

TEACHER LORE AND THE ONE-ROOM SCHOOLHOUSE:
A HISTORICAL REFLECTION OF
LIVED CURRICULUM

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CHAPTER I

Introduction

Since the beginning of time there have been storytellers. The "tellers" told stories to entertain around the fireside at night. These oral stories or verbal renderings of history (Davis, O.L., 1991) originally told of skill and bravery during battles or hunts. Later, stories were developed and used to teach a lesson or moral. Storytellers were respected for their ability to take a simple story, develop it with their own unique style, and retell the story in a way that brought the story to life and allowed the hearer or reader to "approximate the intimacy of witness to the actual events" (Davis, O.L., 1991, p.78). In time, some of these stories were recorded by written word, and became crucial to history (Davis, O.L. 1991) but most were lost--never to be shared with new generations for the rest of eternity.

American teachers, too, (Kirkpatrick, 1917, Weber, 1946, Stephens, 1991) have told stories about school and what happened in the one-room schoolhouse. The chalkboard, Big Chief tablets, and potbellied stoves replaced the campfire. Instead of war or hunting expeditions, these

school stories "talked" a simple language about the one-room school and rural life. Like the stories of old, these school stories were often told to entertain and were never recorded. However, a few autobiographical stories (Kirkpatrick, 1917) and diaries (Weber, 1946) about lived experiences of one-room schools were published. These accounts are valuable as they reached into the "workings" or essence of schools and rural life and present future generations of educators with historical information about education and curriculum development in the one-room school.

Background

If I had my life to live over again, and expected to be a teacher, I would make a thorough preparation for my work. I am certain I would not knowingly hunt up a rural school and occupy the place intended for a teacher, and draw money from its treasury to educate myself sufficiently to help me land a position in a city school or mayhap, a college. I have been high school principal and city superintendent, and without hope of favor or fear of condemnation, I make the assertion that the teachers who are doing

the most for this country, who work the hardest and get the least remuneration from a money consideration are the rural teachers. No other position in the school system of America requires more skill and efficiency (Kirkpatrick, 1917, p.26).

Nowata County was once part of the Cooweescoowee District of the Cherokee Nation, Indian Territory. The Cherokee Nation was very interested in education for their children. This account of a missionary teacher was found in Lights on Oklahoma History, "There was also a Miss Thompson. . . She had gone to the Cherokee country when a young lady; had emigrated with the Indians from the state of Georgia to their present home; had labored in the Park Hill school . . ." (Evans, 1926, p.119). Miss Thompson decided to retire and return to her New England home. She had a wonderful time visiting her old friends and relatives. Then she became bored with her inactivity and decided to return to her friends in Indian Territory. She returned to Park Hill School and found that her old position was filled by another teacher. ". . . but she was rather pleased to find it so, for she went out a mile and an half distant and opened a new school which was soon filled with children that

otherwise would not have been taught" (Evans, 1926, p.120). Many missionaries, like Miss Thompson, traveled with the Indians and helped reestablish the schools.

Schools established in Indian Territory were under the Cherokee compulsory school law. These schools were controlled by a national board of education composed of three members appointed by the principal chief. "By 1888, there were nearly a hundred country schools, but the buildings were often mere cabins. The teachers usually received low salaries and the school attendance was not always good" (Buchanan, 1924, p. 258). Before 1889, only schools controlled by the Cherokee Nation existed in Nowata County. Mary Ellis recalled "Education was not as easily obtained in the early days as the present time. . . . The country schools then were not like the present consolidated district schools, . . . but our schoolhouses were built of logs and in some localities school was held in dugouts" (Indian and Pioneer History Collection Manuscripts, Vol. XXIII, p 394). R. Z. Dugan stated, "There were many schools, country schools were usually in small cabins. They had good teachers but their salary was very meager" (Indian and Pioneer History Collection Manuscripts, Vol. III, pp. 285). Meager pay for teachers is recorded in the Cherokee Nation records which authorized funds for primary teachers to be paid thirty dollars a month on January 31, 1891 (Cherokee Nation Tribal Documents, Vol. 295). Selection of

the teachers for Cherokee funded schools was made by the Superintendent of Education and preference was given to citizens of the Nation. The National Laws of the Cherokee Nation divided that nation into nine educational districts. The few white children living in Indian Territory were taught by their parents (Cook, 1939). The Cooweescoowee District of the Cherokee Nation had sixteen schools and had 874 pupils in 1892 (Cook, 1939).

Indians owned all land and controlled the political affairs of the country. White men had to have a permit to enter or work in Indian Territory (Buchanan, 1924). However, so many whites surged into Indian Territory that enforcement was impossible. After the Land Run, April 22, 1889, several subscription schools were established in the area that later became Nowata County (Couch, undated, Heritage Map of Nowata County).

"One of the first subscription schools in Nowata County was the Wood School. . . . It was taught by Jesse K. Allen. He walked two miles to school and taught thirty-one pupils for \$30.00 per month. One of the customs of this school was a Friday afternoon spelling match. Mr. Allen would give a quarter to the pupil who spelled the others down. He gave away approximately one-third of his salary in this manner" (Cook, 1939, p. 64).

Another subscription school was the first school in the town of Nowata (which was later made the county seat). Both white and Cherokee children attended this school. No taxes were levied to support this school but the Cherokee government did help with the employment of teachers. Before statehood, this school reached a total enrollment of more than 500 pupils (Cook, 1939).

The school institutions were continued under tribal control until the Curtis Act of 1889. Although the tribes wished to continue to control the school, their funds were controlled by the Secretary of the Interior, so they were forced to cooperate with the federal government (Stephens, 1991). A superintendent was appointed by the federal government over the schools in Indian Territory. In the statehood year of 1907-1908, there were 5,656 school districts in Oklahoma. More than 299 of these were in the former Indian Territory (Council of Chief State School Officers). Most of these 5000 plus schools were one-room frame buildings with one teacher teaching grades one through eight.

Teaching in the one-room school was not an easy job. Often, teachers hired for those schools were beginners with little preparation for a teaching position with so many diversities (Slacks, 1938). In 1908 in the state of Oklahoma, many teachers in rural schools were eighth grade graduates, or had only one or two years of high school

(Fourteenth Biennial Report of the Superintendent of Public Instruction of the State of Oklahoma, 1932-34, p.1).

Applicants that paid a two dollar fee and passed the county test (see Appendix D) could be certified to teach for one or two years depending on the type of certificate. Second and First-grade certificates were issued for two years. Five-year and Lifetime certificates could be obtained with the completion of college credits (Thirteenth Biennial Report of the Superintendent of Public Instruction of the State of Oklahoma, p.126). Most one-room schools required the lowest or Third grade certification to teach (Stephens, 1990). The Nowata County Teacher Employment records show that twenty-four of the forty-four teachers employed for the school year 1908-09 held a Third Grade certificate. There was no one nearby to help when the young and inexperienced teacher had questions. The county superintendent usually came once or twice a year (unless there were complaints) to offer help or suggestions. Isolation from other teaching professionals made it necessary for these teachers to work out their own pedagogy and salvation. After teaching for several years in rural schools, these teachers often secured jobs in graded schools in town where there was an administrator to help with problems of instruction or discipline (Slacks, 1938).

In addition to the perplexing problem of varied ages and accommodating several grade levels, the one-room teacher of the early 1900's had few books or materials. Curriculum

outlines for each grade were given to teachers which suggested facts, skills, and habits that should be mastered by each grade level and subject. Textbooks were adopted by the state and were to be furnished to the students free of charge but the legislature never appropriated enough money to make this a reality.

By 1924, the State Department of Education was advising the abolishment of county teachers' certificates and the raising of standards and qualifications for teachers (Tenth Biennial Report of the Superintendent of Public Instruction of the State of Oklahoma, p. 9). In 1930, the push for consolidation of the little red or white school house was a major concern. "Under the present school organization, whereby one teacher is employed for eight to fifteen pupils in hundreds of schools, there is a great deal of waste of money. . . . It is apparent that some provision should be made whereby the rural and smaller village schools of Oklahoma may be made less expensive and at the same time offer a better education to the rural children" (Thirteenth Biennial Report of the Superintendent of Public Instruction of the State of Oklahoma, pp. 2-3). The rural schools were declared the weakest link in the educational chain due to lack of equipment, attendance, enrollment, qualification and salaries of teachers, length of term and curricular offerings (Sixteenth Biennial Report of the Superintendent of Public Instruction of the State of Oklahoma). Under this

criticism, the rural schools in Nowata County, like other counties began to consolidate. Many were disorganized by the State Board of Education--others chose to consolidate with another dependent school or with an independent school district. In 1929, the state organized and issued the first comprehensive and cooperative course-of-study revision.

