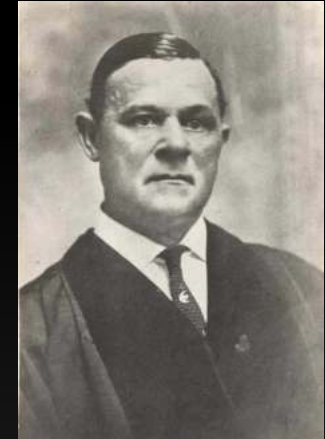


# The Cultures of Teaching: Community Commitments & Local Black Educators

Eric Wilson, Executive Director, Rockbridge Historical Society



## Local Black Histories: Virtual Access, Lasting Archive

As our e-Newsletters roll out this series in the coming months, please check back in to see what new materials we've added. You can click hotlinks to access sites, or download full articles. Please [Contact Us](#) with your Questions, or suggestions for additions, or to add join the email list for latest releases, additions, and notice of relevant events.

Note: Resources with an \* have been produced in conjunction with RHS Programs or Publications.



### Series Overview

\*Eric Wilson, [Local Black Histories: Virtual Access, Lasting Archive](#)

### Free Blacks & Slavery in Rockbridge, Virginia

\*David Coffey, [Patrick Henry, Free Man of Color: Caretaker of Thomas Jefferson's Natural Bridge](#)

Turk McCleskey, [The Road to Black Ned's Forge: A Story of Race, Sex, and Trade on the Colonial American Frontier](#) (+ video lecture)

Ted DeLaney, [John Chavis: Soldier, Minister, Educator & America's First African American College Student, at Washington College](#): (+ 3 min audio profile)

Melvin Patrick Ely, [Israel on the Appomattox: A Southern Experiment in Freedom from 1790 to the Civil War](#) (+ radio interview)

\*Fitzhugh Brundage, [Attitudes towards Slavery in Antebellum Rockbridge County](#)

Neely Young, [Ripe for Emancipation: Rockbridge and Anti-Slavery from Revolution to Civil War](#)

\*Charles Dew, [Master and Slave at Buffalo Forge](#)

Larry Spurgeon, [Stonewall Jackson's Slaves](#)

\*Eric Wilson, [Re-Visiting a Rockbridge Icon: Archer Alexander's Journeys as a Local Slave, a Self-Emancipated War Hero, as a National Monument](#)

### Journeys to Juneteenth

\*Eric Wilson, [Journeys to Juneteenth](#)

Henry Louis Gates, Jr. & PBS, [What is Juneteenth?](#)

New York Times Interactive, [How We Juneteenth](#)

[Juneteenth Art Show 2020](#): Project Horizon and Nelson Gallery



## Aspects of Black Religious and Educational Development in Lexington, Virginia, 1840-1928

Theodore C. DeLaney, Jr.



WRITING in the *Negro History Bulletin* in 1939, Carter G. Woodson, a noted black educator, stated, "A definitive history of the Negro Church . . . would leave practically no phase of the history of the Negro in America untouched."<sup>1</sup> This quote provided great inspiration for me as I searched for a place to begin the task of compiling a history of black people in the Lexington area. The history which follows is by no means complete but represents a mere scratch of the surface.

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*Theodore C. DeLaney, Jr.*, was a technical assistant in the Biology Department at Washington and Lee University at the time he made his address at the First Baptist Church in Lexington on January 26, 1981. He revised his paper for this publication in 1989, while a graduate student in history at the College of William and Mary. He is the great-grandson of the architect, contractor, and builder of the Randolph Street Methodist Church.

# RHS Local Black Histories RockbridgeHistory.org

LYLBURN DOWNING SCHOOL

IS LISTED IN THE

NATIONAL REGISTER  
OF HISTORIC PLACES

BY THE UNITED STATES  
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

1927-1965





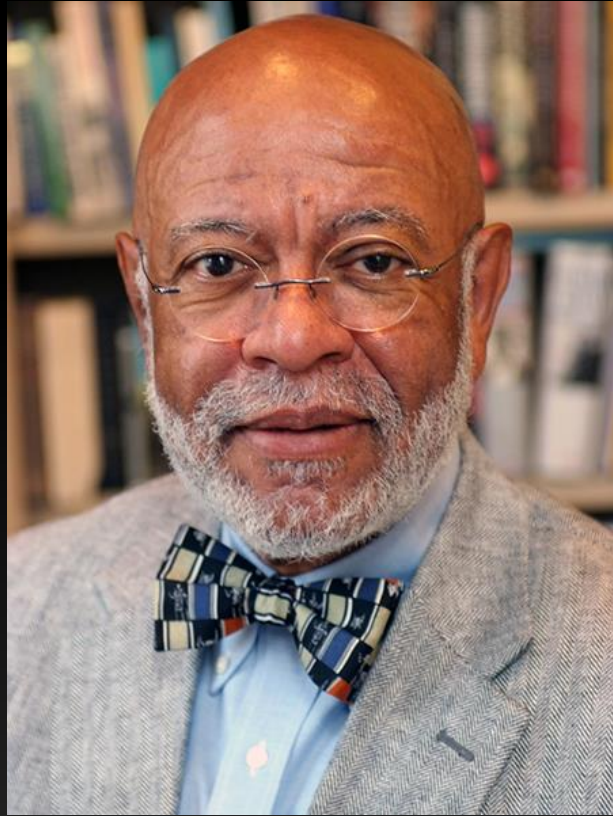
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## Lylburn Downing School

Lylburn Downing School opened here in 1927 after the Home and School League, an organization of local Black parents and citizens, campaigned for equitable schools. Built with financial support from the Black community, Rockbridge County, and the Rosenwald Fund, the countywide school first served grades 1-9 and expanded to include a high school in the 1940s. Desegregation closed the original edifice in 1965, but the newer buildings became Lexington's middle school. Lylburn Downing (1862-1937) was born enslaved in Lexington, attended Lincoln University, and was pastor of Roanoke's Fifth Avenue Presbyterian Church for more than 40 years. He was a long-time advocate for African American education.

Department of Historic Resources, 2021



**Educators &  
Local Students  
Lexington's Two Black Schools**

# Major Shifts in People and Place

Local Desegregation (1965) → HS Consolidation (1992)

**Who Studies? What Communities do Students Come From?**

**Who Teaches? Who Coaches? Who Plays? (Who Doesn't?)**

**More & More Diverse Course Offerings... Class Sizes?**

**Blending 'School Cultures'?**

# Thinking Back to Your School Histories

*(whether as Students, Teachers, or Parents)*

How did YOU get to SCHOOL??

Practical Transportation?  
Generational Uplift?

*Personal Memories ~ Social & Systemic Patterns*

# Trial Integration Here: Fall 1964 10 years after Brown v. Board

*Approved by Virginia Pupil Placement Board:*

3 pupils to integrate Ann Smith 'Kindergarten' School

1 transfer from Downing Elementary to Central Elem.

2 transfers from Downing High to Lexington High

LEXINGTON, VIRGINIA, WEDNESDAY, JUNE 17, 1964

## Locality One Of Eleven:

# State Board Sets First Integration In Schools Here

Rockbridge County will be one of 11 school districts in the state beginning racial integration of the public schools for the first time this fall, according to assignments approved last week by the State Pupil Placement Board.

★ Applications for placement of six Negro pupils in previously all-white schools here had been forwarded to the state board by local school authorities with the recommendation that they be favorably acted upon.

The state board approved the assignments as follows: three pupils to enter the first grade at Ann Smith School in Lexington; one pupil to transfer from Lyburn Downing School to the fifth grade at Central School; and two pupils to transfer from Lyburn

Downing School to Lexington High School.

The other localities which will be experiencing integration for the first time in September are Wytbe, Bath, Halifax, Gloucester, Page and Rockingham counties, and the cities of Bristol, Norton, Suffolk and Harrisonburg.

The state board also gave its approval to a plan whereby Giles County becomes the first state locality to have total integration of all public schools. Giles will close its two Negro schools and the 131 Negro pupils will be transferred to other schools. The county has a total school population of 4,500.

Pre-Trial Meet

# The News-Gazette

The best-read newspaper in the Rockbridge area

USPS 388-060

ABC Audited Circulation

LEXINGTON, VIRGINIA, WEDNESDAY, MARCH 29, 1989

Single Copy Price 35¢

VOL. 188,

## School Vote Scheduled Tuesday

### Area Voters To Settle School Issue

By DARRYL WOODSON

It is once again decision time in Rockbridge County.

Several years of discussions, negotiations, politicking and heated arguments — all part of the 1980s school consolidation debate — will come down to next Tuesday's referendum.

County voters will be asked whether or not they want the county to issue up to \$13.2 million in gen-

### County, City Near H.S. Agreement

#### City Would Pay 20 Percent Of Building Costs, County Would Run School

By DARRYL WOODSON

Rockbridge County and Lexington leaders this week are within one paragraph of reaching an agreement on high school consolidation.

The agreement, if the differences in that one paragraph are worked out, would commit

agreement states.

The agreement would also become a moot issue if the city and county eventually reach an agreement on total school system consolidation. The arrangements for construction and operation of the high school would be included in the school system merger plan.

### School Plan On Ballot In Spirit

Question: Shall Rockbridge County be allowed to issue general obligation bonds in an amount not to exceed THIRTEEN MILLION TWO HUNDRED THOUSAND DOLLARS (\$13,200,000), the proceeds of which are to be used for school purposes and to contract a debt therefore?

By DARRYL WOODSON

When Rockbridge County voters go to the polls next week, the phrase "consolidated high school" will not be on the ballot.

But — because of actions and comments by county leaders and this week's city-county "near" agreement — it will be there in spirit.

That the ballot mentions only "for school purposes" and does not specify that the money will be used for the new consolidated high school has caused concern among some people. They are concerned

the traditional way such bond referendums are written and the way prescribed by state statute said.

Charles Trimble, chairman of the Board of Supervisors, said last week that he feels confident bonds, if approved, would be used only for the consolidated high school. He noted that four of the supervisors said at the public hearing on the referendum in February that if the bonds pass in the referendum, they would vote to issue the bonds for the purpose of building the new school. He also noted the resolution asking for the referendum stated

## Debating School Consolidation in Rockbridge, 1970s-80s

*Rockbridge County Residents Approve \$13 Million in Bonds to Fund High School Consolidation:*  
March 29, 1989 ~ With 40% Voter Turnout, Passes by only 30 votes: 1,398 Approve – 1,368 Against



# Students Concerned With School Plan

By DARRYL WOODSON

Editor's note: The impact of last Wednesday's vote by the Rockbridge County School Board to consolidate the high schools at Lexington High School has hit the students hardest of all.

To get the reactions of some of the high school students who will be affected, photographers Greg Moore and Claudia Schwab were sent to LHS, Rockbridge High School and Natural Bridge High School Friday to interview the student council leaders.

