

Shumake Grove/Shumac School/ Cameronville School

Location: S13/T2/R8E

Funds: \$166.40

School District: 8

Teacher in 1923: Summer Term, no listed

Trustees in 1923: J. H. Cameron and Sam W. Maxwell

Not found in 1937 Directory

Town Location: Cameronville

Years of Operation: 1925-1936

Latitude: 34.8567483

Longitude: -85.7583062



Shumake Grove and Cameronville appear to be two names for the same school. Wendell Page notes that this name of Shumake does not appear in any county records until 1924 when it was called Shumake and the 18 by 22 foot building was barely adequate to house its pupils. When the school first organized, there were 17 pupils and one teacher serving grades 1 through 6. The community of Cameronville was located near the Widow's Creek Dam and Lock. The U. S. Post Office that served the area when the first school was organized was at that time named Mooney. This school was probably consolidated with Fabius. Early teachers included E. Hoyt Fincher (1920s), Margaret Adams, Moleen Roberts, Caroline Precise, Callie Burk, Arthur Williams, J. M. Prince, Hugh Roden, and Earnest Noles. Trustees in 1923 were J. H. Cameron and Sam W. Maxwell.

The school used several locations in District 8, all serving the same community

First Location: The first school was held in a store former store location. The story in the July 1925 *Progressive Age* indicates this was a new school whose space was still being decorated and whose colors were just being determined.

Jul 30, 1925 PA: "We are having school at Sumac Grove with an enrollment of thirty-four and so far have good attendance....The school folks have been fixing up their room. We have our flags, a number of good pictures bought by the children. We selected blue and yellow for our school colors and have decorated the room with blue and yellow crepe paper....The primer class is going to dramatize 'The Gingerbread Boy' Friday afternoon. They are a class of 17 strong and invite all the parents to come in and see the fox eat the 'Gingerbread Boy.'" The full article appeared in the Cameronville News column in the paper and is reproduced here.

E. H. Fincher, an early teacher at this school, wrote a description of this school building, which appeared in the December 15, 1928 *Progressive Age*: "This is a small one-teacher school in Cameronville, Alabama....It is very much secluded yet it is located in perhaps Jackson County's richest farming district. The building where I teach has in time been a small county store. It, together with a small plot of ground has been loaned to the state for a school house." This school was walking distance (two miles) from the Christian Home School. We



know this because Prof. Fincher walked to the from Shumake Grove/Cameronville to Christian Home and back with his entire class one day.” The school seems to have moved to slightly larger accommodations some time between 1928 and 1945.

Second Location: A student-written history of the school that appeared in the 1953 Cameronville yearbook described the second school building this: “During the year of 1945 the school was moved from a one room house on the side of the mountain to Fabius, due to conditions of the building and its location. Mr. John Williams let the school use an old store built on his farm for the school. The building was only 20’ x 30’, not very well lighted and had one one door, although it was much better than the previous building they used.” This building was used for six months in 1945 while the a dedicated school build for this community was being built. “The school began with Miss Margaret Adams as principal and teacher of six elementary grades. They used this building about six months before the county built a new building,” the 1953 school history tells us,.

Third Location: In 1945, a school was built for Camerville. It is pictured below, in a photo from the 1953 yearbook:



When the school moved to this new building, the students from McCoy’s Grove School joined this school, making it a two-teacher school. Miss Mason, principal, teaching 4th, 5th, and 6th grades. Miss Margaret Adams teaching 1st, 2nd, and 3rd grades. The following year Miss Margaret Adams principal, Miss Molene Roberts, teacher. The next year Hugh Roden, principal, Miss Molene Roberts, teacher. The school year 49 and 50 J. M. Prince, principal, Callie Burk, teacher. The next year Earnest Noles, principal, Callie Burk teacher. Principal Noles helped with the financials problem of the school by starting a supply room. The school year 51-52 J. M. Prince, principal, Miss Callie Burk teacher. This school term 52-53 Miss Callie Burk was principal, teaching 1st, 2nd, and 3rd grades, and Carolyn Precise teaching 4th, 5th, and 6th grades. These teachers are shown below in photos from the 1953 yearbook.



Mr. Arthur Williams gave one acre of land for the building and play grounds. The building included two class rooms that could be converted into one large room for entertainment purposes, two cloak rooms, and a supply room. The children are transported to this school by bus. Glenda Mason Placek's mother recalls that her grandfather, Arthur Williams, showed movies at the school on Saturday night.

Here are newspaper accounts of this school.

Jul 30, 1925 PA: "The school folks have been fixing up their room. We have our flags, a number of good pictures bought by the children. We selected blue and yellow for our school colors and have decorated the room with blue and yellow crepe paper....The primer class is going to dramatize 'The Gingerbread Boy' Friday afternoon. They are a class of 17 strong and invite all the parents to come in and see the fox eat the 'Gingerbread Boy

Dec 15, 1927 PA: E. Hoyt Fincher, teacher at Cameronville, writes a condescending letter explaining the vote on the upcoming bond issue that would place a tax on cigarettes, railroads, and the mining industry, but gives some interesting details about the Cameronville school. "I am an almost insignificant primary school teacher, teaching in a little school almost as insignificant as I am. This is a small one-teacher school in Cameronville, Alabama....It is very much secluded yet it is located in perhaps Jackson County's richest farming district. The building where I teach has in time been a small county store. It, together with a small plot of ground has been loaned to the state for a school house. The house is 18 feet by 22 feet, hardly large enough to take care of the few boys and girls of school age in this district. Do we need a better school house? Frankly Yes. My heart goes out in gratitude for the boys and girls of today, who must seek an education to prepare them for citizens of tomorrow in school houses hardly equal to the merits of several generations ago."

