

11/21/02

 FIFTH ANNUAL REPORT  
OF THE PRINCIPALS OF  
THE CALHOUN COLORED  
SCHOOL, OF CALHOUN,  
LOWNDES COUNTY, ALABAMA,  
WITH THE REPORTS OF THE  
HEADS OF DEPARTMENTS ❁ ❁ ❁

1901-02

TENTH ANNUAL REPORT

OF THE

PRINCIPALS

OF THE

Calhoun Colored School

OF CALHOUN, LOWNDES COUNTY, ALABAMA

WITH THE

REPORTS OF THE HEADS OF DEPARTMENTS

1901-1902

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BOSTON

GEO. H. ELLIS CO., PRINTERS, 272 CONGRESS STREET

1902

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### Principals.

Rev. PITT DILLINGHAM	Miss CHARLOTTE R. THORN.
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### Academic Department.

CLARA HART, *Head Teacher.*

Mrs. O. H. BURCHARD.	IRENE SMALLWOOD.
SUSAN M. TURNER.	MARY F. ANDERSON.
* SOPHIA L. THORN.	* A. M. TROYER.
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### Industrial Department.

<p style="text-align: center;"><i>Farm Manager.</i></p> <p style="text-align: center;">JOHN W. LEMON.</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>Dairy and Horticulture.</i></p> <p style="text-align: center;">* A. M. TROYER.</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>Laundry.</i></p> <p style="text-align: center;">MINTHY WILEY.</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>School Physician.</i></p> <p style="text-align: center;">CORDELIA M. WHITTIER, M.D.</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>Disciplinarian.</i></p> <p style="text-align: center;">* CHARLES W. MURRELL.</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>Graduate Assistant.</i></p> <p style="text-align: center;">WALTER ROPER.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><i>Sewing-room.</i></p> <p style="text-align: center;">JEANETTE BULLIS.</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>Domestic Science.</i></p> <p style="text-align: center;">ANNIE E. CRAWFORD.</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>Librarian.</i></p> <p style="text-align: center;">* SOPHIA L. THORN.</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>Housekeeper.</i></p> <p style="text-align: center;">ELLEN HANSCOM.</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>Book-keeper.</i></p> <p style="text-align: center;">HELEN L. EMERSON.</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>Cashier and Office Assistant.</i></p> <p style="text-align: center;">FRANCIS M. DUTCHER.</p>
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\* Names appearing in two places showing time divided between two departments.

## PRINCIPALS' REPORT.

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TO THE TRUSTEES OF THE CALHOUN COLORED SCHOOL :

*Gentlemen,*-- Calhoun closes its tenth year without a debt, though with a surplus somewhat reduced. The enlargement of the Girls' Dormitory was a very important improvement, and its expense was met by special gifts. An encouraging gain of \$7,000 has been made in the Endowment Fund, bringing its total to \$17,000.

In enrolment there was an increase, 269 against 252 of last year. The community class, for special reasons, was smaller by 7; but day and night school were larger by 24. In day school the gain was of 8 boys and 13 girls, the boys falling 11 below the average for seven years, and the girls rising 10 above their average for seven years. The average school enrolment during the entire ten years of the school's life is found to be 280.

Extremely hard times this past year took from us a considerable number of our larger day-school boys, who come in from the cabins. They went to the mines and the railroad to earn bread or were kept at home for outside wage-earning after the failure of both corn and cotton crops. As a neighborhood school, we feel the ups and downs of our farming community. Better times will release the wage-earning boy for more schooling.

In spite of short crops, however, tuition and book money increased from \$712.29 of last year to \$787.19 this year. During ten years the parents have paid in \$7,187. Average payment by them has gone up from \$660 a year during the first three years (and including gifts of their first enthusiasm for Primary Building, etc.,) to \$743 a year during the past

seven years. Twice in better crop years the \$1,000 mark has been passed. The average tuition is about \$4 per pupil, or \$8 a year per family,— a fair proportion of the small family income. It means a half-month's wage-earning for the head of the family. The larger families, sending three or four children, have been rather heavily taxed, in spite of a free kindergarten, which lightens the burdens somewhat. In general, however, those who pay most care most. There has been a gain in punctuality and regularity of attendance, even when the scholar comes a long distance. Four or five, this past year, have walked eight miles a day, going and coming. This all means the interest of the fathers and mothers, as well as of the boys and girls; and one more very radical gain must be noted in this connection,— the coming to school earlier in the fall and the staying later in the spring. Child labor is in demand in Lowndes County, where a boy or girl of nine years of age is reckoned as full field-hand for picking cotton, and even for hoeing.

