

CHAPTER IV

"Celia Foley -- Greater Love Hath No Man"

Part 1 -- World Traveler, Educator and Philanthropist

Introductory word: I am only sorry that this history of Miner School was not written while Miss Celia Foley was still living. I am certain that "On Common Ground" would have been very dear to her heart. However, it has been a pleasure to dedicate this entire chapter to the memory of Miss Foley, who gave so much of her life to the school.

Miss Celia Foley was born in Convoy, Ohio, November 20, 1868.* Twenty years later she graduated from Taylor University and accepted a teaching position with the Fort Wayne Public Schools. At the age of twenty-three she was given an unprecedented distinction -- that of being appointed principal at this early age. This appointment was fulfilled at the McCulloch School. Along with being unprecedented, the distinction has never been or will never be equalled. (Under the present requirements to obtain a principal's license one must hold a Master's degree). In 1903 she was appointed to the principalship of Miner School, a position which she held for thirty-three (33) consecutive years, and which the writer believes to be also unparalleled by any other principal serving the city schools to date. During these years she received additional training at Chicago Institute, Columbus University, Harvard University, Indiana University and Chicago University. She held an Elementary Principal's license in addition to a Primary and Grammar School license in teaching. She served as an educator in Fort Wayne for a total of 47 years. She retired by self-resignation via cablegram from London, England in June 1936 -- an episode which Superintendent Abbett holds dear in his memories. He tells us of this instance in his message which follows in a later chapter.**

During Miss Foley's summer vacations she traveled extensively covering the expanse of the North American Continent from Alaska to Mexico and the breadth of it from coast to coast. She traveled abroad on at least two different occasions known to the writer and visited many shrines and historical places. Outside of school interests -- which were unquestionably first and uppermost in her heart -- traveling and reading were her next best loves. She collected rare pieces of art and silver and her treasures were ever a joy to the visitors in her home.

*Facts concerning Miss Foley's family history were given in an interview with Miss Mable Holland, close friend and associate worker with Miss Foley.

**Facts about her service in the schools and the Foley Scholarship Trust (except amounts) were given in an interview with Merle J. Abbett.