Below are some of their comments.

## NATURAL BRIDGE HIGH SCHOOL

Marci Irvine, a junior who has been elected the SCA president for next year, said, "I was mad when I found out about it."

"You read about it in the newspaper one day, and you wake up the next morning and the paper says we're going to LHS next year."

"Just the thought of them (the School Board) just up and saying 'You're going to LHS next year' makes me mad. Everything we had built here at NBHS was just torn down."

Carrie St. Clair, a sophomore, will be the SCA vice president next year:

"I believe the School Board jumped the gun. I think something this big should take time and be thought out and planned carefully before they (the School Board) do it. It is as if they decided this overnight."

"Everyone is on the phone discussing what we can do to prevent this from happening. Is it fair to us? How can we concentrate on our exams with this happening?"

## ROCKBRIDGE HIGH SCHOOL

Phillip Thompson, a junior who will be the SCA president next year,



AT ROCKBRIDGE HIGH SCHOOL late last week, Principal Larry Bond meets with student council officers to discuss the proposed consolidation of high schools next year. The officers include (from left) Phillip Thompson, 1987-88 president; Robbie Bowers, 1987-88 vice president; Ronda Williams, 1987-88 secretary; and Todd Snider, 1987-88 treasurer. Assistant Superintendent Glen Stark asked school principals at RHS, Lexington High School and Natural Bridge High School to meet with their respective student leaders to help identify student needs in a consolidated program. (staff photo by Moore)

had this to say about the decision.

"I feel that in this whole deal, nobody has even considered the students' opinion in this proposal for consolidation. Three people just went ahead and railroaded it all and shoved it at everybody. They are trying to do it all by themselves..."

"Three people are running the whole show right now, and they are telling Lexington City schools that they are going to kick the ninth grade out and bring in the county students whether you like it or not."

"There's just no way you can consolidate in three months and do it right."

RHS sophomore Robbie Bowers, who was elected vice president of the

student council for next year, said,

"I'm in favor of consolidation, but I don't feel this is the right way to do it. It's just not fair to just rush into things like this."

"They (the School Board) should just wait until they can get the money and the backing of the people and then go ahead and consolidate."

Ronda Williams, a junior, will be the SCA secretary next year.

"I think that they are moving into this way too fast. One summer to have everything ready is not enough time."

"They talk about things Lexington has and that Rockbridge doesn't have, but some of the things Lexington has aren't too desirable. They

have to go through scheduling all over again."

Jack DeCourcy has been elected vice president at LHS for next year.

He said, "I support consolidation, but I don't think it's going to work if they try to rush it through in three months. They're going to have to reschedule everything ... They're going to have problems next year with athletic teams. If they wait and do it the year after next, things will go a lot more smoothly."

"Mr. Reynolds (the principal) called in each class separately and explained consolidation as best he could. The students were really angry. At first, nobody wanted consolidation, but after the meeting, people began



# CONSOLIDATION

Student Advocacy: Purpose, Patience, Partnership - 1987 → 1990 → 1992  
Supt. Philip Thompson, former SCA President



## **Lylburn Downing Students & Mr. James Lyle, 1957**

**W&L Prof. Ted DeLaney: Student in this Graduating Class, 1961**

Downing School Pictures on Facebook: [\*Lylburn Downing Alumni 1928-1965\*](#)



## **1962 Lylburn Downing Faculty: School Library**

Principal & Band Director: U.B. Broadneaux, Sr. ; Rev. Lylburn Downing (Portrait)



**Lylburn Downing High School, 1965**  
Last Graduating Class ~ Last School Faculty



**Randolph St. Schoolhouse, 1865-1927 (Methodist Church, left)**  
variously known as Central School, Freedmen's School, Lexington Colored Graded School

# The strange saga of an old public school for blacks

*The first public school for black students here was first a white school, then a smallpox hospital, then a house, and finally, a place of learning again.*

There's nothing left of it, and no marker to show just where it was or what it meant to the community.

But back before the Civil War, there was a small school house near the old church on Randolph Street. It was the first school here known as the "Central School." It was built in 1819, abandoned, sold, used as a house, abandoned again, and after a few twists and turns, used once again as a school.

During the war, for a few months, what had been the Central School became a smallpox hospital.

It was then sold to a woman who said she bought it as an investment with money she'd saved from her job as a "matron" at Rockbridge Alum Springs.

After the war, the Freedmen's Bureau rented the building for use as a school for black children.

And while the Bureau was running that school, the community it served was raising money to ensure there would still be a school for black children once the Bureau was gone.

There is not much of a paper trail documenting those fundraising efforts. There is one small piece: a bill from September, 1868. It's for 16 dozen eggs, three pounds of sugar, 2 1/2 pounds of raisins, and \$3 worth of candy that were apparently used to raise money.

And there are some notations in an old ledger: "February 19, 1873, Proceeds of festival: \$75.

it was abandoned as a school for white children. But in January, 1860, he sold it to the mayor and town council "during the prevalence of smallpox in the Town of Lexington ... for a hospital."

The folks who were quarantined in the hospital were a "Mr. Hillis" and his whole family. They "had had the small pox, and he would not remain in it, for nobody would go to see him," said one witness. So, in October of the same year, with the smallpox epidemic apparently under control, the property was sold to the church next door, which almost immediately sold it to William Rhodes and several others. (One of Rhodes' partners in the venture was the mayor.)

The partners didn't keep it for very long — just long enough to sell it to Jane Cobb in 1863 for \$850, and long enough to be sued.

When the partners sold it to Cobb, it was occupied by a blacksmith, a man named Peyton Suthard. He sued in an attempt to overturn the sale. He won an injunction, but lost the battle.

Suthard claimed he was lured to town "at the urgent solicitation" of Rhodes, a carriage maker, "who said he felt bound in gratitude to do something for him and his daughter, the half-sister of [Rhodes]. Suthard had married Rhodes' mother after her husband died, and helped rear her children. Before moving to Lexington, Suthard was living in "the lower end of the Valley, and was doing as well as could be expected with his very moderate means."

Rhodes moved Suthard and his family into the old school, which he described as "a small one story house with but two rooms, one fireplace in one of them, and a few outdoor conveniences. The garden was grown up with brush, the fences were ready to fall down." The house had been a school.

"About the time the war broke out," Suthard said, he was ready to go back home, but Rhodes talked him into staying and gave him a job as a collier. Suthard said he had

## *Aspects of Black Religious and Educational Development in Lexington, Virginia, 1840-1928*

Theodore C. DeLaney, Jr.



WRITING in the *Negro History Bulletin* in 1939, Carter G. Woodson, a noted black educator, stated, "A definitive history of the Negro Church . . . would leave practically no phase of the history of the Negro in America untouched."<sup>1</sup> This quote provided great inspiration for me as I searched for a place to begin the task of compiling a history of black people in the Lexington area. The history which follows is by no means complete but represents a mere scratch of the surface.

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Doug Harwood & Ted DeLaney on Lexington's Educational Growth: [RockbridgeHistory.org](http://RockbridgeHistory.org)  
DeLaney Article for RHS: Link [HERE](#)

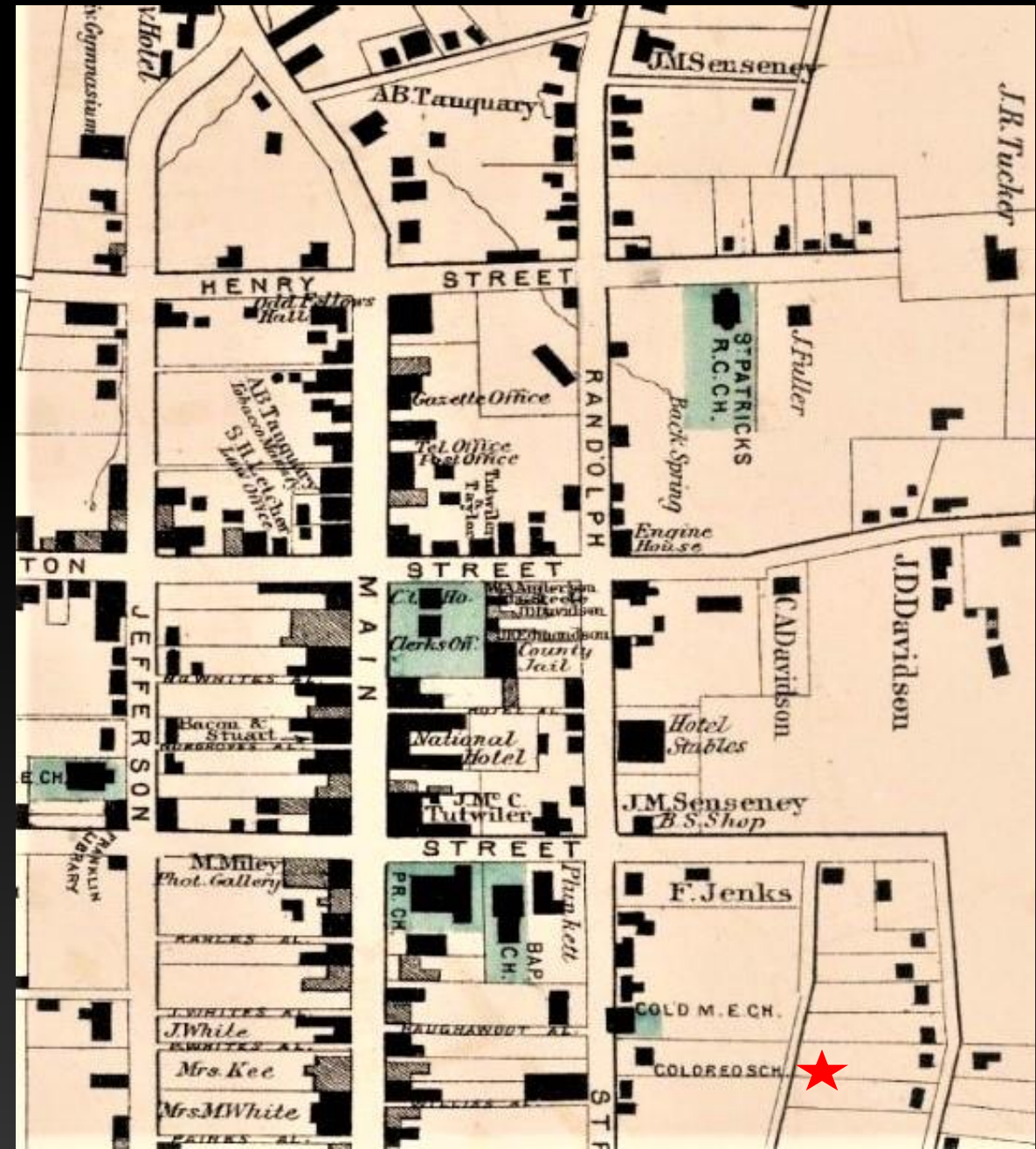
# Lexington, 1877 (Gray's Map)

