

Chapter IV

EARLY EDUCATIONAL DEVELOPMENT IN GRENADA AND VICINITY

As the American frontier gradually moved westward, the settlers who made up the western movement took with them a realization of the need for education. The development of schools in a newly settled area was, of necessity, a slow process. Homes had to be built, land cleared, and crops planted and harvested. In a new land these practical affairs of frontier life has priority over educational and cultural needs and desires. Children old enough to go to school were needed at home to aid their parents in the laborious process of carving out new homes, communities and towns. Available teachers were few in number, and prospective pupils for proposed schools were widely scattered. As a result of these conditions many of the children of frontier areas received little or no education. That area of the Third Choctaw Cession, which was to become Grenada and Grenada County, had to go thru the same slow process of educational development which other frontier areas experienced. In 1833 when settlers began to buy land in the vicinity of Grenada, there was little state wide provision for public schools. Indeed, there was little real provision for public schools until after the close of the Civil War. During the early years of the establishment of the towns of Pittsburg and Tullahoma; their consolidation into the town of Grenada; and the subsequent development of Grenada into a major trading center for the region which included several adjacent counties, there developed three kinds of schools. Public, or state supported schools, were called "poor schools." They were so called because only the poorer people were willing to enroll their children in these schools. They deserved the name "poor schools" because of the quality of instruction provided in the short three to four months school terms. In many places parents who lived at too great distance from this first class of schools to make attendance by their children practical, or because they wanted a better type of schools, organized what were called Subscription Schools. A number of parents would band together to employ a teacher and provide a place for the school which would run for as long a term as the parents felt advisable. Frequently a minister would be the teacher of such a school. These schools had no permanent existence nor location, their continued existence and location depending on the whims and needs of the parents, and the availability of a teacher.

To meet the needs of more affluent parents, in more thickly populated areas, there developed a tuition type school usually designated as a "private school." It was in schools of this kind that most of the better educated people of our section began their education in the years before Mississippi began to develop a worthwhile education system. Two of these private schools had been established as early as 1838. At that date William Duncan was conducting a Girl's High School and G. W. Mitchell had established a Boy's High School. It is probable that these two schools existed for a very short time since in 1839 the Mississippi Legislature incorporated by legislature action The Grenada Male and Female Academies. The first principal of the Grenada Female Academy was the same William Duncan who had started the Girl's High School while the principal of the Grenada Male Academy was B. J. Mendon. He explained the purpose of his school in the following words: "A thorough systematic course of instruction shall be given to every member of the school, both in the English and in the classical department. Scholars can be fitted to enter any college or pursue any of the branches usually taught at College." There seems to have been some objection to advanced education for girls. This objection is evidenced by a letter published in the February 25th edition of the local newspaper, The Grenadian. The following excerpt is taken from that letter. "A wise parent will not send his daughter to a modern boarding school to learn frivolous accomplishments, and make romantic friendships, and have her head filled with the fashions and beaus before any principles for the guidance of her conduct of life or any distinct ideas of what constitutes rational happiness have been

conveyed to her. Certain it is that the love of home and the habits of domestic confidence must pervade female education or merely being married will never make a woman fond of domestic pleasures or capable of discharging domestic duties. It is strange that men of sense, learning, and knowledge of the world can believe that a weak-minded, sentimental, frivolous young lady whose whole heart is devoted to dress, amusements and husband hunting, will make a kind, judicious and submissive wife. Such apparently gentle girls are as wives the most unreasonable beings in existence. Men will not believe until they find by conjugal experience that a pretty, soft-spoken sentimental young creature whose deepest learning is a few french phrases, and a few tunes on the piano, can exhibit passions as violent as Queen Elizabeth, or as obstinate as Madam De Steal." Evidently the opinion of the letter writer was not shared by many parents of the area since we find the following statement from the principal of the girl school: "Gratified with the success of the labors of the past, the Principal would beg leave to assure the parents and guardians of the young ladies of this town and surrounding country, that no exertions shall be wanting to place this Institution on a footing with the best of the South." Both of these academies must have been built and maintained by the efforts of a considerable number of the leading citizens of the town and country. The Board of Trustees of the Female school had Col. G. K. Morton as President, and the following named trustees: Major J. Y. Bayliss, E. P. Stratton, Col. N. Howard, John Smith, and William Lake. All of these men, except Bayliss, have been identified in previous chapters of this series. As an indication of the reputation of the Female Academy an advertisement by the school published in the Weekly Register on December 10, 1842, read as follows: "References may be made to the following gentlemen as patrons of the school: Dr. Snider, Dr. Gillespie, Major Whitaker, Col. Morton, Capt. Smith, Col. Howard, Maj. Bullock, A. C. Baine, Col. Abbot, Dr. Wright, and Messrs. Sims, Choate, Berry, Coffman, Stevens, Neal, I. Melton, J. Melton, M. Melton, Haden, Gill, Taylor and Hunley. Most of these names, found in other chapters of this series have been identified as men of influence in the area.

