

Aug 3, 1969

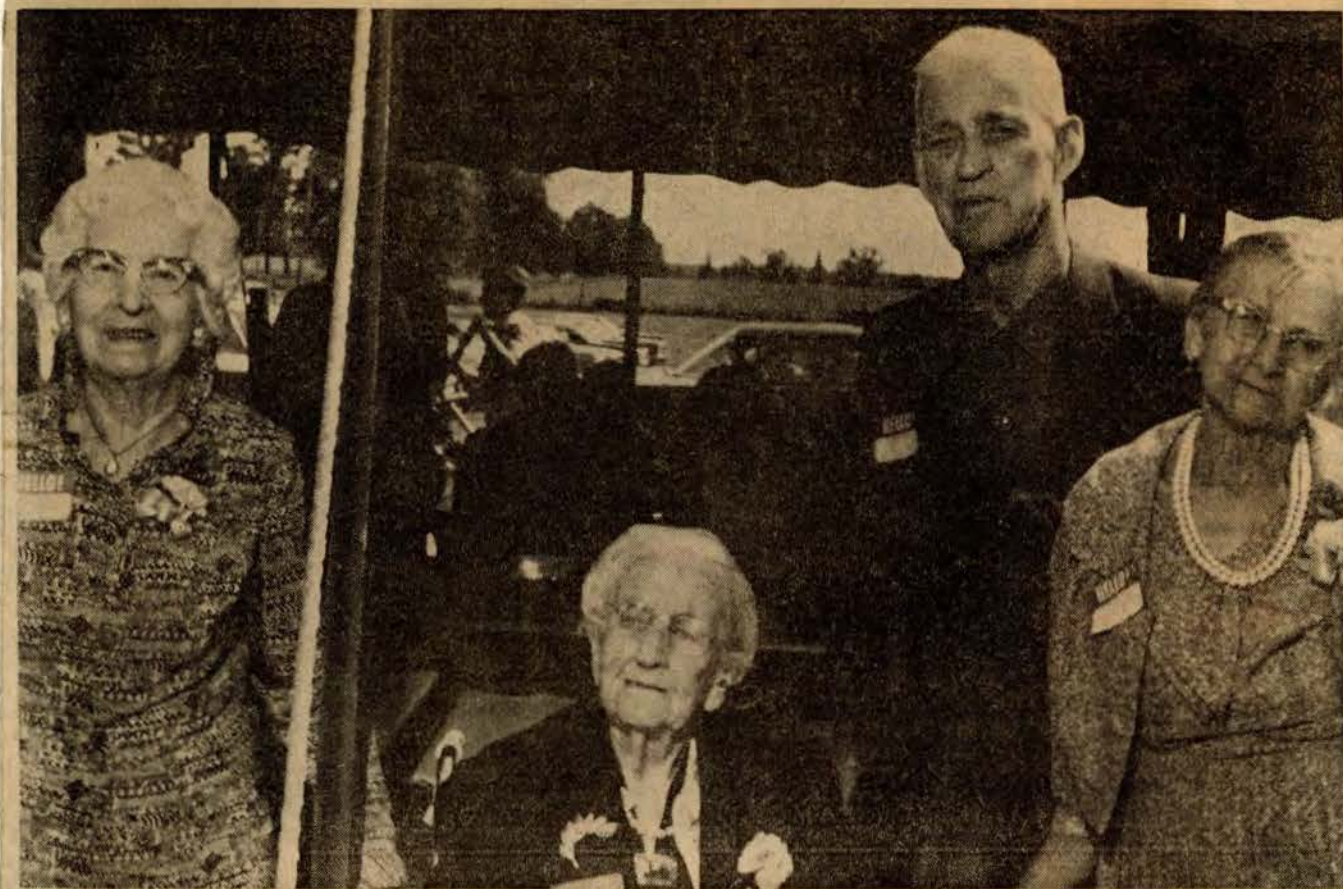
252



BACK TO SCHOOL—Over 200 people turned out to say goodbye to the Skelding Public School, near Belmont, Sunday, for its final reunion and official closing. The old schoolhouse dates back to 1860.—(T.-J. Photo)



