

BESSIE CARMICHAEL DIES AT SAN JOSE

Taught 42 years in Schools here.

A school teacher and principal for 42 years, Bessie Carmichael died last night in San Jose Hospital after a short illness.

Miss Carmichael retired July 1 after serving as principal of Franklin and Lincoln elementary schools in the South of Market district 25 years. She was 65.

Mother to Them

She devoted most of her adult life to the underprivileged children of the district, during an era when industry and Skid Row were blighting it.

She impressed upon her teachers that because their pupils' home life was poorer than other children's, their school life should be better.

She was not content to administer the schools. She took an interest in every child. Sometimes she fed them or helped to clothe them. She found beds for them, listened to their troubles and tried to soften the indifference of the world.

"My Children"

When the state condemned the land on which Franklin School stands, at Eighth and Harrison Sts., for the Bayshore Freeway link to the Bay Bridge, the school department considered closing the school and transporting the children elsewhere. Miss Carmichael fought this view fiercely.

Born In Missouri

"Who else will take an interest in them?" she asked a News reporter last spring when the issue was still in doubt. "In any other school they will be just "those kids from the South of Market. But they are my children."

Almost single-handed she swung top school officials to her side. A new South of Market school is on the drafting board now. It will be built in Columbia Square, on Harrison between 6th and 7th Streets.

It will be constructed of one story, concrete and glass classrooms, movable to satisfy those who prophesy there will eventually be no need for a school there.

Bessie Carmichael was born in St. Joseph, Mo. July 2, 1888. She attended school in Omaha and enrolled in San Francisco State Teachers College in 1908.

Never Married

In the fall of 1911 she became an elementary teacher at Jefferson school. In 1926 she became vice-principal of Golden Gate school. In January, 1928 she became principal of Franklin School.

On retiring she went to live in Mountain View with a friend and fellow teacher, Mrs. Arlie Corbet.

She never married and leaves no family, except a cousin in Modesto. Instead, she leaves to the people of San Francisco a lifetime of loving devotion to their children. And a new school in Columbia Square.