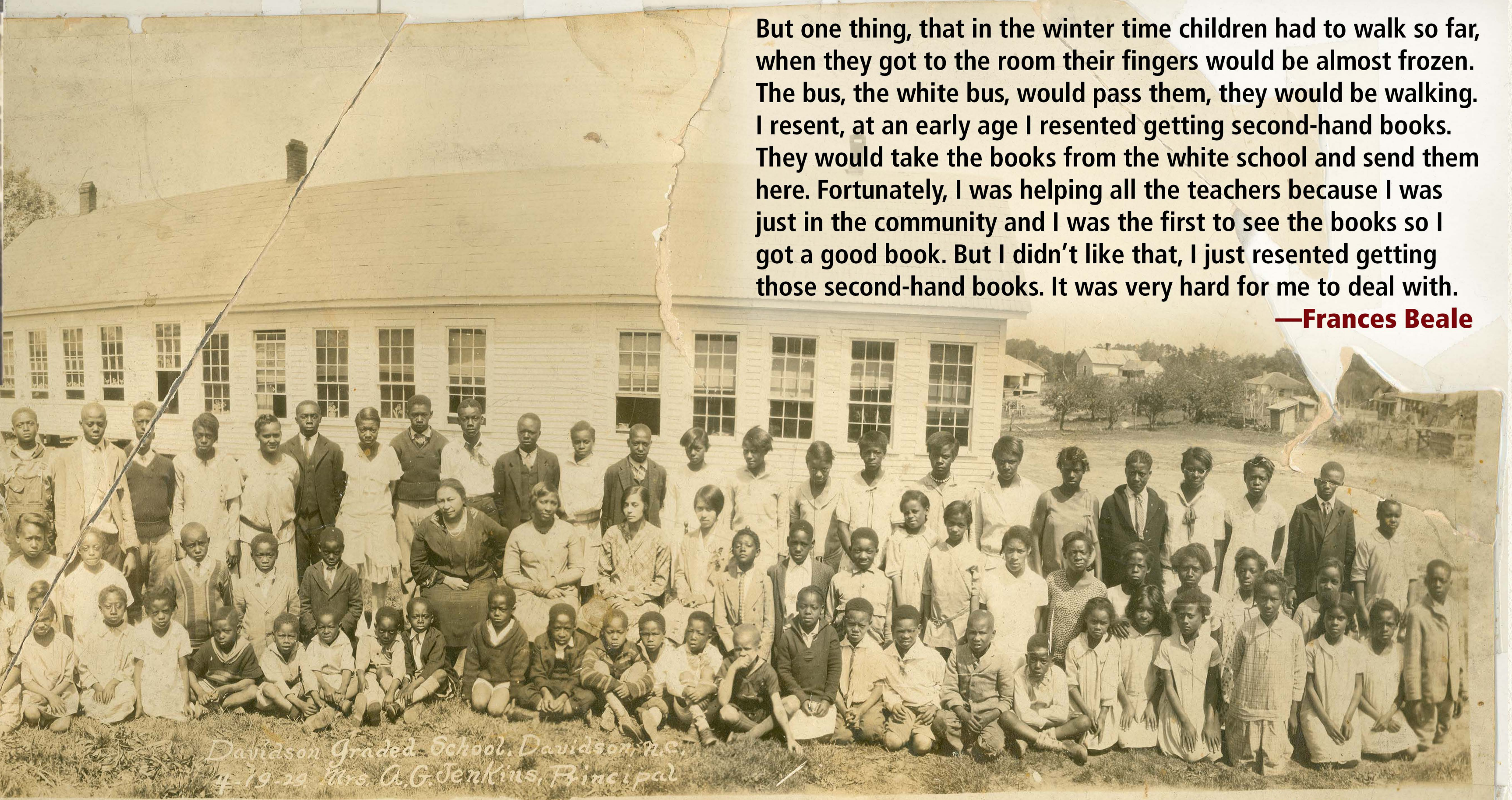


# Shared Stories: Education

## African Americans in North Mecklenburg



Mrs. Ada Jenkins at school



Davidson Graded School, Davidson, N.C. 4-19-29 Mrs. A.G. Jenkins, Principal

Original Davidson Colored School

But one thing, that in the winter time children had to walk so far, when they got to the room their fingers would be almost frozen. The bus, the white bus, would pass them, they would be walking. I resent, at an early age I resented getting second-hand books. They would take the books from the white school and send them here. Fortunately, I was helping all the teachers because I was just in the community and I was the first to see the books so I got a good book. But I didn't like that, I just resented getting those second-hand books. It was very hard for me to deal with.