The First Trustees of Grenada Male Academy have not been identified, but we do learn that in 1841 the following men served as trustees of the school: Thomas B. Ives, Michael Melton, J. T. Talbert, John M. Chaote, A. C. Baine, Jacob Snyder, and T. P. Davidson. We are unable to determine just how long these schools operated but we do know that they were still in operation in 1849. On that date Daniel R. Russell, acting as a Commissioner of the Chancery Court to carry out a decree of that Court in a suit instituted by the President and Trustees of Grenada Male and Female Academy against George K. Martin, ordered the sale of thirteen hundred and sixty acres of land belonging to Martin. Evidently the defendant in the suit was indebted to the school. At the public sale of this land to satisfy the judgement of the court in favor of the schools, the President and Trustees of the two schools bought in the land. We have no information as to how Martin became indebted to the schools. The transaction indicates that one man was President of both schools at the time the suit was instituted. It is possible that the same men may have been serving as trustees for both schools. In 1852 and 1853 most of this land was sold by the schools to Sam W. Land and A. S. Brown. In the year 1853 it seems that each school had a "President" of its own, since we find that "W. H. Whiteside, President of Grenada Male Academy and A. Howard President of Grenada Female Academy," conveyed part of Lot number 190 and all of lot number 191, located in the East Ward of Grenada, to Joseph Collins for a consideration of two thousand one hundred and seventy five dollars. These lots comprise the area on which the North Mississippi Retirement Home is now located. The presumption is, although we have no definite proof to that effect, that the Male and Female Academies were located on these lots. This transaction is the last record we have of any activity of the two schools. It is possible that the schools were not located on these lots, but certainly there is no available evidence to indicate that they continued in existence after the last named transaction.

Although we have found no indication that the Male Academy was suffering from competition with other schools, it is very probable that the Female Academy was having serious competition from two church schools which had been established in Grenada. These were not the first church schools to be established in Grenada. Early in the existence of Grenada the people of the Presbyterian church, under the direction of their minister, established a school in a building located on College street. This building had once been the Union Hotel operated by John Smith. Mr. Holly was the minister who acted as principal of the school. The Baptist people opened a Baptist Institute under a minister by the name of Webb. The location of the building in which this school was taught is unknown. In all probability these schools were elementary in nature and could not have been serious competition for the Male and Female Academies. In 1850 the Methodist people of Grenada erected a new church, and the old building was used as a school. It was enlarged to cover almost a block and must have been of flimsy construction--a newspaper report in the late 1880's describes it as "that old rookery Bascomb's Academy." The school was a project of the Methodist people and was named Bascomb's Academy in honor of a Methodist Bishop of that name. S. W. Moore was the first President of the school which printed probably the first school paper ever published in Grenada when it published the Bascomb Gem.

The Baptist people, not to be outdone, organized the Yalobousha Female Institute. The first record we have of the establishment of such a school is a deed by which James Sims and his wife Harriett Sims deeded to Lewis Aldridge, President of the Board of Trustees of Yalobousha Female College, lot number 140 in the west ward of Grenada and also several lots in the block just south of lot 140. This south lot had been the site of the old Union Hotel, and the Presbyterian school. These two lots remained in the possession of the school until 1857 when Aldridge, still President of the Institute, conveyed them to R. D. Crowder for a consideration of two thousand dollars. It seems that the Baptist used the old Union Hotel building to house their infant school while they were constructing a fine building in another location. Their brief occupancy of the building probably resulted in the change of the name by which the street, originally called Pittsburg street, came now to be called College street. Late in the same year when the location in the West Ward had been purchased, a four-story building, costing about fifty thousand dollars, had been erected in the East Ward of Grenada, in the area just south of the North Mississippi Retirement Home. Many of the people still living in this vicinity will recall that building as one of the dormitories of the now defunct Grenada College.

Since both Bascomb's Academy and Yalobousha Female Institute (or College), as it was called by both names, claimed to doing work on both high school and college level, they could have become serious competitors of the Grenada Female Academy. So far as the Male Academy is concerned, the only local competition which it could have had and that was probably not too serious, was a school established by the Masonic Order and called the Masonic Academy. It was later known as Brick Academy, leading to the presumption that it was constructed of brick. In 1856 Green Crowder sold to the Masonic Order all of lot number 25 and the north half of lot number 26. The Masonic Academy was located on these lots. There was some confusion, either in lot numbers or description, but the lots conveyed to the Masons was that area where the Lizzie Horn Elementary Building is now located. In 1879 the Masonic Order sold this property, including the building, to the members of the Episcopal Church, and for a brief time some of the Rectors of that church supervised a school there.

The new Yalobousha Female Institute had been constructed on lot number 1, of the Snider Survey. For some reason the school did not fulfill the expectations of those who had invested in the beautiful new buildings. At some undetermined date the name of the College was changed to Emma Mercer Institute, in honor of Mrs. Mercer who gave an endowment to the college. Since the new

name was used in 1868 and since both the Bascomb's Academy and the Yalobousha Female Institute had been closed during the Civil War years, it is possible that Mrs. Mercer advanced enough money to get the college in operation and was honored by having the name changed. The new name and the endowments were not sufficient to make the college a going proposition. Shortly after the re-opening of the school under its new name it ceased operation, and the indications are that the property was bought up by a group of Grenada citizens who were desirous of having the school continue operation. Evidently the name was changed to Grenada Female College. This is indicated by a transaction described in the following words: "Deed by Grenada Female College to David D. Moore of lot one in Snider Survey the Grenada Female College having succeeded to all the rights of the individual stockholders and subscribers in the purchase of the said lot." The stockholders and subscribers mentioned may possibly have been promoters of the Baptist College, but more likely were Grenada citizens endeavoring to keep the school going. The so-called deed was, in reality, a lease for a three year term of the defunct college property. Although the initials of Mr. Moore were not the same as those given for the Moore who had headed Bascomb's Seminary, it is very probable that the Moore who leased the college property was the same Moore who had been head of the Bascomb's Seminary. The lease was made out in 1875 and Moore attempted to run a private school. Evidently the project was not a success, since we can find no record of a renewal of the lease arrangement.

