

WASHINGTON-LEE HIGH SCHOOL THE EARLY YEARS: 1924-1939

This study represents a compilation of information from the research of the late Mrs. Frances C. Bell, Deborah Welsh, and Sally Loving, and the personal recollections of Samuel P. Vanderslice, Jr., and Elizabeth Cannon Kimball, as well as research by the latter. Mrs. Bell and Miss Loving were members of the original faculty at Washington-Lee, Mrs. Bell retiring in 1956 and Miss Loving in 1962. Mrs. Bell served as associate principal for 20 years of her teaching career at W-L. Deborah Welsh is her granddaughter. Mr. Vanderslice was the first principal of W-L and taught mathematics during the 1924-25 school year. Elizabeth Cannon Kimball (as Betsy Cannon) was in the first graduating class to complete the full six-year junior-senior high school course at W-L, the class of 1931.

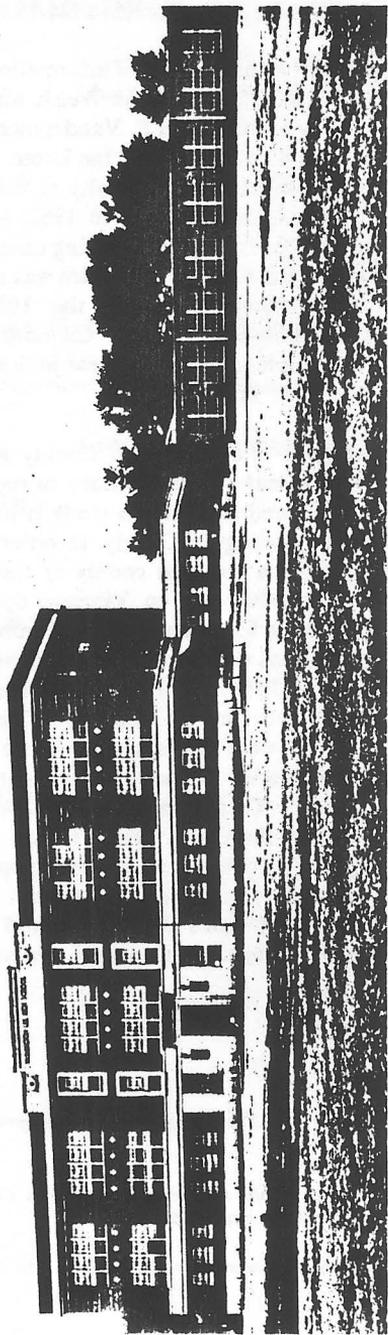
The historical background of Arlington County as a political entity is sufficiently well known to make it unnecessary to recapitulate it here. The important fact from the standpoint of this study is that in 1920 Alexandria County was redesignated Arlington County, in order to end the confusion caused by the existence of a city and county of the same name. ¹

The history of public education in Virginia dates from 1770, when Thomas Jefferson offered the first plan for state administration of education. His plan was unsuccessful, as were several subsequent attempts to establish universal public education. Prior to 1870 no firm record can be found of any public school that was in operation in Alexandria County.² The methods of education in the County were the same as those for the majority of Virginians: private governesses or tutors, grammar schools, community schools, and dame schools. These were all tuition schools. We know that several of these existed in the County prior to the advent of free public education in 1870. In this year three public schools opened in the Arlington District of the Alexandria County school system, Columbia School in Arlington, Walker School at Ball's Crossroads, and Arlington School for Negroes at Freedmen's Village.³ The school system of the County was

¹ Arlington County School Board, *The Arlington Story*. Arlington County Public Schools, 3d ed., 1968, p. 54.

² Fletcher Kemp, *History of Public Education in Arlington County, Virginia, 1870-1936*. Master's Thesis, American University, 1936, p. 27.

³ Dorothy E. Lee, *A History of Arlington County, Virginia*. The Dietz Press, Inc., Richmond, Va., 1946, pp. 124-127.



