the town with excellent service and is in a flourishing condition, owning its own exchange. A. M. Frye is president of the company, S. L. Gibson, being secretary, treasurer and general manager.

The dam on Deep Creek was 0.1 miles above the first bridge on the Deep Creek trail. A large boulder on the west bank of the creek marks the spot.

Construction would have started, at the earliest, in late 1911. Billy Morris sold land along the creek to the town of Bryson City in October of that year.

The "110-pound pressure" suggests that the tank on top of Schoolhouse Hill was being used at that time. There is about 240 feet of elevation between ground level in town and the tank base. Fourteen feet of water in the tank would translate into 110 psig downtown. That tank was in service in 1937 according to Sanborn mapping.

Stores and Hotels

Two drug stores are sufficient to supply Bryson City's requirements for medicines, one owned by Mayor K. E. Bennett, the Bryson City Drug Company, and the other, Sisk's Drug Store, owned by C. T. Sisk.

Hardware stores are owned by R. L. Snelson and Company and Randolph Brothers, the general stores being as follows: Estate of D. K. Collins, T. I. Hughes, C. R. Browning and Sons, J. M. Smiley, Francis and Henson, C. E. Wilhite, S. A. DeHart and Company, W. M. DeHart, John Burnett, L. J. Moody, W. B. Bostie, John T. Beck, W. E. Elmore, John Dorsey, C. H. Meadows, Ben Fuller.

Bryson City boasts of four excellent commercial hotels, including the Freeman House, owned by Mrs. E. B. Freeman; the Entella Hotel, owned by F. E. Frye; the Cooper House, operated by W. F. Cooper, and the Calhoun House, of which William Calhoun is proprietor.

One of the important industries of Bryson City is the Bryson City Pump Works, owned by I. Shank, president, and I. K. Stearns, manager, and employing 15 or 20 men. Solid board columns, liquor logs for tannic acid and tubing for wood chain pumps are manufactured.

The Frankwood Manufacturing Company, owned by A. J. Franklin, Sr., and Jr., has an extensive business in ice manufacturing, distributing wood and coal and handling all kinds of rough and finished lumber. R. J. Coffey has recently started a lumber plan in the town.

Wholesale Houses

Slayden, Fakes and Company, of Asheville, have a branch wholesale grocery house at Bryson City distributing from that point along the Murphy line from Waynesville to Murphy, as well as in other counties. Francis and Henson, C. E. Wilhite, Bryson City manager.

Coffey and Cunningham are erecting a large building, 80 by 125 feet, which will be used as a wholesale grain and feed and farmers' supply house. R. J. Coffey and M. P. Cunningham are the owners and expect to have the place open for business early in June.

TWO STATE BANKS HANDLE BUSINESS FOR BRYSON CITY

Citizens Bank Has Moved Into Modern and At- tractive Home.

Two banks, with combined resources of close to a million dollars, both in healthy and growing condition, are the pride of the citizens of Bryson City and surrounding territory, adding much to the lumber, mining and agricultural achievements through the extension of credit to all worthy activities.

The Citizens Bank, while only 11 years old and starting business with a paid in capital of \$5,800, is now capitalized at \$30,000, with a surplus fund of \$5,550 and resources of \$416,302.09, according to the last statement on May 7. Increase in deposits since January 1 of this year is shown to be \$48,159.01

A. M. Frye, one of the most prominent and substantial citizens of Bryson City, was one of the organizers of the bank and has been president since the incorporation. O. P. Williams has been cashier since the formation. R. G. Coffey is vice president; E. T. Welch is assistant cashier and Dan G. Fisher, bookkeeper.

The directors include Mr. Frye, Mr. Coffey, J. A. Downton, D. G. Fisher and J. R. L. Cole

The Bryson City Bank is the older of the two financial institutions and has been an important factor in the growth and development of the town. The late D. W. Collins, one of the leading citizens of the town and county for many years and a resident since the corporation of the town in 1889, and before, was president for many years. S. W. Black, vice president, is heading the institution since Mr. Collins' death a few weeks ago.

J. Robert Long is cashier, two other directors being J. E. Coburn and A. S. Patterson.

The Bryson City Bank is capitalized at \$30,000, having surplus and undivided profits of more than \$18,000. Total resources are given in the last statement on April 15 as \$439,292.10.

Municipal Improvements

In addition to Main Street, which is a part of No. 10 highway, Bryson City has paved Everett Street from the square to the Presbyterian Church. Sidewalks are paved on Main, Everett and Church Streets. At present the town is contemplating a paving program, which will include all the principal sidewalks not yet paved.

In fact, Bryson City, although probably not many more than 1,000 people live within or close around the town, has many conveniences and improvements of which many much larger communities cannot boast.

Mayor K. E. Bennett and a progressive Board of Aldermen, composed of J. E. Coburn, Thurman Leatherwood and A. H. Elmore, keep fully abreast of the requirements of the progressive community. The aldermen are starting on the second of their two-year term of office. Mayor Bennett, a young man and proprietor of the Bryson City Drug Company, served two years as a member of the Board of Aldermen.

Several motor companies are active in distribution of the various makes of automobiles in Bryson City, among them being the Bryson City Motor Company, Ford dealers, R. P. Abbott, president, and W. M. Hughes, general manager; Floyd Motor Company, Chevrolet agents, F. F. Floyd, manager; Swain Motor Company, Star and Durant agents, M. H. Randolph, president, and R. O. Martin, general manager; Swain-Overland Company, Overland and Willys-Knight distributors, J. H. Lucal, owner.

New School Building

One of the best and most convenient school buildings in Western North Carolina is claimed by Bryson City. One central building, being used for the first time, serves the town. It is three stories high, containing 18 class and recitation rooms and laboratories, including chemistry, physics and biology, and domestic science rooms, which will probably be put in use next year. Music will be added, a teacher, Miss Mary Long, having already been elected as music teacher.

The City School Committee, appointed by the County Board of Education, is composed of K. E. Bennett, chairman, J. E. Coburn and G. H. Tabor, secretary.

During the past year N. J. Sigmon has been principal, the high school teachers including Miss Edith Bryson, Mrs. Lillian Thomasson, Miss Mary Jane Dority and Clarence Angel. Grade teachers are Miss Inez Messer, Miss Bertha Cunningham, Miss Francis Garner, Mrs. Case, Miss Sadie Howell, Miss J. Hamilton McDowell, Mrs. N. J. Sigmon.

County is Progressive

Swain County, for many years backward in her county school system, is rapidly taking a high place in the list of counties, the State Department of Education having publicly commended the wonderful progress made under the superintendency of N. E. Wright. He is ably backed by the County Board of Education, composed of S. W. Black, chairman, J. T. Cunningham and R. J. Roane.

Swain's County Commissioners are active and progressive citizens, taking a forward stand in road building and making successful efforts for the promotion of better conditions in county institutions. S. E. Varner, W. T. Conley and J. H. Coffey compose the board.

Civic and Fraternal

Civic and fraternal organizations, sufficient for the needs of the community, are found at Bryson City. The Parent-Teacher Association, with Mrs. S. W. Black as president and Mrs. Thurman Leaterwood, secretary, is an active body. M. H. Randolph is commander of the Caro E. Freeman Post of the American Legion, while Mrs. D. R. Bryson has charge of activities of the Swain County Chapter of the American Red Cross.

Almond School, erected and first used in 1924



Photo source: TVA collection, Atlanta National Archives.

