

THE DEVELOPMENT OF ELEMENTARY EDUCATION
IN IREDELL COUNTY FROM 1900 TO 1965

A Thesis
Presented to
the Faculty of the Department of Education
Appalachian State Teachers College

In Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements for the Degree
Master of Arts

by
Mary Rhyne Lackey

May 1965

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by

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ABSTRACT

THE DEVELOPMENT OF ELEMENTARY EDUCATION IN IREDELL COUNTY FROM 1900 TO 1965

Statement of the problem. It was the purpose of this study to gather and compile information concerning the development of elementary education in Iredell County from 1900 to 1965.

Methods employed in gathering data. Records in the Iredell County Schools offices are not available before the year 1935. For this reason, the writer has relied heavily upon the biennial reports of the Superintendent of Public Instruction in North Carolina before that year. The Principal's Report of 1935, the Statistical Reports, and the Minutes of the Iredell County Board of Education were the chief sources of information after the year 1935.

Conclusions. The writer concludes that the changes made in the Iredell County school program have been relatively notable. At times, progress was very slow, but there was always some underlying force at work, hoping to reach the next step on the ladder of progress. Perhaps this underlying force was the educators themselves, or the interested citizens who were not satisfied with conditions as they were. Regardless of who or what were the motivating

factors, changes were made.

It is concluded that progress could have been more rapid and more successful if the citizens had been made aware of a growing need for improved educational facilities. However, only a few citizens actually recognized these needs.

The requests for funds and school improvements were often refused, and the request for consolidation was considered to be practically impossible without the support of the citizens. However, the citizens were reached, and perhaps in the future progress will be made more rapidly.

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CHAPTER I

THE PROBLEM

For many years the elementary education system of Iredell County has functioned for the purpose of educating Iredell youth in the application and interpretation of knowledge. The processes employed for educating Iredell youth have centered around the local schools; therefore, schools have become the focal points of education. Schools have their weak points and their strong points. Iredell County schools are no exception. Throughout the past years various changes have occurred in the Iredell County school system. In many instances these changes proved satisfactory.

I. THE PROBLEM

Statement of the problem. It was the purpose of this study to gather and compile information concerning the development of elementary education in Iredell County from 1900 to 1965.

Importance of the study. Education of the child has frequently been stressed as the most important objective of education. In many school systems considerable stress is placed on providing an adequate elementary school course of study. Iredell County has attempted to provide an opportunity to educate all its youth. In this study an attempt was

made to examine the educational development in the elementary schools of Iredell County. It is hoped that through this study Iredell educators, particularly, will attempt to evaluate the Iredell education system in view of its progress. Progress has been relatively slow, but there has been progress.

Organization of the remainder of the thesis. The writer has included a brief description of Iredell County and a section containing important information about its elementary education system prior to 1900. Another chapter is devoted to the actual development of elementary education from 1900 to 1965, including a statistical account and important information about school conditions as they existed during these years. The final chapter is composed of the writer's summary and conclusions.

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

Much has been written in regard to the history of Iredell County and its early elementary education; but only a brief summary of the history of Iredell County and its elementary education will here be given.

I. LITERATURE ON IREDELL COUNTY HISTORY

Iredell County was formed in 1788 from Rowan County. It was named in honor of James Iredell of Edenton. Being located in the central section of the state, it is bounded on the north by Alexander County, on the east by Rowan and on the south by Mecklenburg. It is separated from Catawba and Lincoln on the west by the Catawba River. Statesville, the county seat, was established in 1789.¹

In the year 1750 Scotch-Irish and Germans from Maryland and Pennsylvania came to the Iredell region and called their settlement and their church Fourth Creek. This group of people composed the largest portion of the population.²

¹David Leroy Corbitt, The Formation of the North Carolina Counties (Raleigh: State Department of Archives and History, 1950), p. 127.

²Federal Works Agency Work Projects Administration, North Carolina--A Guide to the Old North State (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 1939), p. 404.

. . . beginning where Coddle Creek enters Mecklenburg, and running up the east fork of said creek to the road leading from Beaties' Ford to Salisbury from thence a straight course to Alexander M'Korkle's, Senior, from thence to the south fork of the Yadkin River at the mouth of a branch in Margaret Dobbin's Meadow and from thence due north to the Surry line; that all that part of the said county of Rowan lying westwardly of the said dividing line, shall thenceforth be erected into a new and distinct county by the name of Iredell.³

Iredell is a county of rolling uplands, being divided in a north-westerly and south-easterly direction by the course of the tributary streams, into broad flattish, elevated zones, the summits of which have generally a gray and yellow loam soil, with mixed oak and pine forests and occasional tracts of red-clay oak-covered soils. Along the streams, forests of oak, walnut, and hickory predominate. One of these high divides lies along and quite close to the course of the Catawba River, having an elevation of 900 feet in its southern portion, rising to 1,000 feet and upward at its northern limit. The average elevation of the county is but little below 1,000 feet above sea level.⁴

Iredell is divided by population into three sections --North Iredell, centered around Harmony and Union Grove; Central Iredell, located around Statesville; and South Iredell, centered around Mooresville. Other communities,

³Corbitt, loc. cit.