As the Great Depression descended upon Oklahoma, money was scarce and times were difficult for many rural school districts. Teacher salaries were directly affected by the economic status of the local community. Many rural teachers continued teaching unpaid when banks refused to honor warrants if the district's bank funds were insufficient (Stephens, 1991).

The role of the one-room teacher significantly differed from other teaching positions. These teachers assumed many duties that are now handled by principals or superintendents, such as the determination of holidays and vacations, ordering school supplies, enforcing compulsory-attendance law, keeping school-census records, teaching all subjects, and doing all janitorial work. Although the one-room school teacher was isolated from other teachers, he or she was responsible for organizing many social events of the community. Slacks (1938) gave many examples of activities that one-room school teachers were prepared to initiate such as community meetings, old fashioned spelling bees, box suppers, home-talent plays and 4-H Club Leadership.

Educators often say that rural schools are no different from other schools; that children are just the same wherever one finds them; that teachers everywhere have practically the same problems to meet and that a teacher who is prepared to teach a grade school in town is equally well prepared to teach a one-room school. It might be better for the schools if this were true, but unfortunately it is not true. There is a vast difference between the activities required of the teachers in them (Slacks, 1938, p.x).

Rural teachers knew there was more than textbook learning involved in school. They became an intricate part of the rural community. "The lived experience of the classroom represents more than extracurricular activities, sports, and after-school jobs. The essence of the out-of-school curriculum is a classroom bonding between teachers and students, in order to enhance educative experiences" (Melnick, 1991, p. 98).

Nowata County school records show that there were between 50-55 school districts in 1908. Six of these districts would later become independent districts by establishing high schools. By December, 1922, twelve one-room schools had consolidated with independent districts or merged with another dependent school. Until 1947, only one additional one-room school or dependent school closed. Then in 1947, twelve more one-room schools consolidated. The one-

room schools continued to decrease slowly, approximately one school every two years, until 1964. In 1965, Adair closed leaving five one-room schools. Snow Creek closed in 1966, Thompson and Witwer-Hoffman in 1967, and Diamond Point and Oakdale, the last remaining one-room schools, consolidated on June 27, 1968.

Few of the empty one-room schoolhouse buildings remain standing today in Nowata County as reminders of the rich histories experienced by students, teachers, and the communities within the walls of the rural one-room school. The schools are gone. . . but the memories continue to live.

Purpose of the Study

This study will record the story of lived experiences of one-room school teachers in Nowata County, Oklahoma. It will give voice to the experiential insights that make up the repertoire of their personal beliefs, values, images, and teaching pedagogy (Schubert, 1982,) used in the one-room school. Each teacher will be given individual space to allow the experiences to be shared full and thick of the nuance, subtlety, and complexity that gives vitality to their personal lived experiences. The primary purpose of this study is to provide greater insight and better understanding of the workings, essence, and knowledge developed in the one-room school and rural life.

The oral tradition among educators to exchange teaching ideas, or discuss situations and perspectives has been

passed from teacher to teacher. Stories of lived experiences or reflective inquiry traditionally are left unrecorded and invalidated in curriculum inquiry research. A secondary purpose of this study is to preserve the experiential insights of one-room school teachers in written form and prevent them from fading into obscurity and remaining voiceless, unheard by future generations of teachers.

"Now that there are hardly any one-room schools left, educators are beginning to think that maybe there is something yet to be learned from them--something that served the pioneers that might serve as well today" (Williams, 1986). A third purpose of this study is to analyze the value of the instructional tools or methodology used by the one-room schoolteacher in today's educational setting.

Rationale of the Study

Because reflective teachers can delve into the essence of curriculum development with subtlety over longer periods of time, I believe the teacher lore, or stories told by these teachers, will provide greater insight and a better understanding of the "workings", essence, and knowledge developed in the one-room school and rural life than traditional research methods.

Schubert and Ayers (1991) questioned why teachers are not allowed to share their knowledge and insights from their years of experience as teachers. They are convinced that

reflective teachers are great sources of "insight and understanding for those who seek to become teachers and for those who strive to become better teachers" (p. ix). Stories told or written as narratives whether, autobiographies, oral history interviews, or teacher stories told to entertain, allow the listener or reader to connect and understand more deeply the meaning and experiences of his or her personal historical and cultural narrative (Witherell, 1991). Tappan and Brown (1991) argue for the "recovery and reappreciation of the role of story telling and narrative--particularly oral narrative can play in moral education" (p.173). Storytelling has a long history across many cultures but these traditions have for the most part been lost to the modern Western world (Ong, 1982).

Research on teaching literature encourages the pursuit of teacher lore by acknowledging the existence of implicit theories and experiential knowledge that teachers have. Too many researchers of teaching grant insufficient credibility to knowledge and theories gained from teaching experience (Schubert, 1991). "Indeed, it is curious that researchers can marvel at a fine study that logs 15,000 hours of investigation by researchers in classrooms but essentially disregard over 30 years of inquiry by career teachers" (Schubert, 1992, p. 211).

There is increasing recognition of the teacher in literature as the "inside expert" in curriculum research and

development. Teaching stories reveal the knowledge acquired through trial and error. Shubert (1991) wrote ". . . it (teacher lore) has particular relevance to the theory and practice of curriculum, teaching, supervision, and school improvement" (p. 207). He believes the teachers' daily contact with inquiry makes them a "viable form of research, for it potentially makes available insights and understandings unavailable from other sources" (p.211).

Janet Miller (1992) believes that teacher stories and teaching sagas that come from created and lived spaces in daily teaching form the core of teaching lore. Miller contends that teachers are bound together by the teaching process and that teacher lore helps articulate processes in education that can not be fully articulated in terms of cause and effect. "Teacher lore, because of its acknowledgment of the variety, breadth, and diversity of focus in teaching approaches and experiences as well as in research of teachers' knowledges, now encourages and enables those particular knowledges, which I once considered to be private and idiosyncratic, to be shared among all those who are interested and concerned about teaching and learning" (p.15).

Dewey (1916) believed more was needed in theory than intellectual construction. In his definition, theory required submersion into everyday practice. These praxis, or experiences of "what worked" and "what didn't" are

necessary to the study of curriculum inquiry. It is through Dewey's theory of education and perspective that teachers' "lived experiences" receive credibility as praxis. It is Dewey's perspective of theory and inquiry that requires the understanding of teachers experiences, insights, and reflections to grasp the meaning of teaching and curriculum. Schubert (1991b) refers to the blend of theory and practice as continuous to teachers in the classroom. As educational practitioners, teachers blend theory with teaching practices to develop their praxis of education.

The study of the one-room school teachers' experiences, through reflective conversations allows growth, understanding, and knowledge of education. "If reflection can be a way to learn and grow--a phenomenon that I validated in my own experience as a teacher--then, I reasoned, perhaps it could be used as a process by which to discover what gives meaning and direction to the lives and work of other teachers. . . . Conversations with teachers who are invited to walk back through their past professional experiences are a means by which we might enter teachers' minds and note their thoughts as they talk about their work and practice" (Millies, 1992, p.26).

Study Assumptions

1. The praxis of the one-room school teacher played a significant role in the creation of knowledge about education.

2. Reflection on their daily teaching experiences led to the development of their teaching instinct and intuition.

3. One-room schools provided an openness for students and teachers to experience educational alternatives.

4. Teacher lore from teachers in today's classrooms differs significantly from the lore of the one-room school teacher. Teachers of rural schools became involved with students in and out of the classroom setting. Out of school curriculum and experiences combine the life histories of the individual teacher and his or her students.

5. During their existence, one-room schools provided a space that dealt in caring educational experiences.

Organization of Study

This study has five chapters. Chapter II reviews the relevant literature, studies, and texts concerning the historical background of one-room schools. Chapter III describes the research process of the extended interview used in this qualitative study of the one-room schoolteacher. Extensive interviews, journal records, pictures, and extended conversations about their educational experiences in the one-room school provided the data for this study. Chapter IV provides a brief biographical background of each teacher and the narrative text giving voice to the one-room teacher's lore as shared through his or her lived experiences. Chapter V contains a summary of the study and suggestions for further research in this area.

