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A study of the Holley School for Negroes, Lottsburg, Virginia: "Our three acres"

Jean Norris Booth

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A STUDY OF THE HOLLEY SCHOOL FOR NEGROES, LOTTSBURG, VIRGINIA

"Our Three Acres"

A Thesis
Presented to
the Faculty of the Department of History
University of Richmond

In partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements for the Degree
Master of Arts

by
Jean Norris Booth
June 1956
DEDICATION

I wish to dedicate this paper to my parents, who have encouraged my desire for formal education; and to the professors in the Department of History, University of Richmond, under whom I have been privileged to study, for their patience and instruction.
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MISS HOLLEY'S HOUSE
CHAPTER I
RETROSPECT AND ABOLITION

Beneath the sturdy oaks that have weathered the stormy conflicts of time, there stands in Lottsburg District, Northumberland County, Virginia, the remains, now in crumbling deterioration, of a project for Negro education. Women, who prior to the War between the States had been Abolitionists, continued their work for the betterment of the Negroes at the cessation of hostilities.

This replica of past decades is known to many of its benefactors as "Miss Holley's House." It has become a symbol to the present generation of the firmness of purpose and the sturdy character of the participants of the opposing teams in the Civil War era. It has been more than a house however, for within its life, it has witnessed and fostered happiness and substantial growth to those who frequented its portals. The warmth which emanated from this structure, then in its prime, was the catalyst for those who were groping in the darkness of the reconstruction years. Although the physical
beauty which once surrounded the area has diminished in the intervening years, "Miss Holley's House" still towers on the mound as the arch protector and symbol to the Negroes as they strive to better their intellectual and social status.

Although this project, of which "Miss Holley's House" is the last remaining material evidence, is accepted in good faith today, this was not always true. The Southerners in 1869 were not amenable to the cause of Negro education because the founder of the school had participated actively in the Abolitionist Movement, and at that time sought to promote a Northern plan in assisting the Negroes in Northumberland County, Virginia. Miss Sallie (Sally) Holley, educational missionary from Buffalo, New York, was a product of a movement which had incurred the hatred of the people of the South.

The Abolitionist Movement had its origin in the North. Primarily, the subscribers to this society were of Puritan heritage who thought that those who deviated from their way of thinking were sinners. Their sole purpose in life was to do good. "These societies represented 'the bitter zeal of righteous men'." At first the movement received no more, if as much, publicity

than other societies of similar focus. Prohibition and woman's suffrage were similar programs for which these agitators heatedly fought.

Prior to 1830, the feeling toward slavery was not sectional. There were many people in the South who openly agreed that slavery was wrong, morally and economically, and instituted measures to correct this injustice to the Negroes. Robert Carter of Nomini Hall, Westmoreland County, Virginia, was an example of Southern awareness that slavery was an injustice to the Negroes. He freed more than five hundred slaves. Also, George Washington and John Randolph of Roanoke freed their slaves. This concept was an outgrowth of the American Revolution when "life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness" was the accepted belief. The South tolerated abolitionist movements and actively promoted the American Colonization Society, which established the Republic of Liberia in 1822. The Southern advocates of this plan believed that removing Negroes from the South was the sole method of successful emancipation. The implications involved in this project


soon evidenced its impracticality and ultimately, the movement was abandoned.

In 1793 the invention of the cotton gin by Eli Whitney served to alter the Southern emancipator's focal point toward slavery. Once more the Negroes became an economic asset and a positive good with the development of the cotton kingdom. The political strength that the cotton states commanded in the Senate of the United States in particular soon gave justifiable concern in the Northern states. These states yearned for supremacy in the national government and sought to overthrow the favorable balance then held by the Southern states. The South equally was determined not to be overridden by a Northern majority. Since slavery caused a notable difference in the mores and customs of the North and South, the extension of this system into the territories became a source of conflict.

The propaganda of Northern writers, religious impulse, and the emancipation of slaves in the British possessions abetted the cause of the Abolitionists, but likewise these happenings forced the South further into its defence and resentment of any criticism of the

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The Abolitionist group, adopted the negative point of view in this conflict, and its ultimate dream was the emancipation of the overburdened slaves. As this movement increased its following and clamored fervently for freedom and justice for the Negros, the South clothed itself in a cloak of sectionalism. The first notable evidence of this growing sentiment was realized in the Missouri argument. As the fanatical leaders of Abolition took the helm, the most significant factor in the rise of the movement was the development of the slavery controversy.

Abolition was part of a concerted effort to unseat aristocrats and re-establish American democracy along lines of the Declaration of Independence—a clear-cut attempt to apply Christianity to the Southern social order. The vitriolic abolitionist, William Lloyd Garrison, once exclaimed in one of his speeches that slave owners who professed true Christianity could not retain his slaves. Garrison aligned himself with this cause and

5. Ibid., pp. 37-38.
6. Ibid., p. 36.
became its most important spokesman in behalf of the slaves. He founded the *Liberator*, an Abolitionist newspaper, in Boston, in which he vociferously exposed the evils of slavery. The *Liberator* featured copious articles denouncing slavery by picturing the overworked, underfed, insufficiently clothed and physically and mentally abused slaves.

The problem as Garrison saw it, was one of abstract right and wrong. The Scriptures and the Declaration of Independence had already settled the issue. Slavery could have no legal status in a Christian democracy. If the Constitution recognized it, then the Constitution should be destroyed. Slaveholders were both sinners and criminals. They could lay no claim to immunity from any mode of attack.

To the Southerner, William Lloyd Garrison was not alone in his blasphemous attacks. Many of the Northern essayists and poets contributed generously to his argument. Henry David Thoreau, James Russel Lowell, John Greenleaf Whittier, and Ralph Waldo Emerson fervently championed freedom for the Negroes. With the able assistance of these writers, among other learned supporters, the country and the South in particular was flooded with

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8. Ibid., p. 135.
9. Ibid.
10. Ibid., p. 149.
11. Ibid., p. 135.
almanacs, hymnbooks, circulars, tracts, and lecturers that drove the South deeper into its sectional position. Special commentary is given to the novel, Uncle Tom's Cabin which appeared in 1852. Harriet Beecher Stowe contributed this atypical exposition of the laboring class of the South.

The fictitious Uncle Tom became the stereotype of all American slaves; Simon Legree became the typical slaveholder. A generation and more formed its ideas of Southern life and labor from the pages of this novel. Mrs. Stowe's work served the cause of the Abolitionists, perhaps more than any other contribution, and it intensified the mounting antagonism between the North and South.

"Hatred of the South had supplanted love for the Negro." The North with the indoctrination of the Abolitionists, altered its views of the South. However, the Southern position was not neglected; for from within the hearts and minds of the loyal Southerner sprang retaliatory debate. They maintained that slavery was an economic asset because it was the source of the laboring forces. They further stated that the fact that their re-

12. Ibid., p. 145.
13. Ibid., p. 146.
source was the Negro was inconsequential and that many
of the conditions which befell the Negro were the results
of his position as a laborer and not due to his physical
characteristics. The South argued that the North had
its laboring caste which in many respects proved more de-
grading and enslaving than the slave system. Spokesmen
of the South attacked the morals of the New England fac-
tory workers and kindled the fires of agitation in their
criticism of labor-management relationships in the North.
Virtually, the "slave wage earner" was more enslaved
than the "darky" of the cotton kingdom. Proslavery
enthusiasts maintained that the Negro was considered in
high esteem in comparison with the lower class of Cau-
casians existing, not living, north of the Mason and
Dixon line.

