Wash-Oak School Curriculum

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Education and The One Room Schoolhouse
In Early Rural America

Including

The Cold Brook School, Readington Township, New Jersey

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The Society's Line #1073
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Grammer school education in the early years of America, prior to the 1830s, was a disorganized amalgam of basic skills and religion, taught by untrained teachers in settings reminiscent of jails. Opportunity for learning was limited; family wealth dictated what, if any, education was available and there was little or no conception of a truly public education system. And yet, students did learn, did move on to higher education, and did produce leadership which the country desperately required. This achievement and the visions it produced brought about the schools of today but not without fits and starts and, in general, seeming anarchy.

The population of the United States, during this time, was about 5,000,000, with half spread around the South and the rest in the middle Atlantic states and New England. The great majority lived in rural areas so education was intrinsically tied to farming and the farming calendar. With the relative conservatism of farming populations, the state of education in the early 1800s had changed little from a 100 years prior.

The schooling which existed was primarily for boys. They were expected to attend and were pushed on to colleges and universities. For the wealthy, tutors provided instruction; for the less affluent, the twin duties of farm life and education could become mutually exclusive, with farming the clear winner. Girls were typically discouraged from any advanced education beyond the social graces, music, dancing, and "good housewifery"; the more progressive families might allow their daughters to be tutored in reading and arithmetic. Rural girls attended the local school but were far more engaged in chores at home, learning from their mothers the requirements of good wives and home/farm managers (Earle, 112).

Schools, themselves, were established where the population could support them. While state support through taxation was sporatic, private pay-as-you-go schools flourished for areas where there were sufficient resources. In rural communities, distance from school was a major problem. Four miles was considered the maximum distance a child could conceivably walk twice a day. Children dropped in and out of school as the farm chores dictated, and they would bring whatever books or supplies they happened to own (Schroeder, 6).

The first rural schoolhouses of the 1700s were one room structures mostly made of logs with rough puncheon or dirt floors. The roofs were of bark slanted higher on one side for drainage. Toward the late 18th century, logs were replaced with fieldstone or wooden framing with windows that contained larded parchment for panes. The buildings were unevenly heated with fireplaces or, later, box stoves. Student fees were frequently paid in firewood, thus the worst, or "green" wood many times found its way to the school woodpile. Often, the children whose parents were delinquent in payments were forced to sit farthest from the fire. School desks were merely boards laid over logs thrust into the walls 3 to 4 feet from the floor. The older children faced the wall with their backs towards the master, who sat in the middle of the room. Younger children sat on blocks or log benches. These dismal and uncomfortable conditions continued well into the 19th century, particularly in the very rural areas. Not until the general school reform of 1832 did conditions change, making way for the charm of the "little red" schoolhouse (Earle, 69-76).

In these very early years, school days of the 1800s were not unlike those of the middle to late 1700s. The bell was rung at 8 a.m. to call students; school might close for recess by 11 and reopen again by 1 p.m. and finally close for the day at 4 (Earle, 74). The school day opened and closed with a prayer and studies for all students were the "three R's"... reading, writing, and religion, with a liberal dose of "ciphering" thrown in. In the 1700s, the hornbook and prymer (or primer) provided all that a pupil needed to know. Both of these continued to be used into the early 1800s. The hornbook, from which students learned their letters and to spell, was really not a book at all, but a thin piece of wood, usually about four to five inches long and two inches wide. Upon it was placed a sheet of paper printed at the top with the alphabet in upper and lower case. Below these came simple syllables and, finally, The Lord's Prayer. The printed page was duly covered with a thin sheet of yellowish horn and both paper and horn were fastened around the edges to the wood by a narrow sheet of metal (usually brass) and tacked down by nails. The lower end usually contained a small hole through which a string could be looped and tied, enabling the "book" to be placed around the neck or hung by the side (Earle, 118-122).

The primer was specifically a book of private devotions. Authorized by the Church and written or printed partially or wholly in the vernacular, it contained devotions for the hours, the Creed, Lord's Prayer, Ten Commandments, some psalms, and instructions of basic Christian knowledge. The hornbook and primer were eventually succeeded by the New England Primer which was a very good combination of the two. For 150 years it was THE school book of America followed by Webster's Speller (1827) and then the McGuffey Reader (1836-1887) (Earle, 128).

From these, all children would memorize and recite. While one group was reciting to the teacher, others would be doing "desk work". If the teacher was progressive enough, Science would be taught corresponding to the seasons; insect study during the fall, weather and astronomy in the winter, and botany in the spring using the neighboring woods, meadows, and farms for laboratories.

Besides the hornbook and primer, school supplies were extremely limited. Blackboards and maps were almost unknown, globes usually unavailable, and paper a precious commodity. Even though pencils were being made as early as 1740, small schools could rarely afford them, so pupils made their own ink for feathered quills, or used charcoal to write on birch bark or, if parents could afford it, paper that was rough and dark. Students' copybooks were also handmade and ruled by hand using lead plummets. Arithmetic problems and compositions were written on slate boards, a rectangle of better quality slate than that used for roofing, set in a wooden frame with a slate pencil or plain chalk (Earle, 78).

Along with academics, children, then as now, found time for recreational diversion. All schools had a recess period which came later in the morning and usually included lunch. Some favorite games of the time were "Snap the Whip", "Ante, Ante, Over the Shanty", "See-Saw, Margery Daw", and in winter, "Fox and Geese". All very, very simple games compared to the computer generated fun of today (Kalman, 18).

Teachers taught academics and healthy play to their students but lessons in manners and moral behavior were just as important. As a teacher of the time explained, "I shall speak to you of the virtues and happiness of life, and in doing so, I shall use your fingers to impress it upon your memories...not only because you use your fingers, but also because you will always have the lesson at your fingertips." This was known as the "Five Finger Lesson" and they were, Truthfulness, Honesty, Punctuality, Cleanliness, and Kindness. Children were often told by their teachers to "make their manners". This was nothing more than to curtsie or bow to their elders. At the end of the day, the teacher's final reminder might have been for his pupils to "make their manners" to their parents when they arrived home (Kalman, 18).

Teacher training, on the other hand, was haphazard at best. In fact, there was no formal training and standards of recruiting were deplorable. School committees were hampered by ignorance, nepotism, or charitable intent. An old-timer recalled that it was "the custom to employ those teachers who were in the most need of support; if they could read a chapter of the Testament, teach the shorter Catechism, and whip the boys", they were sufficiently qualified (Furnas, 537).

Men were hired over women mostly for their strength to exact punishments, not for any dramatic academic ability. The best prospects were young men earning their way through academies by alternating a year or two of teaching with a year or two of learning. Hence, quality teaching slid down to somebody's poor nephew who wasn't good for much but had learned some of the three R's. If the school children were lucky, they got someone who had a natural ability and integrity to pass on to his young charges. Women taught if there happened to be a summer term, but their pupils were often the very youngest children unable to do farm chores. The older boys in particular would, naturally, be at home helping on the family farm.

