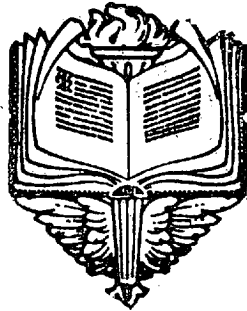


*Pioneers*  
*in*  
*Canal Zone*  
*Education*



*George W. Westerman*  
*†*

*In observance of 1949 Negro History Week*

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OUR *present comfort is made possible because of  
the handicaps endured by the pioneers of the past.*

—ANON

DEDICATED TO



LAWRENCE JOHNSON  
Superintendent of the Division of Schools

*Sincere admiration for his achievements in the field of education and in  
appreciation for his long and deep interest in raising and improving  
the educational standards of the Canal Zone Colored Schools.*







# INTRODUCTION

Since 1926 the second week in February of each year has been set aside by the Association for the Study of Negro Life and History of Washington for focusing attention and reflection upon Negro History. Year by year the week has grown in national significance until its observance has spread even to non-Negro organizations.

Like all dynamic activities the observance of Negro History Week has found fertile soil far beyond the country of its origin. Thus we find that in 1945 the Isthmian Negro Youth Congress took the initiative in introducing Negro History Week to the Isthmus. The celebration took the form of a series of articles published in the local press by members of that organization, all dealing with the achievements of the Negro in world affairs. It was felt that the study of the Negro stimulates in the members of the race themselves an interest in, and appreciation of the contribution they have made to civilization.

In 1946 the observance was repeated locally by the INYC with full cooperation from the Canal Zone schools, THE PANAMA TRIBUNE, and other local newspapers; while the highlight of 1947 was the supplement of the Canal Zone Junior College dedicated to National Negro History Week.

The present year finds the Division of Schools associating itself very closely with the 1949 observance of Negro History Week by sponsoring the publication of this pamphlet, "Pioneers in Canal Zone Education."

History is not just a record of what has happened; it is a prophecy of what is to be. And just in proportion as we study it and make applications will we be able to profit by the errors and high purposes exemplified by mankind in the past.

Negro History Week emphasizes that the past of all groups has in some way or other influenced our lives. Yesterday and today are inextricably woven together. The affairs of bygone times produce the affairs of our times. Our characters and our destinies are woven on the loom of the yesteryears.

There is no valid excuse today for not offering a course in Negro History simply because of the lack of a suitable text. Books and supplementary works by Carter G. Woodson, W. E. B. DuBois, Joel A. Rogers, Benjamin Brawley, Arna Bontemps — to mention a few — deal with Negro History, literature, art and drama for levels from the fifth grade through college.

However, the data and material which we have collected for a place in this year's spotlight are framed by our own local setting. The stories of our own men and women who taught the Three R's and guided our youth into healthful and decent living under the most trying conditions, deserve a special place in our records, our memories, and our hearts.

Being in full accord with the view that biographical history exercises a powerful ethical force, Superintendent Lawrence Johnson supported the recommendation that Supervisor Alfred E. Osborne should prepare a series of historical sketches on those vigorous men and women who pioneered in Canal Zone education. These sketches were published exclusively in THE PANAMA TRIBUNE during the latter part of 1948.

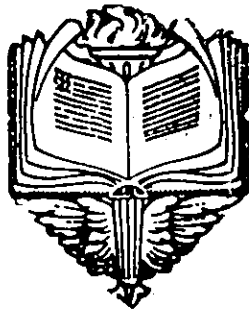
So as to correct the tendency of a good many youngsters to ignore or discredit the contribution of their elders to their communal life, Mr. Johnson has insisted that this year's observance of Negro History week dramatize the exploits of the pioneering members of the Division of Schools, all of whom are British West Indians. It is encouraging to note that persons as highly placed in the Canal Zone hierarchy as Superintendent Johnson should adopt a most wholesome attitude toward the contribution of our people to the historic unfolding of some phase of Canal Zone life.

The Canal Zone school system is what it is today because the nine persons treated by Mr. Osborne, and numerous others who have passed on before, constituted themselves by their abnegation, devotion to their profession, loyalty to the Division of Schools and sacrificial spirit, into a Jacob's ladder of hope upon which hundreds of students of these schools have climbed to a more satisfactory way of life.

The simple biographical sketches by Supervisor A. E. Osborne upon which this pamphlet is based are sure to instill a greater measure of self-esteem, inspiration and incentive among our young people who have never been exposed to the privations, hardships and limitations of their rugged parents. On the other hand, one cannot review the history of the educational system on the Canal Zone without becoming sensible of the essential element our West Indian ancestors represent in its development. Any study will manifest this fact. The impress of their pioneering labors in the field of education and subsequent devotion to their mission as teachers, will remain indelibly inscribed upon the gradually advancing system and expanding program of the Canal Zone schools.

May the spirit which motivated the approval of the publication of the biographical sketches and the issuance of this pamphlet in observance of Negro History Week of 1949 prevail in the official circles of the Division of Schools of The Panama Canal Zone for all time.

**GEORGE W. WESTERMAN,**





# HISTORY OF CANAL ZONE SCHOOLS'

Prior to the American occupation of the Panama Canal Zone no effort had been made to organize a system of schools for the interior villages. The native children had grown up with the little instruction a few of them obtained at home or in an occasional private school. The laborers imported by the French Canal Company opened a few schools, but these constituted a very small step toward the growth of a school system.

On September 2, 1904, the same year that the United States secured control over the Canal Zone, the Isthmian Canal Commission authorized the establishment of a school system, and on January 21, 1905, placed it under the jurisdiction of the Collector of Revenues. A school census was taken the following June and preliminary plans were made for providing buildings and equipment, but little was done toward organization until more than a year later.

The census showed that there were in the Canal Zone nearly two thousand children between the ages of six and sixteen, one-half of whom could neither read nor write. For these the ordinary district school curriculum was planned. An order was placed in the States for text books, desks, and one thousand slates. Buildings were set aside and repaired for school use.

On December 2, 1905, a Superintendent of School was appointed, and on January 2, 1906, the first public school under the jurisdiction of the United States Government was opened at Corozal. Owing to delay in receiving the supplies from the States, this first school had a very meagre beginning, the equipment consisting of a few borrowed chairs and tables and such sample texts as were on hand, supplemented by a few books from

the homes in Corozal. This school was closed in a little over four months, as the maximum enrollment had reached only nine, and the attendance was from six to seven. In the meantime additional schools had been started at other villages in the Canal Zone.

At the time the Government schools first opened, five of the seven municipalities had established and were operating five schools, with a combined attendance of about 150 pupils. For a time, then, there were two systems of public schools in the Canal Zone, acting independently of each other. However, on February 1, 1906, at the request of the Inspector of Municipalities and some of the mayors, the municipal schools were taken over and made a part of the Government system.

A Bureau of Municipalities was created on May 1, 1906, and at the same time the jurisdiction of the schools was transferred to the chief of that bureau. The schools were then more closely related to the work and organization of the Bureau of Municipalities and under this bureau they were free from the Government routine which had previously caused many delays. The building program was at once increased and the work was done at the expense of the municipality in which the school was located. There was a large growth in the school attendance, caused principally by compulsory attendance ordinances which were enacted by the municipalities on June 1, 1906.

On May 1, 1906, there were eighteen schools in operation, with an enrollment of 611 pupils, and a force of twenty-one teachers. Five months later, September 30, 1906, this had increased to thirty schools, with an enrollment of 1,237, and a force of thirty-four teachers. Of

the thirty-four teachers, fourteen were Americans, one Panamanian, and nineteen colored West Indians; of the thirty buildings, four were for white children, and twenty-six for both white and colored. The attendance was largely made up of Negroes; only about ten per cent of the enrollment was white.

The schools were opened under a reorganized system on July 16, 1906. The teachers' salaries, which had previously been from \$30 per month (U.S. C.) to \$80, were revised into three classes: Class A, composed of assistant teachers of fair qualifications, were to receive \$45 per month; Class B, composed of teachers with educational qualifications but no experience, were to receive \$65 per month; and Class C, composed of white teachers with both educational and experience qualifications, were to receive \$80 per month. The school year, which had previously been from September 15 to June 15, was changed to a twelve-month school of four terms, viz: from July 16 to September 28, October 18 to December 21, January 2 to March 22, and April 8 to June 30, respectively. The school day consisted of six hours. The teachers, who had previously been employed for nine months, were now employed for the calendar year, without deductions for the vacation periods. Teachers of Class C were the only ones furnished quarters unless it was impossible for others to provide same for themselves.

