

## Jeanes Supervisors of Lunenburg County Schools

In 1907, the Anna Thomas Jeanes Fund—later known as the Negro Rural School Fund—provided aid to public schools of the South. These funds were designated to employ African American teachers as supervisors to improve instruction in shop work, homemaking, and other vocational skills in the schools. The Jeanes educational supervision was modeled on the work of Virginia Cabell Randolph, a black teacher in the Richmond area. Randolph emphasized vocational education, visited students in their homes, and helped improve their health and sanitation. In 1908, Randolph became the first Jeanes Supervisor Industrial Teacher—providing the first formal in-service teacher training for rural black teachers anywhere in Virginia. She also worked in North Carolina and Georgia.



McNoah B. Cralle was assigned as the first Jeanes Supervisor in 1909. He faced many obstacles such as inadequate transportation, poor school conditions, and insufficient funds. Cralle helped to create school clubs, build a good relationship between the home and school, and raise money for building schools. He increased interest in the schools by meeting with people in civic and social organizations, churches, and Sunday schools to proclaim the importance of education. The organization of the Negro teachers into a unified group—which helped to bring about monthly meetings held for demonstrations in teaching—became a reality under “Professor” Cralle’s leadership.

The teachers’ association helped to sponsor the Negro Organization Society; Negro History Week; parent-teacher banquets; and purchase professional books for teachers’ in-service and training. In 1917, Cralle ended his tenure as a Jeanes Supervisor, but continued his tenure as a teacher and principal at the Kenbridge Graded School until the mid-1940s.

Lucy Mae Hinton Morrison was appointed Supervisor for the Colored Schools in Lunenburg County following Cralle’s resignation as Jeanes Supervisor in the fall of 1918. She was born on May 20, 1886 in Lunenburg County. Her early education was in the public schools of Lunenburg County and the Bluestone Harmony School in Keysville, Virginia. Later, she attended Virginia State College in Petersburg, Virginia; and Columbia University in New York. Her career as an educator began in the small schools in Lunenburg County.



Morrison was also called “superintendent” by many in the community because of her exclusive supervision of Negro schools. She is credited with major improvements such as her written contributions to the first school-wide newsletters, improvements in teacher training and certification, secondary education, bus transportation, and the successful consolidation of small schools. Her administrative title was changed by the School Board from Supervisor of Colored Schools to Negro Elementary Supervisor in 1946.

She was a highly-respected member of the community and deeply committed to public education. In her honor a 16" X 20" canvas portrait was placed on the wall in hallway of the Lunenburg Elementary School in the mid-1950s. It remained there for years but, was removed when schools fully desegregated in 1969. Lucy M. Hinton Morrison was an Education Supervisor for thirty-four years [1918-1952]. Morrison died in 1973.



In fall 1952, Clara A. Morse was appointed elementary supervisor following Morrison's retirement. The job title of Jeanes supervisors was changed to elementary supervisor in Negro schools, and the role became more academic-focused.

During her tenure, Morse supervised the assignment of new students, conducted teachers' instructional workshops and in-service training. Morse—in addition to her supervisory duties—coordinated the Goodwill school program at the Lunenburg Elementary and Kenbridge Graded Schools. Morse returned to the classroom as an English and dramatics teacher in the fall of 1956. She co-advised the junior class at the secondary level; served as drama club sponsor; and co-authored the 1960 Historical Sketch of Lunenburg High School with Leila M. Williams. Morse was the last supervisor for which the School Board received monies through the Negro Rural School Funds to support Negro education and teacher training in Lunenburg County.

Under the Jeanes Supervisors, significant developments for Negro teachers occurred such as the organization of the Lunenburg County Teachers' Association (1909); improvements in academic and secondary offerings, better teacher training and certification; school consolidation; longer school terms; and the equalization of teachers' salaries. For a period of 47 years—beginning in 1909—the work of the Jeanes Supervisors in Lunenburg County included emphasis on vocational training; teacher certification; improved academic instruction; home and school cooperation; and better health and living conditions of the people. The Jeanes programs, which had become Virginia tradition, ended statewide in the 1960s.

Selected sources: *A History of Public Education in Virginia*, (Richmond: 2003), Virginia Department of Education; *Lunenburg School Life* Newsletter, March, 1923; Oscar Wood. *Development of Education for Negroes in Lunenburg County, Virginia 1870-1952*, Virginia State College, Petersburg, Virginia, 1953; Obituary of L. M. Morrison, February 25, 1973; *The Victoria Dispatch*, County Teaching Personnel For The Session of 1952-53, August 18, 1952; *The Kenbridge-Victoria Dispatch*, Lunenburg County Teaching Personnel for Session 1956-57, August 24, 1956; *Lunenburg High School Student Handbook* (1960-61), The Middleton Press, Chase City, Virginia, 1960. Note: The name Cralle is pronounced as 'Crawley'.