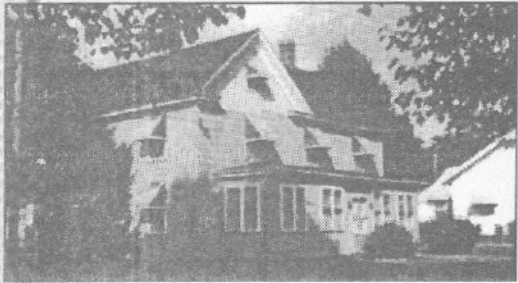


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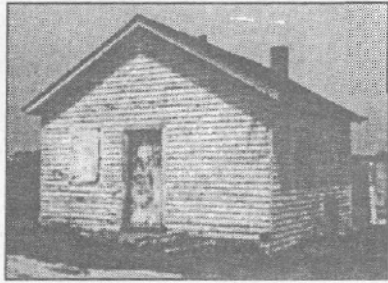
WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 7, 1998

EASTERN SHORE NEWS

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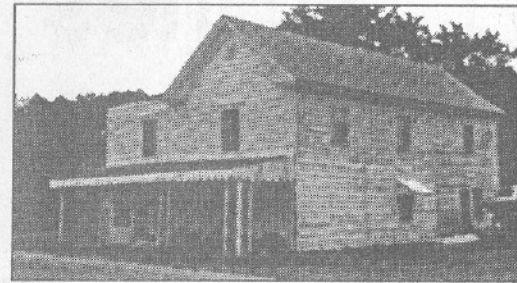
Accomac's earliest school (1821) is part of this house at 23625 Front Street.



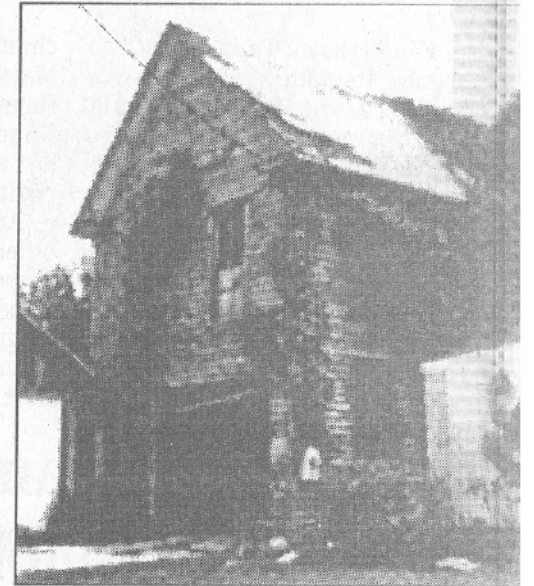
Townsend School (black), 29048 Arlington Road.



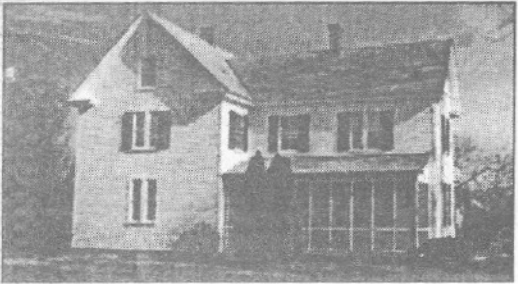
The Agriculture Building of Temperanceville High School, erected 1921.



Sanford School (c. 1897)



Erected 1908, used until 1949, the old Saxis School still stands near the schoolyard.



Drummondtown Academy (1901), 23227 Lilliston Avenue, Accomac.



Assawoman School (1889), the only "one-room schoolhouse" on Virginia's Eastern Shore still at its original site.



Bridgetown Academy, 9851 Church Neck Road.



Bridgetown School (black), 10397 Bayside Road.



