

## Johnsontown/Fairfield School

Originally known as Johnsontown School

**Location:** S21/T3/R6E

**Funds:** \$156

**School District:** 51

**Teacher in 1923:** Mrs. Virgie Chambers

**Trustees:** T. L Green and J. M. Pegues

**Teacher in 1939:** Mrs. Sammie Brown



1908-1939 One teacher

Renamed Fairfield and consolidated with Hollywood

Johnsontown as a settlement area was located just south of the Townsend-Gullatt house, in a area known as Greasy Cove, near the Fairfield Baptist Church and the Hurt Cemetery. As early as 1879, the *Scottsboro Citizen* is referencing the church meetings held in this area. In April 1895, the *Citizen* notes that “Johnstown near Hollywood, has a flourishing union Sabbath-school. Rev. D. K. Pegues is the superintendent.” Most references to Johnsontown are to the church or the spring. The earliest school in this area was probably held in the church, followed by a one-room cabin that Rubilee Smith went to school in a one-room cabin that burned about 1920. It was replaced with the two-room school shown below.

According to Rubilee Moore Smith, the original school was a one-room cabin which burned about 1920. When Rubilee attended this school, it covered grades one through six with 2 or 3 students per grade and had only one teacher who covered all the grades. The school pictured above is the new school. During the 1930s, the school seems to have covered grades 1 to 9 and supported two teachers. Wendell page states that by 1939, this school had merged with Hollywood. Some teachers associated with this school include Clara Young (1897), Nola Proctor Simmons (1928), Sam Hunter and Pearl Barbee (1930), Mrs. S.P. Hunter and Bernice Wallace (1931)

Carolyn Brannon recalls, “Ms. Nola Simmons was the teacher at Fairfield and lived with my mother and grandparents in a house across from the school. Probably late 20's. Then she was my brother's teacher at Hollywood and my teacher in 3rd grade at Hollywood. My mother was in school at the Fairfield school (Nancy Dudley Stills). Pat Dudley was her father.”

**Jul 25, 1879 SC:** “There was a quarterly meeting at ‘Johnsontown’ last Sunday.”

**Apr 25, 1895 SC:** “Johnstown near Hollywood, has a flourishing union Sabbath-school. Rev. D. K. Pegues is the superintendent.”

**Apr 22, 1897 SC:** The Johnsontown community was represented at the Christian Endeavor meeting by Mr. and Mrs. Shepard, Miss Stella Fisk, Miss Mollie Smith, G. P. Boulding and Enlin Smith.

**Sep 30, 1897 PA:** “Miss Clara Young closed her term of school at Johnsontown last Friday. She closed with quite an interesting entertaining.”

**Jul 31, 1902 PA:** The minister at Johnsontown failed to show up for church.

**Jul 7, 1904 PA:** "A crowd of young folks spent the 'glorious fourth' at Johnstontown spring, near Hollywood, and returning through town went to Hargiss' spring and ate supper. Those who enjoyed the day were, Misses Mayme Coffey, Mayme Robinson, Virginia Keith, Grace Francis, Virginia May Brown, Idal Caldwell, Mr. and Mrs. A. D. Kirby, Mr. and Mrs. Wyeth Rorex, Mrs. J. M. Card, Messrs. J. H. Hurt, Ben Thompson, Lawrence Brown, and Aubrey Keith."

Johnstontown was referenced as a church location for another 15 years, but no other references to Johnstontown school are found in newspapers. The name Fairfield seems to have been fairly widespread by the early 1920s. When the new school was built, the attention given to baseball says that the school was a Grades 1 through 9 school. The 1928 Fairfield school photo in the Reflections II book says that Fairfield included 9 grades.

**Feb 9, 1922 PA:** "Fairfield School News. School attendance is real good. We had a really interesting ball game on our ground last Friday afternoon with the Hollywood school boys. We won by a score of 25 to 14. If the weather permits we will play Hollywood on their ground Friday, 10th. Louie Wilson a pupil, had the misfortune to break his arm while wrestling last Thursday, We are preparing a short program for Washington's Birthday. On Friday night following, we will render two short plays entitled "The Cute Family," and "The Obstinate Family." A small admission will be charged.