Epilogue

The once noisy playgrounds are silent and deserted. Some of the buildings are in disrepair. The physical reminders of the one-room school have all but disappeared as will the knowledge and praxis of their teachers if left unvoiced. The stories of adventures in education that took place within their walls can be relived through the "lived experiences" of nine former one-room school teachers which currently reside around or in Nowata County. Their stories have been without voice, their expertise, experiences, and lived histories left untapped by curriculum inquiry. Their experiential insights which make up their personalized beliefs, values, images, and one-room school teaching pedagogy unstudied. ". . . it seems worthwhile to study the character and content of such theories rather than let them descend into obscurity as these teachers retire" (Schubert, 1991, p. 211) or leave them unheard, without a voice for eternity.

Working Definition of One-room School

For the purpose of this study, a one-room school will be defined as follows:

A frame or brick school consisting of a porch or stoop, one main room, a cloakroom, and surrounded by a rural community and agriculture land. These schools provided instruction for grades first through eighth taught by one

teacher, governed by a three-member school board, and supervised by the County Superintendent.

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

In Chapter One, I provided a rationale for seeking one-room teacher's perceptions about the inner workings of the one-room school, curriculum development, and theories. I also suggested the use of qualitative methodology in the form of teacher lore to further the understanding of the pedagogy of these teachers.

Teachers and their stories have been told but not really heard. Teacher's theories about children, learning, curriculum, and methodology have been ignored as unimportant and unscientific. Researchers that observed, accumulated data through surveys, analyzed information gained through pre and post testing were believed to have a better understanding of "school" than a teachers with years of teaching experience (Schubert, 1992b). Thus, literature about teaching became dominated by quantitative research and "step-by-step" teaching models. The factory assembly line or lock-step method designed for efficiency, failed to consider the teaching knowledge accumulated by the classroom teacher. Instead, it concentrated upon "improving" teaching procedures in a closed system. Teacher education and

preparation became a major goal of the state superintendent of education since most rural teachers in Oklahoma had little or no formal training. In 1916 there were 4816 teachers with Third Grade county certificates. The concern for improvement of teachers is expressed in the Biennial Report to the Superintendent:

"When Oklahoma became a state, 257,000 children were being taught by 6,300 teachers in 65,600 school houses worth five and one-quarter million dollars. Only fifty-five percent of the children were even enrolled in school in any one year prior to statehood. Those that did enroll had the opportunity of only three to seven months of school each year. Many of the teachers were only eighth grade graduates; practically all of them had less than two years of high school work. The county third grade certificate was held by more teachers than any other certificate" (Fourteenth Biennial Report, p. 1).

This concern over the lack of formal training for teachers in rural schools all over the United States led to textbooks written for teacher training. These textbooks (Kern, 1906; Kennedy, 1915; Woofter, 1917; Davis, 1920; Ritter, 1925; Mueller, 1926; Lowth, 1930, 1936; Slacks,

1938; Culp, 1942, Bowen 1944; Butterworth, 1952) were published during the early to mid 1900's. The textbooks provided the reader with information needed in the management of a one-room school. Some of the earliest text provided advice on personal traits of teachers, restrictions on social life, and boarding (Woofter, 1917; Slacks, 1938). In The Rural Teacher's Work Slacks provided the following from an actual contract:

"I promise to take a vital interest in all phases of Sunday School work, donating of my time, service and money without stint for the uplift and benefit of the community.

I promise to abstain from all dancing, immodest dressing and any other conduct unbecoming a teacher and a lady.

I promise not to go out with any young men except in so far as it may be necessary to stimulate Sunday School work" (p. 47).

Some of these textbooks went so far as to provide a schedule for one-room school day. Slacks included this schedule in his book:

"9:00 Call school to order. Opening song and short talk by the teacher.

- 9:10 Call roll of pupils from the old register and note the absences. Take names of new entrants, if there are many of these, the taking of their names may be left until they come to class.
- 9:15 Ask all pupils to take their readers. Assign a reading lesson, previously selected, to be studied by each grade except the beginners.
- 9:20 Call the first-grade children and try to get acquainted with them. Teach them one or two words. Send them to their seats and give them some seatwork to do.
- 9:30 Call the second grade children and hear them read. Assign them a lesson for the next day. Explain to them about the number work waiting for them on the board. Give them some seatwork to do after they have done their number work.
- 9:45 Call third grade for reading. Assign next day's reading lesson and the arithmetic work for today.
- 9:55 Call fourth grade for reading. Assign next day's reading lesson and the arithmetic work for today."

Most textbooks of this type used recitation as the main principle of teaching. Teachers met with groups of children in the traditional teacher-centered lesson format.

Influenced by Humanist, protectors of the traditions and values of the Western cultural heritage, practices were advocated that included mindless drill, memorization, recitation, and authoritarianism in American schools (Kliebard, 1987). Teachers asked rapid-fire questions that demanded short answers memorized from the textbooks (Woofter, 1917; Lowth, 1930, 1936). Woofter cautioned teachers to vary recitations in rural schools:

"On some days, instead of calling the whole class forward, the teacher may use the time in passing from pupil to pupil, inspecting work, passing criticism, assisting with difficulties, assigning additional work, and thus teaching in the full sense of the word. This will be an advantage, for the customary recitation is too often mechanical in its attempt to teach in mass, the time of many is wasted in explanations for a few, and the individual sacrificed" (Woofter, 1917, pp. 86-87).

As the classroom atmosphere became less rigid, the method of instruction used by rural school teachers was often different than their urban counterparts due to the demands of teaching eight grades in one room (Cuban, 1984). In 1936, Lowth advocated the practice of teacher and student

working together in a group exercise, "where study, rather than recitation, predominates" (p. 433). The one-room school teacher used individual instruction to help students with differing instructional needs. Older students were used to help younger students, students were grouped according to needs rather than grade level and individual tutoring provided the one-room teacher with options for instruction. The dominate paradigm for this time period followed the Morrison's Philosophy and technique: test, diagnose, adapt procedure, teach, retest, diagnose, readapt procedure, reteach, retest and so forth until mastery (Lowth, 1930). Lowth, author or The Country Teacher at Work, stated his philosophy like this:

"A rural teacher must instruct so that pupils both know and do, she must drill for skill in the fundamentals of an education, such as the 'three R's,' and she must test to see whether her teaching has been effective, i.e., to find out how accurately the pupil knows and how skillfully he can do what he is supposed to do. Of course there is much more to the running of a rural school than is found in instruction, drill and testing, but certainly a large part of a teacher's time is spent on these teaching processes " (p. 131).

Progress in the rural schools was believed to be slow and praise of these schools was difficult to find in print (Cuban, 1984). Yet teachers did the best they could with limited supplies, textbooks and experience. Four Years in a Country School (Dunn & Everett, 1926) is a study designed to help improve instruction in the one-room schools. It was an experiment conducted by Teachers College, Columbia University. The authors believed consolidation was necessary but also realized that this could not be done immediately. This book was written to improve instruction in one-room schools. Books about the life and experiences of the rural school teacher are few. Kirkpatrick (1917), Bourne (1974), and Weber (1946) represent early writings about their experiences in the classroom. Kirkpatrick's book The Rural School From Within was used as a textbook for teacher training; however, he has written his personal experiences as a rural school teacher in a novel rather than textbook style. Bourne's Ranch Schoolteacher is an autobiography of a rural teacher in Arizona in the early statehood days. Her experiences with bilingual students are entwined with her personal autobiography. Weber's book, My County School Diary covers a multi-year time period. She provides a detailed almost daily insight to her growth as a

rural school teacher. Curriculum development using projects to integrate the curriculum and make it meaningful for the students became a driving force. In the foreword to this book, Frank W. Cyr, wrote:

It will be of even greater interest to those responsible for the schooling of the nearly four million children in our one- and two-room schools, who will see in it the unfolding of an educational program which helps pupils to develop their innate abilities, and to acquire the habits and attitudes they need in order to solve and problems of everyday life and to become healthy, useful, responsible citizens. The discerning reader will recognize here the basic problems which every teacher faces in helping a group of children to work and grow together, and in discovering effective ways such problems can be met (p. xi).