With the return of the older boys after the summer and fall harvesting, few women could cope. Discipline for all sizes of pupils was based on physical blows...from the ferule (a flat ruler for whacking the palms of the hands or other parts of the body for minor offenses) to the birch rod or hickory switch for flogging behinds and shoulders. The whipping post was a frightful but all to common sight outside the schoolhouse door. To promise to "flog the boys generously" was often the best way for a teaching applicant to win the committee's favor and it troubled nobody that, if the occasion warranted, a male teacher would beat the older girls as well (Furnas, 537).

There doesn't seem to have been any other means of major discipline and, by necessity, the schools were coeducational. A separate teacher and building for each sex would have been wildly beyond the community's resources. (Among Quakers, however, one of the few non-corporal punishments for misbehaving boys was to make them sit on the girls' side of the room.) Wearing the "dunce" cap, locked in the cellar with a rat or two, and staying after school were some of the other choices a teacher could resort to. Still, most people felt "to spare the rod, you spoil the child"; physical punishment was the best punishment, which therefore limited employment opportunities for women (Furnas, 538).

There was not much a male teacher could do wrong, but a female applicant was carefully scrutinized. Her character and moral fiber were far more important than any personal education she had to offer. Over all, school committees tended to hire teachers they knew rather than strangers. If a woman persevered, her teaching days were still numbered in that if she became engaged or, indeed, married during that time, she would quickly be dismissed. Nevertheless, the more dedicated women elected to remain single so that they could continue their teaching careers (Furnas, 538).

The closing of the 18th century and the time period of 1780-1830 brought increasing awareness of the need for quality education. The deplorable conditions that had sufficed for over 100 years were no longer tolerable, much less adequate. In 1779, Thomas Jefferson had begun drawing up a complete new school system for the Commonwealth of Virginia beginning from the very first grades straight through university. He dreamed of beginning with three years of elementary school, gratis, for every free child, with scholarships for the most promising boys all the way to the top. His purpose was secular, that "of rendering the people safe, as they are the ultimate guardians of their own liberty...every government degenerates when trusted to the rulers of the people alone. The people themselves are its own safe depositories...and to render even them safe, their minds must be improved to a certain degree." (Furnas, 535).

At the time, nothing came of this lovingly worked out scheme, except for the founding of the University of Virginia (without the state-created infrastructure that he had stipulated). Likewise, the school laws of Massachusetts, framed in 1789, included "all principles, practices and hopes" that had been developed by 150 years of school life. Unfortunately, the standard set by these laws was much lower than those of earlier colonial days. Only six months schooling for the year was mandated and formerly, where every town of 100 families had a grammar school in which boys could be schooled for the university, now only 200 families were compelled to have such schools which made getting even close to entering a college more difficult. If schools in towns were being limited, rural education was to suffer even more (Furnas, 226).

Despite problems with implementing these changes, the awareness of the need for reform had begun. As with most innovations, there was a lag between inception and implementation. But by the early 1830s, the change was underway. The Presidency of Andrew Jackson in 1833 and his credo, "Let The People Rule," were underscored by the creation of the "common school" with local support and control. William A. Alcott, in 1832, initiated the architectural redesigning of school buildings, and Henry Barnard followed with additional structural designs along with changes in the curriculum. By 1870, the policy of general taxation for the support of schools had extended to all states, while manufacturers of supplies and furniture were ready to exploit the market (Schroeder, 6-7).

Like America, public education evolved from desperate and humble beginnings. But as in all things American, there was a spirit and an ideal which were given eventual substance. As Barbara Bush said,

> The pioneer families settling America's vast frontiers understood one of Thomas

> Jefferson's most deeply held convictions, that good education is the essential foundation of a strong democracy. Despite their real hardships, country school children were exposed to a broad view of life. They learned a curriculum steeped in such values as honesty, industry, sobriety and patriotism; values we all cherish. But the country schoolhouse was not just a place for teaching. It was also a community center, where neighbors gathered for dances, concerts, lectures, debates, political caucuses and worship. (Leight, Rinehart, 142)

Schools today retain their position as a focus of community activities. While the curriculum and architecture reflect our expanding and multicultural student body, the schools embody the realization that information is freedom, the ideal which we, as a nation, have always held.

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Education in Rural New Jersey
The Cold Brook Schoolhouse
Readington Township

In 1789, the total number of college graduates in New Jersey came to 179, making it highly unlikely there were any teaching schools at all in the rural areas. By 1794, New Jersey passed the "Enabling Act" which stipulated that societies "incorporate for the promotion of learning". Formal groups were created to acquire property, sue, be sued, and to act also as trustees for schools and their property. They consisted of seven members or less with their succession clearly defined.

Around 1804, a three grade system of public, or free, schools was established based on Thomas Jefferson's Notes On Education. John Parker of Perth Amboy followed in Jefferson's footsteps with further editing of Jefferson's ideals and worked from 1806-1819 to increase the cause of uniform and, more importantly, free education.

Teachers, at this time, were still mostly male, highly transient, usually English, Scottish, or Irish with a few "Yankees". The former were good pensmen and the Irish good mathematicians. Teachers collected their own bills for tuition which were per student for a 13 week term with every alternate Saturday a holiday. In July of 1808, Readinton Township passed nine articles for the government of schools, some of which consisted of, "The president and trustees shall examine any person inclining to teach the said schools, and if he appears qualified, the trustees shall recommend him to his neighborhood...no person may teach who is addicted to drunkenness." Teachers were bound by these articles and were to teach the English school of reading, writing, and arithmetic. Failing in this, the trustees instituted a court to try complaints against the teacher or his employer. He was then liable for any or all offenses, particularly if he came to school intoxicated.

With the war of 1812, the increase in population, and the expansion of the new republic, all communities were forced to think seriously about the need for better education. Here in New Jersey, the Dutch Reformed Church played a big role in establishing schools as well as churches where the parish minister did both. By 1817, school funds were being made available through the state and 1819-20, legislation was passed for local taxation.

1829 saw more laws for school regulation but within the year they were repealed and not reenacted till 1838. By this time, the foundation had been laid for establishing a system of district schools which included not only taxation, but district boundaries and procedures for supervision. Teachers were now obliged to pass an exam to obtain a license from the county boards.

The Cold Brook School, District #73, in its founding year of 1828, was a one story, one room, stone structure with a south facing door, one average size window on the west side, two windows on each of the other three sides. Evidence suggests that this structure was built on the site of an earlier school possibly dating to 1817. The high ceiling and number of windows would indicate good natural light in the room. Heat was supplied by an iron wood stove vented by a stove pipe exiting through the east wall about ten feet above the floor. It is uncertain where in the room the stove was located. Records show that in 1828, the school trustees granted sufficient money for the time ($500) for the school which then had board desks and slab seats. Evidence of evenly spaced shallow niches in the walls suggests that the desks, or boards ran around the perimeter of the room and were fastened to the wall with supports.

