

benton
county



"It's that Freedom Train a comin'; get on board, get on board."
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"I WON'T BE PUSHED OUT OF MY SEAT AND
I WON'T BE PUSHED OUT OF ASHLAND SCHOOL."



1ST, 10TH, 11TH, 12TH TO INTEGRATE!

Benton County parents of both races became concerned spectators Tuesday in Oxford federal district courtroom. Citizens crowded the room to hear Judge Clayton hand down the order to the Board of Education to desegregate four grades this year: 1st, 10th, 11th, and 12th grades.

In a preliminary hearing some weeks ago, the board handed in a plan for desegregation of two grades. Judge Clayton rejected the plan and another hearing was set.

The attorney for the Board of Education, John Farese, went in all directions to change the ruling from 1st grade to 9th grade. Farese said the Board's reason for not wanting to accept integration for the 1st grade was because the county would lose the land the elementary building is located on.

The building is on some land deeded to the school board by W.A. McDonald, with an understanding that if the school ever becomes integrated, it would be returned to the McDonald family.

Mr. Flannery, however, pointed out that the high school cafeteria and home economics building were also located on the McDonald land. So that was hardly a good reason to integrate the 9th grade rather than the 1st.

In addition to the four grades to be integrated, the judge handed down the following orders:

The split session will be abolished at ALL THREE schools. All schools will open at the same time--some time in September.

Only one bus system will be used for all schools. In other

words, students from the same neighborhood who are going to the same school will use the same bus, regardless of race.

Courses and expenses in all three schools will be the same. If one school has a course that the other schools don't have, any student can transfer to that school to take the course, regardless of his race and grade.

Letters will be sent to parents of last year's students announcing the opening date of school.

A parent must take his child to the school of his choice (if he is in the 1st, 10th, 11th, or 12th grade) or to Old Salem (if he is in any other grade) on the opening date in order to register him.

If a school becomes overcrowded, students who live farthest away from that school will have to register at either of the two other schools, according to his choice.

Keep on pushing

White supremacy received more than one defeat in the courthouse at Oxford. While Judge Clayton was integrating the schools, Sonny Reaves was integrating the benches.

When Negroes entered the courtroom, whites made a dash for the front benches. They got all the front seats--except one, which Sonny grabbed. Later he was joined by Roy Nunnally, Dewey Washington, and Bob Feinglass. That made 8 on the front bench, including 4 Benton county whites. The benches seat 6 comfortably. The whites began to push, but they were unable to get anywhere against Sonny's strength.

Mississippi passes new laws for us

Voter registration

The state of Mississippi passed new voter registration laws in June making the voter registration test easier. This was done out of fear of the federal government. The lawmakers figured that if they made the test easier the federal government would not interfere in Mississippi.

The new test has only 6 questions, and there is no constitution question. We don't know if Mr. Mathis has started using the new form. It may be that he'll have to be pushed in order to get him to use it. We hope not.

4th district organizes

The 4th district organized itself last Monday night into a part of the Citizens Club. District officers were elected. Chairman is Jeanette Royston, vice-president is Tennyson Royston, secretary is Alice Royston, assistant secretary is Zelma Tucker, treasurer is Celestine Royston.

Freedom school was set up at Royston chapel and is being held on Monday, Wednesday, and Friday. Teachers are Janevial Evans, Mary Peterson, Zelma Tucker, and Gearlean Sanders. Mrs. Nelma Tipler and Mrs. Annie B. Evans are teaching literacy and voter registration to adults, and Bob Feinglass is teaching political education and Negro history to adults.

NEWLY REGISTERED VOTERS

Evelena Walls	Beulah Mae Walls
Alice Royston	Jeanette Royston
Zelma Tucker	Jenola Sanders
Woodrow Sanders	Zenobia Cathy
Lucille McNamee	Birdie J. Sanders
Johnny Lee Daugherty	

Special tax for Benton

We have learned that the Mississippi legislature during its special session in June passed a law for Benton County alone.

The law gives permission to county officials in Benton to impose a special tax on its citizens in order to pay for the costs of federal suits against the county.

This means that every citizen in the county will be paying to fight against the federal government's attempts to integrate schools and do away with discrimination against Negro voters.

In other words, Negroes in Benton will help the white folks fight against integration and voting rights by paying higher taxes.

And who gets this money? Surely they must realize that the county cannot win against the federal government whose laws they are breaking. So the money that we pay will really be of no benefit to the county.

Who will it benefit? Are we going to go along with this robbery?

Petition unanswered

The petition asking that the Board of Education rehire the 6 teachers whose contracts were not renewed was sent to the Board two weeks ago. It was signed by 446 people. A letter was sent with the petition signed by Loyal Thompson and Walter Reaves. The letter asked the Board to contact them at its earliest convenience. As yet, the Board has not responded to the letter. And six teachers, five busdrivers, a cook, and a custodian are still out of jobs.