It seems that George Ragsdale had become President of the college some time after the lease had been made to Moore. We find that, in a suit instituted against "G. S. Ragsdale, President of Grenada Female College." John Stokes was given a judgement against the college to satisfy a loan of eight thousand dollars which he had made to the college. The property was sold at public auction sometime in 1883. Mr. and Mrs. H. C. Timberlake bid in the property for sum of seventeen hundred dollars. In July of 1883 the Timberlakes deeded the property to R. P. Lake, G. W. Jones, George Lake, and W. S. Lake. The consideration involved was sixty five hundred dollars, a very small price for the college property but represented a good profit to the Timberlakes. On the same day on which the men named above acquired the property, they deeded it to the Trustees of Grenada District High School of the North Mississippi Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church. The four men who issued the deed to the church organization became trustees of the District High School along with two other trustees, one from Yalobousha County and one from Lafayette County. The deed given to the Church Conference stipulated that the Conference was to pay four thousand dollars for the property in annual instalments, said notes to bear eight per cent interest. Thus this Methodist school, which was to play such a large part in the educational development of Grenada and North Mississippi, began its existence as it ended it--burdened with debt.

J. T. Newell, Methodist minister stationed at Grenada, became head of the District High School, which began operation soon after the Church Conference had obtained the property. In 1884 the Trustees of the Grenada District High School transferred the property to the Trustees of Grenada Collegiate Institute. Mr. Newell continued as head of the school which now began offering some college courses in addition to the high school courses first offered. The school had three divisions: The Primary Department--small boys and girls; the Female Department--young ladies; and the Male Department--boys and young men. Tuition rates were set up in the following manner: Primary two dollars per month; Academic three dollars per month; Collegiate four dollars per month; Music five dollars per month and Board fifteen dollars per month. The college had dormitory space for sixty students. A large per-centage of the student body was made up of day students who lived, or boarded, in Grenada or vicinity. After a few years the name of the school was changed again to Grenada College. For many years it continued to serve the area as a Senior College, but fin-

acial difficulties which had beset the institution from its beginning continued to harass the college officials, so that, in later years they attempted to reduce expenses by changing to a junior college. This move was not successful, and in the year 1936 the Church Conference liquidated the property and transferred any assets remaining to Millsaps College. The establishment of Delta State at Cleveland, and state supported junior colleges at strategic points in the area from whence the Methodist institution had drawn its students, contributed to the decline of the school.

Bascomb's Female Academy which has been mentioned here-to-fore, at one time had a faculty comprised of the following teachers: Rev. A. J. Edgerton, Principal; C. M. Lawton, Clara George, Olivia P. Sudl y and Sarah W. Hutchings. We have mentioned the existence of the Masonic Academy. We know little about this school except that its first Principal was W. E. Beck, and that the school had a very brief existence as a school operated by the Masonic order. During the period in which the above named school operated, the people unable to pay the tuition charges of the different private and denominational schools were sending their children to a rather poor system of town and county elementary schools. These schools ran very brief terms of three to four months per year. Before the Civil War period the state contributed very little to public education, and any public schools which operated were financed very largely by counties and towns. During the post-war period the state began to make a larger contribution to public education, but for several decades this increased support was very inadequate, and private schools continued to flourish from the patronage of well-to-do people, while the children of less-well-to-do parents continued to obtain very inadequate educational training. In order to bridge the gap between people wealthy enough to send their children to the better private schools, and those less affluent parents who were willing to make a sacrifice to obtain better educational training for their children than that offered by the public schools; educated ladies living in the town, set up schools, usually in their homes, where for very small tuition charges they taught primary, and sometimes, higher elementary grades. Two of these teachers were Mrs. P. J. Dudley and Mrs. M. M. Ransom. At various times these two ladies are found on the faculty lists of the public school. Another of the ladies teaching one of these schools in her home was Mrs. Franklin E. Plummer, wife of the man who was instrumental in the establishment of the town of Pittsburg. Mrs. Plummer was conducting a school in her home when a tornado struck Grenada in 1846, and she and several of her pupils were killed.

In 1884 John J. Gage Jr., who at times taught in the public schools, announced the establishment of Grenada Normal School, he was to act as Principal and was to be assisted by Mrs. P. S. Dudley, Miss Mary Guage and Miss Kate College. The school was to be domiciled in the Parish School Building. Since the Episcopal Church had bought the Masonic Academy building in 1879, we assume that the Parish School Building in which the Normal School was to begin, was the Masonic Academy Building. Gage advertised that the completion of the courses offered by his school would entitle the student to a first grade teaching certificate. The new school seems not to have prospered, since a little later Gage transferred his school to Slate Springs in Calhoun County. In 1883, Gage had served as Principal of the Grenada Free (Public) School. In the same year when John Gage Jr. was serving as Principal of the Grenada Free School, Dr. John J. Gage Sr. was acting as part-time Grenada County Superintendent of Education. His was a part time job, for which he received a very small salary. At that time, and for a number of years thereafter, the position was appointive rather than elective. Dr. Gage reported that the total amount of school money received from all sources for schools in the county was six thousand and ninety six dollars. County white teachers were paid twelve hundred thirty dollars and eighty three cents to instruct six hundred and thirty seven white children, while negro teachers were paid five thousand two hundred fifty seven dollars and twenty cents to instruct twenty one hundred and twenty negro children.

Dr. Gage received two hundred dollars as his salary for the year. He reported that sixty county schools had run for four months, while the Grenada City Schools ran for seven months.

