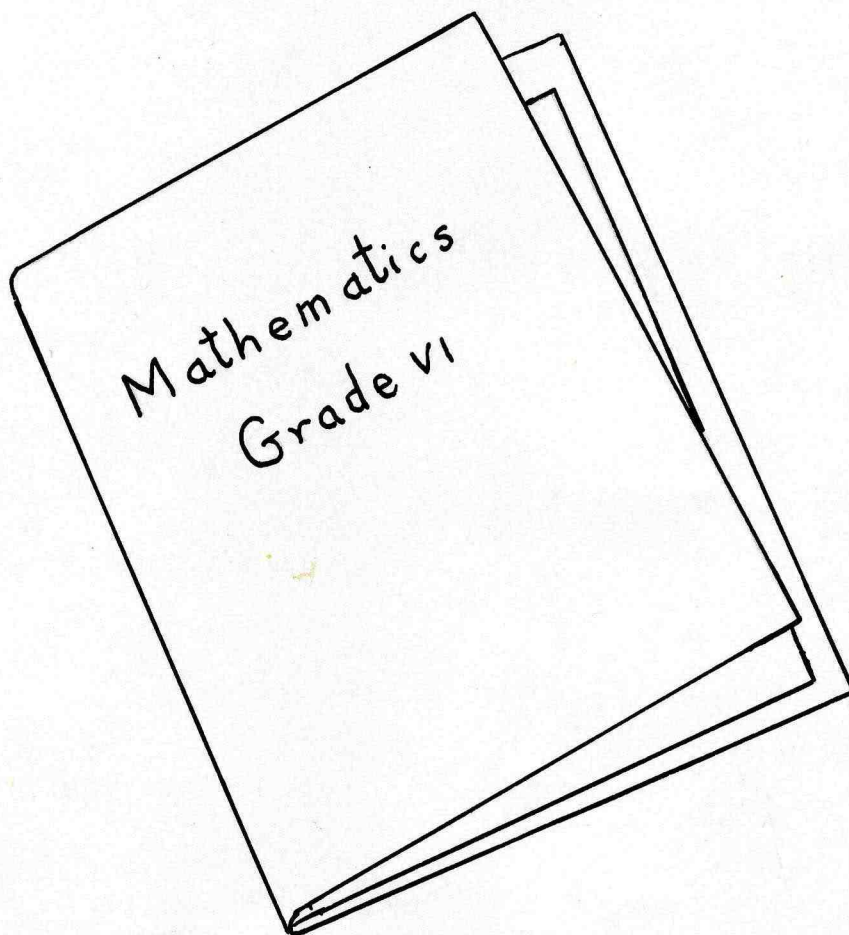


Most of the woodland that surrounded the Dobbie Cemetery has disappeared since Miss Hatch wrote the above article, but it is still a pleasant spot. It is more neatly kept than many country cemeteries due to the fact that a perpetual care fund was established some years ago, started by the late George Elliott, whose earthly remains now rest in this same cemetery. The fund now amounts to \$3,000 and is administered by a Cemetery Board, of which James Elliott is secretary-treasurer.



School days School days



HISTORY OF NORTH BAYHAM SCHOOL

The northern part of the Township of Bayham, situated in the north-eastern part of the County of Elgin, was settled between the years 1819 and 1824. Previous to this it was covered with forests of oak, maple and other valuable trees. The soil is remarkably fertile, and was well watered with small streams and runways which drained into the Otter Creek which, running through Tillsonburg, passes through small villages till it reaches Vienna, finally emptying into Lake Erie at Port Burwell.

Among the settlers who became prominent in the history of this part of the township, were Andrew and George Dobbie, James, John and William Crossett, Daniel and Finley Malcolm, Joshua Brown, Seled Haley, James Bentley, George Best, and Samuel Livingston, with his two sons, John and Samuel. A few years later Joseph Crossett, Chauncey Smith, and John Bentley came.

