



Notable Kentucky African Americans Database

Oliver Street School

The interim schools continued until a bond issue was successfully voted into action by the city for a new colored school building on Oliver Street. The Oliver Street Colored School opened in 1892 and closed in 1969. The first principal, Mrs. G. S. Benton, was replaced the following year by J. H. Mingo, a graduate of the Chandler School in Lexington. The teachers were Miss C. N. Willis, Miss Flora Z. Barbee, Miss Willie Woodford, Mrs. Nettie David and Mrs. Julia A. Benton. In 1894, Principal Mingo was replaced by James H. Garvin.

Within the Oliver Street School, the students were taught music, cooking, sewing, shoe making, brick laying, and business and literary courses. Both Prof. Garvin and wife Lillie B. Garvin were school teachers. Prof. Garvin was principal at the school for 24 years, retiring in 1918. Stanley R. "Fess" Williams, the later bandleader, was a teacher at the school around 1917-18. The Oliver Street Colored School contained grades 1-12.

In 1928 the Freedmen School building was still standing. It was used as a manual training shop for the city colored school.

The Negro teachers in Clark County in 1940 were Howard Allen, Howard Buckner, Juanita Callery, James Callery, Julia Colerane, Elizabeth B. Curry, Jennie Didlick, Lula Diggs, Minnie Downey, Lettie P. Green, Mildred E. Henderson, Lillian Holmes, Katherine K. January, Ester Laine, Mary Miller, Chalmer Owens, Missouri Quisenberry, Lettilla Ranel, James Ray, Mary Robinson, Charles F. Sloan, Fannie Sloan, Vivian Taylor, and Marie Williams.

The Oliver Street High School was closed in 1956, and in 1957 the Clark County high schools began to integrate. The remainder of the Oliver Street School continued until 1969.