

DOROTHY J. HARRIS

1917-1997



Mrs. Harris was born in Portsmouth, VA. She received her elementary and secondary education from local schools in that area and earned her college degree in mathematics from Talladega College in Talladega, Alabama. Upon completion of college she moved to Mecklenburg County to accept a teaching position at Mt. Ararat Elementary School in 1931. In 1944 she was named Principal of West End High School, making her the first woman ever to be named a high school principal in the Commonwealth of Virginia. She served as principal until the era of desegregation and the last graduating class in 1969. During her tenure as principal, the school maintained its accreditation, sponsored countless students to participated in statewide competitions in music, drama, science, athletics, 4-H and Future Farmers and Future Homemakers of America. She married Robert O. Harris in 1939. They had two children, both of whom are graduates of West End High. Mrs. Harris continued to serve as principal of the middle school until 1979.