

CHERRY HILL - A LOCAL HISTORY

Worked out by the pupils in the seventh and eighth grades of the
CHERRY HILL SCHOOL

G. B. Parsley, Teacher
1939-1941

- I. Situation - The unit was to be worked out by the pupils in the seventh and eighth grades of the Cherry Hill School.
- II. The teachers objectives:
 1. To acquaint the children with the early settlers of the community
 2. To teach and encourage better habits of concentration and research for information and materials.
 3. To bring about a keener interest among the children that all may get enjoyment as well as information out of the unit.
 4. To provide a historical record of the people of the community
 5. To make a comparison of the school facilities and conditions of the early schools with the present school.
- III. The children's objectives:
 1. To study a description of the lands and study about the products that grew and now grow in the neighborhood.
 2. To find out where and when the first settlements were made.
 3. To learn about the schools.
 4. To learn about the churches
 5. To learn about the early teachers and preachers.
 6. To learn about the men who went to the wars.
 7. To learn about the leading men who lived and now live in the community.
 8. To learn how the early people lived.
 1. Their occupation
 2. Their houses
 3. Their dress
 4. Amusements
 5. Education
 6. Religion
 7. Politics
- IV. A discussion was made in the class where questions were asked and suggestions made on just how to start to working out the unit. Someone asked the question as to where the first settlement was made in the community. Another asked, where the first school was taught and who the teacher was. Where did Cherry Hill get it's name? Who were some of the people who lived here 75 years ago? What kind of houses did they live in?

Typewritten sheets of questions were sent out to some of the older people of the community asking for all the information they could give from any records in their

possession and also any traditional information about the early people, schools, churches, stores, etc.

The children were instructed to ask their parents and others for all the information they could give about the early settlers.

V. THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE UNIT

Mabel Puckett called on Ike Brown who gave much valuable information about the schools, churches, stores, etc Ralph Herald called on Esquire Silas Anderson and James Maynard who gave much helpful information. Much of the history of the early settlers was given by Joe Brown from papers and records that he had in his possession. He also gave much traditional information. Silas Brown and Mrs. Opal Brown Driver gave some interesting traditional information about their great-grandfather Walker Brown. Ode Lafever gave the names of most of the pupils in Amanda Puckett's first school taught in the Cherry Hill neighborhood. He was one of her pupils. Esq. Henry Puckett who lives on the Caney Fork River in an adjoining neighborhood gave some interesting information about Walker Brown and the early schools. Mr. Puckett went to school to Mr. Brown.

When the information was gathered up, it was arranged and copied by Ralph Herald, Doshia Steele and Mabel Puckett, under the supervision of the teacher.

LOCATION, DESCRIPTION AND HOW IT GOT ITS NAME.

Cherry Hill is located about one mile south of Silver Point on state highway 56 leading from Smithville. It took its name from a large cherry tree that stood just across the road about 40 feet from the school house. The tree died only a few years ago and it was possibly 75 or 100 years old.

It is poor, ridge, hilly and stony land around Cherry Hill and most of the land that is suitable for tillage has been cleared and is now in cultivation in crops of corn, wheat, tobacco, etc Much of the land is in lespedeza as it is a desirable crop on this kind of land suitable for hay and also for grazing cattle and sheep. There was once in this locality a great variety of timber and much of the oak, poplar and ash was sold for cutting into lumber, but the small timber here now is used mostly for firewood.

STORES

There are three stores in the neighborhood. Talmadge Lafever's store at the junction of the highway and the Mine Lick Road. James Maynard's store about 200 yards from Talmadge Lafever's store on the Mine Lick Road. Joe M. Lafever's store is located on the State Highway toward Silver Point about 100 yards from Talmadge Lafever's store. The school house is located about 100 yards from the State Highway on the Mine Lick Road.

THE FIRST SETTMENTS MADE IN THE COMMUNITY

The place where Joe Brown now lives was entered from the state by Amos and Rebecca Mott on February 5, 1835 and the entry was signed by Governor William Carroll. Mr. Mott was probably the first settler in the community since people under the entry laws were expected to live on and make improvements on the lands thus entered.