In order to secure an education for the young generation, a school-house was built as early as 1823, halfway between the 10th and 11th concession lines, on the bank of a deep gully. The children were guided to school by two blazed paths, one from the north and one from the south. The schoolhouse was built of logs and roofed with shingles about seven or eight inches wide, and between two and three feet long, split out of blocks. The flooring was made in the same way, only the boards, or slabs, as they were called, were longer and wider than the shingles. The schoolroom was lighted by one or two long windows. The chimney was built of sticks plastered inside with clay, and the hearth was made of clay, worked and packed together so cleverly that when dry it was hard and smooth.

The first teacher in this school was William Crossett, who, with his mother, was among the first settlers. Mrs. Crossett was a native of England. She would often relate with pride that she remembered Rev. John Wesley laying his hand on her head when she was a little child. Hugh Mulholland and Carlos and Augustus were the successors of Mr. Crossett in this school.

About 1833, a new schoolhouse was built on the Forge road, near where the road crosses the gully upon which the first one stood. This schoolhouse, though built of logs was a great improvement on the first. The windows were larger and more numerous, the chimney and the hearth were of brick, the roof was covered with modern shingles, and the floor and desks were made of sawn lumber. The seats were basswood logs with the bark taken off, flattened on one side to the desired width, and in each end of the other side two strong sticks were driven into auger holes, giving support to the benches.

The first teacher in this schoolhouse was Isaac Tillson. Mr. Tillson's successors were Miss Dewey and William Goodrich, who afterwards became husband and wife. Other teachers were Miss Margaret Livingston, daughter of Samuel Livingston, Miss Mulholland, Holst, Hewitt, Boyd, and J. W. Thoeer.

About the year 1834 a frame schoolhouse was built on the site of the present brick building, the early teachers in which were E. D. Tillson, a graduate of Oberon College, who later founded the Town of Tillsonburg; Misses Sara J. and Mary Ann Livingston, daughters of Mr. Samuel Livingston; Miss Abigail Bentley, daughter of James Bentley.

This schoolhouse was burned, and replaced by one on the opposite side of the road, which was finally superceded by the present building.

The subjects taught in the schools in those days were few, but were thoroughly taught, so that diligent students with such a foundation so well laid, and supplemented by home study, made good teachers.

The principal reading book in the early days was the English reader, compiled by the celebrated grammarian, Lindley Murray. The book was composed of extracts from the works of the best English authors, Milton, Pope, Addison, Cowper, Goldsmith, Blair, Thompson, Dr. Johnson, and other celebrated writers.

At first the three principal studies were the "three R's". Grammar and geography were introduced by Mr. Goodrich. Kerr and Tillson taught grammar classes so thoroughly that their work would compare favourably with the same studies in our modern schools. During Mr. Tillson's term the Irish National series of reading books were introduced, to the great advantage of the pupils.

Before any board of education was established, there were township superintendents, whose duty it was to examine would-be teachers and grant certificates. This office was held for a number of years by William Veitch, of Richmond, and afterwards by Rev. F. B. Reid, Anglican clergyman, of Port Burwell.



A red brick school building was erected about 1876 on the south side of the North Bayham Road where it joins what is now No. 3 Highway, beside the North Bayham Church, and across the road from the site of the previous school building. It was in a union school section consisting of S. S. No. 14 Dereham Township in Oxford County, S. S. No. 10 Middleton Township in Norfolk County, and S. S. No 23 Bayham Township in Elgin County.

When the enrolment rose to sixty or seventy, two separate rooms were used with two teachers presiding. The junior room was at the west end and the Senior room at the east end. Two teachers who each taught for fifteen years in this building were Mr. Harry L. Berry who began teaching the school about 1866, and Miss Josephine Wallace.

An outstanding graduate of this period of the school's history was Dr. Andrew Lowrie, later of Vancouver, B. C., who began his brilliant scholastic career in this little school.

