

Angela gone —  
— see del photo.



← VIC. ADD. → ← OBIO. →

c. 1870's  
Poplar Ridge School  
H.E. Madison Co.



← c. 1870-75 → ← VIC. ADD. → ← doors c. 1920's →

Photos 1988  
not by HJ



POPLAR RIDGE  
SCHOOL  
c. 1870 + c. 1890



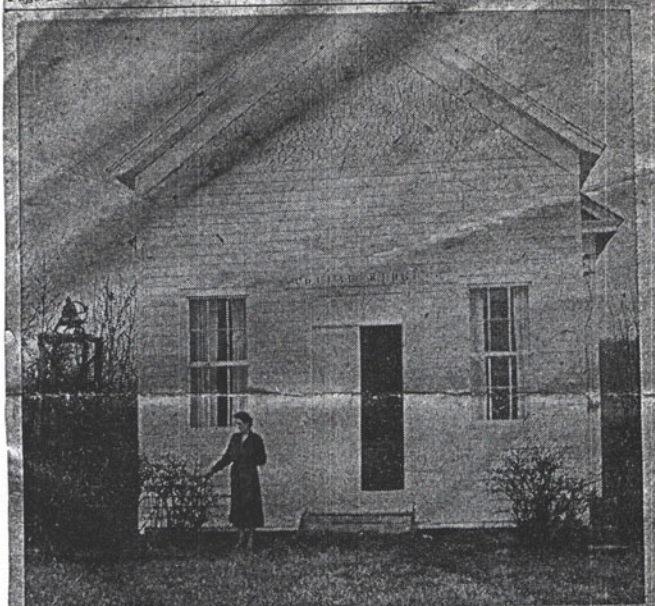
transom is painted over  
(see hist photo for gl.)

c.1920's doors  
(see hist photo for orig. doors)

~~VIC.~~

c.1870





**HAS SERVED FOR CENTURY**—This Poplar Ridge school building and an earlier one near by have served as a school and center for the community for more than 100 years. In more recent times it has served as the voting place. During 1961 it is slated for general improvements under sponsorship of the Poplar Ridge Home Demonstration Club. (Timesfoto)

#### FORMER PUPIL TELLS ITS HISTORY

## School At Poplar Ridge Opened Before Civil War

By LAURA BUTLER

**EDITOR'S NOTE:** This article was written by Miss Laura Butler, of the Poplar Ridge community, who attended the old private school in the Poplar Ridge building. She was assisted by Mrs. Harry Carpenter and others familiar with the history of the school, now used as the community center.

For more than 100 years now, feet of the very young and the old have trod their way to a tree-bordered spot in the Poplar Ridge community where an old white schoolhouse still stands and serves.

Today it is the area's community center and, as in the past, the home demonstration club there will make its improvement a top project for 1961.

The school bell still hangs on its stand in the yard where a second, and earlier, building once stood.

The Poplar Ridge schoolhouse was built before the Civil War. It was a one-room log building with a large open fireplace for heating. The benches were split logs with peg legs and no backs.

A few years after the war, a frame building was added, and for some time there were two teachers. The buildings were connected by a covered walk.

At that time, Poplar Ridge School was considered the best east of Huntsville Mountain. Several pupils from surrounding communities came to this school and stayed with friends and relatives during the week so they might have the advantage of a better school.

All pupils carried their books in a homemade sack hung across their shoulder. There was always a Blue Back Speller in it. They

took their dinner in a tin pail, each family having its own pail. School opened promptly at 8 a.m. and closed at 4 p.m.

At one time the two buildings housed a total of 99 pupils. The principal was so anxious to have 100 pupils that he went by a home in the area and arranged to bring to the school a little boy just under the accepted school age. So for at least one day the school had 100 pupils. That little boy was the late Albert Butler Sr., for many years a leading merchant of New Hope who also had extensive farming and other business interests.

Some of the teachers at this school were quite outstanding and inspired their pupils for a higher education, even though no salary exceeded \$25 per month.

James E. Butler was among the first to teach after the Civil War. Others followed, among them being Billy Nichols, Mr. Horton who later became governor of Tennessee, and Arthur Robertson and Bob Butler from Paint Rock Valley.