Washington-Lee High School, Arlington, Virginia 1925

divided into three districts: Arlington, Jefferson, and Washington, whose boundaries corresponded to those of the political subdivisions, known as magisterial districts, with the same names.⁴ Public schools also were established in the other districts. Until 1917 there were only 12 schools in the area that was to become Arlington County, none of which went beyond the eighth grade. Children were sent to private schools or to the Washington public schools if they wanted a high school education. The first public high school work began with thirty pupils and two teachers in a school called the Mount Vernon school in 1917.⁵ It was evident that another high school was badly needed and in September 1919 George Mason High School was opened in the Jefferson District of the County, with thirty-nine pupils and four teachers.⁶

Meanwhile, Fletcher Kemp had come to the County as Superintendent of Schools and was beginning a vigorous campaign to improve the school system. He wanted to upgrade the existing elementary schools and to establish a high school in a central location. Both the Mount Vernon and George Mason High Schools were in the extreme southern end of the County.) In 1919, a committee was set up to study the County's needs in the area of public education. "As most of the school buildings failed to meet standard requirements, a survey of the school system was begun in 1920 with a view to determining the need for additional school buildings. The survey also covered equipment needed, reorganization of the course of study, and extension of facilities to include high school work. As a result, a building plan was adopted, designed to meet the needs of the county for approximately ten years, based on the county's rate of growth at that time. A revised curriculum was prepared and the schools reorganized on a basis of six years of elementary work, three years of junior, and three years of senior high school. It was at this time also that the trimester promotion plan was adopted."⁷

Apparently, citizen opposition to construction of a new high school was very strong. Most of the county population (then about 20,000) worked in Washington and had access to the District of Columbia schools, tuition-free; hence they saw no need for a high school to be constructed at that time. However, through the efforts of Superintendent Kemp and his staff and other like-minded county citizens, enough voters were persuaded of the need for a

⁴ C. B. Rose, Jr.: "Public Schools in Arlington District of Alexandria County, Virginia, 1870-1905." *The Arlington Historical Magazine*, Vol. 3, No. 1 (1965).

⁵ Arlington County School Board, *op. cit.*, p. 116.

⁶ Kemp, *op. cit.*, p. 49.

⁷ Lee, *op. cit.*, p. 132.

new high school to carry the day for the school bonds in the 1922 election. The total amount of the school bonds, which covered the construction of W-L and 14 other school buildings, was \$674,000.⁸ Issuing bonds to finance the construction of schools was something new in the State of Virginia, and in order to establish the legality of this procedure, a friendly suit was filed. The Court eventually ruled in favor of the bonds, but as a result of the delay caused by the lengthy legal proceedings, construction of the high school was postponed for two years. In the meantime a site had been selected on the Cruit estate (now Lyon Village), in the center of county population. Before the suit could be settled and the funds released, a clever realtor bought the entire tract and subdivided it into building lots, so that the price rose beyond the amount available for the purpose.⁹ An alternate site was chosen, the Douglas property, which was within the budget (at a cost of \$2,300 an acre for the 8-acre tract¹⁰), but less desirable from the standpoint of location, since it was on the western fringe of the County's populated area. Miss Loving recalls, "It has been said that Washington-Lee was built in North Arlington on a spot equally difficult to reach from all points. It was indeed 'out in the country.' There were no paved roads, no sidewalks, and very few houses in or near the area."¹¹ Superintendent Kemp had brought S.P. Vanderslice, Jr., to Arlington in 1921 to be principal of the new high school, which he was confident would be built in the near future. Since construction was delayed by the court suit on the bonds, Mr. Vanderslice accepted the position of principal of George Mason High School (as well as of Mt. Vernon Elementary School), and served in that capacity for a year. Discouraged by the long-drawn-out litigation, he returned to Norfolk, where he served as assistant principal of Blair High School for two years.¹² At long last the suit was settled and bids were accepted for the construction of the school. At the May 30, 1924, School Board meeting the bids were opened. "After careful consideration the contract was awarded to the J.C. Curtis [Company] for the sum of \$179,000 for the general construction of the building, and for the heating, ventilating, and sanitary equipment to the American Heating and Ventilating Company for the sum of \$21,339."¹³ Later that summer the first teachers for the new school were appointed by the board:¹⁴

⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 133.