The Southerners made no pretensions to
either practical or theoretical race equality,
but they contended that the slave was usually
better provided for than the free Negro in
the North, and that the strong criticism of
slavery was promoted not by humanitarian
consideration, but by political ones.17

Politics and political trends and eruptions promoted
the cause of the Abolitionists. They incorporated in

15. Avery Craven, The Repressible Conflict (Louisi-

16. Ibid., p. 38.

their arguments wherever it was feasible the events of Congress. Periodically, using Congressional actions as their themes, speakers would embark on tyrannical tangents. Congress became a meeting place where men argued their sectional differences and arrived at no compromises or conclusions. They adjourned and returned to their respective states having been successful only in widening the rift between the North and South.

The objective of the Abolitionists was the immediate emancipation of the suppressed Negro. However, dissension in the tactical procedure caused a division in the Abolitionist forces. Theodore Dwight Weld deviated from the Garrison program and took with him numerous recruits. Weld approached the slavery issue as a moral thing—identifying it specifically with Christianity. He believed that the movement for abolition should be a gradual process and that it must be conducted through the existing agencies of religion and politics. Theodore Dwight Weld continued the crusade for abolition by spreading the fury in the western section of the nation. It was with this segment that Miss Sallie Holley enlisted her efforts.

Implicit and exact reasons for Miss Holley's af-

18. Ibid., p. 139.
filiation with the anti-slavery society have remained unknown. However, there is evidence that a multitude of possible factors throughout her early childhood and youth served to lead her toward the Abolitionist Movement. Sallie Holley's ancestry, unlike William Lloyd Garrison's, was honorable, distinguished, and one of which she could justly boast. She was the daughter of Sally House and Myron Holley. On her maternal side there was little evidence of accelerated formal education, but much of her firm perseverance and stability can be attributed to her mother. Myron Holley, it is thought, was a descendant of the astronomer accredited with the discovery of Halley's Comet. He was a graduate of Williams College and read law in Cooperstown, New York. Perhaps, it was fate which attracted him to Canandaigua, New York, where he met and married the beautiful Sally House.

Sallie Holley's father was an advocate of the school of freedom of thought. In every phase of his life, he exercised this principle. The theory involved in his various endeavors received a great deal more attention

19. Garrison was the offspring of a drunkard. He was affected by this stigma and fought for recognition of his beliefs. Craven, op. cit., p. 136.


21. Ibid., p. 18.

22. Ibid., p. 21.
than the routine factors of fruition. His zeal in the cause for the Erie Canal project exemplified this trait. Myron Holley worked diligently in support of it in the New York legislature. He was appointed treasurer of the project and when the waters of the Hudson River and the Erie Canal merged, there was not one person who exhibited greater satisfaction. However, upon inspection of the expended funds, Holley exposed a financial deficit of thirty thousand dollars. Never was he completely vindicated in this embarrassing error. Holley's management of the Erie Canal project was indicative of his methods in private affairs. This inconsistency proved a detriment in rearing a very large family. Finally, Myron Holley moved to Rochester, New York where he resided in the rapture of his thoughts and the glories of his gardening for his remaining years.

Of all of his children, Sallie, born February 17, 1817 in Canandaigua, New York, seemed to be drawn closer to her father than all of the other members of the family. Sallie and her father communed in all of their activities, and she, through her impressive years, assimilated many of his idiosyncrasies and patterns of life. Sallie supported him in his undertakings, and it was in this way

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23. Ibid., p. 35.
that Myron inspired her to become a part of the anti-slavery movement. Although he was one of the principal originators of the Liberty Party, he did not live to witness the materialization of a cause he had earnestly fostered and promoted. He died in 1841.

Upon the death of her father, Sallie Holley, who had his desirable qualities and idiosyncrasies, was inspired to accomplish those things which would have pleased him. She loved humanity, good books, flowers, and birds. Myron Holley had encouraged her education in spite of difficulties which presented themselves due to his rejection of conventionalism and his peculiar beliefs.

Actually by association with her father, Sallie had been injected with the serum of anti-slavery. She was never ashamed of the company in which she found herself, and in all of her activities, she was, according to those who knew her, the essence of independence and humaneness of character.

Sallie, like her father, early affiliated with the Unitarian Church. This was another example of her fortitude in the face of adversity, for again, she was in

24. Ibid., p. 25.
25. Ibid., p. 20.
26. Ibid., p. 41.
the minority. One of the rewarding dividends which accrued from this affiliation was the sound advice of Reverend Frederick W. Holland, her pastor, who pleaded with her to attend Oberlin College. Her family counselled with her and forewarned Sallie of the repercussions of an affirmative decision. Nothing could have deterred her because "she had put her hand to the plough and even if she had foreseen how long and hard the ploughing was to be it is not likely that she would have turned back."

While at Oberlin College, 1847-1851, Sallie Holley continued her high purpose and independent attitude. She practiced and voiced the strength of her convictions. Here in this so called "nigger school", Sallie made the acquaintance of Caroline F. Putnam, a lady who shared the common dream. Miss Putnam was not of the friendly, congenial and lovable nature that was to give Miss Holley her enormous following in the cause of freedom for slaves.

While at Oberlin College, Miss Holley was influenced by a professor, made president in 1851, Charles G. Finney.

27. Ibid., p. 43.
28. Ibid., p. 44.
29. Ibid., p. 54.
...the moral intensity of the man must have made a profound impression on her mind and heart. It speaks volumes for the essential soundness of her judgment that with a temper so emotional she was not carried off her feet by the flood of his impassioned eloquence. 30

Caroline F. Putnam met Sallie Holley with the assurance that their friendship would blossom forth in such splendor that time and circumstances would never cause it to wane. They shared a multitude of similar ideas and purposes in their anti-slavery views.

As the surge of Abolitionism permeated practically every crevice of the land, Miss Holley became more obsessed with its soundness. Caroline F. Putnam and maturing years helped Sallie Holley to transfer allegiance from Theodore Dwight Weld to the banner of William Lloyd Garrison. Prior to her departure from Oberlin, Miss Holley openly questioned the validity of the Constitution.

The demure, sensitive, and humble Sallie Holley participated in the cause of Negro freedom while still a student at Oberlin College. Lecturing was a minor contribution because activities at the school did not allocate sufficient time to prepare for the arduous meetings. However, on every occasion possible, Sallie

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30. Ibid., pp. 49-50.
Holley and Caroline Putnam took their places among the throngs to hear such famous speakers as Josephine Griffing and Abby Kelley Foster. These were just two of the multitude of women whose claims to history were rooted in this Abolitionist Movement. The women were prominent in the battles for Temperance and Women's Suffrage and easily slipped into the agitation for the emancipation of the Negroes under the leadership of William Lloyd Garrison.

Credit is given to Abby Kelley Foster for persuading Miss Holley to actively join the anti-slavery movement. Miss Holley attended a convention at Litchfield, Ohio. Mrs. Foster, in her address appealed to the sympathizers to plead the cause of the Negro. During an intermission, Miss Holley confidently dedicated herself to the anti-slavery movement. Mrs. Foster thought that Sallie Holley would not fulfill her obligation upon the completion of her studies at Oberlin College, but Miss Holley proved to be more than just promises. "...the pledge was faithfully made and faithfully kept."

