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SWAN QUARTER COUNTY SEAT



1954-1955

HYDE COUNTY

Outgrowth of Art Workshop February 1953

Art Consultant Henry C. Richmond

Superintendent of Schools N. W. Shelton

Schools Participating
Engelhard, Fairfield, Sladesville
Swan Quarter

INTRODUCTION

The material in this bulletin on Hyde County was an outgrowth of pre-planning and research for an Art Workshop which was conducted by Mr. Henry C. Richmond, Art Consultant, American Artists' Color Works, Incorporated, Brooklyn, New York.

During the workshop it was very clearly shown how art could be related and integrated with many other subjects, particularly Social Studies. Hyde County was the topic of discussion in many social studies classes for a long period of time. Homes were visited, old papers, magazines, records and books were searched, and older people in the communities were visited for available information concerning the county in general. Much was learned by those taking part in the research.

It was through the courtesy of Mr. Homer A. Lassiter, Associate, Division of Elementary Education of the North Carolina State Department that the workshop was planned.

HYDE'S PEOPLE

- 1. Descendants of English settlers.
- 3. Many idioms common.

1- Land measured by cornhills.

- 2- Call people by christian name rather than surname.
- 3- Common expressions originated from nearness to water.

a. Passing out for dying. b. Two sheets in the wind.

- 4. Very hospitable.
- 5. Aristocratic.
- 6. Population mostly static.
- 7. The County's isolation has caused the people to develop a culture all their own. Modern means of communication are causing them to lose a portion of their distinctive individualities.

WHY I LIKE HYDE COUNTY

by
A seventh grade student of the Fairfield
School

I like Hyde because of its glee
Because it is filled with hope for
you and for me
With its trees, its flowers, its
streams, and its fields
Where the crops always give such
bountiful yields.

Where the sun shines bright from day to day
And helps each man provide his way.
Where the children play and go to school
And always mind the teacher's rule.

Where the moon shines bright on the lakes and streams
And help the lovers fulfill their dreams.
Where the Cardinals sing both night and day
And chase the gloom along life's way.

Where the geese go honking under
the sun
And the hunters grab their guns
and run
And the housewife goes about fixing
the food
To feed her large but happy brood.

And then spring gaily comes along With its flowers, birds, and songs And everyone begins to work Even the smallest "Turk."

Then the fall with the falling leaves,
The men begin to gather the sheaves;
Then comes the time to carve the turk,
Christmas holidays with no thought of work.

Nancy Gill, Seventh Grade

HYDE County
by
A Fifth Grade Pupil
Swan Quarter School

Hyde County is a good place to be A home for you and home for me, Be happy while you may And in good old Hyde you'll stay.

Some people call our county skin But if they have been here once They want to come again, So stay in Hyde while you can Whether you are a woman or a man.

The fields are black and wide But I still prefer Old Hyde, That's where I'll always stay I'm not going to run away.

Elizabeth Ann Harris, Fifth Grade

Facts And Places Of Interest In Hyde County

- Name From Edward Hyde, Earl of Clarendon, commissioned as lieutenant governor, by the Lords Proprietor to govern this section of Carolina.
- Nickname "Hoide" because of peculiarity of speech, commonly known as Old English.
- County Seat Swan Quarter
- Population 6,756 Mostly static because of county's location, isolated-so-to-speak.
- Lake Mattemuskeet A 50,000 acre United States Wildlife Refuge Name meaning "Dry Dust" as Algonquin Indians would have it.
- Churches Providence Methodist Church in Swan Quarter.
 "The Church That God Moved"
 Amity Methodist Church in Lake Landing.
 "The Mother Church of Hyde County"
- Birthplace of Ellis Credle Sladesville, Homestead.
 Author of children's books very popular today.
- Ocracoke Island Part of Hyde built around Silver Lake which opens into Pamlico Sound. One of the most picturesque villages along the Banks. Annual Pony Penning in July. Oldest active lighthouse in the United States, in which no structural changes have been made. (1798)
- Ink Bottle House Lake Landing- On highway 264- built with eight sides- has four square rooms with one central chimney.
- Mattamuskeet Lodge Hotel built from old pumping plant which once drained Lake Mattamuskeet for agricultural purposes.
- Industries Commercial fishing and processing constitute the industrial operations in the county. Other industrial operations are the packing of seafood, lumbering, and a small tourist trade. Catering to sportsmen engages a substantial number of people.