⁹ Frances C. Bell, "Recollections", 1959.

¹⁰ Minutes of the Arlington County School Board, Feb. 29, 1924, Meeting, pp. 72, 73.

¹¹ Sally Loving, "Recollections," 1973.

¹² Interview with S.P. Vanderslice, Jr., principal of Washington-Lee High School, 1924-1937, January 31, 1974.

¹³ Minutes, ACSB, May 30, 1924, meeting, pp. 86-87.

¹⁴ Minutes, ACSB, July 25, 1924, meeting, p. 97

<u>Teacher</u>	<u>Salary</u>
S.P. Vanderslice, Jr.	\$2,880
Mrs. Frances C. Bell	1,700
Clifton L. Moore	1,400
S.B. Tue	1,400
Edgar Douglas	1,350
Mabel Allen	1,350
Sally Loving	1,350

Mrs. Bell recalled the first year of operation at two temporary sites, pending completion of the new building: "To avoid further delay, on September 24 [1924] the school now known as Washington-Lee was organized and operated in two different locations. The children on the north (Washington District) side of Lee Highway were housed in the old Cherrydale School building. The ones in the Arlington District were on a half-day basis and were housed in the Ballston School (later Hogate's¹⁵) and the two rooms with attic now remodeled to a finance corporation."¹⁶ The senior author [Mrs. Bell] recalled vividly the attic because she was "fortunate enough" to teach there in the afternoon after having taught, along with the principal and two other teachers, in a corner of the Cherrydale auditorim. "The principal and I walked from Cherrydale to the Ballston location as there was no other transportation and ate lunch on the way. It was a severe winter and ice and snow were not conducive to easy going. However, I did have the rare experience of being able to use the sleet and rain which came through the roof of the attic, putting my flowers on the desk and having them cared for by the gentle sleet of Heaven! Those were pioneer days in reality. In the spring the attic was so hot that I took my classes out under the trees! The principal and I had the pleasure of seeing W-L going up day by day as we walked along what is now Quincy Street."¹⁷

Miss Loving recalls that in the Cherrydale auditorium three classes were being conducted at the same time for part of the day, one in science, one in Spanish, and her class in home economics—an early example, not through choice but harsh necessity, of today's open classroom method of teaching.

¹⁵ Hogate's Restaurant has since been replaced by an office building. Its location was the northwest corner of Wilson Boulevard and North Quincy Street.

¹⁶ This building was on the northeast corner of Wilson Boulevard and Glebe Road, where the Northern Virginia Savings and Loan building is now located.

¹⁷ Bell, *op. cit.*

The name "Washington-Lee High School" was approved by the School Board at the meeting of July 31, 1925,¹⁸ but was not actually used until the new building was opened in October 1925. During the 1924-25 school year the school was referred to as the central high school.¹⁹ The cornerstone for the new building was laid in the fall of 1924 and is still visible to the right of the front door on 13th Street. However, if current plans for remodeling are carried out, the cornerstone may be moved to another part of the building.

Finally, on October 6, 1925, the new Washington-Lee High School building opened its doors. It housed 18 classrooms, 2 laboratories, a gymnasium, a cafeteria, an auditorium, and a library, and there was an additional building for shop work.²⁰ This was the first junior high school in the State of Virginia.²¹ About 600 students were enrolled in W-L and there were 22 teachers when school opened in the new building in October, 1925.²² Mr. Vanderslice was the principal and Mrs. Geneva Thomas the assistant principal. Opening day found teachers and students alike standing in classrooms because chairs and desks had not yet arrived, and it was two more weeks before they were delivered.²³ In June, 1926, the senior class consisted of one person—Bailey Byars—and because the school had not yet been accredited, he received his diploma from George Mason High School. W-L received accreditation during the 1926-27 school year.²⁴

