

SCHOOL AND EDUCATION.

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SCHOOL

School teaching in 1846

Mrs. F. J. Payne wrote the following interesting sketch on school teaching in Ontario in 1846.

In looking back over my early school days, some 60 years ago, I see myself with sunbonnet in summer and warm hood in winter, heavy handmade shoes and homespun dress, starting off to school. I was not encumbered with a load of books, slates and papers for they were left at school as it was there we had to do our studying. Our teacher not only heard us recite but made us study. Our school orders were when meeting anyone on the street we were to make a courtesy and the boys were expected to lift their hats and make a bow. This we were obliged to do on entering the school room if the teacher was at the desk.

The schoolhouse was built of logs and the desks were made by boring holes in them and putting one board flat for our books and slates and one above that on the slant for writing. These extended all around the room. Our seats consisted of a log split in half with short wooden legs and no back. The studies were usually Cobb's spelling book, the Testament, Hayball's arithmetic, English reader, Lennie's grammar, a copybook and Comstock's Philosophy. When the class was heard recite the lessons they were made to stand in line, and the best scholar one day was placed at the foot of the class on the next and his ambition was to work up to the head.

When I was fifteen years old my father came home from attending one of the school meetings and greatly astonished me by saying that I was to teach the school in the section the coming summer. I said "Oh, I cannot teach." But he told me it was all settled, that the superintendant said that I was quite capable and that was enough. But I had to have a certificate and for that I was obliged to go to London, Ont. which was no little trip in those days. I was taken to London by my father and interviewed by Mr. Elliott, the County Superintendant (now Judge Elliott) who gave me the needed credentials. I remember once when he came to examine my school that he asked me to read a verse from the Testament and I read "Render to every man his dues". I hope that he has not forgotten this verse.

I had some nervous times while teaching; especially when four or five wild Indians would take it in their heads to rest under the trees that surrounded the schoolhouse. You could hear a pin drop as the children were as nervous as myself.

The teachers in those days had to board around with the different families; those having the most children boarded the teacher the longest. You were not allowed to choose your own boarding house. Once a trustee coming to see me about teaching a school asked me first if I was a good soldier. I said that it was according to what I had to fight. He answered 'Big Rude Boys', but I did not have much trouble. Some boys were wild and nearly fullgrown before coming to school and, of course, quite ignorant. I remember asking one big boy what his father's name was and he answered 'Uncle Jake'. When I obtained my second certificate we were not allowed to

write our answers, but were placed in a line and the super-intendant and Mr. Silcox and the minister plied us with questions and we had to answer right or wrong. The first school that I taught was at Frome in 1846. The schoolhouse stood on the corner of Mr. Silcox's place (he was the Congregational minister) opposite the Methodist church. In 1848 I taught school in a log house on Mr. Gardner's farm north of Paynes Mills and in 1848-49 I taught S.S. # 7, the Paynes Mills school. In 1850 I taught at the Yarmouth school on the London and Port Stanley gravel road. The salaries were very small, averaging from nine to ten dollars a month for female teachers.

The following excerpts are taken from an old diary kept by Mr. Fred Payne.

Preface in diary for 1867

Cash on hand from 1866 - NOTHING. But owing no man anything.

Grain on hand - 100 bu. wheat, 300 bu. oats, 80 bu. peas, 20 bu. barley, 16 bu. clover seed, hay a little more than need for my stock.

Friday April 19, 1867

This being Good Friday we done but little, very few in the neighbourhood kept it. Afternoon I, Henry, Hohn, George, Julia went to Uncle Henry's mill pond. We all had a boat ride. Lue Sells and Stanley Sharon with us. Julia slipt in the water with Stanley and got some wet.

Wednesday April 24

Card (hired man) ploughed all day, Henry took sheep to field, I planted plum trees, sawed, bored and morticed all the posts for the garden fence. Paid Julia and John cash for finding eggs 8 cents.

May 2

Sowed 18 bushels oats, dragged them twice over. Cole Berdan got 12 bushels oats for Nathaniel Berdan at 45 cents per bushel. Mama walked to St. Thomas, expended for goods \$2.47

May 11

Sold one sheep--\$1.50

May 29

Sturgeon Sharon got hay for which he paid me in shingles. Mrs. Dodson washed for grandma--paid her 50 cents. Miss Sarah Sells and Miss Sutton here. Received for an Indian's dinner 5 cents.

June 8

Got ready to wash sheep. Henry Flockhart helped me and washed them in water from underground drains. Man here piling manure, paid him his wages 87 cents.

August 17

Mama helped me unload a load of wheat and draw two small loads of wheat. I helped Uncle Sturgeon draw and stack 5 loads of peas after dinner and mama milked for me tonight. Julia caught five mice in a trap.

September 30

Helped John Stewart thresh all day. Children got the cows and mama milked and fed the pigs. She paid one pound of butter on her shoes.

October 9

Up early for going to Iona fair. Took potatoes, corn mama had husked, butter, bread and a two year old colt. Got first on bread and second on corn.