Supplies, including ink and books, were furnished by students, with pencils and paper less common than slates. Steel tipped quills were used, at least by the teacher. Blackboards came into use in the early 1800s so it seems likely that this school would have contained one, as well as an individual desk, probably raised, for the master. The McGuffey Reader, printed in 1836, was no doubt used at the Cold Brook School after this date. Hornbooks and primers would have been used prior.

The following points are of interest:

1817 Legislature set up first
school funds and a year
later created board of

three trustees

1820 Townships were authorized
to raise money for school
purposes

1824 Laws enacted which provided
1/10th of all monies paid to
the state in taxes were to be
set aside and added to the
school fund

1828 Readington trustees granted
$500 for the school

1829 Legislature appropriated
$20,000 annually for school
aid, Hunterdon's share came
from the state amounting to
$2,267.92 which was apportioned
to the townships in proportion
to county tax paid. Readington
equaled $200.31; Tewksbury, $114.41

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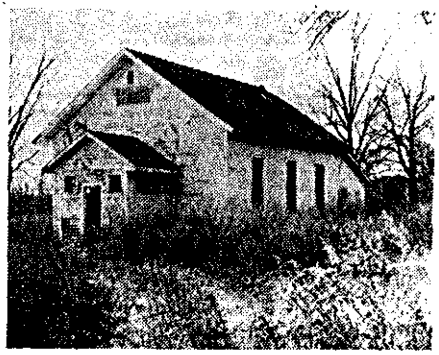
Mill Race Quarterly

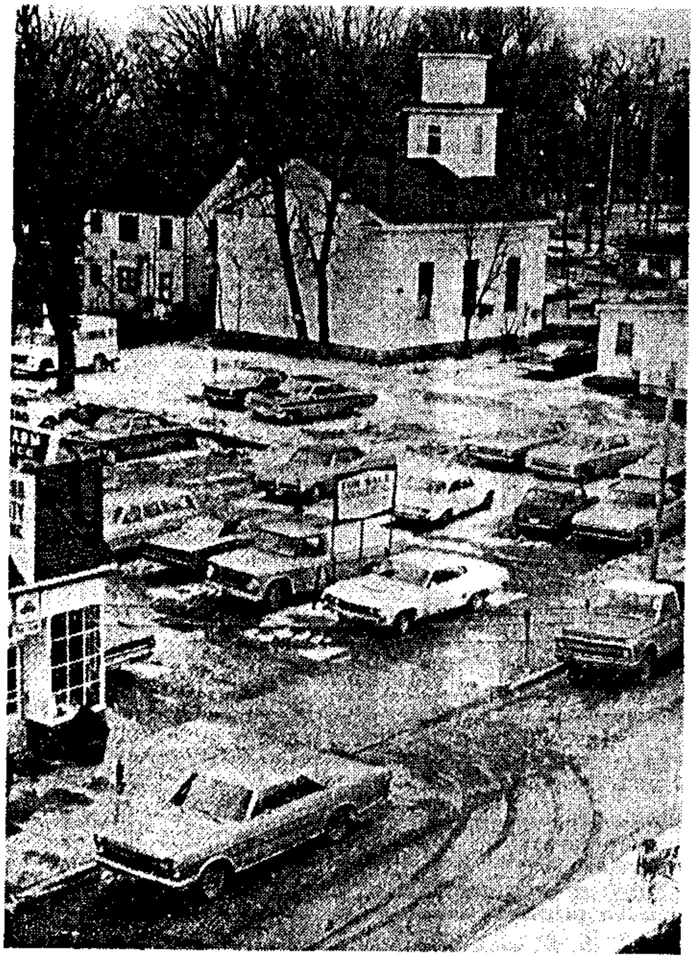
Vol. XI, No. 3 Co-Editors—Jack and Joan Hoffman September, 1984

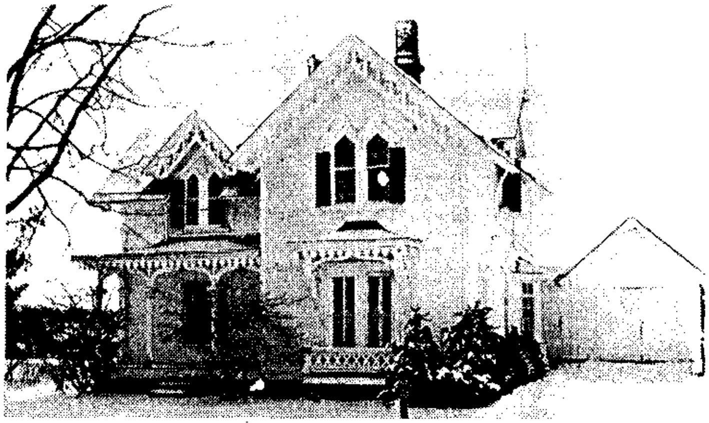
10th Anniversary...

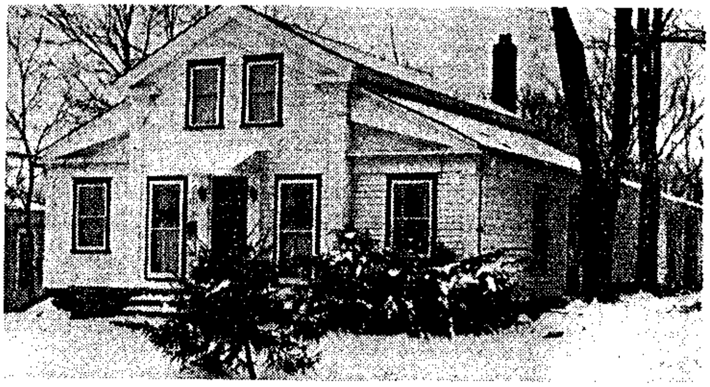
This edition of the Mill Race Quarterly marks the 10th anniversary of its founding by the Northville Historical Society and its first editor, Laura Hixson. We celebrate this birthday by a pictorial sketch of the buildings in the historical village.

