

## THE HISTORY OF "LEARNIN" IN MANITOWOC COUNTY

A MONOGRAPH DEDICATED TO THE  
ALUMNI OF THE MANITOWOC COUNTY TEACHERS COLLEGE

by EDWARD EHLERT

Reading, writing and arithmetic, taught in the public schools has been a part of Manitowoc county's history for the past 132 years. It was only a year after the first permanent white settlers came from Chicago to locate in Manitowoc that these pioneers took steps to provide their children with facilities for "larnin."

The first school was a rather primitive affair, but it had all the fundamental requisites — the hickory stick, dunce stool, pot bellied stove, a few books, a conscientious teacher, and a handful of pupils.

The community was not quite prepared in the first year to support its school by taxation. In view of that it did the next best thing; all families who had children to send to school were invited to contribute to the support of the teacher, to provide fuel for the stove, and to provide a place where the "larnin" could take place.

The school room itself was a room in the Benjamin Jones warehouse on the corner of 6th and Commercial Streets in Manitowoc. The teacher was S.M. Peake, who had twelve pupils to teach. One of the pupils in the original school was P. P. Smith who twelve years later was the founder of the first grocery store in Manitowoc. Incidentally, he was also one of the original "Republicans" in Wisconsin. He was the oldest of Teacher Peake's pupils.

Since there was no such thing as a compulsory attendance law only some children went to school. Those who did attend may perhaps have been a bit envious of those who wandered around on the river bank or in the dense forest which was everywhere around. Those who were forced to go to school had one consolation; school was in session only during the winter months. In

the spring, summer and fall there were more valuable things for children to do than to go to school.

In the spring of 1838 a school was opened at Manitowoc Rapids. The teacher was Mrs. L. M. Potter who had been a teacher in the government school at Green Bay previously. She opened a school near the second bridge. In the meantime, Mr. Peake's school went out of existence and the pupils from the original school in Manitowoc then were transferred to the school in Manitowoc Rapids.

Public education got its start at Manitowoc Rapids in 1839, two years after the private school was opened. The school was held in the only available public building, the county court house. A Mr. Beardsley taught the school. Among his pupils were P. P. Smith, Edwin Hubbard, Joseph La Counte, and D. Sackett.

In 1844 the County Board of Supervisors divided the county into three school districts, Manitowoc, Manitowoc Rapids, and Two Rivers. Schools were established at each place, and elections for district officers were held on October 10. During the next five years, four new school districts were organized. The Manitowoc School District was known as District Number one.

These schools seemed to serve the needs of the pioneer community until immigration began to bring new residents into the county. The need for additional facilities then became apparent, and these were met by means of organization of several private schools. One of these was known as the Wittman Seminary. It was located on Franklin Street in Manitowoc in 1854. The German Lutheran School was started a year later, and two years later the Rev. Malancthon Hoyt of the St. James Episcopal parish opened a third

private school.

### Additional School Facilities Needed in District No. 1

The pupils in Manitowoc District No. 1 were increasing in alarming numbers, and the school building could no longer handle them. Perhaps a larger building would have been built earlier, but up to that time no local community had the legal right to raise money for the purpose of building a school. The state legislature, however, gave such authorization in 1848 and an assessment was then made by which \$350 was raised for the purpose of building a new school. It was a modern, two-room structure that was located on North Seventh Street. This building also became the public gathering place and town hall for the village for a number of years thereafter.

That same year a German school was founded in the town of Kossuth, and a similar school was founded in Mishicot by George Peterson. A few months afterward, however, these schools became public schools.

School terms during the early years were somewhat indefinite affairs. The regular term lasted only seven months. The average pupil attended school only about half of the time, however, due to bad weather, poor roads, and in some cases due to the long distances that pupils needed to walk in order to get to school.

The first gathering of teachers in the county was held in 1849 when a meeting was called at the county court house, then at Manitowoc Rapids. Teachers and all persons interested in education attended. State Superintendent of Schools Root was present. He suggested that "teachers' institutes" be held regularly. These were for the purpose of promoting new ideas for

teaching. The meeting resulted in the first organization of county teachers.

#### Educational Progress in Manitowoc County in the early years.

Much of the progress in education in Manitowoc in the early years must be credited to the hardy German and Irish settlers. Wherever these pioneer settlers made their homes, one of the first buildings to be erected was a log school house. By the end of 1850 there were schools at Centerville, Cato, Newton, Rockland, Meeme, Mishicot and Liberty. There was a remarkable growth in the number of school districts in the next few years as the reports of the State Superintendent of Schools show. In 1850 ninety out of one hundred sixty-nine children in the county attended school, in 1851 six hundred thirty-three out of seven hundred sixty-nine. In 1850 state aid in the amount of \$118 was received; in 1851 the amount was \$560. As late as 1852 there were 22,321 acres of state school lands situated in the county. The wages paid teachers at this time averaged \$23.50 which was a higher salary scale than was attained anywhere else in the state. Among the pioneer county school teachers were Mrs. G. W. Burnett, Misses Theresa Mott, Harriet Higgins, Jane Jackson and Asa Holbrook, also James Evers, John Stuart, and J. Cohen.

By 1860 there were 86 school districts in the county. However, only 3,971 children out of 7,887 children attended school. The value of the school buildings in the county in 1860 was \$15,769, with the average salary \$22.24 for a male teacher and \$15.42 for a female teacher.

The report of the County Superintendent of Schools dated December 31, 1862 and published in the Manitowoc newspaper stated, "A majority of our teachers are discharging their duties in a very satisfactory manner, and comprised in this class are many of superior ability who are an honor to the profession and to the county; teachers who comprehend and appreciate the true nature of their work and faithfully, earnestly and successfully strive to perform it. About one-fourth of the teachers are acquitting themselves

moderately well but are deficient to some extent, in experience and professional culture, though possessing in good degree natural qualifications essential to success in teaching and are disposed to avail themselves of all possible means of improvement. The remaining fourth comprise those who are tolerated only as a matter of necessity, occasioned chiefly by the erroneous idea of economy that prevails in some districts, causing them to limit the compensation and to pursue so illiberal a course in providing for the support of their schools that they are unable to obtain competent teachers, and in some instances on the representation of district officers, that also was the cause, and upon their urging in justification of their action, the poverty of the district. I have been compelled, rather than suffer such districts to be deprived of school entirely, to grant limited or temporary certificates, to unqualified teachers."