Miss Holley's first assignment as a member of the

31. Ibid., p. 59.
32. Ibid.
33. Ibid., p. 60.
American Anti-Slavery Society was to participate in Ohio Conventions with Parker Pillsbury, Charles C. Burleigh, Sojourner Truth, Marius Robinson and the Griffings. This took place in the years when the anti-slavery people were received as unwelcome intruders of the peace. This tepid view toward the bearers of a dream almost beyond comprehension was not to cause them to falter in their pursuit. Everywhere mingling among the crowds in future pilgrimages, these crusaders would reap friends and followers who would substantiate their reasoning and promote their cause. The Abolitionists were blind in their desire to right the existing wrong and no obstacle was sufficient to destroy their faith in the goal.

Miss Holley possessed no great talents in this new career. She was unable to attain great fame as a radical Abolitionist. However, she won the love, affection and respect of all of her listeners. She represented to the audiences a picture that was emotional and soul conquering. Many realized her untiring efforts and the earnestness with which she received adversity.

Miss Holley travelled extensively in connection with the American Anti-Slavery Society. Samuel J. May organized her work and introduced her, but her remaining

34. Ibid., p. 62.
success was lodged within her heart and mind. Miss Putnam revealed that Miss Holley's praise for Wendell Phillips and William Lloyd Garrison and of the Anti-Slavery Standard, another Abolitionist newspaper, and the Liberator gained for her the hearts of many new friends. Among those homes that welcomed her were Abolitionist enthusiasts such as Gerrit Smith, Abby Kelley Foster, Lewis Ford, Lucretia Mott, Thomas Garrett, Robert Purvis, Theodore D. Weld, Angelina Weld, Sarah Grimke, Francis Jackson, Samuel J. May, and the Porters. It was in the home of the Porters in Rochester, New York that Sallie Holley spent much time recuperating from the tedious task in which she was engaged. These people represented only a portion of the happy as well as anxious sympathizers who abetted the dream of a free union for all people.

Most of Sallie's campaigning was confined to New England and the Middle Atlantic states. Ohio, where she initiated her dream, received her beliefs with little enthusiasm. However, she expounded her ideas to those who were drawn to her calling, and never feared the problem of economic solvency. The usual procedure of financing these missions was to have a free-will offering

at each meeting. Often, some more philanthropic sympa-
thizers donated generously to the promoters who by spiritual
guidance ventured in the storm of battle.

The Abolitionist influence spread and the agitation
mounted. Congressional proceedings and literary contrib-
utions abetted the activities of the anti-slavery apostles.
Sallie Holley found herself in agreement with the leaders
of the very young Republican Party. By 1856, the South-
ern fires which had been smouldering were about to burst
into a glowing flame. This situation has been attributed
partially to the zeal with which the Abolitionists af-
fected the Union attitude toward the South and flooded
the South with derogatory accusations.

As the impending crisis gathered its enforcements,
the Abolitionists were caught in its magnetic grip. John
Brown's execution proved to be disastrous for the South
because this insane believer in "no remission of sins
without bloodshed" became a martyr to the anti-slavery
followers. On the day of his death, Miss Holley was
moved to pray for Brown's commendable deed.

Doubtless the sense of an approaching crisis
nerved her to go on if she was ever tempted to
give over the unequal struggle. Nothing could
be simpler than the temper of her mission. She
remembered those in bonds as bound with them.
She felt in her own sympathetic flesh their
wound, in her own side their aches and pains
of separation and contempt. Finding the way
often wearisome, she had great compensations
for its defects and miseries: her lines often fell to her in pleasant places, and few women have ever been more rich in love or been more deserving of their love. 36

She was only one among many who voiced this feeling. Here in itself was one act which gave great impetus to severance of relations between the North and South. John Brown became the symbol of the North.

With the advent of hostilities, the zeal of the Abolitionists increased, for their goal of immediate emancipation of the Negroes proved more pertinent than at any previous time. Miss Holley's interest in the movement continued despite the fact that physically, she needed rest and relaxation. In a letter to Miss Putnam which she wrote in Elmira, New York on September 7, 1861, Sallie expressed the following sentiment:

Personally, I should not object to remaining in one spot all winter, rather than have again the dreadful cold and fatigue and hard work of another lecturing campaign; but I confess my conscience and heart would not be satisfied with doing nothing for the noble cause, and now of all times, to give up seems to me weak and wrong. 37

Sallie continued her lecturing and in a letter in 1862 to her friends, the Porters, she gave the first indication of a new activity which she continued for many years, work

37. Ibid., pp. 181-182.
for the betterment of the freed slaves. She wrote:

...For the last six weeks I have been begging warm, woolen clothing for the 'contrabands' from these farmers, and have had the satisfaction of sending a large box to those destitute ones of God's poor. 38

As the war progressed, William Lloyd Garrison and Wendell Phillips differed in their perspective of the Abolitionist Movement. Garrison considered the work completed and desired to terminate the activities, but Phillips advocated the continuance of the program. Sallie Holley followed the principles of Phillips. She sought subscriptions to the Anti-Slavery Standard since the circulation of the Liberator had been discontinued. 39

Sallie travelled the circuit with as much enthusiasm as she had exhibited in the early years of her dedicated vocation. Through correspondence, she maintained a wealth of friends who never ceased in their active support of her endeavors. In October 1867, this benefactor of the emancipated slave wrote to her friend, Miss Putnam, from Sherwood, New York. The contents of this communication revealed to Miss Putnam a proposal which ultimately altered the lives of many Negroes. Sallie's host, Mr. Howland and his daughter, Emily, were to embark on a

38. Ibid., p. 189.
39. Ibid., p. 195.
pilgrimage which would terminate in Northumberland County, Virginia. Emily Howland, and her father had purchased approximately four hundred acres of land in that far distant place. Miss Holley wrote:

Emily wants you to work and teach among her people in Virginia. She thinks you would be an admirable person to go. If ever you go, you have only to write her to secure a place.\textsuperscript{41}

In 1867, Emily Howland and her father arrived in Northumberland County, Virginia near Heathsville. Miss Caroline Putnam had accepted the challenge offered her and joined Emily Howland in this new adventure among the Negros.\textsuperscript{43}

\textsuperscript{40} Emily Howland, Abolitionist, pioneered the educational missionaries to Northumberland County, Virginia.

\textsuperscript{41} Chadwick, \textit{op. cit.}, p. 203.

\textsuperscript{42} Ibid., p. 204.

\textsuperscript{43} Personal Interview with Robert Diggs, Heathsville, Virginia, January 28, 1956.
CHAPTER II
FOUNDING OF THE SCHOOL

Emily Howland had aspired to create a haven for the emancipated slaves among these people who had formerly held the Negroes in bondage. Having this desire, she prevailed upon her father to purchase a large tract of land in Northumberland County, Virginia. Probably, she chose Virginia to be the scene of her project because she had taught in a school for freed Negroes for some years in Washington, D. C. She was familiar with many of the existing circumstances that actually happened and did not formulate her opinions from reports of other Abolitionists.

To the site in Virginia, Emily Howland brought families of freed Negroes. Here these immigrants cleared much of the timberland and established homesteads similar to those already in existence in the county. To each family, Miss Howland sold a portion of the land in return for labor, cordwood, and produce, and assistance in the instituting of her new project. The idea was foreign to the native inhabitants and, at first, they viewed it with scepticism. However, those people who

had accompanied Emily Howland to this settlement served as a liaison between the natives and Miss Howland. It was not long before the black people of Northumberland County realized that she was a friend who, having sacrificed the luxuries of the North, had come to them with love in her heart.

