

Brown County, Ohio Schools of the Past

Legacy of Learning

Compiled by the
Brown County, Ohio Historical Society

The deed to this lot states that he wanted to build a Methodist meeting house with a burial ground on said lot." He immediately set to work and by 1824 he had his brick meeting house—a one-story building with rock foundations, heavy sills of hand-hewed timbers, a rock wall extending across the cellar thus making two rooms in the edifice.

The lath was of hickory, split evenly by hand and still in perfect condition. The front of the building was the usual center door with two windows on either side, and it was placed on the tax duplicate at a valuation of \$400.

The structure was used as a meeting house until 1827 when the Methodists built a church at the corner of East Grant Avenue and Water Street, just east of the Grant homestead, which move resulted in the old meeting house being converted to a subscription school. Rees apparently never lived in this building, but remained on his farm.

He sold the house and lot to Thomas Jennings Jr. in 1833 for \$427, Jennings later sold it to James Crawford and the property was ultimately bought by Adam Stigler to later become a part of the Christian Hurst property. It is now owned by Earl Pollitt....

... From Grant's "Memoirs" we learn that he attended subscription school in Georgetown and that about half his time was spent

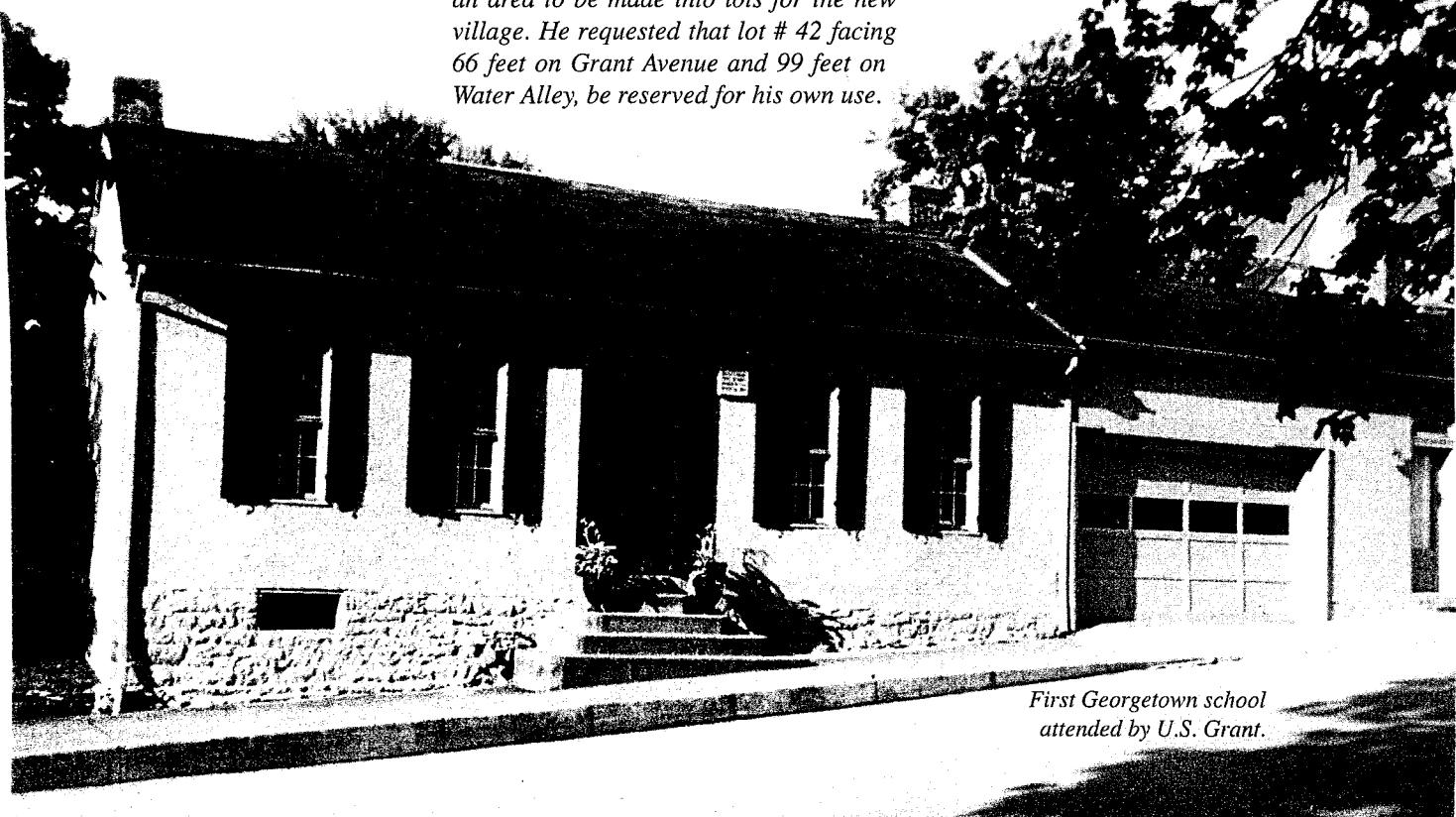
Grant's First School

The first school that U.S. Grant attended is still standing today, at 208 Grant Avenue across from the Post Office in Georgetown. The history behind this building is unique and worth preserving. The following slightly abridged article about the school, written by Meryl B. Markley, appeared in the *News Democrat* on November 27, 1975.

U.S. Grant First Attended School in the Old Rees Building in Georgetown

Abel Rees with his wife and her parents, Jeremiah and Sarah Purdum came to the area of Hillman Ridge very early in the 1800s.

They were Methodists and Rees helped build the log church erected on Hillman in 1815. He also owned sections of land in what is now Georgetown and in 1823 gave an area to be made into lots for the new village. He requested that lot # 42 facing 66 feet on Grant Avenue and 99 feet on Water Alley, be reserved for his own use.



First Georgetown school attended by U.S. Grant.

at the school of John D. White, which is now a state memorial on South Water Street.

He further says that he started to school somewhere between five and six years of age. From his own statements we can determine that he was in the subscription school here for about nine years since he spent two years elsewhere before leaving for West Point in 1839. This leads us to believe that the time spent in each Georgetown school was about $4\frac{1}{2}$ years. ...

... That same Grant, ... holding the highest command of a great army was once the chubby boy who left the hearth of the Grant homestead, clambered up the Grant Avenue hill and entered the doorway into the little brick building erected by Abel Rees, there to learn that "A noun is the name of a thing."

Well, the doorway is still there, the little brick building is still there, every stone of it! We wonder, are we fully aware of the wealth of history this village of Georgetown holds?

Dutch Hill School

The "Dutch Hill" school is at 508 South Water Street in Georgetown. Ulysses S. Grant attended school here and the site is now a state memorial owned by the Ohio Historical Society and managed by the U.S. Grant Homestead Association.

The school was built by the residents of Georgetown in 1830 and served the community until about 1852 when a new school was built on Grant Avenue.

Grant School on Dutch Hill in Georgetown in Deplorable Condition until the Community

Leaders Formed a Grant Memorial Committee

For many years the Grant memorial committee headed by Maj. Frank X. Frebis and Harry I. Cahall, has preserved this building of historical significance as a shrine, financing all repairs, maintenance and employing a caretaker.

On June 28, 1941, officials of the Ohio Historical and Archaeological Society and other state officials came to Georgetown to visit the historic Grant Schoolhouse on Dutch Hill, in south Georgetown, to take over and convert it into a state memorial and shrine. During recent years more than 70,000 persons from this nation and foreign countries have visited the schoolhouse.

The state spent several hundred dollars in repairs to the structure and converting adjoining acreage into a state park.

It was here that Gen. U.S. Grant spent his boyhood and received in this humble structure his early education. (*News Democrat*, July 28, 1938)

Dutch Hill School Damaged

The little brick building on Dutch Hill, in which U.S. Grant attended school, is to be retained in its present outlines. This fact was established last week, (July 22, 1926) when Messrs. F.X. Frebis and G.W. McKibben, acting for the Grant Centennial Committee, made purchase of same from William Moore Jr.

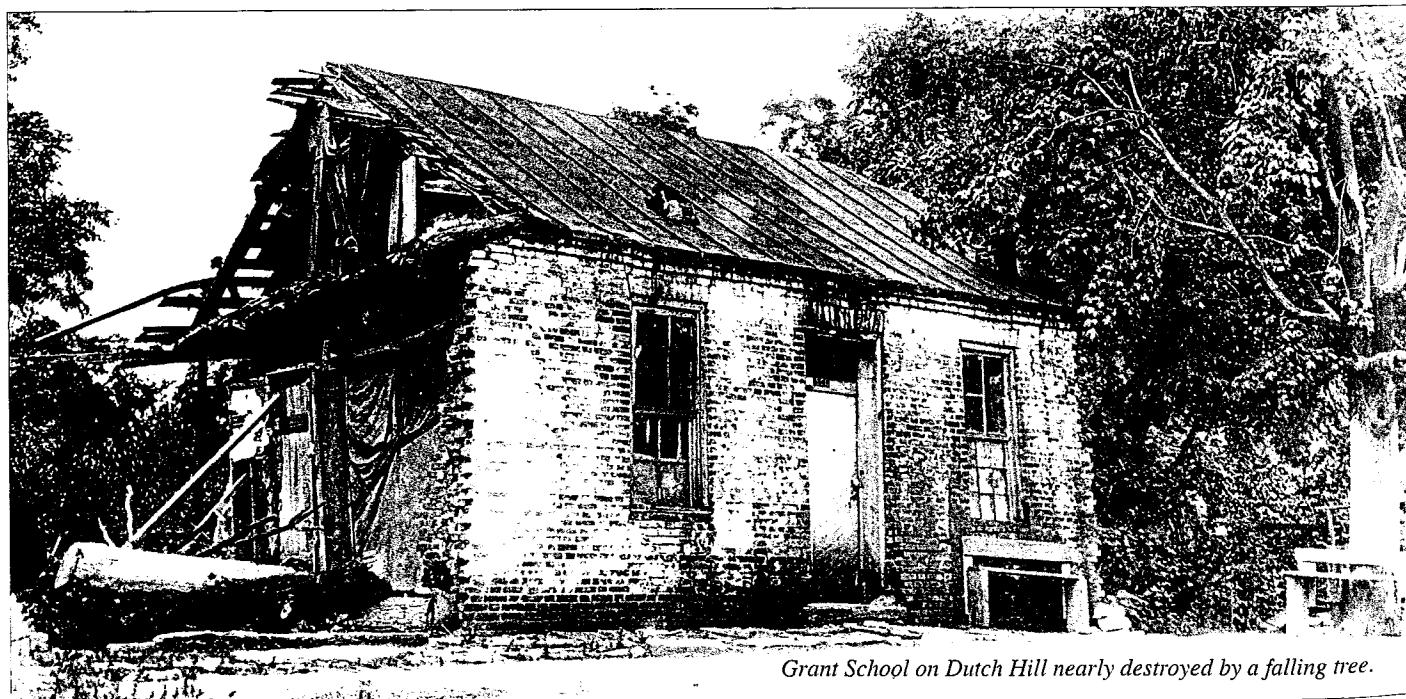
"There has been general commitment among local people that the structure was fast passing, owing to storm effects and general deterioration. Statement was made that a few years more at the rate it declined last season and nothing could be done to bring it back. This caused the action just taken by the Centennial Committee.