#### German Language Used in Some Schools

Earlier in this article mention was made that in some schools the German language was used, either entirely or in part. In October, 1866, an order was received from the State Superintendent of Schools which closed "the German department" in all schools. This caused a furor and much adverse comment. Although the order was given, a "loop hole" was discovered, and the teaching of German was continued in some schools for many years. It would have been almost impossible to carry out this order, for in German communities some children came to school with little or no knowledge at all of the English language, and so it was necessary that the teacher be able to use both the English and German language in her teaching. It was the only way that there could be communication at all under the circumstances.



Garfield School — County Training School on Third Floor  
(present attic)

Some Interesting School Statistics in 1869

In the Manitowoc Pilot of January 8, 1869, the annual report of Mr. Crowley, County Superintendent of Schools, was published. It was the report which he had sent to the State Superintendent of Schools. The report contained facts and figures concerning the number of children between four and twenty years of age in each of the towns: His report follows:

SCHOOL CENSUS AND ATTENDANCE STATISTICS

TOWNSHIP	NO. DISTRICTS		NO. CHILDREN WHO ATTENDED SCHOOL	SCHOOL CENSUS		
	FULL	JOINT		MALE	FEMALE	TOTAL
Cato	9	1	590	363	337	700
Centerville	5		239	345	294	639
Cooperstown	6		339	365	325	690
Eaton	6		287	294	262	556
Franklin	2	7	431	343	312	656
Gibson	7	2	390	348	313	661
Kossuth	5	2	337	446	416	862
Liberty	5		297	290	317	607
Manitowoc	1	4	100	199	201	400
Manitowoc Rapids	6		403	361	324	685
Manitowoc Village	4		993	833	849	1,682
Maple Grove	4	3	138	219	186	405
Meeme	6		292	334	311	645
Mishicot	6	2	586	342	329	671
Newton	6	1	384	410	398	808
Rockland	2	3	89	153	154	307
Schleswig	6	1	--	331	324	655
Two Creeks	2		117	106	91	197
Two Rivers	6	1	735	600	606	1,206
<b>TOTALS</b>	<b>94</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>6,747</b>	<b>6,683</b>	<b>6,349</b>	<b>13,032</b>

On January 15, 1869, the Manitowoc Pilot had these statistics relating to enrollment and attendance in the Two Rivers School District for the months of September through December. We print the statistics for the month of December only. Enrollment in each of the previous months usually was a little lower, but not significantly.

Enrollment and Attendance in Two Rivers Schools  
December 1868

DEPARTMENT OF SCHOOL	WHOLE NUMBER ENROLLED	AVERAGE ATTENDANCE	NAME OF TEACHER
Higher Department	55	45	J.S. Anderson, (also the school principal)
Second Intermediate Dept.	76	55	C. W. Knapp
First Intermediate Dept.	92	60	Miss Mattie Conine
Primary Dept.	150	103	Miss Ida Schaffland
	<b>373</b>	<b>263</b>	

It appears that in 1868 there was only one school in the Village of Two Rivers, and the table indicates the enrollment in that school. It appears that on a given day only about 70% of those who were enrolled would be present. Evidently the teachers had enrollments ranging from 55 to 92; however, in the primary department with only one teacher named, an enrollment of 150 is indicated with a daily attendance of

103 indicated. The newspaper article indicates that in September 305 pupils were enrolled; in December there were 373. Either there was significant growth in population in the village during these months, or some children were a little slow in making up their minds to go to school.

**The Early 70's,  
An Era of School Buildings**  
The early seventies was an era of

school building. In 1871 the First Ward School (the old Roosevelt School) was constructed at South Eighth and Hamilton Streets in Manitowoc. The structure was dedicated on January 29, 1872.

In 1868 the state legislature enacted legislation which enabled the north side school district to levy a tax not to exceed \$25,000 to provide for the erection of a new school. It was four years later that this school was completed. It was

what has been known as "the old Madison school."

Principal I.N. Stewart of the Madison school later became the president of the Wisconsin State Teachers' Association. He was the author of several educational books, and after leaving Manitowoc he taught for many years at Janesville, Wisconsin. His successor was Hosea Barnes who was principal of the school from 1874 to 1877. He later became a Baptist minister. In 1877 interior work on the Madison school was completed. It then housed high school classes as well as elementary school classes.

Two Rivers also erected a school in the seventies. Many parochial schools were established by the Catholics and Lutherans throughout the county, including St. Luke's in Two Rivers in 1877. An academy was begun at St. Nazianz, as well as a girl's school at Alverno. This school later was known as Holy Family Convent.

#### Superintendents of Schools

The legislature of 1848 created the office of town superintendent of schools. This officer administered the schools within a township. He was one of the elected officers of the town. No qualification standards were set up, so any voter, could be, and was elected to this office. His term of office was one year, and his salary one dollar per day for "every day actually and necessarily devoted to the service for which he was elected." Actually, those officers had far-reaching powers of school administration and supervision, including the power to alter and regulate school district boundary lines, the apportionment of school money received from the town and county treasurer, to examine teachers and to issue certificates to teach for a period of one year, and to visit the schools in his town and to give advice and counsel to teachers. Many of the men elected to this office considered the schools a side issue and devoted as much time to the schools as he thought the neighbors would stand for.

In 1861 the state school laws were amended by the passage of an act creating the office of county superintendent of schools. That official was to be elected for a two-year term in the fall election on a partisan ticket. Until 1895 the

only legal qualification was to be a voter in the county. However, in Manitowoc county after the first few superintendents had been elected, all were qualified teachers when elected. All of the schools in Manitowoc county remained under the jurisdiction of the County Superintendent of Schools until city school systems were established. The following served as county superintendents of schools in Manitowoc County:

R. J. Valkenburg	1861-62
C. S. Canright	1862-63
J. W. Thombs	1863-64
J. A. Crowley	1864-69
Michael Kirwan	1869-75
M. A. Walker	1875-79
C. F. Viebahn	1879-80
John Nagle	1880-91
C. E. Patzer	1891-95
A. W. Dassler	1895-97
E. R. Smith	1897-99
F. C. Christensen	1899-1904
W. E. Larson	1904-1909
C. W. Meisnest	1909-1917
J. W. Voboril	1917-1920
Lillian L. Chloupek	1920-1926
E.S. Mueller	1926-1945
Joseph J. Rappel	1945-1953
Gretna Brown	1953-1957
Armond Kueter	1957-1962

#### Certification of Teachers

Teachers during territorial days were hired if they could read, write, and cipher. Persons who were believed to be "well educated" were usually the ones who were chosen to teach school. There were no qualification standards set up. After the office of town superintendent was set up, that official was given the duty to examine and license teachers. Former Judge Jerome Ledvina wrote an interesting history of the Quarry school in 1907. In this account he wrote: "The first teacher was licensed in this manner. She was given a Bible and was told to read a verse. If she read this satisfactorily she was told that she had passed in reading. Then she was told to write a verse to qualify in the teaching of writing. Of course, they always passed in writing. She was then given a column of figures to add. If she did this correctly she passed in arithmetic, and she was then certified as qualified to teach school.