One of the greatest obstacles in bringing white lady teachers from the States at this time, and until some time later, was the impossibility of securing suitable quarters for them. Consequently, a large majority of teachers were those living with friends and relatives and employed on the Isthmus, or were married women living here.

The first teachers' meeting was held at Ancon on March 3, 1906. There were sixteen teachers present, and also many Canal Zone and Panamanian officials. Regular meetings for colored teachers were not held until February 8, 1908.

On December 1, 1906, the schools were organized as an independent division under the

Department of Law and Government. One of the interesting features of this month was the visit to the Isthmus of President Roosevelt. In his passage across the Isthmus he was greeted at all the principal stations by large groups of school children, who welcomed him with the national flag salute and American patriotic songs. The president

expressed personal pleasure and satisfaction with the efforts being put forth in the development of the educational system in the Canal Zone.

(1) A Resume of the Canal Zone Public School System — Albert R. Lang The Panama Canal, 1917.



## DEVELOPMENT OF THE CANAL ZONE SCHOOLS

The policy of providing separate schools for white and colored children originated during the earlier part of the construction period when the enrollment of colored children was greatly in excess of that of the white. Practically all the colored pupils were the offspring of West Indians who came to work on the Canal. Their schools were staffed mainly by teachers trained in the West Indies, although a few white Americans taught in them in the earlier years. This policy of a separate school system has been followed up to the present.

### ENROLLMENT

To 1914 the ten schools, all on the grade level, for colored children were located in Ancon, Paraiso, Cucaracha, Culebra, Empire, Mendingo, Gatun, Mount Hope, Cristobal, and Marajal.

In 1914 there was an enrollment of 1,492 colored children taught by 23 colored teachers, as against 1,270 taught by 66 white teachers.

In 1930 the colored schools had an enrollment of 3,819

which decreased by 800 in the space of nine years. In 1939 colored enrollment was 3,000; white 3,100.

Comparative figures show that the present enrollment is the highest since 1940 when the figure was 3,216, although during the latter period the educational level did not exceed the ninth grade.

Enrollment figures during the month of February from the year 1940 to the present are as follows:

School Year	1940-41	2,954
	1941-42	3,119
	1942-43	3,036
	1943-44	3,024
	1944-45	3,045
	1945-46	2,874
	1946-47	2,912
	1947-48	2,987
	1948-49	3,586

Peak enrollment in these schools was 4,149 in 1932 from grades 1 through 8. Lowest figure is in 1945-46.

In 1948-49 the enrollment in these schools was 20 per cent higher than the previous year, with the greatest increase being shown in the enrollment of the two occupational high

schools at La Boca and Silver City.

A total of 3,618 pupils are now enrolled which is 10.2 per cent higher than that of 1947. The increase at the vocational high schools is reported at 25 per cent; that of the elementary schools is 13.7 per cent; while a decrease of five and a half per cent is shown in enrollment figures for the junior high schools, as of September, 1948.

The table below shows the September enrollment for each school in 1947 and 1948 and the percentage of change; (— indicates decrease in enrollment)

School	1947	1948	Change
La Boca Normal	24	21	-- 12.5
La Boca H. S.	281	341	11.7
Silver City H. S.	180	257	42.8
Total High Schools	461	571	23.9
La Boca Junior H. S.	219	209	-- 4.5
Silver City Jr. H. S.	303	286	-- 5.6
Red Tank Jr. H. S.	120	122	1.7
Santa Cruz Jr. H. S.	107	101	-- 5.6
Chagres Jr. H. S.	64	50	-- 21.9
Total Jr. H. S.	813	768	-- 5.5
Elementary-La Boca	434	462	6.5
Elementary-Silver City	646	737	14.1
Elementary-Chiva Chiva	23	25	8.7
Elementary-Paraiso	216	251	16.2
Elementary-Red Tank	227	268	18.1
Elementary-St. Cruz	306	356	16.3
Elementary-Chagres	134	159	18.6
Total Elementary Schools	1986	2258	13.7
Total Local Rate	3284	3618	10.2

# EXPANSION PROGRAM

The story of the development of the Canal Zone schools for colored children is one of slow, but steady expansion in enrollment, teaching force, value of buildings and equipment, and services.

Up to December, 1948, the Division of Schools was operating twelve schools for colored children, as follows: La Boca Normal School, junior and senior high schools in Silver City and La Boca; and elementary schools at Red Tank,

Gamboa, Gatun, Paraiso, La Boca, Silver City and Chiva Chiva.

The following chart furnishes a graphic picture of the progressive stages through which these schools have evolved since 1914.

## CHART SHOWING PROGRESSIVE STAGES OF EDUCATION IN CANAL ZONE SCHOOLS FOR CHILDREN OF LOCAL RATE EMPLOYEES

PERIOD	TYPE OF TRAINING	OBSERVATION
1914-1931	Elementary - Grades 1 to 8	Traditional academic program
1931-1941	Junior High Grades 7 to 8)	Upper two grades separated from elementary program to form a
1941-1946		) junior high school unit with introduction of pre-vocational training and departmentalization of subjects
1941	Kindergarten	
1943-1946	Night Classes	Pre-high school level or secondary level
1946	Senior High School-Grade 10)	Specific academic and vocational training for an occupation; also
1947	Senior High School-Grade 11)	general education for community life or college entrance
1948	Senior High School-Grade 12)	

### SUMMER INSTITUTE

In 1945, with the advent of a secondary segment in the educational system, the teacher training program was extended to include a Summer Institute for teachers in service as well as those in training. This Institute lasts four weeks and is conducted by the Administrative and Supervisory Staff of the Division of Schools. Its establishment came at the instance of the Canal Zone Colored Teachers' Association. This organization voiced the need for a longer period of free time between school years so as to afford those teachers who desired to further their training an opportunity to better prepare themselves for the ensuing year.

of night schools for graduates of the Canal Zone schools and others with equivalent training was inaugurated in La Boca, one of the large schools. The response was most gratifying and there were enrolled over three hundred students anxious to embrace the opportunity of such additional training as was being afforded. In September, the same year, night schools were begun for the first time in the communities of Gatun, Gamboa and Red Tank. In each of the five largest communities, therefore, night school instruction was offered at the secondary level. In 1945 there was a total of 4,911 class registration in all the night school classes.

ver City Night School was obliged to close its doors for lack of a sufficient number of registrants to ensure its operation. However, it reopened during October, 1948.

The night school operated at the La Boca Occupational High School for students on the Pacific Side from October, 1947 through May, 1948, with a student enrollment of 179, and subject enrollment of 205. Courses offered were: bookkeeping, business English, typewriting, shorthand, Spanish, tailoring general mathematics, carpentry, refrigerating and dressmaking.

### OCCUPATIONAL HIGH SCHOOLS

In 1946, two modern occupational high school plants with well-equipped vocational shops were opened in the terminal towns of La Boca and Silver City. These two buildings were constructed at a cost of \$879,213

### NIGHT CLASSES

In 1943, through the representation of the Isthmian Negro Youth Congress, an educational experiment in the form

Although the night schools were well supported in the early years of their operation it soon became necessary to close them in all the communities except Silver City and La Boca. During the 1947-48 school year Sil-

and the cost of the equipment reached \$124,787, representing an outlay in building and equipment of \$1,004,000.

These two plants include two study halls now in the process of construction, also paved basements under the buildings.

Landscaping of the school grounds at La Boca and Silver City was also a large item of expenditure.

#### CHART SHOWING COSTS OF SECONDARY SCHOOL PLANT AND EQUIPMENT

	Cost of Building	Cost of Equipment	Total Cost of Building & Equipment
<b>LA BOCA</b>			
Occupational High School Shop	127,064	32,936	160,000
Occupational High School	231,330	*23,270	254,600
Occupational High School Completion	74,730	7,270	82,000
Occupational High School Study Hall	30,940	5,260	36,200
	464,064	65,735	529,800
<b>SILVER CITY</b>			
Occupational High School Shop	128,804	33,296	162,100
Occupational High School	194,740	13,760	208,500
Occupational High School Completion	63,865	6,735	70,600
Occupational High School Study Hall	27,740	5,260	33,000
	415,149	59,051	474,200

Items needed for Silver City had to be transferred from La Boca to Silver City to the extent of \$2,037.00.