LAST GOODBYE—For some of the former pupils and teachers at the Skelding School, memories go back a long way. One student, Gary Silverthorne, came back from Montreal for the occasion. Left to right, Mr. Silverthorne; Dr. H. E. McKellar, St. Thomas, eldest male student present; Mrs. Olive (Weaver) Ferguson, Belmont; Mrs. Herb (Thompson) Brown, Kingsmill, oldest teacher present; Mrs. Maud (Jenkins) McMurray, Belmont. Mrs. Ferguson and Mrs. McMurray both were students at Skelding over 80 years ago.—(T.-J. Photo)



SCHOOL CLOSING REUNION—A closing reunion was held yesterday for past teachers and students of SS No. 24, (Dewar's) School, Yarmouth, which is closing after a 106-year history. In the above picture are shown four of the school's oldest living teachers and students. From left to right are: Mrs. Edna Doolittle, 14 Yarwood Street, St. Thomas, a former teacher; Mrs. Mary Turner, an Elgin Manor resident, a former student; Herb Coulter, RR 1, Kingsmill, a past student, and Mrs. Alec Lyle, RR 1, St. Thomas, a former teacher at the school.—(T.-J. Photo)



AT CEREMONY—A portion of the large crowd, consisting mainly of former teachers and students at the closing reunion of RR No. 24 (Dewar's) School, Sunday.—(T.-J. Photo)

Former teachers, pupils bid farewell to SS No. 25 (Dewars) school house

The closing reunion of S.S. No. 24, (Dewar's) in Yarmouth was held Sunday on the school grounds. Of the 240 people who are present, many were former pupils and teachers of the school.

All rural schools are in the process of being closed down since the Elgin County School Board assumed control of rural education. This September, students of S.S. No. 24 will be transported by bus to a new district school at New Sarum.

The former teachers and pupils and their families were treated to a smorgasbord and picnic basket dinner.

Chairman of the affair, Archie Coulter, gave a welcoming address. Gifts were presented to the oldest living male pupil present, Herb Coulter; the oldest living female pupil present, Mrs. Mary Turner.

Of the 21 living teachers, 13 attended yesterday and were presented with a carnation boutonniere. Histories of the school compiled by Donald Ferguson were presented to each family present.

On August 3, 1861, ½ acre of land was purchased by the trustees from Alex Dewar for the location of the school. The deed for this property is located on the north half of lot 8, concession 12, Yarmouth. The deed was registered on Aug. 17, 1861.

Since North Yarmouth had been settled in the 1820's, it is assumed there was a school in the locality in this period. However, no records can be found to support the existence of such a school.

The first teacher at S.S. No. 24 was R. Stafford. The school opened in 1863. At that time a rate bill stated that each scholar pay 25 cents per month in order to attend. About 40 pupils attended. One of the subjects taught was philosophy. At this time, Mr. A. Butler was the inspector.

Teachers and trustees from other area schools made it a custom to visit the school in order to examine the students' progress. The first well to be sunk on the property was built in 1869, at a cost of \$56.25.

A new fence was constructed in 1882. Another ½ acre was purchased in 1908 and the frame school was moved to its present location. It was raised on a cellar and bricks were applied to its outer surfaces. With construction uncompleted, classes were held in a frame house on the Ferguson farm south of the school.

Recent years has seen the

school modernized with hardwood floors, electric lights and a wood furnace. The latter two items were then replaced with fluorescent lights and an oil furnace. Flush toilets were also added.

When the Township of Yarmouth assumed control of rural education in 1964, the trustees were Grant Muma, Stanley Ferguson, John Coulter.

When the Elgin County School Board assumed control of the Township schools this year, with the result that all rural schools would be closed area residents of the school decided to sponsor the reunion to commemorate its closing.

People come from afar to mark closing down of Skelding School, No. 27

Another of the few remaining one-room schools retired from the educational system on Sunday, when the Skelding School (No. 27 Yarmouth) near Belmont held its last gathering.

Over 200 nostalgic former pupils and teachers attended the closing of the school, built in 1860 to replace a little log cabin schoolhouse across the road. The "new" school, named after the man who donated a section of his farm for the building, first held about 100 people, although in times of

epidemics the attendance dropped to as low as six. Wages for teachers were also low way back then—\$250 per year.

The average enrollment at Skelding School was around 25. The present pupils, like those of the two or three other area schools now closing, will be centralized into the New Sarum public school.