 Diversified Farming.
- Accommodations Hotel and boarding houses at Swan Quarter and Engelhard. Lodge and cottages at New Holland. Hotel, sportsmen's club and furnished cottages at Ocracoke.

There are no railroads.

HYDE COUNTY

Hyde County's history, as legend has it was visited by Sir Richard Grenville's men in 1585 when they first came to America, probably the island of Ocracoke. Many facts which could have been put into history about Hyde County have been lost due to no records having been made.

Many of these facts have been gathered from various sources through several generations. However, it has been found that its history goes back to 1705 when Wickham Precincts was one of three precints created in Bath County in Eastern Carolina. The Lords Proprietors of Carolina sent Edward Hyde, Earl of Clarendon, with a commission as lieutenant governor, to govern the "North part of Carolina", the region known as Albemarle.

Hyde was made governor of the colony in 1712 and died the same year of yellow fever epidemic. Although his reigning period cannot be considered successful, Wickham Precinct's name was changed to "Hyde" afterthe Governor's death.

It is believed that many of the early settlers of the northern section of the county came from Accomach and Northempton counties of Virginia, as many of the citizens of those counties have the same surnames as those of Hyde County.

The ancestors of Hyde County brought with them the worship of the established Church of England, a capability for managing their affairs with shrewdness, thrift and intelligence. In the period leading up to and following the Civil War the region developed into one famous for its fine homes and farms, its productive lands and citizenship of great pride and prosperity.

The early colonist found the county inhabited by three tribes of Indians which were fierce and warlike. They were the Cores, Cochneys and Mattamuskeets. These tribes lived principally in the part of Hyde about Mattamuskeet Lake.

The Lake, located a little south and teast of the center of Hyde County, is the largest natural lake of state of North Carolina. The saucer shaped body of water contains seventy five square miles of the world's richest soil and has been compared in fertility to the Valley of the Nile. Unfortumately the lake has never been deep enough to support a very large amount of navigation. It is fourteen miles long and six miles wide.

Several attempts have been made to drain the Lake for agricultural purposes, each time it has been met with failure. In 1934 the land was acquired by the United States Government and a Waterfowl Sanctuary was established. The pumping plant was converted into a modern hotel known as Mattamuskeet Lodge. A circular stairway was built into the former smokestack of the pumping plant, which is used as an observation tower.

The Mattamuskeet Refuge is the largest and best known one in the United States at present, and is the winter home of thousands of geese, duck, swan and numerous other kinds of waterfowl. It is a Veritable "Sportsman's Paradise".

There are many legends as to how the lake was formed. The oldest and best known one is that it was burned out for 13 moons during a severe drought, in order to try to please the gods. However, since the lake is three feet below sea level, the United States Geologic Survey inclines to the opinion that the lake is of natural origin and was once a large juniper swamp.

About the year 1940 a road was started across the lake from U.S. Highway 264 to the Fairfield side of the lake. When it was completed years later, it was the longest causeway in the United States. This road, with its small natural park at one end affords tourists a magnificent view of the entire lake.



The county is divided into four townships, Swan Quarter, Lake Landing, Currituck, Fairfield and of course Ocracoke Island.

Currituck Township

In the western pert of the county is Currituck Township with many smell communities, Sladesville, Screnton, Germantown, Ponzer, Burgess' Mill and Makeleyville. Sladesville once had the largest high school in the county with students from all parts of the county enrolling. At present there is only a two teacher elementary school with other pupils transferred to Swan Quarter and Belhaven High Schools.

In 1789 Germantown was the county seat of Hyde and still may be seen the remains of the old court house in this community.

The people made a living in the early days as they do now by logging, fishing, farming and hunting, though much easier now with modern equipment.

Many people have left Currituck Township and filled their places in the world with great success. I will mention only one though there are many more. Ellis Credle is known throughout the United States as a writer of children's books.

Makeleyville was once a great seaport. Near the water stood a large hotel which now stands in Sladesville as the home of Mr. and Mrs. J.M.Credle.

The people in these communities receive their mail from Screnton and Leechville post officies.