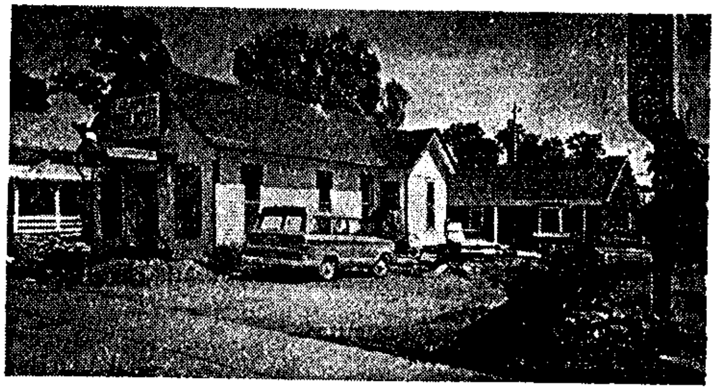
Editors



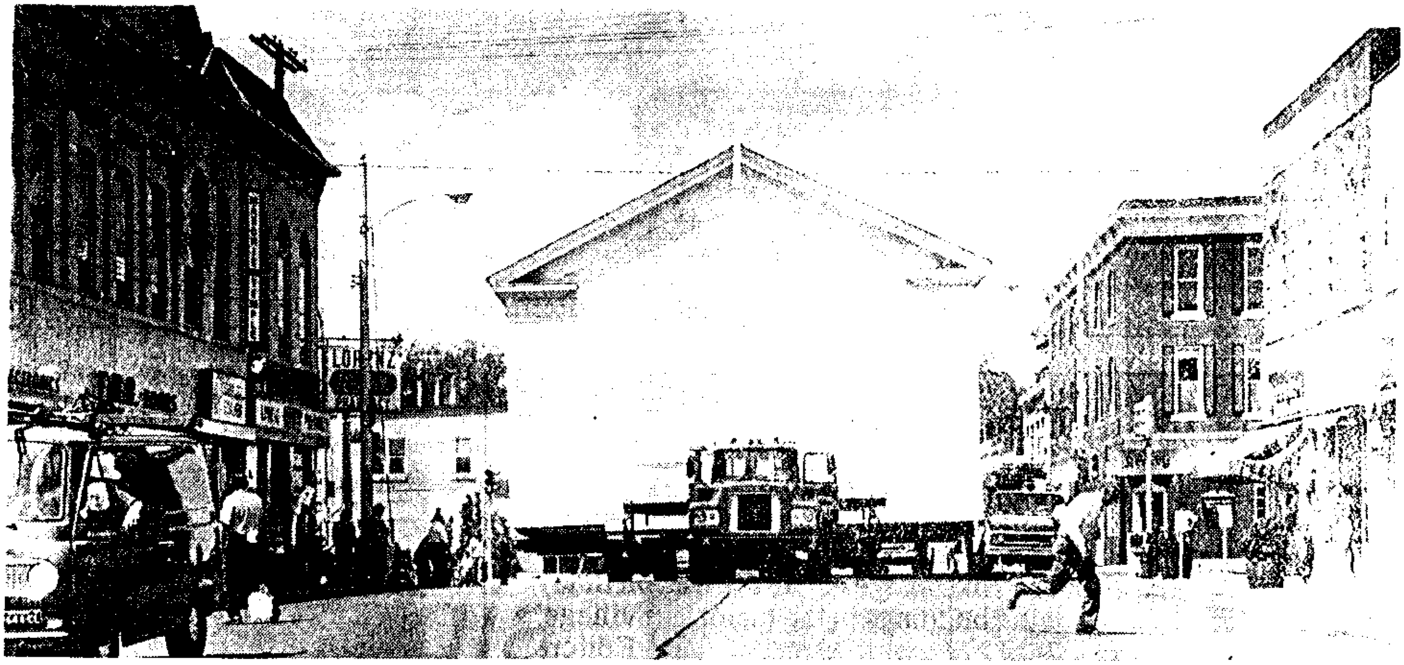


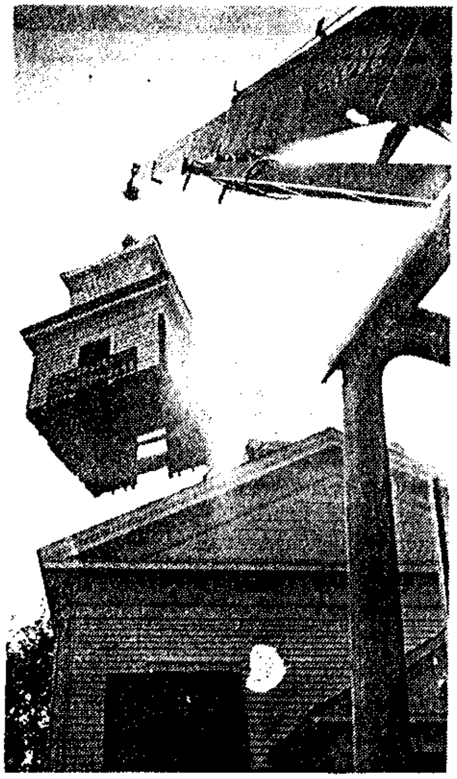


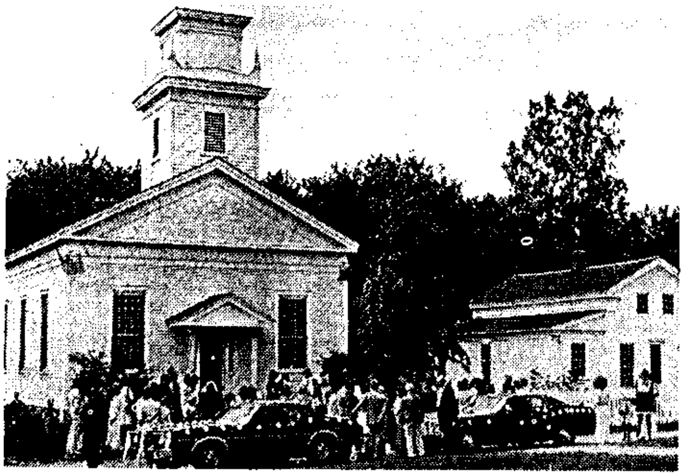




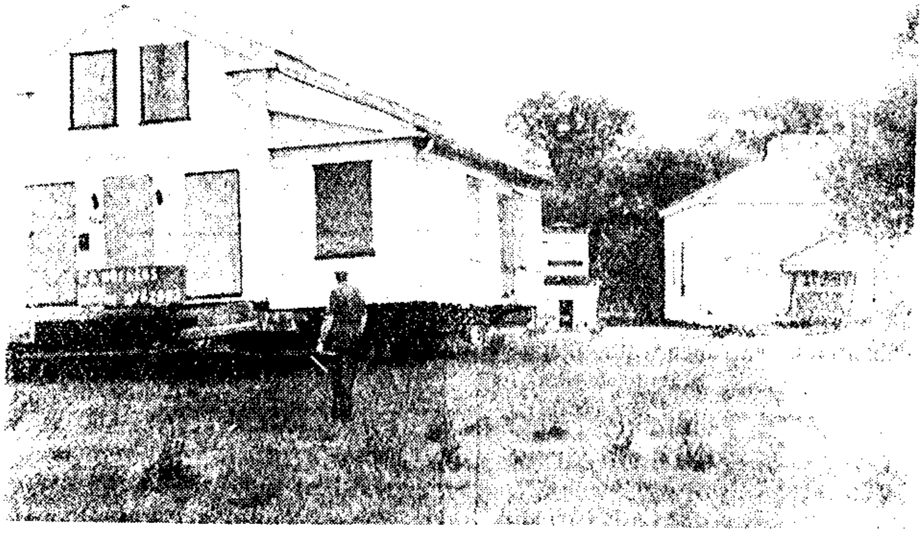
ORIGINAL SITES — Above, the New School Church sits on its original site on Wing Street (rear view). The Wash Oak School (top right) on Currie Road; the Yerkes House on East Cady Street; the Hunter house on East Main at the foot of Griswold; and the Weaver's Cottage on North Center.