When the state legislature passed the law creating the office of

county superintendent of schools, it at the same time gave the general control over teacher's examinations and certification to that officer. It specified the subjects in which the candidate for teaching was to be examined, and also specified that the candidate should possess good moral character, learning, and ability to teach. Three grades of certificates were issued with each succeeding grade requiring proficiency in additional areas of subject matter.

A third grade certificate to teach was issued to a candidate who had received the following grades in the examination:

Pronunciation	70
Orthography	64
Reading	62
Penmanship	79
Oral Arithmetic	46
Written Arithmetic	58
Grammar	63
Geography	59
U.S. History	32
Constitution, U.S. and State	46
Theory and art of teaching	57

In addition to the above, a candidate for a first grade certificate had to show proficiency in the following additional subjects, Physiology, Physical geography, Algebra, Philosophy, and Geometry. Certificates were issued for a period of one year. Spring and summer teacher's examinations were conducted in Manitowoc County until 1939. The standards for each grade of teaching certificate, of course, were raised from time to time. In due time one of the requirements for teaching was that the applicant was required to attend a professional school for teachers. We shall remark at greater length about this when the history of the Manitowoc County Teachers College is given.

#### Courses of Study, Graduation, Libraries

The schools of the early years were concerned chiefly with teaching reading, writing and arithmetic. Grammar became a fourth subject that was taught in the 1850's. Geography was the next subject to be added to the curriculum. The town superintendent had the authority to add subjects of his own choosing. With the return of the soldiers from the Civil War there was a demand for the teaching of history and civics. By 1870, spelling, reading, arithmetic, U.S. History, geography, grammar, and in some

schools physiology, were the subjects that were required to be taught.

The 19th century school children were not graded as they are today. The irregular attendance of children made advisable the group of pupils in A, B, C, D, E, and up to O classes. These divisions were further grouped into primary, intermediate, and upper forms. The A class in the primary form was made up of children who could read in the primer. Those in the upper form were considered the advanced students and these were the ones who took the teacher's examinations. By 1880 definite requirements for advancement of pupils from one form to the other had been set up.

The system of grading pupils into Grade 1 through Grade 8 was instituted about 1910. Separate classes for each grade were conducted daily with the first and second graders spending their time in learning to read and speak the English language. The fifth through eighth grades were by 1915 studying grammar, orthoepy, physiology, mental arithmetic, U.S. History, civil government, written arithmetic, geography, agriculture, spelling, reading, and nature study. As the years passed the state legislature required that additional subjects be taught and eventually this resulted in the grouping of subject matter under more inclusive headings.

In the pioneer school there were few books in addition to those used as text books. The few library books that there were related to history and geography. It was in 1887 that the state legislature passed a township library law. This law specified that one-twentieth of the school fund income should be devoted to the purchase of library books. An equal amount had to be appropriated by the county for this purpose. In 1889 the law was changed to state that 10 cents per person of school age should be expended for library books. In 1920 this amount was doubled. The township library was excellent in its purpose; obviously, where books were needed most, namely in the small schools, the libraries consisted of only a few books. Only a few could be purchased each year from available funds.

### Examinations, Testing Programs and Diplomas

The first "diploma examination" was held in March 1886. The examination was conducted at Cato and Two Rivers and County Superintendent John Nagle was in charge. Eighth grade graduates in 1886 consisted of Daniel Fitzgerald, Alice Carey, Kate A. Hayes, Otto Guidinger, Frank Vraney, Tomothy McKeough, and Charles G. Stangel. The diploma which they received was a common school diploma which entitled the holder to enter high school. Entrance to high school was possible without an eighth grade diploma at that time.

Mr. Charles G. Stangel reported that the diploma examinations were given at the same time and place as the spring teacher's examinations. The subjects in which eighth graders were tested were orthoepy (diacritical marks and word pronunciation) grammar, U.S. history, arithmetic, geography, spelling, writing, constitution, reading and physiology. The written part of the test consisted of essay type questions. There were oral examinations in certain subjects also.

Diploma examinations were held every year after 1886. By 1890 printed tests composed by the county superintendent were administered. A system of preliminary examinations was begun about 1900. The preliminary test was given to indicate to the teacher and her pupils the scope and character of the material that would be included in the regular examination. A system of recognizing outstanding accomplishment in the diploma examination was begun in 1925 by setting up "honor classes." These were made up of the upper ten per cent of the rural graduating classes. In the cities a system of promotion cards was employed and no diplomas were given until the student graduated from high school.

Essay and oral type examinations were the rule until about 1920. Then the short answer type test was begun which consisted of true-false, yes-no, multiple choice, and one word answer types. About 1940 standardized tests were used. Standings in the standardized tests were given in terms of grade

placement rather than on a 100% scale as the others were. (Note: Standardized tests were available from about 1920 on. They were developed during World War I times and were employed in the military services and perfected there.)

During the early years the county superintendent was responsible for making up diploma examination questions, the administration of these tests, and correcting and scoring them. About 1900 this work was delegated to a "board of examiners" consisting of several of the leading teachers in the county. From that time on the diploma examinations were conducted in about ten centers in the county.

The first diplomas to rural school graduates were mailed to the successful applicants. It was not until 1903 that Supt. F. C. Christensen held the first annual district school graduating exercise in the Turner Opera House in Manitowoc on June 11. Forty-five rural school boys and girls graduated. A program of quartet, trio, solo and audience singing was given. On the forenoon of graduating day spelling, addition, and penmanship contests were held. Medals and prizes were awarded to the winners in the afternoon exercises.

All of these programs were designed to up-grade the quality of instruction given in rural schools. It soon was recognized that it was not enough to concentrate attention on the graduating class, but that efforts should be made to have quality instruction on all levels. Thus, a regular program of standardized achievement testing was instituted, beginning in the first grade. It was the beginning of recognition in a scientific way of individual differences in pupils. It was the beginning also of recognition that not all pupils should achieve according to the same grade standards, and that performance should be based on the apparent potential of the pupil to achieve in school.