In 1885 George E. Critz came from Starkville to Grenada to set up a school for boys, to be domiciled in the Brick Academy (the old Masonic Academy Building). After one year as director of this private school for boys Mr. Critz became Principal of the Grenada Public School. As assistants he had Mrs. M. C. Ayres, Mrs. M. H. Ransom and Miss Mattie Ballard. At the time, the Board of Trustees of the City school was composed of the following men: S. S. Fairfield, R. T. Latting Jr., Alex. Davis, Robert Brown and G. G. Leonard. Mr. Fairfield was a native of New Hampshire who moved to the Natchez District of Mississippi. While there he taught school for a time at Woodville, Mississippi. He came to Grenada in 1854. When the threat of secession from the Federal Government arose, he announced that he was a union man. Regardless of his opposition to secession, when the war broke out he became a member of a local militia unit, composed of boys and men either too young or too old for active service in the Regular Confederate Military Establishment. During the war years he and his wife conducted some type of school in Grenada. R. T. Latting, Jr. was an outstanding business man of the town, serving as manager of a cottonseed oil mill, and being interested in other projects, such as an ice factory and a local telephone company. G. W. Leonard was a colored merchant who operated a grocery store on Green Street. We have no information relative to the other two Board Members. It is significant of the disturbed conditions of the time, that there should have served as Members of the Board of Trustees a white republican and a colored one, in a town and county which had long been a stronghold of the Democratic Party.

For some reason Mr. Critz either resigned, or failed of re-election, and was replaced by a Mr. Christian who had been an employee of the Railroad Express Company before resigning that position to become Principal of the Grenada School. A prominent Grenada County citizen, now deceased, who had an opportunity to know Mr. Christian, describes him in this manner: "He was an awesome and fearful being; long and awkward in his walk, making me think of the seven-league boots. He wore a long-tailed coat and broad hat; his mustache was almost as long as a walrus' tusks, and he carried a big silver watch with a heavy chain, which he twisted with his fingers as he spoke. He often applied the rod." At the time when the above described gentleman became Principal of the school it was housed in the old building which had been called the Masonic Academy. Evidently the city had already purchased the property since just a short time later the city erected a new building on the lot. Mr. W. E. Boushe, whose description of Mr. Christian I have quoted, has this description of the school and school building: "There were one hundred pupils; desks were crude and homemade, three pupils sitting to the desk. The shotgun building, first made for a Masonic Lodge, consisted of four rooms, three downstairs and one upstairs. Two strange arrangements were the facts that the youngest children were taught in the upper room and had to go upstairs that were almost as steep as a ladder; all children, in going to their rooms, had to pass through a room in which the coal was stored, which kept all rooms dirty. A large part of Grenada children, even small boys and girls, went to the College; some went to Private Schools; some did not go at all. An unsightly ditch ran diagonally across the school-yard, in which several Negro cabins stood. A high fence was across the back yard of the building; here the girls played. A single plank was the sidewalk to the street in front of the school, and a square surface-well furnished water. Once that gave out and we were forced to cross line street to Judge Wilkins' home for water."

Under the direction of the members of the Board of Trustees, or with their permission, Mr. Christian set up rules and regulations regarding school attendance, and pupil conduct. One of the regulations provided that absence of a

certain number of days from school, without reasonable cause for such absence, would be grounds for suspension of a pupil from school. Exercise of that regulation started off the Principal on a brief and stormy tenure. When some boys were suspended from school because of such absence, the suspension created considerable ill will against Mr. Christian, as well as a division of opinion on the part of the patrons of the public school; some of them commending, and others condemning the Principal. Those who supported Mr. Christian felt that the School Board did not back him up when people began to raise a fuss over the suspension of the boys. From the issue of the Grenada Sentinel printed on July 16, 1887, we quote the following statement relative to the school session just finished—the session in which Mr. Christian suspended the boys: "The Free (White) School opened with an attendance of sixty. Mr. G. W. Christian Principal, assisted by Mrs. M. C. Ayrea and Mrs. M. M. Ransom." At this time Grenada was a town with a population of about three thousand. Although a considerable number of the inhabitants of Grenada then, as now, were colored, it is indicative of the lack of interest in public education, that there were only sixty white children in average daily attendance for the school year of 1886-1887.

Some of the people who patronized the public school felt that the School Trustees were not too much sold on the importance of the public school. In a letter to the Editor of the Grenada Sentinel, one indignant patron brought out the charge that one member of the Board had no child in school; another was sending his children to private schools and a third member was financially able to do so, while the poorer people of the town were compelled to put up with the sorry public school which the town provided. Evidently a number of Private Schools were still in existence in Grenada at the time. Most of them were either Primary or Elementary in their instructional fields. Some women were still running such schools in their homes. For instance there appeared in the local newspaper on August 17, 1887, an advertisement in which Mrs. Dudley notified the public of the opening date of her "Mixed School." The term "mixed" referred to sex, rather than to race. This was the same Mrs. Dudley who had previously been a member of the faculty of the public school. The inadequacy of the Public School System was commented on by J. W. Buchanan, Editor of the Grenada Sentinel, in this manner: Before the war this town held high rank as an educational point. Since, it has fallen, until it has almost reached the freezing point. Our forces are so divided that a school is to be found on almost every corner, without fame, almost without name or even local habitation. We would not be considered as in the least reflecting upon any of the worthy ladies who have the solitary and arduous, and perhaps profitless task of conducting them. We are now advocating the public and not private interests, and would say that here in Grenada, with unanimity and concentrated purpose we might build up a free school that would be much more than an honor, a positive blessing to Grenada." This editorial was written in 1882. A little later we find the same editor advocating the purchase, by the city, of the property of the defunct Grenada Female College, which property would be used by the public school. It will be recalled that, a little later, the Timberlakes bought this property, at public auction, for the small sum of seventeen hundred dollars. Unfortunately, the editorial had no immediate effect, and the city lost the opportunity to obtain, at a very small price, property which would have been adequate for a good public school. Within less than seven years, the city was to spend a great deal more than this price to construct a new school building less adequate than the College building would have been. Although the reputation of the Grenada Public School System was nothing to brag about, the establishment of the Methodist District High School did enhance the educational standing of the city. This School had some boarding facilities, and also attracted many day students from the town. People who lived in communities where school facilities were poor began to move to Grenada to give their children the opportunity to attend the Methodist District High School. In the January 20, 1884, issue of the Grenada Sentinel we find the following

news item: "Rev. S. M. Thames, Judge A. T. Roane, Dr. J. M. Williams, W. B. Saunders and others have moved to Grenada to take advantage of the District High School." Within five years of the appearance of this news item, the Judge became a member of the Board of Trustees of the Grenada City Schools.