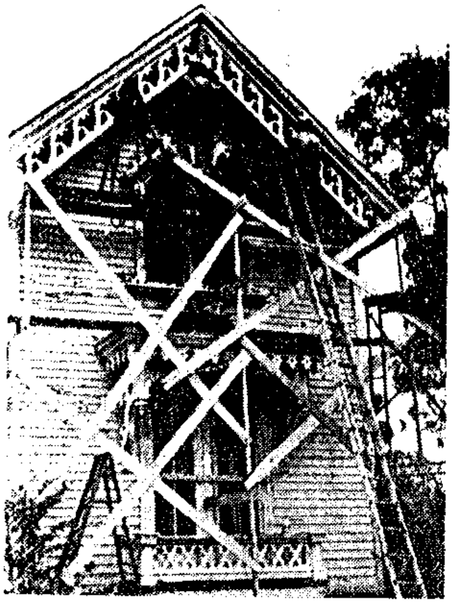




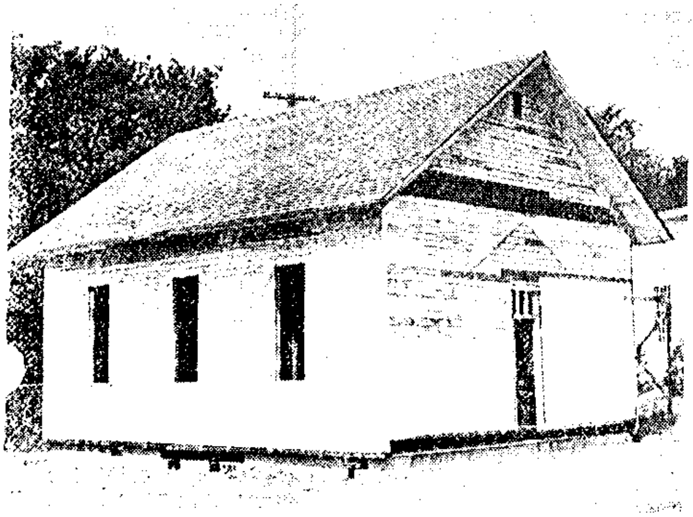


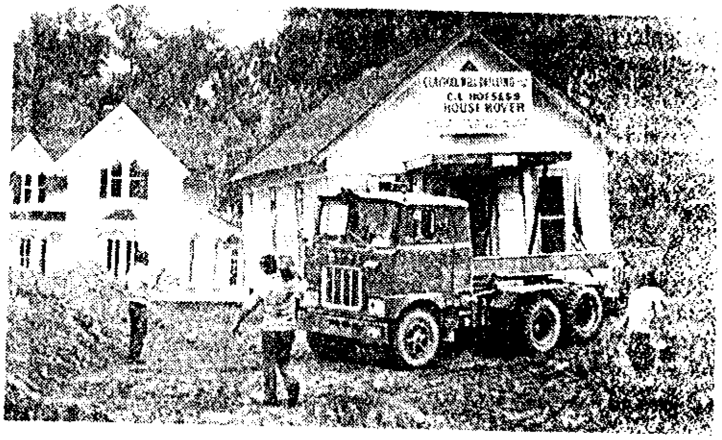
Removing cupola before move (upper left); moving along Main (top); removing interior debris by dump trucks; repairing cupola (above); painting village centerpiece (right); New School Church hosts wedding (left).

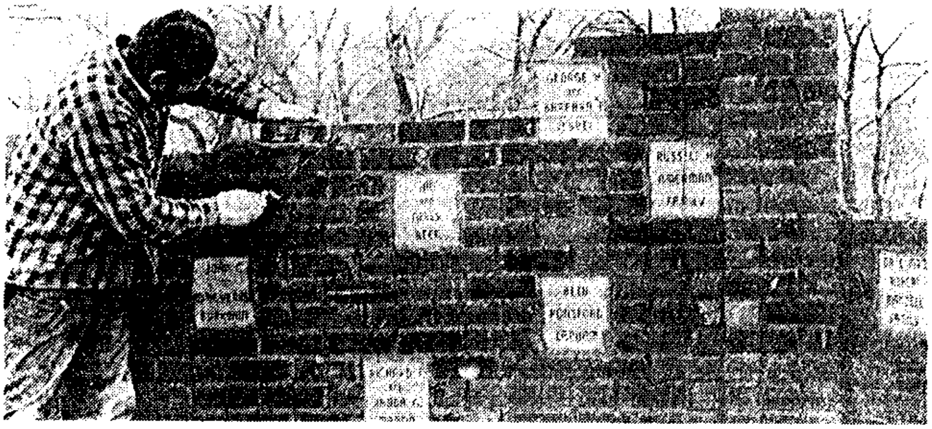




Hunter House is moved into village (top) in 1972 and then refurbishing work begins (top right); Yerkes House is "backed" over basement excavation (right) followed by exterior work (left); Wash Oak School on foundation at last in '76 (below left); Cottage House is positioned in village oppposite Yerkes House (bottom right).







Mill Race financial contributors honored by entrance wall.

Nostalgia

By CHARLES HUTTON

Dunlap Street

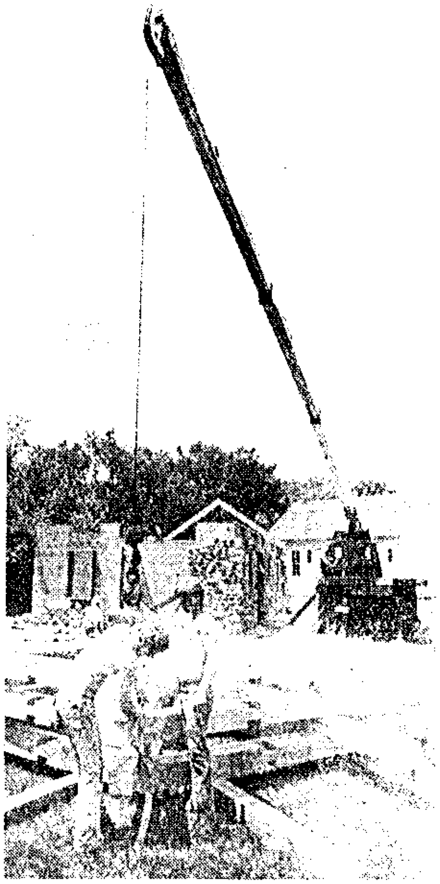
Dunlap Street stays unperturbed
By the changes that abound it;
Its air of gentle dignity
Continues to surround it.

The stately homes built long ago
By folks of early time
Who settled first this avenue
When they were in their prime

Still stand in peaceful quietness
Much as they ever were
When horses trod the earthen street
Or raced, when it was winter!

The names of Filkins, Joslin, Gillis and McKan
Return in our reflection,
And Yerkes, Griswold, Shafer, Ball and Neal
Are within our recollection.

And now, the old church lives once more,
To resume its ordained stand.
While Dunlap Street retains its poise
To be forever grand!