Two books (Stephens, 1990; Smallwood, 1976) provide insight into the one-room school teachers of Oklahoma. Stephens focused upon the stories told by her mother about teaching in western Major County, Oklahoma during 1929-1935. These stories begin with the first year of teaching in a one-room school with a Third grade certificate and continue

through her early marriage. And Gladly Teach edited by Smallwood, is a collection of experiences by retired Oklahoma teachers. Several of the contributions are written by teachers with one-room school experiences and focus on one or two events in their teaching career. Gulliford (1985) examined the memories of the one-room schoolhouse using subtopics of preservation, architecture, and legacy.

Studies of the one-room school (Munro, 1991; James, 1990; Mondschein, 1990; Kenny, 1989) look at perceptions of those attending or teaching in rural schools. Historical factors that impacted women educators (Munro, 1991) and how rural schools impact modern educators (Mondschein, 1990) articulate the perceived value of the one-room school. Munro based his study on the consolidation of one-room schools in Holt County, Missouri. Mondschein used the interview process and gave "voice" to all participants of this study. Smith (1988) examined the history of the one-room school and their dramatic decrease over the past fifty years. Smith focused his study in Appalachian County and Floyd County, Kentucky. He presented pro and con arguments for consolidation of the one-room schools. Kenny (1989) concentrated on one-room schools in Vermont. Its primary focus was to describe what is lost as the one-room school's

in Vermont become extinct. It documents the heritage of the Vermont one-room school and examines issues of small schools and their teachers.

Numerous articles (Michaud, 1992; Leight, 1992; Muse, 1988; Barker, 1986; Kindley, 1985) trace the history and decline of rural schools across the United States. These articles focus on the states of Nebraska, Montana, South Dakota, California and Wyoming. West Virginia one-room schools became a common denominator and focal point for the rural communities. "The progressive ideas of schooling of today, such as interdisciplinary teaching, individualized instruction, non-graded instruction, and self-directed learning were survival skills of one-room teaching" (William, 1986, p. 31). Williams saluted the West Virginia one-room schools and teachers. He suggested that educators "preserve some of their genius for the future" (p. 32).

This review revealed a lack of literature about Oklahoma one-room schools, their teachers and the educational experiences from within their walls. This absence of literature provides additional support for this study of one-room teachers in Nowata County, Oklahoma.

CHAPTER III

Methods of Research

In this chapter, I will describe the methods utilized for this study of experiences of one-room school teachers. The assumptions and rationale underlying this study did not lend themselves to measurement, scientific solution, predictability, or standardized outcomes. Two qualitative methods and procedures were chosen because I believe they best fit the requirements of this research topic. The two methods selected were indepth interviews and historical analysis of the documents related to one-room schools. In using two different methodologies, my time, work, and effort for this study was increased twofold. Indepth interviews and historical analysis are time consuming methods of research; however, both yield information that cannot be obtained from other research methods.

I selected historical analysis to investigate the early story of the one-room school during the pre-statehood period of Indian Territory through the demise of the schools in 1968. The historical research information was gathered from: several Biennial Report of the State Superintendent, various Oklahoma history textbooks, Indian and Pioneer Manuscripts, Cherokee Nation Tribal Records, State of Oklahoma Consolidation Records, Nowata County Superintendent School Records, Nowata County Historical Society Map and

museum information, and interviews with individuals that had collected information about the history of Nowata County.

Historical analysis provided information that was recorded through official channels on both state and county levels. The information I gained from this research aided me in the interview process with the participants. The study participants were reaching deep into their memories for events and everyday occurrences. Often, the historical research I conducted provided key words or phrases that allowed me to prompt the study participant's memory during the indepth interviews. It also gave me a better understanding of what happened during this particular time period of Oklahoma educational history. The questions asked during the indepth interviews were based upon the information gained from this research. Through the indepth interview process, I have explored and recorded the experiences of people that were involved in the day to day activities of the one-room schools. Each persons ideas, interests, and or perspectives are different and have provided a reasonably representative picture (Tuckman, 1988) of what took place in these one-room schools. The reflective knowledge gained by these teachers through their years of teaching in the rural one-room schools was shared during the indepth interviews.

Participant Selection

Selection of the participants relied upon their identification as teachers of one-room schools in Nowata

County. I contacted a member of the Retired Teachers organization in Nowata County. This member gave me a list of retired teachers who had taught in one-room schools. Originally, eleven possible participants were identified and written a letter asking them to participate in this study. I later learned that one possible participant had not taught in Nowata County but in a school three miles west of the county line, sadly, this teacher had to be eliminated from the study. In addition, one possible participant sent a letter of refusal to participate, leaving nine which agreed to be study participants. These individuals were questioned about the prospect of additional study participants; however, no additional prospects were identified.

Participants

The participants of this study ranged in age from early fifties to late eighties. Eight of the participants were female with only one male participant. All but one participant had been retired for a period of over ten years. One participant is currently teaching in Nowata Elementary School. All participants had earned a Bachelors Degree or higher degree from an Oklahoma college or university.

Data Sources

The data for this study was gathered through historical research and indepth interviews. Historical research is concerned with the reconstruction of some part of man's past. It is impossible to truly reconstruct the past

accurately due to the fragmentation of the historical material (Travers, 1978). The historical information was gathered through a search of the Superintendent's Reports which were published biennially. These reports were based on the information furnished through the individual County Superintendent's Office in each county. This information, though reliable, was too brief in detail. Information about school consolidation after 1947 to the present was obtained through the office of Ed Winn in the Hodge building at the State Capitol area. Additional rural school consolidation and teacher employment information resulted from a search of county records now stored by the Nowata County Commissioners. The records were not complete due to a fire that destroyed the courthouse soon after statehood. Also, it is my opinion that some records have been lost or misplaced during the abolishment of the County Superintendent of Schools office. There were gaps in the records pertaining to teacher employment and I could find little or no information for the school years 1933-1944. The storage area for these documents and records is limited and in several areas within the county court house. After a through search of the storage areas and records found, I concluded that no additional documents were available.

The Nowata County Historical Museum provided a map of the area with pre-statehood and early statehood information about subscription school locations and one-room schools in

the county. The museum also displayed the unpublished masters thesis of W. H. Cook and unpublished notebook by Bessie Scott about the Snow Creek community. In addition to the historical data, in depth interviews were conducted. Diversity was not a factor in this study, as so few participants could be identified.

Procedure for Collection

Indepth interviews were conducted by the researcher in the homes of the study participants. Many of the early questions during the interview were designed to relax the study participant (Erlandson, Skipper and Allen et al., 1993). The purpose of the study was explained in detail at that time (Taylor and Bogdan, 1984). Release forms were signed by the study participants. Each interview was tape recorded with permission of the participant. Tape recording the interview provided the researcher with the opportunity to make the interview like a conversation and "visit" with the participants (Measor in Burgess, ed., 1985). It also provided a backup to the notes taken during the interview. Only one copy was made by the researcher. Many of these interviews were conducted over the kitchen table or in a room in which the participant often relaxed. Rapport and trust was easily built due to the friendships between participants and the researcher's sponsor. Participants were identified on the tape by an pseudonym (Taylor and Bogdan, 1984) of their choosing. This pseudonym was used

throughout the study when referring to the participant. Notes were taken during the interview and impressions recorded afterward (Patten, 1980). The tape(s) of each interview were transcribed by an independent source and all tapes and copies of the interviews were returned to the researcher (Dexter, 1970). The typed copies of the interviews were used to retrieve information and obtain the participants "stories" as exact quotes as much as possible.

Procedure for Data Analysis

Each participant's interview was the basis for writing their story in Chapter IV. Taylor and Bogdan (1984) explain the qualitative research method of indepth interviewing, as face-to-face encounters of researcher and informants addressed at gaining information which leads to understanding the informant's point of view as it relates to their lives, experiences or situations. My historical research into the background of rural one-room schools proved valuable as I probed (Patton, 1980) deeper into their memories of early teaching experiences. Measor (in Burgess, 1985) suggests that structured interviews are to be avoided in the interview process of qualitative research; however, the researcher must have a clear set of thematic areas to cover. She also describes the "rambling" that the interviewee will inevitably do. She believes this rambling to be important and in need of some investiagation. While the researcher loses some control of the interview, the pay-

off is that information that is central to the client is discovered. Some participants of this study were remarkably organized and able to tell about their experiences in sequential order. Others moved from one topic to another and sequence had to be determined by teacher employment records. Although the questions were written out in advance, some departure from the scripted questions became necessary to match the questions to the number of years in a one-room school and possible experiences during that time. In addition, due to the number of years and the purpose of giving teachers "voice" through Teacher Lore, it became apparent to the researcher that strictly following standardized open-ended questions limited the information gained and standardize the "teacher stories" losing the essential flavor, details, and personality of each individual. Also, many times, several of the prepared questions were answered without being asked.