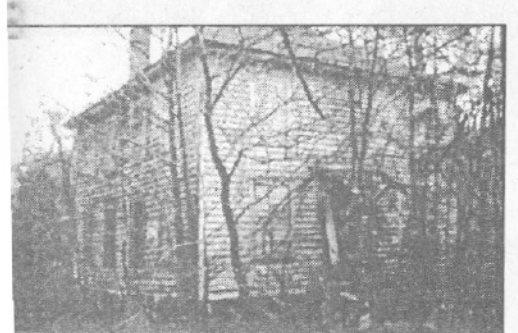
Second public school of Cape Charles (1890-1912), on Monroe Avenue.



Chesconessex School (1898?) since 1942 a part of Leatherbury United Methodist Church.



The "Down-the-island" School (1884?), 3842 Ridge Road.



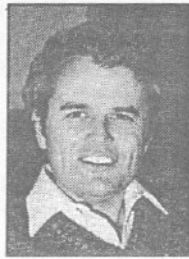
Craddockville School (1882?) originally for whites, later for blacks.



Daugherty School, now a real estate office in Accomac.

CHRONICLES

KIRK MARINER



A new school opens, an old school is forced to close. When it happened again in Accomack County this fall, it was simply the latest chapter in a cycle that has been going on for over a century.

The landscape of the Eastern Shore is dotted with buildings that once were schools, more than sixty of them, far more than the number of school buildings presently in use. Many of them - Capeville, Cheriton, Cape Charles, Birdsnest, Hare Valley, Exmore-Willis Wharf, Belle Haven, Cashville, Temperanceville, Saxis, and Greenbackville - are readily identifiable as schools. Some, like Locustville Academy (1859), are well-known; others have to be sought out, like the old black school at Exmore (C. 1925), which is hidden away behind other buildings at 11147 Occohannock Neck Road. A number of old school buildings are owned by churches, and are used as "church halls" or community centers - the old black schools at Burtons, Mount Nebo, White Rabbit, Boston, and Daugherty; the old high schools at Painter and Pungoteague; and the only Catholic parochial school on the Eastern Shore, on Tazewell Avenue in Cape Charles. The Macedonia School at 27240 Nelsonia church, and Onancock's old black school, still recognizable as such at 6 Boundary Street, houses a church. While at Assawoman the church hall of the Methodist church is the old public school of 1889, the only "one-room schoolhouse" on the Eastern Shore still standing on its original site.

All these still look like schools; many others, usually older and smaller, no longer easily betray their original purpose. Most of them stand disguised as houses. The oldest school in Accomac (1821) stands completely surrounded by and incorporated into the house at 23625 Front Street. In the same town at 23227 Lilliston Avenue stands the private Drummondtown Academy (1901), also a home, largely unaltered from its days as a school. Hacks Neck has two homes that were originally school buildings, at 12492 Hacks Neck Road (the white school) and 13458 Hacks Neck Road (the black school), as does Bridgetown, at 10397 Bayside Road (the old black school built in 1896) and 9851 Church Neck Road (the private Chesapeake Academy). At 5119 Plantation Drive, off Route 13 below the new Kiptopeake Elementary School, stands a home that served from 1914 to 1920 as the Seaview School for whites, and then from 1923 to 1946 as the Dalbys School for blacks.

There are more than a dozen other school buildings that now function as

residences in the two counties: Birdsnest: 9181 Birdsnest Drive (1921-1978) Cape Charles: 635-637 Monroe Avenue (the second public school, 1890-1912)

Cattail Neck: 13619 Cattail Road (the Shiloh School, 1884?-1906)

Chincoteague: 3482 Ridge Road (the "Down-the-island" School, 1884?-1917)

Eastville: 15566 James Circle (the black school, 1888?-1953)

Fairview School: Brier Court (black school, 1919-1947)

Finney's Gate School: 17187 Cashville Road (white school, 1875-1921)

Hallwood: 11534 Corbin Street (the first public school, 1884-1910)

Mearsville: 14050 Cattail Road (first public school, 1887-1910; also once served as a store)