Bryson City School Buildings

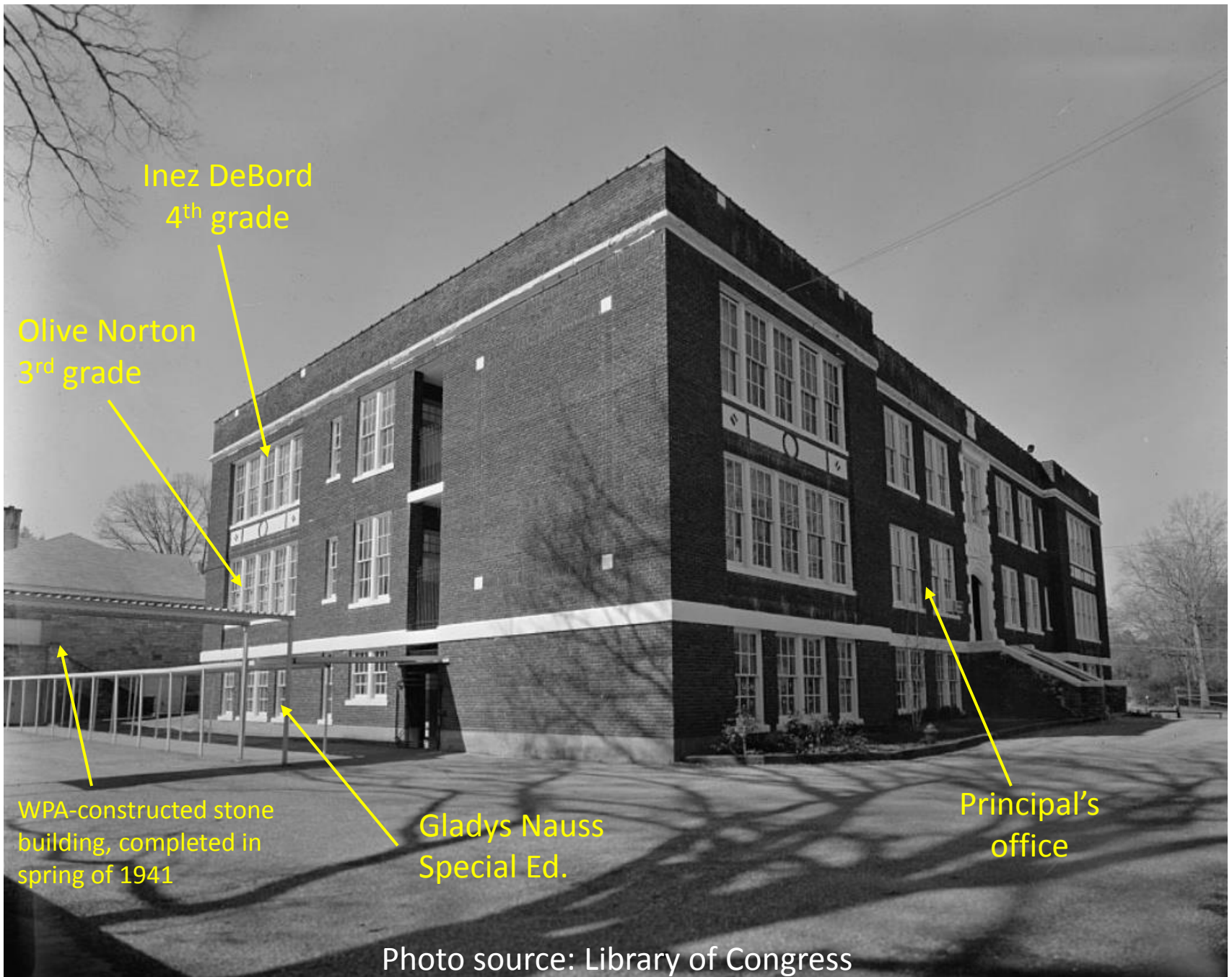


Photo source: TVA collection, Atlanta National Archives.

This Bryson City School structure was first used in 1923. It was used by all grades until the adjacent building to the north (the one in the right side of the preceding TVA photo) was erected in 1929-30. School was closed for several days in October of 1929 to connect heating systems between the two buildings.



Photo source: Library of Congress



Inez DeBord
4th grade

Olive Norton
3rd grade

WPA-constructed stone
building, completed in
spring of 1941

Gladys Nauss
Special Ed.

Principal's
office

Photo source: Library of Congress

Lunchtime behind the WPA building and the add-on ice cream stand



Source: 1950 Ridgerunner



Annie T. Hoyle, 2nd grade

Vivian Williams – 5th grade

Auditorium

Photo source: Library of Congress



Photo source: Library of Congress



Photo source: Library of Congress



Photo source: Library of Congress



Photo source: Library of Congress



Photo source: Library of Congress

Fireplace in principal's office; Carrie Abbott, elementary school principal for many years



Source: 1959-60 Bryson City Elementary School album



Photo source: Library of Congress

Proctor Elementary and High Schools



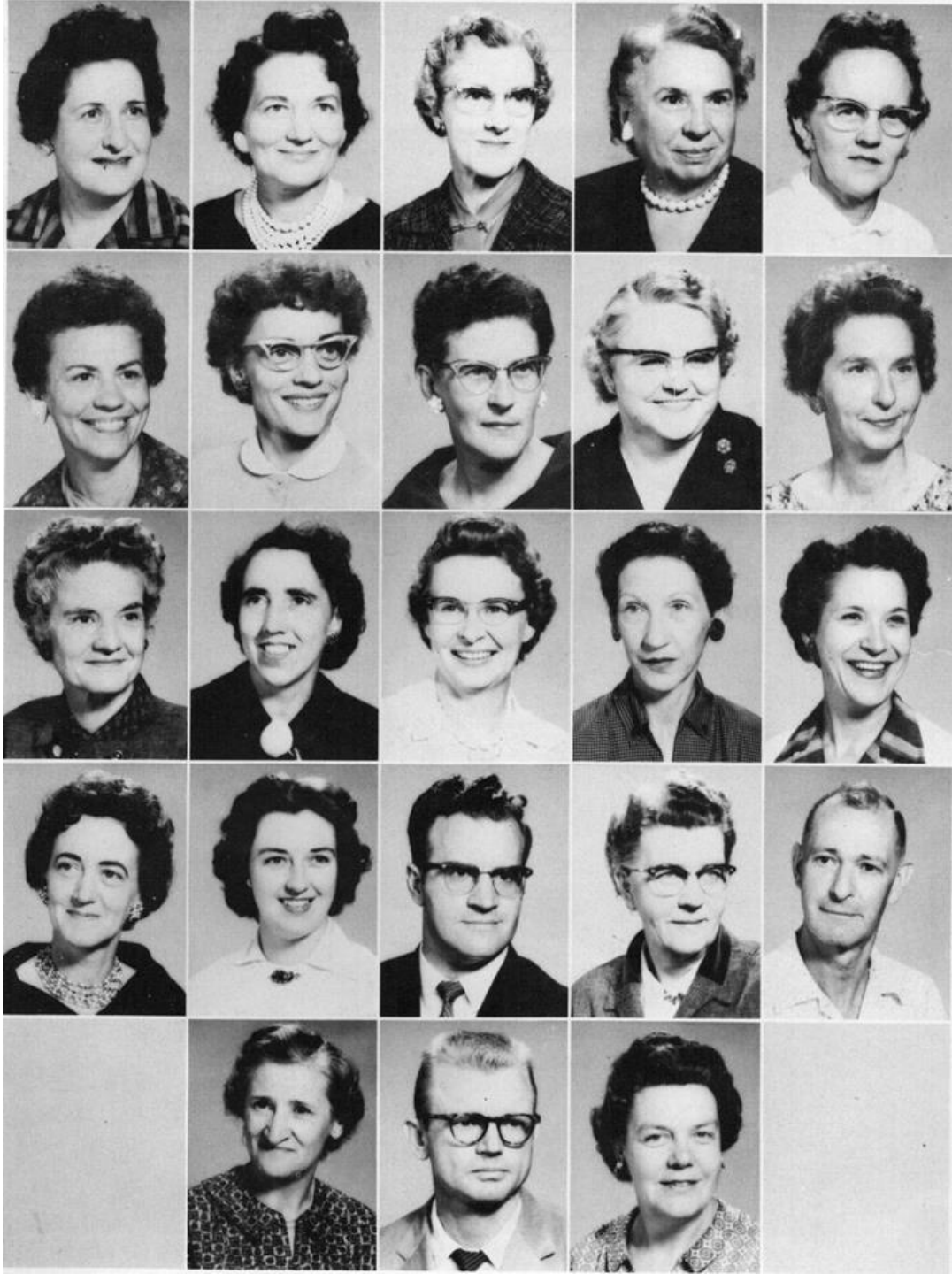
Photo source: TVA collection, Atlanta National Archives.