More than a dozen of their pupils went to Winchester Normal where they received a B.S. degree. Others attended Auburn, the University of Alabama, Athens College, and Florence State Teachers College.

Sam Butler, who later served for many years as Madison County superintendent of education and for whom Butler High School is named, received his early education at Poplar Ridge and his degree at Winchester Normal as did the late Probate Judge W. E. Butler.

Sidney Hodges who taught for many years in Madison County received his education at Poplar Ridge and Winchester Normal as

did his brother, Wayland, who later held a position with the Alabama State Department of Education.

For many years the teachers' salaries were paid by subscription of those in the community who were interested in education. The state provided funds for only two or three months and sometimes the schools ran no more than seven months.

The main supporters of the school during this period were F. T. Butler, J. E. Butler, John Russell and Frank Ivy.

While Sam Butler was superintendent of education, many of the county's one-teacher schools were closed, as consolidated schools were built. Poplar Ridge continued teaching through the fourth grade until about 1937 when the pupils went to the New Hope consolidated school.

The State did not sell the old school building, however, and has allowed the community to use it for a clubhouse and a voting place.

It is one of the oldest surviving landmarks in the county.

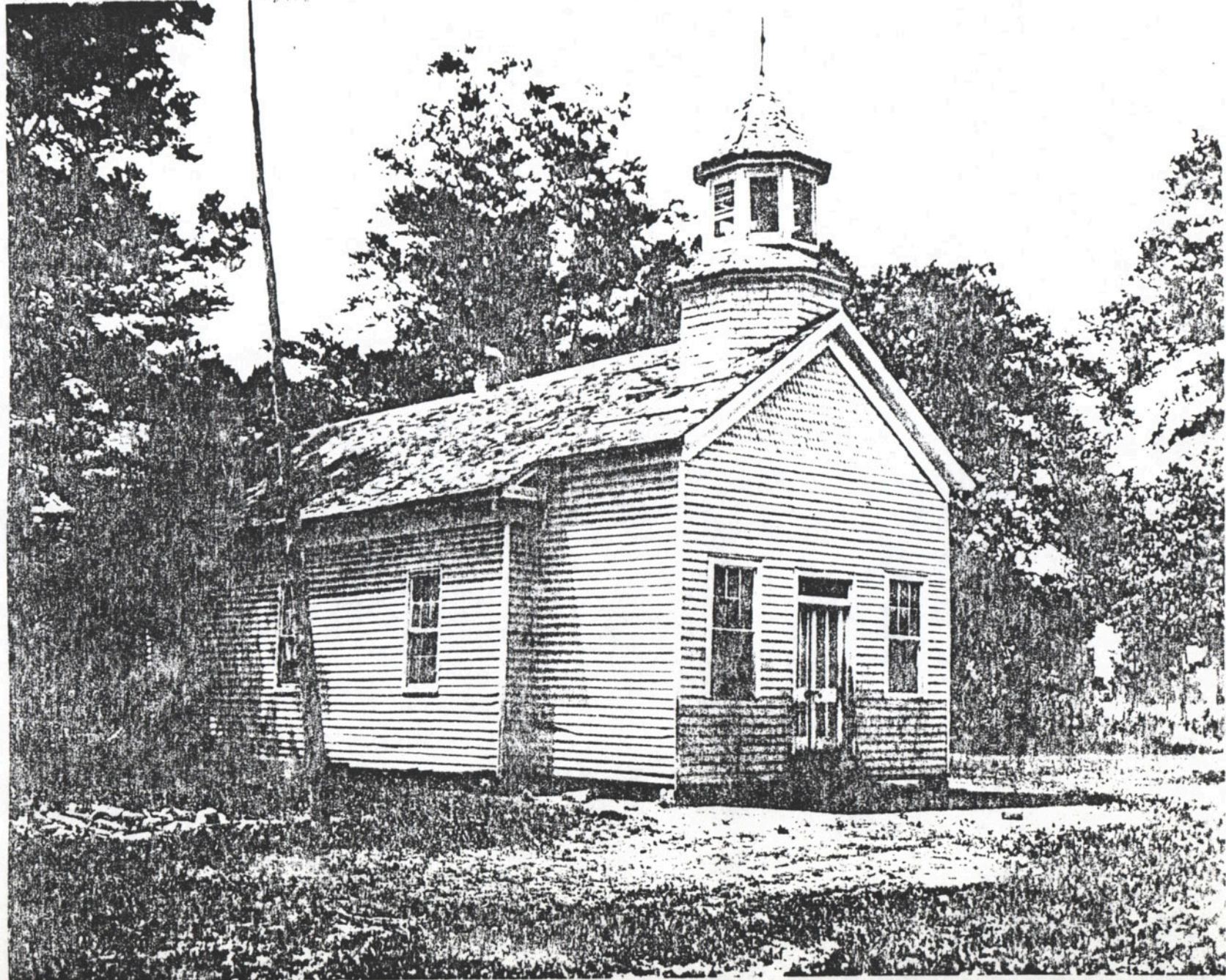
## Old Terraces To Be Replaced

Howard Hughes and his son, Bobby, of Madison are planning to change the terracing system on their Monrovia farm.

Working out details with the staff of the Madison County Soil Conservation Service, they plan to smooth the down old terraces and build parallel terraces on 60 acres of land and to provide grassed waterways to receive the runoff water without soil erosion damage. The land is used for cotton production.

Poplar







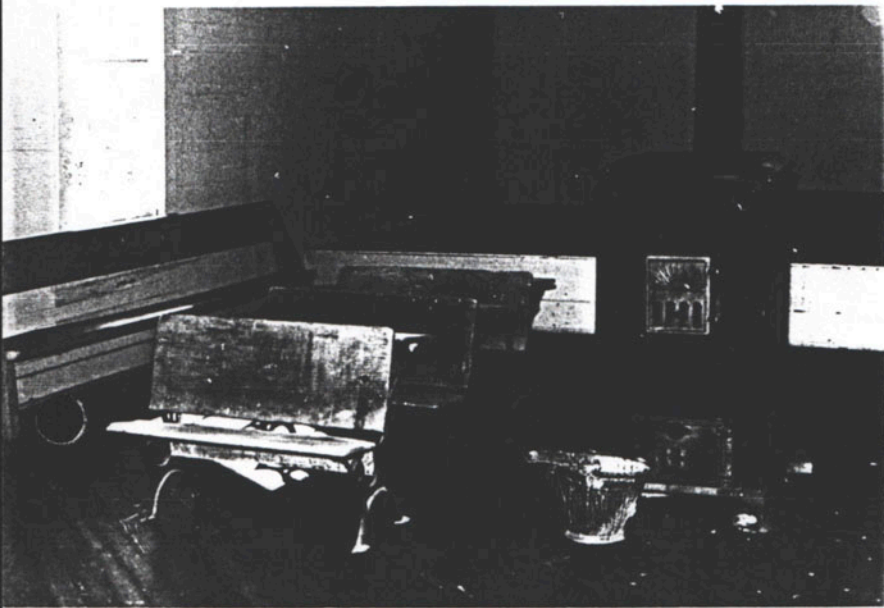
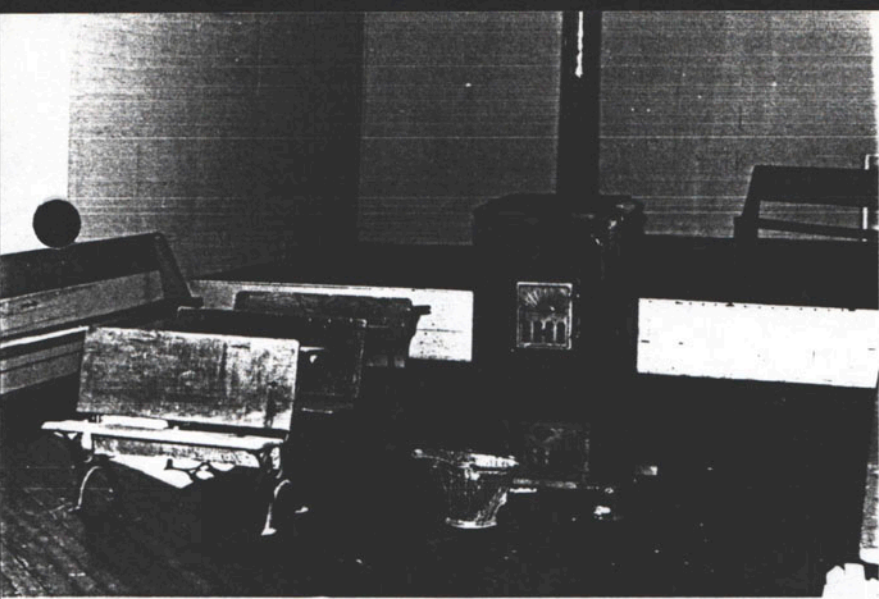
Poplar Ridge School



Poplar Ridge School  
E. M. Harrison Co.