The addition of senior high schools to this school system marked a long waited step forward in the development of the native youth.

Two high school principals and seven supervisory teachers were retained from the United States for work in the two occupational high schools. According to school officials "these men are to assist the local teachers in developing a flexible and serviceable program of education suited to the demands and needs of the changing times." Miss Emily Butcher, a former teacher who recently obtained a Master's degree from Columbia University, was appointed supervisor of music in 1948.

The academic and vocational offerings are designed to meet the needs, interests, and abilities of the students; they also attempt to meet the social and industrial needs of the community. Considerable attention is being given to the vocational and personal guidance of the students.

#### VOCATIONAL AND EXPRESSIVE ACTIVITIES

At this juncture it is interesting to note that a few of the vocational and expressive activities now officially incorporated in the curriculum were introduced by the West Indian teachers long before the Division of Schools was ready to recognize the need of them. It is conceded that L. E. Osborne was the first teacher of tailoring; that John A. Parchment was a pioneer in garden activities, and that C. A. Cragwell started singing classes. Miss Jemima Warren and Miss Violet Bingham were pioneers in the teaching of sewing. These two lady teachers transferred their personal sewing machines to the Silver City School so that they could give the young girls the benefit of sewing instruction, thus opening up the field of Home Economics.

It is significant that while the school system has lengthened at the top, its base has been broadened and deepened

to bear the additional load. The elementary schools have not been at all neglected. On the contrary, they have been given potent shots in the curricular areas.

#### HOME ECONOMICS

The Department of Household Arts, now known as the Department of Home Economics, became established in the schools of La Boca, Silver City, Red Tank and Gatun in 1931 as part of the junior high school set-up. "Cooking" and "sewing" were the subjects then offered to all students of the Junior High School level and those of the La Boca Normal Training School. The Misses Hanna Webster, Amabelle T. Patton, Mae L. Malcolm and Jemima Warren were selected to teach this course. Superintendent Lawrence Johnson, then Director of Vocation for the Colored Schools, organized an in-service training class for these four teachers, with the Home Economics instructors at Balboa and Cristobal High Schools supervising the training program.

In an article published in the 1947-48 report of Panama's Women Welfare Group, Miss Malcolm makes the following observation about the Home Economics Course of these schools:

"We are at present a

considerable distance from the point at which this work started. There has been a gradual but progressive change in the Home Economics Course. New material added from time to time, and the installation of every modern equipment certainly add richness and vitality to the curriculum. The course today offers much more than the mere study of cooking and sewing. Much time and thought have been spent in the development of this subject. The result is that attention is now focused upon home life activities as well as attitudes and appreciation. To obtain these objectives teaching conditions and available equipment in the new Home Economics Laboratory in the recently constructed buildings of the Occupational High Schools have been made more home-like."

"Happy Home Life," "Food Study," and "Clothing and Careful Grooming" are a few of the courses offered in the Home Economics Department of these schools, in addition to specialized training in Dress-making and Cooking.

## ART

In 1946, art was introduced into the elementary school curriculum as a regular scheduled activity and a trained supervisor visits each school on a regular schedule.

## MUSIC

Music was included in the curriculum of the elementary schools in 1944, with the appointment of Miss Emily Butcher as Special Teacher of Music. Prior to that time this subject was taught regularly, once or twice a week, in the junior high and normal schools. In the elementary grades it was taught without regularity.

From 1941 to 1944 Miss Butcher served as music teacher of the La Boca Normal Training School, supervised by Mrs. Helen C. Baker, Supervisor of Music. Miss Butcher recently returned from studying in the United States where she received a Master's degree from Columbia University. She was appointed Supervisor of Music in 1948.

During the 1944-45 school year the idea of a school orchestra was introduced at La Boca. The purpose was to encourage a greater appreciation of the art of music and cultivate musical talent among children of school age.

Students of the junior high, normal and night schools originally comprised the group. The night school students were gradually eliminated, leaving only students of La Boca School as members of the orchestra.

When the orchestra was first organized most of the instruments were owned by its members. However, the former Schools Superintendent insisted that the people of the community support this musical organization financially and otherwise, in order that it would have a place in the community and not be simply a part of the official operation of the schools.

This insistence led to the Isthmian Negro Youth Congress assuming the initiative in promoting a communal venture, the entire proceeds of which were turned over to the orchestra's management. The donation of \$164.58 was of sub-

stantial use to the orchestra in purchasing additional instruments. Most of the instruments now used belong to the school and members of the orchestra are being trained to play their instruments.

Although employed at first as a part-time teacher in charge of the orchestra, Reginald Prescott is now a full-time teacher with an orchestra and instrument classes staggered throughout the day in each of the two Occupational High Schools at La Boca and Silver City. Junior High students are also included in these classes. Under the direction of Mr. Prescott the orchestra has contributed to several school and community programs in a manner that has reflected creditably upon its leadership.

Three new phonographs have been purchased for these schools and in the course of time each school will have one at its disposal. Music books and supplies are steadily increasing and there is evident growth in all aspects of this department.

## SPANISH

We have long advocated that Spanish should begin much earlier than in the junior high schools, and we are pleased to intimate that the Division of Schools is considering a plan to have Spanish taught in grades 4, 5, and 6 in the elementary schools.

It is gratifying to know that suitable arrangements will be made whereby our boys and girls, who must acquire Spanish as an essential working tool, will be given an opportunity, to be introduced to the language of their country as early as possible in their elementary school career.

In the meantime it is suggested that special attention be given to the enrichment of whatever Spanish is now being offered on the junior and senior high school levels. Such

a program should contemplate the culture of the Panamanian people in particular, and the Hispanic-American civilization, in general.

### THE NORMAL SCHOOL

A main point in the continuous program for the improvement of teachers and teaching methods in these schools was the founding of the La Boca Normal Training School in 1934. There have been four graduating classes from this institution to date with a total of 121 graduates, many of whom have assumed positions of leadership on the Isthmus and elsewhere. Of the 125 regular teachers and supervising teachers on the staff of these schools, 60 are graduates of the Normal School.

At this point we should like to indicate the place of the Normal School as apart from secondary education. With the establishment of a high school, the Normal School ascended to the level of an institution of higher education. It represents a two-year college education. Since it is the only unit of higher education available to local rate employees on the Canal Zone, it has a social responsibility which it cannot escape or ignore. On the other hand, we, the people, must learn to appreciate the worth of the teacher. It is said that one may indeed measure the quality of a culture by the conception which the people have of the place and function of the teacher in society.

We do not intend to discuss the nature of the Normal School, but we do wish to hazard an opinion. We must lift teaching to the status of a profession and educate people to follow it. To do so means intelligent and rigorous selection of students who are gen-

erally interested in children and community problems, besides having acceptable intellectual capacities. Our college-trained teachers should capture and preserve the essential ingredients of devotion, integrity, and humility of the pioneer teachers if they are not to be just public employees, but rather social leaders as their predecessors have been.

### LIBRARY

The La Boca Branch of the Panama Canal Library which is located in a large and airy room on the ground floor of the La Boca Occupational High School, was opened to the public on September 1, 1943, with Miss Lurlene Fergus as Librarian. This Library has a permanent collection as well as a rotating collection available to the La Boca community. It also houses the WEST-ERNMAN COLLECTION of auto-graphed photographs of outstanding American Negroes and books for and about the Negro. The literary material on the Negro on hand at this source is said to be the largest assembled in Central America.

During the past five years school libraries at Red Tank, Gamboa, Gatun, and Silver City were expanded and opened to adults. The establishment of a public library at La Boca was the second step in a long-range plan for the expansion of library facilities for residents of the several Canal Zone communities.

The first school-community library was opened at the La Boca School in April, 1943, largely as the result of efforts of a small group of which Miss Leonor Jump, former principal of the La Boca Normal School, was chairman. Over \$650 in cash was actually collected for this project and almost 1,000 books donated from numerous local and foreign sources.

### PLANT EQUIPMENT

A new philosophy with regard to school buildings for native children became apparent in 1944 when a new adequately equipped grade school building was provided for the children of Paraiso at a cost of \$60,000. In November, 1948, another elementary school building was opened in Silver City at a cost of \$200,000. Modern in every respect, this plant is furnished with the latest equipment including two new pianos, movable seats and desks, a paved basement, a clinic, and the latest washroom facilities with miniature fixtures for primary grade children.