At bottom, S. Randolph Street:

## Colored School (est. 1865)

## Colored Methodist Episcopal Church (1865)

(Randolph St. United Methodist Church)



# Lexington Colored Graded School

LEXINGTON, VIRGINIA

*Robert Lee Clark*

having completed the prescribed Course of Study for

*Grammar Grades in this School is hereby declared a Graduate of the Lexington Colored Graded School.*

*In testimony whereof this Certificate is now presented to him*

*Given at Lexington, Virginia, this 12<sup>th</sup> day of May, 1914*

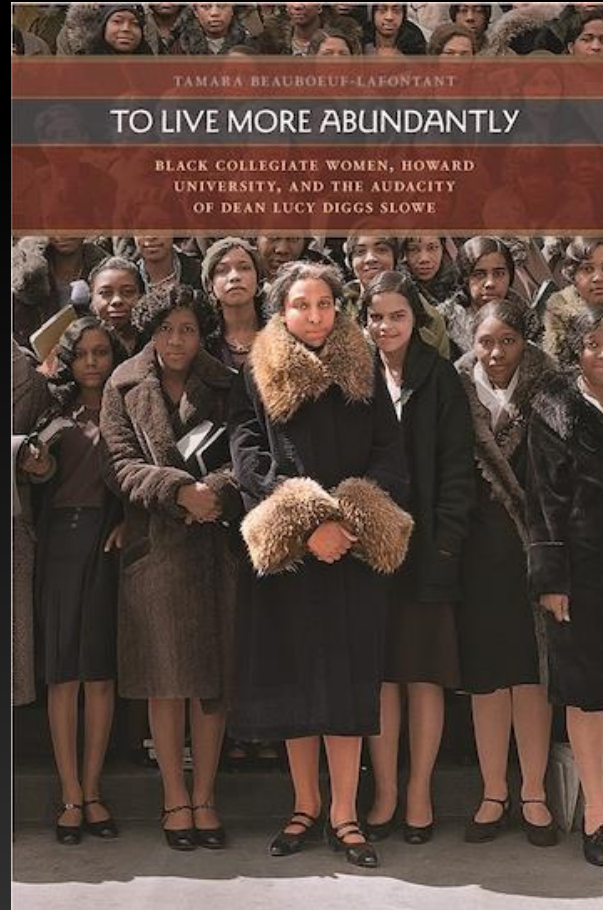
*W. K. P. Harris*, Principal

**Robert Lee Clark: 1914 Diploma, Grammar Grades (RHS Collections)**

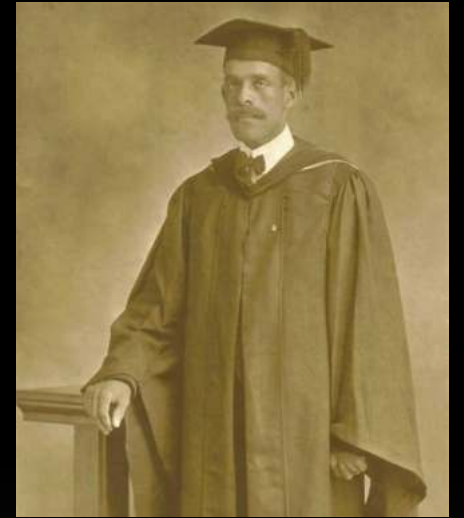
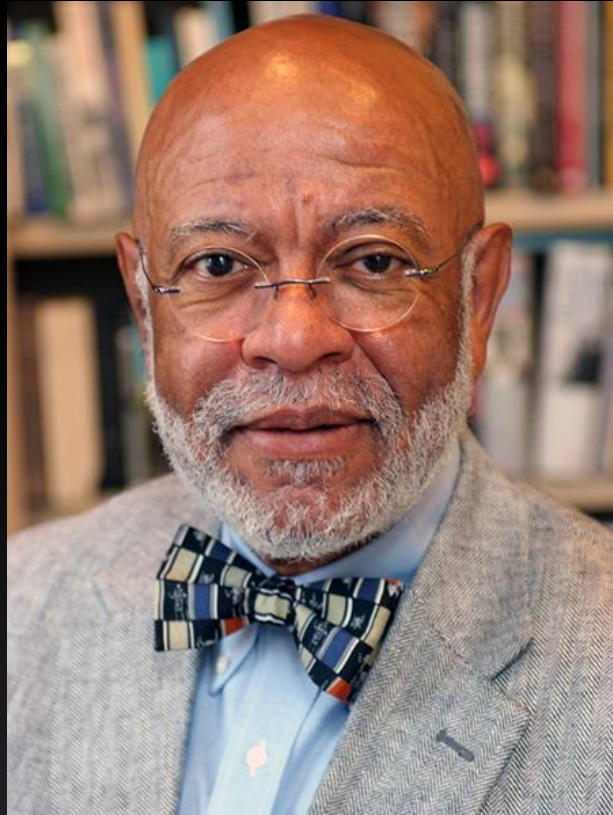


# Lucy Diggs Slowe

b. 1885, moved to Lexington with Aunt → Lexington Freedmen's School until Age 13 → H.S. in Baltimore  
Howard University Valedictorian 1908; Oratory Student of Prof. Coralie Cook; 1<sup>st</sup> National Tennis Champion ATA  
Co-Founder, AKA Sorority (1908) and National Assoc. of College Women (1922); 1<sup>st</sup> Dean of Women, Howard U (1922)



*From Orphan to Dean → Inspiring Women's Leadership*



**Educators &  
Local Students  
Lexington's Two Black Schools**

# Lexington School Board Minutes

## 1920 Scale of Salaries + Bonuses

5 Black Faculty at "Col'd Sch." (Randolph St.)

10 White Faculty (all "Miss": HS + Grade School)

Mrs. H. White, Music (\$400)

Principal Harrington Waddell (\$2600)

Courtesy, Ted DeLaney

Lylburn Downing Alumni Digital Archive, 1928-1965

Lexington School Bd. Record Book - Trustees Meetings 123  
5 May 1920

The Board ordered a bonus to be paid the teachers for the present session and fixed the scale of salaries for the next session as given in the following list of teachers with the amounts after each name:

		Bonus 1919-20	Salary 1920-21
	H. Waddell, Prin	\$175.00	\$2600. per yr.
H.S.	Miss Richeson	95 64.00	110.00 " "
	" Carter	60.00	104.00 " "
	" Rowe	60.00	104.00 " "
	" Drame	90 60.00	104.00 " "
	" Varner	80 52.00	92.00 " "
G.S.	" Dunlap	75 44.00	86.00 " "
	" Wiley	70 45.00	86.00 " "
	" Pustou	75 49.00	86.00 " "
	" Pendleton	45.00	86.00 " "
	" Grosse clove	85 56.00	101.00 " "
Col'd Sch.	Mrs. Rowland	55 17.50	60.00 " "
	Saua Price	40 17.50	45.00 " "
	Kissie Banks	40 17.50	45.00 " "
	Nellie White	40 17.50	45.00 " "
	Margaret Brown	40 17.50	45.00 " "
	Mrs. H. White music teacher		\$400 per yr.

✓ = accepted

Adjourned. H. Waddell, Clerk.  
Agnes Adair 46.00 per mo. Lucy Lindsey 80.00  
Francis Glasgow 93.00 " "

LEXING

# THE STAR

## COLORED PEOPLE AROUSED

★ Home and School League Organized Oct. 3rd

READ THE STAR

WEEK FOR THE TRUTH

Lexington Va,  
November 23-22

The Lexington Star  
Published Every  
Week in interest of  
The Community.

C.M. Wood, Editor.

W.N. Holt and Sons  
publishers  
Mrs. E. J. Holt, Owner

### REPORT OF SCHOOL BOARD TO LEAGUE

#### Result of Interview Favorable

The result accomplished by the work of the Home and School League has been far reaching and worthy of all the time taken and trouble incurred. The League was attacked in every side by its adversaries especially among some of our leaders. Some taking the issue to themselves personally, others apparently standing on the fence between the facts and justice of the case, and favorite friend, who have bought them with a price. Such a person is neither hot nor cold, and thus they are sickening on the stomach of the Devil or the Lord, such a one is distasteful to both. Then there are others constituting the laity who are following the opposing faction, not be-

...course instead of ten years as  
...fore.  
...to those who contended that  
the efforts of the League was vain  
and foolish will see the results in the  
same light unless he is willing to  
endorse its contentions at the last  
The League is open to membership  
...in the first and third Monday nights  
in each month. It emplores each  
and everyone to avail him or herself  
of the opportunity to join and work  
some to the community about you.  
For more than a half century our  
preachers have been preaching our  
beings full of dying religion. That  
is very good; but in connection with  
this please preach as some religion  
by which we can live. There is no  
better evidence that we are going to  
let some religion to live by than the  
fact that Rev. W. N. Holt of the  
Methodist church has done his share  
to lead the sheep about him with the  
gospel.  
A poor, wretched, semi-enslaved  
man want serve and worship as an

- ★ E. M. Walker
- H. L. Walker
- Janeva Williams
- L. R. Freeman
- Mrs. Sinton
- Mary Williams
- Erk Poindexter
- Lewis Richardson
- Marcella Williams
- Nelson Washington
- Virginia Washington
- George Gilbert
- Mrs. Richardson
- Nellie Franklia
- Mary Lou Jackson
- Lafayette Morris
- Stella Jones
- Evelyn N. Jackson
- Gus Jackson
- Virginia Gillam
- J. B. Thompson
- J. E. Roane
- Preston White
- Alice Jackson
- Frank Morrison
- William Howell
- Jack Franklin
- Eliza Morrison

Parent ~ Community Advocacy: Home & School League  
1922 Name-Specific Petition to Build a New School: "Colored People Aroused"

in the death of his mother

Thanksgiving Dinner For The Aged At Randolph St M E CHURCH Thanksgiving Service 11 A M Dinner at 1

Special Sermon by Rev. Holt. Nov. 26 at 8-p-m Come and hear it

friends both colored and white who are commencing the work taken. Many of these friends are amazed to know that others in lead have failed to give such an important issue the cold shoulder.

It is a sad commentary on our people to value friends so dearly that the sacrifice of a race is the price of them. They may think that they are preserving friends and steering clear of enemies but they are making failure in either alternative.

Those who could have been mighty captains in the fight, have sat idly by catering to friends and prejudices. Despite all, the League has much to be thankful for. The result of the work speaks for itself. If the tree of intellectuality planted bears abundance of good fruit the victor and victim alike will enjoy the fruit of the harvest.

The following points have been conceded by the Board. (1) One year constitutes the work of the first and second grade each, where before it took two years each; (2) Sunday School Lessons which were taught in the upper classes by the principal have been struck out. This was absolutely out of place, depriving the church of its mission. (3) The Public School Building is granted to the League as a permanent place of its meetings.