Wage-earning by the boarding students on the farm and school grounds amounts to about \$4,300 a year. This, added to the tuition and book money, \$743, gives a total of over \$5,000 a year, meaning hard work by parents and pupils, the spirit of self-support and of struggle for an education.

But Calhoun's "sphere of usefulness" is not measured by the school alone. The seventy families, or four hundred individuals buying homes about us must be reckoned with, and also the public schools kept in our county by our students and graduates. It is within the facts to say that Calhoun deals directly with over 1,000 individuals each year, while no exact measurement can be made of its general work in its township and county.

The average running expenses for Calhoun during ten years have been \$15,000, \$53 per pupil. The average amount put into the plant has been \$3,000 a year, making the entire output \$18,000 a year, or \$180,000 in the ten years.

- The plant has been kept up, is worth over \$30,000, and is

good for the work of a long future. Calhoun's community work and its students' public school teaching of about 500 a year in its county must be added to its school work proper if the question, "Does it pay?" is to be answered.

School work proper, with its two departments, is double-barrelled; and it is the industrial side which is most obviously expensive.

Our children all come from the cotton and corn fields to the class-rooms. Farming with "mere black muscle" in our county is a very bad failure, and ought to become a crime, no excuse for it being left. Calhoun's attempt to help just here with its school farm is expensive. Nothing could justify its cost except its educational aim, and the fact that the negro's case is hopeless without better farming. Mr. Lemon tells boldly in his report of the feeling about farming as something to be escaped, which exists about us, and which will continue in the cotton belt until a new kind of American schooling changes the sentiment.

We cannot present an exhaustive statement, covering the ten years of Calhoun's attempt with its farm. There has been much to learn, and experience costs. But any one who goes over the ground will see that progress has been made, and that every year our farming and our teaching of farming gets closer to the facts and becomes more efficient.

A few figures and facts may be of use. Leaving out the cost of wages and superintendence, the average cash outlay for the farm for the past eight years has been about \$1,047. The average cash income has been about \$190; but to this must be added the supplies furnished the boarding department, amounting at fair market value to about \$748 a year. (Milk, sweet potatoes, and garden vegetables have been the main items furnished.) This saves a cash outgo of \$938 a year.

The wage account seems more formidable,—an average of six boys at \$12 a month, during seven months of the year, etc.; a somewhat larger force at \$14 a month during the

summer five months,— costing in all about \$1,000 a year. But let it be remembered, these boys are getting but little over 50 cents a day, and are paying their board, \$8 a month, out of their earnings. Moreover, the balance is not paid to them in cash, but becomes a school credit, paying for education later on. As two-thirds of the earnings go for board, this reduces the \$1,000 to a credit balance of \$334 or thereabouts, so far as the student accounts go. Meanwhile training is given in farming, and you open the door to self-support while attending school. Contributions from the North, in this case, are paying wages for hard work. Commercially, it does not pay; but, as an investment for any one interested in educating the negro, it is worth considering.

For a moment let us consider the last year's results. Its cash outlay is over the average,— \$1,224.98; and the cash income is reduced to \$120.79. But the year's contribution in pork and veal, sweet potatoes, vegetables, milk, syrup, honey, strawberries, and fruits for canning and the table, come to \$983.75, which, added to the \$120.79 cash, equals \$1,104.54, saving the boarding department just so much.

