

The History of Tatesville School

By Frances Conry

Transcribed by Barbara Myers & Jan Canfield

The first school was in front of Ray Overturf', an old log building which later burned. It wasn't called Tatesville. Aunt Elizabeth Brown, Edd Brown's mother, attended this school.

Edd Brown started to Tatesville School around 1901-1902. The school was not new then. It was a one teacher school.

Dan Layne was the first teacher. The first Tatesville School building was sold to Uncle Jack Turner, and it was torn down. Materials were saved and used to build a house later, another building was built for Tatesville School by Henry Brown and Willie Dykes of Beersheba Springs, Tenn.

This school stood until the children were sent to Collins School, and later the Tatesville School burned.

This building was also used as a place of worship. The Baptists and Methodists used it as a church house.

Some of the teachers were: Franklin Abernathy, Henry Barker, Mrs. Edna Barker, Lydia Dodson, Alma Brazier, Garnett Tate (1921), Irene Abernathy, Bell Abernathy, Grace Cox Brown, Miss Amanda Barker, Principal, Miss Lois Nearn Principal, Miss Emma Hill, Principal, Mrs. Verna McAlister, Hazel Brown, Principal, Harmon Hodges, Principal, Stella Levan, Mrs. Bill Nunley, Mrs. Elizabeth White, Florence Rollings, Mrs. Oma Dell Brewer, Principal and teacher., A. J. Layne was Principal and Mrs. Oma Dell Brewer was a teacher under him, Leroy Smith, Tom York, Helen Winton, Carrie Lee Hill, Willie Mae Hobbs, Frances Conry, Franklin Rust, Rachel Rollins, Clara Northcutt, Ray Winton, Elsie Scissom, Mary Elizabeth Creighton, Mark Phipps, Betty Sue Meeks, Rebecca Parmley, Doris Burnett, Margaret Merrell, Joyce Hargis, Charles Morgan, and Thelma Geary.

The teachers I remember were as follows: Johnny Goforth, Principal, his daughter Hazel was the teacher under him in the latter part of 1927-1928. The next two teachers were Grace Green and Amanda Barker. Grace was the Principal; then it was Elsie Goforth and Miss Emma Hill. Elsie was the Principal; then it was Claude B. Dykes. He was Principal, and Amanda Barker was the teacher under him. The

next Principal was Miss Emma Hill; the teacher was Carrie Lee Hill. Lois Nearn was the next Principal, and Florence Rollins was the teacher. The Principal taught the 6th, 7th and 8th grades. All below the sixth grade were taught by what they called teachers. Some of the Principals and teachers were before and after I went to school so I don't know what grades they taught.

I have never heard of some of them as I copied them out of the *Memories of Bygone School Days* book of Laager, Gruetli and Tatesville.

The Preaches and Sunday school teachers.

The Pastors I knew were J. D. Chappin from Manchester, a Baptist, I believe, a Free Will. He preached for several years then Brother Self preached a while, I believe he was a Nazarene. I don't know his first name.

Brother Hasten Smith, he was a Methodist. A preacher called Blackie Rogers, an ex-convict, preached a few times. I think he held a revival or two, and he was a Baptist. Preacher Roberts held a revival, he was Baptist. Then Melvin Bud Hampton pastored for years and years. He started out Baptist then changed to Methodist, then Nazarene. He and Brother Chappin both preached so long, we hardly knew any other preachers.

The only Sunday school teachers I remember were Mildred Cook Maynard or Mainord, as some people spell it. She taught our class from the card class, up to the last quarterly. When we got into the quarterlies. Elizabeth Hampton (Bud's wife), taught the card class. I don't know very much about who taught the Bible class, as it was taught in another room. I believe Noah White taught the Bible class for a while. Johnnie Creighton was Superintendent of the church and Sunday School.

Uncle John Creighton was an early settler over there. He and his wife ran a grocery and dry goods store for many years. She was a Tate. I think they came from Tarlton Valley because they owned a farm down there. His oldest son lived on the farm. We always called them Mammy and Pappy Creighton. I believe they lived near Collins River because I heard them speak of it.

The Scott family, Uncle Jim Scott and his wife Aunt Missouri, used to live over in the bottoms where Lewie Campbell lives, or his family lives. They had one girl, Barbara; she married Gilbert Overturf. She lived on top of the hill from them.

