

School

The rural school we all attended was just a quarter of a mile west of our house. We were lucky, some families lived two miles from school. Everybody walked to school back then.

When Clifford and Emma were in school it was common practice for the teacher to room with some family in the district. However, my first teacher was a young man who lived with his parents two miles from our school.

When I started to school in the fall of 1917, we had double desks (one long enough to seat two pupils together) a coal furnace, kerosene lamps on wall brackets, (these were for night gatherings not daytime use) outhouses, and a cob and coal shed.

In the thirties chemical toilets were installed and when Rural Electrification came lights were installed.

By 1920 an eighth grade education was required by law and by then many more rural children were going to high school.

For many years the schools all operated on three terms-- fall, winter, spring. The teachers were hired that way too, but by the time I started in 1930 the eight, eight and a half, or nine month terms were used.

When the fall, winter, and spring terms were used the older children went only in the winter because they helped on the farm the rest of the year. Even then, the first few years I taught we had a husking vacation of two weeks in October.

Dad was secretary-treasurer of our district for many years. He had in his possession some of the early records from which I was able to gather information. I learned the voters of the district first organized on May 10, 1864. On Feb. 18, 1865, they voted to procure a site and borrow money to build a school house. On June 13, 1865, they made an agreement with a contractor to build the school house for one hundred fifty dollars. Thus District #6 was begun.

NOTE: I have included a copy of the first minutes of the voters meetings.

The district was District #6 of Nevada Twp., Livingston Co. Ill., from 1865 through 1901. Following a state and county reorganization of all school districts, it was changed to District #176 after Jan. 1, 1902, and remained that until consolidation took over and the school was closed in the late 50's.

I have copied the daily programs and some other records from old daily record books that I have. These show the time slots allowed and the subjects taught where all eight grades were involved.

The "Graduation, Classification, and Standing" copies were made just because they included all four of the Hoffman "kids".

Each spring the directors would hire volunteers from the district to make the school ready for fall. Someone would be hired to do the various jobs such as clean the room, mow the yard, fix the fence, haul cobs and coal, etc.

*Material written by
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May 10th 1864.

The legal voters in this district having met, proceeded to hold an election for school directors.

The following persons were elected.
 J. C. Magee, for three years.
 Joseph S. Davenport, for two years,
 and Jason Pringle, for one year.

The board of directors then organized by electing J. C. Magee President and Joseph S. Davenport Clerk, of the board.

Joseph S. Davenport
 Clerk.

Feb 18th 1865.

At an election held at the house of Joseph S. Davenport, one of the directors, William McDonald was duly elected school director, to fill the vacancy caused by the death of Jason Pringle.

The meeting then voted to authorize the directors to procure a site as near the center of the district as possible, also to borrow money to build a school house.

Proceedings of District Board.

June 18th 1865

The directors of this district made a written agreement with William Mulligan. The said William Mulligan to build a school house, according to specifications, on a lot to be designated by the directors, for the sum of one hundred fifty dollars.