The points yet under consideration, are. (1) the granting of a nine months school year, and (2) allotting seven years to do a complete elementary

The League was not organized lone for the work just mentioned, but, rather, there are other problems just as acute as course of study. The Leagues need recruits to wage the campaign. It is time now for our people to get up and do something for ourselves, and quit begging for what is possible to attain by our own efforts.

In the fight for justice, equity and civil rights, let us forsake, mother, father, brother and sister and press on with an eye single to the goal that is set before us. As we run place our trust in God and our hope in humanity.

Signed, EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE HOME AND SCHOOL LEAGUE

PERSONNEL OF THE HOME AND SCHOOL LEAGUE OFFICERS

President..... Frank Washington Vice-President..... Rev. W. N. Holt Secretary..... C. M. Wood Assistant Secretary..... M. H. Osborne Treasurer..... Grant Johnson

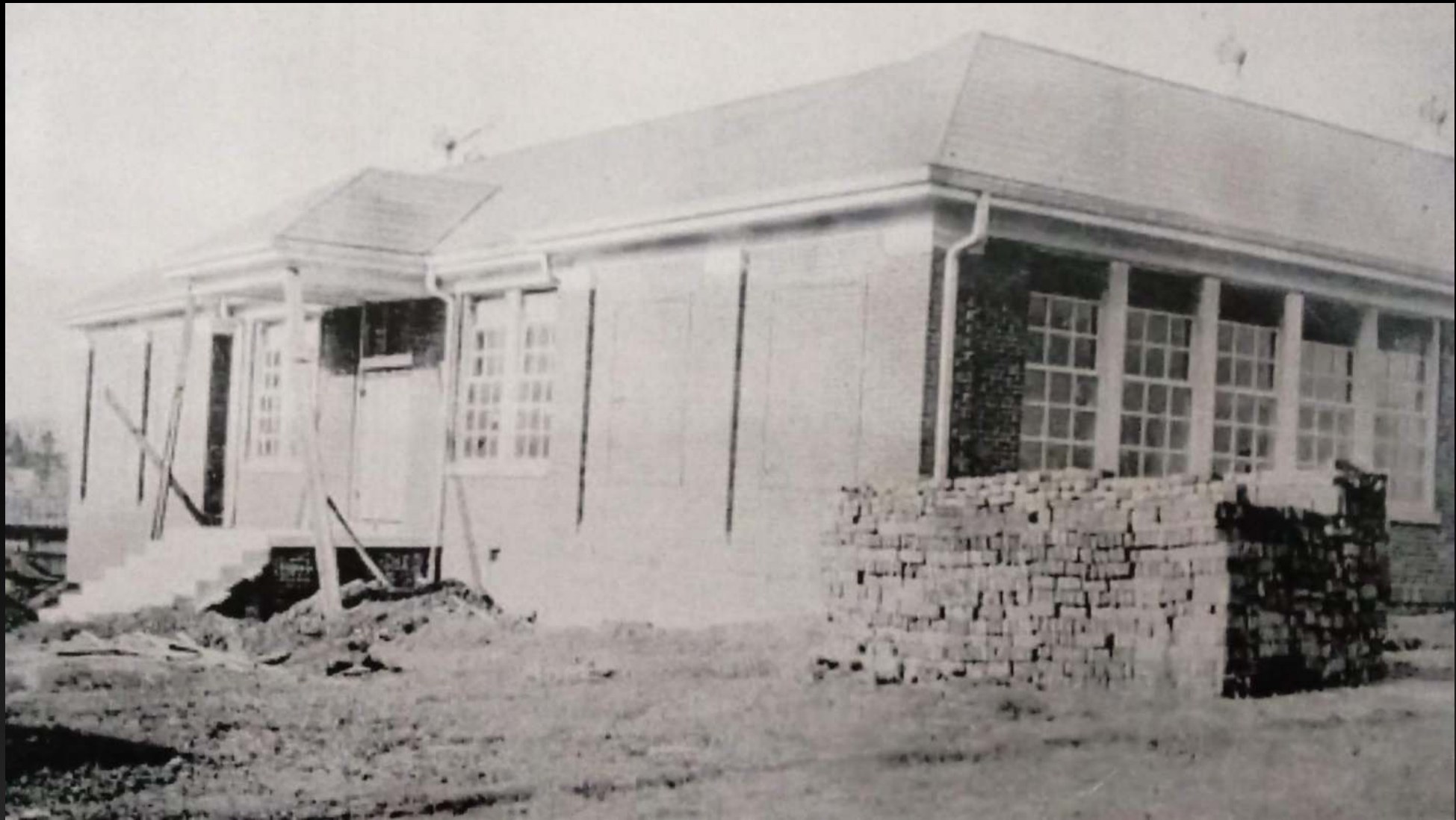
EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE Mrs. Ellie Meyers Mrs. M. S. Jones H. L. Walker Godfrey Washington Chas. Franklin Rev. W. N. Holt, (chair.) C. M. Wood, (Sec'y) Frank Washington

MEMBERS George Alexander Brown Bogus Willie Dock Nannie Wood

Minnie Harris Mrs. Grigsby Mrs. Myers Bob Clarke Jas. Johnson Berta Cawthorne Jas. Stewart John Kenny Julia Dock Annie Hall Jno. Alexander Sam Hamilton Julia Robinson C. M. Wood Chas. Franklin Ellie Myers M. S. Jones Frank Washington Godfrey Washington H. L. Walker W. N. Holt Grant Johnson M. W. Osborne Mable Burnett Mary Johnson A. W. Johnson Minnie Scruggs

The League Meets Every First and Third Mon. Nights at the School Building.

Parent ~ Community Advocacy: Home & School League 1922 Name-Specific Petition to Build a New School: "Colored People Aroused"



**Lexington Finances New School for Black Students, Diamond St.**  
Dedication and Speech by Rev. Lylburn L. Downing Sep. 1927



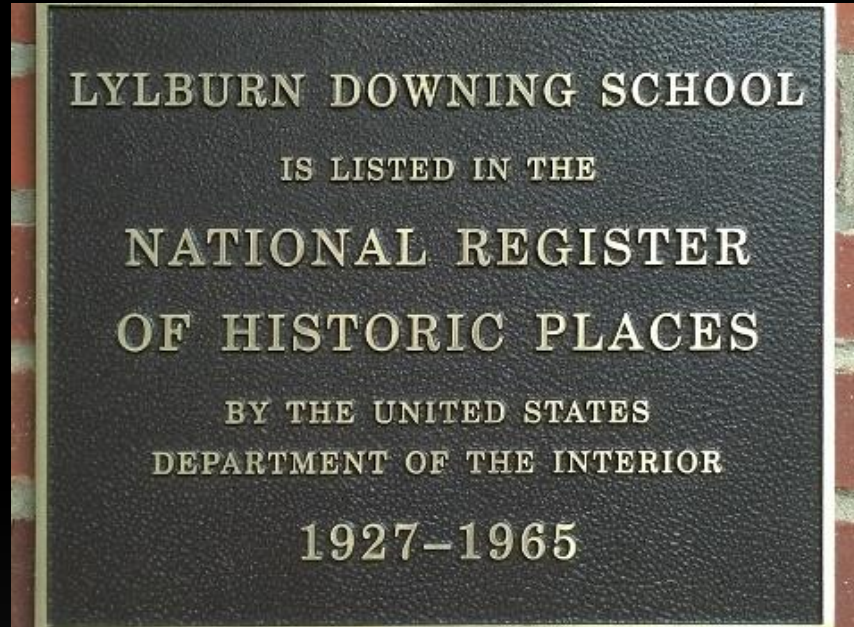
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## Lylburn Downing School

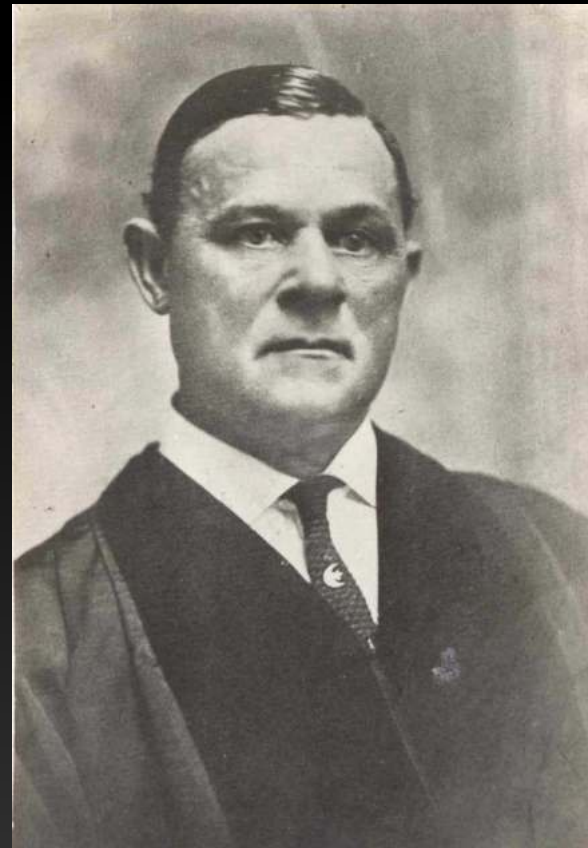
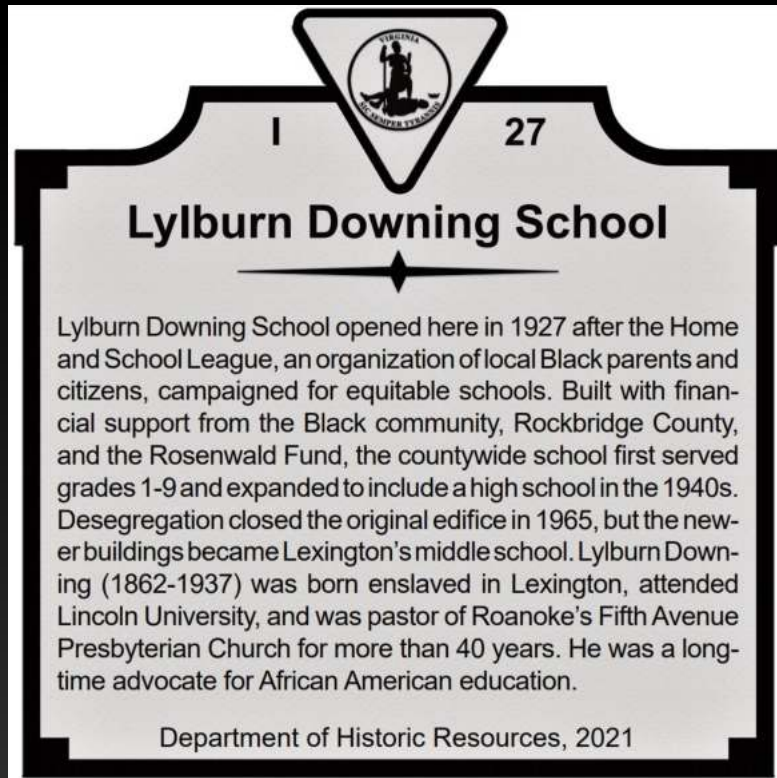
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Department of Historic Resources, 2021



# Lylburn Liggins Downing

*b. enslaved Lexington, 1862; attended Randolph St. Freedmen's School  
Graduated & Ordained, Lincoln University; Presbyterian Pastor in Roanoke,  
Virginia Educational Advocate; School Namesake & Dedication Speaker: 1927*



*Rev. Downing's 1927 Address echoed in Mike Blankenship's speech: LDMS Graduation 2019*



## Petition to the Lexington School Board to Permit the Hiring of a Teacher at Lylburn Downing to Teach the Third Year of High School

This is to certify that we the undersigned parents of the pupils who completed the work at the Lylburn Downing last June, have agreed to pay a teacher for the school year 1932-33 if we can get another year advance work.