Lake Landing Township

Lake Landing Township years ago was on the march for educational facilities for its boys and girls. On April 30, 1952 a tract of land in Wysocking was bought for \$13.50, which was to be used for the site of Rush Academy. The tract of land was large enough for a building and ample play ground. Joseph Swindell wrote into the deed that the building Rush Academy, was also to be used as a place of worship, without any charge whenever it was needed as such. The structure was one of the first meeting places in Hyde County.

The academy at Lake Landing is the elusive one. Legend and facts are so interwoven that one can hardly tell where one begins and the other leaves off. Information in written form has not been found to date.



The old timers agree that this school was started by eight men who were the gentry of Hyde County. It was established as a private school, and is much older than Amity Church which was dedicated in 1853.

It is an impossible feat to learn the names of all the teachers and pupils who attended school at this Academy but it is known that one of the teachers who taught private school in this academy about 60 years ago is still living along with many pupils. The teacher is Mrs. Sallie Swindell of Engelhard and some of the pupils are: Jones Jennette, Liston Silverthorne, Hector Watson, Mrs. Mary Boomer, Mrs. Kate Burrus and Mrs. Maggie Williams. Her salary was one dollar per pupil

per month, with board at four dollars per month.

The Blue Back Speller, Smith's Grammar, geography, history and

arithmetic were studied in the above academies.

Many years ago the Masons in the township started buying shares of the old academy and began to make it into a Lodge Hall. The downstairs is now being used as a Community Building. Reclaiming the old building was one of the first pieces of community work ever done in the county.

Whatever its name was in the beginning, Chapel Hill, Amity, or Indian Ridge Academy, it is one of the showplaces of Hyde County. Located in Historic Lake Landing on highway 264, Old Chapel Hill Academy stands as a beacon marking Hyde's contribution to the educa-

tional progress in North Carolina.

Amity Church is located on Indian Ridge also, and in Lake Landing Township on highway 264. The land was deeded for this church in November 1841 and was registered in the court-house in Book T, page 378 by Green Bridgman on February 9, 1842. The tract of land consisted of one acre and 96 poles and was bought for \$80. Eleven years later the church was dedicated.

The church was built with a balcony to accommodate the slaves who attended church with their white masters. The original balcony is still intact and it gives the building a very unique and



interesting air. The interior is so constructed that the person entering it for the first time feels a kinship with the departed spirits whose lives were spent in service of their fellowman. visitor feels that he has entered a very historical holy shrine, which indeed he has. Amity church is called by Hyde County natives the Mother Church, even though Methodism must have been all of 75 years old in the county when the church was established.

The origin of the name is not known. Prior to its being built, there was the small, worn-out chapel where people worshiped. At that time there was a grove of trees in the turn of the road and one had to drive his horses around it in order to reach the church. grove belonged to David Miller Carter I, a pious Methodist who was perhaps a leader in the Chapel prior to Amity and of the new Church afterwards. He was the grandfather of David Miller Carter, the distinguished lawyer of Raleigh who was one of the greatest men of his day.

Ink Bottle House

The Ink Bottle House was built by Dr. William Sparrow more than a century ago after a previous home had been destroyed by a hurricane. He claimed that the eight sides would be a protection against strong winds during storms, which

are common to this area.

The doctor used no posts at all in the building except for the doors and windows. The house is put together with overlapping timbers such as a rail fence is built. The garret has framing in it larger than the sills used in modern houses, and all are put together with wooden pegs. When this was done, Dr. Sparrow had the house plastered inside and outside. How long the outside plaster last-



ed is a moot question. Some of it can be seen today in between the old sypress shingles which replace it. The inside plaster was painted pink.

The huge octagonal shimney, running through the dead center, accommodates four different fireplaces in four rooms. There are two halls, one upstairs and one downstairs on the south-west side of the building.

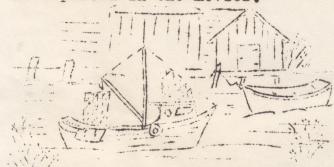
This is another showplace on Route 264 in Lake Landing.

Engelhard

Sprawled out for a mile along the upper reaches of Far Creek, a half mile deep on either side, this growing community is fast becoming one of the most important shipping ports and trade centers on Pamlico Sound. As the result of the iniative of local leaders and businessmen in getting a deep channel and hardsurfaced road, it has grown from a small village to the largest town in Hyde County in a decade and a half.