December 27 1867

Rained so hard I was not able to work outside. The frost is nearly all out of the ground and it is so warm we scarcely need a fire.

December 30

Fanny Silcox here today, engaged to board at 25 cents a day.

December 31

Mama and I cast up our accounts and found we have received \$496.97 and expended \$478.86 leaving a balance ~~of~~ \$18.11. Out of this we gave the minister and charity \$15.47

Tuesday January 21, 1868

This is my birthday. I have now been spared to live 41 years. I begin to feel the effects of old age being troubled with rheumatism.

March 28

Clear and fine--a great week for sugar making. We have made in all this week 200 lbs. all good stirred sugar.

This year I have received \$547.47 and expended \$534.09. This includes outlay and income except our board; five children, my wife, myself, a hired man and one boarder and my mother half the time, which makes a family of 9½. This year has been noted for earthquakes in several places and great storms at sea. In the political world two new eras started; in the United States the negroes voting for president and in England the defeat of the Tory party on the free church question for Ireland and the great success of the British soldiers in Abyssinnia without the loss of one man. Spain dethroned their Queen Isabelle without bloodshed, the people crying loud for liberty.

Some prices noted--

Hay \$8.50 a ton

Wheat \$1.50 a bushel

60 lb. keg of butter \$7.50

Spinning wheel \$6.50

Cradle for grain \$3.60

127 lbs. beef \$6.25

2 pigs \$1.50

Taxes \$16.20

SCHOOL SECTION NO. 7

In 1832 William Sells and Brinton P. Brown agitated for a school nearer than Five Stakes or Frome. In 1832 a school was built on Lot 34 South known as the Wade School House. Money to buy nails and shingles was raised by subscription. James Jackson prepared lumber as he had a saw mill and Jonathan Wade did the carpenter work. Being no playground the children had to use the road for this purpose.

Andrew Boyd was the first teacher. He was paid so much for each pupil and boarded with the pupils. Books used were the Bible, the English Reader, Cobb's Spelling Book and Daybald's Arithmetic.

In 1862 land was purchased from Henry Payne on Lot 35, north side of the North Branch of the Talbot Road, which is the sight of our present school (1952).

During the year 1876 School Section # 18 (along Concessions 3 and 4 of Southwold) and School Section # 7 agreed to join and have one school known as S.S.# 7.

In the year 1889 the combined sections agreed to rebuild the present school on the same sight. Trustees were John Down, Byron Wade and A. McGugan. About 1892 D. McBain taught in this shhool. Other teachers were Dr. McClay, father of the present Dr. McClay at Aylmer, and Grant Silcox of Frome.

In 1889 land was bought on the side road north from Paynes Mills to build a school for both sections but because of the mill pond being dangerous to children passing it, the majority voted to rebuild on the present site.

Teachers of S.S.# 7

	1885	----	Miss F. McNiven	
	1888	----	Fred J. Voaden	(1887 ---A.J.McMULLEN)
	1890	----	Miss McLean	
	1892	----	Miss Enie Lyle	(married Henry James Wyatt)
	1895	----	Miss Leach	
	1896	----	Mr. D. McBane	
	1899	----	Mr. Van Velsor	
	1900	----	Mr. Van Velsor	Sr. room
			Miss Legate	Jr. room
	1905	----	Mr. James Matthews	
	1907	----	Miss Annie Gunning	
	1910	----	Miss Mary Buck	
	1917	----	Miss Norma Perry	
	1920	----	Miss May K. Breen	(married Roy Beaudoin)
	1922	----	Miss Barbara McCallum	
	1924	----	Miss Margaret J. Annett	(Mrs. Angus McIntosh)
	1926	----	Miss Hilda Earle	
	1927	----	Miss Norma Scott	(Mrs. Eldon Gilbert)
	1929	----	Miss Edith Tuckey	(Mrs. Alfred Boughner)
Jan. 1	1931	----	Glen Payne	
	1931	----	Miss Margaret McAlpine	
	1933	----	Miss Mildred Dundas	
	1941	----	Miss Margaret McIntyre	(Mrs. Alex Turner)
	1943	----	Miss Bonnie Bissett	
	1945	----	Miss Mildred Dundas	

teachers cont'd

	1946	----	Mrs. McDowell	January and February
	1946	----	Miss Mildred Dundas	
	1949	----	Mrs. M. Butterwick	January and February
	1949	----	Mrs. Fred Helks	March, April, May and June
	1949	----	Miss Margaret G. Annett	(Mrs. Stuart Fife)
	1953	----	Miss Elizabeth Graham	(Mrs. Bill Malott)
	1957	----	Miss Annie Isabel McCallum	(Mrs. Duncan Tait)
Jan. 1,	1964	----	Mrs. Duncan Tait	
	1967	----	Mrs. Jack Satchell	

School Section No. 18 Southwold

About 1840 the settlers along Concessions Three and Four and North (Area known as the Clergy Reserve) decided a school was necessary in their community. A log school was built on the south corner of Lot 24, Concession 4. This land is now owned by Al Parsons.