Demand for better school facilities at last moved the Board of Aldermen to set up a special election by which the citizens of the town should have the opportunity to vote on a bond issue of fifteen thousand dollars which, if approved by a majority of the voters, would be used for the purpose of purchasing lots and building two school buildings; one for the White children and one for the Colored children. The resulting vote was one hundred and seventy five favoring the bond issue and only six votes against the proposal. This election held on July 7, 1888, reflects a definite change of attitude relative to public education from that time, just a few years before, when a similar bond proposal had been decisively defeated. Indicative of the prevailing thought of the time relative to the importance of education of white and colored children, contracts were let for the construction of a brick school building for the white children, and a wood building for the colored children. The old Masonic Academy building was in a bad state of repairs, and the Board did not want to spend money on repairs on the old building when a new building was under construction. Anticipating a rapid pace of construction which would have the new building ready for use by January 1, 1889, the School Board decided to defer the beginning of the white school until that date. As the fall season passed, and the construction of the new building did not progress as rapidly as had been anticipated, the Board reconsidered its decision, and repaired the old building to the extent that the school session could begin either late in November or early in December.

The controversial Principal Christian had not been re-elected by the School Board, notwithstanding a petition signed by many school patrons and submitted to the Board. Hoping to avert dissention among the school patrons, Mr. Christian had tendered his resignation. The School Board then inserted the following quoted advertisement in the Grenada Sentinel: "Teachers Wanted- One Principal, and Two Assistants for the Grenada White School. Apply to A. T. Roane, Secretary of the Board of Trustees of Grenada Public Schools." Even after the insertion of this advertisement, there was considerable pressure, led by J. W. Buchanan, Editor of the Sentinel, exerted on the School Board to force the re-election of Mr. Christian. As an inducement for the rehiring of the Principal, his friends got him to agree to accept the position at a salary of seventy five dollars per month instead of the salary of one hundred dollars per month which the Board proposed to pay a new Principal. The Board remained firm on their refusal to re-elect Mr. Christian, and began to interview men seeking the Principalship. After several meetings in which applicants were interviewed, the Board elected H. J. Phillips, who came from a small town in Tennessee. We do not know the average attendance for the bob-tailed session in the old building while the new building was being completed, but with the beginning of the first school session in the new building in the Fall of 1889, about one hundred children were enrolled. Mr. Buchanan, still rankling from his failure to pressure the Board into re-electing Mr. Christian as Principal, seemed happy to report in his newspaper that the attendance in the new building under the supervision of the new Principal was less than half the attendance which Mr. Christian had the previous school session. After the school session had run for a short time the paper reported that the attendance in the new school building had reached one hundred and seventy eight. This rapid increase in enrollment seems to indicate an easing of the tensions resulting from the unfortunate disagreement relative to the selection of a Principal.

The date 1889 marks the beginning of an effective Grenada Public School System which gradually developed into one of the better school systems of the state-a position which it has continued to maintain. Because of the superior

advantages of the City School System, a number of small county taxing districts which maintained schools began, one by one, to request permission to send their children to the City Schools on a tuition basis. The new school building mentioned above was a two story building constructed on part of the area on which the present Lizzie Horn Elementary Building is located. It had a combination auditorium study hall located in the upper story of the building, with classrooms on both stories. This building, which had two four room wings added to it in 1906, continued to house both Elementary and High School grades until the present John Rundle High School Building was constructed in 1922. Some of the local taxing districts which began to send their students to the city schools were Fairgrounds, Mitchell, Tie Plant, Elliott, Brooks, Kirkman and Wolfe-Hardy. At the time of the completion of the Lizzie Horn Elementary Building all of these districts, with the exception of Wolfe-Hardy, were sending both elementary and high school students to Grenada. When the completion of the Lizzie Horn Elementary Building was accomplished, that school, which had been sending only its high school students to Grenada, abandoned its elementary school and sent all its school children to the Grenada School. Since all of these county taxing districts had their assessed property valuation set by the county, and their school mileage set by their trustees, it presented a rather complex administrative problem for the County Superintendent of Education. Finally, the people of several districts got together and consolidated their several districts into a single district called the Grenada Consolidated District. This district included all the central part of the county with the exception of the part which lay within the boundaries of the city of Grenada. This District had, by this time, been designated as Grenada Municipal Separate School District. The term "sparate" indicated a new type of school which had no direct connection with the county school system. Although the above mentioned taxing districts had been sending their white children to the City Schools on a tuition basis, no such provision had been made for colored children of these districts. They attended small, mostly one teacher schools, and had no transportation provided them, as it was provided white children. After the consolidation of the several county taxing districts into the Grenada Consolidated District, that district maintained no schools for white children but continued to operate elementary schools for the colored children of the district. No provision had, at first, been made to give the colored students a chance to attend a public high school. The only way a colored student, living in the county could obtain a high school education in the county, was to pay tuition to attend the City Colored School and provide his own transportation. Some boarded in town. Soon after the Grenada Consolidated District was constructed, that district began to pay the tuition of such colored students who could manage to get transportation into town. This condition prevailed until 1954, when both City and County began building new facilities. A new Colored High School was constructed by the city, which enabled the school to provide facilities for all colored high school students in the county. About this time, under new school legislation enacted by the State Legislature, all existing school districts were abolished, and a new system of schools organized. The new school legislation provided for financial help from the state to aid in creating new school facilities, with emphasis being placed on the equalization of school facilities for white and colored children. Under this Program, or in anticipation of it, the County had constructed adequate colored school buildings at Holcomb and Tie Plant. These schools were designed to house the colored elementary children of the county, all colored high school continuing to attend the Grenada City Colored High School. Before the school reorganization mentioned above was effected, The Holcomb Consolidated District in the Western part of the county maintained a twelve grade white school until about a year before the consolidation of all county schools into a County Unit System. At that time, the members of the Holcomb School Board requested that the City School take their High School students on a tuition basis. In the Eastern Part of the County The Gore Springs Consolidated School District maintained a twelve Grade School, which continued until after the school reorganization was effected.