### Extra Curricular Common School Activities

Much of the social life of a pioneer community centered around the district school. These were the community centers and very often were the places where

true democracy was exercised. The annual school meetings were usually well attended and momentous questions affecting the district were brought up for discussion and for a vote of the electorate. One of the very important questions was the amount of money that should be raised in taxes for the operation of the school in the next year. Another matter was concerned with the length of the school year. An article in the Manitowoc Pilot in 1870 indicated that in the Town of Meeme a school district decided to have only five months of school. One month was taken off from the school term so that children could be used as "Potato bug exterminators" the following summer.

Spelling bees, and literary society meetings were popular in many country school districts. Inter-school spelling bees were the cause of much rivalry among the young men and women of the districts involved. Literary and debating societies discussed such matters as the need for good roads, the need for high schools, and other contemporary matters.

Dr. F. W. Hammond wrote in his "Some Experiences of a Poor Farm Boy Who Became a Doctor," these lines, "As far as I know I organized the first debating society in a public school in Manitowoc County. The debates were usually led by the teacher accompanied by two of the older pupils, and were held in various schools, including Cato and Clark's Mills. During these two years we had thirty-four debates on various subjects."

Following the literary and debating contests were declamatory contests. Several times a year the residents of a district would assemble at the school to enjoy seasonal programs. One of these was usually at Christmas time. The quality of these programs in large measure furnished the estimate of the teaching ability of the teacher. If the programs were well done, it was possible that the School Board would offer another contract to teach the following year. There were also meetings in which the farmers discussed matters relating to agriculture. Often historical topics were discussed. Some meetings were political in nature, and related to current events and

local issues. The district school thus was a meeting place for the people of the community. School buildings were the social centers, and also the place around which community life revolved.

The construction of good roads was perhaps the most important factor which caused the demise of rural schools and districts. With improved transportation available to almost every rural resident of the county, school district consolidation became feasible. From the consolidation of several districts in a town to form a state graded school district, came school district reorganization in 1957 in which all the schools of the country were placed into five school districts.

#### Some Reminiscences of Dr. F. W. Hammond

What attending a rural school was like, and later teaching in such a school was discussed in Dr. F. W. Hammond's unprinted manuscript entitled, "Some Experiences of a Poor Farm Boy Who Later Became a Doctor," We quote: "The district school that I first attended at the age of 6½ years was located a quarter of a mile east of my boyhood home. I spent the first few weeks getting acquainted with the alphabet which was printed in capital letters in two vertical columns in my Sanders Primer. This was called learning the a,b,c's. As this was abstract knowledge it was very difficult. After I learned to spell "cat" and "dog" these letters became much easier to learn. . . . I attended the Clarks Mills school until I was graduated from the 8th grade. A diploma was given to those who passed the examinations. During the two months of the summer when I was 15 years old I worked for a farmer named Jerry Murphy. I received \$15 a month, and of the \$30 I earned I spent \$15 for a suit of clothes. That fall I enrolled in the First Ward School in Manitowoc. Pat Hewitt was the headmaster. At the age of 16 I was granted a certificate to teach school after having taken a teacher's examination conducted by John Nagel who then was the Superintendent of Schools. I finished the tenth grade in high school at the age of 17. I then received an appointment to teach at Tisch Mills Public School at a salary

of thirty dollars a month. Although this was predominately a Bohemian community I boarded with a German family named Louis Koehler. The school term was for nine months, and from my meager salary I saved \$100 which I deposited in a Manitowoc bank. The bank failed and I lost my entire first year's savings, thus experience was the only thing I received from my first year of teaching, plus privation and hard work.

My second year of teaching was at the Knapp school which was about five miles southwest of my home. I boarded with my mother and walked to school each day of the term. This made ten miles of walking each day. In the winter when deep snow made walking impossible I traveled on skis, leaving home about 7 o'clock in the morning and arriving at school at about 8 o'clock. The first thing I did was to start the fire in the heater so that the room would be warm when the children arrived. This was any time between 8:30 and 9:00 o'clock.

My next school was located on the Calumet road (now Highway 151) about six miles west of Manitowoc. My salary then was \$40 a month. Previous to my employment the district had female teachers. The School Board told me that I was employed because the pupils had become unruly and were defying the authority of the teacher.

During the first week of school, Willie S, the leader of the gang of unruly pupils, refused to obey my orders. As I was young and strong, I laid him across my knees and applied the ruler on that part of the anatomy where I thought it would do the most good. On my way to my boarding place that evening I stopped at the boy's home and told his mother that I had given Willie a whipping. She said "Dot is goodt." The next morning before 9 o'clock I saw Willie and his mother coming to school. He came somewhat reluctantly, but his mother was of sturdy build and was leading him by the ear. He was a very good boy after that lesson in obedience had been taught.

At the conclusion of my last day at this school the pupils presented me with a gold and ebony pen set. I was offered fifty dollars a month (a fabulous salary at that time) if I

would return to teach the school the following year. However, I was ambitious and could see no future in a life as a pedagogue. I had decided that I was going to study medicine and wanted to try to become a practicing physician.”

#### Efforts to Upgrade the Quality of Teaching

The upgrading of the quality of teaching was done through the following measures:

- a. Teachers' institutes were held.
- b. Supervision of teachers through the office of the County Superintendent of Schools.
- c. Education associations and meetings.
- d. Requirements that teachers must have education beyond high school for advanced teaching licenses.

The first teacher's institute to be held in the county was called by Superintendent Michael Kirwan in 1870. Out of 104 teachers in the county, 89 attended the Institute which was held in Manitowoc. The leading hotel in the city was the Windiate House and it was filled to capacity during the 3-day institute. Those who had relatives in the city, of course, had lodging with them.

The object of the Institute was two-fold: (1) to enhance the knowledge of teachers in specific areas of subject matter, and (2) to train teachers in better teaching methods. Full day and evening sessions were held, with Institute instructors being college professors. Among topics discussed were "Best ways of preventing communication among pupils," "The wisdom and propriety of school board and parents visiting school," and "Is corporal punishment a good way of attaining pupil discipline?"

An institute called by Superintendent Kirwan in June, 1873, was conducted over a period of four weeks. This institute was something like a summer session at a teacher's college later. In this institute assignments were given and participants were expected to recite daily on lessons relating to the common school branches.

One or more teacher's institutes were held each year thereafter. With school reorganization occurring in 1958 the county superintendency as such was "phased out." The services of that

office were then dispensed on a regional basis with the Manitowoc County regional office located at Plymouth.