The first trustees were Isaac Gilbert, Donald Munro, William Mulligan and James Harshaw was the first teacher.

Neil Munro who later became a noted Physician in Detroit also taught in this school.

About 1866 this log school was burnt and due to the small number of pupils at the time it was not rebuilt. For ten years the section was without a school.

In 1876 School Sections S.S. No. 18 and S.S. No. 7 came to an agreement that they would unite and be known as S.S. No. 7.

In later years land was bought on the side road north of the back street to build a school for both sections, but because of the mill pond being dangerous to children passing it, the majority voted to rebuild the school and the same school is still in use being situated on the north side of No. 3 Highway.

School Section No. 7 Southwold

The facts for this paper were collected by Miss Louie Gilbert who died early in November, 1895, before it was completed.

While the land in school section No. 7 north of the fourth concession, Southwold, was uninhabited by man, the lots along the "north branch of Talbot road" were gradually being settled by descendants of the United Empire Loyalists and other immigrants.

How and why the people prospered:

These settlers, when they first inhabited the country, having no means to build houses, erected rude shanties of logs. As stoves and chimneys were not thought of, they had to use fireplaces above which a large hole in the roof allowed the smoke to escape. After living in those huts or shanties a short time, these people, encouraged by prosperity, began to erect log houses with chimneys, which were considered quite a luxury. Later on these were replaced by good frame and brick houses such as exist at the present time.

The forests were very thick with ash, birch, maple, walnut, oak, etc., thus requiring a great deal of labor to clear the land, but when cleared it proved very fertile. The timber was valueless, as everybody could get all the wood they required by simply cutting it, therefore the wood was piled in heaps and burned. The lye from these ashes was put in huge caldron kettles, weighing about 500 pounds, and boiled to make black salts. This was sold and shipped away to make potash.

To prove the fertility of the soil, two heads of wheat were found on David Gilbert's farm, containing 163 and 165 grains respectively. Wheat was often sold for 50 cents and oats for 10 cents per bushel. To get granulated and brown sugar was impossible, so maple sugar, which was made from the sap of the many maple trees, had to be used.

Thread was so scarce that the people often had to use strings of the basswood bark to mend their clothing.

The settlers had to carry their grist or take their oxen and the wagon which supplied the neighbourhood, with his load, to mill about sixty miles distant near Port Ryerse. Some of them would have a stone or a block of wood hollowed out like a bowl, in which they would pound their grain to a coarse meal, bran, shorts and flour all going together.

As game was abundant people were supplied with meat as well as being paid a bounty for the heads of the fiercer animals such as bears, wolves, and lynx. These animals were nearly always

trapped as the old flint lock gun made hunting very unsuccessful. Beavers were not extinct at this time; even now there are places which show where these industrious little animals had built their dams across the stream. In the spring and fall of the year the sky was often darkened by the dense flocks of wild pigeons passing over. Nets which were set to catch them often contained from twenty-five to one hundred pigeons. In the spring many small streams swarmed with fish, thus supplying the settlers with a change of diet.

In a few years all the lots along the Back street were taken up. David Gilbert one of the first settlers settled on lot 37. He lived only about 2 years on his place until his shanty, clothing and all provisions were burned. As it was in the fall of the year they had to live two weeks on hickory nuts and pounded corn; then they returned to Long Point about 60 miles distant. In the early summer of the following year 1818 they returned to their farm which they drew from Colonel Talbot. To show his respect for him Colonel Talbot kept his lot for him during his absence at Long Point.

In the war of 1812-14, he drove a team with supplies for the soldiers. One cold winter's night he had to sleep in a hog shed at Delaware village, as all the places of accommodation were filled. In the morning they proceeded westward to Battle Hill on Longwood's road in Middlesex.

Wm. Sells (Pennsylvania Dutchman), came to Port Dover when he was ten years of age, in 1798. He fought in the battle of Lundy's Lane and was wounded. After the war he came here and settled on Lot 33, south. He was the first and only blacksmith in this part for a number of years, he died at the age of 74.

Albert Berdan, United Empire Loyalist, came from New Jersey, and settled at Turkey Point, near Long Point, in 1796. His sons took active part in the war of 1812-14. Samuel and Jacob Berdan, sons of Albert Berdan, came to this part after the war, and took up lots 36 north, and 36 south, on the Back street. Samuel Berdan died at the age of sixty-six, after a lingering illness of thirty years. Jacob Berdan died when he was eighty-seven years of age. About the year 1859, while Isaac Freeborn and Francis Berdan, sons of Samuel Berdan, were digging in a low marshy place on their father's farm, lot 32, north, they found some large bones of some huge animal. Its teeth were as large as a common brick, two tusks or horns, eight inches across at the base, tapered to a point in a semi-circle, measuring seven feet; thigh bones, a jaw bone, and several other bones were found. Where did this animal come from, and when did he live here? These bones were sold to the museum at Niagara Falls.

On the 5th of April, 1862, Isaac Freeborn and his brother, Samuel, left for the gold fields in British Columbia. They travelled by rail to St. Paul, Minnesota, from there to Fort