We have agreed to have the sum of \$55.00 collected in advance, and turned over by our chairman to the School Board. The teacher to be under the supervision of the Board as the others.

We will appreciate the Board granting us this request, as it is needed now as never before, because of the inability during these times to send our children elsewhere.

Please let us know the cost of equipment in consideration for the advanced year requested, and we will try to

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We will appreciate the Board granting us this request, as it is needed now as never before, because of the inability during these times to send our children elsewhere.

Please let us know the cost of equipment in consideration for the advanced year requested, and we will try to meet the demand. We will do anything cheaper than sending our children away.

Signed:

Sylvester Evans  
Mrs. H. L. Walker  
James Coleman  
Roxie Hughes

P.S. The above agreement is to finding to amount of \$5.00 per person.

meet the demand. We will do anything cheaper than sending our children away.

Signed:

Sylvester Evans  
Mrs. H. L. Walker  
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Roxie Hughes

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# Building Further: Downing Parents in Action

## Volunteering Private Funds to Hire Another HS Grade, 1932



Mr. Sylvester Evans ★

# Building Further → New Students → New High School

Left: Lylburn Downing Students, 1930s

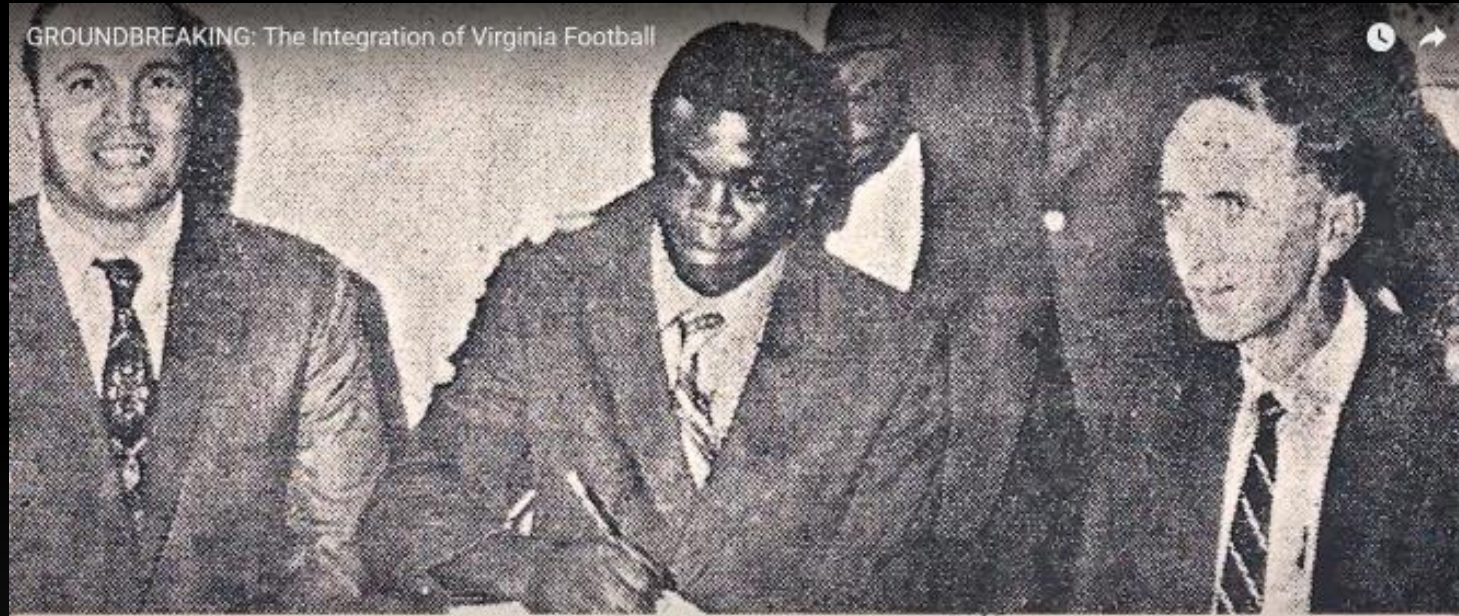
Right: Sylvester Evans: 1932 petition signatory, longtime school steward,  
Grandfather to Lex School Board Member, Vice Mayor Marylin Evans Alexander



## **Building Further → New High School, Class 1944**

**Left: First Graduating High School Class, 1944  
1940s PTA Gathering in Lylburn Downing Auditorium ~ Gymnasium**

GROUNDBREAKING: The Integration of Virginia Football



## Virginia Lands Land

Stanley Land, a 6-3, 210-pound I grew up in a very small town, Fairfield, Virginia. ~~offensive end and~~ offensive fullback for Rockbridge. On his left is assistant coach Dor Lawrence and behind him head coach George Black.



# Family Legacies, Leadership, Groundbreakers

Stanley Land: Son, Vivian Haliburton'44; Grandson, Rockbridge Teacher Jacob Haliburton Downing Class Pres. 1965 → Rockbridge High'70 → First Black Scholarship for UVA Football UVA '74 + Ed School → Rockbridge HS Teacher & Coach → Businessman; Family Genealogist

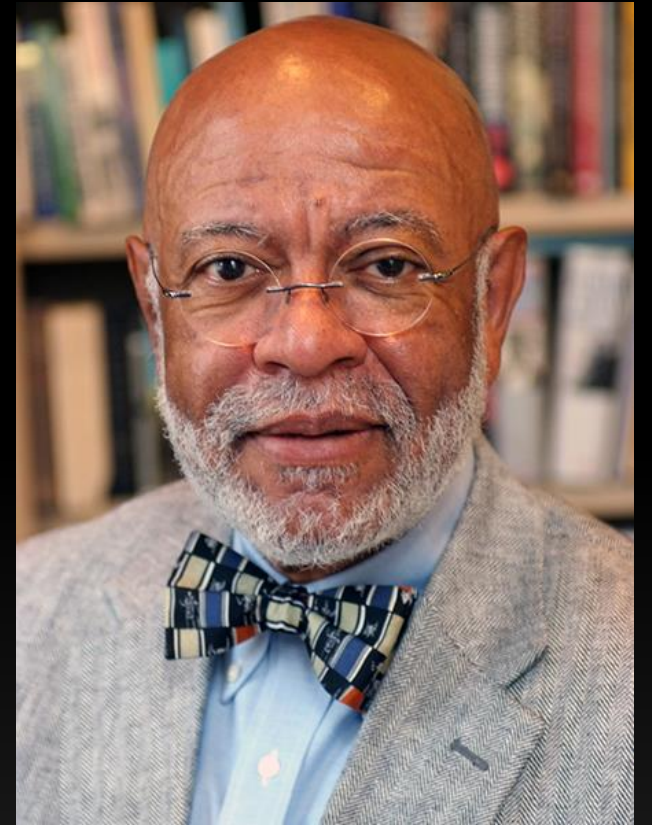
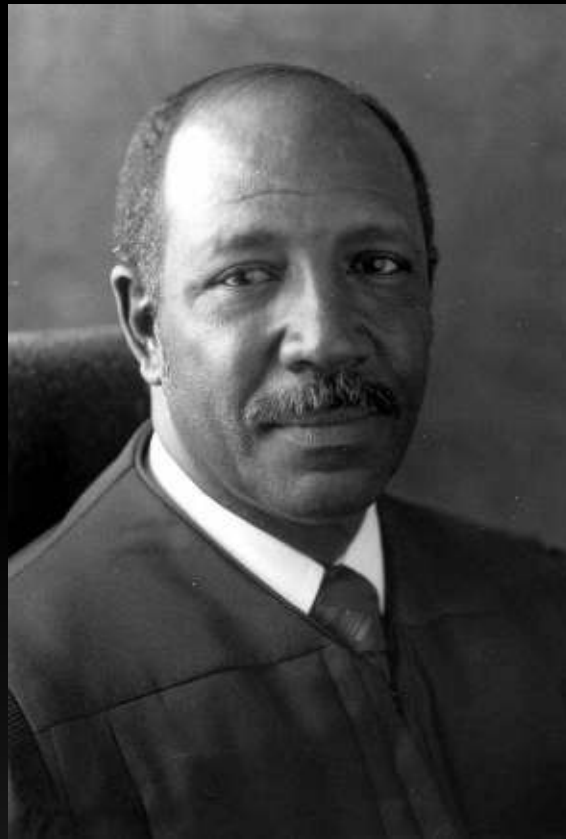


**UVA Documentary Film:  
Athletics & Desegregation  
UVA Homecoming Ceremony 2021  
Stanley Land, Rockbridge High '70  
7<sup>th</sup> Grade Class President at Downing, 1965**



## RHS Alum Land Honored

Stan Land (fourth from left), a 1970 Rockbridge High School graduate, was among four University of Virginia football players honored at the Cavaliers' homecoming football game on Oct. 16 for being the first Black students to earn athletic scholarships at UVA. Joining Land were (from left) fellow honoree Gary Ham, UVA President James Ryan, teammate Kent Merritt, UVA athletic director Carla Williams, Al Groh, who was an assistant coach for Land and his teammates; and teammates John Rainey and Harrison Davis. Land grew up in Fairfield and was a defensive end for UVA. He was visiting from his home in Katy, Texas, and said he and these teammates endured challenging times, but being on the football team helped. "I think football, more than any other sport, is about developing teamwork, brotherhood and kinship because we're all going through the very same thing," he said. "If I had to say anything about that experience, particularly after the first two years, it was a bonding experience." (photo courtesy of VirginiaSports.com)



## **Notable LDHS Alums, Teachers, Artists, Leaders**

**\*\*Dolores Jones: Lylburn Downing Music Teacher, Opera Singer**

**\*\*Justice Leander Shaw: Principal's Son; LDHS '48, 1<sup>st</sup> Black Justice Florida Supreme Court**

**\*\*Prof. Ted DeLaney: LDHS '61, W&L '85, later W&L History Dept. Chair  
Namesake of new *DeLaney Center for Southern Race Relations, Culture, Politics***

# Trial Integration Here: Fall 1964 10 years after Brown v. Board

*Approved by Virginia Pupil Placement Board:*

3 pupils to integrate Ann Smith 'Kindergarten' School

1 transfer from Downing Elementary to Central Elem.