The white people of Northumberland County were unable to share with the Negroes their fondness for Miss Howland. To the Caucasians, Emily represented another intrusion of their mode of life from the North. They could hardly associate her with the Carpetbaggers who were flooding the Southland in these days of Black Reconstruction. The Carpetbaggers, Northern intruders of the South and the Scalawags, native Southerners who supported the Republican Party, contributed nothing toward fostering Miss Howland's project. In fact, they impeded her progress and created months of apprehension to her and her followers.

Miss Howland desired the betterment of the Negroes, and she realized that only through the medium of education could she attain the ultimate goal—the general uplifting of the Negro race toward the standards of the white people. Therefore, she established a one room

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school approximately three miles east of Heathsville, Northumberland County, Virginia. To this school she welcomed all, adult as well as children, who would come. This invitation to acquire knowledge received little response in the beginning. However, when the Negroes learned that Miss Howland had come to help them, they participated freely in the activities which she brought. Many were amazed at the principles which she taught.

The white people hated the Howland School and those connected with it. Whenever Miss Howland or one of her teachers rode along the county roads, the white people shouted malicious comments at them. Often the white boys would scare the horses or expectorate at these educational missionaries. Miss Howland and her teachers did not falter in their cause. The school at the fork in the road, located in Heathsville District, continued and is still in existence in 1956 as a public school for Negroes. Miss Howland’s success with her project distinguished her as the pioneer in Negro education in Northumberland County, Virginia.

Emily Howland’s influence in the North caused other self-styled guardians of the colored people to follow her example. Upon the recommendation of Miss Howland,
Miss Caroline F. Putnam journeyed South in the interest of the Howland School. Upon her arrival in Virginia, Miss Putnam found that the school was progressing nicely.

Sallie Holley, whom Miss Putnam left among her Abolitionists friends in the North, had not ceased her crusade for the cultural and economic advancement of the Negroes. Once when asked why she continued preaching and fighting for the Negroes, when slavery no longer existed, Sallie replied that the Anti-Slavery Society was the only organization that would fight unalteringly for Negro equality. It was the promoter of equal rights and equal justice for these wandering souls who were mystified by their strange new freedom. As slaves they had not been allowed freedom of movement, now they knew not what course to pursue. Within her heart, Miss Holley harbored the desire to continue the Great Cause because she had not yet established the Negroes in a station of life acceptable to her standards. Therefore, Miss Holley continued her endeavor while her friend, Miss Putnam, was "'roughing it in the bush' in Virginia."

Miss Howland received Miss Putnam with renewed in-

5. Ibid., p. 209.
6. Ibid.
spiration, and these two women embarked upon an expansion of education for the Negroes. There were many unlearned Negroes, and more schools were vital if the project of these missionaries was to achieve its intended goal. In order to reach more of the Negroes, Miss Howland suggested that Miss Putnam set up a similar school in the upper section of the county. Miss Putnam realized the drastic need of this second school, but, by nature a cautious person, she was unable to envision the wherewithal by which she could negotiate this ideal. Miss Putnam was equipped with neither the personality nor the funds to establish another institution of learning.

When the Anti-Slavery Society disbanded and the Anti-Slavery Standard was no longer published, Miss Holley heeded the call of Miss Putnam. Miss Holley had visited in Northumberland County before coming there to spend the remaining twenty-three years of her life. She chose to come to Virginia because of her sincere fondness for Miss Putnam. Also, she had a keen desire to continue her active assistance to the freed slaves. The Negroes of the South were her own people and inwardly she shared their joys and sorrows in making their adjustments.

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to freedom.

Miss Sallie Holley and Miss Caroline Putnam started the second school for Negroes in Northumberland County. Their very first school was a small frame structure which was built on the present day well-site of Zion Negro Baptist Church, located on the southwest edge of Lottsburg, Virginia. Its primary aim was to help the colored people to rise, but its broader aim was to help anyone it could.

When these missionaries sought a suitable location for their school, the white citizens were reluctant to sell any real estate to these Northern intruders. After much investigation, Lucius S. and Mary A. Winstead offered to give these ladies two acres of land. With this gift, the two women embarked on their educational project. Adverse circumstances would necessitate them to abandon the first site. Reverend Cary Nutt, Baptist minister, negotiated with the Winsteads for land on which to build a church. Included in Reverend Nutt's purchase were the two acres of land which had already been donated to the

8. Letter from Dr. Robert S. Fletcher, Professor of History, Oberlin College, Oberlin, Ohio, March 3, 1956.


furtherance of education of the Negroes. It seemed that Mr. Winstead was well endowed with real estate, but this business transaction with Miss Holley and Miss Putnam had been a verbal agreement. Therefore, the sale of the land to Mr. Nutt was valid. Miss Holley showed no malice and referred to this school as the "Old Stolen School House."

This temporary obstacle did not deter Miss Putnam and Miss Holley. They faced constant hatred and ostracism, but they carried on with vigor and faith. With keen determination, Miss Holley approached Winstead again in search of more land. On this occasion, she wanted to buy two acres on which to establish a school. Mr. Winstead was agreeable and sold to Sallie Holley two acres, more or less, for the sum of eighty dollars. This land was directly across the road from Lucius Winstead's farm. The new school property formed a triangle, the arms of which were bound by two roads—one ran in the direction of Callao, Northumberland County, Virginia, from Heathsville, Virginia (Route 360—today); and the other road ran from the present day junction of Route 360


toward Bundick, Virginia which is located on the Coan River. The base of the triangle bordered on the property of R. A. Claybrook. It was here in the Lottsburg District that Miss Holley and Miss Putnam established the Holley School, so named at the insistence of Miss Putnam, "for Negroes of Northumberland, working for peace, prohibition and the protection of bird life."

Miss Holley and Miss Putnam displayed the necessary energy and accepted the drastic renunciation by their own families as well as that of the white people among whom they took their posts in dedicating their lives to the Negroes. However, these women could never have realized this goal on their initiative alone. Many equally sympathetic Northern philanthropists donated generously to this Southern project. These people did not journey to the South to actively participate in the operation of the Holley School, but Sallie Holley, Caroline Putnam and those young Northern teachers who gave unceasingly of themselves on the immediate scene always felt and enjoyed the security of the Northern philanthropists.

As is true in every endeavor, there were many who

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14. Letter from Dr. Robert S. Fletcher, Professor of History, Oberlin College, Oberlin, Ohio, March 3, 1956. A student of birds herself, Miss Holley taught the Negroes the beauty and importance of birds.
contributed to the cause but have remained unknown to history. However, it would be ungracious not to name particular supporters. Miss Holley received bounteous assistance from the Porters of Rochester, New York; Gerrit Smith and his daughter, Mrs. Elizabeth Smith Miller; Emily Howland; the Otis Sheppards of Brookline, Massachusetts; Mrs. Francis George Shaw; Mrs. Putnam, the mother of Lieutenant Lowell Putnam; and Dr. and Mrs. Frank Fuller of New York. Dr. Fuller always exhibited interest in the Holley School, not only in monetary contributions but also by having in his office a ready depository for materials to send South to Miss Holley. She was eternally grateful to Dr. Fuller and often spoke with great satisfaction of her "Fuller Fence" which had been built from the contents of the barrels that he sent to the school.

Other people worthy of mention as supporters of the Holley School were Thomas Rooker, a childhood playmate of Sallie Holley, and Oliver Johnson. Johnson gave the project wide publicity in the New York Tribune. These


17. Ibid.
people, for the most part, were inclined to donate to and foster the Holley School because they were intimate friends of Miss Holley. She had gained many lasting friends in the Abolitionist Movement, who now, as she also desired to do, wished to continue in the cause of the Negroes. This project afforded them the opportunity to rescue the Negroes from their plight.