"It is now stated that immediate work will be undertaken. The brick work is to be replaced, even to the large fire place, which was originally along the south wall. With the sale of mementos, which Mr. Moore owns. Local citizens have already offered many articles in the building, which is to be converted to a historical place that will be an attraction with few equals throughout the country.

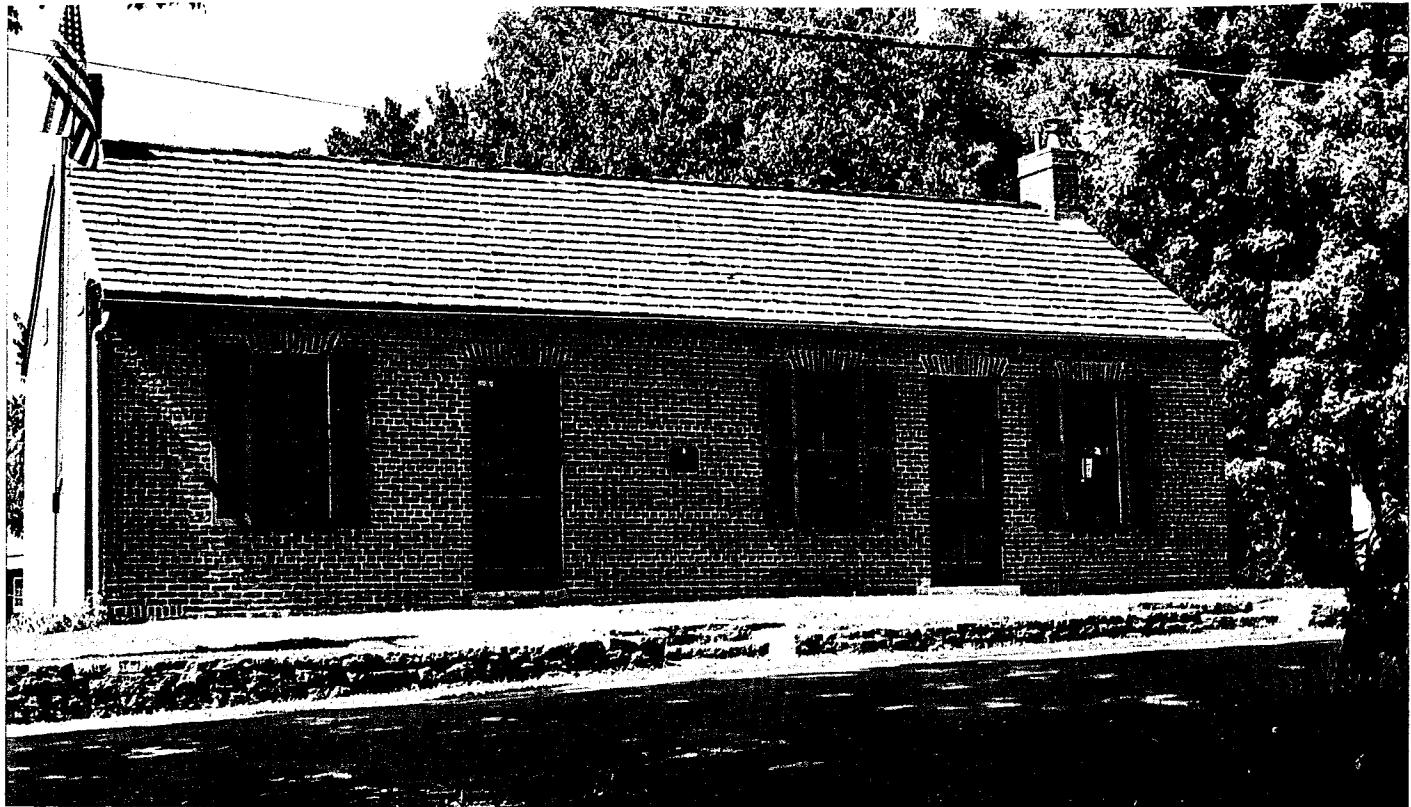
"In this building John D. White once conducted a select school. The pupils were composed of children from local families, and among them was "Lyss" Grant. Also, there were six other youngsters who came from the Civil War as Generals, Admirals, and Commodores. Probably no other private place of learning has such a place in the history of the entire nation." (Publication and date unknown.)

The Interior of the Grant School as Shown in 1941

"Within the little brick house on Water Street—used for a period of nearly thirty years—most of the influential men of Georgetown and vicinity, as well as many others who have gone to other places, received their education.



Grant School on Dutch Hill nearly destroyed by a falling tree.



Dutch Hill School attended by U.S. Grant.

"Ulysses S. Grant, twice elected to the Presidency of the United States, and serving in that capacity during the years 1869-1877 frequently comments in his Memoirs concerning his early Georgetown education. He wrote that the schools were very indifferent and there were none in which the pupils were classified. They were all supported by subscription. The teacher would have thirty or forty scholars, from the infant learning the ABCs to the young

lady of eighteen and the young man of twenty, studying the highest branches taught, the three Rs. Grant wrote that he never saw an algebra in Georgetown while attending the subscription school. In 1836-37, Grant left Georgetown to attend school at Maysville, Kentucky.

"Later in 1838-39, he attended the private school at Ripley, Ohio presided over by the eminent abolitionist, John Rankin. He wrote that at both of these schools

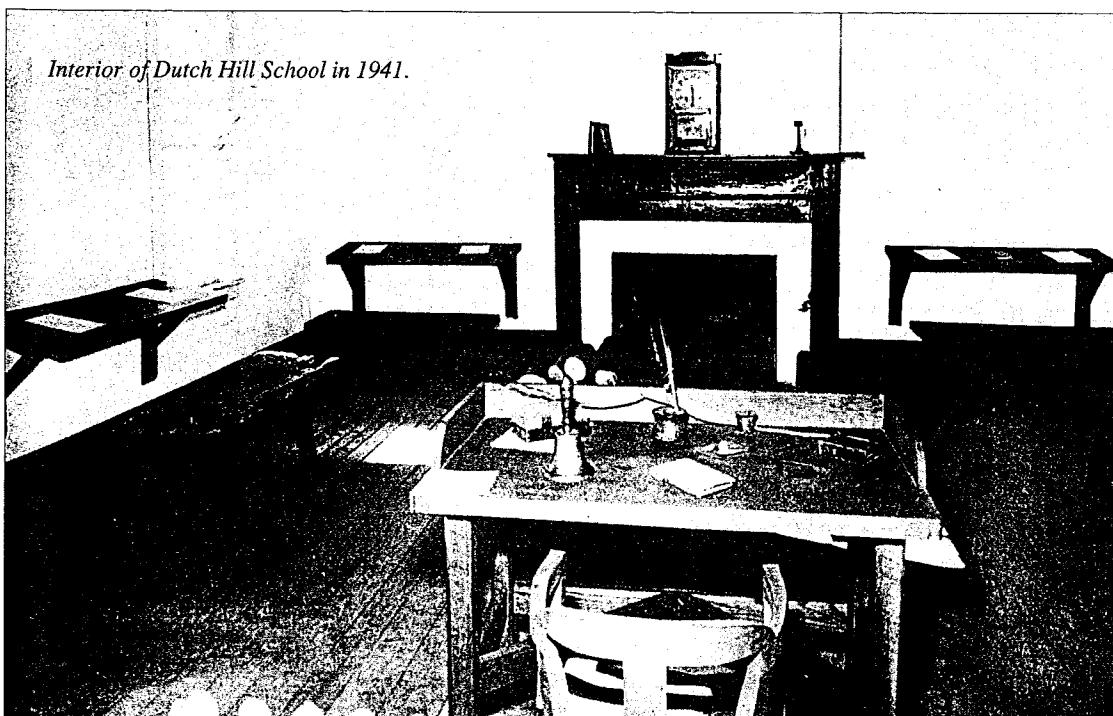
they went over the same old arithmetic of which he knew every word.

"The Grant Schoolhouse is now a well cared for museum, housing a large and valuable collection of relics, many of which belonged to the Grant family." (From *The Contributions of Georgetown, Ohio, Public Schools toward the Citizenship of its Community* by Aaron B. Murray, p.17, at The Ohio State University.)

U.S. Grant Writes of His School Days in Georgetown

Punishment at the "Dutch Hill" School probably took several forms. Hickory, beech, or willow switches were likely the most popular according to Ulysses' description of John D. White's school in his memoirs.