Jan 12, 1928 PA: Shumake Grove: The school gave a Christmas program together with a community Christmas tree.

Jan 19, 1928 PA: Cameronville News, "Shumake Grove School went to the Local and Damn Friday on a picnic. A nice time was reported and some useful knowledge gained. Our school is doing some wonderful work since the holiday season.

Mar 15, 1928 PA: E.H. Fincher teacher at Shumake reported on a trip to Christian Home School.

March 28, 1928 PA: School News feature. The county schools participated in a field day. "Among the county school present were: Hollywood, Stevenson, Woods Cover, Larkinsville, Bridgeport, Rocky Spring, Pisgah, Long Island, Trenton, Cameronville, Dutton, Temperance Hill, McCutchen's, Fairfield, Russell's Jacobs' Mill, and Coffey."

here, just on top of Sand Mountain. We left our school about 8:30 a.m. and arrived there at ten o'clock, having taken plenty of time in order that the children would not be worried too badly.

When we arrived their school had recessed for a few minutes. The school, after a few moments hesitation by a few pupils of my school, were mustered together into a great playing body, playing several old familiar games. Before we were thinking of work time, our thirty minutes had gone by and we were going into the house. At first we noticed the floor to be practically free from loose dirt. We also noticed some inexpensive, yet attractive window curtains made of white cloth, trimmed in green that is very restful to tired eyes.

We studied and recited together. At noon, we spent a supervised lunch period. Everyone seemed in the best of spirits and it could be easily seen that there was no lack of association then into other games. Everyone played together much better than even at the recess period in the forenoon.

We again assembled about one o'clock and after a short talk by each teacher, discussed such things as were interesting with the pupils. At about two o'clock we began our return home.

Of course, we were tired when we were back at our school but I can see the results already. We did not like to lose more than half a day but some of my pupils were small and ascending and descending the mountain was too much for part of a day. I believe it was a fine project and I believe it would be fine for all rural schools to take such a trip. The pupils were not all that were benefitted for I, myself, learned new ways of appealing to the imagination and interest of the pupil. Mrs. Ruby Woodfin is teaching there and she has a very interesting school.

Believing the elementary teachers of the county will find this project interesting and useful, I am yours for the child,
E. H. FINCHER.

Cameronville, Ala.
Shumake Grove School,
March 6.

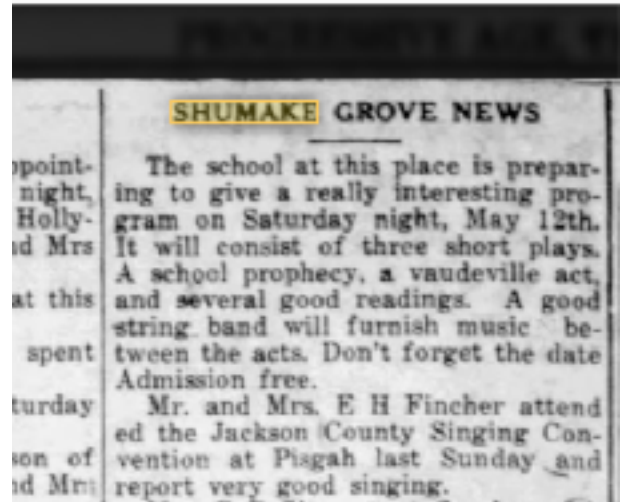
During my short experience as a teacher, I have found a group, or class rather, of boys and girls who are self-conscious, experience a feeling of inward fear, or become naturally subjective to their equals. I found this to be one great handicap to a child's learning and consequently an enemy of good citizenship and right living in later life. Realizing that a greater part of this must be overcome in order that people may be enabled to meet the future conditions of life, "better fitted to survive." I have concluded that a lack of association in early school days is one chief reason for these disabilities, and further, I believe that the rural one-teacher school is the best breeding place for these, and therefore the source should be removed.

In working toward that end, last Friday, March 2nd, I took my pupils and we went to visit Christian Home school. This is a small one-teacher school, two and one-half miles from

May 3, 1928 PA: "Shumake Grove News: The school at this place is preparing to give a really interesting program on Saturday night." See article.

May 22, 1928 PA: In the Christian Home column, "The Christian Home school and their teacher, Mrs. Ruby Woodwind, visited the Cameronville school last Monday and had a nice time."

June 21, 1928 PA: Vote to decided of Shumake District No. 8 taken at the School House on July 26 to vote on a special tax for the support of public schools within the district. Vote seems to have been held in September because advertising the vote continued. See article.



Dec 3, 1930 PA: Despite the adverse conditions some schools are having perfectly splendid attendance. Shumake—90 percent. Similar attendance reports through 1930 and 1931

Feb 5, 1931 PA: In a report about school attendance figures, Shumake reported 77%.

Jan 16, 1936 PA: Shumake Springs still recognized for attendance issue. This is last mention of this school by this name.

Jul 28, 1932 PA: A Typhoid, diphtheria, and smallpox inoculation clinic was held at Cameronville school on four successive Thursdays during the month of August.

Jul 8, 1948 PA: A tuberculosis screening was held at Cameronville school July 20.