⁴State Board of Agriculture, North Carolina and its Resources (Winston Salem: M. I. and J. C. Stewart, 1896), p. 353.

in addition to these, are: Barium Springs, Troutman, East Monbo, Eufola, Elmwood, Buffalo, Mount Mourne and Shepherds.⁵

Northwestern Iredell edges into the foothills of the Brushy Mountains. Seven steep hills are in this area, the largest being McHargue's Mountain, which reaches an elevation of 1,550 feet.⁶

The first census in 1790 gave a total of 5,435 people in Iredell County, with 858 of that number listed as Negro slaves.⁷ Since the turn of the century Iredell has grown both in population and industry. The population at the turn of the century was 25,462. The population in 1950 was 56,303 with Statesville having about 16,905 people.⁸ In 1960 the population had grown to about 65,000 people.⁹ Iredell is highly industrialized today. Textiles and the manufacturing of furniture are the two outstanding industries in the County.¹⁰

⁵Ibid., p. 354.

⁶Bill Sharpe, A New Geography of North Carolina (Raleigh: Sharpe Publishing Company, 1958), p. 910.

⁷Ibid., p. 913.

⁸Bill Sharpe, editor, North Carolina, A Description by Counties (Raleigh: Warren Publishing Company, 1948)

⁹Iredell County Population Estimate, 1960.

¹⁰Sharpe, ed., loc. cit.

The County contains 363,920 acres of land. Iredell has the largest cultivated land area of all the Piedmont counties. In 1944, 43.4 per cent of the total farm land was under cultivation. However, the largest farm income is derived from livestock and dairy products.¹¹ The average rainfall of the County is 49½ inches and the average annual temperature is 60 degrees.¹²

Iredell is the leading dairy county in the State. Cotton, once of considerable importance, is giving way to other crops such as wheat, corn, and oats.¹³ The cotton crop is confined mainly to the southern half of the County. The northern section of the County produces tobacco as its chief market crop, but corn and the smaller grains occupy the larger portion of the tilled land. The grasses and clover grow well also, but it is essentially a grain and grass region.¹⁴ The County produces more wheat than any other county in the State and local flour mills are the largest in the State.¹⁵

¹¹Ibid.

¹²Mrs. J. C. B. Ehringhaus and Mrs. Carl Goerch, North Carolina Almanac and Industrial Guide (Raleigh: Almanac Publishing Company, 1951), p. 568.

¹³Sharpe, op. cit., p. 916.

¹⁴State Board of Agriculture, loc. cit.

¹⁵Federal Works Agency Work Projects Administration, loc. cit.

Iredell County has good railroad facilities, the Western North Carolina railroad passing through it, and the Atlantic, Tennessee and Ohio railroad connecting it with Charlotte on the south. Another branch line of twenty-five miles connects it with Taylorsville on the north.

With its varieties of soil and of products, its water power and convenience for manufacturing, the whole county is undergoing rapid development and improvement.¹⁶

II. LITERATURE ON ELEMENTARY EDUCATION IN IREDELL COUNTY BEFORE 1900

In colonial North Carolina there were no public schools. Elementary education was carried on largely by private tutors, most of whom were clergymen.¹⁷ However, in Iredell the people found means to provide a better than average education for the more ambitious children.

In February, 1827, Mr. King of Iredell introduced a bill for the encouragement of Sunday Schools as follows: "Whenever a Sunday School is established the object of which is to instruct poor and indigent children in the art of reading and writing, the Treasury was to pay twenty-five cents for each child."¹⁸

It wasn't until after the establishment of the public

¹⁶Ibid.

¹⁷Hugh Talmage Lefler, North Carolina History Told by Contemporaries (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 1956), p. 156.

¹⁸S. A. Ashe, History of North Carolina (Greensboro: Charles L. Van Noppen, Publisher, 1908), p. 301.

school system in 1839 that Iredell began to publicly educate its children. This public school system continued to operate throughout the Civil War. Their concern for education laid the foundation for a system of academies and schools.¹⁹

The early Iredell County Schools included Statesville Academy, erected in 1815.

The Trustees of Statesville Academy inform the public that the Reverend John Mushatt has commenced teaching in that institution. The Latin, Greek, and Hebrew Languages, English Grammar, Geography, Euclid's Elements, Natural and Moral Philosophy, Rhetoric and Logic will be taught.

Other schools included Garden's Lancaster School built in 1822; Ebenezer Academy, 1823; and Chapman's Classical School in 1828.²⁰

For decades, the principal factor in the education of the western counties was Hall's Clio Nursery and Academy of Science in Iredell County. Eventually, this academy gave place to Davidson College.²¹

For the school year ending December 1, 1884, there were ninety-five white school districts and seventy-six colored school districts in Iredell County. There were seventy public white school houses and twenty colored

¹⁹Lefler, op. cit., p. 188.

²⁰Charles Lee Coon, North Carolina Schools and Academies.

²¹Ashe, op. cit., p. 164.

public school houses. A total of 6,175 white children and 1,978 Negro children were enrolled in the public schools. The school term lasted approximately thirteen weeks for the white schools and approximately twelve weeks for the negro schools. The white teacher received an average salary of \$21.50 per month, whereas, the Negro teacher received an average salary of \$16.05 per month.²²

Private schools in Statesville in 1890 were the Statesville College for girls, the Home School, Miss Julia MacCall's School, Mrs. A. V. Bennett's School, Mrs. Andrew's School, and the Statesville Academy.²³

The public schools are now more efficient than they have been any time since the war, and are improving constantly. Separate schools are maintained for the white and colored children, and the educational fund is divided equally per capita among the children of the two races of the school age, which is from six to twenty-one years. Each county has its own Superintendent of Public Instruction, who holds examinations of teachers, and no one can teach in a public school without having his certificate. The Superintendent also has general supervision of the schools for the County. For Iredell, A. D. Kestler, Esq. is Superintendent and there are in the county one hundred and thirty public schools, one hundred for the white race and thirty for the colored.²⁴

²²North Carolina Department of Public Instruction, Biennial Report of the Superintendent of Public Instruction of North Carolina for the Years 1883-'84 (Raleigh: Ashe and Gatling, State Printers and Binders), p. 210.

