

2009 Virginia Women in History

VIRGINIA RANDOLPH'S FIRST REPORT AS JEANES TEACHER

A Brief Report of the Manual Training Work done
in the Colored Schools of Henrico County, Va.
For Session, 1908–1909

Having taught Manual Training in Mountain Road School for sixteen sessions, I was recommended by the Supt. of Henrico Co. as Supervisor of the work for the entire county. My work began Oct. 26, 1908, under the auspices of the "Negro Rural School Fund" Dr. James H. Dilliard of New Orleans, La. President. This work should begin in the primary grades and continue as long as the children remain in school. The destiny of our race depends, largely, upon the training the children receive in the schoolroom, and how careful we should be. The great majority of the children in the country schools will never reach a high school, therefore we must meet the demands of the schools in the Rural Districts by introducing this phase of training in every schoolroom.

It must be impressed upon the minds of the pupils that "Cleanliness is next to Godliness," and when this law of Hygiene is obeyed, they have conquered a great giant. They must also see that their schoolroom is neat and attractive with curtains at their windows, pictures on the walls, stoves kept neatly polished, and the grounds neat and clean, have a book of the "Laws of Health" hung in the schoolroom and each child be made to make himself familiar with it. The teacher should also give instructions along these lines which will be great benefit because the teachers are models for the school-room.

My first step was to organize School Improvement Leagues, the constitution says, that the grounds must be beautified and everything done to make an attractive school. Each scholar is expected to pay the sum of five cents per month and from time to time, give entertainments to strengthen the treasury but they must have a tendency to elevate the community morally and educationally.

During the term Mr. Wood gave me one thousand plants of hedge and twenty shade trees which I have distributed in each District. Hon. John Lamb of Washington, D.C., sent seeds for the school garden. Mr. Horace Peterson of Glen Allen, gave shucks to five schools for mats.

The schools are progressing nicely and with a few recommendations for next term, I will give a report from each school. I recommend:

I. The time given for Manual Training be six hours a week instead of three, and that time divided in periods to suit the teacher.

II. That the schools furnish their cooking materials and that the community may feel that they can order bread, cakes, etc. to be cooked at school and the proceeds made, go into the school treasury.

IMPROVEMENTS MADE AT EACH SCHOOL

BROOKLAND DISTRICT

Barton Heights School, Principal, Mary M. Scott

Fenced in the yard, granolithic walk, set out hedges, trees, and rosebushes, white washed the trees and fence, taught sewing, needlework, carpentry, and shuck mats. Amount collected

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during the term, \$50.05, Expended, \$10.95. Balance in the treasury for the next term to fit up kitchen, \$39.10.

Geter's School, Teacher, Mildred A. Cross

Enclosed the school with hedges, set out trees and flowers, taught sewing, making mats, and carpentry. Much interest is being manifested in the school garden. Amount collected, \$22.23, Expended, \$6.63. Balance in treasury, \$15.60.

Pole Road School, Principal, Emma J. Washington

Set out hedge, built a large pavilion, white washed the trees, planted flowers, taught domestic science, sewing, fancy work, laundry work, paper cutting, mats and carpentry. Much interest is being manifested in the school garden. Amount collected, \$25.00, Expended, \$10.00. Balance in treasury, \$15.00.

Mountain Road School, Principal, Margaret L. Brooks

White washed trees, taught domestic science, sewing, and carpentry, kept the yard in good condition. Amount collected, \$23.00, Expended, \$12.63. Balance in treasury, \$10.37.

Brookland School, Teacher, Lucy Wallace

Planted trees, flowers and hedge, taught sewing and paper cutting. Amount collected, \$10.00, Expended \$4.00 [\$4.00]. Balance in treasury, \$6.00.

Coal Pitt School, Teacher, Beulah T. Harris

Taught sewing and paper cutting, could do no improvements on yard because property did not belong to the county. Amount collected, \$5.00, Expended, \$2.00. Balance in treasury, \$3.00.

FAIRFIELD DISTRICT

Woodville School, Principal, Ernestine Christian

Set out hedge, white washed fence, planted trees, taught sewing, making mats, bead work and carpentry. Have a stove and cooking utensils ready for a kitchen. Amount collected, \$7.85, Expended, \$2.85. Balance in treasury, \$5.00.

