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Headline:

## **9 IN ALEXANDRIA ARE INTEGRATED**

**All Is Quiet at 3 Schools Judge Orders Front Royal to Admit 23 Negroes**

ALEXANDRIA, Va., Feb. 10 – Negro children entered another white school system in Virginia today, and again without trouble.

Nine boys and girls joined 2,300 white children in three of this old city's schools. No incidents occurred outside the school buildings and everything was reported to have gone smoothly inside.

As in neighboring Arlington where token school integration began last week, the police were on hand in force but had nothing to do. The only crowds that gathered were composed of reporters and photographers.

Four Negro children are in previously all-white Arlington schools. Seventeen have entered six formerly white schools in Norfolk. And a Federal Judge today ordered the reopening of a High School in Front Royal that was closed last fall to block the admission of twenty-two Negroes.

Settled in the 1700's

Alexandria, on the Potomac just south of Washington, was settled in the early seventeen hundreds and still has many eighteenth century homes in its downtown section. But the three schools involved today are not in the historic part of the city.

James E. Lomax, 8 years old, and his sister Margaret Irene, 6, entered the Theodore Ficklin elementary school, which has 317 pupils. The building, north of the old city, adjoins middle-class white garden apartments, but there are also factories and Negro slum dwellings nearby.

Another elementary school, William Ramsey, with 667 pupils was opened to five Negro children – Sarah Ragland, 8, Jessie May Jones, 8, and three Turner children – Kathryn, 11, Sandra, 7, and George, 6.

Ramsey is a new school completed only last fall. It is in a new suburban section of Alexandria, which the city annexed from neighboring Fairfax County only a few years ago.

The third school was Francis Hammond High, which opened about a year ago, also in suburban annexed area, and has an enrollment of 1,321. Its new Negro students were a sister and brother, Patsy Ragland, 14, and James, 13.

Absenteeism in the three schools ran to about 10 per cent of the student body, which officials said was normal. A junior was withdrawn by his parents from Hammond High, but the parents refused to say whether integration was the reason.

First in Lower Grades

The two Lomax children were actually the first to break Virginia's color line in the elementary grades. The schools affected in Arlington and Norfolk last week were junior and senior high schools.

Just before 8:30 this morning they left their home a ting dwelling about a block from the Ficklin School. With them were their mother, Mrs. Henry Lomax, and their grandmother, Mrs. Ella Lomax.

James wore a dark blue jacket and a cap with earmuffs. It was a warm day, though, and the earmuffs were folded up Margaret wore a light blue parka. Both carried lunch-boxes.

Their mother hurried them along, patting them gently on the head once in a while, and went on into school with them. Reporters then crowded around their grandmother and asked what the children thought about their big day.

“They didn’t think anything.” She said.

“You know children that age. They don’t know anything except what you tell ‘em. We haardly had time to ‘em ready – they were wrestling like every morning.”

“Children ain’t nothing but children – I don’t care where you get ‘em from. All they care about is eating and sleeping and playing.”