Once the data was gathered and transcribed, the researcher began to organize the information into a narrative form. Attention was given to organizing the events in a sequential order and weaving additional information into the story to link the events or memories together in a narrative format that was informative.

In order to verify the information, tone, and flavor of the teacher "stories," each study participant has read and approved their Teacher Lore contribution in Chapter IV.

Analysis of the interview was done by coding (Charmaz, in Emerson, 1983) the responses found in each teacher story that pertained to the five study assumptions discussed in Chapter I. These findings are discussed in Chapter V.

CHAPTER IV

THE TEACHER'S VOICE

Introduction

There was a one-room school in the early 1920's in Nowata County called Childer's Mound. It was on the eastside of a town named Childers. A new teacher came to school one day. She was a little bitty woman named Miss Annie Duvall.

There was a bunch of pretty rowdy young guys (who later grew up to become members of the Poe Outlaw gang) that went to school there. On this first day of school, it is told, they came riding into the schoolyard whooping and hollering and making a lot of noise before putting their horses in the horse barn. Miss Duvall finally got them all in the schoolhouse and settled down. She called the class to order, then she reached into her desk drawer. She pulled out a little pearlhandled pistol and laid it upon her desk. She said to the class, "We're going to open school with a prayer this morning, and what we're going to pray about is-- that I don't have to shoot one of you!"

Students say Miss Duvall didn't have any more trouble from those rowdy students and it was a pretty good school year (Price, C. personal communication, June 12, 1993).

In this chapter the one-room school teachers tell their stories about school, the community, and rural life. These

stories have been written and edited from the taped interviews. Each story is unique, yet similarities in experiences and pedagogical development are evident. These stories now have voice so that others may come "to understand ourselves, others, and the possibilities life holds for us" (Witherell & Noddings, 1991, p. 10).

The years of growth between 1909 and 1928 in the state of Oklahoma brought about many changes. Two changes were the availability of teachers and their preparation for teaching. Fewer and fewer individuals were taking the county examination and teaching with county issued certificates. Most of these teachers attended college at one of the oldest schools west of the Mississippi River. The Cherokee Female Seminary was sold by the Federal government to the state of Oklahoma in 1909. It became Northeastern State Normal School (Chronicles of Oklahoma, Vol. XXIX). A few years later, this same school became Northeastern State Teachers College. Many teachers received a Lifetime certificate from Northeastern State Teachers College. By the time they had earned a B.S., the college had dropped "Teachers" from the name and was Northeastern State College. It remained so until August, 1974, when it was renamed Northeastern State University (The College Blue Book, 1991).

The Register of Teachers employed in Nowata County for the 1928-29 school year had only one teacher with a Third-

grade (lowest) certificate. Seven Second-grade and six First-grade (highest) county teaching certificate holders were also employed that year in Nowata County one or two-room schools. Twelve teachers had state issued certificates (seven One-year certificates, four Two-year certificates, and one Five-year certificate). Five teachers had Lifetime Certificates and five additional teachers had Temporary certificates issued by the State of Oklahoma.

Many of the teachers with One, Two, Five, Lifetime, and Temporary state certificates were teaching during the seven to nine month school years then taking coursework at teacher colleges during the summer months to complete their bachelors of science degrees. Many began teaching in one-room schools without benefit of college coursework designed to help develop teaching methods and pedagogy.

Alice Hanna was one of those teachers. She began her teaching career with a state issued certificate good for one year. She taught in three different one-room schools (Elm Bend, Rutherford, and Adair) while acquiring her B.S. degree. Alice continued to live with her parents while teaching in these one-room schools. Her story describes the problems she had with isolation, parents, the Depression, and how she worked with few teaching materials.

ALICE HANNA

Biographical Information

Alice grew up in the Bartlesville, Oklahoma area. She attended Jefferson School in Bartlesville Public Schools for the first four grades. She then attended a one-room school for the next three years. She passed the county examination in the seventh grade which allowed her to skip the eighth grade and continue her education in the Bartlesville High School. After her junior year in high school, Alice attended Northeastern State Teachers College and completed twelve credit hours. During her senior year in High School, she completed six hours by correspondence. Following high school graduation, Alice was able to complete an additional twelve credit hours. This gave her a total of thirty college credit hours. She began teaching with one year of college and an One-year certificate at the age of eighteen.

ALICE HANNA'S STORY

Alice Hanna, began her teaching career in a two teacher school called Truskett in Washington County. She taught one year before moving to Elm Bend, a one-room school in Nowata County. The Elm Bend school, in 1928, had a cloak room with shelves for lunch pails and hooks for the students coats. There was the traditional pot bellied stove with a raised platform and a blackboard at the front of the room. Little money was available for supplies but Alice felt she needed

and wanted a hectograph. This was a frame or pan that held a jelly substance that could be used to make duplicated copies. "I ordered one and bought it before I went to school. I gave them [the schoolboard] the bill. Well, those old farmers didn't know what the heck a hectograph was and they never let me forget that." The students brought pencil and paper from home. Alice kept pencils and paper to share if a child didn't have supplies. "If I had colored chalk--I bought it myself. We did have a box or two of white chalk to use." Playground equipment was limited to a ball and bat and a few swings.

Alice had one year of experience in a two teacher school. She had taught grades first through fourth at Truskett. She knew that she would have all eight grades at Elm Bend. "It scared me to death. I knew I was going to have an eighth grader. Math was hard for me so I wrote a S.O.S. to the arithmetic book publisher and said, 'I've signed a contract to teach eighth grade arithmetic and I'm scared to death. Send me an [answer] key!' They wrote back and said they would if I proved that I was a teacher. So I sent them an outdated certificate and they sent me a key. I put that little blue book in the desk because, my goodness, I didn't dare let the patrons know I had that. And I never had to use it. Once in a while I'd check to make sure I was presenting it [math] right, but only a couple of times. It gave me confidence because I knew it was there."

"In Elm Bend I can't remember a library, period. I have thought and thought and I don't believe there were any books in a library there. I always got books at the Bartlesville Library. I got classics and read them to the children because I thought they needed them. I read Black Beauty so many times and cried everytime I read it. I read Huckleberry Finn, Tom Sawyer, Little Women and Little Men many times."

Alice drove the family car to teach at Elm Bend. "That was my second year of teaching and I never had driven a car." Her father decided she should drive because it took too much of his time to drive her back and forth to school. There was a shed at school for the car and a barn for the horses. Alice decided the first day she drove that she better put the car in the shed so nothing would happen to it. She drove the car in the shed carefully and stopped way back from the end for two days. On the third day, Alice drove in too fast and "butted" the back of the shed out. "I backed up and went around the shed and pushed the back in as far as I could." It wasn't noticed by the students for several weeks. Another time, Alice got stuck in a rut and had a flat tire. She just left the car in the middle of the road, put on her boots, and went on to school. Later a patron fixed the tire and brought the car to school. "Course, everybody knew I was learning to drive and stayed out of my way. But they were all sympathetic. There were a

few days when it was so bad [muddy] that I rode a horse. I wasn't used to riding and was I sore! When I got down in the valley, I got off and walked, then when I got back on the hill, I got back on [the horse] because I knew people in the community could see me."

Scheduling time for all eight groups was difficult. Alice had to take more time with the younger students. She would combine groups when possible. "I just had to pick it [teaching] up and observe other teachers and remember my own school life. If you sneezed in one class--you had to leave the next one out because there wasn't time for it." Alice had observed her little brother learning to read when she attended the one-room school in Washington County. She patterned her early teaching after the teacher she had there. That teacher had used a visual method to teach reading. With her limited college coursework, Alice stated, "I don't remember the college teaching me anything about how to teach--they taught me subject matter. When I took practice teaching, I had already been teaching for several years." Alice described some of her early reading lessons in the one-room school in which she taught. "Sometimes I made up little stories about the children to help them learn to read. These stories were about them [the students]. I'd write stories on the blackboard or make a little book. No one told me to do this--but it worked and the children liked to read about themselves. I knew about flash cards and

phonics but I think it was just plain trial and error. I took one day at a time and hoped for the best."