**Feb 23, 1922 PA:** "Fairfield School Notes. School attendance is really good now. We had a ball game on our diamond between our boys and the boys from Kyles school and the boys from Kyles school last Saturday. We won by a score of 14 to 8. We have played three games and won all of them. Two other games were with Hollywood. We welcome Louie Wilson back to school after suffering a broken arm. Supt. J. H. Wheeler was with us Monday afternoon. The patrons met and put out the shade trees Monday, Feb 20....Louis Darwin and Tom Walsh of Hollywood were visitors at our school Monday. Our school will render two short plays entitled "The Cute Family," and "The Obstinate Family" Saturday night, March 4th instead of Feb. 25th. Admission 10 and 15 cents. Proceed go to buy athletic equipment for school."

**Mar 16, 1922 PA:** "Kyles News. The Fairfield school came up and played ball with our boys Friday. The score was 4 to 2 in favor of Kyles. This is about the first game Fairfield has lost and we fear they haven't learned to take a defeat well." and later. "Fairfield News: We are glad to have Joe Chandler back in school after a few days illness. Our boys lost their first game of baseball last week. The first was played with Kyles school boys, the score being 4 to 2. The second with Hollywood with scores 5 to 2. These were good game and everyone enjoyed seeing them. We expect to have a game between Kyles and Hollywood next Friday March 17th and then we still play the winners. These games will be played on our diamond. Fairfield school taken will give the plays entitled "The Cute Family," and "The Obstinate Family" next Saturday night March 18th. Charges of 10 cents and 15 cents. We hope to have a full house."

**Feb 5, 1927 PA:** Farmers' meeting at Fairfield school.

**Jan 19, 1928 PA:** "Fairfield News. School is progressing nicely at this place with Miss May Thomas as teacher."

**Jan 26, 1928 PA:** Jackson County School Column. See article.

**1928:** This photo of this school also appeared in the Sentinel's Reflections II photo books with this caption: "Mrs. Nola Proctor Simmons taught in this building in 1928. She had 87 pupils in grades 1 through 9."

**Dec 13, 1928 PA:** "There will be a box supper at the Fairfield school house Saturday night and a little play free. Everybody is invited. Proceeds go to church and school."

**Sep 5, 1929 PA:** "Program at Fairfield. The patrons of the Fairfield school near Hollywood are endeavoring to pay for a piano for the school and will give a program at that place Saturday night. It will be an informal program, but will doubtless be an enjoyable affair. The Hosiery Mill Band has consented to come and a recital will be given by Misses Mary and Lucille Benson, Jimmie Benson will sing and Editor Benson will make a short talk. All are urged to come."

**Nov 21, 1929 PA:** "School reopened here last Monday....Supt. J. F. Hodges was a pleasant visitor at school Tuesday. There will be a short Thanksgiving program at the school house November 28. The proceeds go to the church and school. Everyone come."

**Oct 9 1930 PA:** Ira Pegues will speak at the school.

**Nov 20, 1930 PA:** "Fairfield News. School is progressing nicely at this place with Mrs. Sam Hunter and Miss Pearl Barbee as teachers."

**Feb 26, 1931 PA:** "Misses Mattie Lou and Ethel Miller, Mrs. White, and Mrs. Brewer were visitors at the Fairfield school Friday."

Hollywood, Alabama,  
January 20, 1928.

Dear Miss Haynes:

You do not know me. I am in the sixth grade. We have cleaned the walls, washed the windows and oiled the floors. We have a few pictures on the walls. We have washed the flags too.

We would like for you to visit our school at Fairfield again. We are playing ball every day. We re having a fine time at school. Our teacher's name is Miss Mae Thomas.

Yours truly,  
Fred Chandler.

Progressive Age (Scottsboro, Alabama) · 04 Jun 1931, Th

nday for  
nd sum-  
ter, Miss  
Wilson of  
s of Mr.  
rs, Dris-  
returned  
she has  
e.  
son and  
re guests  
s. J. B.  
ter, Miss  
Tulla-  
returned  
been at-

FAIRFIELD NEWS

Rev. G. D. Akin, the newly elected pastor of the Baptist Church preached an interesting sermon Sunday morning.

Ira Pegues visited his parents, Rev. and Mrs. D. K. Pegues last week-end. Ivan Stills and Miss Nancy Dudley motored to the home of Rev. G. D. Akin Saturday night and were quietly married in the presence of a few friends. We wish for this fine young couple the greatest happiness this life affords.

The school house has recently been painted inside and out and new shades bought for the windows, adding much to the looks and comfort of the building.