Roof timbers go up on blacksmith shop

Columnist born in Dunlap home

To the Editors:

I was born on Dunlap Street [illegible] 1899. I clearly remember things about it that happened during the few years we lived there. My recollections were during the first four years of my life, most of the time in the Gillis house on the corner, now a watch repair shop. I was born in the house now included in the Casterline Funeral Home, next to the Gillis place.

(See "Nostalgia" of December [illegible]

[illegible]

Society welcomes 13 new members

A sincere Northville Historical Society welcome is extended to these new members:

Paul and Sue Anker, Kathryn Widman, Gordon and Rita MacFarlane, Ann Chizmar, Mary Culik, Calvin and Paula Long, and Mr. and Mrs. John T. Schimpf.

Two other new members are Karen Rice and Regan Hill, who passed along this delightful note: "After having such a lovely wedding at the Mill Race, how could we help but want to get involved?"

Congratulations and welcome!

Northville Historical Society
P.O. Box 71
Northville, Michig[illegible]

Non-Prof[illegible]
U.S. Pos[illegible]
PAID
Permit No. [illegible]
Northville, Mich

Gazebo

Constructed in 1979 by shop students of John Glenn High School, Westland, Michigan. Components built in classroom and then assembled on site. Used as bandstand and for ceremonies.

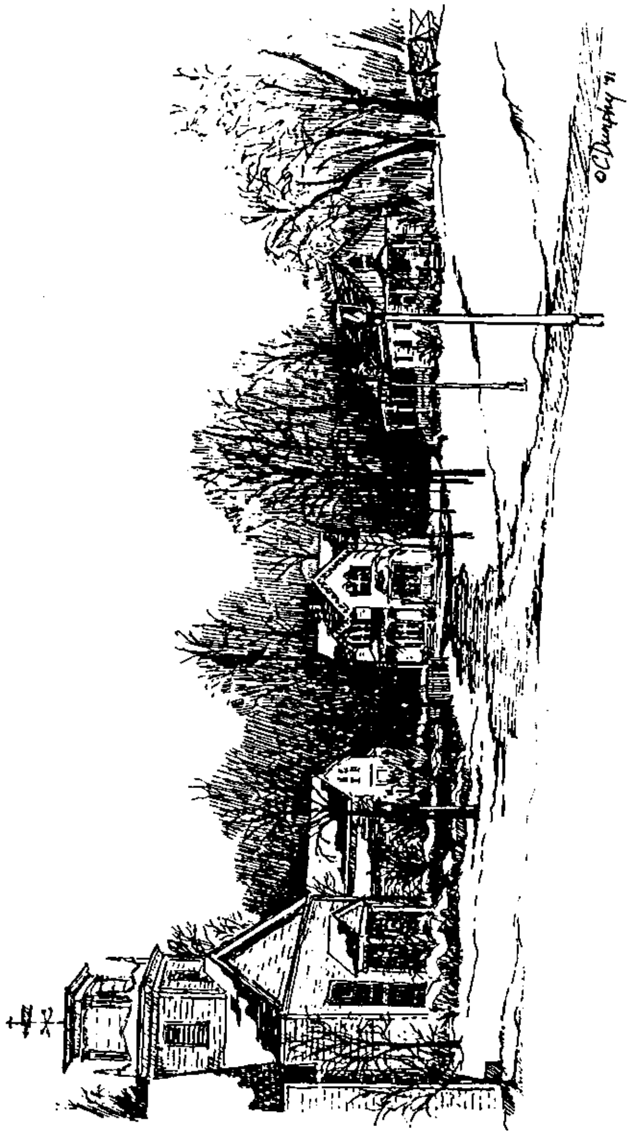
Cottage House

Built circa 1890's on east side of Center between Lake and Rayson streets. Victorian Cottage style. Moved to Village September, 1976. Used as a studio by the Mill Race Weaver's Guild and as Village store.

* * *

For further information about Mill Race Historical Village or the Northville Historical Society, contact:

NORTHVILLE HISTORICAL SOCIETY
P. O. BOX 71
NORTHVILLE, MICHIGAN
48167



Welcome to Mill Race Historical Village

NORTHVILLE HISTORICAL SOCIETY

MILL RACE VILLAGE

History of Wash Oak School

Six miles due west of the Mill Race Historical Village, in agricultural Salem Township, a school was begun circa 1840. It was originally housed in a trading post on the west side of the present Currie Road. At that time, blazes on trees showed youngsters the way to and from school through the dense forest. In 1871, this original home of Wash Oak School was destroyed by fire. Wash Oak Schoolhouse was built in 1873 on a site immediately north of the burned ruin. It was known as the Wash Oak School as it drew pupils from Washtenaw and Oakland Counties. Officially, until 1949, the Wash Oak School District was known as Salem Township District No. 1. Subsequently, it was known as District No. 1 Fractional. Treasurer's records for the periods 1909-41 and 1949-62 have been located and teachers' records for the periods 1886-88 and 1913-24 acquired. In early years the school was known as the "Deake" school or "Nahlor" school, for another early pioneer. According to a history written in 1941 by school students and placed on file with the Washtenaw County Board of Education, the school opened with 35 students in grades 3-12. During the winter term when "older boys" attended school, the record relates, a male teacher was needed to "take care of" them. Other times of the three-term year they were out, working on their parents' farms. At this early time recitation seats or benches lined three sides of the room while the teacher's desk was at the front on a platform facing the box stove in the middle of the floor. The history further pictures wood for the stove stacked by the fence on the south side of the school. A church was located next door, and water was brought from a farm a half-mile away. The school was lighted with kerosene lamps.

Wash Oak Schoolhouse was last used by students and teacher for the 1965-66 school year. It was attacked by vandals and a brush fire which followed soon afterwards. Under terms of the original land grant the property donated by adjoining pioneer Salem families, the Watermans and the Deakes, reverted to private ownership when voters approved joining South Lyon. The last class of 19 youngsters filed out in May 1966, and the property became private. The Waterman portion became the Rodamsky property and the Deakes, the W. C. Stooks. It was purchased by Mr. and Mrs. George Rigby who at the time lived in King's Mill. They planned to restore the building as a home, but he was appointed comptroller for the City of Cleveland before they could do so.

Because they were certain that the building left alone could not survive vandals, the Rigbys donated it to the Mill Race Historical Village in 1974. The school sign by that time was gone; the inside was bare and the fire had destroyed part of the roof. But old, one room schoolhouses are rare, and such Northville Historical Society movers as John Burkman had been searching fruitlessly for one for the Mill Race Village. The original artist's concept of the Village done by Donald Fee of Northville showed a "little red schoolhouse" immediately east of the New School Church (old library). Hofsess Movers, who already had moved other buildings to the property, donated by Ford Motor Company, agreed to move the School for a nominal cost-covering sum if they could do so on their own schedule. Had the School not been moved in November 1975 it is doubtful vandals would have allowed it to survive the winter.