Whittier School, erected in 1934



Photo source: TVA collection, Atlanta National Archives.

Bryson City Elementary School
Teachers, 1959-60; how many of
them can you name? (Names on
the following sheet)



Source: 1959-60 Bryson City
Elementary School album

Teachers on the preceding sheet (L-R)

Row 1: Ruth Eckstein, Mildred Wood, Eula Beck, Gladys Nauss, Rhonda Dunlap

Row 2: Margaret Rentz, Jean Heffner, Annie Hoyle, Jessie Hart, Emily Davis

Row 3: Olive Norton, Inez DeBord, Mary Ellen Wikle, Nelle Potts, Christine Fisher

Row 4: Vivian Williams, Mirtha Wilson, Harvey Franklin, Lenna Cole, Wade Gass

Row 5: Gertrude Ferguson, Jack Williams, Grace Gregory

Not pictured

Gene Brown, Della DeHart, Marian Crisp

Of that group, these ladies are buried in the BC Cemetery



Inez Martin DeBord



Jean Conley Heffner



Vivian Penland Williams



Mildred Penland Wood

Source: 1959-60 Bryson City
Elementary School album

FBCC folks in that 1959-60 – and later high school albums ;)

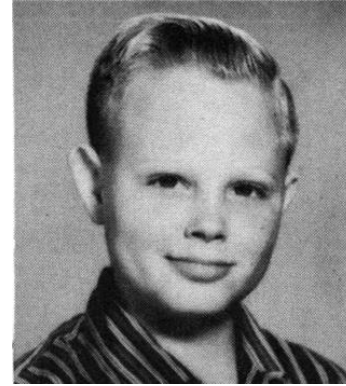


Kate
Welch

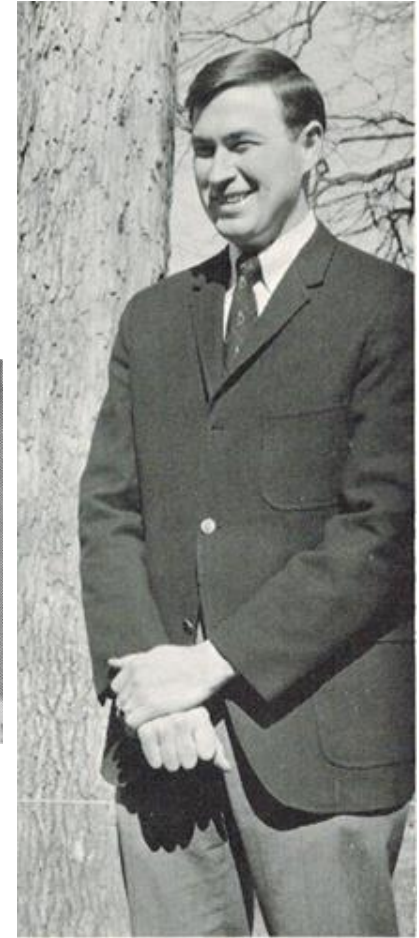
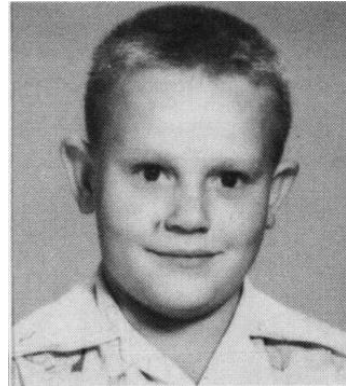
Jean
Douthit

Louise
Sandlin

Bobby
Thomas



Ivan
Gibby



Jim Gribble



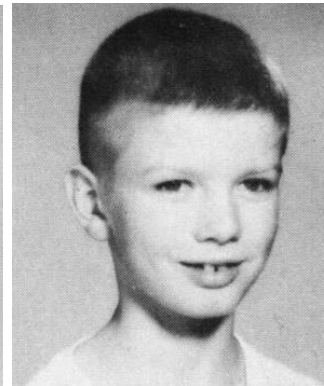
Beth Sossamon



Toni Wright



Boy from
Black Hill



Danny Welch

Sources: 1959-60 Bryson City
Elementary School album,
1969 Ridgerunner

Iris Abbott (1915-1969)



Photo from Swain County Heritage

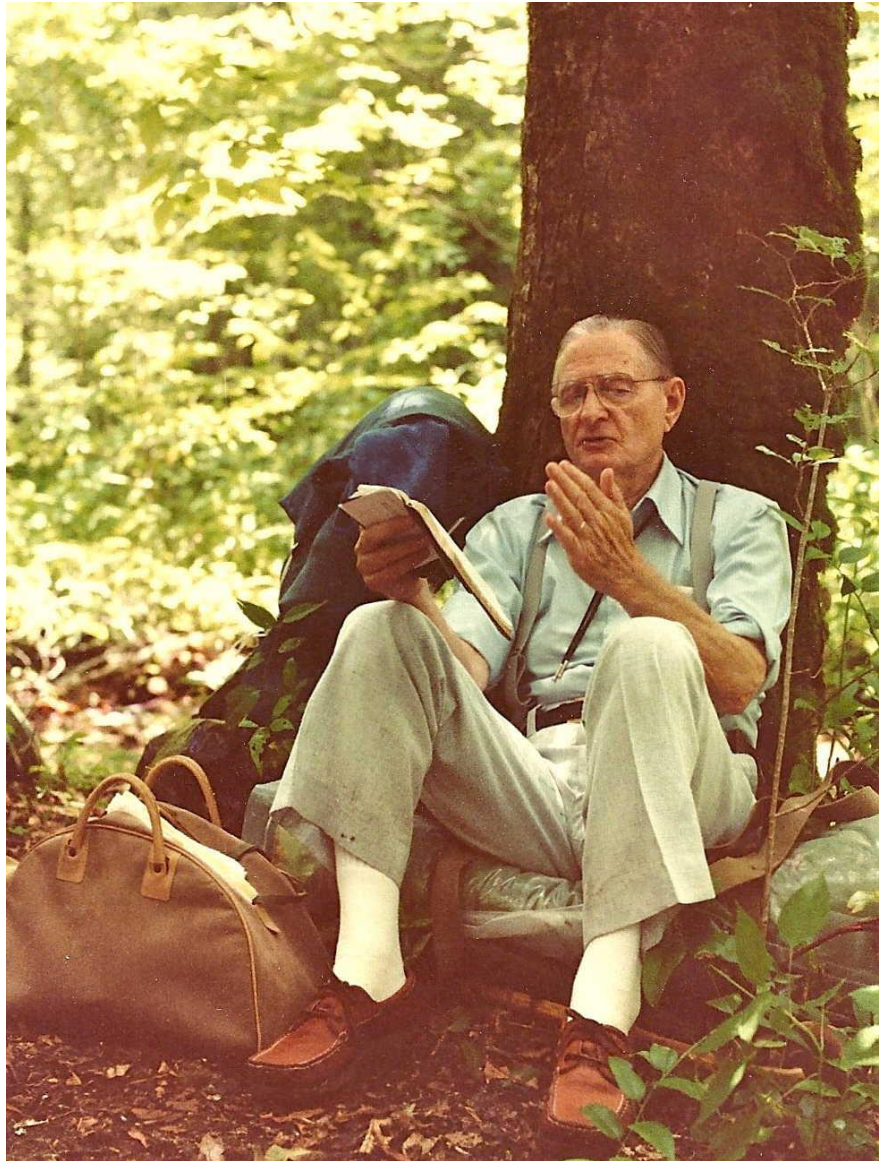
- 1. Mattie Seay Abbott
- 2. Dolly Seay Jones
- 3. Betty Seay Wright
- 4. Francis Joseph Hart
- 5. Carrie Parton Abbott
- 6. Reggie Abbott
- 7. Iris Abbott
- 8. Hayes Seay
- 9. Amy Jones Morgan
- 10. Noah P Seay
- 11. Jessie Hicks Hart
- 12. Amanda Seay Hicks
- 13. Carey Morgan
- 14. Josie Parris Morrow
- 15. Maggie Seay Morris
- 16. Mattie Teague Parton
- 17. Vallama Wright Robbins