After this was done, the Gore Springs High School students were sent to the Grenada High School, and the elementary students continued in the school at Gore Springs until the completion of the Jones Road Elementary School, after which they were sent to that school. The county continued to maintain the white elementary school at Holcomb. Both these twelve grade schools had resulted from the consolidation of a number of smaller schools. Neither district had any provision for colored twelve grade schools in their districts. In fact, most if not all, of the colored elementary schools in these districts were financed very largely by the county. The arrangement explained above continued until the Spring of 1965 when, by agreement of the two school systems, the limits of The Grenada Municipal Separate School District was extended to include the whole county.

From the opening of the new school building in 1889 down to the present time, a period of about seventy seven years, sixteen men have served as head of the white schools of the Grenada School System. Some of the earlier school heads were called Principals, and had supervision over only the white schools. Later they came to be called Superintendents, and were given charge of both white and colored schools. The first thirteen of these men served a total of thirty one years, while the last three, one of whom is still serving, cover a period of forty five years of service.

H. J. Phillips was the first of these men, followed in order by S. A. Morrison, E. L. Bowman, J. A. Granberry, J. N. Powers, J. M. Hubbard, J. H. Woodward, R. H. Hester, V. G. McKie, S. Claude Hall, A. B. Campbell, Clinton Bigham, A. S. McLendon, John Rundle, J. C. Hathorn and the present Superintendent F. G. Wilborn. Mr. Morrison became an attorney in Grenada after retiring from the school superintendency; J. B. Powers became State Superintendent of Education and then the Chancellor of the University of Mississippi; A. B. Campbell became a very successful Jackson businessman, and served a term as President of the United States Chamber of Commerce; S. Claude Hall continued in school work, by becoming a member of the staff of State Normal School at Hattiesburg, which school has now become the University of Southern Mississippi.

The early Grenada City Colored Schools were even more inadequate than the white schools. Well-to-do white parents could send their children to private schools existing in the town, but the economic situation of the colored people was such that there were too few colored parents able to pay tuition to a colored private school to justify the establishment of such a school. If the colored people were to have any local educational opportunity for their children it would, of necessity, have to come from the public schools. For a long time two colored teachers struggled to look out for the educational needs of the colored children of the city. Then, when the new colored school was constructed in 1889, a new era began to dawn for the colored school children of the community. Gus Henderson, educated at Alcorn Agricultural and Mechanical College, was made Principal of the Colored School. He and his two assistants began the long process of building an improved Colored School. Although the White School was operating to cover both elementary and high school grades, the Colored School operated for a time as an elementary school. Gradually, as the scholastic achievement of the colored children justified the action, extra grades were added to the elementary school program until about 1930, the Colored School consisted of twelve grades.

We have little information about county schools, white or colored, before the year 1870. Before this date there was little state aid available to assist counties in supporting public schools. There was no such thing as a real, effective public school system. Regardless of the ills brought to the people of Mississippi as an aftermath of the Civil War and Congressional Reconstruction, we must admit that both Grenada County and the beginning of a statewide public Education System are the children of the Reconstruction Period. The Legislature

which met at Jackson in the year 1870 was largely made up of members of the Republican Party; many of the members were colored men. Governor Alcorn had been elected by the Republican vote, causing many of the white men of Mississippi to look upon him as a traitor to his fellow white Mississippians. Even so it was this Legislative session which created Grenada County and which passed a Legislative Act in 1871 entitled "An Act By The State Legislature Regulating The Organization, Supervision, and Maintenance Of A Uniform System Of Public Education For The State Of Mississippi." By that act, some state money was made available for the so-called "Common School" which schools were set up and operated, at first, very largely on the scant funds supplied by the State. It is probable that the State Funds were distributed on a per capita basis as we know they later came to be distributed. After the Organization of Grenada County in 1870, little was done about education until after the passage of the 1871 Legislative Act quoted above. The County began operation of public schools under the above act by establishing five school districts, these districts coinciding with the five Supervisor Districts. School Directors were provided for each of these districts. The first Directors were appointed by the Board of Supervisors. The first supervisors had also been appointed. After the first term of the Supervisors and the School Directors had been completed, both the Supervisors and School Directors became elective.