The rod was freely used there, and I was not exempt from its influence. I can see John D. White—the teacher of the school—now, with his long beech switch always in his hand. It was not always the same one, either. Switches were brought in bundles, from a beech wood near the



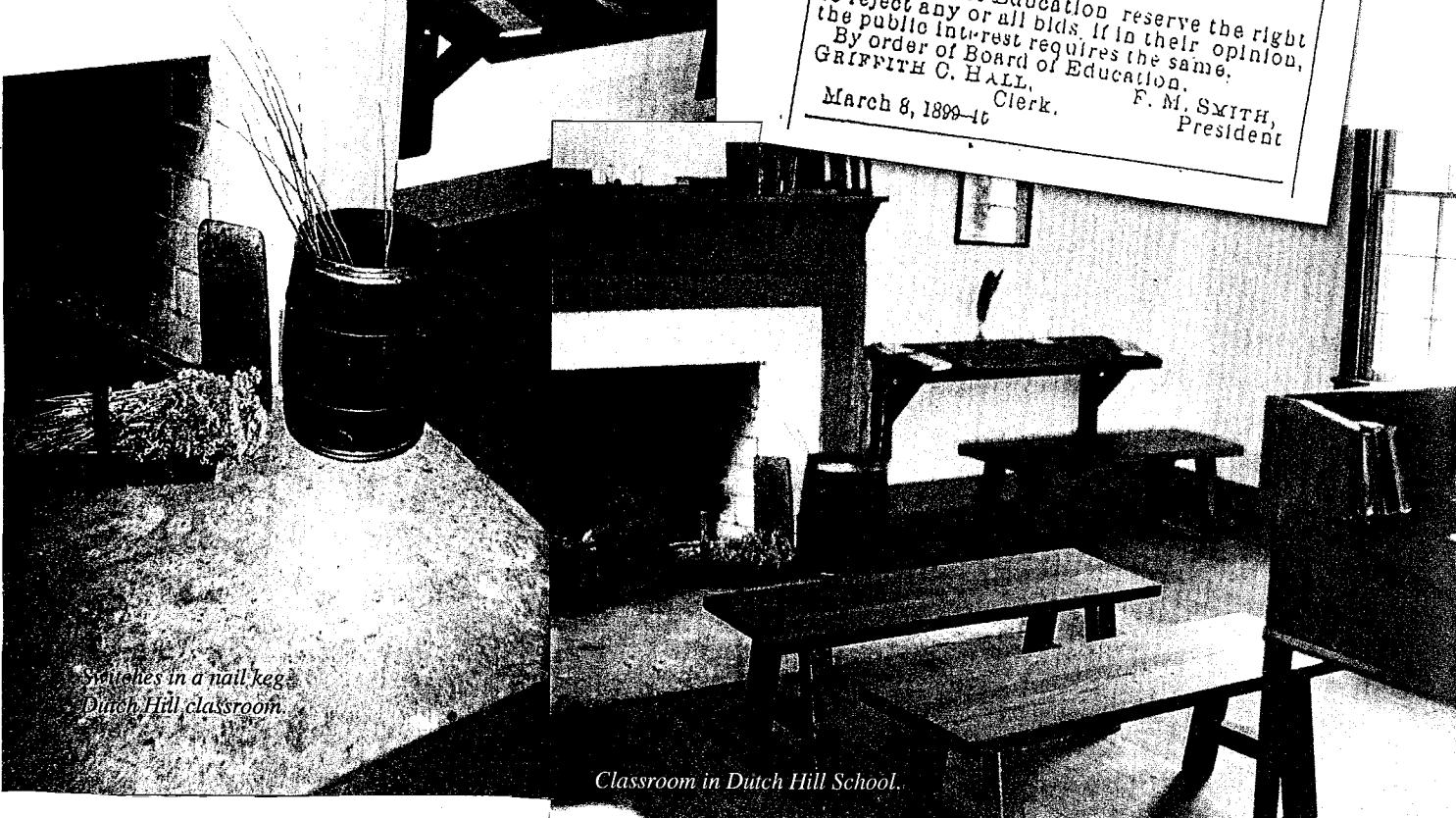
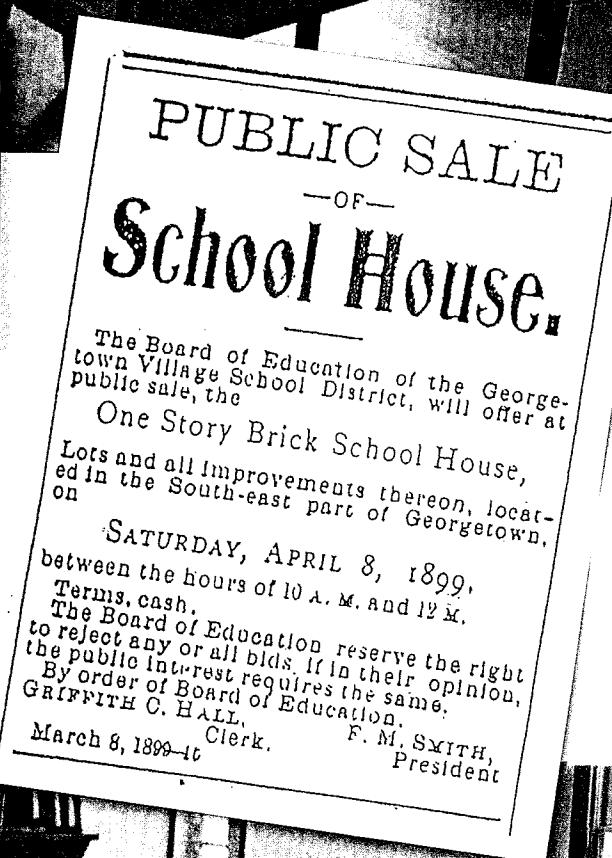
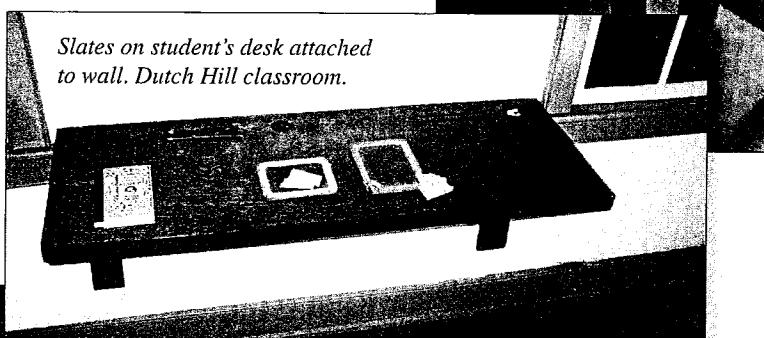
Interior of Dutch Hill School in 1941.

school house, by the boys for whose benefit they were intended. Often a whole bundle would be used up in a single day. I never had any hard feelings against my teacher, either while in school, or in later years when reflecting upon my experience. Mr. White was a kind-hearted man, and was much respected by the community in which he lived. He only followed the universal custom of the period, and that under which he had received his own education. (Ulysses S. Grant, *Personal Memoirs of U.S. Grant*)

↳ Teacher's desk. Dutch Hill classroom.



Slates on student's desk attached to wall. Dutch Hill classroom.



Sketches in a nail keg.
Dutch Hill classroom.

Classroom in Dutch Hill School.

Country Schools in Ohio and Brown County

Early History and Consolidation¹

Interest in public education in Ohio dates back to the Ordinance of 1787, which was, in effect, the constitution for the Northwest Territory² of which Ohio was a part. The Ordinance provided that "religion, morality, and knowledge being necessary to good government and the happiness of mankind, schools and the means of education shall forever be encouraged."

Before 1825 there were no public schools. Families who wanted their children to learn to read, write, and "cipher" had limited options. The wealthy few could hire a private tutor if they could find someone who was qualified. Most families who wanted an education for their children either had to home-school or join with a group of other parents in the neighborhood to provide a building and the necessary furnishings, books, and supplies. Sometimes a teacher with an entrepreneurial streak would initiate the process but more often the families had to recruit an individual who was more or less qualified. In these "subscription" schools the parents paid one or two dollars per child for a thirteen-week term with six days of instruction per week. On the Ohio frontier, with cash in short supply, barter was a way of life so the teacher often had to be satisfied with whatever the parents had to offer in trade.

The following "collection" letter written by John D. White, Ulysses S. Grant's teacher at the Dutch Hill School in Georgetown, Ohio, illustrates the problem.

District School House March 5, 1829

Dear Sir:

Justice to myself and family compels me to make out my accounts and endeavor to collect them. I hope you will not be offended at my sending you this scribble, for I have no time to run about and make collections. If I have got anything from you that I have not booked, I am willing to settle for it.

Note: Many of the school sites mentioned in this publication can be seen easily from public roadways, but all are privately owned. Interested visitors should always ask permission from the landowner before entering private property.

<i>You have paid me as follows:</i>	
<i>In cash.....</i>	\$2.00
<i>214 lbs. beef at 2 cents.....</i>	4.28
<i>1 bushel corn.....</i>	.25
<i>Flour.....</i>	.50
<i>Pork.....</i>	.50
<i>2 baskets corn</i>	.16
	\$7.69
<i>My acct. for 1826 is \$</i>	7.35 $\frac{1}{4}$
<i>for 1827 is</i>	8.00
<i>for 1828 is</i>	4.22 $\frac{1}{2}$
	19.58 $\frac{1}{4}$

This is for the time you sent and not according to your subscription.

Yours, etc. in haste

John D. White

The Land Ordinance of 1785 provided that the lands of the Northwest Territory were to be surveyed into townships six miles square. Each township was to be made up of 36 sections, each one mile square. The land was to be sold at auction for the benefit of the states, and one section in each township was reserved for the support of schools.

Although Ohio became a state in 1803, no significant legislation in support of public education was enacted until 1821, when the procedure for establishing school districts was outlined. A district was required to have at least 12 but not more than 40 householders who were to choose a three-member school board. The board was responsible for managing the school's finances and hiring a teacher. They could also build a schoolhouse if voters approved a tax for construction. Financial support was to come from rental of the section of school land, from donations of land and cash, and from assessments on the parents of students. The law, however, was not compulsory and applied only where voters chose to form a school district, so it had only limited success in promoting public education.

