



## A BICENTENNIAL MOMENT... Carlisle High School

The educational system of Nicholas county is closely intertwined with that of the earliest types of schools in the state. But even these limited beginnings witnessed a far-reaching influence in the lives of these early settlers. Nicholas county's education system has its roots with the home schools and private tutoring of pioneer days. Later, one-room school houses came into being with all 12 grades being taught in the same room. In the early 1900's there became a greater need for education which brought about consolidation and specialization in the schools.

In the late 1700's and early 1800's it is a recognized truth that schools existed even though records cannot be found. Yes, what was true in one community could be applied to that of another. The "Old Field School" prevailed through out the period of primitive settlements in Lower Blue Licks, Irish Station and Headquarters. During this period initial attempts were made to formally educate the young. An abiding interest was shown by sturdy pioneers in both religion and education, for they built their school houses and churches along with the erection of their humble log homes. School masters Hopkins, Ramey, Clayburn, Groves and Mrs. Marston, being the first woman teaching in the county, insured children of a good education in settlements at Lower Blue Licks, Irish Station, Headquarters, Bush Fork, Ellenville, Hooktown, Mt. Pixgah, Barterville, Carlisle and Shiloh Schools as the "Writing Schools", "Singing Schools", and the "Night Schools" became prominent throughout the county. These schools were of short terms usually from two to six weeks. Western Military Institute, The Normal School and Carlisle Seminary were of a private nature. These schools were the first steps toward

public education in Nicholas county.

The school system in the mid 1800's and early 1900's was very slow developing. A General Assembly passage of the law of 1837 was slow in materializing in our county. A clause in the law required each county to survey its school districts. At that time surveying was expensive, so Nicholas, along with many counties, postponed the laying off of districts until 1845. In that year two districts with a census of 111 pupils were reported to the State Department of Education for the first time. As years progressed, the district grew to 57 schools with an across list of 3400 children. Log school houses were replaced by frame houses.

Teachers in the days of the one-room schoolhouse were very versatile, as they taught every subject to children in grades one to 12. Salary was meager for their services, being \$10 to \$15 per month. A teaching certificate was required, and was obtained by examinations of an oral quiz later being changed to a written examination. Once the certificate was obtained, the teacher was assigned to a district.

The curriculum was limited, since only Reading, Spelling, Writing, Grammar, and very elementary Arithmetic were taught. Later Geography and History were added. Geography was quite an interesting subject when first introduced. Book I, a very small book 5" x 9", contained about 100 pages. It was unique, in that questions with answers following immediately were the only forms of information. Thus, the student memorized the answers without much reference to thought or content. Book II, provided to be the real "bug-bear" of advanced thought, since it was composed solely of maps and questions. Here, again, the memory had intensive training. To make this new subject popular classes lined up with "head and foot", that is the

one answering all questions remained head over a certain period of time, at expiration of the stated time - head pupil went foot and worked up again. The one receiving the most bookmarks at the end of the term was awarded some type of present.

Nicholas county has made excellent progress since the year 1900 by meeting and overcoming problems each year. The first tax rate, circa 1908, was an excellent start whereby the power of direct control was taken from the district and invested in the county as central operating power. In 1910, the schools of the county were administered in two district systems, Nicholas County Schools and Carlisle Independent. Each system was governed by its own board of education and supervised by its own superintendent. The 1900's was permeated with such occurrences as the founding of the first parent-teacher Association by Miss Lida Gardner; a typhoid epidemic ravaging the schools in 1915 forcing them to close; night school starting in Henryville for students of all ages (enrollies were 20-84 years of age) being supervised by Miss Mae White and Miss Mary Williams.

Revision of the educational system in the county in 1945 by a consolidation movement forming Headquarters, Ellenville, Moorfield, Parks, Myers and East Union; a desegregation of school in 1956; consolidation of school county schools in 1963; and movement of Moorfield, Headquarters and Carlisle schools into an open concept building in 1971 completing consolidation in the Nicholas County School System.

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