On Friday August 5, 1871, the Board of Supervisors appointed Hilliard Hames and J. R. Rosamond School Directors to serve three years; William Bell and A. H. Graves to serve two years, and Ralph Coffman and W. H. Powell to serve one year. Each of the first four directors named were to serve the schools of his own Supervisor's District. Coffman and Powell were both residents of District One which included the City of Grenada. The presumption is that Powell was appointed to represent the people of the District outside of town, while Coffman, a merchant doing business in Grenada, was appointed to represent the people living in the city. Since each Director was supposed to look after the schools of his district, Powell could look out for the county schools in District One while Coffman could look out after the state interest in the City Schools. This assumption is more or less confirmed by the fact that at the expiration of the one year terms of the two District One Directors, only one was elected thereafter. By this time the City Schools had established their independent existence, and the needed no city representation relative to the direction of the schools in the rest of District One. The city schools received their pre-rata share of the state money sent to Grenada County. The County School Directors were required to visit all schools, white and colored in their School Districts, and received three dollars pay for each day in which they engaged in this visitation. The Directors were required to submit estimates of the money needed to run the schools of their District. This estimate was presented to the Board of Supervisors for approval. In 1871 the Director of District One estimated that it would take seven hundred and twenty one dollars to run the schools of his District-this amount included four hundred seven dollars for teacher's salaries, and the rest for rental and repairs of school buildings and contingencies. The Director of District Two estimated that he would need twenty one hundred dollars, nineteen hundred and forty dollars of this amount for teacher's salaries, and the rest for school house expenses. District Three Director estimated his need at eleven hundred and twenty dollars, nine hundred and twenty dollars of which were ear-marked for teachers salaries and the rest for "School House Expenses." This probably was a catchall item to cover, rent, repairs and supplies such as crayon, etc. District Four required the same amount as District Three, and made the same division of funds between teachers salaries and School House Expense. The Director of District Five estimated that he needed sixteen hundred fifty seven dollars and fifty cents. Of this amount fourteen hundred and forty dollars were to take care of teacher's salaries. The rest was to be divided between "Schoolhouse and Contingent Expense." The fact that District One, the most populous District in the county, had the smallest estimate of District School Expense, is a further indication

that the city schools were taking part of a large segment of the school population of the District, and that the school population of District One outside the city boundaries, did not contain as large number of children of school age as would be found in the other Districts. The largest estimate of District school expenses, coming from District Two, is no surprise. That District contained the area of the county in which the Yalobousha River towns of Chocchuma and Tuscahoma had been located. Although these two towns were practically extinct by this time, populous communities had grown up on the fertile land in that area of the county, and since none of this school population was included in an incorporated town having a school of its own, all the school children had to be educated in the schools of the District.

State support for the common schools was raised by a four mill state levy on property. This is indicated by an order of the Board of Supervisors which is quoted hereafter: "Ordered by the Board that the County Treasurer be and is hereby authorized to use and to pay over to the Treasurer of the City of Grenada the sum of one dollar and eighty cents for each educable child within the corporate limits of the said City out of funds now in his hands from the State four mill Tax, or such proportion thereof as the city may be entitled to under the statute in such case made and provided, and that the receipt of the Treasurer of the City to the County Treasurer shall be a valid voucher for said payment in his settlement with the Board." The spelling, pronunciation and capitalization found in the order is just as it was recorded. It is clear enough, however, to indicate that the state funds were paid to the county on a per capita basis, and that the Board of Supervisors distributed to the City Government of Grenada its rightfully share of the State School Tax. Realizing the inadequacy of the state support of common schools, the Districts began to supplement state school money by local tax levies. In the year of 1871 District One had a school levy of three and one fourth mills; District Two levied five and three fourths mills; Districts Three, Four and Five set their levies at six mills. The assessed valuation of the property in the several school districts is not now available, so we do not know just how much money these several tax levies brought into the school districts which made the levies. We do have information that in 1878 the assessed value of real and personal property in the county had reached one million three hundred thousand dollars. Using this valuation, the millage levies set by the several county school districts would have brought in about thirty two hundred dollars. The returns in 1871 could not have been more than this amount, and was probably considerably less. We have not determined just when the City of Grenada began to impose a local school tax, but we find that in 1878 a school tax of three mills was being collected from city taxpayers. The assessed valuation of the property in the city was five hundred thousand four hundred and sixty seven dollars. The school tax collected that year for local school purposes was fifteen hundred one dollars and six cents. Both the city and county schools received some extra school money from the license fees charged by city and county authorities for the operation of saloons. Such licenses had been issued to individuals in villages of Hardy, Graysport, Elliott, and possibly to individuals in other areas of the county. Several saloons were operating in the city of Grenada. We get some idea of the money which these saloon licenses provided for school purposes from an argument advanced by those persons who were fighting to defeat the prohibition forces in an election proposing the outlawing of saloons in the city of Grenada under the local option law existing at the time. Grenada had permitted saloons since the very beginning of the establishment of the two small towns which united to form Grenada. In 1886, those citizens favoring abolition of saloons in the town finally got the town authorities to set up an election to determine the will of the town citizens relative to the issue. There were two newspapers in the town; one was controlled by the prohibitionists, and the other by those favoring retention of saloons. The following editorial was published by the paper which supported retention of saloons in the city: "It costs \$1,014.57 to run the free schools of Grenada town for four months.

The tax paid by the people is \$195.00 which, with \$222.00 of poll tax we have \$597.57 which is about half way the required sum. Nowhere is the deficit to come from when the saloons are closed? This is a serious question to every poor man who had children to educate and we prepare them in advance, not to kill the goose that lays the golden egg." If the figures used in the editorial were correct, they tend to indicate two things; that license fees from the saloons were financing the city public schools to the extent of approximately five hundred dollars; and that the school millage, which had once been three mills, had been reduced since the school session of 1878.