—Frances Beale

They used to have what they called the old school building. It had classrooms on each end and had a stage in the center where they could have little shows. You played out there on the school grounds. We didn't have nowhere else to play, period.

—Theodore Roosevelt Wilson

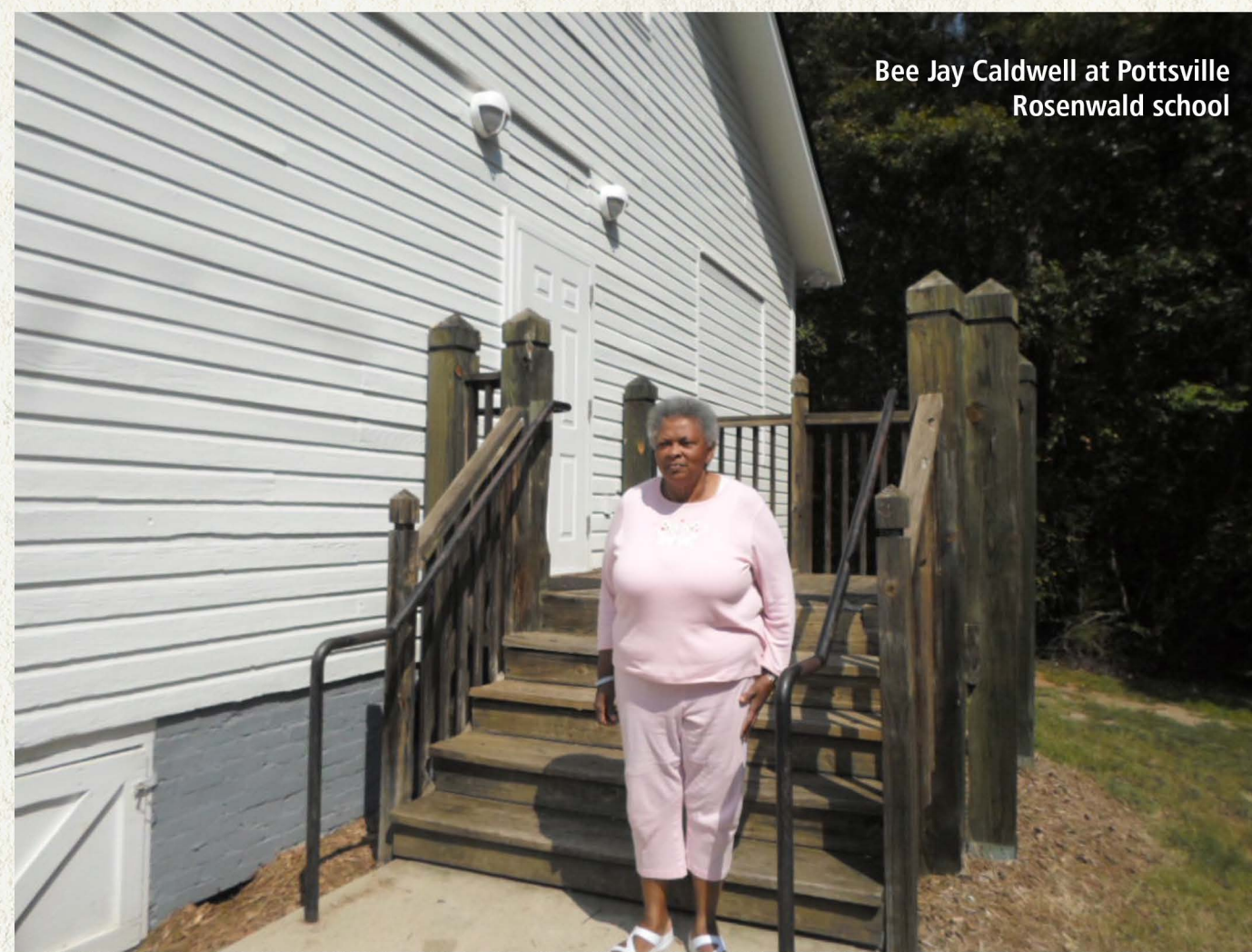
That was the best school we ever had. It was a long building and I can't think of how many rooms it had but it had a long front porch. No indoor water. No indoor anything. We had pot-bellied stoves. The courses were reading, writing, arithmetic. Oh, one thing the teachers did try to do was to provide some activities for us. You know how your parents want to come see you perform, so we had plays. We had a choir, we had a dance group, we had May Day outside. The higher students, they had oratorical contests.