The idea that schools are an asset to the community was generally accepted in Ohio, and under the leadership of Gover-

nor Allen Trimble, considerable progress was made in establishing local taxation as a source of support for schools. In 1825, a new state law required county officials to collect and distribute a one-half mill property tax to support schools. Each township was responsible for establishing school districts with at least twelve householders and an area of two square miles. If no action was taken, the township lost its share of the property tax for five years. Responsibility for approving teachers passed to a county board of examiners.

In 1849, following the pattern of a plan adopted in Akron, Ohio, legislation provided for elected boards of education in cities, towns, and townships.

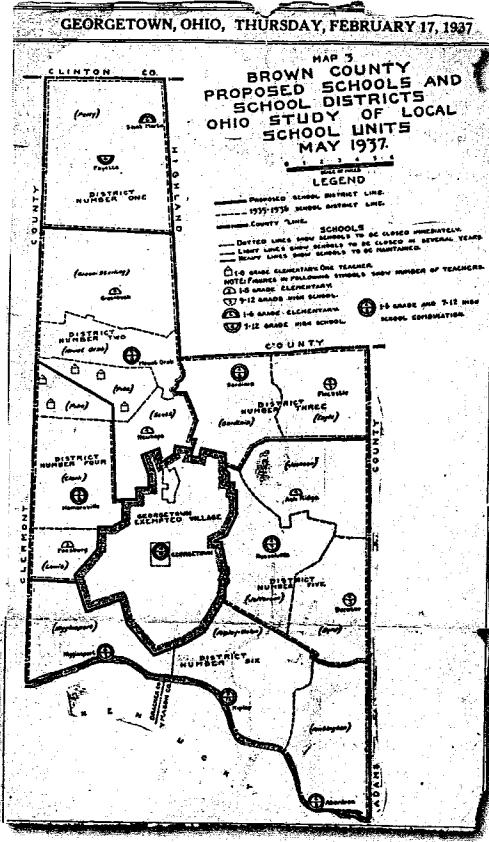
Another state law passed on March 14, 1853, authorized a state tax of two mills for support of the schools and transferred most of the administrative authority to a new board of education for each township. The old district school boards were left in place but with reduced responsibilities.

During this period, grammar, geography, and history were added to the existing curriculum of reading, writing, spelling, and arithmetic. These subjects were taught in the one-room schools that dotted the countryside after the Civil War and well into the 20th century.

From the 1850s to about 1900, Ohio's public education system expanded to include high schools, and from 1860 to 1880 the number grew from 161 to 567. During this same period teachers established professional organizations and pushed for improved training and standards.

Beginning in 1893, students who completed all eight years of elementary school could take the Boxwell-Patterson Examination to graduate. Passing this test meant the student could enter an accredited high school. The test was an all-day affair and was sometimes administered at the county seat under the direction of the County Superintendent's office. (See *The Boxwell Proficiency Exam* later in this chapter.)

The beginning of the end for small, rural schools came in 1900 in the form of a state law that gave elected township



school boards the option to replace district schools with centralized schools, with transportation provided at public expense. This same law made graded schools compulsory for the townships.³

The 1914 Rural School Code abolished the old system of rural districts and replaced it with county-wide boards of education with a county superintendent to manage all schools except those in cities and villages with a population of more than 3,000.

The Bing Act, passed in 1921, required school attendance for all children up to 18 years of age. This meant the rural districts had to pay for tuition and transportation to a high school, or provide a high school for students who had completed the first eight grades.

Many small schools were closed in the early 1920s due to a post-World War I drop in rural population and a state requirement that schools with less than ten students be closed. Even with these closings, records indicate that in 1925 there were 25 school districts in Brown County, all under county supervision.

School District consolidations. The first change after 1925 was the consolidation of the Pleasant Township and Georgetown districts. In further consolidations Ripley and Union Township formed the Ripley-Union District, Fayetteville and Perry were joined to form the Fayette-

vile-Perry District, and Russellville and Jefferson became the Russellville-Jefferson District. These changes reduced the number of districts to 21 in 1931.

In 1932 the Franklin District was eliminated and divided among the Georgetown, Sardinia, Russellville-Jefferson, and Jackson districts. This reduced the total number of districts to 20. In 1933 Georgetown became an exempted village school,⁴ leaving 19 districts under county supervision. The Aberdeen and Huntington Township districts were consolidated in 1934. In 1935 the Sterling District became a part of Green-Sterling; the Washington District was eliminated by dividing the territory between the Sardinia and Scott districts; and the Gladys Special District was transferred to Fayetteville-Perry, which was renamed the Perry Rural District.

One-room school closings. There were 47 one-room schools in the county in 1931. In the four-year period from 1931 to 1935, 41 of these schools were closed. Another was closed in 1936, leaving only five in operation for the 1936-37 school year. Four of these schools were in the Pike District while the fifth was in the Aberdeen-Huntington District. The board of education in the Pike District closed its four remaining one-room schools after the 1935-36 school year. The board had planned to erect a new building to accommodate the children of all of the closed schools but legal action prevented construction of the proposed building. Those students were reassigned to Mt. Orab, Clark Township, and Scott Township.

Many of these one-room school closings in the early 1930s were due to reduced property valuations during the depression. Their small enrollments also made them ineligible to participate in the early state aid programs.

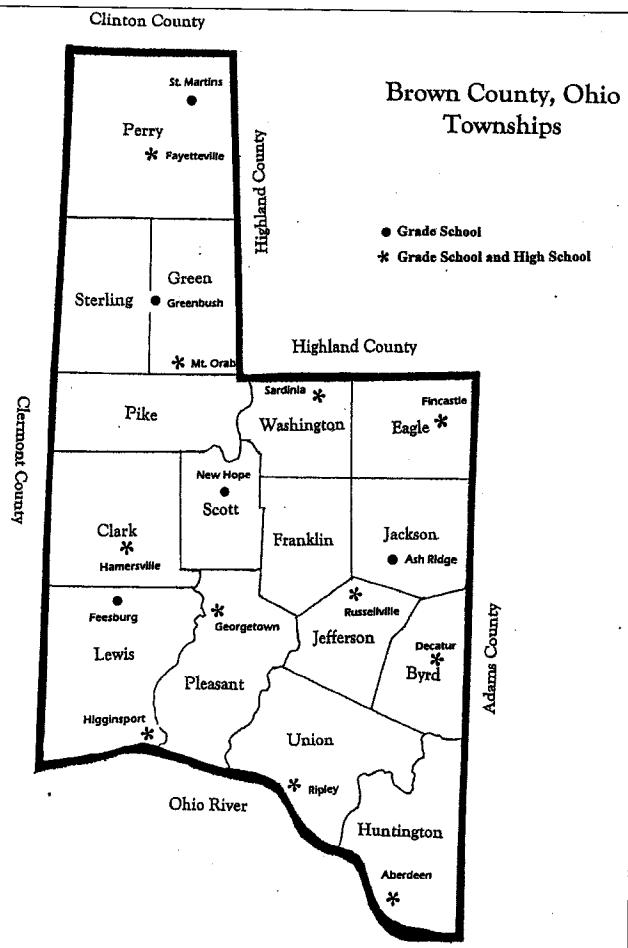
These reductions left the following 15 school districts in the county

when the 1935-36 school year began:
Aberdeen-Huntington Mt. Orab Village
Byrd Perry-Fayetteville
Clark-Hamersville Pike
Eagle Ripley-Union
Green-Sterling Russelville-Jefferson
Higginsport Sardinia
Jackson Scott
Lewis-Feesburg

In January 1937, the Brown County Board of Education divided the Pike Township District among the Mt. Orab, Clark, and Scott districts. The area served by the one-room schools at New Harmony and Locust Ridge became a part of the Clark Township District. The portion of the district served by the Maple Grove school was transferred to Mt. Orab and the Oakland school area was absorbed by Scott Township.

Ellis Grove in Huntington Township and Oakland and Shiloh schools in Pike Township were the last one-room schools to close. A letter from the state department indicates they closed in the spring of 1939.

For almost 20 years there were no further changes, but another round of consolidation was initiated in 1954 when Lewis-Feesburg joined Clark-Hamersville to form the Hamersville Local School District. Two years later, in 1956, the Green-Sterling and Scott Districts joined the Mt.



Orab Village District to form the Mt. Orab Local School District. Later in the same year Higginsport and Ripley-Union combined to make the Ripley-Union-Lewis Local School District.

In 1957 the Eastern Local School District was formed when Sardinia, Jackson, and Russellville-Jefferson Districts went together. A short time later the Byrd District joined the Eastern District.

In 1963 the Brown County Board of Education voted to allow the Aberdeen-Huntington School District to join the Adams County School System and in 1971 the Hamersville and Mt. Orab School Districts joined to form the Western Brown Local School District.

Finally, in 1989 Aberdeen-Huntington joined the Ripley-Union-Lewis School District to form the Ripley-Union-Lewis-Huntington (RULH) School District, leaving the county with the five school districts we have today (2009).

Fayetteville-Perry, Western Brown, Eastern, and RULH districts are under the Brown County Board of Education. Georgetown is an exempted village school system and St. Michael in Ripley is a Catholic parochial school.

The One-Room Schools⁵

Ohio's earliest schools were uncomfortable, makeshift affairs and it was not unusual for abandoned buildings to be pressed into service. Most were log structures with puncheon⁶ or bare dirt floors and windows covered with cloth or greased paper. Students sat on rough-hewn log benches with no back to lean on. During cold weather a large fireplace with a stick and mud chimney at one end of the building held logs that burned all day, roasting one side of the students who sat nearby and leaving those at a distance to shiver.

After 1825, most of the first generation schools were replaced with frame or brick buildings, often located on lots which were donated for the purpose. In many cases, the school was named for the family who had contributed the land. They might also be named for the closest community, the road on which the school was located, or for some nearby physical or geographic feature.

The families who helped build the schools had very little money, so construc-

WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 10, 1941

Last One-Room Schoolhouse In Brown County Opens Doors



MT. ORAB, O., Sept. 10—(Special)—Pictured above is the only one-room school building in the

Brown County-Mt. Orab rural area. About forty pupils are attending and are transported by a bus and private cars.

County Superintendent West said that at one time nearly all schools in the county were one-room buildings.