Ela Dam 2nd generator dedication (1930)
included Clarence Angel (1900-1931)

Source: Swain County Centennial

Nell (1898-2000) and Herbert Brown (1901-1992)



Photos from members of the Brown family

Elwood Parker
and **T.D. Bryson II**
(duck hunting in
eastern NC)



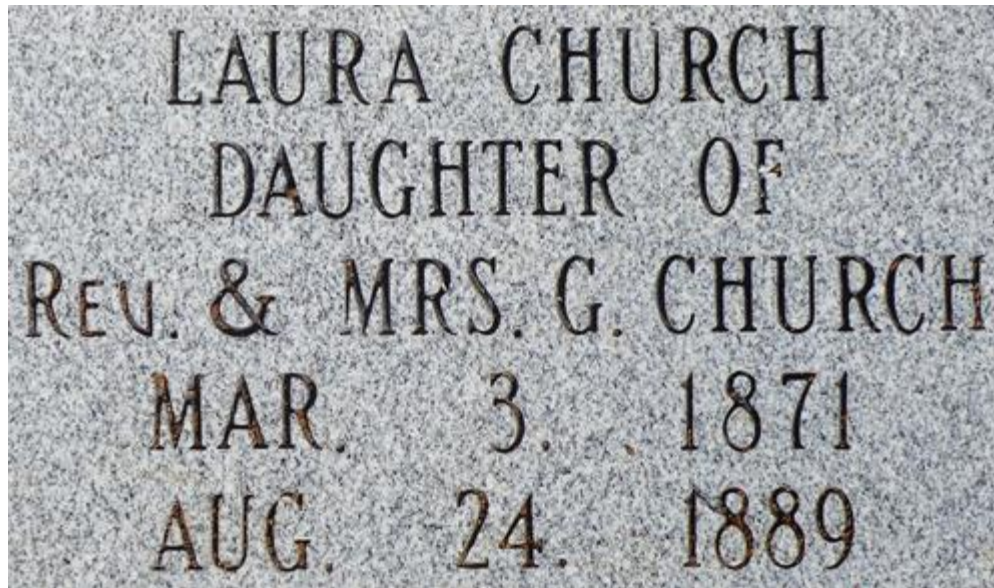
Photo by IK Stearns, courtesy
of Carl Gruening, Jr

Zulia Ketchie Bryson, wife of TD Bryson II



Source: callinwin of Ancestry.com

Laura Church (1871-1889) taught at a school in Bryson City which her father, Rev. G.H. Church ran



John Hill and Dessie Coffey (in front of Presbyterian Church)



Photo by IK Stearns, courtesy of Carl Grueninger, Jr

Ira Bascomb Conley (1855-1893), Lyndon Conley (1895-1966), John Constant (~1836-1915)



Inez Martin DeBord (1916-2010), Vivian Williams (1923-2012), Mildred Wood (1915-2005)



Ora Hughes Dougherty, Ora Lee Dougherty Sossamon, Leroy Sossamon,
Jon Sossamon, Louis Eckstein



Upper left: Hester Farley Hughes (1870-1956), Ora Hughes Dougherty (1892-1981), Ora Lee Dougherty Sossamon (1917-2013), Jon Sossamon (1940-1989)

Upper right: Louis Eckstein (1934-2007)

Lower left: Leroy (1912-2005) and Ora Lee Sossamon (1917-2013)

Photo sources: Sossamon family, NC State Agromeck, SC Heritage

John Everett (1857-1937)

Below, with 2nd wife Mary Jane
Rodgers and daughter Hilda



Gola Ferguson (1887-1962)

8 C ASHEVILLE CITIZEN-TIMES, ASHEVILLE, N. C.
Sunday, March 25, 1956

Ferguson Constructs Violins As Hobby, Knows No Music

By LILLIAN HIRT

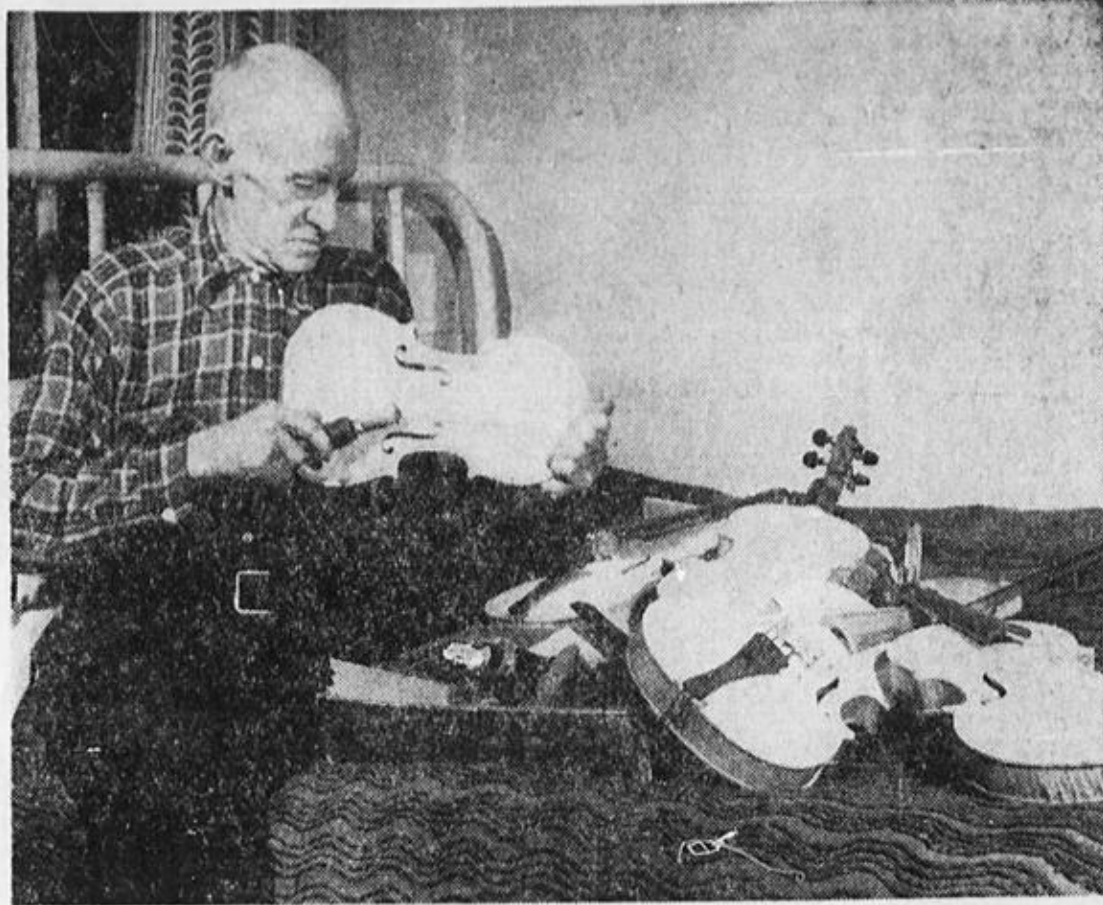
CULLOWHEE, March 24 — You'd think that being a farmer is a full time job. You'd also think that a man who has spent a long and active life in farming, politics, law enforcement, hunting and public service, would be ready to sit down and take it easy for a while. Well, Gola Ferguson wouldn't think so.

At 68 years of age he is still active in farming, but the other activities have given way to one of the most fascinating hobbies imaginable—making violins. Now, it seems that making violins, particularly those that produce any sort of pleasing music, would require infinite patience and a high degree of craftsmanship, plus a better-than-passing knowledge of music. That's true, and Ferguson is well endowed with the first two qualities. As for music, he says he doesn't know one note from another, cannot recognize tunes, and his good wife has to nudge him when it's time to stand up for the na-

has a rare wit and a flair for telling stories. But, to get back to violins.

This being such an unusual hobby, one wonders when and how Ferguson took it up. Some years ago, while he was sheriff of Swain County, he went on business to a place down the Tennessee River where a highway was under construction. He got there just in time to see a man buried in a landslide, and extricated him and arranged a special train to take him to Asheville for hospitalization. In gratitude, the man gave him a violin he had owned for many years, and which was the only thing of value he had to offer in return for his life. Ferguson said he didn't want to accept it, but the man insisted, and later someone told him it was a Stradivarius. This was not true, but a Chicago expert stated that it was a very good copy, valued at about \$700.