After one year at Elm Bend, Alice moved to Rutherford for the 1929-30 school year. Contracts at that time were not as restrictive as in the past. Restrictions were no longer written into the contract. "But the Superintendent told us we weren't supposed to have a date from Monday to Friday night. We were supposed to go to church every Sunday."

Alice was responsible to start the fire each morning, sweep out the school, and keep the lanterns clean. "At home I took corn cobs and put them in a tin can with coal oil around them. The next morning I picked those corn cobs up and put them in a sack. I'd go to school and turn the grate and get the ashes out and stick those cobs in there and set them on fire. Then I carefully put in the coal. I always put the oldest boys in charge of the stove, because I'd get busy and forget all about the fire, until it got cold. Then it would be out and I couldn't start it again."

Another chore Alice was responsible for was keeping the lanterns clean and full of oil. Once, when it was time for the Christmas program to begin, the lights went out because they hadn't been filled. "It was just as dark as the inside of your pocket in that building and the men got busy and got those lamps and begin putting fuel in them. I was standing there . . . and I was ready to strike a match when someone

calmly said, 'Oh--nobody strike a match in here!' I thought, oh my lord, I was supposed to be smart and I almost did something like that. He just caught me in time.. I was standing right over the lantern. What an awful thing I would have caused if I had gone ahead [and struck that match]. It still makes me scared."

Times were hard for everyone during the Depression. Sometimes a truck would come to the school and deliver oranges and grapefruit. There was also clothing for children who needed it. "They [children] hated those clothes. . . they branded them. They were two colors of corduroy, and the kids didn't like them." Alice remembered one family that had several small children and one child was cross eyed. She sent clothes and shoes for all the children and a note. "I wrote to them and said, 'Now, I want you to take this child to my eye doctor. Tell him I sent you, and if you can pay twenty-five cents a month he'll do what the child needs.' The parents took that child to the doctor and got him glasses. . . so his eyes got corrected."

Alice was responsible for the children's safety at school. Help was often a quarter of a mile or further from the school. "I was always deathly afraid that some child would get seriously hurt, and there I was without anyway in the world to help them. No one had ever heard of a telephone. Some families had a car--but only the men drove the car--women didn't." Accidents were only one of the many

facets of safety that Alice faced alone. "One time out there, there was a tornado. It blew the chimney off the school east of Rutherford. There I was out there, all by myself, with thirty children expecting me to take care of them. I couldn't see the clouds. A couple of men were working on a fence across the road. They had a wagon and team with them and I kept watching them, I thought if it was going to do something terrible, they would move. Those crazy fools stood there until the wind blew their hay frame and wagon over. Then they ran to the little house on the grounds and got under the porch. By that time the wind was blowing so strong that I didn't dare take those youngsters out[side]. We had a storm cellar that was a half a block from the school. Some birdbrain fixed it out there so you couldn't use it. When the storm was over--we had recess, a long recess, because the teacher needed it! I never was so scared in my life, and, you know, if I let them know I was scared, they would have all gotten hysterical. One little child started to cry and I said, 'Oh, it's all right. We'll just wait until it gets a little lighter before we go on with our work.'"

During the school years of 1928-29 and 1929-30, Nowata County had thirty Model and Superior Model schools. Alice remembered that her school "usually managed" to qualify as a Model school. One of the school projects that helped them qualify as a model school was planting trees on the school

grounds. "We had a parents day when we planted those trees. I don't know whether they got the tree seedlings down on the creek somewhere--because that's out in the prairie and trees don't grow out there. They [parents] came and brought a picnic lunch. We got so many points for that on the model school card. The model school was so much for teacher training and so much for this and that."

Some parents were critical of the way teachers dressed. Alice remembered she was once called a "painted clown" because she wore make-up to school. "I never will get over that. I said, 'Well, I guess I'll have to stop wearing makeup.' My mama had seen me without [it] and she said, 'Oh, no you don't. You wore makeup when they hired you and you are still going to wear it.'" Many rules and expectations that teachers followed were not written into the contracts. "But the Superintendent got up and told us we weren't supposed to drink, or dance, or play cards. And now I wonder why I didn't ask him if we had his permission to sneeze if we needed to--but, of course, I didn't. And slacks, my goodness, if I would have worn slacks, they would have fired me before I got to the front door."

During Alice's teaching experience at Adair school, the Oklahoma Highway Patrol was first initiated. Schools have often been used as a way to introduce something new to the general public. "Well, you have to educate people to a new something, so they decided the best way to do it was to sell

the school children. The patrolman came with the [County] Superintendent out to my school with this black and white car. He was in his uniform and he told them [the students] about that." Many of the children that attended Adair school walked along U. S. Highway Sixty to and from school. "The patrolman asked, 'Do any of you know how you're supposed to walk down the highway?' One little boy popped up, just like a jack-in-box, and said, 'On the north side going and the south side coming to school.'" The patrolman was surprised that the little boy knew how to walk along the road and talked with Alice about it later. "I told my students that people from all over the nation drive down that road and they don't know there's a school here and they might be going too fast. You get across the road and you stay there, and don't be jumping back and forth because I don't want somebody to get run over. Oh, I'd just preached to them." Later the patrolman took the students outside to his car and showed them what he carried in his car. "And he said the siren is so noisy--you don't want to hear that. And [when] that soaked into the students and they said, 'Yes, we do!' And when he said it he looked over their heads and winked at me. He knew just exactly what they'd say. That was the beginning of the highway patrol in Oklahoma."

Alice continued teaching during the school term and attending Northeastern College until she received her degree

in 1936. That summer was very dry. Alice remembered that it didn't rain from June until the first of October. "That year everything burned up. There weren't any plants at all. Then in October, it came a rain--just a gentle rain all day long. It soaked everything and we were all so glad to have a rain. After school, I worked a few minutes then went out to start home. The [car] battery wouldn't peep. I couldn't make a sound. Well, there wasn't anyone around, so I just closed the garage door, picked up the car keys, and away I went for home--walking. I was afraid to walk down the highway. I knew somebody would ask me to ride and I would be afraid to ride with them. So I went through a pasture. I was walking along--just hoofing it home as fast as I could. I had gone about two miles when I realized somebody was behind me. I was holding up my skirt but I let loose of that skirt and turned around and it was a cowboy. He said, 'Lady you shouldn't be in here. There's wild cattle in here.' I told him, 'Well, I looked when I came through and I didn't see any.'" The cowboy continued to follow Alice and talk to her until she reached the fence. "I got to the fence and those were the tightest wires you ever saw. They were so solid and I tried to get through but my clothes kept getting caught on the wire. First on the top wire, then on the lower wire. When I finally got through, I was so mad. I thought that cowboy had sat on his horse and laughed at me trying to get through the fence. But when I looked up, he

wasn't there. He just followed me until he knew I was out of his pasture and safe from his wild cattle."

Alice, now eighty-five, fondly remembers her days as a one-room school teacher. The days were long and hard but she always enjoyed teaching. "I never worked so hard in my life as I did in rural schools." She taught in three one-room schools for a total of seven years. With this teaching experience and her degree, Alice continued her teaching career in Nowata Elementary school, Skiatook school and finally in Tulsa Public schools. She is now retired and has returned to Nowata County to live with forty years of teaching experiences.

About four years after Alice Hanna left Rutherford, a vibrant young woman applied for the teaching position. She had grown up in Canada but had United States citizenship through her father. She still spoke with a distinctive British accent and was known to her friends as "Izzie."

Izzie had some difficulty getting hired as a teacher because of her small stature and youthful appearance. Years later, one of her older male students was persistent in trying to date her.

She shares some of her teaching memories and methods used in one-room schools as well as incidents that happened during her teaching career in Nowata County.

IZZIE

Biographical Information

Izzie was born in a Scot village called Saskatchewan, in the providence of Alberta, Canada in 1911. Her family lived in a sod house on a homestead. She attended a brick one-room school for the first eight grades. She and her family moved to Nowata county while she was in her teens. Because she had attended British schools, Izzie and her brothers were often teased about their accent. She graduated from Childers High School and attended Coffeyville Junior College. She transferred to Northeastern State Teachers College at Tahlequah and received her B.S. education degree in 1942. Izzie taught at Rutherford for two years, one year at Prairie View, and three years at Elm Bend. In addition, she taught in two different one-room schools in Washington County for one year each. She began teaching with a Five year certificate at the age of twenty-two.