Various uses have been made of them. The majority are being used as homes. Some of them have been remodeled into dwellings.

From The News-Democrat

tion was simple. These small schoolhouses were built to accommodate the number of students in the area and measured anywhere from 16 by 18 feet to 30 by 50 feet. Generally, the school was rectangular with three large windows on each side and a door at the front. The floor was either puncheons or wood planks. Heat came from fireplaces and later from cast-iron potbelied stoves. With little or no insulation, the buildings were cold in the winter and one of the older boys was likely to be assigned to sit near the fireplace or stove to keep the fire going. Parents supplied firewood cut to size and the child of a parent who did not fulfill his obligation might wind up sitting furthest from the heat. The boys carried in the day's supply when they got to school. Usually a wood-shed or lean-to was provided to keep the wood supply dry.

The teacher arrived early to see that the fire was built and usually stayed after school to make sure it was out. Sometimes the teacher would hire one or two students to get the fire started in the morning and to take care of cleaning and other maintenance work.

The school was normally painted white, which was the least expensive paint

available. The roof was usually wood shingle or tin, and a stone or brick stoop provided access to the front door. Stone foundations were common and some schools had large windows with exterior shutters. Before electricity, tall windows provided natural light which could be supplemented by lard lamps (small bowls with a knotted rag in lard, grease, or vegetable oil) and after 1850 by "coal oil" (kerosene) lamps. Many schools built in the early 1800s did not have porches, cloakrooms,⁷ or bell towers. Rural communities, however, were proud of their schools and amenities were often added later if finances allowed.

Wooden plank floors were treated with oil to help preserve the wood and keep down dust. Because most of the students went to school barefoot, they often went home with their feet black from the oil.

The blackboard behind the teacher's desk could have been slate, but more likely was made from pine boards coated with layers of egg white and carbon from charred potatoes. Painted blackboards could be used with chalk but had to be resurfaced frequently. The blackboard could also be an instrument of punishment. The young miscreant would place his nose in

a circle on the blackboard, and remain in that position until the teacher felt that justice had been served.

Soon after tax support became available, school desks replaced the log benches. Ink was used by the older students, so an "ink well," a hole designed to hold an ink bottle, would be found in the upper right-hand corner of the desk. A groove across the sloped top of the desk kept pens, pencils, and chalk from rolling away. In the early years students used goose-quill pens and home-made ink while the younger children used a small slate with slate pens⁸ or chalk.

The schoolroom walls were decorated by the students with their own art and with good papers showing current work. Most schools had a flagpole and the day started and ended with raising and lowering the flag. A flag might also be in the schoolroom on a staff or hung on an inside wall. Portraits of George Washington were common before the Civil War and Abraham Lincoln was often added after the war.

Books were purchased by the parents, and as the children advanced they could be handed down to a younger brother or sister, or sold to another family. Education was so important in many homes that children who were unable to go to school were taught from the Bible or, in later years, the Sears Roebuck catalogue.

Coats were hung on pegs or nails on the wall. Lunch pails and bags were kept on shelves or hung on pegs with the students' coats. Lunch was whatever mother had available at home. Students brought biscuits to school with home-made jelly or apple butter and in later years, peanut butter. Ham, sausage, scrambled eggs, and corn bread with soup beans and onions were common lunches. With luck, an apple or other fruit might be included during the winter months. Sometimes the teacher made soup or stew on the potbellied stove from ingredients brought by the students. Mother always made sure there was a piece of gingerbread, apple stack cakes, or sorghum cookies for dessert. In hot weather, some put their lunch pails in the creek to keep them cool and nearly everyone ate outside. A lunch pail could have been any kind of tin box with a lid and a carrying handle. During the summer, the pail was used when picking blackberries.

On a bench near the door there was a large bucket for drinking water. In the early years everyone drank from the community dipper; sometimes made from a gourd, and drinking water came from a nearby

spring or creek. As ideas on health and personal hygiene advanced, the water supply came only from wells or springs and students brought their own drinking cups from home. The older boys were assigned the job of carrying water when needed.

Two essential structures, the "outhouses" or "privies" stood behind the school. Often, two girls went together so that one could stand lookout, since mischievous boys sometimes locked the girls inside.

The playground was whatever open space there was around the school and often included the fields and woods beyond. With a full hour for lunch, and a 15-minute recess in the morning and afternoon, the playground got a workout. There was always a ball game going on, but there were also many other popular games including marbles, mumbly peg, hide and seek, ante ante over the shanty, and when it snowed, fox and geese. (See "Schoolyard Games" below.) The girls usually played separately from the boys, jumping rope, bringing their dolls from home, or playing house in the trees or around some rocks. The teacher's hand bell signaled the end of lunch and recess.

Children's clothing prior to the 1900s was often made at home from cotton material. If there were several children in the family, everyone wore hand-me-downs. Clothes were very simple in style since sewing machines were not available in all homes. The girls wore long dresses and many layers of clothing to keep out the cold on the long walk to school. In warmer weather, they went barefoot to avoid wearing out expensive shoes. The styles prior to 1900 included bloomers, long stockings, and ankle-high lace-up shoes.

The boys wore plain, long-sleeved shirts and pants or bib overalls. Suspenders were a necessity to hold up the trousers. The boys also went barefoot in summer and bundled up in several layers of clothing in the winter. After the 1920s, when manufactured clothing became more popular, styles changed more frequently.

Some One-Room School Memories

By John T. Richey

John T. Richey submitted the following information about his mother, Lura McGohan Richey, and her teaching career in Brown County, along with his own memories of one-room schools.

Lura McGohan Richey, my mother, was born in Hamersville, Ohio on July 14, 1889. Her schooling started in Hamersville and later her family moved to a farm on Loudon Road in Pleasant Township. She finished her grade school education at Loudon School on Loudon Road near Shaw Road and Big Run Road. On completing the eighth grade, she stayed at home for one year, then returned to Loudon School for one year to help prepare her for teaching. She first taught at Loudon School in 1908-1909 and returned for the 1909-1910 school year. Those two summers she attended Miami University in Oxford, Ohio.

The years 1910-1911 and 1911-1912 she taught at Four's on Graybill Road east of Free Soil Road. The years 1912-1913 and 1913-1914 she taught at Camp Run on Camp Run Road near and across the road from Henize Road. The next two-and-one-half years she taught at Georgetown.

My education started in Jackson Township at Canada School in 1924. Our farm was 1.9 miles from the school and many mornings mother took me to school in the buggy with old Topsy. This school was located east of the Russellville-Winchester Turnpike on Cherry Fork Road. My teachers were Zoa Bennett Schatzman, Ella Mae Shaw Alexander, and the third year until November, Mary Wood. At that time we moved to a farm one mile west of Russellville on SR 125 in Jefferson Township. Our school was Fairview (still standing, and located one-and-one-half miles west of Russellville, Ohio, on SR 125). My teachers here were Charlotte Pindell Rainey and Charles McKinley.

The Russellville School became the Russellville-Jefferson School in 1929, with the Fairview School and the school located at Hockman Road near Conn Road. We were bussed to Russellville and Charlie McKinley was my seventh grade teacher. During that year a contract was let to build a new school by adding on and surrounding the present four-room building. The new addition included modern rest rooms and an auditorium-gymnasium.

This school system continued in 1930 by centralizing the rest of Jefferson Township which included schools on: Gooselick Road near Laycock Road, one-and-one-half miles north of Red Oak on US 62, George Miller Road east of US 62, one mile east of Eagle Creek on SR 125, Russellville-Winchester Turnpike at McNoun Road.

In 1931 Franklin Township started eliminating one-room schools and at that time they were bussed to our school from the Honey Run School on Honey Run Road and the school at the Grange Hall on Arnheim-Day Hill Road.

Memory also can add other schools, in Jackson Township one mile north as well as one mile south of Ash Ridge and on Kendall Road. In Pleasant Township, Hillman Ridge near the church and on SR 125 just east of Hillman Ridge Road.

Learning was made much easier with the bench up front and learning as other classes were conducted, the use of the blackboard, the helpfulness of the teachers, and the competitiveness made possible by all being together. It was the beginning of a fulfilling life.

Schoolyard Games

Children usually played outside, regardless of the weather, and games were an important part of their lives both at school and at home. All were competitive, but some emphasized cooperation and teamwork, while others helped develop individual skills. The following are brief descriptions of several popular children's games.

Ante Ante Over the Shanty. The name is often shortened to Andy over, handy over, or Annie over. One team throws a ball over the roof of a building to a team on the other side. The team catching the ball runs around the building and the one with the ball tries to tag members of the other team. Tagged players switch sides and the team with the most players when the game ends is the winner.

Fox and Geese. A wheel (20 feet or more in diameter) with spokes is tramped in the snow. The fox stands at the hub with the geese around the rim. Players can only run along the rim or the spokes. When the signal to start is given, the fox tries to tag the geese and keep them away from the center of the wheel. A goose who is tagged is out of the game. The first goose who reaches the center of the wheel without getting tagged gets to be the fox.

Mumble the Peg. Also called mumbly peg or mumblety peg, the object is to stick a jack-knife in the ground by flipping it from the hand, wrist, elbow, shoulder, head and other positions. The last to succeed in all positions loses. The winner then drives a two-inch peg into the ground as far as he can with three blows of his

knife handle, and the loser has to pull the peg out of the ground with his teeth.

Hopscotch. A course, consisting of single squares, side-by-side squares, triangles, and a "safe" or "home" square is laid out in dirt, or in chalk on pavement. A marker stone is tossed into the first square and the player hops through the course, skipping the square with the marker. Side by side squares are straddled, single squares are hopped on one foot, and the "home" square can be used to turn around for the return trip to the first square. The player picks up the marker on the way back, then tosses it into square number two and repeats the pattern through each square. A player who steps on a line, misses a square, or loses balance loses her turn. The first player to go through all squares successfully is the winner.