Ferguson made no effort to learn to play the violin; but



—Citizen-Times Photo.

GOLA FERGUSON . . . doesn't know a note of music

Methodist Group, circa late 1940s

Cora Wilson Woody (1895-1966)



Group of primarily Methodist Church members; unknown occasion. Parties in red below take their rest in the Bryson City Cemetery. Some of the identifications are certain, others speculative.

1) Ila Sherrill Ferguson, 2) Melvin Taylor, 3) Unknown, 4) Leroy Sossamon, 5) Unknown, 6) Ora Lee Dougherty Sossamon, 7) Unknown, 8) Bettz Taylor, 9) Evelyn Taylor (mother of Bettz and wife of Melvin), 10 and 11) believed to be Mrs. and Rev. Acres, 12), Unknown, 13) Reggie Abbott (his parents, R.P. and Mattie Seay Abbott are buried in the BC Cemetery), 14) Carrie Abbott, 15) Cora Wilson Woody, 16) Ethel Smith Long, 17) J. Robert Long, 18) Ora Evelyn Hughes Dougherty, 19) Unknown

Photo courtesy of Rick and Christine Colcord

(those listed in red buried in BC Cemetery)

Ila Sherrill Ferguson (1896-1980)

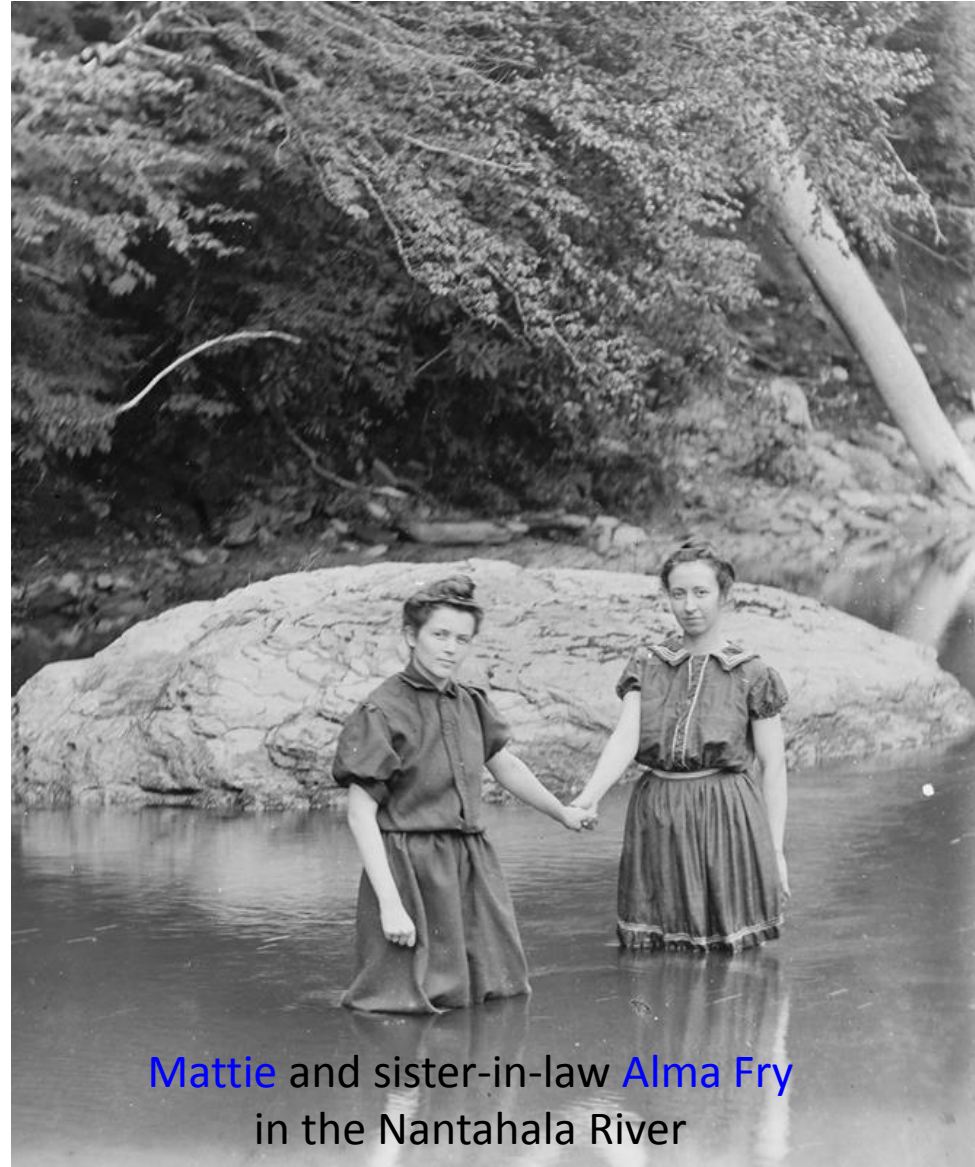
A.J. Franklin/Sallie Keener family



The Andrew J. "Jack" Franklin and Sallie Keener Franklin family, 1933. Standing, from Left: Dr. Grover Wilkes, Edith Bryson Franklin, Sallie K. Franklin, "Jack" Franklin, Nell Franklin Johnson, D.H. Johnson, holding Alva, Daisy Franklin Wilkes, Jean Franklin. Seated from Left: Helen Franklin, Lillian Franklin Thomasson, Dr. Berlin C. Thomasson holding Doris, Amy Franklin, Jack Franklin Jr. holding A.J. Franklin III, and Gloria Johnson.

Photo source: Swain County Heritage

Mattie Pender Fry (1879-1958)



Mattie and sister-in-law Alma Fry
in the Nantahala River

Both photos courtesy of Mrs. Jean Douthit

Bob (1920-1957) and Jean Heffner (1919-2016)



Sources: 1953 Ridgerunner, 1959-60 Elementary school album

Lytle N. Hickerson (1884-1944)

Mr. L. N. Hickerson, county superintendent of schools of Stokes county, resigned said position to take effect the first of November. Mr. Hickerson is a Wilkes county man, and for several years practiced law at North Wilkesboro.

North Wilkesboro Hustler, Oct 10, 1923

Mr. L. N. Hickerson, who is well known in Statesville, has been elected mayor of North Wilkesboro.

Statesville Record & Landmark, May 10, 1898



Passport photo

Prof. L. N. Hickerson spoke for ten minutes on "The Origin of Thanksgiving," its meaning and why it should be observed. He told of the Thanksgiving of 1919, when he was in France, just after the signing of the armistice, and how the citizens and soldiers observed the day.