In spite of the pessimists, W-L could be reached fairly easily by either bus or trolley from most sections of the County, with the exception of the west end of South Arlington. Concerned parents persuaded Bob May to allow one of his Columbia Pike Line busses to be operated as a school bus for South Arlington pupils. (He had founded the bus line in June, 1921, with one bus, which he drove from his home in Barcroft down Columbia Pike to Washington and back by the same route.) He had enlarged his "fleet" of buses by 1925 and that year turned over his first bus, an old model, to serve as the W-L school bus. It had a seating capacity of about 25 and resembled a large, dark red pumpkin. A W-L student, John DeLashmutt, Class of 1928, was the first bus driver. In September, 1928, Julian Nelson, a senior, became the driver of a newer, larger May school bus. Riders of the original bus recall that if Courthouse Hill was icy, the bus would stop at the foot of the hill, the riders would disembark and walk up the hill, while the driver slowly maneuvered the empty bus to the top. One memorable day, as the bus lumbered up Glebe Road, the right front wheel fell off and preceded the

¹⁸ Minutes, ACSB, July 31, 1925, meeting, p. 159.

¹⁹ Washington-Lee was never named "Central High School," although this myth has been perpetuated over the years. In the planning stages it was referred as *the* central high school (meaning centrally located) for Arlington County.

²⁰ Kemp, *op. cit.*, p. 50.

²¹ Arlington County School Board, *op. cit.*, p. 116.

²² Kemp, *op. cit.*, p. 50.

²³ Warren M. Miller, *Arlington Daily Sun*, June 29, 1956, p.12.

²⁴ Vanderslice interview, Jan. 31, 1974.



1950 — Shows first ANNUAL and last three on original faculty of W.L. to leave.
Sally Loving Frances Bell Coralie Greenaway

careening bus up the road for several yards before the startled driver brought the lurching vehicle to a halt. Fortunately, no one was hurt and for some time the incident provided a lively topic of conversation. After 1929 school buses were piloted by regular paid drivers.²⁵

In 1927 the school administration decided to raise money for a curtain for the W-L auditorium. Up to this time the only barrier between the auditorium and the gymnasium was a set of folding wooden doors. The Arlington County School Federation published a cookbook, compiled under the guidance of Sally Loving and Coralie Greenaway, W-L's domestic science teachers.²⁶ Students and their parents submitted recipes and advertising space was sold to local merchants. The money obtained from the ads and from selling the cookbooks at 60¢ each, enabled the school administration to purchase a handsome maroon plush curtain with gold fringe, which served the school for many years.²⁷

In reviewing the yearbooks it appears that during the period covered by this study W-L's best years from the standpoint of inter-high school athletic competition were the early years, notably for the football teams. Except for the 1928 season, all these teams were very successful. The greatest achievement for any of the school's teams came in 1929, when W-L played Big Stone Gap for the State football championship. The final score was 12 to 12 and both teams were declared State champions. Also during the 1926-1930 period W-L produced many great athletes, some named to all-state teams, some setting records in track and field events, and some going on to outstanding careers in college and professional athletics. The first W-L graduate to play professional baseball was George McQuinn, Class of 1929, who was a member of the 1944 pennant-winning St. Louis Browns and later helped the New York Yankees win the World Series in 1947 and 1949.²⁸ Harry J. Chase, Class of 1931, played for Columbia University in the Rose Bowl in 1933, and J. Elwood Clements, Class of 1932, played in the Orange Bowl for Catholic University in 1936.²⁹

The Washington-Lee Cadet Corps was organized in January, 1927, under the auspices of Robert Ludwig, faculty advisor, and 1st Lt. G. B. Hudson, USA, drill instructor. Active drills began late that winter and Edwin Sherwood was the first captain and commanding officer. Andrew H. Cannon was given credit for his assistance in selecting and ordering the cadet uniforms.³⁰ The first year there was one company of cadets.³¹ The following