Mr. C. S. Crossett served as Secretary-Treasurer of the Board of Trustees for thirty-three years. Mr. George Elliott and Mr. G. Alwx Scott also served long and faithfully as Secretary-Treasurers later in the school's history.

In December 1936 hydro was installed in the school. By this time it was a one-room school with an enrolment of about thirty pupils. In 1938 a new woodshed was built and in the fall of 1939 a new pump was installed. In 1942 indoor toilets were installed. In the fall of 1948 the school was stuccoed in an attempt to make the old brick walls more weatherproof. In the spring of 1949 the school was re-wired and a teacher's room equipped with supply cupboards built in the west end of the building.

By 1952 the enrolment had again risen to over 50 and a part-time teacher was hired to assist the regular teacher. In 1953 an addition to the old building was begun and extensive remodelling and modernization of the school was undertaken. The new wing was opened in the spring of 1954. It consisted of a new Senior Room, washrooms equipped with flush toilets, a furnace room with an automatic oil furnace, and a new teachers' room. A pressure system to supply water to the school was installed at this time also. The old school room became the Junior Room. The teachers at that time were Mrs. Kenneth White teaching the Senior Room and Mrs. Jack Horton teaching the Junior Room.

In June, 1962, the old section of the school was destroyed by fire of unknown origin. The fire was discovered early on



Addition 1953

a Sunday morning and had apparently started in the roof of the old section. Fire departments from Bayham, Tillsonburg, and Dereham fought the blaze and were able to save all of the new wing built in 1953. The part destroyed by fire was replaced the following year so that both rooms were of modern construction. Teachers at that time were Mrs. Donna Ludwig in the Senior Room and Miss Dorothy Stover in the Junior Room.



In the fall of 1954 something happened that might have been a terrible tragedy. With very little warning the plaster ceiling of the Junior Room fell. The weight of the plaster crushed many of the desks and the whole room was filled with choking black dust. Fortunately Mrs. Horton noticed the ceiling at the back of the room beginning to sag and quickly led the children out through the front of the classroom. Her quick action undoubtedly saved the lives of many children. The Junior classes were held in the basement of the church while the room was repaired.

In 1964, the North Bayham School was taken over by the Bayham Township School Board. In June 1967 the school was closed. The building was sold in the spring of 1968 to Arnold Vandenberg who established an interior decorating and furnishing business as well as a residence in it.



Teacher - Miss Vera Hockey

Back Andy Green, Oscar Wollenstein, Beulah Crossett, Ethel Cowan, Iva Neff, , Minnie Wollenstein, Annie Scott, Leslie Swance, Harry Minshall, Pearl Fenn

Middle Eva Crandall, Marie Ronson, Erie Argent, Harriet Emmerton, Roy Green, Bert Minshall, Bill Green, Lorne Argent, Lena Best, Ruby Cowan, May Emmerton, Lena Everett

Front Stanley Ker, Wilmont Wardle, Eva Neff, Nora Ronson, Violet Green, Mabel Fenn, Maude Wardel, Wilma Robertson, Alice Healey, Eda Emmerton, Roy Crossett, Mahlon Bounzar