Benedict School, Teacher, Marion Steward

Taught sewing, making baskets, mats, boxes, and carpentry. Amount collected, \$3.02, Expended, \$3.02. Balance in treasury, ---.

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New Bridge School, Teacher, Racilia Steward

Taught sewing, making baskets, mats, boxes and carpentry. Amount collected, \$8.38, Expended, \$8.38, Balance in treasury, ---.

Boa Swamp School, Teacher, Annie M. Whiting

Planted trees and flowers, taught sewing and making baskets. Amount collected, \$3.00, Expended, \$1.00. Balance in treasury, \$2.00.

Seven Pines School, Teacher, Corinne Stutely

Planted trees and hedge, built wood house, belfry, bought a large bell. Amount collected, \$10.35, Expended, \$4.00. Balance in treasury, \$6.35.

TUCKAHOE DISTRICT

Westwood School, Teacher, Virginia A. Taylor

Planted trees and flowers, white washed, taught sewing, shuck mats and carpentry. Amount collected, \$12.00, Expended, \$2.00. Balance in treasury, \$10.00.

Green's School, Teacher, Pearl B. Rowe

Planted trees and flowers, taught sewing and needlework. Amount collected, \$9.00, Expended, \$6.00. Balance in treasury, \$3.00.

Zion Town School, Teacher, Amanda Brown

Cleaned up an acre of ground and turned it into a lawn, taught domestic science, sewing and needlework. Much interest is being manifested in the school garden. Amount collected, \$29.47, Expended, \$16.69. Balance in treasury, \$12.78.

Carbon Hill School, Teacher, Mabel V. Harris

Plowed up ground and made a twenty ft. walk, planted trees, rooted up stumps, taught domestic science and sewing. Amount collected, \$14.18, Expended, \$4.00. Balance in treasury, \$10.18.

Springfield School, Teacher, Bessie B. Langhorne

Planted trees, flowers and hedge, taught domestic science, sewing, and carpentry. Amount collected, \$15.10, Expended, \$3.10. Balance in treasury, \$12.00

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Quioccasin School, Teacher, Mattie E. Tyler

Plowed up ground and made a thirty ft. walk, planted trees, set out hedges, put benches in the yard, taught domestic science, sewing and carpentry. Amount collected, \$15.34, Expended, \$3.00. Balance in treasury, \$12.34.

VARINA DISTRICT

Sydney School, Teacher, Martha Ross

The Chairman of Varina Board, Mr. S. C. Freeman, knowing how hard the teacher and patrons were working to build up their school, sent a good many workmen that he employed at Curls Neck Farm, to the school and fenced in the yard, put up belfry and bell, graveled the walk, built a porch, made benches and set out hedges; free of charge. He also assisted many other schools whenever called upon. Taught sewing and needlework. Amount collected, \$5.30, Expended, \$1.50. Balance in treasury, \$3.80.

Bethel School, Principal, Estelle Ford

Made a ten ft. walk in front of school with flower borders, taught sewing and making shuck mats. Amount collected, \$9.42, Expended, \$1.91. Balance in treasury, \$7.51.

St. James School, Teacher, Susie Monroe

Planted trees and flowers, taught sewing. Amount collected, \$10.00, Expended, \$1.05. Balance in treasury, \$8.95.

Chatsworth School, Teacher, Blanche M. Kenny

Owing to the teaching in a rented place, could not do any planting, but taught agriculture in the school room, also taught sewing, and making baskets. Amount collected \$3.00, Expended, \$1.10. Balance in treasury, \$1.90.

Gravel Hill School, Principal, Mannie B. Jackson

Fenced in the school grounds, planted trees and flowers, taught domestic science, sewing and needlework. Amount collected, \$40.80, Expended, \$3.00. Balance in treasury, \$37.80.

No. of schools, 22

No. of visits during term, 190

Amount collected, \$331.49

Amount expended, \$108.81

Balance in the different treas. to date for stoves and cooking utensils next term, \$222.68.

I am indeed proud of the interest manifested by each teacher in carrying on the Manual Training work. Every school without any exception took hold of the work willingly and cheerfully, one can but admire the energetic efforts put forth by each teacher to carry out every

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suggestion that pertained to the advancement of the work. I hope by the beginning of next term, kitchens will be built in all the schools.

Respectfully submitted
Virginia Estelle Randolph

Jones, Lance G. E. *The Jeanes Teacher in the United States, 1908–1933*. (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1937), 127–132.