At this time all elementary schools are furnished with science equipment, and teachers are able to demonstrate simple, practical experiments which give meaning to the world of nature and some of the science concepts that are developed in the grade school.

The book value of all these schools, plants, and equipment is approximately one and a quarter million dollars.

### TEACHER-CENTRAL OFFICE RELATIONSHIP

The present official attitude of the Schools Department is one which assures competent teachers, in the terms of Dr. John W. Studebaker, United States Commissioner of Education, "that they can have security, an adequate salary, good surroundings and a real place in the life of the community."

In 1948 a new wage scale was put into force which, although not embodying full wage adjustments, admittedly marked a distinct improvement over previous salary scales. It places an emphasis on educational qualifications and responsibility and bids fair to move forward in due course.

From one or two teachers

noted for their positive leadership it has been learned that present teacher-central office relationship is at its highest level since 1944. Problems of organization, administration and instruction are handled in the most effective manner, and there is a more cordial approach to even those matters having to do with radical changes in personnel or management.

This relationship is aptly described in the following statement made by an outstanding member of the high school faculty:

"Just as there have been notable gains in the line of plants, equipment, and the like, in our schools, so it is there have been improvements in relationships between teachers and the administration.

"Prior to the present time quite a number of teachers felt very much insecure in their work. In most cases they were at the whims of some over-zealous administrators. They were treated with scant professional respect. The policy seemed more of a 'big stick' one instead of the type demonstrating the tolerance, sympathy and growth, vital characteristics of a democratic institution.

"There is now in evidence, however, a definite

new trend in policy. Teachers appear much happier in their work. On the whole there is recognition of the need for more professional preparation. Administrators are more helpful, more conscious of teachers' needs. They reflect an attitude of 'lending a helping hand.'

"With the recent additions to our schools, white American teachers have been employed to serve among us in a supervisory capacity. Considering the local set up on the Canal Zone, friction was, for a time, considered inevitable. However, it is encouraging to note that thus far not one serious incident has developed. As a matter of fact this has added to the feeling of more formal preparation on the part of our teachers."

#### **LEADERSHIP IN CIVIC AND RECREATIONAL FIELDS**

Approximately 500 boys in 11 troops are members of the International Boy Scouts in the Canal Zone. This organization is administered by the Division of Schools and is under Scout Executive Raymond George. Mr. George is responsible to a scout council of about forty-five adults who volunteer their services as

leaders. Officers of the council are: Robert T. Ellis (Paraiso) President, Harold D. Perkin (Gamboa) First Vice-President, Nathan Bryan (Colon) Second Vice President, Joseph E. Moon (La Boca) Treasurer, and James A. Hassocks, Scout Commissioner.

Officers named to appointive positions are: William Jump (La Boca) Finance Committee, Sylvester Callender (La Boca) Organization and Extension, Hamilton N. Lavalas (Red Tank) Advancement, James Syres (Curundu) Camping & Activities, Harold Rerrie (Camp Bierck) Cubbing Program, Victor J. Smith (Panama Public Relations) Bernardo Tomas (Colon) Citizenship Training, and Charles I. Barton (La Boca) Reading Program.

Students in the secondary schools have the following clubs: Glee Club, Science Club, Business Club, Photography Club, Chef Club, Sewing Club, The Good Citizens Club, Debating Club, Sports Club.

Six playgrounds and four gymnasiums are operated by the Physical Education and Recreation Section for the benefit of local rate employees and their dependents.

Physical directors are: Astor M. Parchment (La Boca), John West (Paraiso-Red Tank), Joseph French (Gamboa), Clinton Parris (Gatun), and Harold Scott (Silver City).

## **GENERAL**

As we view it, the purpose of the schools locally is twofold: first, to develop in the child those qualities which make for responsible citizenship of the Canal Zone, the Republic of Panama, and the world. Second, to help him attain the optimum development of his capacities as an individual. An appraisal of the local situation raises the ques-

tion: "What are the results in terms of these ends since the establishment of institutions of higher learning for local youth on the Canal Zone?"

Despite the steady improvement in facilities, personnel, and equipment, we are of the opinion that too much emphasis is being placed on vocational work, without the necessary balanced diet of aca-

demical subjects that help to give the child a liberal education. We contend that it is to the benefit of all concerned that a certain percentage of our local youth be given the necessary training which should fit them to stand on a level with the peoples of the other races in the search for higher knowledge in the sciences and letters. This is as it

should be and must be. Our local youth must be inspired to enter the higher fields of learning. At least a few must be fully prepared for the arduous and exacting tasks which these fields demand. For, as we see it, the very dignity and progress of our people depend thereon.

Being merely good cooperative, skillful and honest employees shall not give us rank among the other peoples locally, or of the world. Neither shall we be possessed of a conscious self-respect until we can point to men and women in our ranks who are definitely the equal of any group; men and women who by virtue of their achievement have given birth to those qualities within each of us of inward nobility and self-esteem.

From our past observance, we honestly believe that our boys and girls have the capacity to achieve singly if only the facilities are utilized to their fullest advantage. We are of the opinion that the ability of our youth has been woefully underestimated. Without higher education and under terrific handicaps many of them have done exceptionally well in past years.

It appears to us therefore that too much leeway has been given with the result that there is too much loafing and applauding of mediocrity on the part of both the students and some teachers. If we do not move rapidly along, it is to assume that it is largely because we are allowed to move at a snail's pace. If we are therefore, to keep our rendezvous with destiny we insist on true high school work in the two higher institutions of learning now available: we insist on students taking greater advantage of the educational

opportunities being provided by the Canal Government; and we contend that parents and guardians must cooperate more fully with the school and manifest a wider interest in its curricular offerings and problems of administration.

We cannot afford to lose sight of the fact that these schools belong to us and as such their development and continual progress should be our constant concern. It is believed that the administration and the faculty of these schools will be glad, at all times, to inform our people about them, what is being done in them, and why; also how these schools are meeting the needs and interests of the students.

The school system on the Canal Zone represents the brightest jewel in the relation of the Canal Zone Government to its local rate employees. The Government and administration have done their part in providing us with these advanced educational facilities for which several of us have been clamoring for more than a generation. We must now do our part as intelligent people in the community to acquaint the faculties of our aspirations and our hopes. All of this does not imply that we should not cooperate with the schools' authorities, or support their programs and activities; it should simply mean that we would like to be considered as participants with the faculties and administration in the development of the curriculum and general educational concepts as they are applied in these schools.

Let us all, then, pioneer in widening the frontiers of these schools so that their mission is sure to be that of producing persons well adjusted to modern society.

However brief is the history of these schools, it cannot be concise to avoid mention of the debt of gratitude native employees of the Canal Government owe to former Governor Joseph C. Mehaffey, Col. Frank H. Samuel, Horatio Whyte and Sidney A. Young.

Governor Mehaffey's constant interest in higher education, Executive Secretary Wang's strong recommendations, Labor Leader Whyte's effective and persistent representations, and Publicist Young's publicity pressure for high school plant are known to the general public. However few if any realize the surprisingly skillful part they played behind-the-scenes in the movement that ultimately made secondary education a reality in the colored communities.

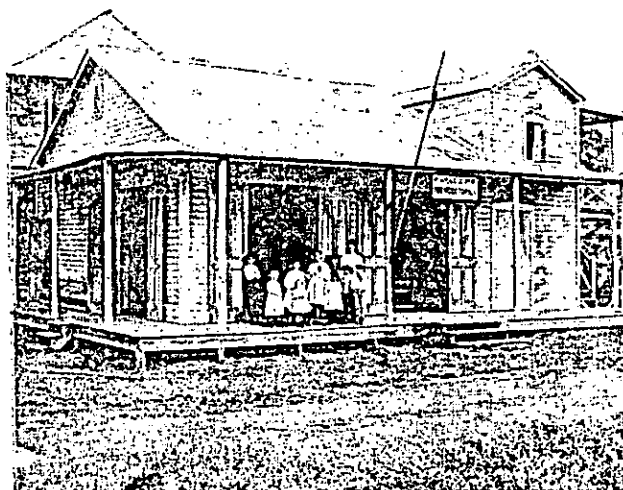
The efforts of Messrs. Whyte and Young are motivated by obvious reasons. However, in many people know of the determined manner in which Colonel Wang has pushed forward broad and elastic program of advancement for the colored schools ever since he became Executive Secretary; how many people are aware that Governor Mehaffey made it his business to call personally on President Franklin Delano Roosevelt at the White House in Washington to plead for approval of the appropriations for the planned program of expansion of the Canal Zone School system.