—Frances Beale



Torrance-Lytle 8th grade 1958

EIGHTH GRADE



Bee Jay Caldwell at Pottsville Rosenwald school



Teen Babysitting Class

Sports at Torrance-Lytle: We had some of our equipment from the college, they gave us their used equipment. We had to buy shoes. They gave us their pants. We had a baseball team, we had a basketball team and we had a pretty fair team [given] the conditions. We didn't have a gym. We didn't have one in Davidson and we didn't have one in Huntersville. So if it rained, the game was cancelled. The ground was so wet you couldn't practice. We had a track team, and my first year at Huntersville, the guy came there from the agricultural department. We hauled grass and dirt to make the fields.

—Theodore Roosevelt Wilson

When I was in school, this was grades one through four. The fifth and sixth grades were somewhere, and seventh and eighth, I don't really know where. In '53, they added another wing to Huntersville Colored School, and in '53-54 it became Torrance-Lytle in honor of the men who had lobbied so hard to the county commissioners of Mecklenburg County to obtain a school, because before, if you wanted to further your education from the sixth grade, you had to attend a boarding school in another city, like Salisbury or Kannapolis or Concord.

—Bee Jay Caldwell

**A MESSAGE TO PARENTS CONCERNED ABOUT EDUCATION**

If you are interested in high standards of education for your child - now or in the near future at a proposed private day school, grades 1 through 9 in the Davidson-Cornelius area - rates approximately \$50.00 monthly per child -

Please send your name, the number of children, and grades they will attend in the fall of 1966 to:

**North Mecklenburg Day School**  
P. O. Box 762  
Davidson, N. C.

Your reply to this ad does not obligate you, but it will indicate a sincere interest at this time.



THE TROJAN  
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THE SENIOR CLASS OF 1966  
TORRANCE-LYTTLE HIGH SCHOOL  
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**School Board Plans Staff Desegregation**

When I went to North Mecklenburg, it was in 1965. Went to 10th grade, I was at Torrance-Lytle in the 8th and 9th. That was something. People would sit beside you and they'd move. I told one little girl, I said, "it won't rub off." We had fights and the day that Martin Luther King was killed, that was hard. They said, "What you all crying for?" We just had to fight our way out of it and I was not a big fighter.

—Ruby Houston



PRINCIPAL'S MESSAGE

To the graduating class of 1958 I extend a warm and hearty congratulations. Behind you lie the many years of preparation upon which you have built your foundation for the future. Let us hope that that foundation is laid on solid ground so that your future happiness and success may be inevitable.

You will henceforth become aware of the full significance of the continuous prodding by your matrons to encourage you to exert your utmost effort to build a firm foundation. We hope that your interest, your aim and your insight into future demands will motivate and effect determined efforts for progress.

It is my desire that your preparation will continue until you can master some trade or profession, to this end that you become generous or worthy contributors in this progressive atomic era. May you always remember that your true value will be measured not in terms of the services you render or material rather than in the number of dollars you earn. Let your aims be high and lofty; your preparation be thorough and complete; your determination steadfast and strong; and your success assured and soon.

Isaac T. Graham, Principal

After my children were in middle school, I attended college. I finished my college degree at Johnson C. Smith University. And that's were my grand-daughter graduated from 2 years ago. She's there working on her master's for social work.

—LaGretta Neal



POTTERY STUDENTS at Davidson Community Center under the instruction of John Christian are shown at the potters wheel demonstrating the craft. From left are: Carolyn Houston, Yasmin Clark, Barbra Clark, Sandra Reid, Cornell Hunsucker and Wilfred Gaston. (Gazette Photo)

[Going to Livingstone College.] It was an understood thing. First time being away from home. I think about it now as a travel on the highway that was the longest, dreariest road. A classmate of mine from Cornelius, her father would take us back and he would take us in the early afternoon so he could get back before dark. I thought that was the worst thing that could happen, but that was your ride back to school. I think now, they talk about the cost of college. My mother made \$12 a week, doing domestic work. Somehow we made it.

—Verdie Torrence