

Ms. Eunice Currie Sweet and The Gettysburg Address
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Ms. Eunice Currie Sweet, the daughter of Ms. Lelia Johnson Currie Grisby and Mr. James B. Currie and sister of Ms. Algee Currie Outlaw, spent nearly her entire teaching career teaching third and fourth grades at Douglass Junior High School in Stanton. The reed thin wedge heel wearing woman who walked with a skip in her step, came to Douglass in the 1940s and stayed until the late 1960s when she was reassigned in the teacher shuffle that was a part of the process of desegregating the Haywood County School System.

Although Ms. Sweet who is pictured in the accompanying photo had been briefly married to James Sweet, she lived most of her life with her mother in a small wood frame house on Jefferson St. in Brownsville. The house, which no longer exists, was situated on a tiny lot between First Baptist Church and the railroad track.

At Douglass School, Ms. Sweet's room was the room of perpetual activity. She was not known for teaching the 3Rs. She was noted for teaching square dances and folk dances, long devotions in the mornings, unusual craft projects, and most notably requiring all students to learn to memory President Lincoln's Gettysburg Address.

Each student copied from the blackboard the words of the address into their notebooks. After doing this their homework assignment was to memorize the address within a given period of time, generally a week or two.

While Ms. Sweet assigned other memory tasks, for example the poetry of Robert Louis Stevenson, and the preamble to the U. S. Constitution, it was the Gettysburg Address that resonated with her students who were all descendants of men, women, and children freed from enslavement as a result of the American Civil War that Lincoln is talking about in this address at the dedication of the Gettysburg battlefield.