Animated, as always by his conviction of the social responsibility of government, the "Great Humanitarian" chose to turn the key which set in motion the governmental machinery that would open bright broad and new cultural, vocational, and social vistas to the children of non-Americans in the Canal Zone.

G. W. W.

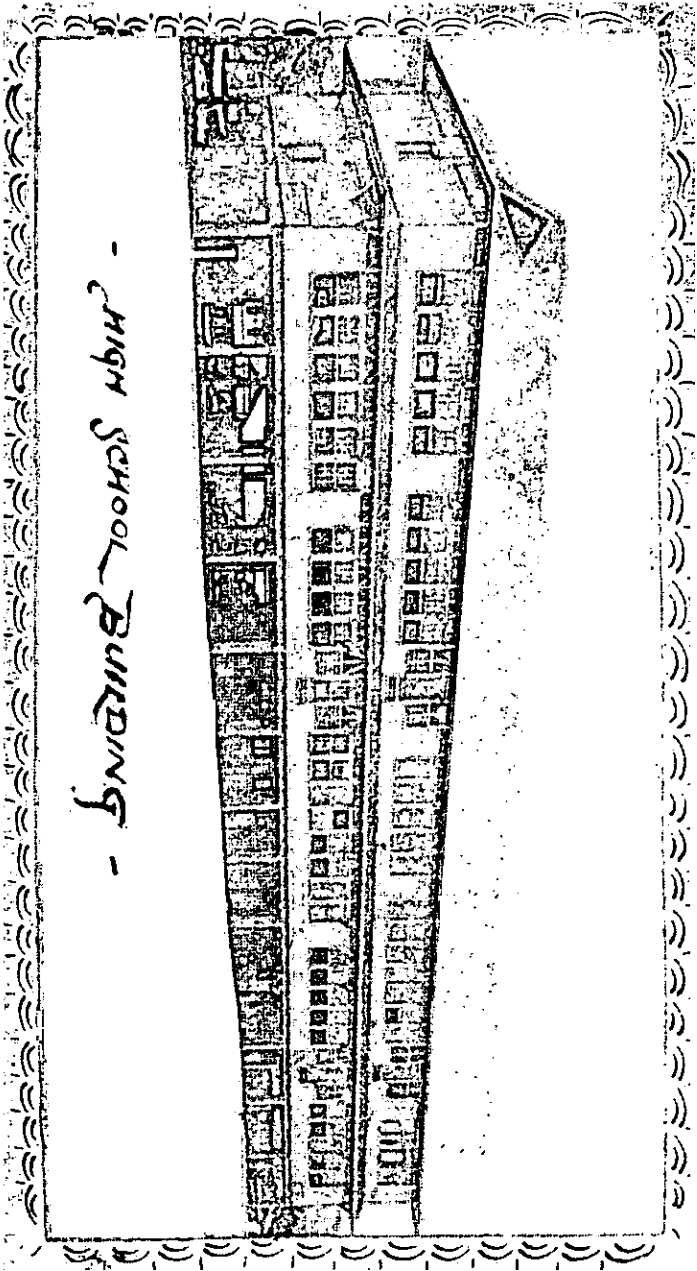
SOURCE: Newspaper releases from The Division of Schools Annual Reports, Division of Schools.





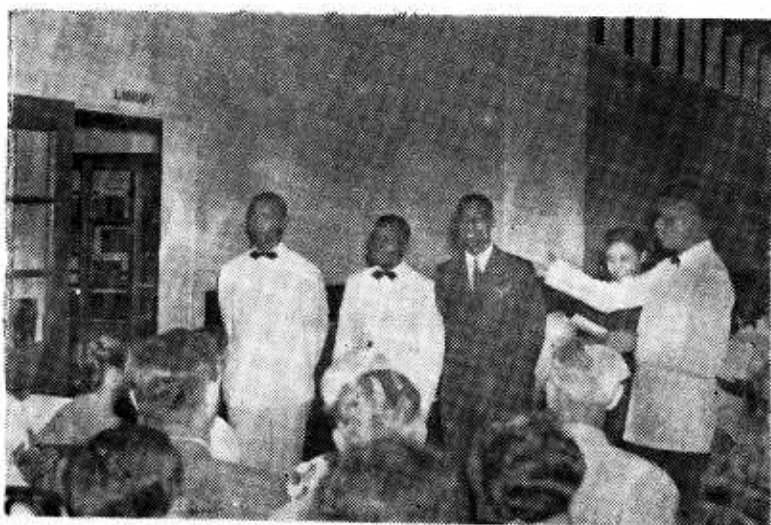
First Schoolhouse on the Canal Zone,  
Gorgona, Canal Zone; 1904.





- HIGH SCHOOL BUILDING -

LA BOCA OCCUPATIONAL HIGH SCHOOL BUILDING



Supervisor Alfred E. Osborne presenting members of the Library Committee to the community of La Boca at Dedicatory Exercises on April 17, 1943.

Reading left to right: Miss Leonor Jump, chairman, Robert H. Beecher, Edward A. Gaskin, and George W. Westerman, who served as secretary-treasurer of the committee.



"Opening Night" at the La Boca Branch of the Panama Canal Library system which provides reference and lending services for the school and community.

Reading left to right: Earl Brathwaite, C. L. Barton, Librarian Lurienne Fergus, Bernice Haynes, Beryl Greaves and Marion Johnson.

## A SIGNAL HONOR

Though the process of government is slow and the ramifications of democracy locally seem partial, every now and then Canal Zone liberals come to the fore in giving credit where credit is due, in showing recognition of worth through accomplishment. Thus, active democracy last Saturday morning saw the signal honor that has come to a member of the community as "an acknowledgment of superb work and distinctive service in the Canal Zone school system."

The gesture of the Schools Division in presenting the La Boca School with a portrait picture of Alfred E. Osborne has high importance under all conditions; but it derives additional importance from the fact that the act marks the first time in the history of the Canal Zone schools that a public tribute has been paid by the Canal officials to a member of our group and, naturally, the gesture will strongly vindicate those who study, prepare and fully equip themselves for future opportunities.

Schools Superintendent Lawrence Johnson pictured his colleague as a man who came to the administrative staff of the Schools Division by starting in 1932 as a classroom teacher—but a teacher with his eye fixed on the goal of leadership. Mr. Osborne gave satisfaction to everyone toward whom he had duties. He never sought to

jump over any rung of the ladder, but stood long enough on each rung to know all about it. By almost his own shoe-string he has pulled himself up from a minor position to the high office as Supervisor of Instruction in the Colored Schools.

With an unquenchable thirst for learning, Supervisor Osborne attended schools of higher learning in Chicago after finishing Paraiso grade school, under his father, the Rev. David A. Osborne, now a retired Canal Zone school teacher. Ultimately he graduated from the University of Chicago, and a year ago received his master's degree from Columbia University.

In Mr. Osborne we have a young man whose life is marked by purpose and usefulness. This fact was emphasized by Superintendent Johnson who remarked, "we are proud to have Mr. Osborne as our colleague because he is as prepared and as trained as any other of us in the Schools Office, and we can all gather from this picture inspiration for a career of distinguished service."

The gesture of the Canal Zone Schools Division is not without significance to our community. Mr. Osborne's recognition is an open invitation to others of our group who seek a similar road to achievement. It is the wedge securely



ALFRED E. OSBORNE

placed between the present and what may be expected in the future from the Canal Zone executives toward those who are fully qualified.

Meanwhile an admiring community shares the honor that has been bestowed upon the young pedagogue for his work as Supervisor of Secondary Education in the Colored Schools. His portrait now hangs in the Hall of Fame in the Occupational High School Building at La Boca, not only as a symbol of "local boy makes good," but as a challenge to other Negro youths of the community to equal and even excel, if possible, Alfred E. Osborne's sterling attainments.

Editorial,

THE PANAMA TRIBUNE  
June 13, 1948





# Biographical Sketches of Pioneers

**By A. E. Osborne**  
(Supervisor of Instruction,  
Canal Zone Colored Schools)



# TRAVELLED BY CANOE TO INSTRUCT NATIVE YOUNGSTERS

## RECALLS WHEN WEST INDIAN TEACHERS WERE ON CANAL "GOLD STANDARD"

Mr. Lawrence Johnson, Superintendent of Schools, has discussed with me his plan to give appropriate recognition to our veteran Canal Zone teachers and has given me the pleasant assignment of writing the series of articles honoring these oldtimers. With the cooperation of the TRIBUNE, therefore, it is proposed to give each week special prominence to one outstanding personality who has contributed to the improvement of our Canal Zone schools.