IZZIE'S STORY

Izzie began teaching at Rutherford in 1935 for fifty dollars a month, with her knowledge gained from college and her personal experiences as a student in a one-room school. The County Superintendent thought she was too young to teach. "I said, 'Mr. Smith, I'm older than you think.' He thought I looked about fifteen."

The Rutherford one-room school was located about eight miles west of Nowata. It had a large playground and was typical of most rural schools. "I went to see it [the school] in the last part of August. It was so hot and dry that year. The grass and weeds were way up--they hadn't mowed it yet. I thought, 'Oh, this is terrible,' but it soon was done. Of course, it [the classroom] was up to the teacher--nothing was up on the walls. One of the ladies I went to board with gave me some old magazines and I cut out a lot of stuff. I got it to look like a classroom. I tell you, that first year was just a delightful year to me. That was a great experience. Those children were just lovely. I didn't have a discipline problem with the younger children, but when a boy is fifteen or sixteen and in the seventh or eighth grade--look out!"

Izzie walked to school every day carrying her papers that she had corrected, lesson plans, and books she needed to make the plans. "I made sure I had things planned because you never knew when the County Superintendent was going to walk in." She also carried her lunch from home.

Wood and coal were used for heat. "The big boys would help me through the day to dump some coal in that big potbellied stove. It had a jacket about it. Early in the mornings, I had to build that fire. Sometime I was confronted with ice and snow. When I got there--I couldn't get the door open. I had to take a crow bar and break the

ice to get in." Izzie had a three mile walk across the prairie many mornings to school. One day she decided to cut across a pasture. "That was the morning a big bull chased me across the prairie. I slid under a fence--when you're young you can do that--I never crossed that pasture again."

While a student at Coffeyville Junior College, Izzie learned how to set up a schedule. "That was work. It took hours, especially if you had eight grades. At Elm Bend, I had thirty-two students and all eight grades. I tell you, that was work. And checking papers, after you teach a while you can get the upper grades to work with them and check and write them in class. We did a lot of that. My seventh and eighth grade girls were a great help. They were always. . . watching me teach the primary grades and when I listened to them [work with the younger students] they did the same as I did. I thought 'Well, I've got a great league here.' They knew these little kids and they made wonderful little teachers. I'd observe [them] and think, 'I've got to be careful what I say and do with these children because they are spoiling the little ones just like I do.' But they did a good job teaching them how to read and they used the flash cards and trained them well." Izzie used the older students to keep the classroom neat and reinforce the lessons she had presented to the primary students. "If they got through with their work, why not let them do something else. They could straighten up the room, . . . the library or help put

up the things in the room, decorate. Of course, I had to clean up the building--sweep out the school every day after school. That was in the contract. But I learned that children will cooperate with you about cleaning out their desks. I would allow about four or five minutes before the close of school. I would say 'Let's clean our desk out, and get rid of all those old papers.' There was always someone assigned to carry the waste paper basket around. That kept the desks cleaned out--but didn't throw away paper that were for mom and daddy to see."

Izzie had a strong background in phonics during her early school years. She used this background when teaching her pupils to read. "Well, I was taught that [phonics] in Canada, they really stressed that. I remember my first grade in Canada, 'Baby says, "a" and he was cute.' Our teacher from Scotland only used phonetics. She had us up front reading one day, and I was in the fourth grade. She had us all stand at the front of the desk and we were reading poetry. When it came my turn, I said, 'Blow buggle, blow.' It should have been 'Blow bugle.' The teacher got tickled and she laughed. I never forgot the 'gle' rule after that." Izzie also used flash cards which she made to assist in her teaching of the phonetic rules. She taught the Scott Foresman series of 'Dick and Jane.' "I would pick out the new words every two or three days and print those on cards. The students could put them up on the

chalkboard. They would learn those words and then in no time they were reading those sentences. Another way I taught sight words was to make flash cards and pin those on the table, chair or desk. Then we'd have games. When they had learned these words, I'd print 'sit down' and they'd do that. 'Stand up' and those that could read would stand up. 'Come to my desk' and here they'd come. They learned to read and they loved those actions--and movement."

The rural schools in which Izzie taught in the 1940's had good equipment for that day and time. "They had good desks in most of these schools. At Prairie View, . . . the teacher had a nice big new desk and a swivel chair. I was so thrilled over that. They had a nice wall map--I loved good maps--to teach geography by. The students had to buy their own paper and most school supplies, in those days. I bought my own hectograph and gel. Prairie View had nice venetian blinds at the windows. Now Elm Bend had some old shades. There was a man teacher there [before Izzie], and you know how men are about [rooms]--they don't fix up a classroom like a lady teacher. So I made some pretty curtains and put those up at the windows, and dressed it up. We had those kerosene lamps in my first school, at each window."

In 1937, while teaching at Prairie View, Izzie received a certificate from then Governor Marland for cooking lunch for her students. She cooked beans seasoned with cut up

salted pork to serve the students. The government sent the beans, pork and crackers. She cooked beans every day for several weeks--until the supplies ran out.

Recess and lunch times required Izzie to be on the playground with the children. "That was also in the [teacher's] contract--the teacher's out on the playground with the children." Izzie often ate lunch with the children outside if the weather was nice. The boys and girls loved to play baseball, London Bridge, and Drop the Handkerchief. "You didn't have any discipline problems as long as they were interested in playing a game." During the long winter days, Izzie taught the students to square dance. When some parents criticized her for teaching dancing she replied, 'You just watch, they'll be fighting and everything else if I don't have something to entertain [them] with.'

The routine of a rural one-room school seldom varied from one school to another. Izzie described a typical day in a rural one-room school. "If it was a pretty day, the children would line up outside. They'd already been trained to do that. When I rang the bell, the children would come inside. We began the day with the flag salute and always said the Lord's Prayer together. I'd read some from the Bible and we would sing 'America.' Of course, I was trained to sing 'God Save the King' which was the same tune in Canada. They [students] were sweet--they were very content. They'd been trained already--the older ones. Everybody knew

where they sat. The ones in the eighth grade had a section of big desks--then the intermediates sat in another section. The little first graders had the little desks. They knew just where to go. Then, through my lesson plans, I could start with reading. They already knew what they were doing. I'd print on the board their assignments that they should be doing while I was teaching classes. They would be preparing their work. I taught reading first because I think reading is the most important subject. They cannot do other subjects if they can't read. Then, of course, I 'd have math every day and the geography was planned nearly every day and some history. I liked it when the companies finally combined the geography and history and called it social studies. That made it a little easier and the children enjoyed those books. In those days, they didn't have a lot of wonderful filmstrips and projectors. But before I left these rural schools, I bought a projector of my own. The students enjoyed that--it helped the reading. I wouldn't teach all subjects every day. I would teach the more difficult ones like the math, reading, and social studies every day, but music maybe one or twice a week. I'd go to the piano and I'd play some little tunes and they could sing up a storm. I didn't teach them penmanship every day, but I did believe in teaching it because they learned to write better. I taught spelling every day. It didn't take long--a little spelling every day."

Students that were not working with the teacher were expected to be studying and preparing their lessons. Sometimes Izzie called a group to her desk, but often she would go back to their desk and "teach them right there in their seats. I would check to see if they had studied and had their assignment done. I would ask them questions and see if it was too difficult for them. I would read some and then they'd read it until they would get some grasp of the subject." If it was too difficult for the students to read, Izzie would read it to the students and then have them tell her what she had read in their own words. "I would put those sentences on the board and they read it that way. I taught them to read by sight that way. They couldn't do it with just the big old book. I'd have them copy the sentences down from the chalkboard [into a notebook]. Then the next day somebody would read it [aloud] quickly. It helped with reading--to me it did."

There were several incidents that happened to Izzie as a one-room school teacher that she remembers fondly. One involved a bullet in the pot-bellied stove. "I was all ready to start school, I don't know who did it, but one of the boys put a bullet in the stove. It went 'BANG!' We wanted to find out who put it there. No one would tell me who did it. I said, 'But you could have gotten killed.' And to this day I don't know who did it."

Another incident involved Izzie's new car. "I had taught for several years and I had bought a car--a little cute Ford." Izzie did not learn of this story until she had returned to Nowata years later. One former student told her about taking her car down to the creek to wash it. While she was busy with some students on the playground, they found her keys on her desk and drove her car to the creek. "And I thought, 'Well, those ornery rascals, they could have wrecked my car."

