

A HISTORICAL VIEW

As history reveals it, over eighty years ago, with the playing out of melodic strings of the old school bell, approximately twenty-five Negro children found their way into a one room log cabin which was located one-half mile south of Blevins. One teacher, an eight grade graduate, constituted the faculty. One chair, a teacher's desk, and several crude benches furnished the classroom. The curriculum activities were mainly the three R's – Reading, wRiting, aRithmetic. Instructional materials were the Webster Blue Speller and McGuffey Reader. The school term was only two months long.



Very soon the log cabin was destroyed by fire. The children then attended school in the *Emmanuel Methodist Church*. After a few years of instruction there, still yearning for an opportunity to improve their education status, this small group was transferred to the *Williamson School*, which was located four miles east of Blevins. The Williamson School was soon discontinued, the children were then transferred to the *Iron Spring School*. This building afforded two classrooms, two teachers, and the length of the school term was now four months.

In 1928 the Iron Spring District promoted the building of a four room *Rosenwald School* only four miles southeast of Blevins on the hope rural road and embracing the *Shorter Chapel A.M.E. Church*.

The Blevins children were transported to this location by bus, owned and operate by *Mr. W.M. Cross*, one of the few now living who can verify these facts. Another, lest we forget is the illustrious *Mrs. Irene Nesbitt*, a well known and a much loved former instructor of Blevins Elementary.

In 1932, a homogenous group of noble men, all of whom were constituents of the Blevins Board of Education, met and agreed to rent one room from the Iron Spring District. They further agreed to employ and pay a teacher for the Blevins District.

The first teacher employed by the Blevins Board of Education was **Evelyn Cross Burton**. The superintendent at that time was Mr. Glen Coker. The president of the Board of Education was Mr. M.L. Nelson who held this office for more than *40 years*. Mr. A.B. Wetherington succeeded Mr. Coker as superintendant of Blevins Public School.

In 1940, under Mr. Wetherington's administration another school building was erected. This building was located two miles south of Blevins on the Washington-Blevins rural road. As our enrollment and faculty increased through the process of consolidation, classrooms were added and other buildings were constructed. The following schools consolidated with Blevins District – *Mt. Moriah, Oak Grove, McCaskill, Shiloh, Nolen, Antioch, Green Hill, and Iron Spring*. Education had rapidly developed under the administrations of principals *J.L. Taylor, Mr. E.D. Robinson, Mr. R.L. Wiley, and Mr. A.M. Evans*.

Presidents of the School Board included *Mr. J.J. Bruce, Mr. H.M. Stephens, and Mr. P.C. Stephens* – another component of this education that has brought up the equation of this momentous occasion. The persons that put reality into our dreams of a new **Blevins Training School** were *Mr. R.W. McCracken, Mr. James S. Meaders and Mr. Norman Jones*. Mr. Jones was ambitious, tactful, patient, and conservative, and distinguished himself for the excellent manner in which he carried out plans step by step for the construction of the school plant.

This historical account of the Blevins Training School was provided by **Mrs. Evelyn Cross-Burton**. She ends this period in her account with the following quotation:

**"Let us pause not, nor falter, our faith is in our hands.
May we climb ever onward, upward to where our feet would stand.
The course was rough and rugged, but victory sublime.
We stepped bravely forward, and climbed and climbed and climbed."**