

They put the war dead in the library. The Yankees took all of the livestock, food, and feed. The problem quickly became the hungry rats.

This library had been built by this unincorporated community without the funds of Andrew Carnegie whose generous foundation supplied funds for scores of public libraries such as the one in Camden where the Kershaw County Archive Building is now housed. As we all are aware an excellent library is a cornerstone of a great community.

This rural community not only endured the occupation of Sherman's marauding army and his followers but had most of its businesses, academies, schools, and homes burned. The good folk endured and later built a meeting place for its professionals. They also later built and maintained their own baseball field and for decades operated its own baseball team. The members of this community also built a community center and had lighted tennis courts. All of these notable accomplishments were completed through the efforts of its citizens who did not ask its county neighbors for help in paying for these structures.

We often forget our history.

Many of the Civil War dead who are buried in the Pine Grove Cemetery went to a local school which was funded by the Camden Orphan Society. Many of the leading citizens of the Kershaw District (from around 1800 to 1860 there were no counties in the state) contributed money to provide schools throughout the district/county. The schools were usually for grades one to six and spread out because the kids usually walked (quite often barefoot) or rode a horse or mule. There is an old wives tale about not letting your kids play barefoot in the dew because they can get worms from the worms which crawled to the end of the grass blade to get moisture.

Citizens who enjoyed an economic advantage usually had tutors or sent their kids to private schools or academies. There is a long history of academies in this county. The schools were usually segregated by sex.

The public school system that exist today found its beginnings with the Freedmen's Bureau after the Civil War and during Reconstruction. The schools were first created to educate the children of ex-slaves and eventually there became schools for whites. Schools have always been the domain of states. Buildings such as the old Camden High School and Mt. Pisgah were WPA buildings. Many of the flat top schools which were constructed in the 1950's had funds provided by the federal government because of the large number of baby boomers. The federal government started contributing money for curriculum when they discovered that Ivan was smarter than Johnny when Sputnik flew three rotations around the earth.

For many of us who grew up in the south, the term Reconstruction was not a smiley face expression when used by our seniors. There are two entertaining and educational points of interest concerning Reconstruction. One occupying Union officer wrote home that the southerners had a varied diet. They would have corn mush, fish, and treason for breakfast, lunch would consist of fish, treason and corn mush, while supper was treason, corn mush, and fish. One would wonder if this officer ever became familiar with the term grits or hominy.

The second point is that before the 1960's the only Republican (the party of Abe Lincoln) you could find in most towns were the postmasters. Usually when you had the Democratic Primary the election was settled. In the 1950's there was a group mostly residing in Kirkover Hills who were 'Democrats for Eisenhower.' In 1964 William Workman ran as a Republican candidate for the U.S Senate and he was the

first most prominent state Republican candidate. Sheriff Hector DeBruhl was the first local Republican party winner and the late Jeff McMahan was a founder of the S.C. Republican Party. The late George Carlton was an early leader of the Republicans in this county.

Savannah Georgia was laid out as a Roman Army encampment which emphasized protecting the livestock. Hence many parks, commons and greens throughout the South were initially designed to increase business and feed horses, cattle, sheep and pigs. In most locales Saturday was always the market day and farmers drove their wagons to town. In front of the Camden Post Office there was a water trough for horses. The popularity and availability of the car and paved roads are relatively new. Mrs. Louise Boykin who taught the fifth grade at Camden Grammar School in the 1950's rode in the first car in Kershaw County. Billy Ammons grandfather operated the ferry on the Wateree River before the bridge was built between Lugoff and Camden.

Mt. Pisgah, Blaney, Bethune and other locales had their own superintendents. In the Camden School District the Superintendent appointed the board. Bob Branham grew up in Blaney and the Wildcats played basketball against other schools on an outdoor court. The original basketball court for Camden High is the current parking lot at LSUMC and only the girls had teams. Recreation basketball was played in school gyms until the Rhame Arena became operational in 1964. In the 1940's and 50's youth teams played for 'the city.'

Emergency health care before the Kershaw County Hospital was built was as fast as your horse could get you to the doctor. The hospital, which used to be located on the corner of Fair and Union, is approaching its 100th birthday. The kindness and generosity of the Bernard Baruch foundation and family built this hospital. Dr. Baruch was a Civil War surgeon who operated in a house where the First Baptist Church is now located.

Liberty Hill is the community which built its own library, ball field, tennis courts and public buildings. All were constructed in the era from before the War between the States and 1939.