About the same time D. Tibbs entered the place now owned by Ike Brown. Mr. Tibbs sold this farm in 1843 to William Maynard, grandfather of James Maynard who now lives and operates a store in the community. There were 150 acres in the farm and it sold for \$150.00 cash. The same tract was sold by William Maynard to John Harrison Maynard in 1866.

During the civil War Bob Prentis, a Union soldier, lived where Joe Brown now lives.

At the close of the Civil War in 1866, William Maynard sold his farm and moved to the place where Esq. Silas Anderson now lives.

Walker Brown, grandfather of Joe Brown, bought the land and moved where Joe Brown now lives. He bought the land in 1867 from John Terry, grandfather of Fred Terry who now lives in Smithville.

About the same time in 1867 Sim Palmer, a Union soldier, lived where Ode Lafever now lives.

Capt. Francis Anderson, a Union soldier, lived from 1861-65 near where Ode Lafever now lives.

THE SCHOOLS

Amanda Puckett taught the first school in the Cherry Hill community in 1891 using a little log dwelling house located in the hollow southeast from Ike Brown's on his land and about 200 yards from the present Cherry Hill school house. Some of her pupils were Mary League, Lem Givens, Joe Brown, Ode Lafever, Billie Brown, Bettie Brown, Carrie Brown, Monroe Lafever, Sid Herald, Belle Pack, Del Pack, Lon Pack, and Ought Pack.

The second school was taught in 1892 for three months by James Phy in a little log house near where James Maynard now lives. Some of the text books used were Webster's Blue Back Speller, McGuffie's Readers and Ray's Arithmetic.

The first school building was erected where the present school building now stands. It was constructed in 1901 by Sam and Jim Allison for \$17.50 with lumber paid for out the school funds. Some of the teachers were Fuse Dyer, Almond Austin, Mack Reynolds, Lulu Johnson, Hautie Medley, Mamie Gill, Walter Lafever, Effie Johnson, George Caldwell, Bonnie Puckett Medley, Silas Brown, Luther G. Puckett, Janie Mitchel, Mary Paris and Ethel Buckner. Some of the above list of teachers in the second building that was erected in 1917.

The present building was constructed in 1934. It consists of two large classrooms, a community room, and two cloak rooms. The two class rooms are equipped with chairs and desks for each child. The school is also equipped with maps chards, globe, library, etc.

Some of the handicaps of early education in this county were lack of proper buildings, equipment and books. The other handicaps were the short terms of school, two and three months a year and many times poorly trained teachers. One of the chief handicaps of early education still exists to a great extent, it is that of indifference of the people. Esq. Anderson tells of the spellings, headmarks and prizes given to the children who won in the spelling 50 years ago. He also told us that many times the children were allowed to study their spelling lessons out loud and they had a habit of singing geography.

CHURCHES

Abner Maxwell erected the first church building (Church of Christ) in this community near where John Lindsey now lives in 1905. The building was torn down in 1924. Some of the preachers were Elders Watson, Jeff Bowles, Leo Bowles, Charles Brewer, Grover Brewer and Elder Cubb.

SOME LEADING MEN WHO LIVED IN THE COMMUNITY

Walter Brown was born near Tullahoma in 1811. He was the son of John Brown who came from Virginia in 1800 and settled near what is now Tullahoma. Walker Brown married Bettie Elizabeth Anderson and moved to Old Monroe in Overton County in 1837 where he taught school for several years. He moved to Algood in 1852 and taught there for seven years and went from there to Buffalo Valley where he taught for some time, then to Cherry Hill in 1867 and died there in 1879. Will T. Hale in his history of DeKalb County states that Mr. Brown taught school on Wolf Creek. Henry Brown taught within two years of his death. Joe Brown has now in his possession, a teachers certificate issued to Mr. Brown by the County Superintendent of DeKalb County, Terry Trapp, dated July 9, 1878 and the certificate shows very high marks of qualifications for Mr. Brown in the tool subject of learning. Mr. Brown was a great teacher.

Dr. Whitefield was born in North Carolina in 1850 and died in the Cherry Hill community in 1927. He lived in Buffalo Valley in 1880 doing blacksmithing and woodwork and was a little later in the goods business in the Pumpkin Center community, coming to Cherry Hill in 1907. He practiced medicine during the 20 years he was in this community. It is said that he did a large practice in the Cherry Hill and adjoining communities, calling on many people whom he knew at the time could not pay him.

