

Pinkham School

While handwritten notes found at the Trinity County Office of Education indicate that the first Board of Trustees at the Pinkham School was in place in 1899,¹ and the first eighth-grade graduation occurred there in May 1905,² this information seems to be disputed by information found in the local paper, or at least, if it's true then all of it occurred as a private school and not as a public one. In February of 1908, the Pinkham (public) School was established by order of the Board of Supervisors who, in those days, acted as the Board of Education for Trinity County: "It is therefore by the Board ordered that a new school district be created out of a territory hereinafter particularly described and which school district is to be known as and called the Pinkham School District bounded and particularly- described as follows, to-wit:

Beginning at the North 1/4 stake of Section 2 Twp. 37 N, R 8 W, M D M, thence southerly a distance of 1 mile; thence westerly 1/2 mile, thence southerly 2 miles; thence westerly 4 miles and which embraces the following sections of Twp 37 N., R 8 W, M D M; W1/2 of Sec. 2, all of Sections 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 25, 16, 17 and 18; thence south 1 mile, thence west 4 miles to west boundary line of Trinity County; then following the west boundary line northerly and easterly to the intersection of the line between Sec. 2 and 35 on the north boundary of Twp. 38 N, R 8 W., thence E 2 miles to N E Corner of Twp 38 N, R 8 W, thence South 6 miles to S E corner of said Twp, thence west 1 1/2 miles to point of beginning"³



Pinkham School House, date unknown

In October, following the establishment of the District, Superintendent of Schools Nellie Jordan visited Pinkham. At the time, teacher Nellie M. Hennessy had only eight students enrolled, with seven in attendance that day. Their "Order and Attention" was reported as "Good," along with the "Methods and Zeal of Teacher." Miss Hennessy had received her Grammar School Certificate in Trinity County.⁴

Pinkham is listed in the local paper under the schools that received public school apportionments (state funding) on May 22, 1909. Pinkham received \$38.16. Given that apportionments were determined proportionately based on the number of students attending a school, this was a small amount of money compared to other schools. Interestingly, this was the same amount that Coffee

¹ This was referred to in handwritten notes found at TCOE dated 5/15/1975 and indicates this information was on page 160 "of the Register".

² This was referred to in handwritten notes found at TCOE dated 5/15/1975 and indicates this information was on page 5, possibly of the same Register.

³ "Board of Supervisors", *The Trinity Journal*, February 29, 1908.

⁴ *School Superintendents Record of Official Visits, 1905-1918*, Historic Records Collection, Trinity County Office of Education, 341.

Creek School received.⁵ The low apportionment was due to so few students attending both schools. This fact will come into play a few years later.

By June 21, 1910, Maud Keithley was teaching at Pinkham School District when she closed the school for the summer vacation.⁶

Strangely, another official visit was recorded in April 1911 to what was noted as “(Coffee Creek) Pinkham.” The teacher was Miss Helen Pratt.⁷ Due to the names of the Pinkham teachers recorded below, it is believed that this visit must have actually been to the Coffee Creek School District. It’s hard to speculate why the school title was written as it was.

In the spring of 1911, Claire Flower taught at Pinkham School District, and her student, Jewel Craft, was one of 31 grammar school students in the county who graduated that June.⁸ Beginning the next school year, Mrs. E. E. Pinkham was the teacher on September 2, 1911.⁹

A visit to Pinkham School by Minnie E. Aldrich, County Superintendent of Schools, occurred on October 31, 1912. Rosa Mintz was the teacher there at the time. She’d been teaching in the district for four months but had a full year of teaching experience. There were only six students at this time. While the students and the school buildings’ condition were rated as “Good,” the library was said to be inadequate. It was noted that the students needed books, maps and “etc.”¹⁰ Given the few students enrolled at Pinkham and apparently at Indian Creek School District as well, the Board of Supervisors temporarily suspended both schools on June 30, 1913.¹¹

Just a little over a year later, in September of 1914, both School districts “having heretofore been temporarily suspended and it now appearing to the Board of Supervisors from the report of Mrs. Minnie E. Aldrich, Superintendent of Schools of Trinity County, that it may be that said districts can be re-established.” The Board determined that the matter should be “passed for further consideration at a future meeting of this Board.”¹² Instead, it appears that Pinkham School District remained suspended during the years of 1914 -1918, never having been apportioned any funding during that time. Instead, the school merged with the Coffee Creek School District in a decision of the Board of Supervisors on September 13, 1919.¹³ The Pinkham District’s remaining funds were also transferred to Coffee Creek.¹⁴

One source indicates that Pinkham opened again on July 25, 1927, was suspended once more for lack of students a year later, but was re-established in July of 1929 with 13 or more students.¹⁵ This information could only be true if Pinkham School were opened as a school within the Coffee Creek School District, as there is no Pinkham School District listed in the District Directories after the 1919-1920 school year.

See also **Coffee Creek**.

⁵ “Apportionment of School Money”, *The Trinity Journal*, May 22, 1909.

⁶ “Local Brevities”, *The Trinity Journal*, June 21, 1910.

⁷ *School Superintendents Record of Official Visits, 1905-1918*, Historic Records Collection, Trinity County Office of Education. 377.

⁸ “Local brevities”, *The Trinity Journal*, June 6, 1911.

⁹ “Schools of Trinity Supplied with Teachers”, *The Trinity Journal*, September 2, 1911.

¹⁰ *School Superintendents Record of Official Visits, 1905-1918*, Historic Records Collection, Trinity County Office of Education. 441.

¹¹ “The Board Of Supervisors Of The County Of Trinity, State Of California”, *The Trinity Journal*, September 9, 1913.

¹² “Board of Supervisors”, *The Trinity Journal*, September 9, 1914.

¹³ Holland, James. *A History of Education in Trinity County; A Thesis presented to the School of Education*. 1971. Chico State College, 31; and “School District Disbursements & Receipts”, Historic Records Collection, Trinity County Office of Education, 1919.

¹⁴ “Statistics of Elementary Schools”, *Annual Reports*, Historic Documents Collection, Trinity County Office of Education, 23.

¹⁵ From a timeline found in the files at Coffee Creek School District, 2021.