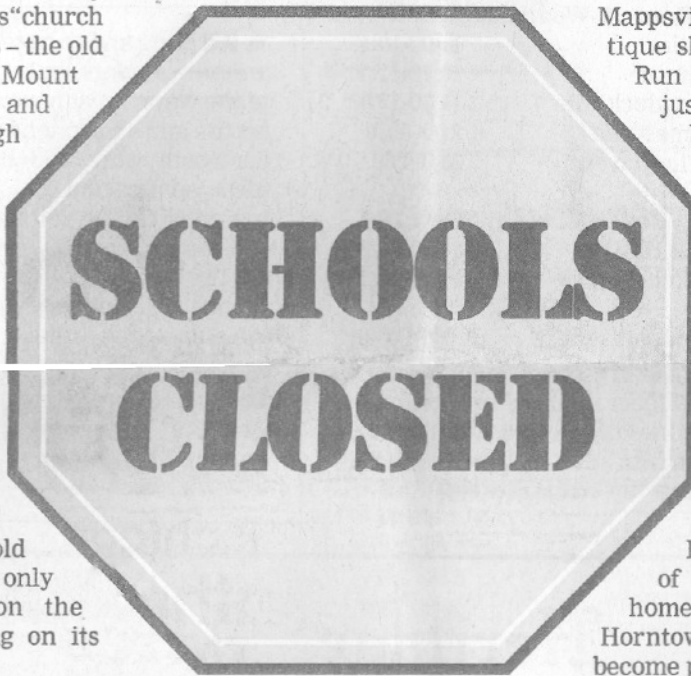
Metompkin: 27314 Mason Farm Lane (black school, 1917?-1954)

New Church: 30560 Depot Street (second public school, 1892-1913)

Onancock: 8 Lee Street (part of the first high school, 1890-1921)

Parksley: 23459 Leslie Trent Road (the Whitesville School, 1925-1964)

Trower: 32460 Bradford's Neck Road (black school, 1938-1964).



In addition, two Eastern Shore homes were originally dormitories for private schools: 5138 Mount Hebron Drive in Chesapeake (Tidewater Institute), and 28507 Bobtown Road in Bobtown (Margaret Academy). The small house that stands behind 26069 Saxis Road has served as a school three different times at three different locations. Built in 1898 as Accomack Academy, a private white school, it was moved in 1904 to serve as the Jenkins Bridge public school (white); then about 1925 it was moved again and became the St. John's School (black), which closed in 1957. It was moved to its present (fourth) site in 1996.

Not all the old school buildings are now homes. The Daugherty schoolhouse is a real estate office at 23279 Courthouse Road in Accomack. Sanford's old school (c.1900) is now used for storage, but it once served as a store. Some schools survive as barns or farm buildings: the old Saxis school (1908) behind the

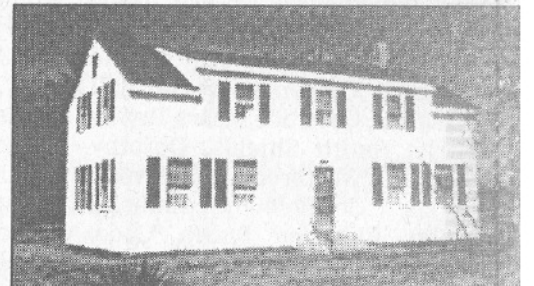
post office; the black Townsend School (c.1890) behind 29048 Arlington Road; the Upshur's Neck School (c.1890) on Frank Warren Lane. The home economics "cottage" (1928) of Temperanceville High, and later Atlantic High, was moved in 1980 to Nassawadox, where it became the nucleus of the hospital's dialysis unit.

Two old schools are now part of church buildings. The back part of Leatherbury United Methodist Church in Chesconessex was originally the public school built across the street in 1912, moved and incorporated into the church in 1942. The back part of Melfa United Methodist Church is part of the old public school moved to this site in 1945.