With the subsidy of these Northern citizens, and the support of the United States Government, Miss Holley and Miss Putnam strove to better the position of the Negroes in Virginia. They often needed to remind the local citizens of the area that if the natives continued in their threats and offensive manner, the United States Government would intercede in order to protect the school. This type of proclamation seemed to be sufficient to ease the tension at the moment, but often, it was necessary to reiterate it to their white antagonists.

Even though the school was of genuine interest to those who supported it, the establishment of Holley School upon a firm basis was one of unceasing anxiety and incessant work. Only to Miss Holley and Miss Putnam can this honor be attributed. These missionaries fought

unfalteringly and faithfully the obstacles which possibly might have impeded or defeated other pioneers of less determination.
MISS SALLIE HOLLEY
CHAPTER III
PHYSICAL AND MATERIAL DEVELOPMENT OF THE SCHOOL

Amid the dissension and uncertainty, Miss Holley and Miss Putnam broke the ground for the construction of a school for the purpose of elevating the Negroes to a station where they would be in a position to demand as well as warrant the motto that each child incorporated in his daily life—"Equal Rights for All."

On their two acres, more or less, a school, which had an appearance similar to that of any private institution of learning, was built. A high vertical board fence nine feet in height surrounded the premises. This fence, known as "Fuller Fence", was a rugged, unpainted structure, but it indicated in its appearance that the white people were not welcome and also, this fence afforded those people privileged to enter its gates a feeling of supreme safety. All that transpired within the enclosure served to be a revelation to the ignorant Negroes. Here they were awakened from a lethargy that had clouded their lives for generations, to the beauties which should have been a vital part of their lives.

There were two entrances by which a person might gain

access to this utopian world. One was the east gate which
was located at the extreme end of the triangle on Bundick
Road. It was through this opening that the contributions
and necessities of this school passed. The gate was al-
ways open to gifts that arrived weekly on the steamer
which "made port" at Bundick, Virginia. The other entrance
to Holley School was on the main highway from Heathsville
to Callao, Virginia. Through it the students and visitors
entered the school house. Adjacent to the entrance was
the wooden structure in which the children were taught.
It did not present a formidable appearance. The build-
ing was a large frame structure with a shed porch. The
school was not ornate, but the porch had filigree around
the roof edging. Both and porch and the main school were
heavily coated with pink white-wash. The maze of pink
was interrupted only by two doors and three windows.
The doors were located in either end of the building;
over the front door, the one that opened on the road,
was a transom window. Other sources of ventilation were
two windows to the southern exposure and one to the north.

A view of the interior failed to be a great im-
provement over the exterior. It was a one room school
of dimensions approximately twenty-eight by thirty-five

2. Ibid.
feet. The teaching which took place within its portals was invaluable to the children. Four teachers assumed their positions in the corners of the room and commenced their indoctrination of the Negro children.

At one end of the room there was a large carpeted platform on which all corporate activities were held. Behind the platform there was a large wall blackboard on which was printed the motto—"Equal Rights for All." Above the blackboard hung a rectangular frame; within the matted frame were two oval openings in which the Declaration of Independence was inscribed. As a crowning evidence of freedom, an American flag draped the entire frame leaving only the written words of Thomas Jefferson in view to the children. The remaining wall space was decorated intermittently with pictures and paintings of the Orient and pictures of the ancient Christian world. Seated in approximately twenty-six double chairs, the children soon accepted their strange surroundings in great humility and thankfulness.

From this building came an atmosphere of warmth and invitation to all the students. That heat which the single wood-burning stove failed to give, the teachers

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supplied in their loving patience and untiring efforts. The stove served a dual purpose in that the majority of the pupils brought only sweet potatoes to school for lunch. Each child carefully initialed his potatoes and placed them in the stove to bake. As the noon hour approached hungry stomachs superceded the prime position of hungry minds. However, one lunch hour passed, approximately forty students assembled again to acquire more food for thought.

Directly behind the main school building was a house known as the "Summer House." The most vivid recollection of this house by the students was an immense stone table on which the faculty, Miss Holley and Miss Putnam cared for their horticultural projects. Beautiful floral arrangements and compositions were made with flowers grown in the extensive gardens of the two acres, more or less. Also in this house, Miss Putnam and Miss Holley cared for ailing birds and prepared food to be placed in the numerous bird houses. These bird retreats could be found frequently among the trees; some shrubs and trees had been foreign to the locality until the coming of these educational missionaries. Likewise, many of the flowers which these colored children weeded

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and enjoyed in blossom were not common to Northumberland County. The friends of Miss Holley and Miss Putnam knew the joy which these ladies received in working in flower gardens. Therefore, in the barrels and boxes, Miss Holley frequently found flower bulbs and plants which in some degree would afford beauty and happiness to these people who had dedicated their lives to this cause and lived among malice and hatred on the part of the white citizens.

Built to the right of and a little to the rear of the summer house was the "Teachers' College." No explanation of the title of this house has been ascertained, but it was the dwelling in which the teachers were quartered. There were three rooms—two down stairs and one big room on the second floor. Atop this structure, Miss Holley maintained an observation platform. From this location, the children as well as the teachers learned more of the activities of the heavenly bodies. Miss Holley, in particular, spent many hours viewing the wonders of the sky.

To the left of the "Teachers' College," Miss Putnam had a house which, like the other buildings, was coated with pink white-wash. Even though Miss Holley and Miss Putnam were very close friends, they maintained separate

homes; for to the left of Miss Putnam's house was the home of Miss Holley. It was the only structure on the premises which had a basement. In this basement the contents of every carton and barrel were kept to be used when the appropriate time presented itself. It was certainly true that Sallie Holley retired every night with the funds and requisitions for operating the school secure in her basement; for on these regular shipments depended the existence of the school. Only this weather-beaten house stands on a slight mound and remains as a tangible evidence of that which once was a part of Sallie Holley's dream—a dream that materialized.

The Holley School did not have to solicit pupils. Knowledge seekers came willingly to Miss Holley and placed themselves at her mercy. Adults as well as children sought instruction. Unfortunately, instructors were not as easily attainable. The white people in the vicinity did not volunteer their services, and the Negroes were not equipped to live normally in their new freedom; therefore, they could not qualify as teachers. Every year in November, Miss Holley made the journey to New York in search of young women who were willing to donate their energy and time in the primitive life of Virginia. Sallie Holley presented the situation to possible candidates, and in no way coerced them. The final decision was theirs.
She explained that there would be no monetary compensation, but that the teachers would receive the necessities of life and invaluable personal satisfaction in the effects of their labors.

The teachers came for brief periods of six or seven months, but quite often, after a brief vacation in the North, they would resume their posts. During the existence of the Holley School, there were frequent replacements in the faculty. Many teachers remained loyal, and outstanding among them was the strict disciplinarian, Miss Comstock. She was known to the children as Miss Comstock, for they never ventured to learn her given name. Most of the teachers were addressed as "Miss Sallie", or "Miss Carrie" or whatever their given names were. All of the teachers commanded the respect of the eager learners, but some were able to create a bond of love between themselves and the children. Other teachers who remain as memories of the glorious past were Miss Clara Soles, Miss Harriet Allen, a Miss Johnson, and a Mrs. Thompson. At one time in the school's history, a gentleman by the name of Mr. Williams, native of South

6. Ibid.

America, was on the faculty. Another teacher of the Holley School was Miss Carrie Benton, who later married the brother of Miss Harriet Allen. Miss Benton taught in Northumberland County for the sessions of 1898 and 1899. She and Miss Allen sojourned in Virginia together. Miss Mary Pratt and Miss Maine Howard were two of the last Northern women to come to Virginia. At first, all of the teachers were white, but gradually, white instructors failed to offer their services. This presented a grave problem, but some of the former students were capable of teaching their own race. Two of these Negro educators were Miss Susie Blackwell, the first of her race to teach in the school; and Miss Eliza Conner. These women taught under the direction of Miss Putnam, for Miss Holley died in Miller's Hotel in New York in 1893 and was buried in Rochester, New York.