²³Western North Carolina, Historical and Biographical (Charlotte: A. D. Smith and Company, 1890), p. 199.

²⁴Ibid.

James A. Butler served as Iredell Superintendent in 1899-1900. At the end of the school year on June 30, 1899, there were 4,229 white children and 1,616 colored children enrolled in Iredell County schools. There were ninety-three white and thirty-eight colored school districts. For white children the average length of the school term was fourteen and one-half weeks. Thirteen weeks was the average length of the school term for Negroes. There were ninety-four white school houses for white children--twenty-five of which were log, sixty-eight frame and one brick. Thirty-five colored school houses were used--seventeen log and eighteen frame.²⁵

Iredell is one of the few counties to have three independent school systems--Iredell County, Statesville City, and Mooresville City Schools.²⁶

²⁵North Carolina Department of Public Instruction, Biennial Report of the Superintendent of Public Instruction of North Carolina for the Scholastic Years 1898-'99 and 1899-1900. (Raleigh: Presses of Edwards and Broughton, 1900), p. 338.

²⁶Sharpe, op. cit., p. 194.

CHAPTER III

ELEMENTARY EDUCATION IN IREDELL COUNTY

FROM 1900 TO 1965

Elementary education before 1900 had undergone a few notable developments, illustrated by an increased enrollment of both negro and white students, an increased number of school days, an increase in teachers' salaries, and the construction of additional schools. In 1900 the school situation was much the same as before, but there existed an idea of educating the mind for the twentieth century. The nineteenth century was past history and the twentieth century was to present a glorious future. However, in order to progress toward this glorious future, an effort was needed for promoting these ideas. As a result, schoolhouses were built in almost every community in Iredell County.

James A. Butler continued to serve as Superintendent of County Schools in 1900. At this time, there were a total of ninety-six white and thirty-six negro school districts in Iredell County. There were ninety-six white and thirty-seven negro schools taught. The enrollment for the whole county was 5,334 white and 1,798 negro children. The average length of the school year was seventeen weeks for the white children and fifteen weeks for the negroes. The

city schools had increased their school term to thirty-six weeks. The average salary of teachers was \$26.74 per month for a white male, \$27.30 for a white female, \$19.00 for a negro male, and \$20.71 for a negro female.¹

Schools were numerous, but the idea of having more schools did not improve the quality of education received by Iredell youths. Due to the large number of schools being taught, many problems began to exist. The lack of trained teachers brought about a lack of efficient teaching. As a result, teachers were forced to teach several grades in one room. In many instances, one teacher taught all the classes in the school. The students seldom knew what grade they were in or what grades they were making on their subjects. Some students attended school for a number of years without knowing whether or not they had completed their grammar grade requirements.

The curriculum was centered around the teaching of the three R's--reading, writing, and arithmetic. Spelling and history were taught as an integral part of the three R's. Textbooks were scarce and funds were not readily available for their purchase. Library books were considered a luxury for the county children. Most of the

¹Department of Public Instruction, Biennial Report of the Superintendent of Public Instruction of North Carolina For 1900-1901 and 1901-1902, (Raleigh: Edwards & Broughton, 1902), pp. 280-281.

books read were the Bible or books from family libraries.

The length of the school term in 1900 also produced an inefficient school system. The period of time was too short for students to learn effectively. Many students were unable to attend school each day because of weather conditions, a need for them to work at home, or parents' lack of encouraging the children to attend school. Many children had long distances to walk to school. Roads and modes of transportation were scarce; therefore, some students were unable to walk the several miles to school each day.

The school term was arranged to be taught during months which would avoid harvesting, cotton picking, and spring planting; therefore, the winter and early spring months were considered to be best for school.

Supplies and equipment in the schools were scarce because of a lack of money. In most schools students had to share their desks and books. The chalkboard was used for a large portion of the teaching. Schools were poorly lighted and heated. There was seldom a need for lights, but kerosene lamps were available. A large stove in the center of the school was used to heat the building. School was often dismissed when the weather became too cold for the schoolhouse to be heated. There were no drinking or bathroom facilities in the schools. Most of the drinking

water was obtained from nearby springs. There were no lunchrooms but a lunch break was given, during which time the children ate the food they brought from home.²

In 1904, a consolidation of several community schools brought about a decrease in the number of schools taught and in the number of school districts. There were now eighty-six white and thirty-three negro schools taught within eighty-seven white and thirty-four negro school districts.³

The County Board of Education for the school year 1903-1904 was represented by J. H. Hill, Chairman, M. W. White, J. W. Albea, Jr., and J. A. Butler, Superintendent of County Schools.

There were fifteen townships in Iredell County, each being represented by a number of school districts. Davidson Township had eight separate school districts centered around Mt. Mourne, Mott's, Doolie, Neill's, Kennedy's, Long's, Mayhew, and Brawley's schools. Coddle Creek had five districts--Mooreville, Granite Hill, Oak Ridge, Linwood and Coddle Creek, and Hickory Hill schools. Shiloh Township had seven districts--Watts, Elgin, Rhyne, Abernethy,

²Information received from talks with Homer Kever, Iredell County Historian.

³Biennial Report of the Superintendent of Public Instruction of North Carolina For Years 1902-1903 and 1903-1904, (Raleigh: E. M. Uzzell and Co., 1904), p. 104.