As to the weather last summer, it was simply a calamity. Sweet potatoes held to a low average, 50 bushels to the acre. Cotton dropped to one-third of a crop,  $2\frac{1}{2}$  bales from 10 acres. Long food, or hay and fodder, dropped from an average of 37 tons to less than a half crop, 15 tons. Corn dropped to 105 bushels from 15 acres, or to the rate of 7 bushels an acre. All this made it necessary to buy much food for the stock; and, as prices went up, we had to suffer the consequences.

It must not be supposed, however, that any one is satisfied. We refer you to the reports of the Farm and Agricultural Instruction Department to show that there is a constant aiming at better things and a growing conviction that larger results are within our reach.

How to use a farm educationally is a new question in the history of education. Experts in the North find some in-

efficiency in the highly organized academic teaching of the day, but academic teaching has centuries of experience behind it.

The farm makes an educational climate at Calhoun. It is at work all the time with the students, secretly quickening respect for the farmer and his occupation, and preparing the mind for more genuine interest in farming. It is an indispensable object-lesson and experiment field for our neighborhood work, and it is a main road to any working knowledge of our situation, of the people with whom we deal.

Again and again one must come up against this stubbornly poor and yet capable soil. Again and again one must experiment in a dozen directions with care of soil and crops and the feeding of stock. Again and again one must take the Southern farmer's chances, be "burnt up" one summer and "drowned out" the next, in order to sense the situation, know what the homes about us are contending with.

The one point essential is going ahead, raising the standards. We must definitely demand more each year from each cotton bush, corn plant, pea vine, potato hill, peach-tree, etc., from each square acre. In short, there is a point of greater efficiency just ahead, for which we have been slowly preparing during ten years. The need at this moment is for further development. Any one can see that we are moving toward better things in so sharply reducing our acreage and in the increasing use of cow-peas and other fertilizers, in holding our soil on the hillsides with winter grain against the semi-tropical violence of the winter rains, in eliminating our unproductive cow and bringing the butter-producing standard to a good dairy standard, and in the largely increasing returns in fruits and vegetables.

Little by little, too, we are gaining in the nature study done in the Academic Department, in getting the boys and girls seriously interested in their individual gardens, and

connecting our book work with this central matter of the farm and garden, orchard and dairy, stock-raising, forestry, "front and back yard study," etc. This, in simple, practical ways, we must more and more do; for we have to do here with the one absorbing, fatal for good or evil, life industry of the people in our Lowndes County world.

Yet we are only at the beginning of it all, sharply conscious of present limitations. Quite revolutionary changes may yet be made, under the growing sense that, in spite of professions of devotion to industrial education, we are yet secretly and dangerously unconverted, only half alive to its importance and great educational possibilities.

Two other matters of special importance Calhoun should bring to the front this year: First, the further development not only of its manual training and housekeeping and cooking, but the further teaching of carpentry, and the starting of elementary blacksmithing, wheelwrighting, and painting, the trades incidental to and immediately connected with farming, all in a simple and inexpensive way.

Second, normal work, in order to make our own students and graduates reach before long 1,000 boys and girls instead of 500 a year, to insure better teaching by our graduates, and to co-operate more effectively with the 100 schools and teachers already at work in the county. At present only one-fourth of our colored school population is in school in a given year, and only one-half of the white children of school age are attending school. The school term is four months (by recent law) for colored boys and girls, the colored teacher's certificate is third grade. The less said of school-houses, the better.

Lowndes County is one of those black-majority counties which will naturally make a severe testing field for the new movement for "education in the country districts of the South," which has recently begun to make itself felt. All that Calhoun earnestly desires is to see a difficult situation really known and faced and wisely dealt with, and to co-

operate in any way possible. We are deeply gratified and greatly encouraged by the appearance of the new movement for education in the South, especially as it has no color line in it, but desires to give even-handed justice to both races, and puts needed emphasis on the rural districts. Crying as is the need for more and better colored schools about us, Calhoun especially desires the white people of its county to more clearly understand our profound interest in the education of the white children of the county. At the end of ten years it is a great regret that the work for the white children belonging to the poor and neglected part of our population could not have gone on at the same time. It is a part of our certain knowledge that there is no way out which neglects either race.