William Brown was born February 8, 1835 and was two years old when his father, Walker Brown, moved to Old Monroe in Overton County in 1837. He had three sons Ike, Joe and Willie. He served in the Confederate Army.

Capt. Francis Anderson, an Uncle of Esq. Silas Anderson, moved from Jackson County to near where Ode Lafever now lives in 1861. He made up a company and joined Stoke's Regiment of the Union Forces.

SOME LEADING MEN WHO NOW LIVE IN THE COMMUNITY

*Silas F. Anderson was born in Jackson County November 21, 1863. His grandparents came from Cumberland County, Virginia. Mr. Anderson attended the rural schools in Jackson and Putnam Counties some. He moved to the Jeff Dyer place on the Caney Fork River in 1886. He was elected Constable in his district the 8th. He was sheriff of DeKalb County from 1892-1896. In 1897 he entered the service of the government as Deputy Marshal and served for several years. He was again appointed in 1924 and served for 11 years. He is a leading farmer and stock raiser. He is a man liked by all the people in his community.

*Joe Brown, the son of William and Vina Brown, was born on November 14, 1870 in the Cherry Hill community and has been a farmer all his life. He was a Justice of the Peace in his district, the 8th, for 6 years. He is now and has been member of the school board for many years. He is a leading Democrat of the County. He is an elder in the Church and a leader in the Sunday School.

*Isaiah Brown, the son of William and Vina Phy Brown, was born in the Cherry Hill community on March 27, 1867. While he has held no public office he has been a useful citizen. He has farmed all his life. "Uncle Ike" as he is familiarly called is well liked by all the people of the community.

*James Maynard a grandson of William Maynard who bought the farm and lived where Ike Brown now lives is a farmer and operates a store in the community. He is a leader in the Church and Sunday School. "Pa Maynard" as he is familiarly called by the school children is a fine man and liked by everybody.

*Joe M. Lafever was born on Caney Fork River and is about 80 years old. He moved to this community more than 50 years ago. He opened a store here about 1903 or 1904 and still operates it.

***The sketches of these men were written by the teacher.

Howard Herald, a pupil in the 6th grade and grandson of James Maynard, was asked to find out some information about his grandfather, Mr. Maynard, and report, but he failed to do so.

Ruby Jack Brown was asked to report on her grandfather, Joe M. Lafever, but she failed to make any report.

THE MEN WHO WENT TO WAR

William M. Brown served in the Confederate Army under General Forest Hill community.

J. C. Watson was the other Confederate soldier who lived in the Cherry Hill community.

Union Soldiers 1861-65

Capt. Francis Anderson

Bob Prentis

William Maynard, grandfather of James Maynard who lives here now.

Sim Palmer

Harrison Maynard

Charlie Burton

Soldiers in World War 1917-19

John Henry Brown who now lives in the Cherry Hill community

Claude Maynard, died in 1930 from army disabilities.

Ambros Steele who now lives near Hickey in Putnam County

Bethel Butts, died in the army.

The first settlers made their living principally by growing little crops of grains and vegetables. Since wild animals such as squirrels, rabbits, opossums, wild turkeys, deer, etc. were so plentiful, the people secured much of their meat by hunting. There were bears, deer, buffaloes roaming in this section, but these three animals and the wild turkey have become extinct in this county. The early settlers would exchange sugar, coffee, tea, nails, cotton cloth and other essentials. Furs was a product that brought in quite a bit of money. Ginseng was growing wild in great quantities in some sections. It was dug, dried and sold for a good price. Many hogs were raised on acorns and beech mast. There were flat boats that were pushed up the Caney Fork River with poles, coming from Nashville going as far up the Caney Fork River as Sligo bringing commodities to sell for cash or to exchange for surplus farm products, furs, ginseng, etc. The crops grown were corn, wheat, oats, rye, sorghum, a little cotton and flax. In 1845 corn sold for 20 cent per bushel, molasses 75 cents per gallon and fine horses sold for \$40 each. The cost of some commodities were coffee 25 cents, sugar 12 cents, nails 12 ½ cents per pound, ½ lb. tea 62 ½ cents, domestic cloth 25 cents per yard, calico 50 cents per yard, bandanna handkerchiefs 1.00 each, fur hats 6.00 each, cotton hose 60 cent a pair, and flax seed 10 cent per lb. Just after the Civil War corn sold for 20 cents per bushel, flour \$1.50 for 100 lbs., apples and sweet potatoes 25 cents a bushel, hogs 3-4 cents per lb., tobacco 4 cents per lb., and eggs for 5 cents per dozen.