Two of those attending the reunion, Mrs. Olive (Weaver) Ferguson and Mrs. Maud (Jenkins) McMurray, both of Belmont, had been pupils there over 80 years ago. Dr. H. E. McKellar, a St. Thomas dentist, was the man whose school days went back the farthest—he attended Skelding School from 1900-1910. Mrs. Herb (Thompson) Brown, Kingsmill, was the earliest teacher present.

People came to Sunday's reunion from as far away as Montreal. Most were from the Belmont-St. Thomas area, and others were present from Sarnia, Guelph, Ridetown, Oakville, London, and Woodstock.

Chairman in charge of arranging the gathering was John Thompson, Glanworth, a former pupil. A history of the school was given by Mrs. Harold Davis, Belmont.

And now the old Skelding schoolhouse is for sale.

In 1887 a fine new 3 room brick school was built in Belmont. In 1915 a room addition was added. For many years it housed both Public and Continuation Schools, but the latter was closed in 1950. The school section was a union section, drawing its pupils from 4 townships and the village, and was known as S. S. No. 11 South Dorchester.

The seats in Room 1 were still, in 1937, remnants from the old frame school. Some of the older ones were chairs on iron legs. The teacher's desk was merely a table, and the rooms were heated by a wood furnace. The scratching of slate pencils on numerous slates was most distracting.

The present building had installed steam heat, water system, stoker, boiler and condensation pump by 1945.

The S. S. No. 19 Yarmouth School opened in 1833 and closed May 27, 1947.

A portion of the original agreement reads— "Yarmouth, April 10, 1833 between Joseph Graham, Charles Conrad builders, and John Marlatt, George and John Caughell—trustees of the undermentioned schoolhouse...one room...red brick...size twenty-five feet square...ten feet high..."

The brick was made in the New Sarum brickyard. The school was left intact when converted into a home in 1948.

The present day school (built at the junction of No. 3 Highway and Highway 74) was erected in 1946 with Mr. R. T. Tonkin as chairman of the Board. The north room, which made it a three room structure was built in 1958.

Schools in the Yarmouth No. 23 school section were built as early as 1848. Land at a corner of the 10th concession was bought for fifteen dollars in 1877.

Early teacher payment was per pupil and the medium was often grain, vegetables, meat or money.

The last school, Glen, was built by Archibald Palmer (father of Shine Palmer).

Doors closed June 27th, 1969.

Dewar's School No. 24 Yarmouth was built on a half acre of land purchased from Mr. Alex Dewar in 1861.

In 1863 school opened with Mr. R. Stafford as teacher and an enrolment of 40 scholars who paid 25 cents per month tuition. Trustees were Messers John Couse, John Thompson and Thomas Fowler.

In 1908 another $\frac{1}{2}$ acre of land was acquired from Mr. Wm. Fowler. The school was moved, raised and bricked.

By 1964, when the Yarmouth Area Board assumed control, many improvements had been made. Trustees were Grant Muma, Stanley Ferguson and John Coulter. Mr. R. E. Rawlings was inspector. The school closed in 1969 after 106 years of use.

Skelding No. 27, replaced a log building built about 1850 on the north side of the thirteenth concession.

In 1860 George Skelding donated a site and a frame building was erected known as "Skeldings".

The pupils numbering one hundred sat on benches along the wall. Wood was painted to serve as blackboards and students did their lessons on slates. Text books were unknown. The teacher's annual salary was \$250.

The building was "modernized" in 1910.

These schools have served well to educate the people in the communities of which they were a part. They will be remembered for many years by the local populace as a meeting place and a community hall. It seems however that the smaller unit is being gradually replaced by larger, in the name of progress, giving the pupils a broader experience.



Elgin County Wrestling Champions

East Elgin Secondary School boys wrestling team recently won the Elgin County Wrestling championship, with 58 points. They were in competitive play against six other high schools in the area. Above front row left to right are, Mark West, Mike Lysko, Dan Brown, and Dan Swaenepole, Second row left to right are Jamie Kerkhove, Greg Zavitz, and Larry Prong. Also 11 other public school wrestlers in the group played, Feb. 13, 1978.

Get the trunk of a large tree, chop the wood out of the centre leaving the wall three or four inches thick and the same for the bottom. By means of a brace and bit, insert an opening through the wall near the bottom. Elevate the structure slanted a foot or two off the ground thus, leaving space for a container to catch the lye. Pour your wood ashes from day to day into the log and every few days pour in a pail of water thus, making the lye to run from the opening into the container. After you have received your required amount of lye, pour it into a real large iron kettle and boil as you would sap slowly, after adding pork scraps and fat. Boil mixture until thick and then, cool. In the morning cut the soap in cakes and place it in a cool place.