2 transfers from Downing High to Lexington High

LEXINGTON, VIRGINIA, WEDNESDAY, JUNE 17, 1964

## Locality One Of Eleven:

# State Board Sets First Integration In Schools Here

Rockbridge County will be one of 11 school districts in the state beginning racial integration of the public schools for the first time this fall, according to assignments approved last week by the State Pupil Placement Board.

★ Applications for placement of six Negro pupils in previously all-white schools here had been forwarded to the state board by local school authorities with the recommendation that they be favorably acted upon.

The state board approved the assignments as follows: three pupils to enter the first grade at Ann Smith School in Lexington; one pupil to transfer from Lyburn Downing School to the fifth grade at Central School; and two pupils to transfer from Lyburn

Downing School to Lexington High School.

The other localities which will be experiencing integration for the first time in September are Wytbe, Bath, Halifax, Gloucester, Page and Rockingham counties, and the cities of Bristol, Norton, Suffolk and Harrisonburg.

The state board also gave its approval to a plan whereby Giles County becomes the first state locality to have total integration of all public schools. Giles will close its two Negro schools and the 131 Negro pupils will be transferred to other schools. The county has a total school population of 4,500.

Pre-Trial Meet



## **Lylburn Downing High School, 1965**

Last Graduating Class with Last School Faculty (rear)

440 Total Black Students in Grade & High School at Desegregation from Lex, Rock., BV





JUN • 66

## Natural Bridge Elementary School, 1965-6

First Year of School Integration, Rockbridge County

Ms. Anne McAlphin, 4<sup>th</sup> Grade Class

# Major Shifts in People and Place

Local Desegregation (1965) → HS Consolidation (1992)

**Who Studies? What Communities do Students Come From?**

**Who Teaches? Who Coaches? Who Plays? (Who Doesn't?)**

**More & More Diverse Course Offerings... Class Sizes?**

**Blending 'School Cultures'?**

# Expanded Course Offerings at Consolidated HS

## Proposed by Teachers: 'Master Plan 1987'

### Social Studies Courses:

RHS, LHS, NBHS  
See Columns 2, 4

### New Electives Possible:

Sociology & Psychology,  
Current Affairs, Civil War,  
Introduction to Law,  
Third World Development

# Course Offerings Compared To Teachers' Wish List

What courses Rockbridge County high school students can take sometimes depends on which high school they attend.

A student attending Lexington High School, for example, can take German and Latin, but he can't take Spanish. Students attending Natural Bridge and Rockbridge high schools can take Spanish but courses in Latin and German are not available to them.

These differences in course offerings among the three county high schools are being cited by promoters of a consolidated high school as among the reasons a consolidated program is needed.

If all of the county students attended a single high school, they would have equal educational opportunities and probably have expanded course opportunities, supporters say.

When the teacher-administrator committees met last fall to determine educational goals and strategies that would be included in the "Master Plan '87" proposals, they drafted a list of courses they would like to see at the high school level. That "program of studies for grades 9-12" has been released by Jay at the various public hearings on the master plan.

The proposed program of studies includes some courses, such as advanced level courses, that are not currently offered at any of the three high schools. Other courses are offered at one school and not at the others.

To give an idea of where the course offerings of the different high schools stand in comparison with where many teachers would like them to be, below follows a list of courses in the proposed program of studies and

ed economics and sociology class  
Sociology and Psychology — none except for the economics/sociology class at NBHS

Current Affairs — none  
Introduction to Law — none  
Specialized Courses (i.e. Civil War) — none

Third World Development — none

#### HEALTH AND PHYSICAL EDUCATION

Physical Education and Health Education 9 and 10 — LHS, NBHS and RHS; RHS also has adaptive and advanced physical education  
Driver Education — NBHS, RHS and LHS

Life Sport — none  
Aerobics-weight lifting — none have aerobics but NBHS does have weight lifting

#### CULTURAL ARTS

Music Appreciation — none  
Instrumental Band — none  
Concert Band — LHS and NBHS  
Vocal Music — LHS

Art Appreciation — part of general art courses at all three high schools  
Art Drawing, Painting, etc. — NBHS, LHS and RHS

Advanced Art Classes for Specialities — none

#### BUSINESS

Typewriting — NBHS, LHS and RHS  
Office Technology I and II — NBHS, LHS and RHS  
Accounting I — NBHS and RHS  
Accounting II — none

Introduction to Business — LHS  
Business Computer Applications — NBHS

Word Processing — RHS, LHS  
Career Office Education — LHS  
Business Exploration — none  
Keyboarding — none

Programs for special needs students

— none  
Adult Educational Programs — none

#### INDUSTRIAL ARTS

Mechanical Drawing I and II — LHS; RHS and NBHS have Mechanical Drawing I

Exploring Technology — none  
Woodworking I, II and III — LHS; NBHS has Woodworking I and II  
Exploratory — NBHS

Computer Aided Drafting and Design — none  
Engineering Drafting — none  
Architectural Drafting — none

Modern Industry — none

#### HOME ECONOMICS

Home Economics I, II and III — NBHS and RHS; LHS has Home Economics I

Life Management Skills II — none  
Family Living — RHS  
Single Living — LHS  
Six-Week Exploratory — none

Semester courses in marriage, parenting, nutrition and clothing management — some subjects found in family and single living courses

Occupational Courses (instructional and home care services) — none  
Coop Programs (child care/food service and building trades) — none at the high schools but food service coop does exist at Floyd S. Kay

Vocational-Technical Center

SPECIAL EDUCATION  
Learning Disabled — LHS, NBHS and RHS  
Trainable Mentally Retarded — RHS  
Emotionally Disturbed — LHS  
Severe-Profound — none

Speech/Hearing — when needed  
Adaptive Physical Education — RHS  
Educable Mentally Retarded — RHS, LHS and NBHS

#### ENGLISH

English 9, 10, 11 & 12 — LHS, RHS and NBHS  
Composition — LHS, RHS and NBHS  
Advanced placement for college — none

Speech — only through forensics clubs  
Drama — LHS and RHS have drama clubs

Journalism — photojournalism at all three, journalism at LHS and NBHS  
Vocational English — none  
Reading (remedial work) — RHS  
Specialized Literature — none

FOREIGN LANGUAGE  
French 1, 2, 3 & 4 — through French 3 at NBHS, LHS and RHS  
Latin 1, 2 & 3 — through Latin 3 at LHS

Spanish 1, 2, 3 & 4 — NBHS and RHS  
German 1 and 2 — LHS  
Introductory Japanese and Russian — none

MATH  
Basic Skill (Remedial) — NBHS, LHS and RHS  
General Math 9 and 10 — NBHS and LHS

Pre-Algebra — NBHS, LHS and RHS  
Algebra — NBHS, LHS and RHS  
Advanced Algebra — none  
Algebra II and Trigonometry — NBHS, LHS and RHS

Geometry — NBHS, RHS and LHS  
Advanced Geometry — none  
Analysis — NBHS, LHS and RHS  
Calculus — LHS and RHS

Consumer Math — NBHS, RHS and LHS  
Advanced Computer — LHS has Computer Science 1, 2 and 3, NBHS has Computer Skills and Computer 2 and RHS has Computer Science 1 and 2

SCIENCE  
Earth Science — RHS and LHS  
General Science — NBHS and LHS; RHS has physical science and applied physical science

Biology 1 — LHS, RHS and NBHS  
Advanced Biology — LHS  
Applied Biology — none  
Chemistry 1 — NBHS, LHS and RHS  
Advanced Chemistry 1 — none

Environmental Studies — none  
Physics — NBHS, LHS and RHS  
SOCIAL STUDIES

World Geography — NBHS, LHS and RHS  
World History — NBHS, LHS and RHS  
U.S. History-Virginia History — all three have U.S. History

U.S. Government — NBHS, LHS and RHS  
Civics — none  
Economics — LHS; NBHS has a com.

# Teaching African American History in Virginia

This webinar is a conversation with members of Governor Northam's Virginia Commission on African American History in the Commonwealth for special insight on the development of this groundbreaking report and its impact on the interpretation of African American History in Virginia.

## Our Mission

Virginia Africana seeks to promote African American history and culture by sharing best practices and development opportunities, advocating for the preservation and protection of African American heritage within the state, and providing network support.



**VIRGINIA  
AFRICANA**  
THE NETWORK OF MUSEUM, HISTORY  
AND PRESERVATION PROFESSIONALS

*January 2021: Governor's Commission, Virginia Humanities, Virginia Africana, Collaboration with School Administrators, Faculty, Museum & History Professionals*

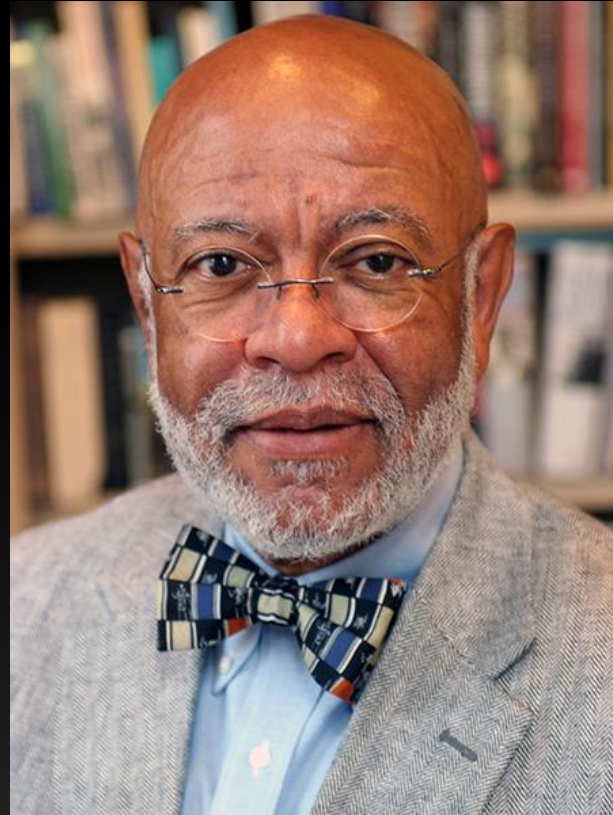
*New State-Required Elective: African-American Humanities, Social Studies Licensing*



## Diamond-Green Hill Historical Walking Tour & Lylburn Downing School History Scavenger Hunt

Waddell Elementary School (2014→) & Lylburn Downing Middle School Projects (2015 →)  
First Baptist Church, Lylburn Downing Alumni Room~LCS School Board Room