Jacks. The game can be played indoors or out on a smooth surface with 10 jacks and a small rubber ball. (A "jack" is a six-pronged metal piece.) To begin, the player tosses the jacks onto the playing surface. She then tosses the ball into the air and picks up a single jack, catching the ball on the first bounce and in the same hand. This is repeated, with the player picking up two jacks on the second try, three jacks on the third try, and so on until she picks up all 10 jacks on the last try. A player who misses, loses her turn and picks up at the same number on her next turn. The winner is the first to pick up all ten jacks on a single bounce of the ball.

Marbles. There are many games that can be played with marbles. "Ringer" is played using a circle 10 feet in diameter. Players "lag" to see who shoots first by tossing or shooting a marble at a line on the opposite side of the circle. Closest to the line wins the first shot. Thirteen marbles are arranged in a cross in the center of the circle. The first player may shoot from anywhere on the circle and tries to knock one of the marbles in the cross out of the ring. If he succeeds, he keeps the marble he hit and gets to try again. If his "shooter" marble stayed in the ring, he shoots from where it stopped. If the target marble is not knocked out of the ring and the shooter stays in the ring, the next player gets to shoot at any of the marbles in the ring including the shooter. If the shooter is knocked out of the ring, the player keeps both the shooter and all of the marbles the other player has taken. If the game is "for fair" all marbles are returned at the end of the game, if "for keeps" players keep the marbles they win.

The School and the Community

The school was a center for social life in the rural community and was often the only building suitable for public gatherings. The doors were open for voting, tax collection, and political meetings, as well as for local clubs and organizations. Various religious denominations held services in the school until a church could be built.

Local people generally recognized the importance of their schools and provided support by participating in many school-related events even if they had no children.

At Christmas a live tree, usually a young cedar, was cut from the woods and brought in by the older boys. The younger children decorated the tree with popcorn, cranberries, orange peels and colored paper. Names were exchanged and gifts might be pocket knives or marbles for boys and handkerchiefs or inexpensive dolls for the girls. The community was often entertained with a Christmas play, poems, and stories written and performed by the children. The event closed with Christmas carols and refreshments.

Picnics, spelling bees, foot races, and other competitions were common and one or more of the nearby schools might participate in special meets.

Other events included pie or box suppers. The ladies and older girls prepared food, which was sold at auction to the men and boys to raise money for school supplies or for some special project. The successful bidder then ate with whoever had prepared the meal. In theory, no one knew who the cook was until the item was purchased and the box was opened, but a young lady might drop a hint or two to a special boy.

Transportation was never an issue for teachers or students. You either walked or rode a horse. In bad weather, father might make the horse and buggy available, picking up other children on the way to school. In later years the Model T Ford became a common form of transportation and some of the first school buses were built in a local barn on the frame of the dependable little "flivver."

The school year accommodated the agricultural calendar because children were needed to help with spring planting and with the harvest in the fall. Four months of school during the winter and two months during the summer were typical.⁹ Many of the boys who planned to farm with their fathers only attended

school long enough to learn basic reading, writing, and arithmetic.

There was always sickness and the common drinking water supply was often the culprit. By the 1920s, water fountains began to replace the communal water bucket and indoor toilets eliminated the privy. Smallpox, cholera, whooping cough, measles, and chicken pox were serious problems in the early schools and an epidemic could close the school for several weeks. When a child was sick or injured, ringing the school bell would alert a neighbor that help was needed and the child would be taken home or to the doctor.

The Teachers

The most important element in any school was the teacher.

Though some men taught school, most teachers were unmarried women. Male-dominated school boards thought it unseemly if not disgraceful for a married woman to be working for pay outside the home, so as soon as a female teacher married, she was out of a job.

To set an example for the children and to satisfy the school board and the community, a teacher was expected to be a paragon of virtue as indicated in the following list of rules.

Rules for Teachers

- Teachers each day will fill lamps and clean lamp chimneys.
- Each teacher will bring a bucket of water and a scuttle of coal for the day's session.
- Make your pens carefully. You may whittle nibs to the individual taste of the pupils.
- Male teachers may take one evening each week for courting purposes, or two evenings a week if they go to church regularly.
- After ten hours in school, the teachers may spend the remaining time reading the Bible or other good books.
- Women teachers who marry or engage in unseemly conduct will be dismissed.
- Every teacher should lay aside from each pay a goodly sum of his earnings for his benefit during his declining years so that he will not become a burden on society.
- Any teacher who smokes, uses liquor in any form, frequents pool or public halls, or gets shaved in

a barber shop will give good reason to suspect his worth, intention, integrity and honesty.

- The teacher who performs his labor faithfully and without fault for five years will be given an increase of twenty-five cents per week in his pay, providing the Board of Education approves.

(Compliments of *One Room Schools of Ohio*)

Teachers were highly respected and well-liked in the community, although their status was never reflected in their pay. Discipline seldom seemed to be a problem. Parents generally accepted the teacher's word without question, and a student who was punished at school might expect something worse at home.

The teacher was often the student's best friend, patching up emotional as well as physical wounds, wiping away tears, healing friendships, and providing sound advice and a sympathetic ear when there was no one else to listen.¹⁰

Teachers were responsible for the maintenance and upkeep of the school building but the students helped. Girls kept the floors swept and the windows clean while the boys carried in the drinking water and firewood. The teacher sometimes paid the older students from her own pocket for such jobs as cutting wood, starting the fire every morning, and emptying ashes. A student who stayed after school to help with the chores, however, could become a "teacher's pet," a reputation male students were eager to avoid.

Teachers who lived some distance from the school often boarded with a family nearby, helping with the chores, and sometimes using the family's horse and buggy for transportation.

Teacher Training

Most early teachers were not well educated. Anyone with a good reputation who was competent in reading, writing, and general arithmetic could usually get a teaching contract in a rural school. In the early years, however, it was often difficult to find applicants with even these minimum qualifications.

The hiring process became more uniform in 1853 when legislation established boards of examiners in each county. A further advance came in 1864 when a state board of examiners was appointed. This board issued teaching certificates that

could be accepted anywhere in the state. The state board's responsibility for teacher certification was increased in 1914 and again in 1935 as standards for education and experience were raised.

Before formal requirements for teacher education were established, students who had passed all eight grades were sometimes hired to return to their school as teachers with no additional training. In some cases, the teacher was younger than some of her students.

To provide extended training for teachers, local institutes were organized by counties, villages, and cities beginning in the 1840s. These institutes continued into the early 1900s and provided several professional training sessions each year. The institutes were held in specified local school buildings which led to some of those buildings being referred to as a "college." (See Columbia College and Maple College in Green Township and Bloom Rose College in Sterling Township.)

BROWN COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS

OUTLINES OF COURSE OF STUDY
FOR THE ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS



Issued by
COUNTY BOARD OF EDUCATION

MISS MARY CAHALL, Secretary
DICK SMITH, County Superintendent

AUGUST, 1931

The News Democrat, Printer and
Publishers, Georgetown, Ohio

Company, Cincinnati, Ohio. No book to be in hands of the pupils until the first forty-five minutes have been spent, or about the end of the second hour. If attendance is regular, normal pupils should be able to do three or four books each year. Baldwin and Bender, Elson, Young and Fields, etc., should follow the completion of the Method Reader.

SECOND YEAR—New Education should be followed by Baldwin and Bender, Elson, Young and Fields, Brown, etc.

THIRD YEAR—New Education to be followed by Baldwin and Bender, Young and Fields, Brown, etc.

FOURTH YEAR—New Education to be followed by Baldwin and Bender, Young and Fields, Brown, etc.

The mechanics of reading are to be mastered before the end of the fourth year. Reading must still be carefully taught. The pupils should now have desire to read a great deal of good books at school when he reads at leisure at other times. We should aim to teach our pupils to do rapid silent reading, as well as good oral reading. Unless a given grade is interested in sight reading, the pupils should be prepared to receive a diagnosis of the lesson before it is taught. It is important to read to the class. When one member of the class has reading work to do in recitation, other members of the class have their books open or closed.

If at all possible, do not fail to have the Pupils Reading Circle Books in the process of creation as well as in the following:

FIFTH YEAR—After completing selections from Baldwin and Bender, Young and Fields, Brown, Rip Van Winkle, Tom Thumb, Cio-Cio, etc. The Dictionary hand book should be formed, not later than the fifth year.

SIXTH YEAR—In addition to selections from Baldwin and Bender, Modern American by Laurel House Company, Chicago, Elson's Reader, Guidebook of Civics, The Perfect Tribute, Pupils Reading Circle Books should be read.

SEVENTH YEAR—Selections from Baldwin and Bender, Elson's Reader, French, Arden, Franklin, The Legend of Sleepy Hollow, Christmas Carol, Snowbound, etc. should be read.

EIGHTH YEAR—Involving interest in reading books of travel, adventure, biography, action, etc. is characteristic of the period reached by pupils of the seventh and eighth Grades. Pupils should read a great deal of good books and give an oral report to the class or a written report to the teacher.

Inexpensive copies of The Great Peace, Franklin's Autobiography, Lives of the Golden Men, Lamb's Tales from Shakespeare, Plutarch's Lives, The Man Without a Country, etc. can be gotten for class use.

Carpenter's Geographical Readers and the Pupils Reading Circle Books should form a part of the reading of the pupils of these grades. The school music provide an opportunity at this stage for the pupil to

tation period may be needed to explain the new subject of the following lesson and thus make it of real interest to the child.

Where Stryker-Ogden Arithmetic is adopted the following suggestions are offered:

SECOND YEAR—Chapter I may be used.

THIRD YEAR—Chapter II, First Term, Second Term, Chapter V.

FOURTH YEAR—Chapter IV, First Term, Second Term, Chapter V.

The Lower Grades Book covers the work for the Second, Third and Fourth Years.

FIFTH YEAR—Chapter I, First Term, Second Term, Chapter II.

SIXTH YEAR—Chapter III, First Term, Second Term, Chapter IV.

The Middle Grades Book covers the work of the Fifth and Sixth Years.

SEVENTH YEAR—Chapter I, First Term, Second Term, Chapter IV.

EIGHTH YEAR—Chapter III, First Term, Second Term, Chapter IV.

The Higher Grades Book covers the work for the seventh and eighth years.

