

HOODTOWN SCHOOL

This school was a two-story, one-room, frame structure that stood across from the Shady Grove Methodist Church on Highway 97. Like many of the earlier schools in the South, it operated on a seven month term so the children could be home to plant and harvest the crops that were the life blood of the community. There were no restrictions on attendance; children would enroll and stop at the discretion and needs of their parents.

Mr. Bill Shillinglaw of the Hoodtown community says that a log cabin was used as the Hoodtown school in the 1860's and later; and that it was the same cabin that housed the Methodist congregation in 1873. This cabin was located behind the present church and just above the cemetery.

The school was a one teacher institution, teaching children to the eighth grade level. There would be any where from twenty to thirty children at a time in the one room. Usually the school changed teachers every year; some of them were: Bessie Sherer (later married Joe Plaxico), Zula Horton, Rosa Jackson (married Moffet Sherer), Minnie Wickler, Lillian Quinn, Miss Moore and Reverend Luther Lathem who taught summer school.

Shortly after 1923, the school was closed and the children of the area attended Bullocks Creek School. The upstairs of the building for many years housed the Hoodtown Masonic Order (now the Palmetto Lodge of Sharon) and the Woodsmen of the World. The building was torn down about 1960.

CENTER SCHOOL

This school for whites was located on present Blanton Road and was in operation as late as 1914. Some memories tell that there was another building prior to the last - possibly built cr 1855. In a land transaction on August 24, 1801 (Book F, Page 705) between Peter Galloway and John Gillespi, mention is made of a school house spring and an old school path. This tract was part of the William Hillhouse plantation and may refer to the first school. Three of Center's teachers were: Mary (Russell) Sadler, Caroline Russell and Clara Love.

Boys attending these country schools were allowed to cut wood for heating the school. Among the young wood-cutters were: Joseph M. Love (1884-1953) and Rob Mitchell; one day in the late 1890's, during their chores, Joe cut the ring finger from Rob's right hand. Dr. Saye from Sharon was called to his home and finished removing the finger. It was cut at the last knuckle next to hand.

The second school was built about 1904, and Mrs. Clara Love was the last, if not the only, teacher in that building until its closing.

Sometime after its closing, Mr. Jim Lathen purchased the building, dismantled it and moved it to a location near his home where it now stands.