As time passed, antagonism and hatred gradually ceased even though the white people remained unreconstructed in their attitude toward the project during

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Miss Holley's and Miss Putnam's entire sojourn in Virginia. Mrs. Allen wrote that when she was in Virginia in 1898 and 1899, the open opposition to the school had ceased to exist. The local citizenry had transferred its attention to another unfortunate situation. They wished to remove Miss Putnam from her position as post mistress. She had received the governmental appointment in 1869 and held the place until a smallpox epidemic spread through the school. It seemed that in a shipment from the North, the germ was transmitted. At that time, the government was forced to move the post office which was located behind the fence on the school grounds. This occurred shortly after the turn of the century.

Mrs. Allen had the duty of attending the mail while she was in the school. The method of delivery was very primitive and inadequate. When the mail arrived, it was dumped on the floor of the school and the white people as well as the Negroes came to inquire for their mail. With each inquiry, all the mail was investigated to secure the individual's mail. This proved burdensome, but it, at least, superseded the methods of handling the mail exercised by the former post master who was

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II. Personal Interview with Clarence Claughton, Lottsburg, Virginia, March 26, 1956.
unable to read or write his name. Despite the fact that Miss Putnam's appointment was official from the United States Government, the white citizens refused to accept peacefully the new post mistress. They fought Miss Putnam's assignment through Congress and in various other ways, but their efforts proved fruitless.

The mail was an additional duty to the numerous chores and difficulties which befell the teachers. Miss Holley endeavored to secure four teachers for each year. The year officially began in January and continued through December. Miss Putnam, who was very interested in history, current as well as past, conducted a period of history each afternoon. Miss Holley shared in the attempt to elevate the Negroes by instruction in Christian beliefs. She held Sunday School every Sunday to which all the children in addition to many parents returned on Sunday. Actually the gates of the school were never closed and never locked unless everyone was away. This situation was an extremely rare happening, and everyday the teachers, dressed in black skirts and white blouses, cheerfully welcomed approximately forty Negroes to study with them from nine o'clock in the morning until three o'clock in the afternoon. This average remained

constant although the attendance fluctuated with the seasons. During the planting season the number was reduced and again, at harvest time the attendance showed marked reduction.

Regardless of the number of pupils, the teachers conducted the routine of the day. Miss Holley began the day in a Christian theme with morning devotions. After prayers, the materials that would be needed for the day were requisitioned from the supplies in Miss Holley's basement. Everything that the children used was sent from the North—chalk, books, paper and pencils. The only expense involved to the students was twenty-five cents a year. This was termed "wood money." If some could not pay their tuition, they brought produce or some other article that would assist in the maintenance of the school.

When the children received their working materials, classes began. The Holley School offered a varied curriculum including reading, writing, arithmetic, art, music, and physical culture. Each teacher took a group to its respective corner and remained there until noon time. The children were assigned to A, B, and C groups.

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14. Ibid.
The more advanced students sat to the left of the front entrance and often assisted in the extra-curricular activities. There was no age limit within the groups, and the students advanced at their own capacity. Miss Holley felt that when students reviewed a subject once, they were just ready to actually learn the material therein. She maintained that more was learned through repetition than in any other method of learning.

The teachers needed no bell to indicate lunch time because as the sweet potatoes neared readiness, they served to indicate recess time was in order. When the afternoon session began at one o'clock, Miss Putnam took her place on the platform, and the entire student body assembled for an hour and a half of historical instruction. The students participated in the instruction by contributing to current events. Prior to the opening of the school, the Negroes especially were ignorant of the happenings outside their immediate surroundings. In the remaining half-hour, the students and the teachers had recitations, group singing and prayers.

At three o'clock, the day of formal learning terminated. However, on various occasions, students remained at school to help weed or tend the garden. Often an

15. Ibid.
assignment of this nature was a disciplinary matter. Miss Holley felt that it was a learning process and advocated this method of correction. She maintained that the Negroes had been physically mistreated long enough and desired to appeal to the students' ability to reason. One student of the school related an instance in which he particularly remembered his guilt. The arithmetic class had been given a problem for assignment. When the class convened the following day, he was the only one who had worked the problem. The teacher asked him to demonstrate the problem. However, he could not remember the procedure. He had the answer but was unable to recall the method that his older brother had used in working the problem. After several attempts, he was asked to be seated, and the teacher said, "Eugene, be sure your sins will find you out." The student said that it was one reprimand that he has always remembered, and it was one which he has incorporated in all of his life's activities.

Many of the provisions sent from the North could not be used in the classroom, but Miss Holley and Miss Putnam bartered them for necessities from the local store which was operated by A. E. Pearson. Other articles

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16. Ibid.
were given as gifts to the children and parents for services which they did for the teachers. Miss Holley instilled in her subjects the principle that nothing good could be attained without expending honest energy and effort. Eugene Nelson told me that every Friday afternoon, he took a "light-wood" stump to Miss Holley, and she always had a gift for him in appreciation of his thoughtfulness.

Attending the Holley School was an enjoyable occasion for the Negroes. When a public school for Negroes opened in a nearby town, Cowart, Virginia, all of the Holley School children remained loyal to the Holley School. Here, they worked and played in the peaceful atmosphere. On particular days, the normal routine was altered for celebration. Among others, Miss Holley and Miss Putnam celebrated Christmas, West India Emancipation Day, the Emancipation Proclamation Day and Thanksgiving. On Thanksgiving Day, each child brought some ingredient from home to be put into a pudding. Regardless of what was brought, it became a part of the pudding. When the delicacy was ready, the students assembled with dignitaries to partake of it. One of these visitors would grace the table, and each child voiced thanksgiving for

17. Ibid.
some benefit. When they had devoured the pudding, a planned program of patriotic songs and hymns followed. Also, the students recited anti-slavery poems.

The life the children learned helped them to become better citizens in their adult years. It was no wonder that the children walked as much as six miles to school, for when they were at school, they seemed to realize the achievement that they were making. The students were loath to leave the school, and graduation day was not eagerly anticipated. In fact, graduation day did not exist because Miss Holley thought that people never ceased to learn, and it was not necessary to recognize a pause in learning. Therefore, when the children reached the age of eighteen, other interests or duties served to cause their absence from the Holley School.

Miss Putnam had continued the project after Miss Holley's death. She never considered the partnership terminated because every week she had the children write letters to Miss Holley asking her to be their guardian angel. Therefore, Miss Holley's influence was always

18. Ibid.
felt even though Miss Putnam had continued the work for twenty-one years after her friend's death. When Miss Holley's estate was settled, it is believed that the Holley School property was willed to Dr. Felix Adler of New York City. He had displayed an active interest in the work, and Miss Holley felt that he afforded her the best security of the continuance of Holley School.