Teacher - Dorcas Macfarlane

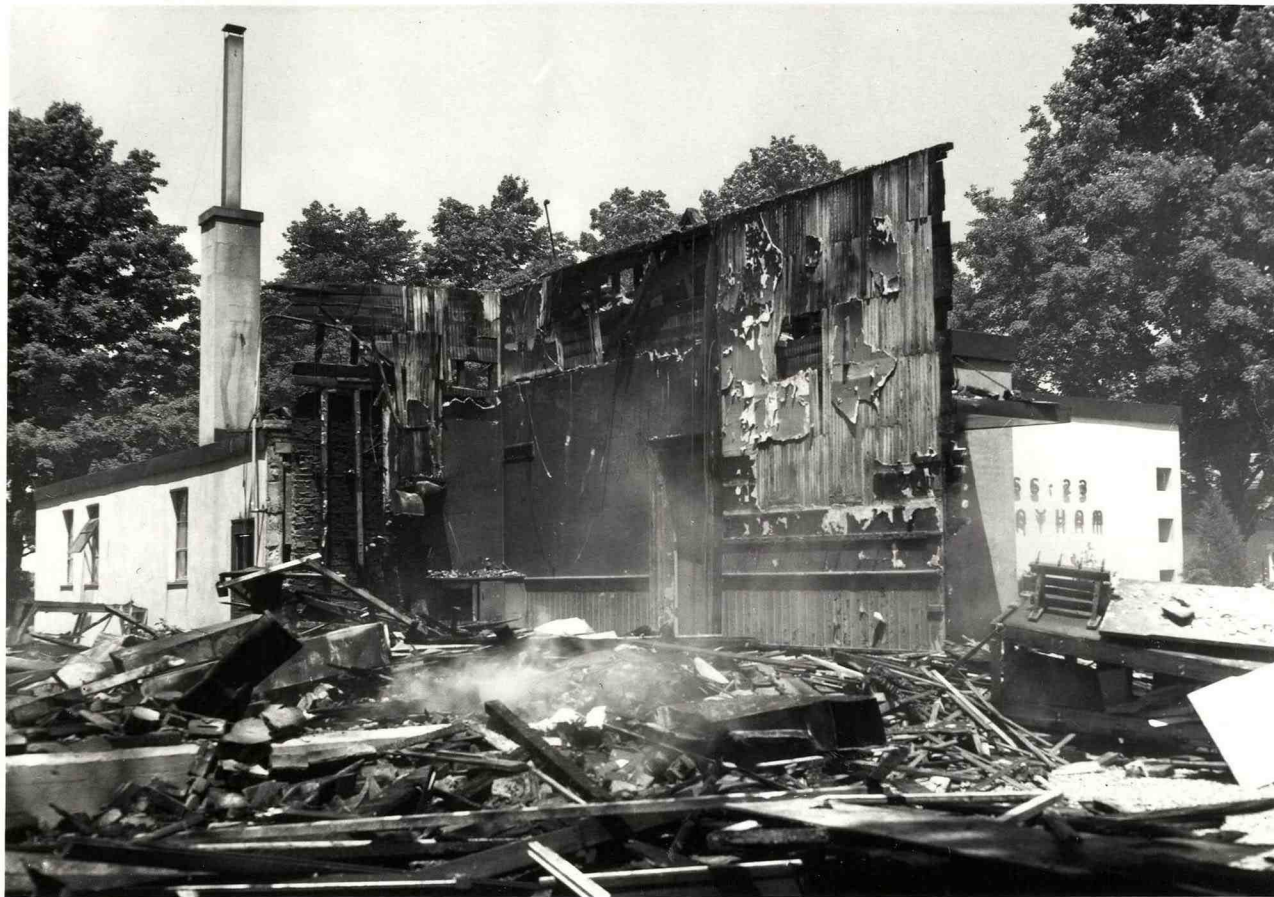
About 1926

Back Hazel Ford, Lulu Thompson, Mabel Thompson, Fred Cowan, Lowrie Scott, Maurice Raymond, Lucille Abbott Elva Abbot, Hazel Boyd

Middle Theodore Boyd, Edna Best, Cecil Silverthorn, Inez Ford, Ross Cowan, Emery Tupper, Warren Tupper, Spencer Wallington, Willard White

Front Lela Coulter, Verna White, Mervin Green, Lyle Compeau, Leo Boyd (One who had heart transplant) Velma Scott, Vera Thompson, Silverthorn, Myrtle Raymond





Fire of June 25, 1962



Building that was formerly the North Bayham School,
now "Berg Interiors" in 1972