A message to parents

by Sarah E. Robinson

Parents, don't deprive your child of his chance. Remember, fortune is good, but miss fortune is never good.

Your child's education is the most important, to cope with today's world. Some of our parents have the feeling that there is no way out other than to keep your child out of school to pick the cotton.

But remember, years ago when there were no limit to acres, large crops were made, there were no machines existing, and our parents never deprived us of our little scholling. They went to the field, and when we got out of school in the afternoon, we'd eat our dinner, then get our sacks and go to the field.

And it can be done now--if you only stop doubting yourself and saying, "I can't." Look to the Lord instead of the white man. God will never let you down--the white man always has let us down.

School for freedom

by Earnestyne Evans

The freedom schools are for everyone in the community, old as well as young. The people there are not there to tell you what to do but to listen and talk about the things you feel are most important.

Everyone is invited to attend the school nearest them. We hope you'll get something out of it.

Due to revival and association meetings, Royston and Samuels will meet only Monday this week, and Sims will not meet at all. Classes at Hardaway will be held all week as usual.

Thanks to Tiplers

by Janevial Evans

"There is now before us an unparalleled opportunity. This is our day. Doors will open soon. The floodtide of a new life is coming in."

These words spoken by the great Negro educator, Mary McLeod Bethune, apply to our new office. When the idea of moving into our new office came to mind, we thought of the opportunities that we would have, the number of times the door will be open to help the people in the county, and of the new and different life that's coming to everyone.

There are a lot of people we would like to thank for our office: the people who have worked days on it, the people who cooked for the workers, the people who are giving money to help pay for it. And most of all, the people who donated the land on which the office is located.

Our thanks above all goes to Mr. and Mrs. Miller Tipler for the generous donation of their land.

ANY SUGGESTIONS?

We need ideas.

Ideas on how to raise money for the new office--to pay for building and equipping it, as well as maintaining it in operation.

Ideas on how we can help those who will be hurt by not having a split session.

Anybody with ideas should bring them to the all-county meeting Tuesday night at New Bethel, or send them to the Freedom Train, Rt. 2, Box 100, Holly Springs, Mississippi.

*Mississippi union leader**battles against Jim Crow*

Tribbett, Miss.--At a Freedom Labor Union meeting here two weeks ago a middle-aged Negro man stood up and bragged about the \$1.80-an-hour he earned at his civil service job.

Isaac Foster, 22, the leader of the meeting, waited patiently until the man had finished. "But do you say, 'Yes sir,' to the white men there?" he asked.

"To the older ones," the man answered, "but that's just common courtesy."

"Do the younger ones say, 'Yes sir' to you?" Foster asked.

The older man sat down, embarrassed, and the discussion of the farm labor strike continued.

Isaac Foster doesn't tolerate Jim Crow treatment from anyone. The local chairman of the Mississippi Freedom Labor Union, he has been one of 16 men living in a large tent near Tribbett since the strikers were thrown off the A.L. Andrews plantation May 31.

Looking at Foster, a handsome, dark-skinned man, you might think he's no different from the generations of sharecroppers before him, who lived and died here under the watchful eye of the white planters. He has the lean body and the easy smile of the farmhand, who works from dawn to dusk and has learned by necessity to keep his sense of humor.

But Foster is different. Although his mother and 9 of his 12 brother and sisters still live on the plantation where he grew up, Foster didn't like it, the job, or the money. "Now I'd rather die than go back there to make my \$3 a day," he says.

But it isn't just the low pay that bothers Foster. In January he quit a \$1.52-an-hour job in Greenville because the boss didn't treat him the same as he treated the white workers. After this incident and some voter registration work he did in March, Foster decided that the problem of respect was harder to solve than he had thought. He saw that a lot of things couldn't be better for him until they were better for ALL Negroes.

Foster is working now with the Freedom Labor Union because he feels it can help revive the self-respect that many Negroes have lost under the plantation system. "The biggest problem for the Negroes here is that they're afraid of the boss man," he said. "The man has given them the feeling that they'd be doing a terrible wrong if they demanded a raise or picked up and left his place."

Foster thinks the farm labor strike will help Negroes to find new courage as well as higher salaries. "When we first went out into the fields to ask workers to strike, many Negroes looked at us like we should be ashamed," he said. "Then enough of them see that some of us have the guts to refuse the treatment they're getting, they're the ones who will soon be ashamed."

The above article was written by Philip P. Ardery in The Southern Courier, a newspaper of the freedom movement. For subscriptions, write to Pete Cummings, 68 Electric Ave. NW, Atlanta, Georgia 30314.