Reidsville Review, Nov 27, 1922

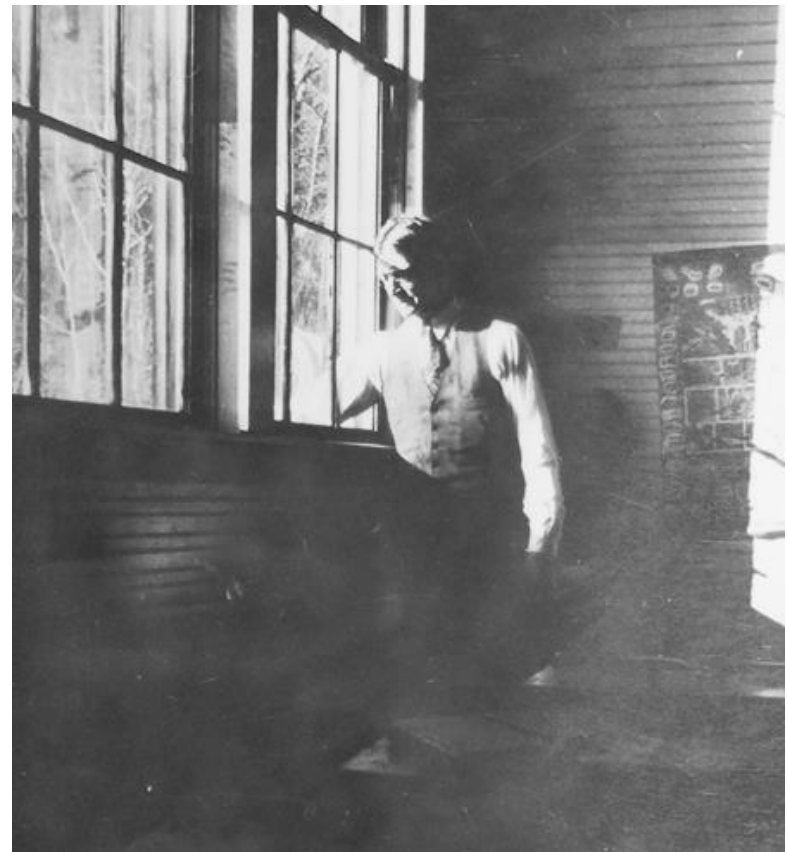
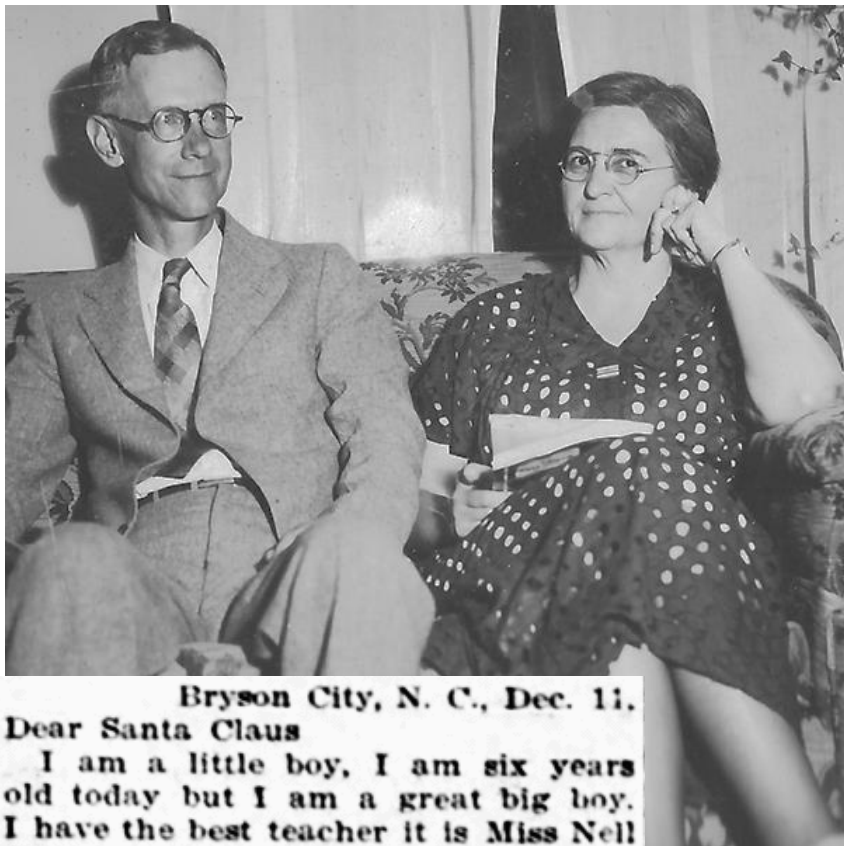


Photo courtesy of Helen Cable Vance

Thurman (1888-1972) and Nell Shank Leatherwood (1883-1965), Marie Shank (1886-1961)



Bryson City, N. C., Dec. 11.

Dear Santa Claus

I am a little boy, I am six years old today but I am a great big boy. I have the best teacher it is Miss Nell Shank. We all love her so much. Father and Mother say I am learning fast. I want you to bring me some toys that I cant break so quick there aint so much children down here like there was at Whittier to help me break them up. Please bring me a bicycle. Dady says I'm too little but I'm not.

Your little friend.

SAM ROANE.

<=Letter to Santa in 12 Dec 1909 Asheville Citizen. Sam turned 6 the day he wrote the letter to Santa. He was the nephew of Sheriff [Robert J. Roane](#) and his wife [Mary Siler Roane](#), and lived with them. They are both are buried in the BC Cemetery. R.J. Roane later became a NC State Senator. Both the Leatherwoods and Nell's sister Marie Shank created college scholarship endowments.

Photos source: Carl Grueninger, Jr

Lafayette Leander Marr (1865-1932)

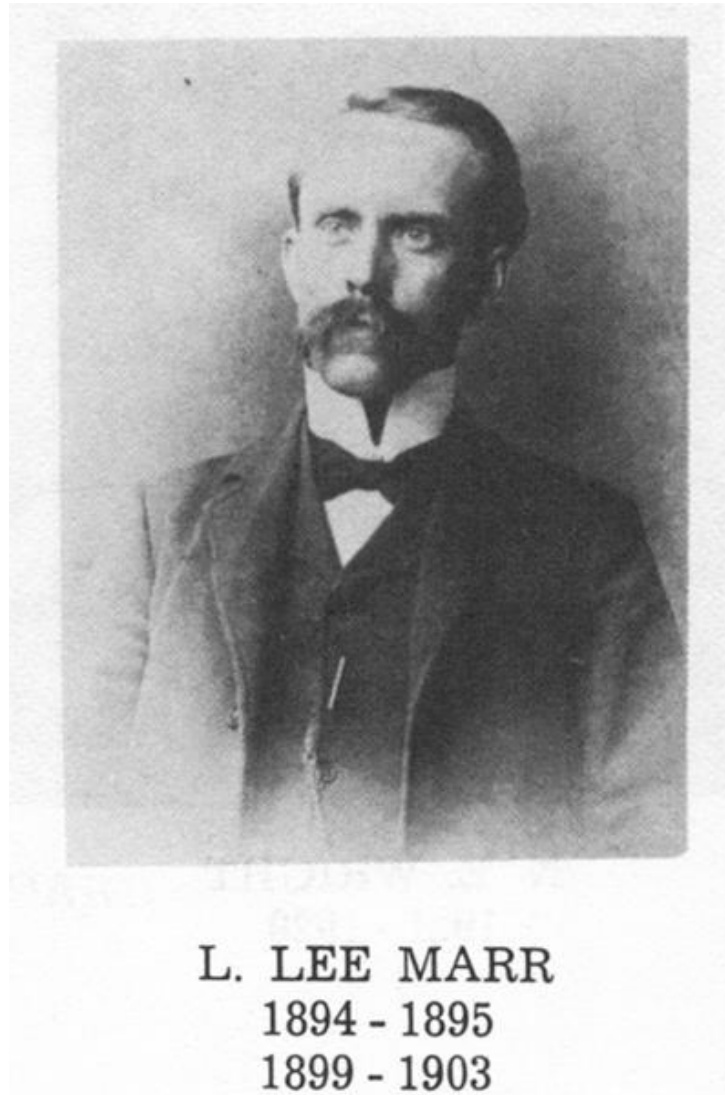


Photo from *Swain County Early History and Educational Development*

Weaver McTyeire Marr (1888-1965)



WEAVER McTYEIRE MARR

BRYSON CITY, N. C.

Bryson City High School and Trinity Park School; H. L. S., Marshal (2); Treasurer (3); Freshman and Sophomore Honors; Junior scholarship; Sophomore Debate; Associate Editor *Chronicle* (3); Assistant in Biology (3, 4); Assistant in English (4); Class Basketball Team (3, 4); Science Club, Secretary-Treasurer (3); President (4); Secretary Fortnightly (4); President Mountain Boomers' Club (4); Historical Society; Deutscher Verein.

A.B. Trinity, 1910, Magna Cum Laude; Honors in Biology; Principal Waynesville High School, 1910-11.

Candidate A.M. Degree, Trinity, 1911-12; President Science Club, Secretary Botanical Club; Assistant in Biology; Assistant in English; Student Life Committee; Alumni Editor *Chronicle*; "9019."

Member National Geographical Society; Contributor to North Carolina Journal of Education.