HOW TO MAKE BUTTER

Separate the cream from the milk by means of a separator or set the milk in pans for two days in a cool place and skim the cream off. Sour the cream for two days, stir occasionally. Then, pour the sour cream into a churn large enough for expansion. Revolve the churn for twenty minutes or so and remove the plug from time to time to let the gas escape. The churning cream is 60 degrees. If, more than 60 degrees, add ice to cream and if less than 60 degrees add warm water to cream. In due time, particles of butter are formed into a chunk and consequently, buttermilk remains. If you prefer sweet butter, churn the cream when it is sweet. The skim milk and buttermilk may be fed to calves, chickens and pigs while human beings may even drink it. Pour off the buttermilk. Wash the butter three times in luke warm water thus, releasing all the buttermilk so, that the butter will not be streaky. Salt to taste in a wooden, scalded butter bowl with a laddle. Rub damp salt on butter bowl and laddle and print so that the butter will not stick. Print and place the pound sections on wet butterpaper. Fold the paper around the butter and keep it in a cool place until used.

HOW TO MAKE BREAD

In the 18th Century, hops were sown and grew similiar to a climbing vine. They were picked when ripe, dried and made into yeast for bread. Later, the Royal yeast cakes came on the market (6 cakes in each box) This yeast made the bread more moist and stayed more moist for several days than the yeast we buy these days.

Recipe: dissolve 1 Royal yeast cake in $\frac{1}{2}$ cup of lukewarm water. Add 1 tablespoon of white sugar and let stand for ten minutes. Pour in $1\frac{1}{2}$ cups of cooled, scalded milk, 2 level teaspoons salt, 3 tablespoons white sugar, 4 tablespoons shortening, fold in 6 cups of sifted bread flour. Mix well with hands. Keep sides of bowl wiped clean. Turn out on floured board and knead until smooth and bubblely at surface. Cover and let stand in a warm place until double in size. Knead again and cover for 56 minutes. Let stand 15 minutes. Divide and make 2 loaves or shape into rolls. Let rise double the size and bake at 400 degrees at first. Reduce to 350 until done about 25 minutes. Brush butter or sugar paste on top. Serve hot with maple syrup or honey.

HOW TO PACK EGGS FOR WINTER

1. Take a large wooden box.
2. Line the bottom with salt.
3. Place eggs in rows in the salt.
4. Cover the eggs with salt.
5. Add extra salt for second layer and so on, until the box is completely full.
6. Cover the last layer with a thickness of salt then, place the lid of box on top.

SOUTH DORCHESTER TOWNSHIP REEVES AND WARDENS

(from 1852 to 1964-72, 120 years of progress)

1. Jacob Cline	1852-1853	20. Duncan Ferguson	1891-92
2. John Gregory	1854	21. John H. Wilson	1893-99
3. Reuben Johnston	1855-1856	22. David Moore	1900
4. Jacob Cline	1857- 58 -59	23. Andrew Stokes	1901-02
5. Edwin McCready	1860-1861	24. J. L. Woolley	1903
6. J.S. Clunas	1862-1868	25. John A. Simpson	1904
7. Edward Hegler	1869	26. Charles Luton	1905-06-07-08
8. John Ballah	1870	27. James J. Mitchell	1909-1910
9. W.H. Brown	1871-1872	28. Silas R. Wilson	1911-1912
10. M.G. Woodworth	1873	29. Sam Dawes	1913-14-15
11. Jacob Cline	1874	30. Harry Lyons	1916-17
12. Peter Charlton	1875	31. Malcolm McVicar	1918-19
13. Andrew Cline	1876-1878	32. Thomas Farrow	1920-21
14. Lewis Simpson	1879	33. J. Arthur Moore	1922-23-24
15. James Bentley	1880-81-82	34. Wm. Kiddie	1925-26-27-28
16. William Luton	1883	35. G. (Bert) Taylor	1929-1945 (16 Yrs.)
17. J.C. Davis	1884-85-86-87	36. James C. Jenkins	1946-47-48
18. John Charlton	1888	37. R. K. McNeil	1949-50-51-52
19. W.S. McCready	1889-1890	38. John B. Wilson	1953 (still is)