The first veteran in this series is Arthur B. Kinnimouth.

Mr. Kinnimouth's employment in the Canal Zone dates back to 1905, when the Canal Zone was known as the "Isthmian Canal Zone."

His service with the Division of Schools began in 1906 when he was appointed by Governor Charles E. Magoon and assigned to the school at Las Cruces, Municipality of Gorgona. Those were the good old pioneer days when Mr. Kinnimouth had to travel by canoe from Las Cruces, three miles down the Chagres River, to Matachin (now under water), and by Panama Railroad from Matachin to Panama. He was the first teacher to be appointed to Las Cruces, and he spent four successful years there teaching native Panamanian children the English language.

He was subsequently assigned to teach school at Gorgona,

Empire, Mt. Hope, Cristobal, Red Tank and Paraiso, where he is now a teaching principal. To hear Mr. Kinnimouth recount some of his old experiences as a teacher is both interesting and educative. There was a time, he recalls, "when West Indian teachers were carried on the gold roll and received gold coins just as other gold employees."

Mr. Kinnimouth has many avocations and has found time to be actively engaged in religious, fraternal and civic activities. He is considered a fluent speaker and an effective writer. His "Scraps and Patches," published in 1921, is still considered good reading. This publication has historical and literary significance for West Indians and their offspring in this country.

Mr. Kinnimouth has devoted over forty years of loyal, faithful and efficient service to the education of our youth and from what he writes and says he has not regretted the time spent. "I am glad," he writes, "that I have lived to see the rapid and substantial development of our Zone system of education and that I have been privileged to take part in it up to the present time."

Our cosmopolitan Isthmian community pays tribute to Arthur B. Kinnimouth for his meritorious achievements in the field of education and wishes him to know that his pioneer contributions as a teacher are highly appreciated



ARTHUR B. KINNIMOUTH



If our service has not earned us bars that is no reason why we should bar ourselves from giving satisfactory service. Let us remain at our posts; we are needed right where we are. The work of enlightening and uplifting our race is ennobling. True, conditions often arise that would dishearten and discourage; but no cross, no crown. Doing well is being well, and being well is living well. Besides, "the consciousness of well-doing is its own reward."

—A. B. Kinnimouth  
Scraps and Patches



## ALWAYS FAVORED TILLING THE SOIL

### A NATIONAL AGRICULTURAL CONSCIOUSNESS NECESSARY TO RELIEVE PANAMA OF STRAIN OF LIVING ALMOST EXCLUSIVELY ON ITS GEOGRAPHIC POSITION

The second veteran teacher to be honored in this series of outstanding old-timers who have pioneered in Canal Zone education is Mr. James C. Webster.

Mr. Webster's brilliant and fruitful career as a teacher began in his native Jamaica, where he taught for ten years before coming to Panama.

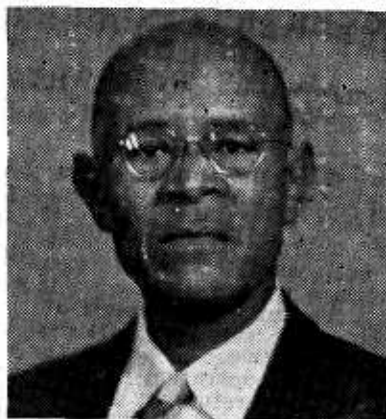
He landed on the Isthmus in April, 1910, worked for six months in the Supply Department and then accepted an appointment from the Division of Schools to teach in grade one at the Gatun School.

I asked Mr. Webster to name some of the Canal Zone towns where schools for our youth had been established in 1911, and he mentioned Cucaracha, Gorgona, Culebra, Empire, Mandingo, Matachin, Cruces and Marajal — towns now abandoned or are under water. These names, I am sure, have some significance to all Isthmian old-timers. In the construction days when these towns existed it really never rained but poured! Mr. Webster recalls how it would rain continually for several days and nights. There being no concrete roads or sidewalks as there are today, going to school then was almost like pioneering in the backwoods. The teacher wore rubber boots, had a couple of umbrellas to spare and kept a good stock of home remedies for the ubiquitous colds and fevers of the construction era!

Mr. Webster taught at Cristobal, then at La Boca and Red Tank, where he worked under that pioneer scholar and teacher, Mr. T. S. Johnston, deceased. In 1918, Mr. Webster was appointed principal of the Gatun School and during the twenty-two years of his stay there he saw it grow from a two-room to a twelve-room school. In 1940, Mr. Webster was transferred to the Silver City Elementary and Junior High Schools to succeed Mr. T. S. Johnston, the out-going principal. In December, 1944, he was assigned to the La Boca Elementary and Junior High Schools. Since 1946, Mr. Webster has served as teacher in the La Boca Junior High and in the Red Tank Elementary School, his present station.

In 1931 when the Division of Schools initiated a more practical and serviceable program of education for our boys and girls, Mr. Webster played a prominent part in helping to establish pre-vocational training. Agriculture is his forte and he was an enthusiastic teacher of school gardening. He was not ashamed to don overalls and work in the school garden. He still believes that the future of Panama depends largely on agriculture. Bee-raising has been his favorite hobby.

In 1936 Mr. Webster was awarded the Centenary Gold Medal by the Miconian Association for meritorious services as a teacher. This was the



**JAMES C. WEBSTER**

first time that Mico College had honored one of her distinguished sons who had achieved outside Jamaica.

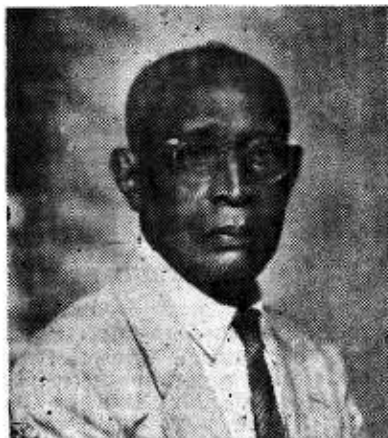
Mr. Webster was married twice. He is the father of three children: two boys and one girl. One of the boys teaches in the La Boca Junior High School, the other is a civilian employee of the U. S. Army, and the young lady is a student of the National Institute. Two of his sisters have been connected with the Division of Schools: Mrs. A. B. Kipping was the first West Indian woman teacher in the Canal Zone Schools and Miss Hannah Webster, herself a veteran teacher, is working at the La Boca Elementary School.

Mr. Webster has given over thirty-five continuous years of faithful and outstanding service. He has seen great changes in our school system and he has been an active participant in its gradual and steady growth. We salute Mr. James C. Webster and assure him that his pioneer contributions as a teacher and old-timer are recognized and appreciated.



# 38 YEARS CONTRIBUTING TO EDUCATIONAL GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT OF SILVER CITY

## EDUCATED 6 CHILDREN THROUGH HIGH SCHOOL ON MONTHLY INCOME OF \$55



**GEORGE B. PARKER**

George B. Parker is the third veteran in this series honoring our pioneer teachers in Canal Zone education.

In September, 1910, Mr. Parker, a graduate of Mico Teachers' Training College, came to the Isthmus from Jamaica on the inducement of C. R. Cunningham, who was then principal of the Cristobal school. He was appointed teacher by Frank Gause, Superintendent of Schools, and assigned to grade two, and later to grade four, at Cristobal. When Mr. Cunningham resigned and returned to Jamaica, Mr. Parker was appointed principal of the Cristobal School in 1914. He served in this position until 1922, when he was replaced

by A. B. Kinnimouth.

Mr. Parker recalls that the school building in Cristobal having become too small for the growing attendance, the school was transferred to the abandoned commissary building at Silver City. For more than twenty years this building, which grew to be a landmark in Silver City, housed the elementary classes there.

About 1923 the eighth grade was established in the colored schools, and the eighth grade pupils were required to pass a written examination at the end of the school year. Mr. Parker proudly recalls that fifteen pupils from the Silver City School, taught by him, took the test and passed. "This was the first batch of pupils who graduated," writes Mr. Parker.

A remarkable and noteworthy fact is that Mr. Parker's thirty-eight unbroken years of teaching on the Canal Zone have been spent on the Atlantic Side and at the Silver City School.