The better understanding is growing. Many of our white neighbors came to Calhoun to give their cordial greeting to the "Ogden party." Others of our influential white people of this county, unable to be present, sent earnest words of approval and hope. In particular, our State Superintendent of Education and our County Superintendent were present, and have expressed their desire that all may work together to take the next step ahead in the difficult field of Lowndes County.

Calhoun is not to be blamed for the limitations of its situation in the past. It has always sought to cultivate friendly relations between the two races, and at the very outset it desired to do something for the white boys and girls.

Another thing which we desire to make equally clear is our wish for the vigorous growth and increasing influence of the better colored schools in different parts of our county, not the overshadowing importance of Calhoun, which means too great dependence upon her, or any undervaluing of any colored teacher of good sense and good character.

On that day when Mr. Ogden brought influential friends from the North and South to see us, the entire country-side

turned out, at our invitation, filling our grove with a great mass of plantation fathers and mothers, boys and girls, and little children. In one sense, Calhoun sought her "own glory" in this. But her "glory," to those understanding the situation, was in the manifestation of good will toward Calhoun and the belief in her aim at the common good of the whole county, shown by the coming together, not only of our own immediate neighborhood, but of representatives of remote communities in our county.

Here, indeed, is another next step to be taken in the beginning of our second decade,—a further development of helpful relations to the communities or neighborhoods at a distance. One such neighborhood at Lum, six miles away, we particularly rejoice in, and this because its school and church and its homes and farms seem such a sign of similar possibilities elsewhere.

Calhoun is increasingly committed to the policy of supplementing the work of the great schools by the taking of *counties* as definite fields for settlement and school endeavor, and by developing many efficient *small centres* of better things in each county. So, of course, in its own county it desires to see teachers and preachers identifying themselves with communities, taking root, buying land and making homes and farms as object-lessons, and aiming distinctly to build up local loyalty and pride and sense of responsibility, along with a cordial feeling of good will toward all similar communities. Calhoun seeks not jealous or narrow competition of neighborhoods, but, along with the organic union of farms and homes and churches and schools in each community, the equally real union of communities for the common good of the county.

We are conscious of new possibilities in this direction, because, for one thing, the graduate body of our school begins to be of sufficient size to be visible; and the meeting of graduates at our last closing day, together with the letters received from absent graduates, gave the principals a distinct

sense of a new force becoming gradually available. The spirit of loyalty to Calhoun and her special aims and methods was sufficiently marked to give much courage.

First of all in importance, a number of the graduates, in whom we have confidence, have begun to buy farm and home land on our plantations. Two of our graduates have deeds to land near by. Nine are now buying, and three or four more are waiting for their chance. It can be guessed what this may mean in the building of our neighborhood.

We refer you to the various reports of the Heads of Departments and the final short one on Land and Home Movement for a more detailed account of the year's life and work.

The spirit of "hard work, helpfulness, and responsibility," which Miss Hart refers to as characterizing the student body this year, exists largely because that is exactly the every-day spirit of the teachers and workers at Calhoun; and we desire to earnestly thank all the teachers and workers for their help (which cannot be measured or over-valued) in making the tenth year a successful one, and the years that have gone before.

#### CLOSING DAY.

Closing Day was as pleasant as usual during the forenoon and until the middle of the afternoon. The usual crowd of visitors was also there, more people from a distance than ever before; and the fathers and mothers and friends took apparently deep satisfaction in seeing and hearing the boys and girls in the class-rooms and inspecting the industrial exhibit. Once more we met in the school grove in the afternoon, and had short and unpretentious papers from the graduating class, revealing an earnest and practical spirit; but in the midst of it all came a wind-storm which drowned the voices of the speakers and scattered the audience to the four corners of the county. The graduating class of eleven bravely finished their papers in our

assembly-room, and received their certificates. Everybody admired the quiet way in which the class took its disappointment, and we saw in this a good augury of the way in which they were likely to face the inevitable difficulties of life before them.

The storm cleared away, and later in the evening came the reception and supper given by the principals to the graduating class and all graduates and boarding students present. This took place in the new model log cabin (a gift from a friend), which was so much needed for just such occasions, and is a standing revelation to the colored people of Lowndes County of the delightful possibilities in the making of a cabin home with the old-fashioned materials, including stick and clay chimney, if one has also plenty of sense and taste.