The main street follows very nearly the crooked wagon trail that lead from Mattemuskeet Lake to Waupopin Creek 100 years ago. But today, with new permanant buildings going up and large frame stores along both sides, it has the appearance of a booming wildwest town

as depicted in the movies.



The community is the headquarters for hundreds of shrimping boats in season and has recently been publicized as the "Shrimp capital of the world". But foremost among its industries are fishing, oystering and farm produce. Some seafoods and cegetables are canned here. It is the headquarters of a \$2,500,000 banking business with branches in Swan Quar-

ter and Columbia; the home of a successful power company boasting 150 miles of lines; a daily bus transportation company serving two counties; an extensive farm produce business, handling most of the crops in Hyde County; and several unusually successful merchantile ousinesses. There are also several dairies which have been added in recent years.

The community is the home of a large consolidated high school. Among other recent forward steps was the construction of a two

story Town Hall building.

Today the community talks of new industries, an airport, larger tourist accommodations, residential housing and other projects.

While Engelhard is relatively a new town, it is located in an old community, dating back to colonial times. It was known as Far Creek until the government established a post office in the village following the Civil War. It was named Engelhard at the insistance of I. B. Watson, leading citizen, who wanted to honor a friend by the name of Maj. Engelhard of Wilmington. It is the only town in the United States by that name, according to the listing of post offifies in the federal directory.

Legend of Mattamuskeet Apple

It is generally known that the mattamuskeet apple was originally found in Wapoppin by the first settlers. Legend has it that the seed was found in the gizzerd of a wild goose and that the Indians planted the seed and thus began the culture of a fruit that has been famous in Hyde County for many, many years.

Swan Quarter Township

The town of Swan Quarter was settled in 1812 and named for the thousands of swans that used the bay as a winter haven. The population of the village at present is about 271 and the entire Swan Quarter Township about 2000. It has been the county seat since county seat. In 1789 it was moved from Woodstock to Germantown when the present county seat, Swan Quarter was designated. The present courthouse was completed in 1854, with re-modeling in 1878, second floor.

The most interesting building in Swan Quarter other than the courthouse is the methodist church which is spoken of as The Church Moved by the Hand of God. Following is an article written by Kate Smith and appearing in the Coronet Magazine November 1952.



THE CHURCH GOD MOVED

For months, the people of Swan Quarter, North Carolina, raised funds for a new Methodist church. Money was scarce that year of 1876 and so the people appealed to a rich landowner to donate a choice lot.

"I can't help you," he snapped. "I have plans for that land." Discouraged, the people went away. They acquired land on a back street, and there they built a modest wooden church that stood on brick pilings.

On the night of the dedication, a storm broke. Howling winds and angry tides whipped the coastal village. Through the long night, the storm's fury mounted. By morning, waters of the bay flooded the streets.

At last the winds abated, but the turbulent waters still swirled through Swanquerter's streets. Suddenly a strange thing occurred. The new church shuddered, then floated from its spindly brick pilings. Sluggishly it moved down the street, gaining speed as it drifted. At an intersection, it paused in the churning flood waters, then veered sharply, continuing its voyage

toward the heart of the village.

Moments later it slowly settled- on the very plot of land which

the rich man had refused to donate to the congregation!

Next morning, the first person to arrive at the office of the town's Registrar of Deeds was the rich man himself. Quickly he deeded the property to the Methodist Church, without cost.

"I had plans for that land," he said smiling, "but it appears

that God had His, too!"

Confederates Engaged In Battle Near Swan Quarter On Main Highway

During the period just prior to the Civil War, the rich lands of Hyde County, owing to cheap labor, became very valuable. Judge John R. Donnell owned a farm of six thousand acres three thousand of which were cultivated by two hundred to three hundred slaves.

The great Civil strife came on in 1860. There was one battle fought in Hyde County in 1863, between the Confederates and Federal troops, on the main thoroughfare from Swan Quarter to Lake Mattamuskert, and within one and a half miles of Swan Quarter. The Confederates attacked the Federals from ambush. As there is no written record of this battle I will quote from a letter written by L. S. Dickey of Chicago, Illinois: who was in a raid to the county a few days after the fight: "I was not along with the ambushed party. They belonged to the 3rd New York Calvary Company F and were commanded by Captain Collier Richardson. They debarked at Rose Bay Bridge."