CIVICS

Tarkington's My Country

SEVENTH YEAR—First Term, pages 1 to 52. Second Term, pages 53 to 153.

EIGHTH YEAR—First Term, page 153 to 272. Second Term, beginning with page 273 and complete the text.

Seventh and Eighth Grades will recite together in Civics on Thursday and Friday, during eighth grade work in 1931, beginning with page 153. The first three days of the week will be given to history.

HISTORY

FIFTH GRADE—Text—Montgomery's Beginners' American History. First term, pages 1 to 66. Second term, pages 67 to 132.

SIXTH YEAR—Same text. First term, pages 133 to 197. Second term, pages 197 to 254. Part three again to be given to Ohio History.

Grades Five and Six will recite together in History on Thursday and Friday of each week, doing sixth grade work in 1931, beginning with page 133.

SCIENCE

SEVENTH GRADE—Text—Montgomery's Beginners' American History. First term, pages 1 to 66. Second term, pages 67 to 132.

EIGHTH GRADE—Same text. First term, pages 133 to 197. Second term, pages 197 to 254. Part three again to be given to Ohio History.

Grades Five and Six will recite together in History on Thursday and Friday of each week, doing sixth grade work in 1931, beginning with page 133.

SUPPLEMENTARY OUTLINE COURSE OF STUDY FOR MENTARY SCHOOLS COUNTY TO BE USED TION WITH

County Outlines Published
and State Course of

Prepared and Issued
MISS MARY CAHALL, S.
DICK SMITH, County Super
1931

SPELLING

No text to be in hands of pupils during the first two hours of the day in connection with Language. Pearson and Suzuki's Essential text. The first twenty pages of this text should be printed on one side of the paper so that the pupils will do more efficiently when the interests of the pupils in the lessons when the book is prepared so that only two new sets of words are introduced each day. Set Six, also Grades Seven and Eight, the two years work in one year, it may be noted. When the book will be no longer used, the pupils should then be given the assignment.

In 1931, Grade Three and Four
Five and Six and Seven, and Grades .

Read carefully and follow Direct
on Pages VII to XII. Too much time
is taken in reading the text. Give a list of words from previous grade
text exercises by different members

READING

FIRST YEAR—New Education
first. Follow directions which m

DAILY PROGRAM FOR YEAR 1931-32, 1933-34, ETC.

Begin	Time	Grade	Recitation
9:00	5	all	Opening Exercises
9:05	10	1	Reading
9:15	10	2	Reading
9:25	10	3	Reading
9:35	20	4	Reading
9:45	10	5	RECESS
10:05	10	6	Number Work
10:20	15	6	Arithmetic
10:30	10	6	Arithmetic
10:45	10	7	Reading
10:55	10	8	RECESS
11:05	10	9	Number Work
11:20	20	6	Reading
11:35	10	2	English
11:55	10	5	Arithmetic
12:00	60	8	Hygiene and History
12:00	60	all	NOON
12:05	5	all	Opening Exercises
1:15	10	1	Reading
1:25	10	2	Reading
1:35	10	3	Geography
1:45	10	3	Reading
2:00	3	all	History-Oralia
2:05	10	3	Writing
2:15	10	6	Reading
2:25	10	6	Spelling
2:35	10	6	RECESS
2:45	10	3	Language
2:55	10	3	Language
3:05	15	6	Geography-Ohio History
3:25	10	6	English-Agriculture
3:40	20	8	Hygiene-Agriculture
4:00	60	8	School Classes

EIGHTH GRADE—Hygiene on Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday, and Agriculture on Thursday and Friday.

SIXTH GRADE—English on Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday, and Physical Education supervised by the teacher at the recess and noon periods.

In rural schools where some of the grades are missing more time may be given where the teacher sees need of it.

TEXT BOOKS USED IN BROWN COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS

1931-32

(a) Pearson and Suzuki's Essentials of Spelling.

(a) Readers—New Education—Book One, Book Two, Book Three, Book Four.

(a) Baldwin and Reader—First Reader, Second Reader, Third Reader, Fourth Reader and Fifth Reader, Sixth, Seventh and Eighth Reader.

(a) Overton's Personal Hygiene.

(a) Overton's General Hygiene.

(a) Webster's Elementary School Dictionary.

(a) Pearson and Kirkway's Essentials of English (Lower Grades).

(a) Pearson and Kirkway's Essentials of English (Higher Grades).

(a) Arithmetic—Graves Lower, Middle, Higher or First Book and Second Book.

(b) Arithmetic—Wentworth-Smith Essentials of Arithmetic-Primary School book.

(b) Civics—Tarkington's My Country.

(b) History—Montgomery's Beginner's American History.

(b) History—Montgomery's Leading Facts of American History.

(b) Geography—Guthrie's Ohio History and Geography.

(b) Price's Home Geography.

(b) Price's Wood Geography—Book One.

(b) Price's Wood Geography—Book Two.

(c) Gehrt's Productive Agriculture.

read a number of good books. Many of these books the pupils should often be expected to report later on the basis of what they have learned.

HANDWRITING

The Palmer System of Writing for Primary. Writing lessons for Primary. Works the work for Grades One to Ten. Writing the work for Oral Reading. The teacher of the county will be present at the meetings of the county council and will be present in the room where the work is to be done. The teacher should be present in the room where the work is to be done. If teachers cannot meet with the class, the teacher should be present with the class.

In writing of the first two years, large pencils should be used. The teacher should provide writing materials for the pupils.

SEVENTH GRADE—Pearson and Kirkway's Essentials of English, Higher Grades. First Term pages 1 to 151. Second Term pages 153 to 212-213, 1931-34, etc.

Fifth and Sixth Years will recite together doing sixth grade work in 1931-32, 1933-34, etc.

SIXTH GRADE—Pearson and Kirkway's Essentials of English, Middle Grades. First Term pages 1 to 151. Second Term pages 153 to 212-213, 1931-34, etc.

EIGHTH GRADE—Pearson and Kirkway's Essentials of English, Higher Grade. First Term pages 221 to 361. Second Term pages 361 to 420, 1931-32, 1933-34, etc.

Seventh and Eighth Years will recite together doing eighth grade work in 1931-32, 1933-34, etc.

The work in dramatization, story-telling, letter-writing, etc. of the previous grades should clearly show its effects in topic selection, etc. May stories, reports on current events, etc. Letters, etc.

It is to be eliminated to have grades seven and eight recite together in this branch. It is not feasible to have the pupils recite together if the composition material is too great. This will be done in the eighth grade only, required to do the most difficult contractions in grammar.

Every month or perhaps oftener, each pupil of the seventh and eighth grades should be expected to produce a written product that is other parts of the curriculum, expressive writing, force, etc. may be expected of the seventh and eighth grades. The teacher should return the written and later method by which the pupils are continually made.

The work in technical grammar that is helpful in teaching one that is to succeed in future English should be given more attention. Less time should be given to the old form of grammar, etc. Pronouns, verbs and verb tenses, etc. should be given to the study of correct sentence formation, the use of words in sentences, combinations of parts of speech, etc. should be encouraged for the purpose of substituting the correct word or form of the word for the often used incorrect form.

"Every recitation should be a lesson in English," means that the pupils should always accept from her pupils only the best English that they may be expected to use.

Opportunity daily to stand in front of the entire school, as it recalls forth his best efforts of

SEVENTH GRADE—Same text as above. First Term, pages 1 to 151. Second Term, 152 to 256.

EIGHTH GRADE—Same text as above. First Term, pages 152 to 256.

Fifth and Sixth Grades will recite together, beginning with the work of the fifth year 1 to the end of the text. More work should again be recited here.

SEVENTH GRADE—Same text as above. First Term, pages 257-343.

EIGHTH GRADE—Same text as above. First Term, pages 258-341.

Second Term, pages 451 to the end of book.

SEVENTH GRADE—Same text as above. First Term, pages 349-384.

EIGHTH GRADE—Same text as above. First Term, pages 385-451.

Second Term, pages 451 to the end of book.

In Arithmetic we have the most difficult problem of combining the grades, but the stellar teacher will be able to do it successfully. The country teacher will find it difficult to do this. The teacher should be given time to discuss the work problems at the teacher's desk. Before taking up a new subject, the teacher should be given time to discuss the new subject.

GRADING ONE TO SIX—No text will be placed in the hands of the pupils of these grades, but much should be done in the work of Nature Study and of influencing the pupils to observe the many things of interest in nature about them.

SEVENTH GRADE—Gehrt's Productive Agriculture. First Term, pages 1 to 107. Second Term, pages 108 to 260.

EIGHTH GRADE—Same text as above. First Term, pages 261 to 345. Second Term, pages 346 to 451. The following parts of the text. The seventh and eighth grades will recite together in this branch on Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday of each week, doing eighth grade work in 1931-32 and other odd years, beginning on page 151 and completing the work in the text. The seventh grade work will be done in the even numbered years, starting with page 151 and ending with page 256. The eighth grade work will be done in the odd numbered years, starting with page 257 and ending with page 345. The first term should be supplemented with Agricultural bulletins and Farm Paper. Also experiments of interest with agricultural projects should be performed.

AGRICULTURE

GRADES ONE TO SIX—No text will be placed in the hands of the pupils of these grades, but much should be done in the work of Nature Study and of influencing the pupils to observe the many things of interest in nature about them.

SEVENTH GRADE—Gehrt's Productive Agriculture. First Term, pages 1 to 107. Second Term, pages 108 to 260.

EIGHTH GRADE—Same text as above. First Term, pages 261 to 345. Second Term, pages 346 to 451. The following parts of the text. The seventh and eighth grades will recite together in this branch on Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday of each week, doing eighth grade work in 1931-32 and other odd years, beginning on page 151 and completing the work in the text. The seventh grade work will be done in the even numbered years, starting with page 151 and ending with page 256. The eighth grade work will be done in the odd numbered years, starting with page 257 and ending with page 345. The first term should be supplemented with Agricultural bulletins and Farm Paper. Also experiments of interest with agricultural projects should be performed.