There are so many old school buildings on the Eastern Shore that a ride up Route 13 can, for those who know where to look, provide a glimpse of no fewer than eleven of them. Visible from Route 13 (not including those that still function in some educational capacity) are Cheriton School (1922); the Reidtown School (1919) at 7065 Bell Lane south of Machipongo; Birdsnest School (1921); Painter School (1910); Accomack School (1932); and the old Mappsville School (1882), now an antique shop at the corner of Turkey Run Road and Rt. 13. In addition, just south of Oak Hall are two buildings that were part of the Atlantic High School complex: 9085 Jerusalem Road, and 8020 Lankford Highway, now the mental health center. In Oak Hall itself stands two homes which were originally there, the older part (c.1893) at 7210 Lankford Highway, the newer part (1910) behind the church at 30227 Downings Road. Finally at 30603 Energy Drive, on the southern edge of New Church, is visible a home that was originally the old Horntown School (1916), moved to become part of the New Church High School in 1927.

Several schools are simply abandoned, and fast going to ruin. Next to the local dump site in Craddockville stands an old building (c. 1882) which was originally a white school, later a black school. The Jamesville School at 5036 Saltworks Road was built for blacks in 1937 by the Works Projects Administration with lumber salvaged from the abandoned Wardtown School for whites, and was itself abandoned in 1953. The black school at Pungoteague (30114 Bobtown Road) closed in 1964, and barely stands. The larger part of Melfa's old school (c. 1908) stands empty and covered with vines behind 29298 Racetrack Road. And in a grove of trees at the edge of a field half a mile below Mappsburg stands Painter's first school building, the Harrison's Lane School, erected in town about 1890, now a ruin that seems destined to disappear altogether in the near future.

They are all around us, once well known, still deserving of more notice than we give them today.



Reidtown School (1919-1939), on Bell Lane south of Machipongo.



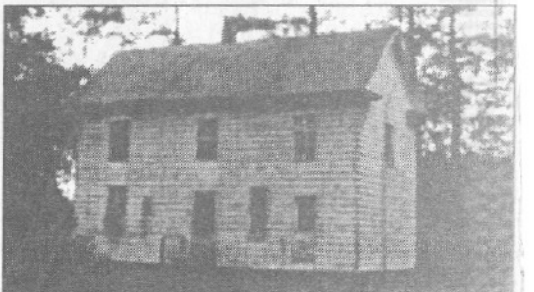
The newer part of the old Oak Hall School (1910).



The Harrison's Lane School.



Part of the old Fair Oaks/Melfa School is now attached to the Methodist Church.



The first Mearsville School, later a store, now a home.



The oldest part of the old Oak Hall School (c.1893), on Route 13.



Finney's Gate School, now a home at 17187 Cashville Road.



First public school of Hallwood (1884), now at 11534 Corbin Road.



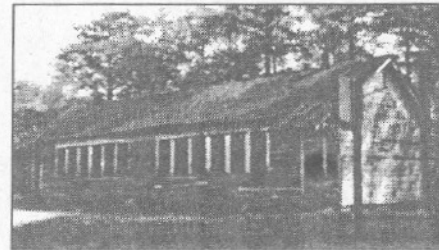
Locustville Academy (1859), best preserved of the Shore's old schools.



New Church's second public school, 1892-1913.



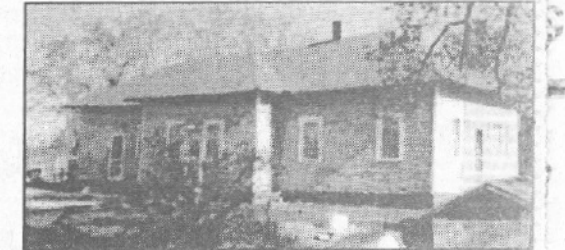
Hack's Neck School (white), 12492 Hacks Neck Road.



Jamesville School (1937).



The Mappsville School, now on Route 13, closed in the 1920s.



This home on Energy Drive in New Church was erected as the Horntown School in 1916.