Source: 1912 Duke University annual

Essie Norton Myers, Jim Myers, Carol Myers Saunooke

- According to grandson John Myers, **Essie** taught both at Eagle Creek and at Cary, NC.
- Per Beth Sossamon Eckstein and Charlie Saunooke, Carol taught in Woodstock, GA and at Whittier

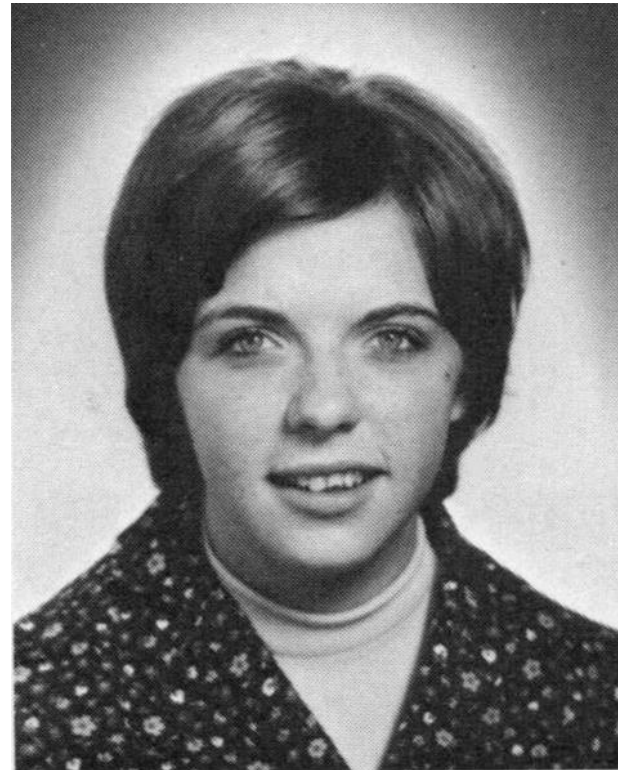
Jim Myers

1953 Ridgerunner



Carol Myers

1967 Ridgerunner

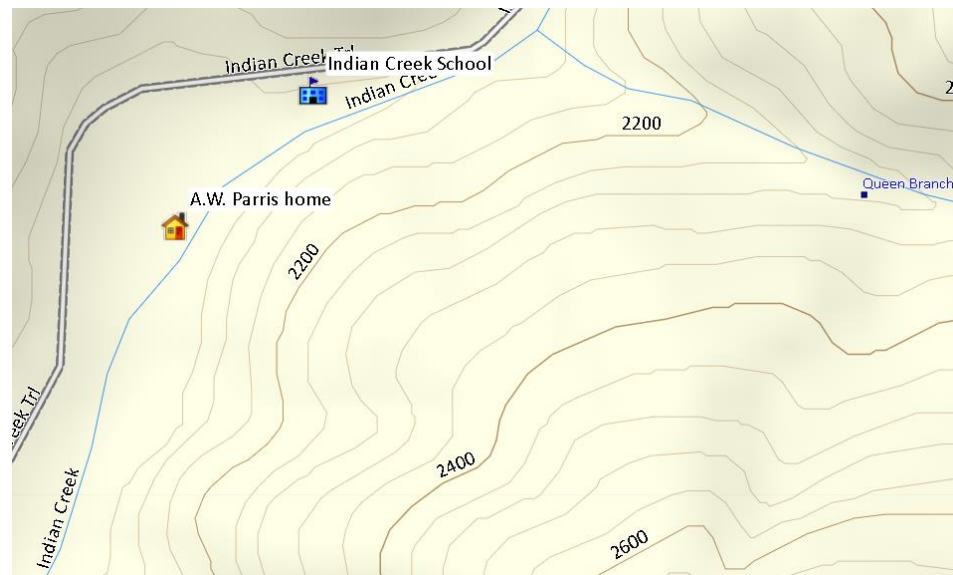


Clover Meadows Queen (back, center) and sisters, ~ 1905



Source: Jess Meadows, ancestry.com

Clover Meadows taught at Indian Creek, per “Where They Teach....”



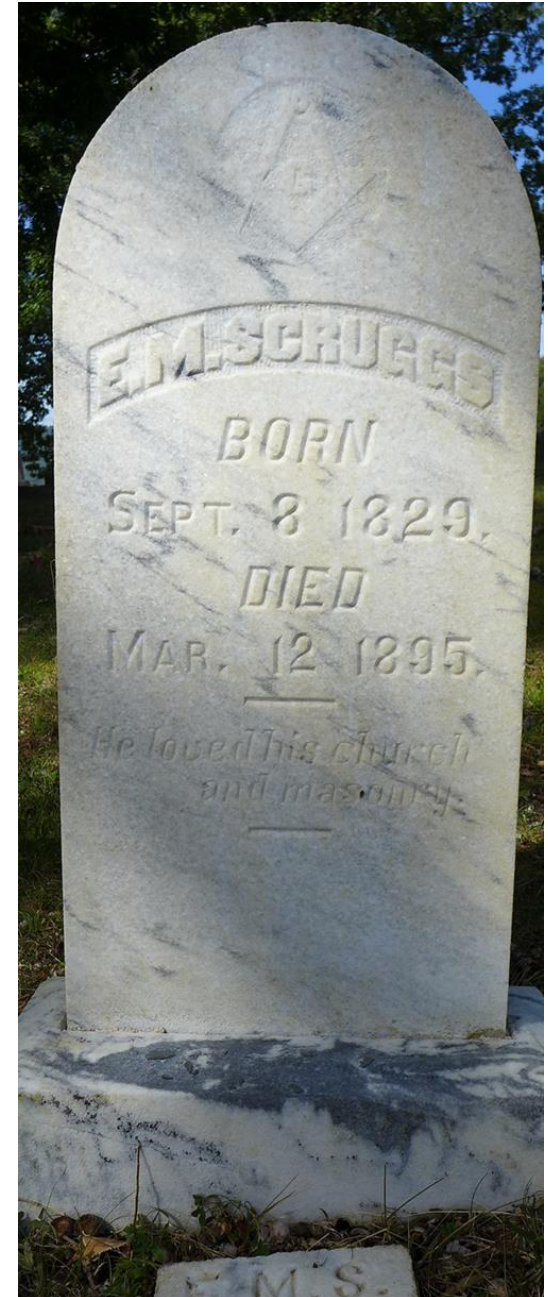
Source: personal mapping with GPS unit

Lillie Almond Quiett, whose lovely home still stands alongside the Tuckasegee River, taught at Kirklands Creek Elementary, according to her grandson and FBCC member, Jack Casebolt



E.M. Scruggs (1829-1895)

- Along with [T.D. Bryson](#), first elder in BC Presbyterian Church
- Civil War vet
- Practiced medicine
- Worked at both Bryson City and Whittier depots



Newell “Cotton” Sherrill Seay (1911-2001)



Eugene Hyatt, Cotton Sherrill,
Commodore Casada, Glennie
Roberts, circa 1930

Photo source: Casada family collection

Jimmerson Kelly Stiles (1898-1941)
Taught at Emma in West Asheville area



Photo courtesy of Gloria Stiles

Both [Zenía Taylor](#) (1873-1962) and her sister [Clara](#) (1876-1900) taught at Bushnell, per SC Heritage