25 Elizabeth Cannon Kimball, "Recollections", and interview with Julian Nelson, February 8, 1974.

26 A copy of this cookbook is in the files of the Arlington Historical Society.

27 Kimball, "Recollections."

28 Interview with Mrs. George McQuinn, January 28, 1974.

29 Interview with Mrs. J. Elwood Clements, February 10, 1974.

30 WLHS *The Virginian*, 1927, p. 117.

31 WLHS *Blue and Gray*, 1939, p. 70.

year a professor of military science and tactics, Capt. C. E. Johnson, USA, was assigned to W-L, where there were now three cadet companies, A and B, uniformed, and C, not in uniform. The Arlington County ROTC comprised the cadet corps of W-L and George Mason High School.³²

The school year 1928-29 saw the establishment of the cadet band and participation by the entire corps in various parades: the Alexandria George Washington's Birthday parade, the Presidential Inaugural parade on March 4, and the Winchester Apple Blossom Festival parade, where the W-L cadet unit won second prize in its class.³³

The Girls' Auxiliary, originally organized in 1928 was a social adjunct to the Cadet Corps, was inactive the following year and in 1930 was reestablished and formally organized as Company I of the W-L Cadet Corps. Mozelle Powell was the faculty sponsor and Major Lorraine Branson the commanding officer. Drills were conducted by Cadet Lt. Frank Scott three times a week.³⁴ Officers of the Girls' Auxiliary were selected by the officers of the Cadet Corps and were called "honorary cadet officers."³⁵ In the spring of 1930 an Auxiliary uniform was designed by Mozelle Powell and Florence Cannon. It consisted of a Navy blue woolen beret, circular skirt, and hip-length circular cape, and a gray long-sleeved blouse, the skirt, cape, and blouse being home-made of light-weight rayon material.³⁶

In 1930 and again in 1931 the entire Corps, including the Girls' Auxiliary, marched in competition with other cadet units in the Winchester Apple Blossom Parade, winning a \$50 second prize in 1930 and first prize, a silver cup, in 1931.³⁷ The entire Corps continued to participate in the Apple Blossom Festival throughout the period covered by this history. In 1931 Sadie Williams became sponsor of the Girls' Auxiliary. On March 1, 1932, the first Cadet-Auxiliary Frolic was produced to help defray expenses connected with participation in the Apple Blossom Festival.³⁸ The Auxiliary uniforms were changed in 1933 to ones very similar in appearance to the former outfits, but of heavier-weight material. The girl cadets still wore dark blue capes and skirts, but substituted gray sweaters for the blouses.³⁹ The Girls' Auxiliary was expanded in 1933 by the addition of Company K⁴⁰ and a third company, L was added in 1936.⁴¹

By 1930 W-L was feeling the pinch of too few classrooms for too many students, the result of a rapidly growing population in the County and the annexation by Alexandria in 1929 of the territory in which George Mason

32 WLHS *Blue and Gray*, 1928, p. 99.

33 WLHS *Blue and Gray*, 1929, p. 60.

34 WLHS *Blue and Gray*, 1930, p. 66.

35 *ibid.*, p. 71.

36 Kimball, "Recollections."

37 WLHS *Blue and Gray*, 1932, p. 68.

38 *Ibid.*

39 WLHS *Blue and Gray*, 1934, p. 81.

40 WLHS, *Blue and Gray*, 1933, p. 89.

41 WLHS, *Blue and Gray*, 1936.

High School was located, thus leaving W-L as the sole high school for the County.⁴² In May, 1930, a special election was held to approve a school bond issue of \$640,000. Included in the bond issue were funds for an addition to W-L. Enrollment at W-L at that time was 1,252, in a building that had a normal capacity of 750.⁴³ The bond issue passed and in August the School Board approved the construction of the addition to W-L and the contract was let to J.H. Coleman.⁴⁴ In addition to the construction of additional rooms a number of other improvements were made in and around the building, using the 1930 bond issue funds.⁴⁵

This description of the 1931 addition and improvements appears in School Board Minutes:

"The 32 classrooms for Washington-Lee High School were estimated in the bond issue to cost approximately \$194,000. The contract, as let by the School Board according to the plans and specifications, provided for 32 classrooms, several rest rooms, clinic, new gymnasium, a 35% increase in the size of the cafeteria, enlargement of old gymnasium, with bleachers to accommodate 450 people, sidewalks, and extension of the high school sewer trunk line, and a recirculating system in the heating and ventilation system of the old part of the building, at a total cost of approximately \$28,000 less than the cost estimated in the bond issue."⁴⁶

In August, 1931, the School Board authorized the purchase, out of 1930 bond issue funds, of 2.5 acres of land adjacent to the W-L property, at \$2,500 an acre.⁴⁷ The warrant was drawn and paid the following week, the entry in the minute book reading "Additional site, Washington-Lee, \$6,557.50."⁴⁸ In 1934, with the help of PWA funds, the first part of the stadium was built.

In 1936 bonds were issued in the amount of \$250,000 to erect and equip Thomas Jefferson Junior High School, the first separate junior high school in the County.⁴⁹ This school was opened in January, 1938,⁵⁰ which relieved W-L of some of its pupil load, but a number of junior high classes were conducted there through the end of the period covered by this study.⁵¹

On October 1, 1938, the School Board received an offer from the Public Works Administration of the Federal Government to finance 45% of the cost of constructing a junior high school (Swanson), two elementary schools, and

42 Lee, *op. cit.*, p. 134.

43 Executive Committee of the Parent-Teachers Associations and Other Arlington County Civic Organizations. "The School Bond Issue," Vol. 1, No. 1, undated [1930], p. 1

44 Minutes, ACSB, Aug. 18, 1930, meeting, p. 384.

45 Minutes, ACSB, Sept. 4, 1930, meeting, p. 388, and Nov. 14, 1930, meeting, p. 395.

46 Minutes, ACSB, March 6, 1931, meeting, p. 409.

47 Minutes, ACSB, Aug. 6, 1931, meeting, p. 425.

48 Minutes, ACSB, Aug. 11, 1931 meeting, p. 427.

49 Lee, *op. cit.*, p. 133.

50 Leon W. Brown, *The History of the Growth and Financing of the Public School System in Arlington County, Virginia, 1870 - 1944*. Master's Thesis, George Washington University, 1945, p. 44.

51 Interview with Claude M. Richmond, principal of W-L, 1937-1951, Feb. 6, 1974.

an addition to W-L.⁵² The offer was accepted and the following additions and alterations were made to the high school: three classrooms, alterations to the shop building, and extension of the cafeteria, all completed in 1938. The total cost was \$40,043.97, of which \$21,500 was from the State Literary Fund, the balance from PWA and school operating funds.⁵³ In 1939 there were 60 teachers on the W-L staff and the total number of students in the junior and senior classes alone was over 560.⁵⁴

In recalling her days at W-L, Mrs. Bell cited these "firsts" for the Arlington County School system, besides those already discussed: the first division of the State to have a 12-year system, the first to have free textbooks, and the first to have a school health department. W-L could also brag of having the first cadet corps organized in a public high school in Northern Virginia.

In this brief history it would be impossible to list all the distinguished graduates of the period covered or give a complete chronology of notable events, but it might be useful and interesting to cite some W-L "firsts." The list follows:⁵⁵

Event	Date School year is cited unless definite date is known)
Football team, Mr. C. A. Goff, coach	1925
Girls' Glee Club, under Mrs. J. Forney Doanldson	1926
Boys' basketball team, Mr. L. K. Bergey, coach	1926
Girls' basketball team, Miss Dorothy Graves and Miss Nina Trevette, coaches	1926
Boys' baseball team, Mr. Gordon Simmonds, coach	1926
First school play, "The Charm School," directed by Mr. Gordon Johnston	Feb. 1927
Orchestra, Miss Madeline Whitlock, director	1927

⁵² Brown, *op. cit.*, p. 46.

⁵³ Brown, *Ibid.*, p. 48.

⁵⁴ WLHS, *Blue and Gray*, 1939.

