Heritage Of Local Black Education Began In 1800s

The following material was researched and written by Mary E. Brownlow, of Birdwell Mill Road, in connection with the observance of Black History Month. The material deals with the origins of what in the late 1930s became George Clem School. Part of the information is based on her own experience as a student in Greeneville. — Eds.

There were once two buildings on the site on Floral Street where the George Clem School is today.

The Greeneville Negro College (Greeneville College) was established in 1875. A two-story brick building with a basement was located on Floral Street.

On the left side facing the school (where the playground now is), was once a swimming pool, now covered over, where the chapel stood.

Attending students were from North Carolina, Kentucky, Virginia, Tennessee.

The Negro A.M.E. Zion Church was responsible for the establishment of the college. J.W. Young was president of the college from 1915 to

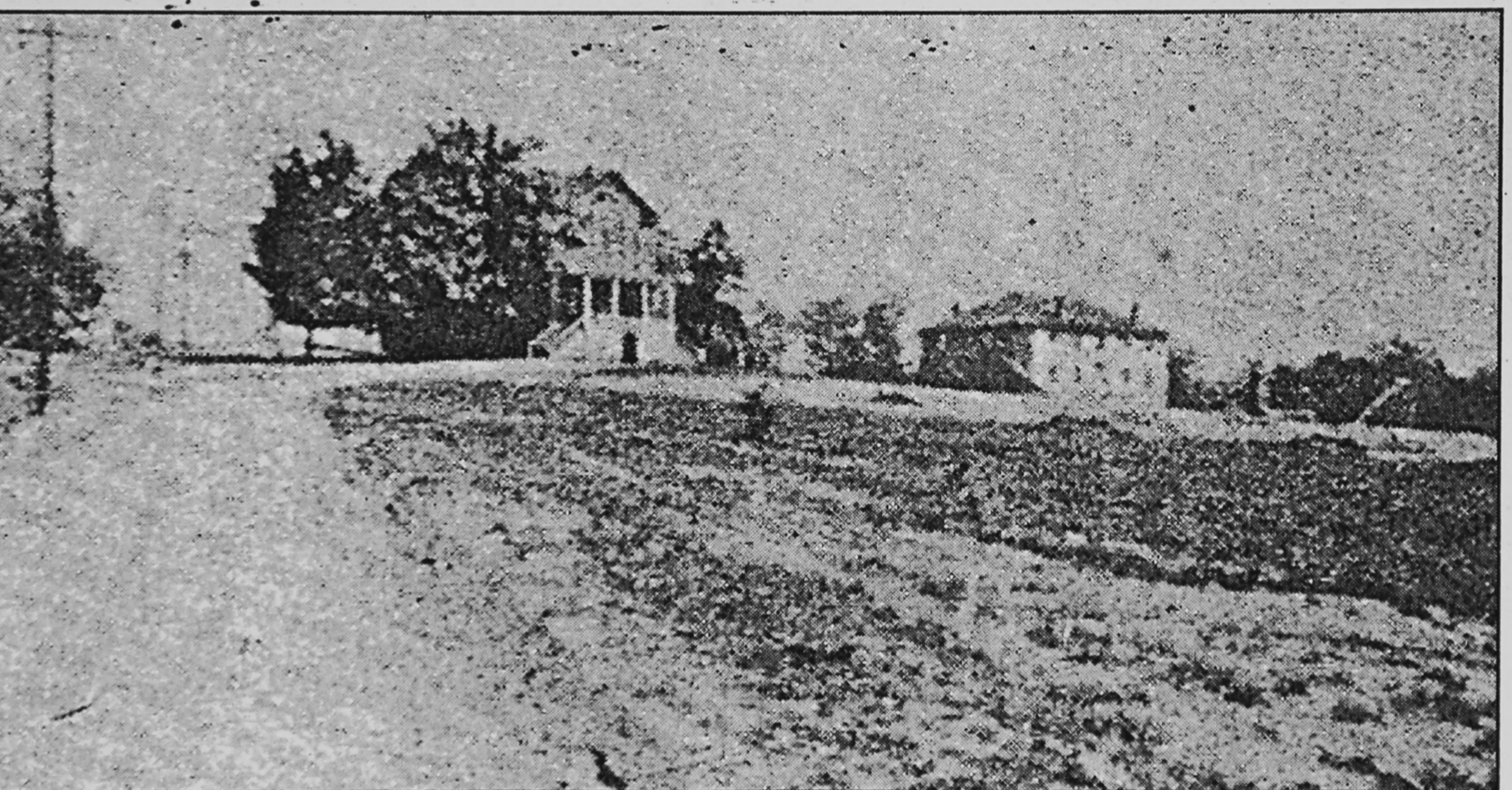


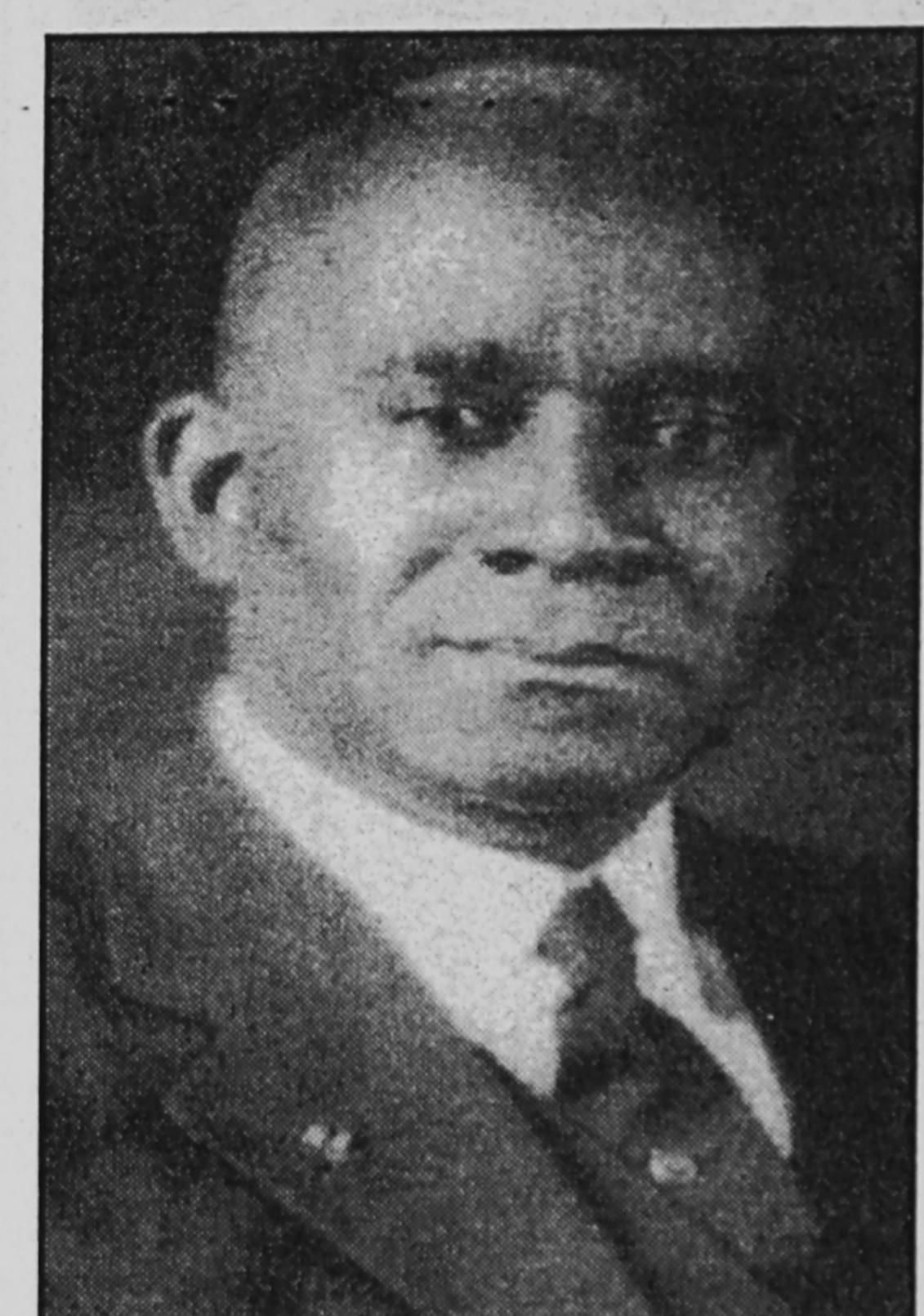
Photo Special To The Greeneville Sun

This photo is an enlargement of perhaps the only surviving picture of Greeneville College High School as it was from the early 1920s until the late 1940s. The name was changed in 1939 to George Clem School. The two buildings were removed in the late 1940s when they were replaced with a new brick structure, also known as George Clem School. That building now houses the Greeneville City Schools Central Office. The building on the left in the photo above was originally Greeneville Negro College (Greeneville College). After the college was closed, the structure became the chapel of a new two-building school known as Greeneville College High School.

1932.

first principal of the new school. After the closing of the col-school. In the early 1920s, he The school was originally lege, the building itself was responsible for the con- operated by the A.M.E. Zion became the chapel for the new struction of a concrete block Church and was called school that succeeded the col-building, which had two sto-Greeneville College High ries and a basement. This School.

Professor Young was the building became the new In 1932, the City Schools of



Professor J.W. YOUNG Played Important Educational Role

Greeneville leased the building from the church, establishing a public school that gave training though the junior high school level.

In 1938, the school became an accredited four-year high school.

G.W. Gilbert was principal from 1932-1935.

George W. Clem became principal from 1935-1939. The school was renamed for him after he died.

Mac Alexander was superintendent of Greeneville City Schools from 1935-1942. He taught a high school class for Greeneville College High School.

The two buildings that made up Greeneville College High School were torn down in the late 1940s when they were replaced with a new brick structure, also known as George Clem School.

That building has since the 1960s been the location of the Schools Greeneville City Central Office.