#### ARCHITECTURAL SIGNIFICANCE

No other one-room school is known to the writer in this area, of any date or type of construction. This one has survived, with its Victorian addition, in good condition except for the loss of the bell cupola. Small frame non-residential buildings of this age are now very rare in North Alabama. For these architectural reasons, and as a representation of the normal type of 19th century rural school, this building should be preserved and recognized.



Poplar Ridge School - E. Madison Co. Al.  
built c. 1870, + Vic. front add perhaps 1890 ±

for National Register Nomination by Mrs. Lynn Harford

ARCHITECTURAL DESCRIPTION - HQ Jones, FAIA, 17 Oct '88

Clapboarded, gabled one-room Classical Revival frame structure with a Victorian front addition. The entry gable is about 4 feet narrower than the main body of the building for about 12 feet back from the entry doors. A change in the flooring and other details indicate, along with this gable-width change, that the front section was added, probably in the late 19th or early 20th century. The rear main body of the building is of a simple late Classical Revival design, whereas the front part is late Victorian in design.

The pair of entry doors are each a stack of five horizontal panels of a type popular in the early 20th century. An old photograph shows 4-panel doors, which were probably original. Above the entry doors is a painted panel which was originally a glass transom, per the historic photograph.

The late-Victorian front gable is dog-tooth wood shingles with simple boxed eaves. This later front gable has a wide frieze-board, but has no eave-cornice returns. The gables on the original late Classical Revival part have more elaborate boxed cornices, and eave returns on both the wall that was the front, and on the rear, in a simplified Classical Revival manner. These differences strongly indicate the time periods of the two parts of the building.

A historic photograph shows a shingled octagonal bell-cupola on the Victorian front part with a bell-shaped shingled roof and a weathervane. These elements are no longer present.

The building rests on small stone piers and is open underneath. The historic photograph shows the yard has filled in about a foot since the earlier photograph, a common occurrence in historic structures.

The historic photograph shows wood shingles on the roof. The present roof is tri-rib galvanized steel barn roofing. The current concrete entry steps are not original.

A small brick flue is suspended in the center of the original part of the structure. A later wood stove is connected to it by a metal flue.

The interior flooring is diagonal in the late Classical Revival part (an unusual feature if original), and square in the Victorian addition. The walls and ceiling are flush planking. The ceiling is about 12 feet high. A raised platform about 2 feet high by 8 feet deep is at the rear, and a four-panel door exits to the rear side from this platform.



Bell tower removed

1st roof shingled

This is 2nd roof

Set on hand hewn beams

Area under bell tower remodeled

Diagonal flooring is original, front by door is not

Original benches stored at Butler's

could put back if secured

Stove not original

Mrs. ~~Stipes~~ Dorothy Mellett - taught there, living

Library has photos of all schools

Benches are from Bethel Springs Church

John Ed has desk full of material

about church. Was log, begun in 1823 or

so, while area still part of Cherokee

reservation. Indians not moved out

until 1830.