#### Rural School Supervisors

Manitowoc county schools were first supervised by a committee of five inspectors of the common schools of the town. These supervisors had no training in teaching. Nevertheless they were empowered to give advice on how to instruct children in the various subject matter areas, suggest improvements on the course of study, recommend text books, counsel in matters of school administration and discipline.

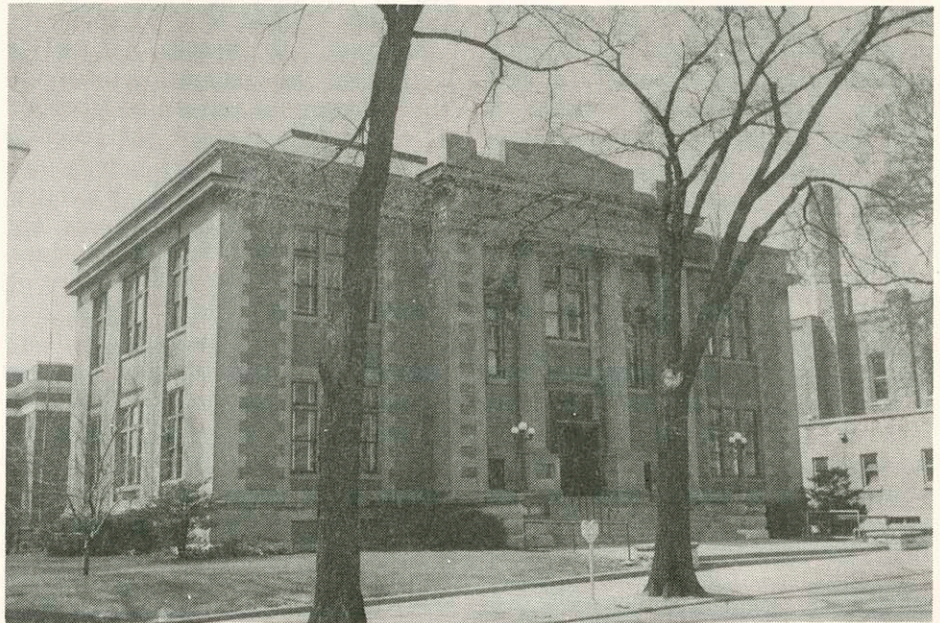
Since the first county superintendents of school did not have teaching experience, they also could offer little help in the technical aspects of teaching. Because schools usually were in session only in the winter months, and because roads often were impassable, these difficulties only added to the problem of giving any kind of supervision of teaching in the rural schools in the early days.

Manitowoc County was fortunate to have among its county superintendents some very competent men. Among these were Michael Kirwan, John Nagle, C. E. Patzer, and F. C. Christensen. Mr. Patzer later became the head of a department in what was then known as the Milwaukee Normal School. (Now UWM-Milwaukee) He remained on the faculty of that

school for many years as Director of Teacher Training. Mr. Fred C. Christensen, of course, is well known in Manitowoc County History, for after serving in the county superintendency he became the principal of the Manitowoc County Teachers College. Falge's History of Manitowoc County (p. 183) says of John Nagle, "He was beyond a doubt the strongest and most able superintendent that the county had had." He served from 1880 to 1891.

It was in 1901 that the state legislature passed a law authorizing the county superintendent with the consent of the County Board of Supervisors to name a deputy, provided that he had under his jurisdiction not less than one hundred schools. Although Manitowoc County qualified early for a deputy superintendent it was not until 1915 that the first supervising teacher was named. Lillian Chloupek became the assistant of C. W. Meisnest.

To get from school to school she hired livery men to take her around. She would leave the city on Sunday night and return on Friday afternoon. These were weeks of continuous visiting of schools and living in the country. Improved rural school teaching was soon quite apparent as a result of this effort at in-service training. Miss Chloupek's efforts were so fruitful that in 1923 a second supervising teacher was named. Until 1933



Manitowoc Public Library — County Training School  
on Second Floor — 1904 - 1922)

Manitowoc was served by two persons in the field who worked to upgrade the quality of teaching. When the depression came, ways and means had to be found to cut budgets, so one of these workers was released.

#### Teachers' Associations and Meetings

Teachers' meetings were held as early as 1849. Although an organization of teachers was effected and officers were named, nothing came of this. Other efforts to organize teachers were called in succeeding years, but such gatherings did not become a regular feature until 1872.

In 1872 a Manitowoc County Educational Association was organized with the following officers:

President . . . . . C. A. Viebahn  
Vice-president . . . . . W. A. Walker  
Secretary . . . . . Emma Guyles

This seemed to be an organization no more active than were those that had preceded it. In 1875 such persons as Hosea Barnes and John Nagle became officers; however, a permanent organization did not develop until 1893 when the Manitowoc County Teachers Association was organized. This organization continued to have annual meetings until 1966.

The purpose of the Manitowoc County Teachers Association was "to gain greater proficiency, and to promote the interests of the common schools." This remained the objective of the association through all the years of its organization. It was a unique organization, and it had the oldest record of service to its members of any like organization in the state. Its annual meetings were of outstanding quality.

Prior to 1930 the annual conventions were held for two days with general meetings in the forenoon and separate afternoon sessions for high school teachers, city elementary school teachers and rural teachers. After 1930 one-day conventions were held with nationally known speakers addressing the convention in two general sessions. Since teachers also had the opportunity to attend conventions of the Northeastern Wisconsin Education Association and the Wisconsin Education Association, in due time it was felt that the purposes and objectives of

the county association could be accomplished by participation in the larger organizations.

#### Wisconsin Education Association

The Wisconsin Education Association today is one of the most powerful associations of occupational groups in Wisconsin. Through its history it was an association composed of all persons involved in education of the youth. There may have been a feeling at one time that it was an administrator dominated group. Today, however, it is an association that is dominated by the teachers themselves, with those in administrative positions regarded as a part of the management team, especially when salary and employment conditions are negotiated. The annual convention now attracts over 20,000 teachers to Milwaukee.

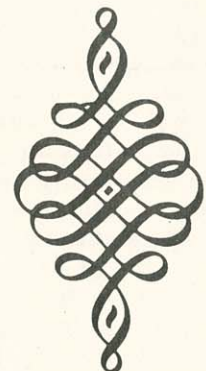
The Wisconsin Education Association has a history which began in 1853. It was in that year that five teachers met with State Superintendent of Schools, Azel P. Ladd, to organize the association. A principal from the Racine High School was the first president. One of the first actions of the new association was to organize for a teachers convention to be held the following summer. Seven teachers attended the convention that was held in Madison in the lobby of a hotel. (They had forgotten to arrange for a meeting place.) Finally someone was able to locate the sheriff and the "convention" then was moved to a room in the courthouse. It was on August 9, 1854 that the convention session in the court house was called to order. The audience besides the teachers were eight or ten book agents, and the University of Wisconsin Chancellor, John W. Lathrop. The most important item of business transacted that day was a resolution which stated "the educational interests of the state demand the immediate establishment of an educational journal. "Thus the Wisconsin Journal of Education was born, a publication that has existed to the present day.