Bruce Butske of the Northville Historical Society took charge of renovation plans, but at the time Society funds were being used to finish work on the New School Church and the Hunter House (Greek revival house). The School became a project of Northville Mothers' Club in 1975. That year and subsequently they contributed over $11,000 for restoration. Approximately twenty-five percent of the siding had to be replaced due to deterioration or fire damage. A rear gable was constructed at the time of the installation of cedar shingles for the new roof. In preparation for the move to the Village, Historical Society workers removed the addition at the rear and the front entrances, exposing the original front doorway with the three-pane window light above. According to early reports, there was a cupola with a bell on the School, and the bell always got stuck upside down. A bellfry has been built and houses a bell made in the Northville Foundry. The heating system was installed under a new solid floor. The double-hung windows were designed from a surviving pair of original sashes confirmed by a circa 1916 photograph. The wainscoting was repaired. Portions of the plaster which existed above the wainscoting were painted and are used as blackboards. The outside of the building was painted grey with white trim. Dr. Butske believes that the outside was probably whitewashed. The inside was painted a Williamsburg grey. The work on all aspects of the building was carried out by a small but spirited group of volunteer carpenters, painters and roofers.

Furnishing began in the Fall of 1982 when the Society's Board of Directors asked Kay and Doug Otton and Harriet and Bob Welland to assume this responsibility. They have attempted to be as authentic as possible and adhere to the 1873 period. They visited the schools at the Troy Museum, Wing Lake and Greenfield Village. The thirty-two seats and four recitation benches were copied from those at Greenfield Village and Troy with the aid of an original owned by the Troy Museum. Kenneth Harrison with the assistance of his students at John Glenn High School, Westland, designed the seats. The building and wood finishing was done by Earl Bryant and his students at the same school. Earl ad former students had built the gazebo in the Village. These teachers and students designed and contructed the bellfry. A 37 star flag, made of cotton by a company in the Detroit area, was purchased to hang inside of the building. Cotton was the appropriate material for the 1873 period. For durability, a nylon 37 star flag was made for the outside, the special flagpole was made from a hardwood tree. The kerosene lamps that were installed on the window frames are authentic reproductions obtained from a company in Pennsylvania. The committee purchased and installed the reproduced stove. It is not intended to function due to safety hazards and fire regulations.

The Northville Branch of American Association of University Women accepted as a work project the developing of the curriculum for the School. It is planned for the early grades and is authentic to the 1873 date. Copies are in the Northville Schools, public and private, the Northville Library and the Wash Oak School.

Pinafores were made by the NO. IV Station Questers and vests were made by the Waterford Bend Questers. These are available for students to wear when they visit the School for a one day or longer experience. The teacher has a docent outfit available for her if she so desires. There is not a provision for a male teacher at this time.

The School became available for Northville public and private students in January 1984. Out of district schools are welcome beginning in September 1984.

An album has been prepared for viewing. It is kept in the teacher's desk. It contains the history of the School, presidents of the Society, all gifts and donations, monetary support, professional services performed gratis, skills donated by volunteers, fund raising chairmen of the Society's activities when monies were earmarked for the School and a pictorial history of the reconstruction and furnishing.

Recognition to Dr. Bruce Butske and Jean Day, Editor of the Northville Record for historical facts as presented here.

NORTHVILLE HISTORICAL SOCIETY

MILL RACE VILLAGE

WASH OAK SCHOOL

Procedures and Rules

As part of your pre-visit planning, please be sure that you and your students assume certain responsibilities to insure that the School and its contents are not damaged.

The Northville Historical Society would like the users to be aware that they are using a historical building and that many hours of volunteer labor and money have gone into restoring these buildings and grounds. The Society deems it a privilege to make this building available for students and teachers and we trust that you will respect the historical value of the premises you are about to use.

1. Although many suggestions for your day have been offered in the Curriculum Guide, you will conduct your day according to the plans you wish to follow. The Society Representative will greet you and give you a short history of the School.

2. Buses and any accompanying vehicles are to unload and park in the parking lot only, no vehicles will be allowed within the Village gates.

3. You must have at least one adult to assist you. It is not fair to the contents of the building or yourself to attend the School without assistance.

4. An adult assistant should remain with your students outside the School while you check in with the Society Representative.

5. Use only the front door of the School for entering and exiting during the day. The rear door will be unlocked for safety only.

6. User undertakes to conduct the class in an orderly manner, in full compliance with all applicable laws, regulations, and rules. User assumes full responsibility for the conduct of all persons in attendance and for any damage done to any part of the building during the school day. If you find something defective or if an item is broken during your stay, please report it.

7. No open flame devices are allowed in the buildings.

8. No decorations or displays of any kind will be attached to any building or tree, either interior or exterior by the use of staples, nails, screws, tacks, wire, tape or any device that in any way will put a hole in or damage the finish of that structure or tree. Any personal property of the users brought into the premise shall be at the sole risk of the user and Northville Historical Society shall not be liable for any loss or damage to any such property for any reason.

9. Have all students pick up all paper inside the School and on the grounds used and clean out the desks at the end of the day. The broom and dustpan in the School are to be used for sweeping the floor. Cloths are in the desks for cleaning the slates.

10. A Certificate of Attendance for each student will be available at the time of your visit. You should fill out each one before presenting them.

11. We would appreciate your completing and mailing the Evaluation Form to the Society Representative.

Northville Historical Society
Mill Race Village
Wash Oak School
C/O Mrs. John Brugeman (Mary Jane)
46040 9 Mile Road
Northville, MI 48167
349-2659