⁵⁵ Based on Mrs. Bell's research and personal recollections and additional research in the W-L annuals from 1927 through 1939.

Girls' Glee Club Christmas cantata	Dec. 1927
Home Economics Club, Miss Sally Loving, sponsor	1927-28
Oratorical contest; W-L (John Bell) winner in the State	1928
Spanish Club, Mrs. Frances C. Bell, sponsor	1928-29
First senior class to wear cap and gown and to have a senior prom 56	June 1929
Night school organized	Sept. 1929
French Club, Miss Mary Aldhizer, sponsor	1929-30
Fencing Club, Mr. W. A. Richardson, sponsor	Feb. 1930
First broadcast by Boys' and Girls' Glee Clubs (Station WJSV)	Feb. 19, 1930
First Senior Class play, "Nothing but the Truth," directed by Miss Sally Loving, hero, Allan Willis	1931
School flag, designed by Betsy Cannon	May 1931
Student Council, Charles Couch, first president	1932
First official school newspaper, "Crossed Sabres." First edition was untitled, but paper was named by Warren Dodd later that year. 57	Feb. 27, 1932
First W-L graduate to return to teach at W-L (Parkes Fielding, class of 1927)	1932
First night school graduation	1934
Boys' Glee Club formally organized under Mrs. Florence N. Baldwin	1937
Chapter of the National Honor Society established, Miss Sally Loving, sponsor	May 1937
First W-L graduate to achieve fame in the entertainment world (Forrest Tucker, class of 1938)	1939

56 Mrs. Bell noted that the seniors had to have special permission from the School Board for this dance, with guarantee of full faculty chaperonage.

57 The first abortive attempt at a school newspaper was called the "W-L Gazette" and was published by one of the 9B English classes in 1928, selling for 5¢ a copy (editor, Betsy Cannon).

As a member of the first class to complete its full six years of work at W-L, I would like to add some personal reminiscences and observations.⁵⁸ From the perspective of nearly fifty years later, the most outstanding impression of those earliest days at W-L is the memory of the prevailing spirit, among both teachers and students, that this was a time of new beginnings—a new building, a new concept in education in Virginia, an opportunity to be pace-setters and forgers of traditions. There was an atmosphere of enthusiasm and enterprise throughout the school.

Apparently, there was still the feeling in some quarters in those early days that academically W-L did not quite measure up to the better D.C. schools, although in the State of Virginia it had an excellent reputation. Consequently, we lost a number of members of our class in the junior and senior years to Western High School in Washington.

In 1931 some members of the senior class decided that the school should have a flag of its own and I was asked to work out a design for one. The final design was based on my sketches. The field contained four triangles whose points met in the center. The top and bottom triangles were gray and the right and left ones Navy blue. The Washington family coat of arms was appliqued on the left triangle and the Lee coat of arms on the right, in their correct colors, and the words "Washington-Lee High School" were appliqued on the left triangle and the Lee coat of arms on the right, in their correct colors, and the words "Washington-Lee High School" were appliqued across the gray background in Navy blue. The flag was made for us at Garrison's and cost about \$20. It was presented to Superintendent Kemp at our senior banquet. It stood on the stage of the auditorium and was used on ceremonial occasions for many years. In the late 1950's, when Mrs. Bell was gathering material for a history of W-L she discovered that the flag had disappeared and could not be located. *Sic transit gloria mundi!*

Our Class of 1931 graduated into the Great Depression. Only a handful of the 92 graduates were able to continue their education. Many more had the ambition and were qualified academically, but a lack of funds defeated their plans.⁵⁹ This was before the days of the National Merit Scholarship competitions and there were very few scholarships available. Despite this, members of this class have made their presence felt in this and other communities and many of them have had outstanding careers, in education, the law, Federal and local government, nursing, and many other fields.

⁵⁸ Kimball, "Recollections".

⁵⁹ In fact, many W-L students found it necessary in the early '30's to transfer to night school in order to work at full-time jobs during the day to help support their families.