The three sessions on the next day were better attended. At least seventeen teachers voted on the resolutions. In addition some townspeople drifted in, out of curiosity more or less. Their curiosity was aroused because they

wanted to learn "what could induce men, above all teachers, to come from home, at a very considerable expense, to attend meetings of their own craft."

The first convention ended on a note of discouragement, and there was a feeling that the organization should be abandoned. However, President John G. McMynn of Racine pleaded that they continue another year at least. He felt that poor roads were a cause of the poor attendance, and that when the railroad would cross Wisconsin, attendance would be better. The following year more than 100 teachers attended the meeting in Racine. However, growth was very slow, and as late as 1883 there were only 175 members in the association and by 1900 scarcely more than 1000 persons had become members. It was not until about 1910 that the growth of this association increased rapidly.

The part that Manitowoc County educators had in the growth and development of the state association is not known. It is a matter that needs to be researched. It is known that there were members from Manitowoc County in it at an early age, and that one of these was a president of the association. Several have served as president of the WEA in the last decades including former principal of Lincoln High School in Manitowoc, Charles G. Stangel, and later Superintendent Angus B. Rothwell.





## Teacher Training Schools

In the research and writing of this part of the monograph we are indebted to Mrs. Eugene Stenson and Lester Kornely, president and vice-president respectively of the Manitowoc County Teachers College Alumni Association. Without their exhaustive research we would not have been able to write this section of the report.

C. E. Patzer, in 1894, tried to induce the County Board of Supervisors to establish a training school for teachers. He argued that the State Normal Schools had virtually refused to offer courses leading to teaching in the rural schools. However worthy that they felt his arguments were, they decided that they had no legal right to set up such a school. Thus the State Legislature's help was sought in the enactment of the needed legislation. It was not until 1899, however, that a law was passed giving counties the authority to establish county training schools for teachers. The first school of that kind was established at Wausau, and the second one in Menominee in western Wisconsin. In 1900 the Manitowoc County Board of Supervisors passed a resolution, signed by A. P. Schenian of Manitowoc, John F. Koeck of Eaton, and Supt. Fred Christensen to appropriate \$1,500 for establishing and maintaining a rural teacher's training school. The resolution required that the state provide a like amount. The first Training School Board consisted of William Guetzdorf, John Schroeder and Fred C. Christensen.

It appears that there were some legal obstacles associated with this venture into teacher training, for the county board proceedings contain at least five other resolutions relating to this project. One of these pertained to the location of the new school. Two Rivers and Reedsville wanted the school located in their communities, as did Manitowoc. Manitowoc finally won by the narrow margin of a 15 to 14 vote. In a meeting held on July 31, 1901 the first principal of the school was named. Prof. H. S. Hyer of Chicago, Illinois was chosen. His assistant was Rosa M. Cheney of River Falls, Wisconsin. The school was located in the Fifth Ward School (present

Garfield school) in Manitowoc. The city agreed to pay the first year's rent of \$400.

The first class consisted of nine men and twenty-three women. This class was graduated on July 2, 1901, and by fall all but three in the class had teaching positions. The members of this class were: Louis Ahlswede, John Arends, Maude E. Biermann, Emma Danforth, Oscar A. Drews, Henry Duckart, Julie Sullivan, Martha Tegen Healy, Ella M. Terkelson, Leona Weilep, Ella Weinfurther, Edward Elmer, Julia Evenson, Eleanor Gielow, Mary Greene, Mamie Gunderson, Clara Knutson, Cornelia Stephenson, Caroline Schumacher, Elizabeth Schneider, Leonora Zechel, Anna Halberg, Roland Kolb, Mamie Linnane, Emma Miller, George P. Mitnacht, Anne P. Morrisey, Joseph Murdock, Emily Rauch, Fred Sachse, Lillian Savage.

On September 23, 1904, the Training School was moved to the second floor of the Manitowoc Library building on North 8th Street, the present location of Manitowoc Marine Museum. This remained the location of the County Training School until September 1922 when the building on North 17th Street and Michigan Avenue in Manitowoc was occupied.

In a meeting on May 22, 1920, the Committee on Education of the County Board of Supervisors was instructed to enter into an agreement with the Milwaukee, St. Paul and Sault Sainte Marie Railroad to purchase land in the block where the present County Teachers College is located for the sum of \$7,200. On June 29, 1921, the County Board authorized the erection of a building to cost \$53,000 on plans submitted by the architectural firm of Smith, Brandt and Reynolds. The name "County Training School" remained in effect until 1923, when the State Legislature changed the name to County Rural Normal School.

The first principal, F. S. Hyer, resigned his position in 1904 to become the head of the training department of the Stevens Point Normal School, a position he held until he was elected president of the Whitewater Normal School in

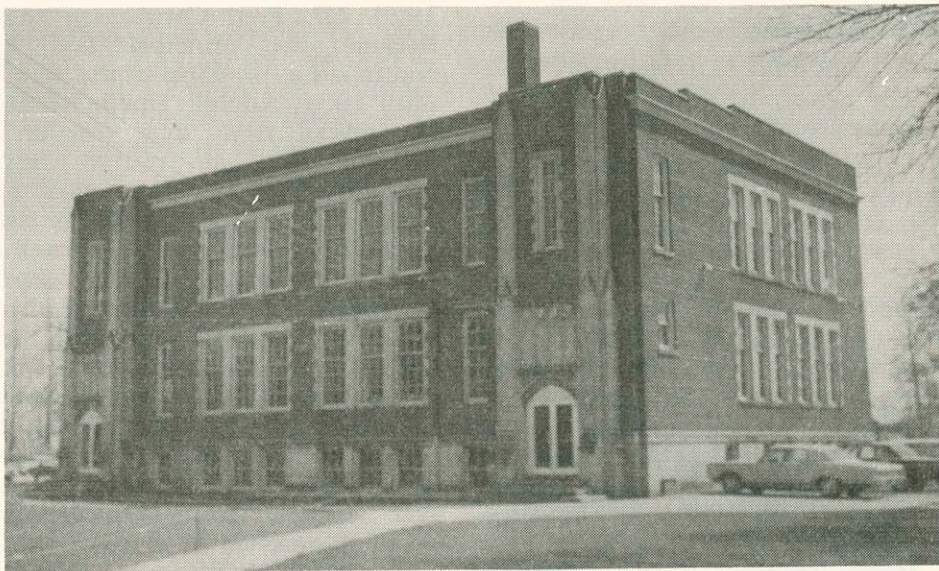
1920. Mr. Fred Christensen then became the principal and he continued as principal of the school until 1934. Adolph Thiede headed the school from that year until 1959 when he retired from teaching. He was succeeded by Lester Timm who remained for two years, and then resigned to accept a position in Kenosha. Bert Greenfield, formerly the president of the Sheboygan County Teachers College then became the president of the school, and he has remained in that position until the present. (Note: The name of the chief administrative officer of the school was changed from principal to president in 1954.)