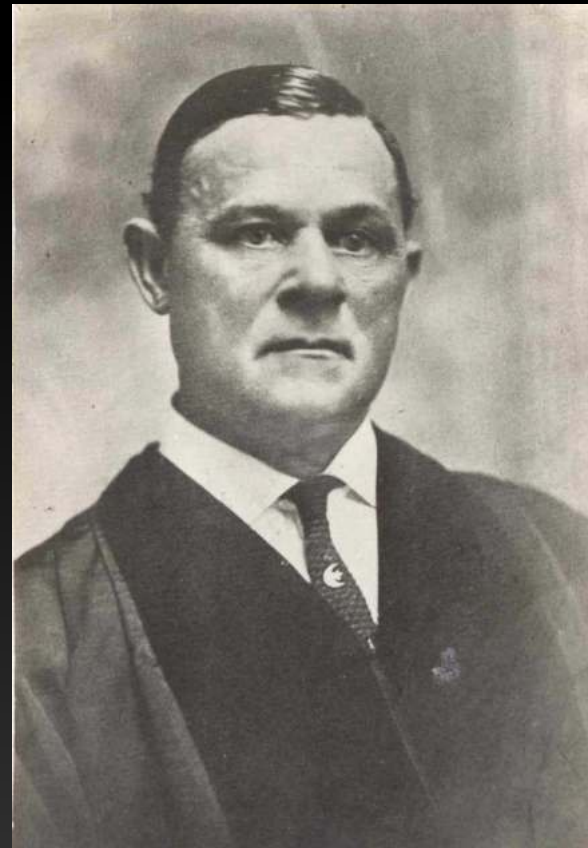
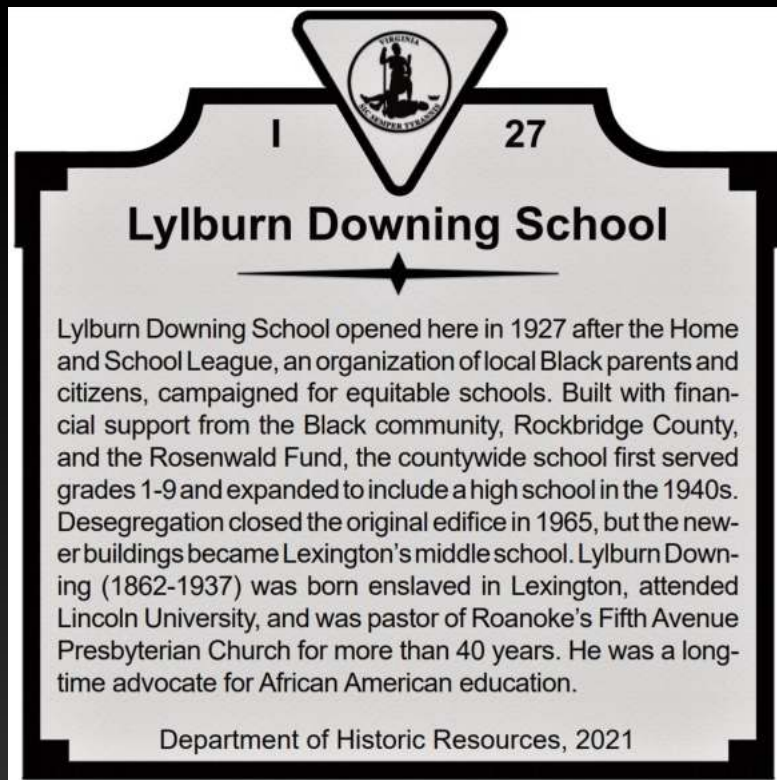




**Local Students & Educators: Some Profiles...**

# Lylburn Liggins Downing

*b. enslaved Lexington, 1862; attended Randolph St. Freedmen's School  
Graduated & Ordained, Lincoln University; Presbyterian Pastor in Roanoke,  
Virginia Educational Advocate; School Namesake & Dedication Speaker: 1927*



*Rev. Downing's 1927 Address echoed in Mike Blankenship's speech: LDMS Graduation 2019*

# Coralie Franklin Cook

*Speaking with Power, Speaking through Art*

*b. enslaved Lexington 1861 → Family's Educational Arcs~Freedmen's School? → Storer College Alum & Faculty Chair, Oratory Dept, Howard Univ.; Pres. D.C. Arts Council; Suffragist w/Susan B. Anthony & W.E.B. DuBois*

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## Shadows of Light



MRS. CORALIE FRANKLIN COOK

Member of the Board of Education, District of Columbia; born at Lexington, Va.; educated at Storer College; wife of George William Cook, Secretary of Howard University.





# Eliza Bannister Walker

*Social Networks, Local Activism, Poetry with Purpose*

*b. Natural Bridge 1874, Colored Graded School; Trained as Nurse in DC (Howard)*

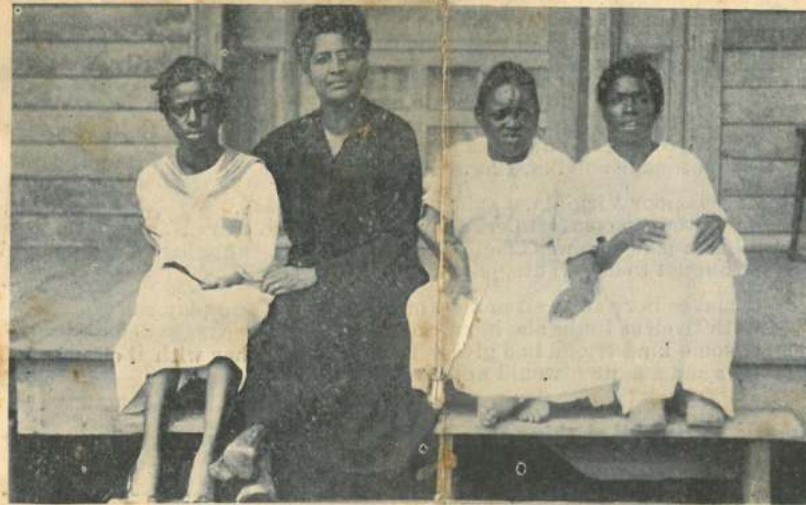


To the Public:  
**The Colored Soldier's Appeal**

HELP THE SUFFERING OF OUR RACE

Buy a Memorial Block and Help us to Take Care  
of the Colored Old Folks and Needy Orphan Children.  
We are Asking Someone to Educate Little Violet.


MEMORIAL BLOCK

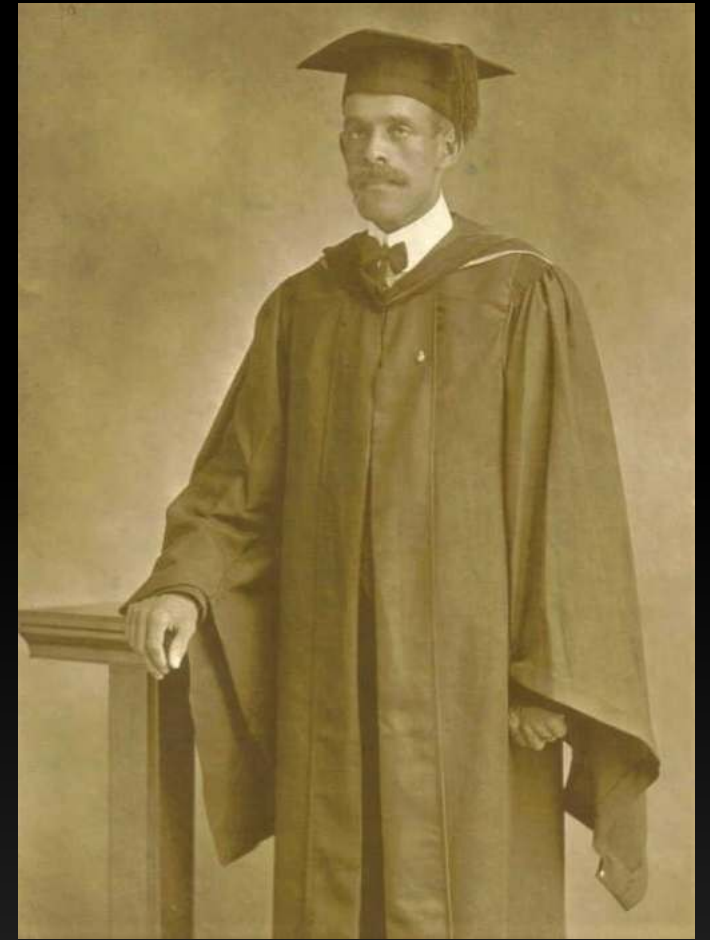


Violet      Mrs. H. L. Walker      Virginia      Annie  
An Orphan Freak      Pres. of Lexington's Old      Cannot Walk      Cannot Talk  
Born without Hands      Folks Home and Orphanage





The following teachers were elected for the colored schools : William Washington, Jr. re-elected principal, with Charles S. Harper, Henrietta C. Evans, and Nannie Clay as teachers. The principal, William Washington, Jr., served acceptably in that capacity the latter part of last session, filling out the term of Isaiah Bolen. He is a graduate of Oberlin College, Ohio. Charles S. Harper, the new teacher, is a native of Lexington, but has recently been in Philadelphia. He is a graduate of Lincoln College, and also of the normal department of Morgan College, Baltimore. The other two teachers have been in the school for some years.



## Lexington Natives, School Alumni, New Faculty: 1902

William Washington (left, b.1872; Oberlin) & Charles Harper (b.1880; Lincoln U)  
Join veteran teachers Henrietta Evans & Nannie Clay on Randolph St.



## Rev. William Washington, Oberlin College, B.A. 1900

Top, 2<sup>nd</sup> from Right: Orations on *Frederick Douglass* and *Educating the Laboring Class*:  
“won the highest honor ever won by a colored student in any northern institution,” *Rich. Times*

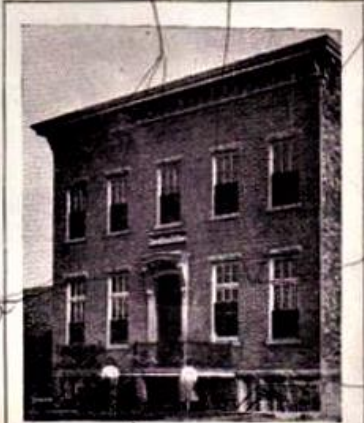
DR. JOHN R. FRANCIS, President  
1102 9th St. N. W.