#### BEQUESTS.

Two of Calhoun's much valued friends have within a short time died, and have left helpful remembrances to work for the school perpetually in their name,— Mrs. Mary J. Phipps and Miss Helen Scott Robinson, both of Boston, Mass. In each case the gift was of \$1,000. We desire also at this time to acknowledge gratefully the gift of \$5,000 by Mrs. Helen G. Coburn, of Boston.

#### CLOSING DAY EVENING.

It was an earnest and happy meeting held in the old hall of the principals' cottage after the reception at the Log Cabin. Graduates representing every class which has so far gone out were present; and almost all who were absent sent letters, the reading of which letters was received with deep attention and evident pleasure. It was the beginning of the organization of our graduates for helping each other and helping Calhoun. 23 in all were present out of Calhoun's 36 living graduates.

## ITEMS.

An enrolment of 269 and a graduating class of 11. Calhoun has graduated 39 in all, 36 of whom are alive. We shall all miss the class of 1902. Four of our boys and girls graduate from Hampton this year. One of the girls is to be salutatorian of the class.

Christmas morning at sunrise, when the boys and girls gathered for the first breakfast in the large, new dining-room, beautifully trimmed with the Christmas greens, was a morning to be remembered. The students thought the new room the best Christmas gift possible.

The girls find it hard to say how much the enlarged dormitory means to them. At last they have a sitting and reading room. The house-mother says home life among the girls has risen to a new standard.

The grounds and freshly painted buildings attract attention as a good object-lesson. They have taken a long step forward in attractiveness. We have a new, admirably woven wire fence, enclosing school grounds and farm. There has been much thought and work in planting of trees, etc., during several years. Our students wove the wire fence.

We are all looking forward to the agricultural fair to be held on the school grounds October 25 and 26.

The County Colored Teachers' Conference held at Calhoun in April did much to promote genuine acquaintance with the teachers and conditions in Lowndes County. May those who came come again, and bring others with them every year.

Can the short summer school for teachers be started next May?

When on Closing Day morning all our boys and girls, from Seniors to kindergarten children, fell into a long line and marched so strongly, circled the flag-pole with concentric rings, pledged allegiance, and then sang "America," one man from a long distance away was overheard to say with

feeling : " I dun tell my wife our chillens ought to be in dis school years ago. If I libes, suh, I'se gwine to see um here next year." Truth to tell, it was for all of us a simple but impressive sight.

The coming of the Ogden party, Monday, April 28, was an event for Lowndes County and in Calhoun's quiet life. Nature gave them a beautiful day, and our mocking-birds were in tune and Calhoun's roses were at their very best. Our own strawberries, also, were ripe ; and many things were planned for which there proved to be no time. But at least we were all there, old and young, from far and near ; and we saw and heard from our distinguished friends. Many were the kind things very earnestly said by our visitors about Calhoun, some of whom had never before penetrated into the real plantation country and looked into the faces of so many old ex-slaves, or understood just how simple and natural and friendly a thing is Calhoun's Land and Home Movement and its neighborhood life and work, or how, on a small scale, it seems to go to the heart of the situation. We shall not soon forget the day. Some of our colored people thought a genuine pot of gold had been left on the grounds. They will find the gold, perhaps, later on by digging and patient waiting for it. Meanwhile much courage was given ; hope of a better day, which you help bring yourself, and the belief that help will be wisely given to those who help themselves. New expectations and determinations are abroad in Lowndes County in communities both white and black ; and Calhoun has been given the lift of friendly greeting and important recognition by those who are in earnest about and entirely capable of helping to solve the educational problems, or, better, the life problems of the country districts of the cotton belt.

PITT DILLINGHAM.  
CHARLOTTE R. THORN.

## TREASURER'S REPORT

FOR THE YEAR ENDING MAY 31, 1902.

TO THE TRUSTEES OF THE CALHOUN COLORED SCHOOL :

*Gentlemen,*— The following statement is of all cash receipts and expenditures for the year ending May 31, 1902.