Fulbright's, Thomas, and Bethlehem schools. Barringer Township was centered around Pine Valley, Shinn's, Arthur's, Simpson, and Moss Hill schools. Fallstown Township was centered around Leonard, Clark's, Ostwalt, Troutman, Bell's X Roads, and Brown's schools. Statesville Township included Ramsey's, Barkley, Duck Creek, Davidson, and Oak Grove schools.

Chambersburg Township included Elpikora, Carter's, Lingle's, Elmwood, Amity, and Plyler's schools. Cool Spring Township had four districts--Cool Spring, Fifth Creek, Chestnut Grove, and Beaver's schools. Bethany Township included Bethany, Moore's, Hampton, and Duffy schools. Concord Township included Trinity, McLelland's, Concord, Amity, and Harris schools. Sharpesburg included Snow Creek, Rocky Branch, Brotherton, Harmon, and Bryantsville schools. Olin Township was represented by Reid's, Allison's Athens, and Hopewell schools. Turnersburg Township included Mt. Bethel, Harmony, Tabor, River Hill, and Gum Grove schools. Eagle Mills Township included Rock Springs, Joyner's, Steelman's, Eagle, Holly Springs, and Cross Roads schools. Union Grove Township included Henderson's, Union Grove, Zion, Liberty, Colvert, and Trinity schools. New Hope Township included Morgan, Taylor Springs, Barker's, Jolly, and Prospect schools.

Each school had at least one teacher employed and

several schools had one or more assistants. Salaries for teachers ranged from \$25.00 to \$35.00 per month. An assistant received \$20.00. The number of students enrolled in each school ranged from a small group of thirty-one pupils to a large group of 211 pupils.⁴

For the school year 1908-1909, the total rural school enrollment for Iredell County had increased to 8,547 students. There were ninety white schools and thirty-two negro schools being taught. Thirty-nine negro and 148 white teachers were employed. An increased enrollment had brought about a need for more teachers and the construction of more schools.⁵

Social life centered around the schools became an important part of the community activities. Various social functions occurred in connection with the opening of new schools, and many schools began to have homecomings for students and teachers who had once been enrolled in the school, or had taught there. One particular instance is accounted for as follows:

Next Saturday Mr. J. Sylvester Leonard has called together at this place [Troutman] all his students,

⁴Brady, J. A., Brady's Almanac and Iredell County Year Book for 1903, (Statesville: Brady Printers and Publishers, 1904)

⁵Biennial Report of the Superintendent of Public Instruction of North Carolina For Years 1908-1909 and 1909-1910 (Raleigh: E. M. Uzzell and Co., 1911), p. 57.

young and old, to renew old acquaintances and to sing the songs of Auld Lang Syne. . . . Thirty or more years ago there was a dancing platform here in the grove where the Methodist Church now stands. It was used also for the muckiest kind of all politicians as a stamping ground for mud-slinging. Politics then was not on the high plane it is now. Liquor was selling all around and reeking with filth. This man, J. Sylvester, bought this dancing platform and put walls around it and a roof over it. Then he converted the building into a school building and began teaching school.⁶

By 1920 the total enrollment of Iredell students had increased to 10,285, and by the school year 1921-22, the enrollment was 11,221. There were 289 white and fifty-six negro teachers employed. The number of schools being taught decreased because of the consolidation of several community schools.⁷

Ten years later, 1930-1931, the average daily membership for both negroes and whites in the schools was 9,495 pupils per day. The number of white teachers decreased by seventy-six; whereas, the number of negro teachers increased by six. Teachers' salaries were not adequate, causing many to seek other employment or transfer to other states.⁸

⁶Statesville Landmark, September 5, 1911.

⁷Biennial Report of the Superintendent of Public Instruction of North Carolina For Years 1920-21, 1921-22, (Raleigh: State Superintendent of Public Instruction, 1922), p.59.

⁸Biennial Report of the Superintendent of Public Instruction of North Carolina For Years 1930-31 and 1931-32, (Raleigh: State Superintendent of Public Instruction, 1932), pp. 8-9.

Records in the Iredell County Schools offices are not available before the year 1935. Minutes of the Iredell County Board of Education were not kept until the year 1938. Statistical reports are not available until the year 1936. The consolidation of smaller school units into larger school units caused many school records to be lost or destroyed. For this reason, the writer has relied heavily upon the biennial reports of the Superintendent of Public Instruction in North Carolina before the year 1935.

A principal's final report was filed at the end of the school year 1935-36. At that time, the length of the school term was 160 days. There were twenty-three school reports given in the county, but these reports were not complete. The total number of elementary students enrolled in each school ranged from a low of twenty-seven pupils to a high of 548 pupils. For a complete report of each school see Appendix A.⁹

By the school year 1936-37, there were thirty-one white and twenty-two negro schools in the county. The total elementary school enrollment was 4,134 white and 1,484 negro pupils. Twenty men teachers and 115 women teachers were employed by the county. J. A. Steele served as the

⁹Principal's Reports for the School Year 1935-36.

Superintendent of Iredell County Schools.¹⁰

The length of the school term increased to 163 days for the 1938-39 school year. The average daily membership in the elementary schools was 5,259 pupils.¹¹ At this time there was a great need for improved secondary education in Iredell County. There were numerous requests for high schools which would serve the elementary schools in the county. Several areas had conveniently located high schools; however, certain communities did not have reasonable access to a high school. Their children were forced to travel long distances to attend school each day.

On August 1, 1938, the County Board of Education passed a motion, on a request by A. Y. Neal of Brawley, that a senior high school be established at Brawley.¹² On August 16th of that same year, an Application Resolution came before the Board of Education concerning the construction of negro schools within the county. The content of the Resolution was as follows:

a resolution authorizing the Board of Education of Iredell County to file an application to the United States of America through the Federal Emergency Administration of Public Works for a grant in aid in financing

¹⁰Statistical Report of Iredell County, 1936-37.