WARDENS OF SOUTH DORCHESTER

1. John Clunas	- - - - -	1865
2. Edward Hegler	- - - - -	1878
3. J. C. Dance	- - - - -	1887
4. Andrew Cline	- - - - -	1891
5. David F. Moore	- - - - -	1900
6. Charles Luton	- - - - -	1908
7. Wm. Kiddie	- - - - -	1928
8. H. G. (Bert) Taylor	- - - - -	1931
9. James C. Jenkins	- - - - -	1940
10. R. K. McNeil	- - - - -	1952
11. John B. Wilson	- - - - -	1958

268

Some of - Assessor, Peter J. Putman's Assessments for S. Dorch. 1877

Name	Age	Acres	Assessment	Lot	Con.	Religion
Peter McNeil	60	100	3700	14	12	Dicile
David Ehyte	60	100	3900	24	12	"
James Moore Sr.	67	100	3900	23	12	Presby.
Alexander Hoover	35	15	700	21	12	Pro.
Wm H. Charlton	41	100	3900	23	12	Disciple
William Appleford	42	50	1900	24	12	Does'nt say.
Andrew Cline	40	200	7300	1	11	Pro.
Peter Charlton	46	167½	6250	6,5,5,	11,11,12.	Pro.
Peter Dennis	35	2/5 ac.	250	13,13	11	Pro.
P. J. Putman	45	24	1300	12	11	M.C.of C.
Nelson Cline		250	9000	13,14	11	Pro.
Henry Bryee & Sr.	36,76	100	3400	16	11	Pres.
John Sherk	30	100	3800	16	11	Disciple
Randle Cline		398	14300	18,19,14,13	11,10	Pro.
Wm. H. Brown	55	100	3900	21	11	Pro.
Jno. Wismer Sr.	72	61½	2400	23	11	Pro.
Jas. Moore, Jr.	28	35½	800	24	11	Does'nt say
Fredrick Carter	47	125	4650	24,23	11	C. E.
Geo. Durdle	51	3/5 ac.	250	24	11	Baptist
Benjamin Dennis		½ ac.	375	13	10	Pro.
Thomas Widner	42	20½	1050	13,12	10	--
Mathew White	32	100	3600	14,15	10	M.C.of C
Edmund Sheperd	53	48	1600	19	10	Disciple
David Moore & Sons	64	100	3700	21	10	C. E.
Thomas McGregor	58	50	1900	22	10	Pres.
John R. Charlton	34	50	2000	24	10	Disciple
Peter Ferguson	62	100	2700	9	9	Pres.
Benjamin Noble		125	4000	11,10	9	"
James Sherk	54	75	2900	11	9	Baptist

Name	Age	Acres	Assessment	Tot	Con.	Religion
James C. McCrediet & Son	53	372	12500	12,13,13,14	9,11	Pres.
William Roberts	32	100	3600	16	9	"
James Ballah	39	100	3500	18	9	Disciple
George Learn	51	100	3800	19	9	Pro
S. T. Pettit	47	150	5600	21.22.22	8,9,8	MC. of C.

Names	Cattle	Pigs	Horses
Peter McNeil	9	12	6
David Whyte	6	5	2
James Moore Sr.	23	3	4
Alexander Hoover	2	2	2
Wm. H. Charlton	12	4	3
Andrew Cline	23	9	7
Peter Charlton	22	13	6
Peter Dennis			1
Nelson Cline	8	2	6
Henry Bryce Sr.	12	3	6
John Sherk	13	5	4
Randle Cline	15	16	11
Wm. H. Brown	2	4	2
Jno Wismer	4	5	4
Jas. Moore, Jr.	Does'nt say.		
Fredrick Carter	15	6	5
Benjamin Dennis	1	1	1
Thomas Widner	2	2	1
Matthew White	8	8	3
Edmund Shepherd	5	4	2
David Moore	8	7	4
John R. Charlton	8	2	3
Peter Ferguson	20	6	5
Benjamin Noble	15	9	3
James Sherk	15	7	3
James McCrediet	10	30	8
William Roberts	14	6	3
James Ballah	16	35	6
George Learn	9	5	7
S. T. Pettit	20	4	5

While some farmers keep as many as 8 to 10 dogs.