The county schools were also running on a very limited budget. Fifteen months after county was organized the county was paying S. Riley two hundred and ninety five dollars for services as County Superintendent for service through August 10, 1871. On the same date William Pierce was allowed ninety five dollars for similar service. We assume that one man had been appointed for a short term, and the other for a longer term. On July 2, 1872, J. J. Williams received one hundred and ninety dollars for service in the same capacity. In 1873, the Board of Supervisors allowed A. C. Snider sixty two dollars and fifty cents as rental of a house, in the town of Grenada, used as a school for county pupils. This item indicated the prevailing practice, during the early years of the operation of the county school system, to rent rather than build school buildings. The practice was to establish county schools close to the homes of a number of school children. It is quite probable that a considerable number of county school children lived in the area around the city limits, and that a house in the city was the point most convenient to a majority of the children. It must be remembered that the county, still in the grip of the economic depression resulting from the Civil War and the consequent period of reconstruction, could well have decided that its economic situation would not justify building substantial school buildings, and that it would be better to rent buildings for school purposes until such time as the county was able to build substantial school buildings. To those people who think that Negro education entirely disregarded the following order, passed by the Board of Supervisors, will be revealing: "Moved and passed that one hundred dollars out of the common school fund be paid to H. R. Revels, Presidents of Alcorn University to pay for clothes and board of Edward Muffett in the said institution, holding a free school fee scholarship therein for the year of 1874." The Alcorn University mentioned in the Board order later came to be known as Alcorn Agricultural And Mechanical College. It was a Negro school named to honor Governor Alcorn who served a term as governor during the Reconstruction Period. The college was located near Rodney, which had been the center of a very prosperous plantation economy in the years before the outbreak of the Civil War. The College was located on the spot, and in fact, used some of the surviving buildings of Oakland College, which had been a pre-war educational center for the white people of that area. It was from Oakland College that Smith Daniel graduated in 1846. He built the magnificent house known as Winsdor, the ruined corinthian columns of which are still standing to-day, to attest to the opulent life of some of Mississippi's pre-war planters. Hiram R. Revels, President of the Alcorn Agricultural and Mechanical College, was a negro leader during the reconstruction period who served a term as United States Senator from Mississippi. He was succeeded in that office by Governor Alcorn, and became President of the College mentioned above. It is indicative of the great change, brought about in Mississippi by the Civil War and Congressional Reconstruction that, within twenty five years after Oakland College was a center of culture for class of wealthy white planters, a Grenada County Negro should have been a student in some of the buildings of the older college.

As an indication of the financial insecurity of the schools of Grenada County in the year 1888, we quote the following order passed by the Board of Supervisors in April of the same year: "In view of the fact that the county school funds are being rapidly exhausted and a number of the public schools

not being taught to this term, the Board hereby orders that the salaries of the teachers in the county for the year 1888, commencing at this date, be fixed as follows: First Grade Teachers twenty five dollars per month, Second Grade Teachers twenty dollars per month and Third Grade teachers fifteen dollars per month, and that the County Superintendent be requested to use his discretion in aid of this purpose." It should be noted that the designation of the teachers as First, Second and Third Grade Teachers did not have reference to the grades taught, but to the type license held by the teachers. The problem of selection of proper textbooks for public schools, and their high cost, is not a new one, but one which existed in 1884, as evidenced by the action of the Board of Supervisors on March 3, 1884, when they accepted the recommendation of the County Superintendent of Education relative to the books to be used by the county schools. The recommendation was accepted on the basis of a proposal by the publishers, to furnish books at two thirds the established retail price of the books, or one half the retail price in exchange for the old books. This shrewd bargaining on the part of the Board of Supervisors was probably highly appreciated by the parents of school children in the county. At this time, of course, school books had to be purchased by the parents of the school children.

The County Superintendent reported the receipt in the School Fund of two hundred and thirty five dollars from the sale of whiskey licenses in the county. This probably encouraged the Superintendent to request an allowance of ten dollars per month to be used for rental of an office from which conduct of the county schools would be carried on. At the time, the County was still using an old store building as the Courthouse, and there was a serious lack of space for County Officials. The Board approved the allowance over the protest and negative vote, of James H. Miller, President of the Board. He insisted that his reasons for his negative vote be included in the Minutes of the Board. They were expressed in the following words: (1) Because the law does not authorize us to make such a provision; (2) Because the Superintendent of Public Education is amply paid for his services and to procure for himself an office; (3) Because the people are poor and crushed by taxation; (4) Because there are several important offices in this county such as Treasurer, Assessor and Coroner all of whom have no offices provided for them, and an order by this Board to provide an office for the Superintendent would open the door for them all, even to the Justice of the Peace. Therefore I enter my protest in justice to the people of Grenada County." In view of the alleged serious condition of county school finances, it seems strange that the school fund had accumulated a surplus, as indicated by the following order of the Board of Supervisors in August, 1874: "The County Treasurer is hereby authorized to convert into United States Currency the school funds of the County now invested in State Warrants or bonds, at not less than eighty cents on the dollar and for as much more than eighty cents on the dollar as he is able, and to report his action to the Board." This would seem to indicate thrift on the part of the School Officials, as well as the depressed value of State warrants and bonds. Financial conditions relative to school funds must have improved somewhat in the next two years, for we find that in the October, 1876 meeting of the Supervisors, they passed the following order: "On motion of the Board and with the consent of the County Superintendent of Education the maximum salary per month for teachers shall be thirty five dollars per month."

Once, an old Negro preacher trying to encourage his people made this plea "Judge us not by the heights which we have attained, but by the depths from which we have arisen." When we are inclined to discount the educational attainment which has been accomplished through the years down to the present time, we would do well to note "the depths from which we have arisen."