The school year closes with a balance of \$1,156.75. This, while a smaller balance than that of a year ago, is larger than that of any year previous to last year.

This tenth year has brought addition to our endowment fund, and thus lasting help to the school. In two cases the additions came in the form of legacies from old friends and supporters of the school,— Mrs. Mary J. Phipps, \$1,000, and Miss Helen S. Robinson, \$1,000. The third was a gift of \$5,000 from Mrs. Helen G. Coburn. Such additions to the endowment mean a lessening of the yearly burden of money-raising.

In most places of receipts we find very little variation, if we except the large increase to donations. This was the case of gifts for special needs, in shape of additions to the Girls' Dormitory and the furnishing of same.

The tuition receipts were the largest with two exceptions we have ever had, although it was a "poor year" among the people.

While our receipts this year have been larger than ever before, our expenditures show even greater increase. In trying to place this increase, it is found largely in the high prices of everything from building material to food and clothing supplies, and also in a poor crop year.

The first large increase shows in the real estate and improvement account, due almost entirely to the fact that on the buildings put up nine and ten years ago there was need

of many repairs to keep things in good shape and property from depreciating. These repairs were in the way of new steps, porches, replacing of old blinds, repairs to roofs, etc. The improvements were mainly in the shape of storage places, closets, cupboards, etc., for more systematic storage of supplies and consequent saving of time and material.

Our new Commencement stand is an expense that comes about every third year. This is a large stand in our school grove, which grove takes the place of a large assembly hall. The carpentry and painting work was carried this year again by our school force, and so all outlay has been for material and for better brick-work.

The next increase is in Teachers' Home and Boarding Department furnishings and supplies. Here, also, it was a question of replacing the worn out, and included beds, mattresses, bedding and table linen, china, kitchen utensils, window shades, carpet strips, etc.

The large farm expenses may be traced to a "failure crop year" in our community in the line of staple crops. The corn alone gave good reason for increase. We had to buy from a distance most that we used, and, while usually the prices paid are 35 cents to 50 cents per bushel, this year they were from 75 cents to \$1.00; and corresponding prices in all feed made an expensive year in care of stock.

The farm and Agricultural Department this year provided vegetables, milk, fruit, etc., for the tables of teachers and students to the value of \$983.95, thus saving a cash expenditure for same to outside market.

The increase in laundry cash expense came largely from the fact that it was found less expensive at the closing and opening of school to put out large amounts of household goods; for, although it makes a larger amount of cash spent, it saves a much larger student credit, as well as the board of students who would have to have been kept for the work. Also, scarcity of water necessitated the putting out of work.

Salary increase was the result of getting done much work

that had accumulated during nine years of school life in the way of reference and record work.

The service account is perhaps where the increase seems most satisfactory. We gave work to graduates, paying them in cash, with which they were able to start buying land, and thus are going to help in the community life. We feel it to be one of the important steps of the year, and look for good returns from it.

While we have no *cash* obligation, our books show credited to students \$718.46. This amount has been earned by boys and girls doing the work of the institution to enable them later to enter day school and pay board and tuition from their credit. The money cannot be drawn in cash; and, if for any reason the student is unsatisfactory at school and has to be expelled, the school's obligation is cancelled.

Heating and lighting account shows what a long season of cold means to us, and also what the heavy prices of coal and oil caused in way of increase.

More printing, an illustrated report, and getting our picture record completed caused the advance in the printing account.

I have thus itemized the places of increased expenses to show that our expenditures are not passed over without thought. We regret the increase, and have aimed and desired to reduce rather than increase, excepting where reduction means limitation to the detriment of the work.

Again, we thank our friends and supporters for all the interest and help given us, thus making it possible for us to carry on the work.

The Calhoun Club of Boston gave larger support than ever before, and we owe them especial gratitude.

We have now closed our tenth year, and enter upon a new decade with a deeper feeling of responsibility than ever before, and deeper gratitude for the support given the school and its work.

Respectfully submitted,

CHARLOTTE R. THORN,

*Treasurer.*