# The Colored Social Settlement

NO. 16 L STREET, SOUTHWEST

H. E. WILLIAMS, Treasurer  
U. S. Weather Bureau

The House



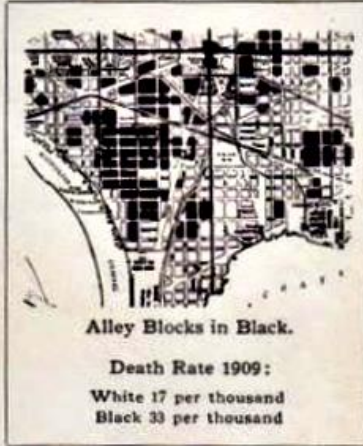
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Mrs. Anna J. Cooper  
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### The Neighborhood



Alley Blocks in Black.

Death Rate 1909:  
White 17 per thousand  
Black 33 per thousand

South Washington

Washington, D. C.,

APR 18 1912

MISS ELLA HAWES, Headworker  
Acting Head Worker.  
MRS. M. G. DILLARD,  
Associate Worker.



Playground in Yard



Girls' Sewing Club Under Direction of Mrs. Fernandis

Glimpses of the Work of the Social Settlement

Washington, D. C.

## From Lexington to the Nation's Capital

William Washington: Head of D.C. Colored Social Settlement

Board Members: Luminary Educators, Suffragists, NAACP Founders

CATALOGUE OF  
H O W A R D  
U N I V E R S I T Y

FOR THE YEAR 1905-1906



INCORPORATED, MARCH 2, 1867

WASHINGTON, DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

PUBLISHED BY THE UNIVERSITY :: MDCCCXVI

their expenses by work in the city. Washington affords unusual opportunities for self help. No energetic student need be deprived of the advantages offered by the school because of lack of opportunity. As an encouragement to thorough preparation for the work of the School of Theology, college graduate students of promise, who may need it, are furnished \$72. Two Pomeroy scholarships—one of \$75 and one of \$50—are awarded for excellence in Biblical studies. Two Maynard prizes—one of \$10 and one of \$5 are awarded for superiority in public debate.

The Washington Presbytery holds and administers funds for the aid of Presbyterian students.

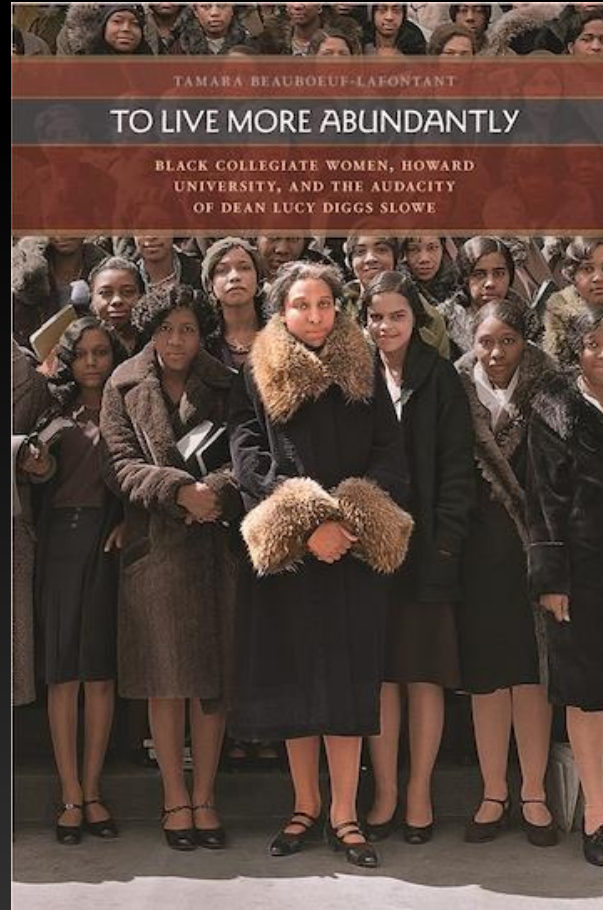
The awards for the year 1907-1908 were as follows: The Pomeroy Scholarship was divided equally between Charles S. Harper, William V. Mitchell, and Edward E. Tyler. The first Maynard prize was awarded to General W. Dickens, the second to Fairfax King.

**Rev. Charles Harper (Lincoln U, Morgan State, Howard U)**

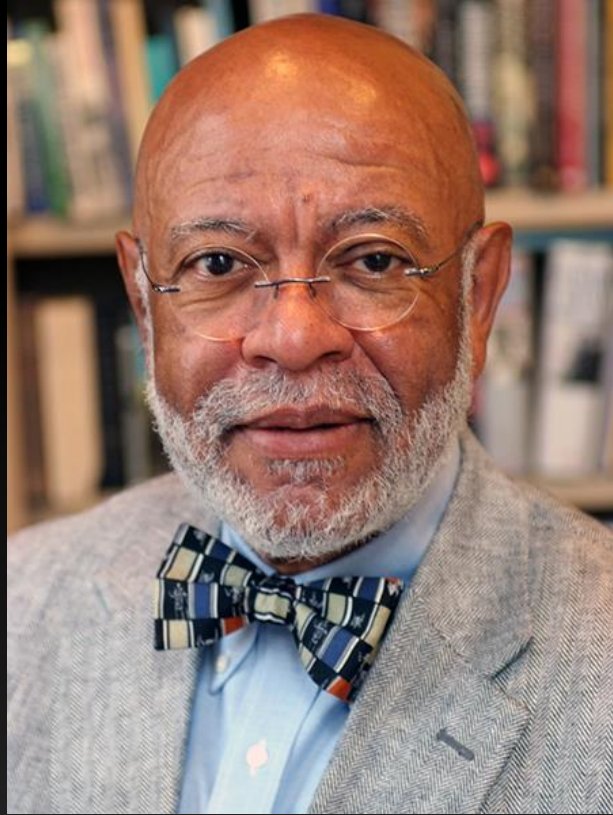
Degrees from Lincoln Univ. & Morgan State; Returned for Advanced Degrees in Theology  
Howard Univ, B.D., 1908: Pomeroy Prize in Biblical Studies; Lincoln U, M.A., 1914

# Lucy Diggs Slowe

b. 1885, moved to Lexington with Aunt → Lexington Freedmen's School until Age 13 → H.S. in Baltimore  
Howard University Valedictorian 1908; Oratory Student of Prof. Coralie Cook; 1<sup>st</sup> National Tennis Champion ATA  
Co-Founder, AKA Sorority (1908) and National Assoc. of College Women (1922); 1<sup>st</sup> Dean of Women, Howard U (1922)



*From Orphan to Dean → Inspiring Women's Leadership*

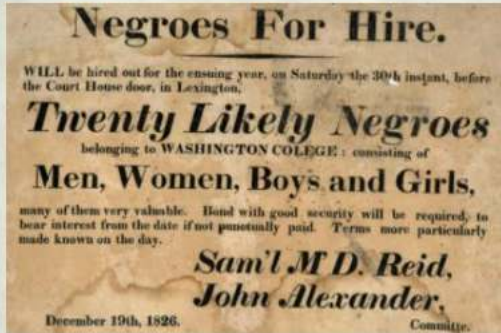


**Educators &  
Local Students  
Lexington's Two Black Schools**

## Local Black Histories: Virtual Access, Lasting Archive

As our e-Newsletters roll out this series in the coming months, please check back in to see what new materials we've added. You can click hotlinks to access sites, or download full articles. Please [Contact Us](#) with your Questions, or suggestions for additions, or to add join the email list for latest releases, additions, and notice of relevant events.

Note: Resources with an \* have been produced in conjunction with RHS Programs or Publications.



### Series Overview

\*Eric Wilson, [Local Black Histories: Virtual Access, Lasting Archive](#)

### Free Blacks & Slavery in Rockbridge, Virginia

\*David Coffey, [Patrick Henry, Free Man of Color: Caretaker of Thomas Jefferson's Natural Bridge](#)

Turk McCleskey, [The Road to Black Ned's Forge: A Story of Race, Sex, and Trade on the Colonial American Frontier](#) (+ video lecture)

Ted DeLaney, [John Chavis: Soldier, Minister, Educator & America's First African American College Student, at Washington College](#): (+ 3 min audio profile)

Melvin Patrick Ely, [Israel on the Appomattox: A Southern Experiment in Freedom from 1790 to the Civil War](#) (+ radio interview)

\*Fitzhugh Brundage, [Attitudes towards Slavery in Antebellum Rockbridge County](#)

Neely Young, [Ripe for Emancipation: Rockbridge and Anti-Slavery from Revolution to Civil War](#)

\*Charles Dew, [Master and Slave at Buffalo Forge](#)

Larry Spurgeon, [Stonewall Jackson's Slaves](#)

\*Eric Wilson, [Re-Visiting a Rockbridge Icon: Archer Alexander's Journeys as a Local Slave, a Self-Emancipated War Hero, as a National Monument](#)

### Journeys to Juneteenth

\*Eric Wilson, [Journeys to Juneteenth](#)

Henry Louis Gates, Jr. & PBS, [What is Juneteenth?](#)

New York Times Interactive, [How We Juneteenth](#)

[Juneteenth Art Show 2020](#): Project Horizon and Nelson Gallery



## Aspects of Black Religious and Educational Development in Lexington, Virginia, 1840-1928

Theodore C. DeLaney, Jr.



WRITING in the *Negro History Bulletin* in 1939, Carter G. Woodson, a noted black educator, stated, "A definitive history of the Negro Church . . . would leave practically no phase of the history of the Negro in America untouched."<sup>1</sup> This quote provided great inspiration for me as I searched for a place to begin the task of compiling a history of black people in the Lexington area. The history which follows is by no means complete but represents a mere scratch of the surface.

The churches in Lexington which date from ante-bellum days all have histories which included attempts at slave evangelization. While such evan-

*Theodore C. DeLaney, Jr.*, was a technical assistant in the Biology Department at Washington and Lee University at the time he made his address at the First Baptist Church in Lexington on January 26, 1981. He revised his paper for this publication in 1989, while a graduate student in history at the College of William and Mary. He is the great-grandson of the architect, contractor, and builder of the Randolph Street Methodist Church.

**RHS Local Black Histories**  
**RockbridgeHistory.org**

LYLBURN DOWNING SCHOOL

IS LISTED IN THE

NATIONAL REGISTER  
OF HISTORIC PLACES

BY THE UNITED STATES  
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

1927-1965





# Partners: Oral History, Research & Education:

Theodore C. DeLaney, Marylin Evans Alexander, Francis Watts,  
Irene Thompson, Beatrice Johnson, Louise Mikell, Na'im Ziyad,  
Larry Spurgeon, Tom Camden, Seth Goodhart, Doug Harwood, Michael Hill  
Virginia Humanities, W&L Special Collections, Lexington News-Gazette

Stanley Land, Denise Jones Smith,  
Charlotte Alexander, Preston Evans,

Byron Winchester, Halle Kline, Debbie Funkhouser,  
Sascha Goluboff, Alison Bell, Rebecca Walters, Phillip Thompson

And My Own Most Influential Teacher ... Peggy Vaughan, Albemarle HS