

Randall's Chapel School

Location: S28/T4/R6E

Funds: \$166.40

School District: 23

Teacher in 1923: Harvey Hinshaw

Trustees in 1923: W. L. Carter, J. L. Matthews, and
T. J. Welch

School Locations: Route 4 (Highway 35)



1908-1925 One teacher.

Consolidated with Scottsboro after 1925.

The Randall's Chapel School was grades 1-6, one-teacher school, held in the Randall's Chapel Methodist Church building and was, by some accounts, the third school assembled in this area. Ann Chambless, who had a photo of the 1900 clapboard Randall's Chapel church building, wrote that the church/school was located almost in the middle of what became Alabama Highway 35 and faced the old road (street that runs behind K&K Trailer Park). The church was moved to present location and was not bricked until 1954 when the building was enlarged and remodeled to meet the needs of a growing church community. The only teacher names associated with this school in newspaper accounts are Frank Jarnigan (1912), who signed Leonard Barbee's report card (born in 1902), Harvey Hinshaw, who was named in the newspaper as principal in 1922. The article by Madge Wilbanks below suggests a number of other teacher names.

A search of early newspapers turns up very little information about this school.

Oct 15, 1895 SC: "Prof. James Jarnagin is teaching school at Randall's Chapel."

Nov 4, 1897 SC: "W. J. Money will begin teaching public school at Randall's Chapel in a few days."

Feb 5, 1904 SC: "Prof. J. M. Money, who is teaching the public school at Randall's Chapel, may move to town soon and read law."

Feb 3, 1911 PA: School is steadily advancing both in number and work. The total enrollment is 71, and the work covers all the ground from most primary, to the seventh grade.

Mar 9, 1916 PA: "Miss Mattie Winn is eating school at Randall's Chapel."

Oct 19, 1922 PA: Randall's Chapel District No. 23 held an election to determine if a three mil tax should be levied for a period of seven years to support public schools within the district. "19 votes were cast in said election for the proposed taxation. 3 votes were cast in said election against the proposed taxation.: I. W. Wimberly, C. T. Bobo, W. T. Eustace, R. S. Skelter were the commissioners and A. H. Moody was the judge of probate.

Nov 23, 1922 PA: "The box upper was given at Randall's Chapel last Saturday night was a big success from every standpoint. A large crowd of people were present as well as a large number of boxes. The bidding was spirited and many boxes brought as high as \$5.00, and something over \$60 was raised for school improvement. Editor Benson was present and delivered a talk and acted as auctioneer. The people of this community have become

interested in education. Recently they voted a three mill tax for that district and expect to push forward in an educational way. Prof. Harvey Hinshaw is the principal of the Randall's Chapel school and is making good."

Jan 20, 1927 PA: The 1926 report from the county board of education indicated that Gay Hardware had provided supplies for the school at a cost of \$17.80.

These are the only articles citing the school at Randall's Chapel as a school. But Madge Wilbanks wrote a series of local history articles for the 1975 *Jackson County Advertiser*, and had this to say about schools in this area, including two schools held in the area before the church was built:

The Schools of Randalls chapel also gave the community a strength and "holding power. The older residents were told that the first school in the community was a log house which was located on the present [1975] home site of Mr. and Mrs. Looney Sisk [where Cunningham Street intersection Crawford Road]. The second school was on property given by "Aunt Jenny Wilson" and was known as the Old War House School. After Randall's Chapel Methodist Church was built, school was held in the church building. That would place school being held in the church any time after 1973 since the church celebrated its 100th birthday this coming September. When Looney Sisk went to school in the 1890s, he remembers that it was held in the church house.

Attending school and getting an education was no easy task in the late `1800s and early 1900s. A school term of four months was considered a long term. On a report card of Leonard Barbee's the term began November 4, 1912 and ended February 14, 1914. The report card was signed by E. A. Johnson whom Mr. Leonard remembers as a "very good school teacher."

The class schedules and attendance were greatly influenced by the weather which dictated whether or not there would be school many times. Most of the students walked a mile or more from their homes to school, so many times the weather was so bad that school was just impossible.

Wood heated the schools and provided good employment for the young boys in the young boys in the school room. Looney Sisk and George Gant evidently used every possible trick to they could think up—and then some—to take as long as possible to leave the classroom and go into the woods to scurry up some wood for the stove.

Evidently the long-suffering teachers finally caught on to the boys' tricks and petitioned the parents to take turns bringing loads of wood to the school. This cut down on the hours of hunting for wood in the nearby woods and possibly made some certain boys get a big more school work done that they had done "once upon a time!"

Another job for some students in those early days was to take the classroom bucket and head for the well. The bucket had to be filled to provide drinking water for the day. Being selected to fill the bucket was a special treat and might relieve them—if they were lucky—of just a little classroom time!

Since farming provided the community of Randall's Chapel with its livelihood, split terms were often commonplace and most students spent 2 months in school in the summertime. No school was held during the time of planting in the spring and harvesting in the fall since the children were needed by the parents to help plan and later gather the crops that provided their living. However, there would be no school in summer unless there was enough money.

Sometimes parents would “Make up” enough money to make it possible for their children to attend school.

A typical school roll in the early 1900s might have included: John Tipton, Carrie Tipton, Dewey Tipton, Paralee Tipton, Allie Gant, Mattie Gant, Chelsie Gant, Lilly Gant, George Gant, Gilbert Thompsen, Monroe Cart, Shird Carter, John Carter, Albert Carter, Alma Carter, Ray Carter, Mary Green, Waldrop green, Virgil Green, Jessie Green, Lilly Green, Maud Green, Harris Keeble, Hugh Keble, Grace Golden, Margaret Golden, Willie Barbee, Leonard Barbee, Jim Judge, Sam Judge, Lizzie Judge, Emma Judge, Hershel Terry, Johnny Sort, and Leonard Tiffin.

Some early teachers would include Clara Young, Gertrude Collins, Will Money, Johnnie Young, Sam Wininger, Ben Shelton, Mrs. Belle Baker Dicus, Earl Barclay, E. A. Johnson, Professor Bennett, Jim Swaim, Allie Rodeo, and J. H. Jernigan.

The JCHA has one school picture of students at this school. It is from Bessie Tiffin Bradford’s daughter, Gladys Bradford Dutton, and must have been from the early 1920s. The girl on the left in front of the window is Bessie Tiffin, who was born in 1910. Her family is in the Scottsboro precinct in the 1920 census and the Tiffin family is buried in the Burgess Cemetery at the county park. Ann Chambless noted that the Tiffin farm was located in the 90 degree bend of present-day Clemons Road.



This is the 1900 photo of Randall's Chapel church which Ann Chambless referenced, showing the church building and congregation, which would have been in the same building.