c/o Mrs. John Brugeman
46040 9 Mile Road
Northville, MI 48167
349-2659

NORTHVILLE HISTORICAL SOCIETY

MILL RACE VILLAGE

CONFIRMATION OF VISIT TO WASH OAK SCHOOL

School______________________________ **Phone**____________

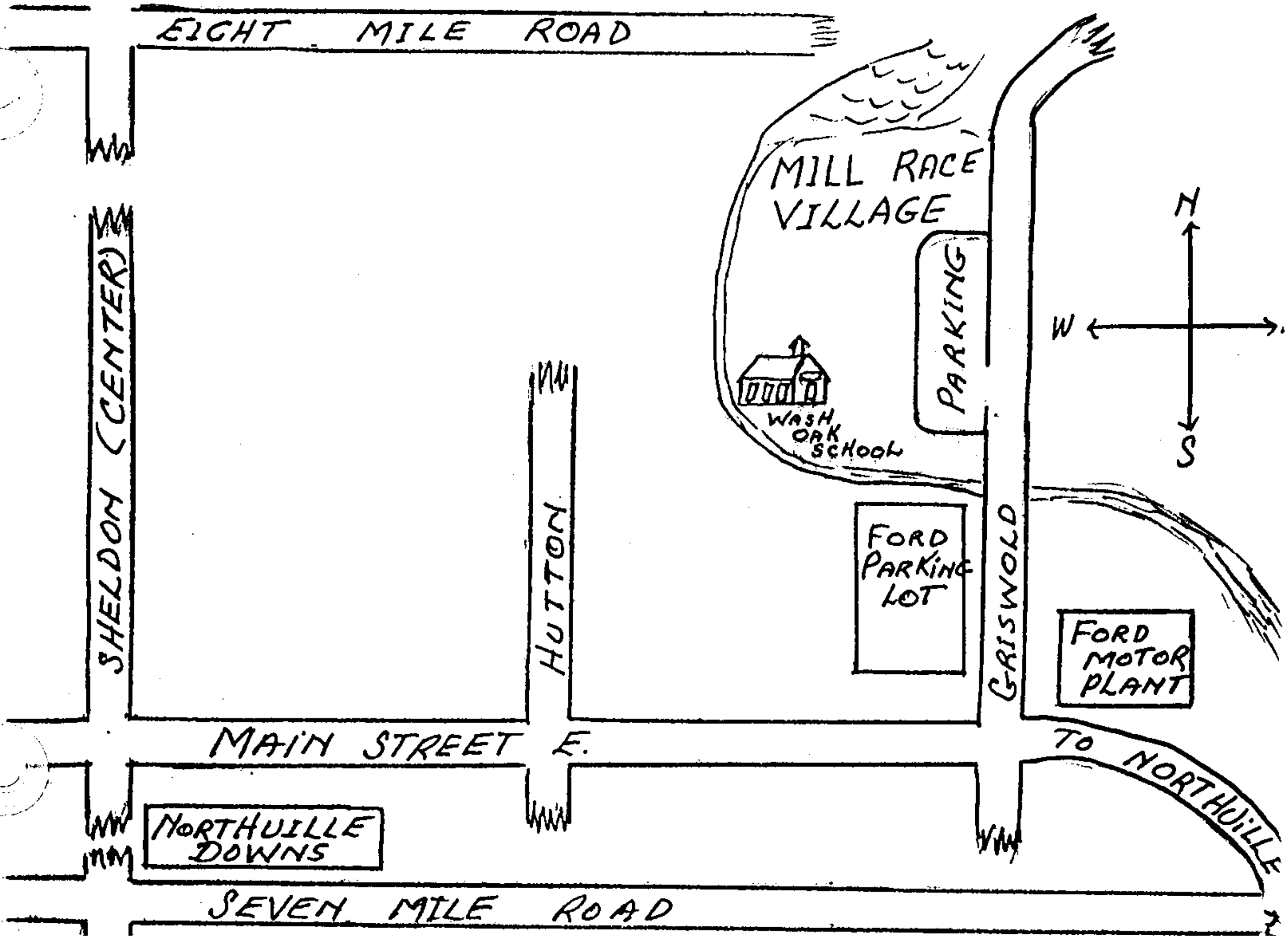
Principal____________________________ **District**____________

Teacher_____________________________ **Grade**____________

Adult Assistant/s____________________________________

Date of Visit_______________________________________

Number of Students________ **Hours of Visit**______ **a.m. to** ______ **p.m.**


EIGHT MILE ROAD
MILL RACE VILLAGE
PARKING
WASH OAK SCHOOL
N
W
S
SHELDON (CENTER)
HUTTON
FORD PARKING LOT
GRISWOLD
FORD MOTOR PLANT
MAIN STREET E.
TO NORTHVILLE
NORTHVILLE DOWNS
SEVEN MILE ROAD

This is to certify that

____

did attend a one room school
and was taught in the manner
and with materials used in Michigan
in the late 1800's.

*Date*________________ *Teacher*____________________

NORTHVILLE HISTORICAL SOCIETY
1964

Wash Oak School
Mill Race Village
Northville, Michigan

NORTHVILLE HISTORICAL SOCIETY

MILL RACE VILLAGE

WASH OAK SCHOOL

Evaluation Form

The Wash Oak School program is in its first years of use. The Northville Historical Society wishes to provide a pleasant and effective 1873 educational experience for the teacher and students. Please assist us by completing this form. Your participation will be appreciated.

Teacher's name ______________________________

School ______________________________

District ______________ Grade ______________

Number of students ________ Number of adult assistants ____

Date of visit ____________

I. Pre-visit:

A. How helpful was the curriculum guide in your pre-planning?
_____Quite helpful _____Little help _____No help

B. Were your visit arrangements handled satisfactorily?
_____Yes _____No

C. Would it have been helpful to preview the textbooks beforehand?
_____Yes _____No

D. Further comments on the curriculum guide and arrangements:

Please use fack of form for your response.

II. Visit to Wash Oak School:

A. How would you evaluate Wash Oak School as a teaching tool?
_____Very good _____Fair _____Not as expected

B. What was the reaction of your class to their experience?
_____Very good _____Fair _____Unsatisfactory

C. Did you plan and conduct your activities to reflect life in the 1870's?
_____Yes _____No

D. Was it helpful to have the pinafores, vests and docent costume?
_____Yes _____No

E. In your opinion, how can the program be improved?

Please use back of form for your response.

CURRICULUM

The curriculum in Michigan's one-room schools depended, for the most part, upon the teacher's own interest. For example, if a teacher had the ability to sing, singing was included in the class activities. If a teacher excelled in a particular academic subject, that subject made up a major portion of the teacher's lesson. If a teacher disliked or did poorly herself in some academic area, the subject was, understandably, not stressed in the curriculum.

In addition to the lack of a set curriculum, lack of standard textbooks also created a problem for the rural teacher. Frequently, textbooks were in short supply for any one subject. It was not unusual to have a variety of textbooks within one school. Books were rare and very expensive. The few books that existed in a rural school were read and passed on to younger children.

As in a large school, students attending a rural school were divided into several "classes". They were divided according to their levels of ability, rather than according to their ages. For example, a student continued studying the same book until he completed the book. In some cases, completing a book might take several years because of the student's infrequent attendance.

The teacher established a daily schedule of recitations. She would call each class forward to the recitation benches at the front of the schoolroom. At the front, the students would sit or stand to recite their lessons. (Due to the lack of books, many lessons were oral.) The teacher would call and dismiss each group using a large, bronze bell that she kept on her desk. The other students would work at their desks when not reciting their lessons for the teacher.

A standard curriculum was proposed in 1881 by Varnum B. Cochran, the Michigan Superintendent of Public Instruction. Cochran's plan covered an average of seven years of study. He divided an ungraded (rural) school into "classes" and "sections" based on a student's progress rather than on the student's age:

First Section - Class I and Class II
- average time: 2 years

Second Section - Class III and Class IV
- average time: 3 years

Third Section - Class V
- average time: 2 years

Cochran proposed that advancement to another class or section be based on an examination. He suggested that the examinations be made uniform throughout the county or township.

Curriculum, cont.

Superintendent Cochran also recommended adopting a series of books to be used throughout a student's education. One series of textbooks, for example, was the McGuffey Readers. The books, published by William Holmes McGuffey, were used in schoolrooms across America for over 100 years.

The plan proposed by Varnum B. Cochran in 1881, was the first of a number of curriculums that were proposed for the State of Michigan. However, a standard system was not adopted in Michigan until the early 1900's.