In his report the Captain says: "The crossings of the road were destroyed by the negroes under orders of one Henry Credle, whom they took to New Bern as a prisoner. About three miles from Fairfield they found some of the enemy, and when they arrived there the place was nearly deserted. I then moved on and drove in mounted pickets during the whole march from Lake Landing to within one and a half miles of Swan Quarter, when I attacked from the swamp on the right of the wood by about eighty Rangers, and ordered to surrender. A deep canal eight feet wide ran between me and the attacking party. As my cadetes were passing, the Rangers fired

one shot.

"Lieutenant Benson immediately charged the first platoon of cavalry and received a volley killing three of my men and wounding the Lieutenant and several others. Six horses were killed and many wounded. I ordered the infantry to go deeply into the woods as skirmishers and ordered Lieutenant Burke to give the enemy a few rounds of canister. Here Lieut. Burke was wounded. The enemy were dispersed and fled. This happened Wednesday, March 4, 1863. The following week March 8th, 9th, 10th, 11th and 12th the expedition followed, marched around the Lake. L. S. Dickey was in command of this expedition, and was the only one that came to Hyde.

Fairfield Township

Fairfield is located on the northern side of Lake Mattamuskeet. It is difficult to believe that this town, less than forty years ago, was a thriving seaport town. In 1849 to connect the town with Alligator River and thence with the Albemarle Sound, a group of men had the Fairfield Canal dug with slave labor. Boats could safely enter this canal. Steamboats plied often up and down the canal. Farm products from all parts of Hyde County were traded in Norfolk, Baltimore, and elsewhere. Today the farmer sells his produce by means of highway transportation.

Signs of slave life may still be seen in the community. There is a slave jail on the farm of A. L. Cuthrell. There are dents in the front door of Mrs. Jennie Midyette's home caused by Yankees trying to enter the home. The old home of Thomas Mann has many

signs of Plantation life.

Fairfield has as many cultural opportunities as the average village. Its population of between three and four hundred supports four churches, a school, a cemetary, a theatre, a community building, and three tourist homes.

Doctors, lawyers, senators, West Point graduates have been

reared here.

Fairfield has long been known as a very aristocratic part of the county and the hospitality of the people can't be surpassed.

Today fishing and hunting under Federal regulations and supervision are carried on and an abundance of geese, ducks, and fresh water fish are to be had. Hunters and fisherman from all sections of the nation come here to enjoy the bounties of the refuge. It is a veritable "Sportsmen's Paradise."

Ocracoke Island

One of the most picturesque villages along the Outer Banks, Ocracoke is built around Silver Lake. The village of Ocracoke and its island, stretching a narrow ribbon of sand between Pamlico Sound and the Atlantic Ocean is a shrimping and fishing center, and a favorite resort for sportsmen and those who are attracted by the simple life. The United States Coast Guard stands ready to help in time of need the many fishing boats and trowlers that come into the island harbor. There are now about six hundred inhabitants of Ocracoke. This population makes Ocracoke and Engelhard the largest towns in Hyde County.

But it is difficult to realize that as long as shallow-draft vessels plied the seas, Ocracoke Inlet was the commercial key to North Carolina. As early as 1715 the Colonial Assembly realized the value of Ocracoke Inlet for trade and passed an act for settling and maintaining pilots on Ocracoke Island. These were the first

permanent settlers of Ocracoke of which there is record.

Much has been written of the pirate Blackbeard. His capture in 1717 near Ocracoke Inlet freed the colonies from a real menace to

their shipping.

In 1747 the Spaniards made depredations on the Island, killing several people and destroying property. The Assembly passed an act appropriating funds for erecting two large forts, ane at Cape Fear and the other at Ocracoke. When in 1750 five merchantile Spanish vessels were cast ashore in the vicinity of Ocracoke the islanders had an opportunity to see revenge when they were approached for the loan of small sloops to salvage the cargoes.

It was not until 1777 that a fort was finally built at Ocracoke. By this time shipping through the inlet had become extensive and was of great importance to the Thirteen Colonies since the British crusiers had closed the Cape Fear and Chesapeake Bay and were

keeping rather close watch at Beaufort harbor.

The British did not realize the importance of Ocracoke Inlet in fighting the early part of the Revolution. It was considered too small and insignificant to require a blockade. The pilot who lived on the island were loyal patriots to the cause of the Colonists and were a great help in bringing in ships favorable to the States and leaving stranded outside the bar those favorable to England.

