

Charles Jesse Saunders

June 22, 1918 – June 25, 2004

(From Hinton News June 2004)

Charles Jesse Saunders

HINTON — Charles Jesse Saunders, 86, of Ballengee Street, died at 6 a.m. Friday, June 25, 2004, in Beckley Appalachian Regional Hospital following a short illness.

Born June 22, 1918, at the James Saunders Homestead, located on Zion Mountain, he was the first child of the late Lacy M. and Grace Maddy Saunders.

Mr. Saunders had lived his entire life in Summers County. He

graduated from Hinton High School in 1937 and received a Standard Normal Certificate from Concord College in 1939. He graduated from Concord College with a B.S. degree in elementary education in 1948 and completed a M.A. degree from West Virginia University in 1951. He also completed additional post-graduate studies at Radford College and Marshall University.

Mr. Saunders began his professional career with the Summers County Board of Education at the Birchfield School on Ellison Ridge. He also taught at Jack Deeds School and White Oak School, completing nine years as a one-room school teacher. He later served as principal of Jumping Branch School and Central School in Hinton. He served as assistant



Saunders

superintendent of schools for 14 years and retired as superintendent of Summers County Schools on July 1, 1978.

He helped organize Little League Baseball in Hinton and was the “founding father” of organized elementary school basketball in Summers County. He maintained an active interest in education his entire life and recently had been compiling a history of the Summers County school system. During his retirement, he maintained his farm at Jumping Branch and was an active member of First United Methodist Church of Hinton. He was a member and teacher of the John Wesley Bible Class at the church for many years.

In 1997, the Graham House Preservation Society honored Mr. Saunders, along with all one-room school teachers and students, with the dedication of the Saunders One-Room School Museum at Lowell.

Besides his parents, he was preceded in death by two brothers, George W. Saunders and Fred M. Saunders; and one great-grandson, Steven Keller.

Survivors include his wife of 61 years, Enola Vest Saunders; three daughters, Carolyn Fitzsimmons and husband, Tom, of Hinton, Sandra Lowe and husband, Glenn, of Roanoke, Va., and Ronda Rowan and husband, Rod, of Roanoke; one son, Charles W. Saunders and wife, Debbie, of Jumping Branch; seven grandchildren, Patton Lowe and wife, Terri, of Clemmons, N.C., Melissa Keller and husband, Steve, of Roanoke, Preston Lowe of Dumfries, Va.,

Susan R. Cole and husband, Billy, of Roanoke, Sara Fern Fitzsimmons of State College, Pa., Thomas Fitzsimmons of Crossville, Tenn., and Zachary Saunders of Jumping Branch; one great-grandson, Andrew Keller; two stepgrandchildren, Christy Lilly and husband, Tim, of Daniels and Chad Burdette of Jumping Branch; two stepgreat-grandchildren, Colton Burdette and Alyssa Lilly of Daniels; and three sisters, Paris Ann Fisher of Peterstown, Virginia Kammer and husband, Max, of Bluefield and Louise Hunter of Bluefield.

Service will be 1 p.m. Monday at First United Methodist Church, Hinton, with Pastors Bill Fox and Walt Mullins officiating. Entombment will follow in Greenbrier Burial Park Mausoleum, Hinton.

Friends may call 5 to 9 p.m. Sunday at Pivont Funeral Home, Hinton, and one hour before service Monday at the church.

Grandsons will serve as pallbearers.

Arrangements by Pivont Funeral Home, Hinton.