

Indian Creek School District

Indian Creek, near Douglas City, was an old quartz mining camp, situated on a creek of the same name in Wintu ancestral territory.¹ The school opened sometime between 1871 and 1875.² It was receiving apportionments through the county in 1876.³

In the fall of 1891 and the spring of 1892, Indian Creek School warrants show that the school made regular \$70 payments to Isabel Richmond. As this was the going rate for a teacher's salary at the time, we can assume that Isabel Richmond was the teacher at Indian Creek that school year. Using the same logic, the beginning of the next school year saw Lillian Harvey as the teacher at Indian Creek.⁴



Top row from left: Mary Mamie Williams (Griffith), Mary Wallace Coombs. Others are unknown, 1896, Indian Creek School

In the fall of 1895, Miss Daisy Davidson was the teacher receiving the same salary as the teachers above. She had 29 students enrolled with an average attendance of 19.⁵ She was still teaching in 1896. That year an article in the local paper indicated that she had returned from a several months trip visiting her original home in Vermont.⁶ It was also reported that she had an experience during her trip to the East. She was a passenger on the train that was robbed in Montana near the Dakota line. She was sitting in a seat near the door when it was opened by a masked man holding two loaded revolvers, one of which was pointed directly at her head. At his orders, she gave him what money she had in her pocket. Thankfully, he didn't take her watch or jewelry although he took everything of value from the men on the train. Other robbers looted the other cars and made a "fair haul". There was no resistance from the passengers. Miss Davidson was able to return to teaching at Indian Creek during the spring term of 1896.⁷

The 1896-97 school year began on July 20, 1896, with Miss Flora Woodbury as the teacher. She closed the school for the long winter break on November 6, 1896.⁸ In the fall of 1897, the teacher was Bessie Coady who closed the school for the winter break on November 12.⁹ In 1899 the school site was relocated and a "commodious, well-ventilated school house" was constructed.

The enterprising trustees devised means to furnish the room with the patented single desk, and the building when painted and complete will be one of the best equipped and most attractive school rooms in the County.¹⁰

¹ *History and Happenings*, <http://historyandhappenings.squarespace.com/trinity-county/?currentPage=2>. Accessed June 26, 2021.

² Holland, James. *A History of Education in Trinity County; A Thesis presented to the School of Education*. 1971. Chico State College. 25.

³ Bragdon, H. H., "Apportionments", *The Trinity Journal*, January 17, 1876.

⁴ *Warrant Records*, Historic Records Collection, Trinity County Office of Education.

⁵ "Our Public Schools. Teachers, Clerks and other Matters of Interest", *The Trinity Journal*, August 17, 1895.

⁶ "Local Brevities". *The Trinity Journal*, March 7, 1896.

⁷ "An Exciting Experience" and "Schools Open", *The Trinity Journal*, March 14, 1896.

⁸ *The Trinity Journal*, August 1, 1896 and November 14, 1896.

⁹ Fox, Lizzie H., "Districts, Clerks and Teachers", *The Trinity Journal*, October 2, 1897 and "School Notes", November 11, 1897.

¹⁰ Fox, Lizzie H., "Our Public School. Their Progress for the Past Year Has Been Gratifying", *The Trinity Journal*, September 9, 1899.

The school was in operation in 1900 when the County Superintendent of Schools, Lizzie H. Fox, made an official visit to the district on April 19th of that year. Mr. J. F. McKnight was the teacher at that time. His salary was \$65 a month. He taught 30 students, mostly primary grades. Their “Order and Attention” were determined to be “Good” and so was the condition of the school buildings and grounds.¹¹ In 1901, the teacher was Miss Bertha E. Post who opened the school for the spring term in March.¹² In the spring of 1904, the teacher was Annie I Fox, younger sister to Lizzie H. Fox, who opened the spring term on March 7.¹³ Other early teachers in the district included: Miss Josie Kenrick, Fall term 1904 and fall of 1905 who made \$65 per month;¹⁴ Miss Nettie Armistead, 1908¹⁵; Miss Ruby A. Ordway of Chico, Spring term 1909; Miss May McArthur, Fall term 1909;¹⁶ Miss M. Riley of Gridley, Spring and Fall 1910 with 16 students;¹⁷ Miss Agnes R. Dedrick, Spring 1911; Miss Fay Little of Biggs, Fall term, 1912 and Spring term, 1913.¹⁸

On September 9, 1913, the school was temporarily suspended due to the lack of attendance by students. However, the district was quickly re-established a year later.¹⁹

On September 11, 1920, Indian Creek School District lapsed along with several other districts in the county that year.²⁰ Interestingly, the local paper reports in 1925 that the Indian school district was formed out of a part of the Hayfork Valley Union and Douglas City school districts²¹, and sure enough, the district shows up again in the school records in the 1924-25 school year and is listed as “new”.²² It was “temporarily suspended” in the 1928-29 school year and lapsed (closed) on July 20, 1929 for the last time.²³

The former Indian Creek schoolhouse still exists in 2022 but has been moved to a new location.²⁴

¹¹ *School Superintendents Record of Official Visits, 1905-1918*, Historic Records Collection, Trinity County Office of Education, 119.

¹² “Local Brevities”, *The Trinity Journal*, March 23, 1901.

¹³ “Schools Closed”, *The Trinity Journal*, June 6, 1904.

¹⁴ “Schools Open”, *The Trinity Journal*, July 29, 1905; and “Districts, Clerks, Teachers, Trinity County, 1904-1905”, *The Trinity Journal*, November 5, 1904.

¹⁵ “Schools Closed”, *The Trinity Journal*, June 27, 1908.

¹⁶ “Local Brevities”, *The Trinity Journal*, July 3, 1909, and November 27, 1909.

¹⁷ “Indian Creek School Report”, *The Trinity Journal*, June 7, 1910.

¹⁸ “Local Brevities”, *The Trinity Journal*, March 3, 1911, April 9, 1910, December 17, 1910, August 8, 1912, and June 14, 1913.

¹⁹ “Board of Supervisors”, *The Trinity Journal*, September 9, 1913, and September 19, 1914.

²⁰ “Statistics of Elementary Schools”, *Annual Reports*, Historic Documents Collection, Trinity County Office of Education, 1920-21, 12.

²¹ “Board of Supervisors”, *The Trinity Journal*, January 17, 1925.

²² “Statistics of Elementary Schools”, *Annual Reports*, Historic Documents Collection, Trinity County Office of Education, 1924-25, 12.

²³ *Ibid.*, 1928-29 and 1929-30, 7; and “Board of Supervisors”, *The Trinity Journal*, July 20, 1929.

²⁴ Supahan, Sarah, discussion with Jim French, retired Trinity County Superintendent of Schools, January 2, 2022.