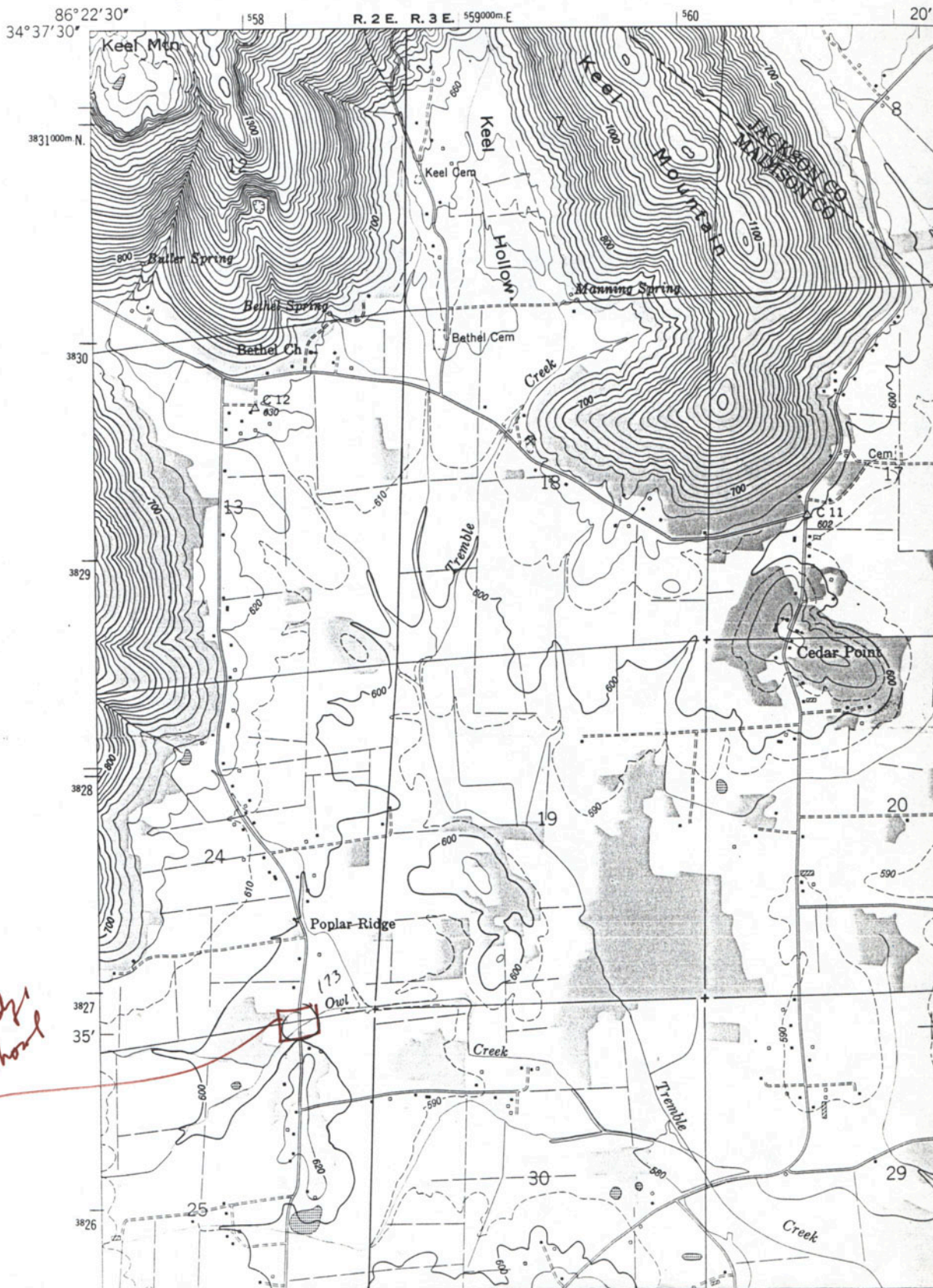
John Ed wants to have Reunion ice cream

supper at school.



3753 (11 NW  
(MOON TOWN 82-NW)

UNITED STATES  
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
GEOLOGICAL SURVEY





28  
Feb. 20ndy 1874.

1st week  
2nd  
3rd

Brook  
week  
the  
week

Opened school with 11 pupils

Learning student

Julius Allen

Kenneth E. Allen

R. E. Butler)

Isaac E. Bryant

526 Bayash.

Martha Bryant)

(M. Graham)

George Graham

(Mr. Jaffrey)

Mr. Miller)  
1893-94

W. H. Miller  
L. A. B. Co.

Sally Miller  
N. B. P. 1

W. L. Gaffis

1998/10/10

fish cont.

next page



2  
Sirah E. Seaman

Lydia Seaman

Sam Hall

Quincy Weston

Mary Preston

Samuel Andrews

Henry Roberts

D. B. Walker

S. G. Vandervee

Nathan Miller

Mary Patterson

Mahar Hutchinson

George Hutchinson

John A. Miller

T. A. Miller

James Patterson