NATURE HISTORY AND GEOGRAPHY

The seventh and eighth grades should recite together, doing eighth grade work 1931-32, 1933-34, etc. The first term work should begin on

page 109 to page 169 and the second term work begin on page 169 and complete the book. In the even years 1932-33, 1934-35, etc. the first term work begin on page 1 and extend to page 57 and extend to page 57 to 169 in the second term.

SUGGESTIONS ON DAILY PROGRAM

All teaching in rural schools with all grades represented should follow the daily program given in the Course of Study as nearly as possible. This provides not only for reciting and reading for the study periods as well. No provision is made for third grade spelling, but the fifth and sixth grades in Hygiene and Agriculture may be limited to 15 minutes and the fifth and sixth grades in Reading, etc. The first term work should be done in the first term. The second term work should be combined with the third grade spelling, the fifth and sixth in all except Arithmetic and the seventh and eighth, and ninth in all except Arithmetic. In the odd years 1931-32, 1933-34, etc. most states require the teacher to open the 6th and 8th grade work in these branches and in the even years 1932-33, 1934-35, etc. most states should place upon the 3rd, 5th and 7th grade work. A suggested program is printed on next page:

Brown County School Curriculum. (Courtesy of the Ripley Museum.)

Education and Race

Brown County—and the state of Ohio—seem to have been split nearly 50/50 on the issue of abolition and the rights of African-Americans. Ohio did not permit slavery but many Ohioans disliked the idea of living and working with blacks. Even those who had freed their slaves and moved to Ohio because freedom was guaranteed here had difficulty extending more rights to the black community. In 1804 Ohio enacted the “Black Laws” that prohibited African-American males from voting and serving in the militia or on a jury. They could not testify against a white in court, send their children to public school, or receive assistance from the “poor house.” Many Ohio villages and towns used the power of the “black laws” to limit or prevent blacks from living in their communities. Blacks were required to post a \$500 bond to insure their good conduct. Gov. Tiffin and his brother-in-law Thomas Worthington (a future governor) had both freed their slaves before they moved to Ohio but cast the votes that passed the “Black Laws” by just one vote. Even with all these restrictions, 37,000 blacks lived in Ohio by 1860, preferring limited freedom to living in the South.

Under an 1853 law, school boards were required to establish separate colored schools in districts where there were more than thirty African American children. Integrated schools were permitted if no parents objected. After 1878, school boards were allowed to keep segregated schools but had to provide a free education for all children. A law passed in 1887 eliminated separate schools, and students of all races were required to receive the same educational opportunities.

A number of one-room schools in Brown County are referred to as “colored schools” but most became integrated over a period of years and photographs often show both colored and white students.

The Boxwell Proficiency Exam

Concerns that Ohio's school children were underachieving led to the controversial implementation of a ninth grade proficiency test in the late 1880s. Legislators reasoned that only with some type of exit exam could both students and teachers be held accountable. Along with this concept went the assumption that schools would be forced to model on those of a past era when teaching the "three Rs" was given proper emphasis.

In 1877 a new law made school attendance compulsory, but the legislation seems to have had little effect. So haphazard was its enforcement that when the general assembly provided for enforcement by truant officers twelve years later, the editor of the national journal Education heralded the action as if it was the state's first compulsory measure. This 1889 law established minimum periods of instruction for both city and rural children (less was required for country students) between the ages of eight and fourteen. Children be-

The Boxwell-Patterson Examination: Some Answers

Although the state commissioner of education printed the complete text of both the April and May examinations in his annual report for 1912, he did not include the "official" answers used for scoring. These answers, therefore, were gleaned from references dating approximately to that time period.

History

1. In 1681 the Quaker William Penn was given a grant to Pennsylvania by the English crown to settle a debt owed to his family. Philadelphia was founded the same year. Penn came to the colony a year later, enacted a peace treaty with the Indians, and established a liberal governmental charter that attracted large numbers of settlers, especially Irish, Scotch-Irish, and Germans.

2. The American Revolution began with the battles of Lexington and Concord on April 19, 1775. The conflict resulted from differences over governmental charter rights and trade privileges between the American colonies and Great Britain.

3. The Constitution was formed by a convention of state delegates held in Philadelphia in 1787. The Constitution was officially adopted after the ninth state, New Hampshire, ratified it in June 1788.

4. The legislative branch of government.

5. The Washington administration was characterized by internal political division between those who would expand the federal government, known as Federalists, and those who sought to limit it, labeled as Democratic Republicans. Major diplomatic initiatives were undertaken with England and Spain, and military action was taken against rebellious farmers in western Pennsylvania and the Indians in the Northwest Territory. The Union was also expanded by three states.

6. Meriwether Lewis and William Clark were sent by President Thomas Jefferson to explore the far Northwest and report on the geography, inhabitants, animal and plant life, and mineral resources. In addition to scientific data, the expedition gave the United States a major claim on the region beyond the Rocky Mountains, an area not included in the original Louisiana Purchase.

7. Gold was discovered at Sutter's Mill on January 24, 1848, but the first gold seekers did not arrive until over a year later. Thousands from the U.S. and distant nations went to California seeking their fortune, swelling the population and leading to a port for statehood. This precipitated the political conflict over its free or slave status and led to the Congressional Compromise of 1850.

8. In 1912 these were William Henry Harrison, Zachary Taylor, Abraham Lincoln, James A. Garfield, and William McKinley.

9. In the absence of the "official" answers, we suggest that the expected response in 1912 may have been Lincoln, Stanton, Grant, Sherman, and Sheridan.

10. In 1912 these were Johnson, Grant, Hayes, Garfield, Arthur, Cleveland, Harrison, Cleveland, McKinley, Roosevelt, and Taft.

Arithmetic

1. 272 lbs, 10 lbs
2. \$52
3. 15%
4. \$37.15

5. 320 rods
6. 51.26 inches
7. July 29, 1895
8. 52.9 bushels/acre or 52 bushels/3 pecks, 5 quarts/acre

BOXWELL-PATTERSON EXAMINATION

MAY 18, 1912

MORNING

HISTORY.

1. Write a brief description of the settlement of Pennsylvania.
2. When did the Revolutionary War begin and what was the principal cause of this war?
3. How was the Constitution of the United States formed?
4. What is the substance of the first article of the Constitution?
5. Write a short description of Washington's administration.
6. What were the purposes and results of the expedition of Lewis and Clark?
7. Where was gold discovered in California? What were the results of this discovery?
8. Name the presidents of the United States that died during their term of office.
9. Name the five greatest Union leaders during the Civil War.
10. Write the names of the Presidents of the United States since Lincoln was President.

READING.

The examination in reading will be conducted by the examiners.

ARITHMETIC.

1. Seventeen barrels of sugar weigh 27 cwt. 25 lb. 8oz. What is the weight of one barrel?
2. What will 16 cwt. at 60 cents per sq. yd. to concrete a walk 30 ft. long and 10 ft. 6 inches wide?
3. The invoice price of goods was \$285. The discount allowed by the seller was \$43.20. Find the rate of discount.

MORNING

PHYSIOLOGY.

1. What are sweat glands? Why is it necessary to keep the ducts open?
2. What are the ill effects of keeping in the house or school the greater part of the time?
3. Is it necessary to be exposed to the sunlight and pure air in order to have good health? Why?
4. How often should baths be taken, and when should the water be warm and when cold?
5. Explain how food enables the body to grow.
6. What is the pulmonary circulation? Why is this circulation necessary?
7. What are bacteria? Are bacteria dangerous to the health of people?
8. Explain the importance of thoroughly chewing your food.
9. What is reflex action? Give an illustration of reflex action.
10. Name the three divisions of the brain, and state the work of each division.

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BOXWELL-PATTERSON EXAMINATION

MAY 18, 1912

AFTERNOON

GRAMMAR.

1. Use the following words in sentences, (a) as nouns, (b) as verbs: frame, fire, use, rest and studies.
2. Write the active and passive constructions "see" in the present tense indicative mode.
3. Write a direct question and change it to an indirect question. Show the syntax of each word of the following sentence: "It is a picture."
4. What is the syntax of a word? Show the syntax of each word of the following sentence: "It is a picture."
5. How do you classify pronouns? Name a pronoun of each class.
6. What are adverbs? What adverbs have inflections of comparison?
7. Show by illustration, the differences between phrases and clauses.
8. What is a sentence? A word? A syllable?
9. Write three imperative sentences; also three exclamatory sentences.
10. Write a sentence containing a transitive verb and parse the verb.

WRITING.

- Copy the following quotation as a specimen of your best penmanship:
- The hills are dearest which our childish feet have climbed the earliest; and the streams most sweet Are ever those at which our young lips drank Stopped to their waters o'er the grassy bank,

ORTHOGRAPHY.

1. What is a vocal, a subvocal, an aspirate?
2. Illustrate by words the two sounds of "I" and the two sounds of "U".
3. For what do the following abbreviations stand: C. O. D., D. P. P. S., and S. R. T.?
4. What are synonyms? Write four words as synonyms for each.
5. Use the proper diacritical marks to indicate the sounds of letters in the following words: pencil, scissors, eight, there and blue.
- 6-10. Spell:

ful Boxwell exams were held in Warren County.

The law's provisions were simple. Any rural student who had completed the eighth grade could take an examination on orthography (spelling and language study), reading, writing, arithmetic, geography, physical geography, English grammar, United States history, and physiology¹¹.

The first 65 percent of the students taking the Boxwell exams passed and received their certificates at commencement ceremonies set up by the county examiners.

Strong voices of dissent among turn-of-the-century educators questioned the intrinsic value of "examinations." Gradually Ohioans raised the standards of rural schools in the early twentieth century. Districts were consolidated, curricula were standardized, and better transportation was provided. New, more modern high schools were erected in the counties.

Sweeping education reform legislation, known as the Rural School Code, was passed in 1914, establishing graded, consolidated schools under county supervision with curricula for each level, and requiring teachers to be graduates of colleges or normal schools. This eliminated the need for Ohio's first proficiency exams, and brought to a close the era of the Boxwell-Patterson test. (From the Ohio Historical Society, *Scoles Collection*, September-October 1993)