Miss Putnam aged gracefully, but toward the end of her life, it was necessary that she have a housekeeper. Miss Cora Burgess, a former student who had directed the operation of the "Teachers' College," was the maid and nurse for Miss Putnam. She lived in a house which was built by Northern philanthropists' funds and located adjacent to the school property. Her duties, at first, were not too numerous, but in the last months of Miss Putnam's life, Cora's responsibilities increased. In January 1917, Miss Putnam's work at Holley School ended. The last of the pioneers of Negro education in the Holley School project had completed her mission. Miss Putnam was cremated in Baltimore, Maryland. Her ashes were buried in Zion Baptist Church Cemetery. Here, she


22. Ibid.
desired to remain among her people and forever to be an inspiration to the Negroes of Lottsburg District, Northumberland County, Virginia, whom she had befriended in their darkest hour.

In 1917, Dr. Felix Adler, associated with the Society for Ethical Culture, deeded the school property to a group of trustees; namely, Robert Diggs, Eugene Nelson, William Rich, Ernest Eskridge, Edward Diggs, Cora Burgess Smith, Maxwell Williams, Ella Knapp, Dr. Frank Lewis, and T. C. Walker, all residents of the county. Successors to these trustees were to be appointed by the remaining members. The sum involved in this transfer was one dollar. The group, known as the Negro School Improvement League of Lottsburg District, Northumberland County, Virginia, would work in cooperation with the Public School Board of the District.

Dr. Frank Lewis was Superintendent of Schools of Northumberland County at the time of the transfer of land and buildings. These terms have continued and today the Holley School is continuing the project which was

23. Ibid.


SACRED TO THE MEMOIRE
OF
CAROLINE E. PUTNAM
BORN JULY 25, 1826
DIED JAN. 14, 1911.

MISS PUTNAM'S TOMB
CHAPTER IV
THE PIONEERS' CONTRIBUTION

In 1917, at the death of Miss Putnam, the Holley School entered a period of transition from private auspices to that of becoming an instrumentality of the state. During the current session, 1917, the school continued as it had since it had become a reality. However, the next year, Dr. Frank Lewis, Superintendent of Schools of Northumberland County, began to share in directing the operation of the institution. The Negro School Improvement League of Lottsburg District, Northumberland County, Virginia has furnished the land and buildings toward the maintenance of the school, and the School Board of Northumberland County has secured the instructors, transportation, and provisions for the students. This method of operating the school has become the accepted procedure throughout the ensuing years.

Perhaps, when Miss Holley and Miss Putnam began this educational project, they did not visualize the extension of it beyond their lifetimes. Often, when the school was still in its embryonic stages, fear and scepticism shadowed their ultimate goal. However, they persevered and are accredited with the distinction of being inaugurators of Negro education in Lottsburg District, Northumber-
land County, Virginia. Their efforts served as the necessary impetus which eventually became public education for the Negroes. The possibility remains in question, had these courageous women not journeyed to Virginia, as to what the station of the twentieth century Negroes in Northumberland County would have been.

The citizens of Northumberland County can never convey enough appreciation to the memories of these missionaries. As they view, in retrospect, the events of the intervening decades, the people must agree that all of the products of the War between the States were not evil. The Carpetbaggers descended upon the war-ridden South and displayed little regard for the defeated people. However, with these undesirable people, there came also a leavening of good in the persons of Miss Emily Howland, Miss Sallie Holley, and Miss Caroline Putnam. These women, sought the frontier where they might exercise their desire and reap noticeable dividends. They hated slavery, and after the cessation of hostilities, they came to Virginia to aid the Negroes in firmly planting their roots. It was imperative that the colored people commence their new life with guidance from God-fearing

leaders. The Negroes were in a state of rebirth and as a child is reared from birth to adulthood, these Negroes in Virginia and the South drastically needed assistance to guide them from their primitive status.

Miss Holley and Miss Putnam were very successful in the fulfillment of the principle on which they based their teaching—"Equal rights for all and the world is my country." Their influence for a better way of life was tremendous and is still evidenced in the apparent good feeling between the races that exists in Northumberland County. This county has enjoyed a tranquil era where men have lived according to their individual dictates without fear of being molested by other citizens.

This feeling has resulted from the project which was started many years ago. Miss Putnam and Miss Holley pressed upon these unlearned Negroes the high ideals, and stressed the good clean way of living. These women lived in the manner which they advocated. To these rescuers of the overburdened Negroes, the colored people looked for help. By nature, the Negroid race is endowed with a high sense of imitativeness. Through the efforts

2. Ibid.

of these early Caucasians, the Negroes were given their initial start. When the local white citizens finally acquiesced in the change necessitated by the War between the States, they too, have endeavored to assist the colored people.

When Miss Putnam and Miss Holley were in Northumberland County, the typical "darky" family lived in a state of squalor. They, as well as the white people, had suffered the rigors of the war. Their homes were mostly dilapidated log cabins with only the earth to serve as flooring. They were disheveled in their dress having to do with the "cast-offs" of white people to protect their bodies from the elements. In many cases, the Northern philanthropists furnished the clothing which the children wore. Miss Holley and Miss Putnam gave wearing apparel to the Negroes who did not possess the necessities. It was the desire of these two ladies that there be no discrimination in their school.

The Holley School taught the Negroes manners as well as the rudiments of formal education. Formerly, the Negroes were not allowed to learn to read and write. In this new way of life, the Negroes would have to know these fundamentals in order to negotiate their everyday problems and activities. Ignorance placed the colored people at the mercy of the white people of the South as
well as the Scalawags and Carpetbaggers. The Holley School served as a refuge to these wanderers in the South during their period of transition. The white people were making their adjustment to the changes of the war, and having little innate compulsion toward bettering the Negroes, they left the colored people without assistance. The type of work which the Holley School afforded met the needs of the primitive Negroes.

Miss Holley and Miss Putnam gave to the Negroes a Christian way of life in addition to an economic preparation. These women were very religious themselves, and in every phase of the school activities, both Miss Holley and Miss Putnam incorporated the religious theme wherever it was feasible. The children began and terminated their day with prayers and meditation. During the day, the teachers reminded the pupils of God's contributions to their welfare by explaining the ways in which He was always guiding and directing them. Whenever the students received discipline, the teachers made reference to Biblical passages wherever pertinent. The reprimand of Eugene Nelson, mentioned earlier in this paper, is a typical example of the methods of discipline in effect in the Holley School.

This school afforded the Negroes their initial start in the new freedom. Many children attended the
Holley School. It was improbable that all of these pupils were potential geniuses who would become people of fame in adult life. Miss Holley and Miss Putnam never entertained this possibility; they simply desired to rescue the Negroes and direct them in the correct patterns of life. Most of the alumni of this school have supplemented the contributions of Miss Holley and Miss Putnam. The influence of this school instilled in the students a desire to convey that which they had learned to be creditable citizens, who have and still are contributing generously of their talents to their fellow citizens.

Some have been more outstanding than others. Robert Diggs, now an elderly gentleman, left the school with a preparation which equipped him well enough to cope with New York society. He went to New York in the employ of the family of one of the teachers at Holley School. While there, he attended the Baptist Church. Early in his career, he received the opportunity to attend a religious training school, which would qualify him as a Sunday School teacher in New York. Today his diploma hangs from the wall of his living room.

Also, Robert Diggs, among other alumni of the school, served as a promoter of the Holley School. On several occasions these former students of Miss Holley and Miss Putnam presented benefit programs before those
philanthropic supporters of the project which they had never seen. Actually witnessing the capabilities of these post pupils abetted the desire of these Northern sympathizers, and they departed from an enjoyable evening with renewed zeal toward continuing their support of the school.