Mr. Anderson states that the early settlers farmed by using bull-tongued plows drawn mostly by oxens. The plows, reaphooks, hoes and other crude farm implements were made by a local blacksmith. The corn and wheat was ground for bread by mills run by water power with an overshot wheel. The mill had to be located on a branch or creek near a waterfall. The people in the Cherry Hill community had to go some distance to the mills, as mills were scarce. There was a mill on Eagle Creek about 2 miles from

Smithville, and one on Fall Creek near where the Evins Mills are now located about 3 miles from Smithville.

HOUSES OF THE EARLY SETTLERS

The first settlers in this community lived in log cabins with chimneys made of sticks and clay, but later on made out of rocks. The roofs of the buildings were made of boards split out of straight grained timber, usually oak, with the aid of a little tool called a frow. Glass windows were not know. Small openings were made in the side of the house for windows and shutters were used. The floors, doors and shutters were made of lumber hand sawed with a whip saw as it was called.

**Veida Lindsey secured the information on the houses.

DRESS OF THE FIRST SETTLERS

The most of the clothing in these days was made by hand by the mothers and daughters. The cotton and wool was carded, spun and woven into cloth by the women. The boots and shoes were mostly made by the men by hand. The leather was tanned locally. One of these little tanneries was located on the creek near Smithville. Cloth was dyed by the use of certain barks from trees.

AMUSEMENTS

The men would have what they called "log rollings" when one would invite his neighbors to help his clear land and in constructing a house or barn. He would lave a house or barn "raising" when his neighbors would help him build his house with logs. Sometimes the women would have a "quilting" and invite her neighbor women in to help her. These "workings" and "quiltings" were usually followed at night by a party or "frolic" as they sometimes called it. Many times the games would be played and dancing carried on most of the night. The "Old Virginia Reel" was a favorite to play. Music was furnished for the plays by the use of the violin and banjo. Some of the old favorite musical pieces were "Seeing Across the Sea", "Apple Blossoms", "Billie in the Low Ground", Arkansas Traveler", "Old Joe Clark", and "Soldier Boy", etc The people showed each other great hospitality.

COOKING AND THE KINDS OF FOOD

*Information provided by Veida Lindsey

The first settlers had no cooking stoves. The meats and vegetables were cooked on the open fireplace in a kettle or pot. They had a vessel called an "oven" in which they baked the bread. The vessel was placed on coals of fire and other coals of fire were placed on top of it.

Some of the things the early settlers had in which to eat were, beans, peas, potatoes, some kinds of vegetables, beef, hog meats, wild meats, some fruits, such as wild blackberries,

raspberries, strawberries, grapes, etc Fish was another important food since it was plentiful in the Caney Fork River about a mile away. About the only method the people had of preserving fruits and vegetables was by means of drying since sealed cans had not been invented. The people secured water for use in their homes from springs usually on hillsides or in hollows. The people did not have matches. They did not have kerosene but used grease to burn in their lamps.

It is said that the people of this community were Democrats prior to the Civil War, but since the war, the Republicans have been in a large majority.

Most of the early settlers used oxen to do their farm work with and also to do their hauling. They used a two wheel cart to haul and grains to the mill, haul goods, farm products and in general transportation.

Some of the people of the Cherry Hill community got their mail at the Bozarth, a post office on Mine Lick nearby, and a little later a post office was put in at Silver Point. The people now get their mail on Rural Route 2 from Silver Point.

TEACHERS NOW LIVING IN THE COMMUNITY

Silas Brown who is now teaching at Indian Mound in the 23rd District.

Mrs. Opal Brown Driver who is teaching at the Bridge School in the 8th District.

Submit to this website by: Robin Michelle Evans

<http://www.ajlambert.com>