

# 213 TALES

by the late  
**Michael Dale Proffitt**

My name is Michael Dale Proffitt, and I was born and raised in Estill County. I was the ninth child born to Charlie Elmer Proffitt and Elsie Patrick Proffitt and was the first born in a hospital. Mom was born at Cob Hill, the ninth child of twelve children.

I started to school that fall, 1962 at Mt. Carmel School, also known as Tipton Ridge, just up the hill from our house behind Mt. Carmel Church.

The old toilets were wood and had a big concrete tank. The top had a toilet seat molded in it and had a commode seat on top of the concrete. The girls' toilet was over next to the Mt. Carmel Church and the church also used them. The boys' was next to Arnold Puckett's fence on the other side of the school. The well was in the middle, in front of the school.

Mom let us bring water from home. She always thought the cemetery was running into the well. There was a Tipton Cemetery in front of the church. It was Elmer Tipton's family's cemetery. A few hundred feet around the road was another cemetery. It was Millard Tipton's family. He used to own the farm next to the school. Then, a few more hundred feet there was another Tipton Cemetery there in the woods. It was Burnie Tipton's family. Burnie still lived close by. His son Pearl had a house close to that cemetery. There was a lot of graves in it.

My teacher was Mrs. Loretta John-

son. She lived down around Irvine somewhere. There were several in my classroom, including Donnie, Larry, Joe, Dwight, Kenny, Becky, Billy Paul, Carl, Donald, Linda, Brenda, Nettie, Bobby, Gary, Allen, Donnie, Cleveland, Virginia, Sam Buck, Oscar, Darrell, Nancy, Scottie, Ricky, David, and Michael. There may be some missing; that's been a long time ago. Sam Buck was in the second grade and was about grown. One girl peed in the floor and never came back that year.

At recess, the boys in the little room would play town ball. You play with a gum ball and hit the ball with a board. If you threw the ball in front of the runner they were out. We played next to the girls' toilet. The big room would play softball in front of the school.

We would go home for lunch. Sue and Glenn were in the big room. Chester and Sanford went to West Irvine that year in the eighth grade. Sue and Glenn had Mrs. Elms that year.

There was a lot went on up there. The teachers would send the boys down in the woods on the Millard Tipton place. We would gather sticks and bring them back. I got down there one day and threw rocks at the other boys. I didn't come back until after school was let out. The teacher was waiting on me and spanked me good with a paddle.

My brother Chester locked a dog in the girls rest room. It got down in the hole. For some reason, the teacher found out who had done it. Chester didn't have to go to school that day and had to come and get the dog out of the toilet. It looked so pitiful when he got it out.

One day, a billy goat was at the school. Someone had dumped it there. Some of the boys caught it and sold it to Esco Crowe. They said he took it home

and eat it.

The next year, I had the same teacher again. The buses that run to the school was just two. Clay Tipton drove the one that picked up the kids on KY-52 and Walters Ridge. It was an old 50-some Chevrolet panel truck with windows and seats in it. The other bus went to Furnace and picked the kids up out on KY-213. It was a regular size bus.

There were several new people in the class that year. Two of the girls didn't go long. They quit again. Cecil Adams also brought kids from Marbleyard and McKinney Hollow to KY-213 to catch the bus. He used his own car.

That fall, President John F. Kennedy got shot and they let us out of school early. I didn't realize that was a bad thing. My parents were strong republicans and I thought democrats were all bad.

Another time, Kyle McIntosh's "Grandpa Cox" passed away and his mom came to get him from school. He started crying and it was sad. Mr. Cox lived with them.

My cousin Irma had moved back to Grandpa and Grandma Proffitt's old house. They had lived at North Fork in Powell County and they had went to Bowen Elementary. It was a big school. She cried all day that day. She never came back. Oscar sent his children on to Ravenna Elementary city school. Uncle Oscar was Daddy's baby brother and had worked for the Kentucky Forest Service. They had laid him off so he moved back to the old homeplace at the head of Crowe Hollow.

The next year was going to be the last for Mt. Carmel School. We didn't know that. A lot of people had moved away and others went to other schools. Dwight Hall had went to West Irvine Elementary when his brother Hobbie

went there for the 8th grade. Donnie and Gary Tipton moved to Ohio. Virginia Marcum had moved to Powell or Clark County. Others had sent their children on to Ravenna School.

This was going to be my last year at Mt. Carmel. I got a new teacher that year. Her name was also Mrs. Johnson. She was not as big as the other Mrs. Johnson was but still pretty strict.

There were a few new people in our classroom. They were Roger Allen, Silvia, Rita, Debbie and Alvin.

Mr. Smith was a young man and let the kids play softball a lot. A few afternoons we got to go watch them play softball. Mr. Smith would play with them. Sue and Glenn were in the 6th and 7th grade.

They had a substitute teacher one day and a bunch of the boys "acted up." They had the law come up there and it was awful. I think they put the boys on probation. I think the teacher was Mrs. Celia Abney. She was from down on Cow Creek.

Someone broke into the school one afternoon and got a bell and a few other things from the teacher. She offered a reward for who done it. One of the boys told on him. The tattler had moved into the old house where the Fielders had lived and Darrell Fielder and his family had moved to Cow Creek. I cried because the boy told on who done it. I had to take the tattler down to our old shack that used to be a chicken house. He went through the window and got her stuff. That "Little Rat!"

At the end of the year, that was the end of Mt. Carmel School. Clay Tipton bought the old building and tore it down. The Mt. Carmel Christian Church bought the land. That was the end of an era. Dad had got his education there.



Can anyone positively identify the students from the upper grades at Mount Carmel School (Tipton Ridge) in 1957-58. They are partially identified in ECH&GS's book "Schools of Estill County" as the following: Left to right, front: Ann Puckett, C. Gay Puckett, Judy Harper, Jesse Lynn Tipton, Barbara Foster?, Nella Watson or Judy McIntosh? Middle: Teacher-Margaret Parks, Bonnie Harper, Sue Frazier, Evangeline Puckett, Francis Watson, Rebecca Gail Tipton. Back: Wayne Barnes, Jerry McIntosh, Reece Foster, Billy Cassidy or Earl Arthur?, Edward Adams, Johnnie Lee Puckett, Linville Arthur, Donald McIntosh?

TIPTON RIDGE SCHOOL (About 1920) Left to right, front: Betty Tipton, Alice Tipton, Dan Crowe, VOLLIE BARNES, Garnie Henry?, George Harvie Puckett, Mary King?, Dick Ashcraft, Tracy Tipton, Dillard Tipton. Second row: Dorsey B. Sparks, Bernie Tipton, Ethel Tipton, Allen Crowe, Millard Tipton, Tracey Tipton (son of Silas), Magalene Tipton, Ellar Tipton, Armster Barnes, Acie Barnes, Bessie Tipton. Third row: Zettie Tipton,????, Carlie Tipton, Cornelius Tipton, Mae Tipton (teacher), Gentry Sparks, Arnold Barnes, Lou-Ann tipton, Eddie Clay Crowe, Carrie Tipton. Back: Ester Mae Barnes, Nannie Susan Puckett, Ida Puckett, Betty Puckett, Rice Tipton, Charlie Tipton, Gordon Tipton and Martha Puckett. This was first published in The Estill County Tribune in the 1980's. Several county schools are featured in the "Estill County Schools" book by the Estill Historical Society. "213 Tales" above by the late Michael Dale Proffitt who describes what it was like to attend Tipton Ridge (Mt. Carmel) School in its final years of operation in the late 60's. His father, Elmer Proffitt attended the same school.

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