In view of the trend toward college degrees as a minimum prerequisite for a teaching license in many school systems, many graduates of the County Teachers College transferred to the State University system to complete their education so it was felt by the powers-that-be on the state level that the County Teachers Colleges should be "phased out". By act of the state legislature no further funds for the support of these schools will be appropriated, thus 1971 marks the end of an era in which these county training schools for teachers were in operation. They have served well, and have contributed significantly toward the upgrading of the quality of education, especially in the rural areas of the county. Many teachers now in service in the schools of the county received their initial training in the county training schools.

Personnel of the board which set policy for the County Training School changed little through the years. The County Superintendent always served in an ex-officio capacity. Others who have served were: John Schroeder, Two Rivers; W. J. Guetzloe, Kiel; H.C. Wilke, Two Rivers; John Bertsche, Meeme; Peter Schroeder, Two Rivers; Fred Bagniet, Francis Creek; Mrs. Lillian Schmidt, Mishicot; Edward Koutnik, Two Rivers; and Joseph Rappel, Manitowoc.

Present members of the County Teachers College Board are: Leonard Stangel, Two Rivers, President; Albert W. Tetzlaff, Manitowoc, Secretary; and Mrs. Lorina Heinz, Cleveland, Treasurer.





County Training School Building — No. 17th and Michigan Avenue  
1922 to present

## A HISTORY OF THE MISHICOT SCHOOLS

by Mrs. Hazel Eisenmann

The first school for this locality was one shared with the Jambo Creek district in Gibson. It was located about 1½ miles northwest of Mishicot village and near the present site of the Jambo Creek school. Because of the distance to that school for the boys and girls in the Mishicot area, the voters decided to erect a school in Mishicot. Accordingly, a frame building was erected about 1845 to 1849 on a site just north of the gristmill near the cemetery. This was one of the first frame school buildings of the county and was of frame construction because Mishicot was a pioneer sawmill town. There are no written records of the size or cost of this building. Because many of the English settlers were without a church building, this school served as their meeting house on Sundays.

In 1873, this pioneer schoolhouse was abandoned and a new two-room frame building was built on the site of the present school. What was done with the old schoolhouse is not recorded.

In 1905, by a vote of 50 to 28, the old two-room frame schoolhouse was to be replaced by a two-room brick structure. Evidently there was enough sentiment in the district at that time for a four-room brick building, for at another meeting it was voted to change plans and build a four-room, two-story brick schoolhouse at a cost of \$6,000,

with the upper rooms not finished. The following year, though, these upper rooms were completed and ready to accommodate the ninth grade students. By 1915, the four rooms were used when the tenth grade was added.

The present Rockway School was at one time known as the Mishicot Graded School and was built in 1905. At that time instruction included grades one through nine and was divided in three departments, which were taught by Mr. Casper, upper department; Miss Schultz, teaching the intermediate grades and Miss Ruby teaching the primary grades.

The present Mishicot Jt. District No. 1 is operating three buildings, the converted Rockway Primary School which housed the High School in the past, the present Elementary School and the Mishicot Community High School. The present Elementary School and its site were obtained after the approval of a \$650,000 bond issue which was accepted by the electors in 1964. The building has 26 teaching stations, a multipurpose room, kitchen and lunch facilities and a modern art room. The building was occupied in September of 1965 and at present is overcrowded.

The present Mishicot Community High School was built in 1958 for a total cost of \$575,000 and has 24 teaching stations, a gym and multi-purpose

room.

The present enrollment of the Mishicot Community School system consists of 1058 children in K-8 and 447 in the four-year high school. There are 34 elementary classroom teachers, 6 special subject teachers, 8 school service aides, 6 lunchroom aides, 3 full time cooks, 2 part time cooks, 2 secretaries and 1 elementary coordinator in the elementary department.

The High School department has 22 teachers, a guidance counselor and a full time principal. The administration is handled by a superintendent and seven elected members on the Board of Education.

The building is maintained by a staff of 5 full time janitors and 4 part time janitresses. All students are transported by a fleet of 21 buses and 21 bus drivers.

## VALDERS PUBLIC SCHOOL

The area of the village of Valders was originally a part of the Cato-Jt. 3 school district dating back to 1856. This district was jointed with part of Liberty Township in 1872. In 1920, the village of Valders was incorporated and became a part of the school district jointure.

Prior to 1906, two school buildings had been built with the first one being a log cabin. The second one was a wood frame building, 36 x 20, with soft wood floors, a large wood burning box stove, no water since the boys had to secure pails of water from the neighbors with drinking taking place from a community dipper. The benches and desks were homemade. This building was sold to Herman Kattreh in 1906 and moved to Valders where it is used as a dwelling today.

In 1906, the voters built a new two story frame building, 36 x 40, at a cost of \$2500. The upper room was left unfinished and one teacher hired. It was located at the top of the hill just north of Valders on highway 148. The upper room was finished in 1910 and two teachers hired.

1910 — First Principal was Viola Sullivan. Enrollment — 78.

1914 — Principal was Herbert Wernecke. A ninth grade was added and three teachers hired.

1916 — Principal was Adolph Stangel of Manitowoc. Manual

training was taught in the basement. Mr. Stangel organized football and basketball as outdoor sports. First team members were Floyd Evenson, Norbert Christel, Florian Isselman, Adolph Haese, Art Hill and Guilford Berge.

1919 -- Principal was Walter Fritch.

1921 -- Principal was V. J. Romdeonne. Tenth grade added. Enrollment -- 153. A new building was under construction in Valders.

1922 -- Principal was L. M. Adams. Eleventh grade added. The new red brick building was completed. Cost -- \$80,000.

1923 -- Four year high school was established. L. M. Adams -- Principal. A total of seven teachers on the staff.