¹¹Biennial Report of the Superintendent of Public Instruction of North Carolina, 1938-39, 1939-40, (Raleigh: State Superintendent of Public Instruction, 1940).

¹²Minutes of the Iredell County Board of Education, 1938-39, p. 5.

the construction of a negro high school in Statesville and an elementary school in Mooresville including the necessary equipment for the school, auditorium, gymnasium and manual training, and designating S. H. Houston to furnish such information as the Government may request.¹³

The motion was approved by the Board of Education and action was taken immediately.

At this same meeting of the Board of Education, another motion was passed concerning the construction of a new Coddle Creek School, a new Oak Ridge School, and a new Linwood School in Coddle Creek Township.¹⁴

On April 5, 1939, T. Ward Guy was unanimously elected County Superintendent of Schools for the ensuing two years. On a motion by J. A. Craven and seconded by C. H. Knox, a number of committeemen for the Iredell County Schools for the next two years were declared elected.¹⁵ See Appendix B.

Twenty-eight white and eighteen negro schoolhouses were owned by the county in 1940-41. The total elementary enrollment was 4,809 white and 1,440 negro children. There were 107 women and eighteen men teachers.¹⁶

On January 27, 1940, a meeting was called by the Iredell County School Board for the purpose of discussing the negro school problem in Iredell County, particularly

¹³Ibid., p. 7. ¹⁴Ibid. ¹⁵Ibid., p. 17.

¹⁶Statistical Report of Iredell County, 1940-41.

relative to the selection of a suitable site for the erection of a new negro high school building. A resolution was passed which would make provisions for the negro high school pupils of Iredell County to have another rural school.

On January 20, 1941, a resolution was presented before the Board of Education requesting the Board of Commissioners for Iredell County to issue school building bonds. As a result, the following was resolved by the Board of Education:

Section 1. That it is necessary in order to maintain the constitutional six months school term to provide the following school improvements in Iredell County: Erecting a new negro school building in Statesville and acquiring a site therefor; Erecting a new negro school building in Mooresville and acquiring a site therefor; Erecting a new negro school building outside the city limits of Statesville.

Section 2. That no funds are available for said school improvements and no provision has been made by local tax or otherwise by which said improvements may be provided, and it is necessary that the Board of Commissioners for the County of Iredell, acting as an administrative agent of the State in providing a State System of public schools, authorize and issue bonds of Iredell County, under the County Finance Act, in order that said improvements may be provided.

Section 3. That the Board of Commissioners for the County of Iredell is hereby requested to order the issuance of a sufficient amount of County bonds to provide the school improvements set forth in Section 1 of this resolution.

In regular session of the Board of Education of Iredell County on September 3, 1941, all members agreed to recommend to the Board of Commissioners of Iredell County a special called election for the purpose of voting school bonds for the school units of Iredell County, the City of Statesville, and the City of Mooresville. The proposed total of the bond issue was \$270,000, this amount being allocated as follows: City of Statesville, \$129,000; City of Mooresville, \$71,000; Iredell County, \$70,000.¹⁸

On March 2, 1942, the bids asked for the construction of the proposed county school buildings and additions were rejected on a motion by S. H. Houston. These bids were rejected because the amounts bid were in excess of the amount appropriated by the county-wide bond issue.¹⁹

However, schools continued to operate without the new additions, and by the school year, 1945-46, a statistical report for the county showed that there were 5,031 white elementary students and 1,414 negro elementary students. A total of twenty-two white and eighteen negro schools were owned by the county. T. Ward Guy continued to serve as County Superintendent of Schools.²⁰

¹⁸Minutes of the Iredell County Board of Education,

¹⁹Ibid., p. 92.

²⁰Statistical Report of Iredell County, 1945-46.

On October 7, 1946, the principals of Iredell County Schools presented to the Board of Education a petition signed by the various school committees asking that a special election be called in the county for the purpose of voting on a levy of fifteen cents on the hundred dollars taxable property for schools. This motion was approved and recommended to the County Board of Commissioners.²¹

At the meeting of the Board of Education on August 1, 1947, T. Ward Guy, County Superintendent, gave the following report from the State Board of Education:

The State Board of Education in session July 31, 1947, approved the request from the Iredell County Board of Education for the consolidation of the Sharon School with the Celeste Henkel School and that these two school districts be combined.²²

The Sharon School had burned, causing their students to attend Scotts and Celeste Henkel Schools.

The biennial report of the State Superintendent of Public Instruction in North Carolina for the years 1948-50 showed that the average daily membership in all grades in Iredell County was 3,823 white boys, 3,570 white girls, 961 negro boys and 943 negro girls.²³ A statistical report

²¹Minutes of the Iredell County Board of Education, 1946-47, October 7, 1946.

²²Minutes of the Iredell County Board of Education, 1947-48, August 1, 1947.

²³Biennial Report of the Superintendent of Public Instruction in North Carolina For Years 1948-50 (Raleigh: State Superintendent of Public Instruction, 1950), p. 10.

for the school year 1950-51 revealed that there were 4,823 white elementary students and 1,254 negro elementary students. There were twenty-eight schools owned by the county with fourteen of them being negro schools. A total of 144 white and thirty-six negro elementary school teachers were employed.²⁴

S. H. Helton was sworn in as Superintendent of County Schools on July 2, 1951. On August 22, 1951, a letter was presented to the Board of Education which had been prepared by the Iredell County Schools and Statesville City Schools concerning school district attendance. The letter was to be sent to Mr. J. E. Hunter, director of the Division of Teacher Allotment and General Control, State of North Carolina Department of Public Instruction. It contained the following information:

School children shall attend school within the district in which they reside unless assigned elsewhere by the State Board of Education. Enrollment and attendance will be counted only in the administrative unit in which the student resides.