**Jun 3, 1931 PA:** "The school house has recently been painted inside and out and new shades bought for the windows, adding much to the looks and comfort of the build.

**Jul 16, 1931 PA:** "School will begin here next Monday, July 20th with Mrs. S. P. Hunter and Miss Bernice Wallace as teachers."

**Sep 10, 1931 PA:** "Fairfield School will close for vacation with a picnic Friday.

**Nov 19, 1931 PA:** "On Thursday night, November 26th, the school children will render a short Thanksgiving program, after which sandwiches, candy and other good eats will be sold. Music will be furnished throughout the evening by a string band. No admission will be charged. Some and enjoy the evening and help a good cause. Fairfield school house is the place 00Thursday, Nov 16th 7 p.m. is the time.

**Feb 4, 1932 PA:** School is progressing nicely at this place. Our attendance is good despite the sickness and weather.

**Mar 3, 1932 PA:** Adele Rivers supervised all elementary education for 15 years in Jackson County. Two students from Hollywood and Fairfield wrote her thank you letters for books she brought the school. "Dear Miss Rivers: I have enjoyed reading the book. They have been a great help to me. I am in the third grade and have read three of the books. I like the story of Hiawatha better than any of the stories. I am glad we could have these books to read. Come to see us. With love, Alma Webb, Fairfield School." Also "Fairfield News: "Miss Adele Rivers was a pleasant visitor to our school today,"

**Mar 17, 1932 PA:** School graduation. See article.

**Jan 12, 1933 PA:** "Fairfield School News. We scrubbed and oiled our floors this week. Several of our classmates have moved away an we miss them. Some new pupils have been added to our roll recently and we welcome them. We are sorry indeed, to give up on of our loyal trustees, Mr. Bishop, and the school wishes to thank him for the many good deeds, acts of kinds, and all services rendered while here. Miss Thelma and Daisy Wright who are attending school here, spent last weekend with their parents at Pikeville. Misses Ella Mae Dudley and Evelyn Bradford of Kyles visited school Tuesday. The Jr. I Better English Club will have charge of Chapel exercises Friday morning. Their subject is 'Kindness to Animals.'"

**Mar 2, 1933 PA:** "Fairfield School Notes: We regret very much that our teacher, Mrs. Hunter, continues very ill. It is hard to express how much we miss her in our school work and in her helpful community activities. The entire community wishes her a speedy recovery. Last week we had a who's who contest. Pretties girl, Buncie Mae Ware; Most handsome boy, Kenneth Brewster; Wittiest girl, Marie Brewster; Wittiest boy, Billie T. Campell; Smartest girl, Buncoe Mae Ware; Smartest boy, Kenneth Brewster; Laziest girl, Maude Miller; Laziest boy, Claude Miller; Biggest pest boy, Trester Moore; Biggest pest girl, Margret Hunter."

**Apr 16, 1934 PA:** "There will be an ice cream supper at the Fairfield School Saturday night August 18. Plenty of cold drinks and sandwiches too, music furnished by a string band. Proceeds to benefit of school. Come and enjoy the evening."

**Feb 11, 1937 PA:** Fairfield School contributed \$5 to Red Cross flood relief.

**FAIRFIELD SCHOOL NOTES**

Rev. W. F. Brooks of Scottsboro visited our school Tuesday morning and delivered an interesting address in his usual charming manner. We feel sure that no pastor in the county is more generously loved and appreciated than is Bro. Brooks.

We are expecting members of the Health Unit to be with us next Friday at ten o'clock.

School closes Friday, March 26th, and programs will be rendered by the children on Thursday and Friday evenings. The program Thursday evening will be in keeping with the Bicentennial celebration of the birth of George Washington, composed of recitation, songs, plays, ring games, minstrel, flag drill and music.

Friday evening at 7:30 o'clock the school will present the following program:

Song—Vacation—By the school.  
Welcome Homer Wright.  
Acrostic, Vacation—Eight children.  
Several reading and dialogues.  
Presentation of prizes given by the teachers for perfect attendance—Miss Mary Carroll.  
Play:—"The Mistake They Left Behind"—Fitzroy pupils.  
Reading "A Mother's Wish"—Fred Hunter.  
Flower invitations—Nine girls.  
Playlet, "Which Will You Choose"—Sixth grade pupils.  
Ornamenting exercises:  
Sakatory—Freda Bishop.  
Reading, "Our Childhood School"—Fronie Womack.  
Class property—Ella Bratcher.  
Class colors—Elen Venable.  
Class motto—Woodrow Holt.  
Pinner—Grace Womack.  
Class WII—Dick Hunter.  
Valedictory—Bernice Warr.  
Presentation of diplomas—Supt. J. T. Hargis.  
Response to presentation—Fred Wright.  
Acrostic—Good bye—Seven boys and girls.  
Music will be furnished throughout the evening by the Dawson band.  
All friends of the school are cordially invited to attend these exercises.