I think the front room was built out of logs and the kitchen was built out of planks. He had a big white beard and still worked his oxen or steers as we called them. He didn't own a horse as other people did. His wife cooked on the fireplace. She had an iron rod that reached across the fireplace. She hung her iron pots on it that she

cooked in. The most amazing thing to me was how she baked her bread. She had a flat vessel, with 3 legs on the bottom of it and a big heavy lid, she raked coals of fire on the hearth then she set the iron vessel on the coals, then she put the dough in the vessel, then she put the heavy lid on it. They put coals of fire on top of the heavy lid and baked the bread. It tasted really good. They and their son in law Gilbert Overturf bottomed chairs. They took white oak splits or splints or whatever and put seats in chairs. They were nice and lasted a long time. I think they had to soak the splits or splints in water a few days before they could work with them. I believe they also made handles for axes and picks. Not for sure, but I think they did. Missouri was a Campbell before she married him; she wore high top shoes and wore real long dresses down past her shoe tops. To me it was something else to see them. They came here either from Coalmont or Tracy. I think it was from Coalmont. I heard my dad say he and Uncle Jim used to drum logs up the mountain. I guess out of Johnson's Gulf before they came out here, so they probably lived in Coalmont. They were good old-fashioned people.

Another early settler family was Uncle Jack, I guess his name was Jackson, and Aunt Maggie Turner. She was a Heard or Hurd before she married Uncle Jack. They used to come to church all of the time at night. I remember them testifying. They were good religious people, both of them. They also lived in a log house. They farmed and lived in a bigger house than the Scotts. I don't know where they came from, but I think they raised five boys and one girl. They were Joe Turner's grandparents. They lived across the creek from us.

I don't know where they came from. I remember they brought a lantern and came to church. He was kind of tall and wore a mustache, she wore long dresses and a bonnet on her head. I believe he was of Irish descent, and she was Dutch. Joe could probably tell you where they came from.

I found out where Uncle Jack and Aunt Maggie Turner came from, Sequatchie County but I don't know what year. When I find out, I will let you know.

Another person who lived across the creek was Uncle John Overturf. He and his wife Melissa, he was Justice of the Peace for many years. His children were Minnie Layne, the wife of Gerron Layne, Ora White, George Overturf, Lewie Overturf but Robert Overturf there might have been some more of his children, I don't know.

He finally went blind; I believe cataracts got on his eyes.

Ila Lee Brewer is his granddaughter. At one time, Joe Tate lived in the house where Uncle Will Adams lived. He was a Deputy Sheriff. I don't know for how

long. I remember I went to school with his children, Joe B Herschel and his daughter Mildred. She married a Melton, I believe. His brother was pastor of the Church of God here in Palmer for a while. I think Joe Tate was Doloris Nunley's uncle.

Another interesting person in Tatesville was Marsh Murphy. Mr. Paul Murphy and family used to live where Denny Magouirk now lives; they had this boy named Marsh. I hope that was his name or it could have been Marris, but everyone called him Marsh.

Marsh was a song writer. Once when he was away from home, he got awful homesick and wrote the song titled *Little Green Valley*, then he wrote *Breeze*. I was told he got James Cox, or some people called him Jamie Cox, and they set it up with music as they both were musicians. I don't know what instrument Marsh played. I suppose different ones. Anyway, when they got it in the way they wanted it, and they sold the sheet to a publishing house in Nashville. Along came Cowboy Copas. He got the sheet of music, he made a record of it. The record became very popular. A lot of records were bought of these songs. The record on one side was *Little Green Valley*, the flip side was *Breeze*. I was told Cowboy Copas made a lot of money off of the record. John Cox told me every time a record was sold, Marsh and Jamie drew royalty. I don't know how much but some, I remember, my brother in law from Alabama was also a musician. He then owned a mandolin. He thought these two songs were so pretty, he used to go over to Murphy's to play music with Marsh and Jamie. I believe he said Marsh played the violin, Jamie the guitar. He played the mandolin. People said they were really good.

Murphys moved away; I don't know where to. All three of these men are dead now. I believe Marsh is dead. I know the other two are. I was told Murphys lived in a valley somewhere and Marsh moved away from home.

We also had a ball field we called it. Across from the schoolhouse and in front of Mr. Frank Brewer's house, across the road. I remember some of the players on the ball team, Echerd Brewer, Ellis Magouirk, Henry Ford Adams, Willie Douglas Layne, John Cox, I believe Earl Brewer, & Herbert Overturf. I think they had some to fill in when some of the main players got sick, or couldn't be there. I don't remember who. Gerron Layne or however it is spelled, was umpire. I think Alder Brewer and Francis Magouirk were the team managers.

Francis was the secretary because I remember once we had an old-fashioned box supper. He kept the money to buy supplies for the team, I guess he was secretary of treasury. They also had other events to raise money for the ball team or club, they

called it. School teacher Claude B Dykes got them organized at one time they had a good team.

I think Levoy Layne was one of the ball players. I think the date was in the thirties.