If a student(s) is admitted to a school in the Statesville Administrative Unit from the Iredell County Administrative Unit, his enrollment and attendance will be reported to the Iredell County Administrative Unit when he enters and at the close of each school month during the period of his attendance in the Statesville City Administrative Unit and residing in the Iredell County Administrative Unit.

²⁴Statistical Report of Iredell County, 1950-51.

²⁵Minutes of the Iredell County Board of Education,
1951-52.

The same was true for admitting a student from the Statesville City Administrative Unit into the Iredell County Administrative Unit. At this same meeting, the names of the Iredell County Schools and their principals were disclosed. For a list of the Iredell County Schools and their principals in 1951, see Appendix C.

An interest in the consolidation of schools in Iredell County led to a called meeting of the Board of Education on August 19, 1952. The purpose of the meeting was to discuss an erroneous report that consolidation was being considered by the Board of Education. As a result, the Board of Education announced that it did not have any definite proposals to make concerning consolidation. It was confirmed that during the past two years a large survey was made in the schools and informal suggestions from this survey showed a need of consolidation in the high schools. However, this did not indicate that action would be taken immediately; therefore, the idea was to be tentatively dismissed.²⁶

On July 2, 1953, the Board of Education met to discuss a proposed budget for the school year 1953-54. An amount of \$145,167 was voted for Iredell County. A motion was passed which requested State school bond funds to

²⁶Minutes of the Iredell County Board of Education, 1952-54.

complete four elementary classrooms at Harmony School. By April, 1954, the Board approved the additional purchase of land for schools in the county. The Board also voted to present to the North Carolina State Board of Education petitions from the school patrons of the old Sharon School district for an elementary school. The district was requested to be established and built at the old Sharon School site to serve the elementary school children of that area, as a part of a program of re-organization for the Celeste Henkel district and the Scotts-Monticello district.²⁷

The Board of Education approved additional plans for school improvements on October 15, 1954. These plans included the building of two additional primary classrooms to Amity School, one classroom for Ebenezer, two primary classrooms for Houstonville, and two primary classrooms for Mt. Mourne.²⁸

A school survey concerning the Sharon School project showed that Celeste Henkel, from the school year, 1943-44, to the school year, 1954-55, had almost a continuous increase in the elementary school enrollment. For the same period of time, Scotts Elementary School enrollment had varied but not increased, and Monticello Elementary School

²⁷Minutes of the Iredell County Board of Education, 1954-55, p. 37.

²⁸Ibid., p. 53.

enrollment was on the increase. The survey committee concluded that it would be possible to build an elementary school on the old Sharon School site, thus relieving the crowded conditions at Celeste Henkel and Scotts.²⁹

A statistical report for the school year 1955-56 showed an enrollment of 5,432 elementary white children and 1,243 elementary negro children. There were twenty-seven white and nine negro schools. A total of 162 white and thirty-four negro teachers were employed by the county.³⁰

Members of the Board of Education for the 1955-57 school years were Mr. F. T. Loftin, Chairman, Mr. W. B. Harris, Mr. H. F. Crowson, Mr. Maury Gaston, and Mr. Flake Millsaps.

On August 19, 1955, it was resolved by the Board of Education that for the 1955-56 school term the assignment and enrollment of school children residing in this administrative unit should be governed by the following rules and regulations:

That each child residing in this Administrative Unit shall be assigned to and enrolled in the school to which he would have been assigned and in which regulation of administrative policy in respect to the assignment and enrollment of pupils followed by this Board and the State Board of Education during the 1954-55 school term.³¹

²⁹Ibid., p. 58.

³⁰Statistical Report of Iredell County, 1955-56.

³¹Minutes of the Iredell County Board of Education, July 5, 1955-April 1, 1957, p. 13.

A meeting of the school board in July, 1956 revealed that during the past five years all Iredell County Schools had participated in a county-wide program of elementary school accreditation. During the school year 1955-56, the following schools operated as fully accredited schools: Brawley, Celeste Henkel, Central, Union Grove, Chestnut Grove, Cool Spring, Ebenezer, Harmony, Houstonville, Mt. Mourne, Monticello, Scotts, Shepherds, Troutman, Unity, Wayside, and Harmony. This represented both the negro and white schools which were operating as accredited schools. All of the elementary schools in Iredell County were accredited by 1955-56. However, Mrs. Blanche Reitzel, Elementary Supervisor of Iredell County Schools, suggested that there be a re-evaluation of the total school program. This was to include a thorough examination of the school operation, the curriculum, and the materials used for instruction.³²

A report given by the Iredell County Board of Education on May 28, 1958, showed that the Iredell County schools had been averaging a gain of about ten classrooms of children each year. Some of the schools had gained 100 per cent over a ten-year period, indicating that there was a definite need for expansion in the county schools.

³²Ibid.

