

Martin School

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Date: Unknown

Source: Mr. and Mrs. Collins F. Kindred collection

Families living west of the "big road," now Highway 169, two and one-half miles south of Smithville, decided their children had too far to walk to school. From this urgent need a new school district was organized. This one-room school was located in the center of four larger districts, namely: Smithville, on the north; Oak Grove, on the west; Second Creek, on the South, and Woods, on the east side. The land was purchased from Emma B. Fletcher and husband Naylor Fletcher for a consideration of \$40.00 on September 24, 1896, and is just across the road north from the home of Mrs. Martha (D.W.) Martin and sons, Perry, John, Jefferson and James Martin. The name Martin School originated from this family.

The exact school plot was located in School District No. 16, Township 53, Range 33, and is part of the southwest fractional quarter of Section 34, Township 53, Range 33 beginning at a point in the south line of said section 34, thence north 8.30, containing about one acre free and clear of any encumbrance except taxes assessed for the year 1897. This information is recorded in the Recorder's office at the Clay County Courthouse, and was signed by Notary Public, Preston T. Aker.

The first trustees for this district school were James Shepard, Sr., Perry Martin and Cornelius H. Woods, Sr. The first teacher was Miss Lena Ecton, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. George Ecton, prominent residents nine miles east of Smithville. She was later the wife of Sheriff Dee Pence. Miss Maude Pittman from Independence was the next teacher. Miss Alma Berry, wife of Dr. J.R. Woods, taught one year; Miss Winnifred Fann, sister of Hugh R. Fann was the next teacher.

Other teachers who were graduates of Prof. W.E.A. Aul's Academy Normal were Henry Esler, one year; and his sister, Miss Mary Esler, two years (1903-04); Miss Delma Thomas, wife of Elma Porter; Miss Maud Oliver, sister of J.W. Oliver of Hoover; Miss Sarah Walker and Miss Mary Walker were sisters and taught five years at Martin School.

The directors in 1913 were Dick Gosney, John Bullock and P.N. Shepard. Lela Harbaugh Kindred taught in 1913. Miss Florence Strange, daughter of Wm. Strange, taught in 1915; Miss Alice Waggy taught; Miss Alice Yates taught 1918-19; Artie Jesse Coleman taught 1920-21. Miss Frances Robinson taught three years. Georgia Simmons Coleman, daughter of W.D. Simmons, taught in 1924-25. Later teachers were: Miss Marie Wilson (Mrs. George Kerr); Miss Wilma McComb (Mrs. George Tatman); Miss Irene Baxter, three years; Miss Lois Fann, two years; Robert Arnold (1940-42); Mrs. Laura Ayers, from Mission, Kansas, was the next teacher for three years until 1945. In 1945 there were only a few pupils, and it was decided to transport the children to the Smithville schools. Mrs. Pearl Wallace transported the children from the Martin School District to Smithville grade and high school as this district was annexed to Smithville.