**Nov 4, 1937 PA:** County Board of Education financial report. Proctor Grocery Store reimbursed \$1.00 for supplies for the school and W. L. Johnson paid \$.60 for repairs.

**Apr 6, 1939 PA:** Smallpox outbreaks in Hollywood, Fackler, and Bellefonte leads to inoculation clinics at area schools, including Fairfield.

**Jun 15, 1939 PA:** Dogs vaccinated against rabies at the school.

**Oct-Dec1940:** Forestry program held at the school in response to recent fires.

**Aug 7, 1941 PA:** Typhoid vaccination clinic at school. Also July-August 1942

**Before 1950** (Wendell Page says before 1939): Fairfield School consolidated with Hollywood. There was not Fairfield school profile in the 1950s "Know Your Schools" series of articles.

**Aug 2, 1951 PA:** "Sale of School Property. Notice is hereby given that the Jackson County Board of Education will accept sealed bid until 12 o'clock noon August 31, 1951 on the school property listed below....Fairfield School Building and two acres of land...Signed Delbert Hicks, Superintendent of Education."



Dr. Ron Dykes interviewed Rubilee Moore Smith for his book *Growing Up Hard*. Rubilee was born in 1916 and write about attending Fairfield School, in the early 1920s. She remembers it thus:

Rubilee started to the Fairfield School when she was five years old. It had one room and one teacher and was about a mile from their house. She had to walk except when the weather was bad, and then her father would take her and other. The first building had burned, and a new building the summer of her first year. She remember that the students had to provide their own desks, and her father bought two new desks, one for her and one for Sammie her sister. The school was heated with cola. "it was unusual to start at five, but I worried my mother because I wanted to do everything my older sister did, and she was already going to school. The one room school worked amazingly well. There were no

serious disc inline problems. We were supposed to be doing homework while the teacher was working with other classes. I would watch the third grade and work along with them."

School went from about eight until three, and "We started in November, since this was an agricultural society, and the kids had to help gather the crops. I remember we went for seven months, but we had a nine month session. There were just a few in my class in the one room school, maybe two or three, but less than six. Different teacher came through the school. Mrs. Chamber, who just turned one hundred years old, was my second grade teacher there.

Schooling for the Moore children did not stop when classes were out. There was a considerable amount of what she calls "home teaching." Both sides of the family were education oriented, and she credits her family with impressing upon her the importance of learning. Her grandmother Moore was a teacher, and her father had an uncle who was a principal in Lenoir City, Tennessee. She was told that her father stayed with his uncle and had gone to school "a good bit," and for his time was "pretty well educated." Her mother had also been a teacher before she raised her family. "They had something like an extension, and professors would come there, and that is how she became a teacher."

Her mother was the one who made sure she got her homework done, and the home schooling didn't stop after school ended for the year. "Every summer she always had certain things we had to learn. In third grade, we had to learn multiplication tables that summer. After the fifth grade, we had to learn all the states and capitols, and I still remember them.

The Fairfield School only went through the sixth grade, then they went to Hollywood for junior high. Usually they would ride to the Hollywood School, about three miles away, with some of the older students. It was a nine month school, and there was less than ten in each class. There was only one teacher for the three junior grades, however. Although there were a few departmental classes, they spent most of the time in that one room. Ordinarily she would have gone through the ninth grade at this school, but Sammie had to come to Jackson County High School in Scottsboro for the tenth grade, so Rubilee came with her at the beginning of ninth grade.

She vividly remember reading to school bus to Scottsboro. "The bus came up County Road 33. Most of the roads were chert, and since there was no air conditioning we had to ride with the windows open. Dust got all over us, and we would get to school with dust all in our hair. The Scottsboro kids, in contrast, looked neat and trim. But students from town not accepting the ones bussed in from the pike never bothered me too much.