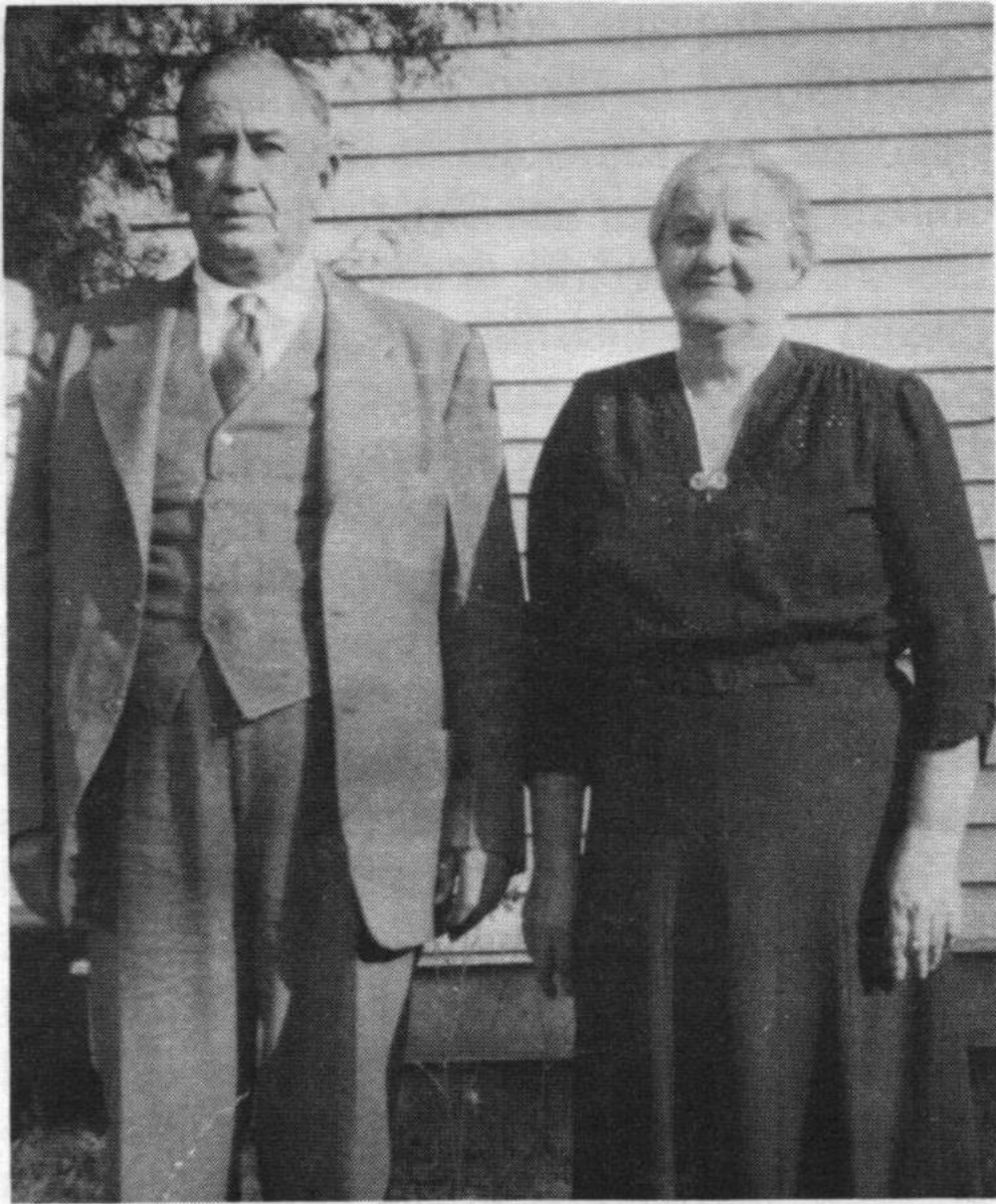
Zenia Taylor (SC Heritage)



Rollins Madison Thomasson & Josephine Welch Thomasson — “50th wedding anniversary.”

Rollins Thomasson (1873-1946) taught subscription schools from 1892-1902, per SC Heritage. He married former student **Josephine Welch**, daughter of **J.E.T. and Emeline Gunter Welch**

Source: Swain County Heritage



Joseph Henderson Wilson (1883-1948) taught at multiple schools, including Whittier, Almond and Proctor. He, like Rollins Thomasson, married a former student, **Sarah Catherine Welch**. Photo at their home on Schoolhouse Hill.

Rev. Joe Wilson and wife, Sarah Catherine Welch Wilson.

Source: Swain County Heritage

Ellen Black Winston (1903-1984)



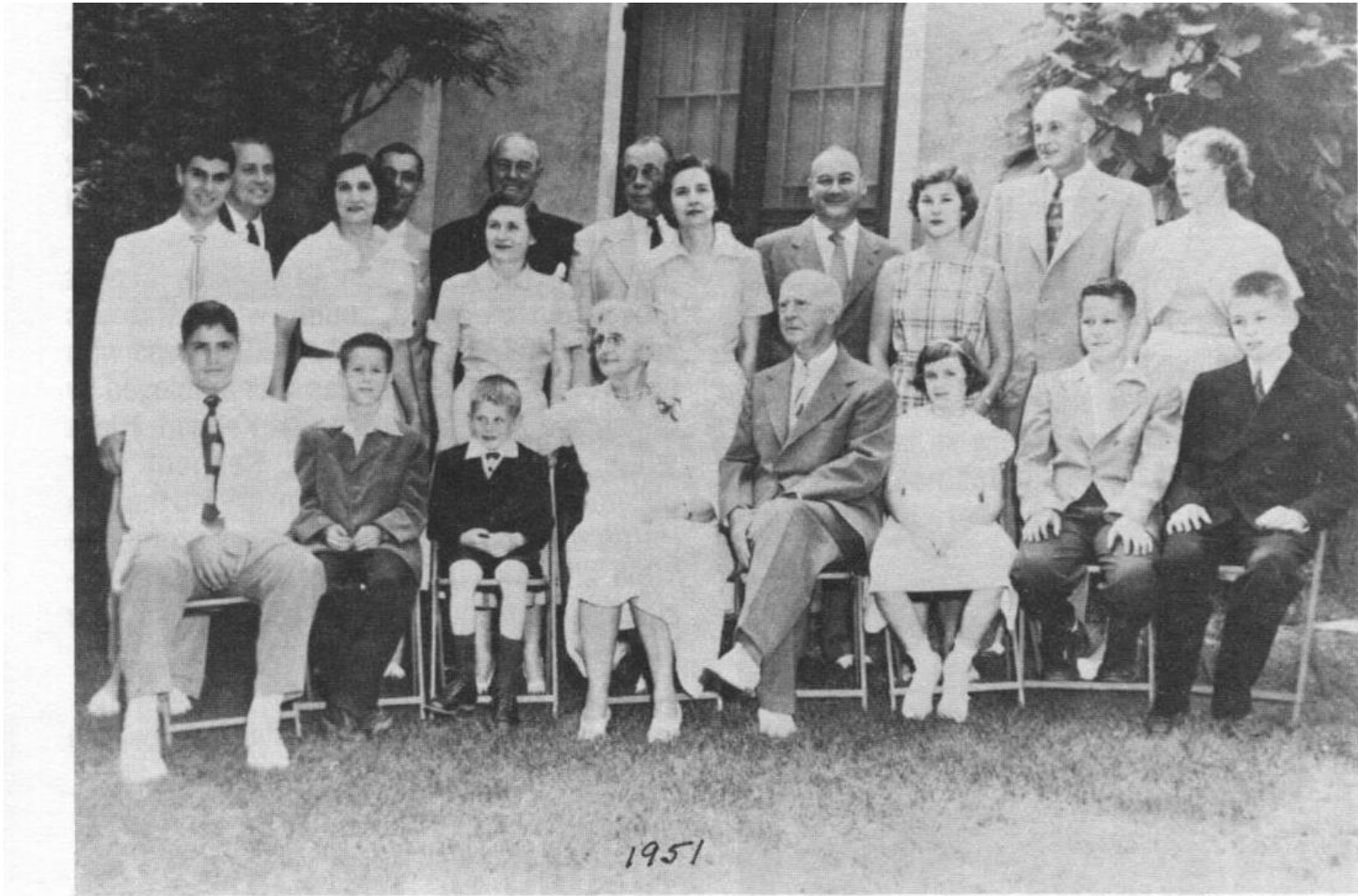
Ellen Black, Circa 1925



Ellen Black Winston, Circa 1955

Source: Black family collection

Stanley & Marianna Black family; Richard Winston
(1897-1969) is behind Mr. Black



Front Row: L. to R.: The Family. Peter Cox, Wilkes Black, Louis Black, Marianna Black, Stanley Black Sr., Blakeney Black, Stanley Black III., Fisher Black Jr. Second Row: Warren Cox, Louise Cox, Elizabeth Black, Ellen Winston, Julia M. Black, Julia Black. Back Row: Fischer Black, Oscar Cox, Chester Fischer, Louis Fischer, Richard Winston, Stanley Black Jr.

Source: Swain County Heritage