The budget for the coming year was geared for spending more money on educational materials for the schools. It allowed \$4,036 to be spent for elementary school supplies.³³

A new hope arose for the consolidation of the Iredell County high schools. On February 26, 1959, a joint meeting of the Sharon School Committee and the Celeste Henkel School Committee was held at Sharon School. It was agreed that there should be a consolidated high school built in the western part of Iredell County to serve the high school students of the area. However, action was again delayed by the county school board.³⁴

A statistical report for the school year 1960-61 showed an enrollment of 5,523 white elementary students and 1,273 negro elementary students. There were now fourteen school districts with fifteen white and five negro schools. Frank L. Austin was elected as County Superintendent of Schools. For a report on enrollment in each school, see Appendix D.³⁵ By the school year 1963-64, there were sixteen white schools and eight negro elementary schools operating in the county. Prior to this school year,

³³Minutes of the Iredell County Board of Education, April 23, 1957-June 12, 1958, p. 67.

³⁴Minutes of the Iredell County Board of Education, June 25, 1958-June 15, 1959.

³⁵Statistical Report of Iredell County, 1960-61.

T. Ray Gibbs was elected as Superintendent of County Schools.³⁶

A meeting was held by the Iredell County Board of Education on January 6, 1964, for the purpose of discussing statistics on elementary and high school enrollments for the five-year period ending in 1963. Iredell County had approximately 55 per cent of the total school population in the county. Elementary school increases were growing smaller and high school increases were growing larger. However, it was proposed that a leveling off would come within the next five years.³⁷

On February 1, 1965, the Board of Education passed a motion requiring all teachers who hold a certificate lower than "A" to present a total of six semester hours of credit within twelve months before their contracts will be renewed. This was designed for improving the teacher quality in the county.³⁸

The emphasis upon teacher preparation and the need for expanded school facilities brought about a greatly renewed interest in the consolidation of the high schools in

³⁶Statistical Report of Iredell County, 1963-64.

³⁷Minutes of the Iredell County Board of Education, January 7, 1963-April 6, 1964.

³⁸Minutes of the Iredell County Board of Education, April 13, 1964-February 1, 1965.

Iredell County. At a meeting of the county school board on March 1, 1965, a report was given on the plans being made for the erection of two new senior high schools in Iredell County. Bids were also asked for an addition to Mt. Mourne Elementary School. Superintendent T. Ray Gibbs told the board that the architects would have plans for the identical high schools ready to ask for bids about March 26, 1965.

As a climax to many years of controversy, two consolidated schools will be constructed simultaneously and will be located on a tract off Jennings Road at Charles to serve the northern part of the county and the other will be located on property joining the Barium Springs Home farm on the Old Mountain Road in order to serve the southern part of the county.³⁹

Each school will include forty classrooms, offices, gymnasium, library, home economics, business education, physical science and industrial arts facilities in addition to an auditorium, cafeteria, and agricultural shop. The schools are expected to be ready for occupancy in the fall of 1966.⁴⁰

As a result of these new high schools, elementary schools will be able to expand extensively and crowded conditions can be relieved.

³⁹Statesville Record and Landmark, March 2, 1965, p.1.

⁴⁰Ibid.

CHAPTER IV

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

I. SUMMARY

Elementary education in Iredell County has undergone considerable advancement since the turn of the century. The one-room school house and the one-teacher schools became outdated, but plans had to be devised to replace these old ideas. This was not an easy task because communities lacked money which was needed for such school improvements, and many minds were not willing to accept change. However, there were those people who recognized the importance of educating the children. These people began to instigate plans which would help to provide newer and better means of educating the youth in Iredell County.

Agrarian living compelled the students to work on the farms, thus making conditions impossible for them to attend school for many months; therefore, the school term was short. However, it was realized that very little learning could take place in such a short period of time. As a result, the school term gradually began to lengthen, and as years passed by, a nine-month, 180-day school term became a requirement for all schools.

There were a large number of elementary schools in Iredell County at the beginning of the Twentieth Century.

Gradually, the educators and the citizens began to realize that combining several of these smaller schools brought about a more efficient learning situation. Thus, the emphasis began to shift to the building of larger schools which would increase the enrollment in each school, as well as increase the number of skilled teachers.

The curriculum shifted from the original three R's to a more liberal system. At present, the emphasis is placed upon acquiring knowledge in as many areas of learning as possible. Science, mathematics, reading, spelling, art, languages, geography, history, music, creative writing, and physical education are part of the many areas taught to the elementary school child today. As time progresses, these subjects tend to broaden in scope and break down into more subjects.

There was considerable interest in improving the quality of education received by Iredell youths. The process of accreditation and the agitation for the consolidation of schools are only two of such demands for improvements made by Iredell County citizens. The main purpose of accreditation was to promote the best possible conditions in the schools to the end that maximum desirable results for all boys and girls might be achieved. It was hoped that during the ensuing years, considerable stress would be placed upon adequate use of materials and equipment, better

planned daily and weekly schedules, more attention given to long range planning and variety in the physical education program, more creative art work in all grades, more correlation of subjects in large blocks of time, more work with individuals and small groups of pupils, and more adequate use of the library to provide reading materials on many different levels of difficulty in all grades. Libraries in Iredell County continue to improve in book collections, library facilities, and in student use of the library materials.

Consolidation is finally being achieved and will be in effect by the beginning of the school year 1966. Much time and effort has been given to bringing about this change in the Iredell County school system. This new phase of the educational system in Iredell County is just another step toward continued progress in the Iredell County elementary school program.

II. CONCLUSIONS

The writer concludes that changes made in the Iredell County school program have been relatively notable. At times, progress was very slow, but there was always some underlying force at work, hoping to reach the next step on the ladder of progress. Perhaps this underlying force was the educators themselves, or the interested citizens who were not satisfied with conditions as they were. Regardless

of who or what is the motivating factor, changes were made.

It is concluded that progress could have been more rapid and more successful if the citizens had been made aware of a growing need for improved educational facilities. However, only a few citizens actually recognized these needs.