When the British did seek to close the channel through the inlet with crusiers the blockade was not effective. The man vessels continued to slip in with needed supplies, and privateers were

constantly going out to prey on British commerce.

With the end of the Revolution hostilities ceased. As commerce of the young United States developed more activity came to Ocracoke Inlet and in 1789 an act was passed providing for the erection of a lighthouse. The first structure was built on Shell Castle Rock, and the present picturesque tower was built in 1823. It is one of the oldest original towers still in use upon the eastern seaboard.

During the days of sailing vessels, Ocracoke Inlet saw much trade. The warehouse and docks at Pourtsmouth and Shell Castle Rock did a thriving business until in 1810 a terrific storm destroyed them. Then came days of steam-powered vessels and changes in

navigability of the inlet.

Ocracoke Today --- Ocracoke is the land of wild pony penning. About one hundred of them roam the fourteen-mile length of the island. Their origin has been forgotten. They are hardy and easily domesticated and are allowed to roam wild as cattle were in the West, with an annual roundup--penning on July Fourth, when the owners of branded animals mark the spring's colt crop. Fresh water lies eighteen inches under the surface of the Banks and the ponies know the trick of digging their own wells with their hoofs.

The houses are built along winding streets of sand, overhung by water oaks and yaupon. It supports two churches, a school, a recreation center, theater, hotel, many cottages and tourist homes,

but no doctor, no police, and no jails.

Transportation to Ocracoke today is by daily mailboat from Atlantic, by mailboat and car from Hatteras, weekly freight boat from Washington and by charter plane from Manteo.

Schools

The people of the county have always shown much concern about the education of their boys and girls. In the early days the well-to-do citizens employed private teachers for their children and some of the children of neighbors came in; other children were sent to schools in adjoining counties.

In the schools which were first established English Classics,

Latin, Greek and surveying were taught.

The first high school was established in 1903. It is said that Hyde sends more boys and girls to college in proportion. than any

other county in the state.

Jos. M. Watson was elected the first superintendent of schools and served in that capacity until his death in 1904, with the exception of four years the Populist were in power. At no time did his salary exceed three hundred dollars per year. Those who followed him are: Stewart Beckwith, Willie Credle, Joyner, Guy Guthrie, P.G.Gallop and N.W.Shelton who has been serving since 1941.

There are three white high schools and two two-teacher elementary schools with an enrollment of 482 in the elementary grades and 177 in high school making a total of 659 for the

county.

County Today

Communities include Swan Quarter, county seat, Engelhard, Ocracoke, Middletown, Fairfield, Scranton, Sladesville, New Holland, Makeleyville, Lake Comfort, Wysocking, Gulrock, Lake Landing, and Ponzer.

There are eight post officies: Scranton, Swan Quarter, New Holland, Lake Landing, Engelhard, Middletown, Gulrock, and Fairfield.

Rainfall (inches) -	51.11	
Noon annual tempera	ature 62.0	
Growing season Iday	75) 263	
Corn (1949 Val.) -	\$513,590	
Sovbeans (1949 Vel	.)\$446,250	
Livestock and Live.		
stock Products so	old (1949 Val.) \$270,598	
Total Land Area (a)	cres) 405,760	
Forest Area (acres)	295,000	
Population (1850) .	7,636	
Population (1950) .	6,479	
Total Tax Valuation	n (1954)\$8,336,27	6
Tax Rate (1954)	91.08	

Chief crops (cash) are corn, soybeans and livestock. Sweet potatoes, oats, cotton, lespedeza (for feed) and some tobacco are grown.

Principal species of trees are loblolly pine, gum and cypress.

Having come through a history of nearly two and a half centuries, Hyde has gradually made a place for herself near the front among the eastern counties of North Carolina.

Many years ago when travel was mostly by boat a methodist minister by the name of D.C.Johnson upon his first trip to Hyde and Mattamuskeet charge said, "Hyde County reminds me of Heaven." When asked why, he said, "It is hard to get to but wonderful when you get here."



HYDE COUNTY AS FOUND BY STUDENTS AND TEACHERS Of The ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS

Drawings By
Mrs. Juanita Miller

Compiled By
Mrs. Ada Harris, Mrs. Juanita Miller
Bettie Swindell

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