Eugene Nelson, former owner and successful operator of a general merchandise business in Northumberland County, and now an insurance agent, displays the benefits which he received from Miss Holley, Miss Putnam and the teachers. Today, he is one of the leading citizens of his community, having served on the Northumberland County Red Cross Board among other civic contributions. He holds a prominent and important position in the Negro School Improvement League of Lottsburg District, Northumberland County, Virginia. Also, he has in his possession much of the information concerning the Holley School.

Robert Diggs and Eugene Nelson are only two outstanding examples of the results of the Holley School. However, many honest, forthright, and contributing citizens

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5. Letter from Dr. John M. Ellison, Chancellor, Virginia Union University, Richmond, Virginia, February 13, 1956.
accredit their station in life. Even the teachers have felt benefitted by their associations with the Negroes in Lottsburg District. Mrs. Clarence (Carrie Benton) Allen stated in her letter:

I went back after 50 years, and was so pleased to see the progress. I look back upon my work there as some of the best, most worthwhile I have done. I receive beautiful letters from my "boys and girls" both, and am proud to call them friends.6

Even though Miss Holley and Miss Putnam have not been included in the pages of historical record, they gave their lives in loyal service to their fellowmen. The Negroes of Northumberland County owe these women, the progenitors of Negro education in Lottsburg District, a debt of gratitude. When they view the dilapidated house, Miss Holley's House, on the mound, and when they read the inscription on Miss Putnam's tomb, these citizens cannot fail to realize the genuine worth in the influence these women contributed to the social growth and development of their county.

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BIBLIOGRAPHICAL ENTRIES

A. BOOKS


B. NEWSPAPERS


C. LETTERS


Letter from Dr. John M. Ellison, Chancellor, Virginia Union University, Richmond, Virginia, February 13, 1956.

Letter from Dr. Robert S. Fletcher, Professor of History, Oberlin College, Oberlin, Ohio, March 3, 1956.

D. PERSONAL INTERVIEWS


Personal Interview with Clarence Claughton, Lottsburg, Virginia, March 28, 1956.

E. MANUSCRIPTS

Northumberland County Circuit Court Records, Heathsville, Virginia, Deed Book D.

Northumberland County Circuit Court Records, Heathsville, Virginia, Deed Book Z.
Lucius S. Winstead to Sallie Holley

28 April 1869—Received of the Clerk of Northumberland County Court, the original deed from Lucius S. Winstead and wife to Sallie Holley. E. Nash for Sally Holley

This Indenture, made this Twenty-fifth day of February in the year of our Lord one thousand eight hundred and sixty-nine, between Lucius S. and Mary A. Winstead of the County of Northumberland State of Virginia of the first part, and Sallie Holley of the city of Buffalo State of New York of the second part, Witnesseth, that the said party of the first part, in consideration of the sum of eighty dollars to them duly paid, have sold and by these presents do grant and convey to the said party of the second part, her heirs and assigns, all that tract or parcel of land, situate in the County of Northumberland state of Virginia on the county road leading from Lottsburg to Westmoreland Court House, commencing at the South-east corner of land belonging to R. A. Claybrook running in an easterly direction along said road one hundred and two feet, thence parallel with said Claybrook's land to the county road leading from Lottsburg to Coan River, thence along said road one hundred and two feet to said Claybrook's land, thence along said Claybrook's land to place of beginning, containing two acres more or less, with the appurtenances and all the estate, title and interest therein of the said party of the first part. And the said Lucius S. and Mary A. Winstead do hereby covenant and agree to and with the said party of the second part, her heirs and assigns, that the premises thus conveyed in the quiet and peaceable possession of the said party of the second part, her heirs and assigns, will forever warrant and defend, against any person whomsoever, lawfully claiming the same or any part thereof.

In witness whereof, the party of the first part have hereunto set their hands and seals the day and year first above written.

Lucius S. Winstead
Mary A. Winstead

Sealed and Delivered in the presence of:

W. R. Claughton
A. J. Henderson

State of Virginia, Northumberland County
The above information was ascertained in the Northumberland
Clerk's Office, Heathsville, Northumberland County, Vir­
ginia. It was located in Deed Book D, page 319.

January 14, 1956

Dr. Felix Adler to Robert Diggs et. al.

This deed made this 11th day of September 1917, be­
tween Dr. Felix Adler, of New York, party of the first
part, and Robert Diggs, Eugene Nelson, William D. Rich,
Ernest Eskridge, L. C. Newman, Edward Diggs, Cora Smith,
Maxwell Williams, Ella A. Knapp, Dr. Franklin W. Lewis
and T. C. Walker, all of Northumberland County, in the
State of Virginia, parties of the second part, Witnesseth:
That in consideration of the sum of one dollar ($1.00)
in hand paid to the said party of the first part at and
before the sealing and delivery of this deed, and other
valuable considerations, the receipt whereof is hereby
acknowledged, the said party of the first part doth grant
unto the said parties of the second part and their suc­
cessors, as trustees, with special warranty, all the
following described real estate, situate, lying and being
in the County of Northumberland, in the said State of
Virginia, to-wit: Beginning at the Southwest corner of
land belonging to R. A. Claybrook, running in an Easterly
direction on hundred and two (102) feet to the land of
the said R. A. Claybrook, thence along said Claybrook's
land to the place of beginning. To Have and To Hold in
trust for the purpose of erecting and maintaining thereon,
with funds voluntarily raised by the said trustees and
the other persons, associated as the Negro School Improve­
ment League of Lottsburg District, Northumberland County,
Virginia, in co-operation with the Public School Board
of the said District, a school building or buildings for
the use and benefit of the colored children of Lottsburg
for such use, and for such other educational purposes
as the trustees herein named or their successors, may deem
necessary and expedient for the intellectual advancement
of the colored population of the said district. Any vacancies
which shall at any time occur either by death, resignation,
or removal of one or more of the trustees, I direct shall
be filled by the election of a new trustee or trustees by
the surviving trustees. Witness the following signature
and seal.

Felix Adler

State of New York
Court of Essex, to-wit:
I, W. Scott Brown, a notary public of and for the County aforesaid, in the State of New York, do certify that Felix Adler whose name is signed to the writing above, bearing date on the 11th day of September 1917, has this day acknowledged the same before me in my County aforesaid. Given under my hand this 11th day of September 1917.

W. Scott Brown

State of New York
Essex County Clerk's Office

I, William H. Roberts, Clerk of the County of Essex, and also Clerk of the Supreme and County Courts in and for said County, (the same being Courts of Record) do hereby certify that W. Scott Brown whose name is subscribed to the certificate of proof or acknowledgement of the annexed instrument and thereon written was at the time of taking such proof or acknowledgment, a Notary Public in and for said County, dwellin therein, commissioned and sworn, and duly authorized to take the same. And further, that I am well acquainted with the hand-writing of the said Notary, and verily believe the signature to the said certificate is genuine and that said instrument is executed and acknowledged according to the laws of the State of New York. In testimony whereof, I have hereunto set my hand and affixed the seal of the said Courts and County, this 12th day of September 1917.

W. H. Roberts, Clerk

W. J. Vashell, Deputy

The above deed plus witnesses was presented to the Clerk's Office of the Circuit Court of Northumberland County, Virginia, May 10, 1918.

This information was ascertained in the Northumberland Clerk's Office, Heathsville, Northumberland County, Virginia. It was located in Deed Book Z, page 660.

March 10, 1956
APPENDIX B