The requests for funds and school improvements were often refused, and the request for consolidation was considered to be practically impossible without the support of the citizens. However, the citizens were reached, and perhaps in the future progress will be made more rapidly.



LEBANON AGRICULTURAL BOARD
COTTON CENTRAL

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FRASER VALLEY COLLEGE

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APPENDIX A

PRINCIPAL'S REPORT FOR 1935-36

<u>School</u>	<u>Principal</u>	<u>Number of Pupils</u>
Sharon School	J. P. Stevenson	247
Harmony School	R. H. Laukford	505
Celeste Henkel School	R. B. Madison	265
Mt. Mourne School	Wm. A. Hethcox	163
Springdale School	J. D. Young	117
Barium Springs School	R. G. Calhoun	186
Scotts School	E. B. Bass	205
Monticello School	J. C. Stikeleather	283
Wayside School	J. T. White	187
Troutman School	R. S. Shore	548
Clark School	Pearl Davidson	61
Joyner School	T. Crater	67
Ebenezer School	S. M. Johnson	128
Cool Spring School	B. M. Madison	273
Oakdale School	F. B. Madison	117
Central School	W. C. Grose	317
Union Grove School	A. H. Wolfe	450
Westglow School	R. C. Weisner	133
Olin School	Lester Hollar	116
Shepherd School	H. E. Barkley	190
Oak Ridge School	C. W. Kipka	61
Amity School	Ada Neal	27
Fairfield School	Mattie Tolbert	31

APPENDIX B

SCHOOL COMMITTEEMEN FOR YEARS 1939-40, 1940-41

District No. 1

E. M. Ervin
 Glenn Feimster
 L. B. Hass
 John Norris
 John Lentz

District No. 2

W. R. King
 Elam Myers
 Charles King
 G. T. McClelland
 J. A. McLain

District No. 3

H. P. VanHoy
 Claude Howard
 W. W. Woodward
 T. T. Walker
 G. B. Campbell

District No. 4

Dr. F. B. Gaither
 O. A. Dearman
 W. C. Pierce
 W. E. Taylor
 W. A. Evans

District No. 5

T. E. Swann
 R. H. Page
 E. D. Fox
 R. A. Brawley
 N. A. Beaver

District No. 6

L. A. Brown
 V. L. Wagner
 J. L. McLain
 R. H. Brown
 Bennie Brown

District No. 7

L. L. Sherrill
 Glen Shinn
 A. F. Craven

District No. 8

Graham Johnston
 J. M. Fesperman
 J. S. Alexander

District No. 9

Shuford Duckworth
 J. G. Arthurs
 W. C. Thompson

District No. 10

A. Y. Neal
 Sid White
 C. V. Alexander

District No. 11

G. W. Nash
 H. A. Rimmer
 Roy Little
 Jesse Arey
 Claude Ostwalt

District No. 12

J. C. McNeely
 D. H. Webber
 G. C. Reid
 J. E. Alexander
 J. S. Miller

APPENDIX C

WHITE SCHOOLS AND THEIR PRINCIPALS FOR 1951

<u>School</u>	<u>Principal</u>
Scotts School	R. L. Bradford, Jr.
Monticello School	Henry C. Freeze
Central School	Raymond Modlin, Jr.
Ebenezer School	Mrs. Irma Angell Holcumb
Cool Spring School	R. B. Madison
Wayside School	Mrs. Lillian White Stokes
Troutman School	Carl A. Litaker
Barium Springs School	Robert Glenn Calhoun
Shepherds School	Charles Nelson Clark
Mt. Mourne School	William Lee Kennedy
Brawley School	Wm. Thomas Poston
Celeste Henkel School	Fred T. Hollis

NEGRO SCHOOLS AND THEIR PRINCIPALS FOR 1951

<u>School</u>	<u>Principal</u>
Scotts Rosenwald School	Charles Wm. Rankin
Piney Grove School	Eva Estella Young
Houstonville School	H. H. Blackburn
Unity School	Leroy Campbell
Chestnut Grove School	Mason C. Miller
Rock Crest School	Laura Barbara Jones Taylor
Amity School	Harry T. Henry
Rocky Knoll School	Beulah Spann Cannon
Coddle Creek School	Genevieve Reeves Hall
Morrows Chapel School	Euver Lee Mangum
New Center School	Fleecy Mae Griffin

APPENDIX D

WHITE ELEMENTARY ENROLLMENT FOR 1960-61

<u>White Schools</u>	<u>Boys</u>	<u>Girls</u>	<u>Total</u>
Scotts School	246	259	505
Central School	285	281	566
Union Grove School	434	400	834
Harmony School	501	517	1018
Cool Spring School	344	325	669
Troutman School	700	613	1313
Barium Springs School	21	15	36
Shepherd School	105	118	223
Wayside School	154	152	306
Mt. Mourne School	184	151	335
Brawley School	87	76	163
Celeste Henkel School	282	281	563
Sharon School	117	103	220
Ebenezer School	153	112	265
Monticello School	<u>300</u>	<u>300</u>	<u>600</u>
<u>Total White</u>	3913	3703	7616

NEGRO ELEMENTARY ENROLLMENT FOR 1960-61

<u>Negro Schools</u>	<u>Boys</u>	<u>Girls</u>	<u>Total</u>
Scotts Rosenwald School	160	131	291
Houstonville School	174	151	325
Unity School	342	385	727
Chestnut Grove School	90	97	187
Amity School	<u>304</u>	<u>302</u>	<u>606</u>
<u>Total Negro</u>	1070	1066	2136