His own children — five boys and one girl — had their elementary schooling at the Cristobal and Silver City schools. Then they were sent off, in turn, to Jamaica for their high school training, the boys to St. John's College and the girl to St. Andrew High School for Girls. They have all returned to the Isthmus and are holding good positions.

The eldest son, following in his father's footsteps, is now a teacher in the Silver City Occupational High School, and up to the end of the last school

year the young lady had engaged in useful and creditable work in our community. He taught for two years in the elementary school.

Those of our readers who know that, in the days when Mr. Parker pioneered, the average teacher's salary was \$55 a month, that the school year was nine months in length with a three-month payless furlough, and that our youth received no public education beyond the eighth grade, can appreciate the sacrifices made by persons like Mr. and Mrs. Parker to give their children more than a primary education.

"The early days of my school life on the Canal Zone were hectic ones," writes Mr. Parker, "but I had the pleasure of seeing the canal under construction, especially the Gatun Locks." To all of which we should like to add that, despite his many vicissitudes, Mr. Parker now has the pleasure and the satisfaction of seeing all his children educated and engaged in useful and creditable work in our community. He has tutored many persons of Panamanian and of West Indian background who have in time made good.

Like his illustrious colleagues who pioneered in those hectic years, Mr. Parker understands that the joys of teaching consist not so much in the material gains and worldly goods acquired but in the paradoxical receiving while giving to others, and also in the satisfaction that the good teacher contributes to the growth and development of boys and girls who are tomorrow's men and women.

The Isthmian community honors George B. Parker for his meritorious years of service devoted to the education of our youth.



# WITNESSED GHASTLY DEATHS OF WEST INDIAN WORKERS DURING CONSTRUCTION DAYS

## CLAIMS GOOD HOME TREATMENT HAS ACCOUNTED FOR LONG AND FAITHFUL SERVICE

The fourth pioneer Canal Zone teacher in this series is John A. Parchment.

Mr. Parchment graduated from Mico Training College, Kingston, Jamaica, and taught for eight years in several towns of the island before coming to Panama. He began teaching for the Isthmian Canal Commission in the Canal Zone in April, 1913, when he was assigned to the Gatun School under James C. Webster.

"Living in Colon and teaching in Gatun was a difficult undertaking," writes Mr. Parchment. "I had to rise at 5:00 a.m., breakfast at 5:40, take the labor train at 6:00, arrive in Gatun at 6:20, walk about the school yard and the verandah for about an hour and half brushing mosquitoes until the janitor arrived and opened the doors!" Like his pioneer colleagues, he says that "a raincoat, an umbrella and a pair of golasches constituted one's armor of safety and defense against the sloppy, muddy road, the torrential downpours of rain and the cold driving winds."

During the summer vacation in 1913, Mr. Parchment worked for the constructing company which built the massive gates of the locks. He recalls that he saw workmen fall sixty feet or more to the concrete basement below to an untimely and ghastly death.

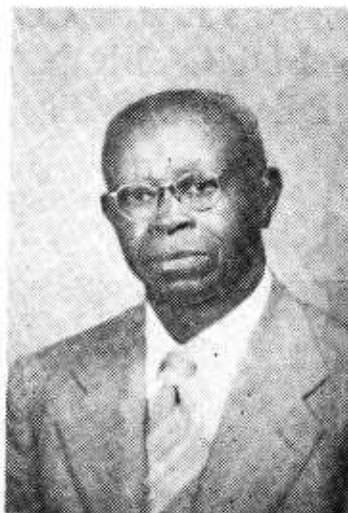
In 1914 Mr. Parchment taught at Cristobal and the following year at La Boca. In

1916 he served in Empire as principal. From Empire he went to Red Tank and later he taught at Gamboa, where he was principal until 1940. Then he was assigned to the La Boca Junior High School, where he now teaches mathematics.

Mr. Parchment was actively connected with Y.M.C.A. (later re-named Clubhouse) work. While at Red Tank he operated a one-room Y.M.C.A. as a branch of the La Boca Y.M.C.A. "This," writes Mr. Parchment, "developed into the Red Tank Clubhouse (now destroyed by fire), which was opened during my summer vacation and I was its first secretary." At Gamboa he managed a one-room clubhouse at nights in old Gamboa.

Mr. Parchment's three children — one son and two daughters — received their early schooling in the Canal Zone. The son, Aston, graduated from St. George's College in Jamaica, returned to the Canal Zone to teach for many years at La Boca and is now teacher of Physical Education in the La Boca community and also the La Boca schools.

The older daughter, Mrs. Mae Brandon, graduated from Acadia High School, returned to the Isthmus and taught in Gatun and Red Tank. The other daughter was educated at the Normal School in Santiago and later taught Spanish at the Red Tank School. Both daughters left the Isthmus to reside permanently in Los An-



JOHN A. PARCHMENT

geles, California. Mr. Parchment's grandson, Everett Brandon, was a graduate of the La Boca Junior High in 1940 and is now a graduate of the Manual Arts High School in Los Angeles and a corporal in the National Guard. The educational record of the three children and the seven grandchildren must certainly warm the cockles of Mr. Parchment's heart!

But Mr. Parchment is not selfish. He knows that only with the loyal and loving assistance of a devoted helper could he have accomplished as much as he has. For he writes "the continuous cooperation of my wife has made it possible for me to render long service in good health."

We wish to pay tribute to John A. Parchment for his many, many years in the teaching profession. Thirty-five years of unstinted service devoted to Canal Zone youth have earned him the recognition and respect which he undoubtedly deserves.

## DEVOTED HALF A CENTURY TO EDUCATION

### PLAYED ACTIVE ROLE IN CONVERTING SCHOOLS INTO MODERN PLANTS WITH VARIED TYPES OF NEW INSTRUCTIONAL MATERIALS

The fifth pioneer teacher in this series is my father, Mr. David A. Osborne.

Mr. Osborne received his teacher training at the Mico Training College for Teachers in St. John's, Antigua. Before coming to Panama he had taught for over seventeen years at St. Kitts and Antigua, Leeward Islands. In 1912 he was appointed teacher by Superintendent Frank A. Gause and assigned to the Culebra School. Two years later he was transferred to the La Boca School where he worked for two years. Because of the lack of family quarters in La Boca, Mr. Osborne traveled daily from Culebra to Balboa. I used to accompany my father on those daily rides on the labor train, and I too know something of the pioneering of these oldtimers. Father was up at 4:00 a.m.; my mother woke me or tried to wake me fifteen minutes later. It was a difficult job for her to dress a six-year-old boy who was fast asleep. By 4:50 father and I had breakfasted and we were soon on our precarious way through the dangerous Culebra Cut, where we boarded the labor train for a rough ride to Balboa. We invariably arrived in La Boca at 6 o'clock, long before the town was up. At 5 p.m. we made the return trip to Culebra. Thank heavens, father was transferred to the Paraiso School and I could sleep a little longer!

After two years at Paraiso my father was appointed

teaching principal, succeeding a veteran teacher and scholar, Mr. S. K. Walters, who was promoted to the principalship of the La Boca School.

Mr. Osborne served the Paraiso community for over twenty years. In 1940 he was transferred to the principalship of the Gamboa School. In December, 1944 he resigned his position — just two days before reaching his "three score years and ten."

For many, many years my father has been active in religious work and has been associated with the Episcopal Church. He was appointed catechist in 1912; ordained deacon in 1931 and priest in 1937.

Now that Mr. Osborne has retired from the schools, he is able to devote more time to his church work. He resides with Mrs. Osborne in their home in Pueblo Nuevo.

The Osbornes have two children — a girl and a boy. The girl has substituted in our schools and up to 1948 was the kindergarten teacher at the Gamboa School. The boy went through the Canal Zone primary schools and was sent to Chicago to do his high school and college work. He returned to the Canal Zone to work and at present is supervisor of instruction in our schools.

Mr. Osborne is one of those veterans who came here when "dirt was flying." He saw the gradual disappearance of private property in the Zone. For example, he witnessed the abandonment of Spanish Town



Rev. DAVID A. OSBORNE

and Jamaica Town, both flourishing sections of Paraiso where people owned property and conducted lucrative business.