1924 -- First high school graduating class.

1924 -- Mr. C. E. Bray became Principal in fall and remained for 37 years.

1934 -- Enrollment was 142 in high school. Music and commercial subjects were added.

1940 -- New gym was built -- cost \$33,000 (60 x 113). This is now the elementary gym. Four school buses were in operation.

1941 -- Agriculture was added. Enrollment now 167.

1944 -- Vocational Agriculture Shop added. (\$40,000). Enrollment 196. Eight teachers in high school. Three in elementary.

1958 -- New \$350,000 addition was dedicated. Included a music department, science department, home economics and cafeteria. C. E. Bray, Principal.

1959-1962 -- Reorganization of school districts.

1961 -- C. E. Bray retired after 37 years.

1961 -- Melvin Donner -- Principal.

1962 -- District voted a \$700,000 addition to high school. Reorganization completed. Jt. District No. 1 includes Valders, St. Nazianz and Whitelaw, all or parts of the towns of Cato, Eaton, Liberty, Newton, Manitowoc Rapids and Rockland. About 120 square miles.

1963 -- A. B. Stuebbe -- Principal.

1964 -- New High School dedicated - April 1, 1964 (\$650,000). L. E. Bray, Architect (Son of C. E. Bray). 56,000 square feet. 96 x 96 gymnasium --

carpeted library -- graduated 66 seniors.

1965 -- Swimming pool dedicated in February. Cost about \$150,000.

1967-68 -- New Junior High built (\$330,000). 16 rooms. Added new Industrial Arts shops. Machine shop, Drafting, Art.

1968 -- Alvin Glaeser -- High School Principal. Marion Johnson -- Elementary Principal. A. B. Stuebbe -- Superintendent.

1971 -- Valders High School. Valders Junior High. Valders Elementary. St. Nazianz Kindergarten School.

Statistics -- 35.5 acre campus in Valders. 16 acre village park located on east edge of campus. Hard surface, quarter mile track.

Enrollment -- High School -- 506. Elementary -- 645.

Board of Education members: Norbert Kustka -- Manitowoc businessman (President); Orin Ulness -- Valders area farmer (Clerk); James Hansen -- Manitowoc County Dairy Agent (Treasurer); Orman Streckert -- Collins business man; George Lenz -- Wisconsin Public Service Electrician; Aubrey Zutz -- St. Nazianz Post Office; William Bredesen -- Whitelaw Life Insurance agent.

## REEDSVILLE PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Reorganization -- The Reedsville School District for many years was coterminous with the boundaries of the Village of Reedsville. High School students were transported to the central school on a tuition basis, paid for by the town of residence.

Many children attended parochial schools for their education from grades 1 through 8. There were many elementary districts and many rural grade schools.

From 1953 to 1958 reorganization took place with many elementary districts (1-8) discontinuing service. The main thrust of reorganization took place in 1955. Valuation of the district with added territory increased from under 1 million to more than 20 million dollars.

The Reedsville District presently serves grades Kindergarten through 12 and in addition to the Village of Reedsville and the Towns of Franklin in their entirety, the

following towns are partially in the Reedsville School District: Cato, Cooperstown, Kossuth, Maple Grove, and Rockland in Manitowoc County and the Town of Morrison in Brown County.

Present enrollment of the school is 375 in elementary and 400 in the high school.

Building -- 1898 -- first school at Reedsville

1941 -- Gym constructed under WPA

1946 -- Home Economics and Agriculture Addition

1955 -- Reorganization took place

1955 -- Four room classroom addition

1958 -- Construction of Gym, Cafeteria, Music, Physical Education and Classrooms.

1962 -- All old buildings were razed and new construction begun.

1962 -- Construction completed -- two-story building, library, study hall, laboratories, agriculture, Home Economics, Elementary and Secondary classrooms.

Administrators - 1953 - Present -- 18 years -- Mr. John E. Worachek, Superintendent

1951 -- 1953 -- 2 years -- Mr. Joseph Griffen, Supervising Principal.

1948 -- 1951 -- 3 years -- Mr. Owen Reince, Supervising Principal.

1945 -- 1948 -- 3 years -- Mr. John Gable, Supervising Principal.

1927 -- 1945 -- 18 years -- Mr. Earl Witte, Principal.

1926 -- 1927 -- 1 year -- Mr. Douglas Braun, Principal.

1920 -- 1926 -- 6 years -- Mr. Otto Kluth, Principal.

1915 -- 1920 -- 5 years -- Mr. Byron Delaney, Principal.

1913 -- 1915 -- 2 years -- Mr. Ludwig Pederson, Principal.

Other supervising principals were: Mr. Edwin Kuehl, Mr. Arthur Huebner, Mr. Ernst Krueger, Mr. Ottmar Falge, Mr. Geoff Morrissey, and Mr. William O'Hara.

1969 -- present -- Mrs. Evelyn Moede, Elementary Principal.

1967 -- 1969 -- Mr. Denzil Diekfuss, Elementary Principal.

1970 -- present -- Mr. Kenneth Konop, High School Principal.

1963 -- 1970 -- Mr. Robert Meissner, High School Principal.



# KIEL PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Since 1928 Kiel has had the following school construction projects:

Old high school — Now Kiel Middle School — 1928 — \$28,000. Elementary part of Kiel Middle School — 1951 — \$180,000. Gym in old high school which is now Kiel Middle School — 1957 — \$273,000. Kiel Elementary School — 1963 — \$600,000. Meeme Elementary School — 1965 — \$300,000 Kiel High School -- 1970 — \$2,100,000.

Administrators from 1928 until the present time:

William R. Bruce . . . . . until 1930  
R. J. Sisson . . . . . 1930 - 1942  
J. P. Gnagey . . . . . 1942 - 1943  
M. A. Rowdon . . . . . 1943 - 1946  
Russell S. Way . . . . . 1946 - 1948  
S. W. Zielanis . . . . . 1948 - 1970  
Dr. David J. Bassuener . . . . . 1970

At the time of the reorganization of the Kiel school district, the Ada area became a part of another school district; however, fourteen school districts then became a part of the Kiel district. These rural schools were operated as individual schools until an elementary school was built in 1963. Very crowded conditions existed until the Meeme Elementary school was built in 1965.

The reorganization of the district had little effect on total enrollment. There has been a steady increase in enrollment in the last several years which might be the result of the general exodus of people from the metropolitan areas to the rural areas, plus also the fact that there have been job openings in factories in Kiel and New Holstein.

## MANITOWOC COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

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