He has seen the colored schools grow from small, dingy two-room buildings, equipped with "cast-off equipment and books" to modern, airy buildings equipped with new furniture and varied types of new instructional materials. He has been privileged to know that he has directly and indirectly contributed to the emergence of these modern schools. And last, but certainly not least, he is proud of the fact that when he resigned in December, 1944 he had given a half century of service to the cause of education both here and elsewhere.

I feel certain that the Isthmian Community joins me in honoring this veteran pioneer teacher, who has contributed to the educational and religious welfare of our group.

## FOUNDED COLERIDGE-TAYLOR CHORAL GROUP

### GAVE IMPETUS TO MUSIC AS SCHEDULED SUBJECT OF SCHOOL SYSTEM



CLARENCE A. CRAGWELL

Mr. Clarence A. Cragwell is the sixth teacher in this series honoring old-timers who have pioneered in Canal Zone education.

Mr. Cragwell did his teacher training at St. George's Parish School in Barbados, B.W.I., and he taught for eight years before coming to the Isthmus in March, 1906. He obtained employment with the Department of Subsistence, which in those days received the laborers as they arrived from Europe and the West Indies and provided their subsistence and housing. Later he moved to Panama City where he conducted a large and successful private school.

His service with the Division of Schools began in October, 1918 when he was appointed by Superintendent A. R. Lang and assigned to the La Boca School. He also taught at Empire and Gatun. Still later he was transferred to Red Tank where he worked for over twenty years in both the junior high and elementary grades. At the present time Mr. Cragwell is stationed at the Paraiso School.

Perhaps Mr. Cragwell's outstanding contribution to our schools was his pioneer work in developing music until it became a scheduled subject. When the present Superintendent of Schools, then director of the colored schools, visited Red Tank, he was so impress-

ed with the singing done under Mr. Cragwell's direction that he permitted a singing period on the daily program. Since that time music has blossomed forth in our schools as a curricular and co-curricular activity.

Mr. Cragwell's singing group at the Red Tank School grew until it became The Coleridge-Taylor Choral Group, an organization which was well known to Isthmian music lovers.

I asked Mr. Cragwell to share with us some of his recollections of the construction days. He mentioned the swinging pontoon bridge over which one traveled in going by railroad to Culebra and Empire. Many of our readers no doubt remember this bridge which spanned the canal at Paraiso. We used to like to watch it as it swung back and forth to permit ships to enter or leave the Pedro Miguel locks. Since ships always had the right of way, Panama Railroad trains going to or from the west side were usually late. With the depopulation of the west side towns, the train service was discontinued and consequently the pontoon bridge was removed.

Mr. Cragwell married Rosalind Murlin Haynes of Barbados. To the union were born six children, four of whom

taught at some time or other in the Canal Zone schools. One of the young men is acting managing editor of Panama Tribune.

Mr. Cragwell has always been active in religious work. In recognition for his faithful and loyal service in the Episcopal church he was ordained a deacon in 1941 by the late Bishop Harry Beal.

With much pleasure Cragwell looks back on his long service in the educational and religious fields. He helped prepare many young people, both natives and West Indians, who fill important positions today in the Republic of Panama.

We pay tribute to this pioneer teacher and assure you that his meritorious services to the Isthmian community are recognized and appreciated.

# ACHIEVES ATTENDANCE RECORD

## TWENTY-SEVEN YEARS SERVICE WITHOUT ONE DAY'S ABSENCE ON ANY ACCOUNT

The seventh pioneer teacher in this series is Mr. A. L. B. Morgan.

Mr. Morgan served three years as pupil teacher and two years as assistant teacher in the Rock River School in Jamaica, B.W.I.

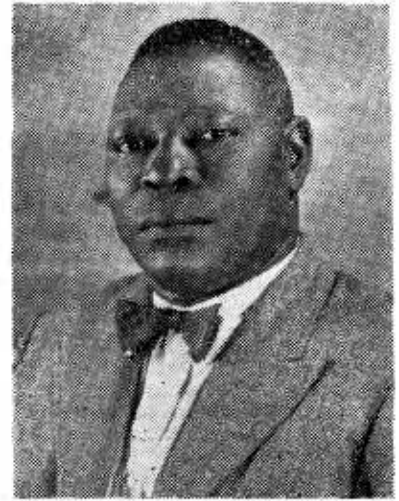
He was appointed teacher in October, 1921 and assigned to the La Boca School. Later he was transferred to the Cristobal (Silver City) School where he worked under three old-timers: G. B. Parker, A. B. Kinnimouth and T. S. Johnston. Because Mr. Morgan was hard-working in the performance of all his duties, he soon became Mr. Johnston's assistant at Silver City. From 1921 to 1933 he had taught in every grade in the elementary school and also in the junior high school. He also served as acting principal of the Silver City School when Mr. Johnston took leave of absence. Thus, when an experienced man was needed to assume the important duties of Principal of the

La Boca School, Mr. Morgan was the most logical person for the job.

During his eleven years as principal at La Boca, he built up this school, the second largest in our system, until it became one of the best administered schools on the Zone. In January 1945, Mr. Morgan was transferred to the Gamboa School as principal, succeeding D. A. Osborne, who had resigned. He has served for twenty-seven continuous years, without a day's absence on account of sickness or other causes.

During World War I, Mr. Morgan enlisted in the British West Indies Regiment and was sent to Egypt and Palestine. He was honorably discharged with the non-commissioned rank of Company Quartermaster Sergeant.

Up to the present time Mr. Morgan has not become a benedict and it is unlikely that he will change (or allow someone to change) his status of confirmed bachelor.



**A. L. B. MORGAN**

Although he has devoted his entire life to the schools, he has always made time to participate in worthwhile community endeavors.

We salute Mr. Morgan for his faithful and meritorious service to our youth and assure him that his pioneer contributions to our schools are recognized and appreciated.





## QUARTER CENTURY AT GATUN SCHOOL AND STILL GOING STRONG

In previous articles seven pioneer Canal Zone male teachers have been given special prominence. In this concluding article two female teachers will be presented. Although female teachers today outnumber the males in our elementary schools, there was a time when our teachers were all men. The fact that Miss Amabelle Patton and Miss Hannah Webster, Canal Zone teachers, were among the first group of lady teachers, is one of the reasons why they should both be considered pioneers.

Miss Patton's teaching career began in Jamaica, B.W.I., where she worked as academic and sewing teacher under her father, who was a government schoolmaster. Prior to her appointment with the Division of Schools she taught in a large

private school in Panama City. In 1923 she was appointed and assigned to the Gatun School. Her twenty-five years of teaching have been spent at this school. She taught first in the primary grades, but when pre-occupational training was introduced in 1931, she was assigned to teach academic subjects and domestic science in the junior high grades. For three years she also taught simple tailoring to the boys. She recalls that with the resignation of the first female teacher, she was the only lady teacher on the staff. Since 1942 Miss Patton, still at Gatun, has been teaching in the primary grades. "If I have been successful in the teaching field," writes Miss Patton, "I owe everything to my parents, who are now deceased."



Miss AMABELLE T. PATTON

## HELPED ESTABLISH DOMESTIC SCIENCE COURSES IN CANAL ZONE SCHOOLS

Miss Hannah Webster was graduated from Shortwood Training College in Jamaica and later taught for seven years in Jamaican schools. She came to the Canal Zone in March 1925, was appointed teacher and assigned to the Gatun School. She was transferred five years later to the Red Tank School. Miss Webster, like Miss Patton, taught Domestic Science in 1931 and helped to establish this practical subject in our schools. Miss Webster recalls that "the annual exhibition of the household arts work was the most colorful event of the year. Students, teachers and parents looked forward to the exhibitions with great interest. The exhibitions attracted hundreds of visitors." Miss Webster was later transferred to the La Boca elementary school, where she is at the present time.

During World War II, she took active part in the Civilian Defense Program at Red Tank and became a certificated First

Aid Nurse for Air Raid Shelters. She is a community worker and has been actively associated with the Baptist Church as a Sunday School teacher and chorister.

"I wish to pay homage," writes Miss Webster, "to three eldest sisters and to brother, Mr. J. C. Webster, who were all certified school teachers before I was and who assisted me in obtaining my cherished profession."

I feel certain that the Isomian community is happy to honor these lady pioneers for their meritorious educational services, especially the part they played in helping to lay the foundation for worthy neighborhoods and good citizens in our girls.

The Division of Schools congratulates all those persons who collaborated in this series and wishes especially to the PANAMA TRIBUNE featuring the articles which have been honoring our pioneer teachers.



Miss HANNAH WEBSTER

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