Izzie once had an older student ask her for a date. He was much younger than she. "I said, 'Oh, I bet I'm old enough to be your mother.' He said, 'Well, you're cute and little.' He was tall and he thought that it was all right because I was a small person."

Izzie left Nowata County to move to the New Jersey area. She was called by the County Superintendent to return to the area but refused. She didn't want to leave the cultural activities and better teaching conditions as well as a much higher salary. She married while living in New Jersey. She also taught in North Carolina during school integration. Today, Izzie, at age eighty-three, lives in Nowata with her pet cat. She is retired after thirty-six years of teaching. She reminisces about her experiences in the one-room school. "Some people will talk to me and say they wish we had those country schools again. I say 'Yes, but somebody has all the work, then.' My failing was, I

giggled with my students. I never missed a day without having a laugh--plenty of laughter. They [the students] did some of the craziest things."

When Lizzie began her first year at Elm Bend school, another one-room school in the northeastern corner of the county had a new teacher also. Charlie Bill had received her Life certificate and was looking for employment. Her family moved into the county while she was away at college. The country roads were ungraveled and in poor conditions due to the continuous rainy weather. Many rural families had cars--but travel was still difficult due to the road conditions.

Charlie Bill boarded with local families during her teaching career in one-room schools. Like Izzie, she also had dating problems with a local patron, taught in several one-room schools, and worked on her degree during the summer. Unlike Lizzie and Alice, Charlie Bill did not have childhood experiences of attending a one-room school to help her. She discusses her experiences in two one-room schools in the county.

CHARLIE BILL

Biographical Information

Charlie Bill was born August 31, 1918 in a rural home on Hog Shooter Creek, close to Bartlesville, Oklahoma. She was the seventh child in a family of eleven children. She

attended elementary school for a year in Centralia. She moved to Lenapah in the seventh grade and graduated from Lenapah High School. She obtained a Life Certificate after completing approximately 62 hours at Northeastern State Teachers College in Tahlequah, Oklahoma. Like many of her contemporaries, Charlie Bill continued attending summer sessions at Northeastern until she earned her B.S. degree in 1942. Charlie Bill began teaching at the age of twenty-one.

Charlie Bill's Story

Charlie Bill began her teaching career at Thompson in the fall of 1938. This school was one of the one-room schools in the northern part of Nowata County. She lived with her parents and younger brother and sister. "I came home from Northeastern to help them [her parents] move one weekend. As we were moving, it was so muddy that a car would help one through the mud hole and then the third one would help the second car through. I thought, 'Oh, my! What have we gotten into.'"

"I walked two miles, facing the north wind, to get to school. I'll never forget it. I had to be my own janitor, carry in all the coal, sweep, and at recess I had to go out and play with the children. No matter what was needing to be done in[side] the school, I had to go outside. We played games that all could participate in, like Blackman and Red Rover. The little children had swings."

"We had outdoor bathrooms and a pump in the schoolyard to get water. My brother and sister were in my school. My sister was pretty spoiled and she gave me quite a few problems. I got along fine with my brother--but my sister tells me now that I spanked her for lots of things that other children did."

Charlie Bill had not attended a one-room school as a child and Northeastern Teachers College did not have coursework to help prepare beginning teachers for teaching in a one-room school. She remembered getting started that first year. "Well, you know, you just get there, and you know you have to do it. So you just start finding ways to do things. As far as setting up the curriculum, you just had to kind of go by the books you were given for each grade, and go through those and plan your day's work around that. We usually started out in the morning with reading, followed by math, and then in the afternoon we had the sciences and history and that sort of thing."

She used an older girl "who was really sharp" to help with the younger children. The children worked with Charlie Bill first so that she could explain the work and make an assignment. Then the students were to study and work independently. "I always used a lot of phonics, all through my teaching. I remember a while when they dropped phonics, but I always thought it was important and I always used some. I would get the little people started and then,

maybe, I would let them illustrate what they had read. I remember there were lots of papers to grade. I always felt like if I gave an assignment to them [students] that I needed to grade it, and I did. It seems like I never did learn how to sit down and teach. I just had to be up moving around seeing what was going on. I remember one time in my first year the County Superintendent came and I was literally scared to death. I didn't know what to think. But he took over and taught a class for me while he was there. He was just a wonderful, wonderful person. He was a really big, tall man, and was just as nice as could be. He made you feel comfortable after he was there for a while. But that was an experience!"

Charlie Bill taught her first year for \$75 a month for an eight month year. She had twenty-three students with all eight grades. Most of the families that lived in the school district were farmers. "Everybody carried their lunch pail. We didn't have any facilities for even warming anything up, but economically, I think they were pretty well off. The schoolboard members were pretty conservative with money. I remember that some men who were on the board were pretty productive farmers, but they hung on to it too."

The Thompson school, in 1938, had windows along the north side of the building and electrical lights. It was an older building but Charlie Bill remember that "It was in pretty good condition for schools of that day." She had

textbooks, chalkboards, chalk and some paper to work with her students. The students were expected to furnish the rest of the supplies.

"I only taught there one year. One of the schoolboard members had two sons. One of them wanted to go with me and I wouldn't go with him, so I lost my job. I moved four miles south of there and taught two years at Prairie View. It was an older building and I boarded with several families. I remember the first year at Prairie View, it was muddy. We had to take the tree for the Christmas program and everything [else] in a wagon to get to the school." The Box Supper and Christmas program were social events for the entire community. Teachers were expected to organize the programs. "You always had to have some kind of a program and it involved as many children as you could. It might be just a little recitation. If you had a first grader, they wouldn't say very much, maybe six lines or ten. Then we would usually have a little play. I remember at Prairie View, we had no one to play the piano--so, that year I took piano lessons along with my teaching. I would practice on the piano so at the end of school I was able to play about three little ditties, that they [students] sang with the piano."

Charlie Bill remembered that the rural children were use to the routine needed in a one-room school. There were days that she couldn't get to every student or every

subject. "But you'd have to pick it up then the next day." She also had students in the eighth grade that had failed so many times or hadn't come to school enough to pass that they were almost as old as she was.

During the summers, Charlie Bill continued to attend Northeastern State Teachers College to obtain her degree. In June, 1940, she and her high school sweetheart, Hawkeye, decided to marry secretly before returning to Nowata County to teach that fall. "There were two men on the board at Prairie View who were against married teachers, and I wasn't married when I got the job. I knew that it was expected that I stay single. But we decided to get married while we were at Northeastern, and we kept it a secret, which wasn't very smart--should I [have] gotten pregnant, it would have been a bad thing. We wrote my sister in California and told her that we were married, and Hawkeye's brother at Lenapah had our license. Of course, the community probably wouldn't have ever believed that we were [married]." They were married for six months, until Christmas, before announcing their marriage so Charlie Bill could keep her job. It was the policy of many schools in that area to demand the immediate resignation should a female teacher marry during the school year; however, Charlie Bill was allowed to finish the year. "I don't think these men were against you getting married, so much as, they were against a woman taking jobs away from men. But you didn't have many men prepared then."

Men were being drafted in the early 1940's to serve in World War II. More teachers were needed to fill these positions left by the drafted men, so married female teachers were sometimes hired. Charlie Bill's father-in-law was on the Lenapah schoolboard but he resigned so that she could be hired to teach there.

Charlie Bill couldn't remember any significant differences between the rural students and the students that attended Lenapah school. "It was probably easier to motivate where you had a group all the same level, but academically, I didn't see a lot of differences. Your children [in one-room schools] were real helpful with the little children, and I don't think that they felt inhibited. They felt free to go help one if they wanted to and that made it a lot easier for me. I think it [teaching in the one-room school] was a real rewarding experience. I don't think I would want to leave it out of my career. I think it was an addition to it. It's just hard to conceive of going in [to a one-room school] after you've taught in a room where you had one grade, and think back, 'How did I do it?' But you just had to manage."

After Charlie Bill left the one-room schools, she taught for two years in Lenapah Elementary School and three years at Childers before "taking time off" to raise a family. She then returned to Lenapah to teach for seventeen years. In 1966, Charlie Bill and her husband moved to

Nowata where she taught in the elementary school for fourteen years. During all this time, Charlie Bill taught either second or third grade. She was recognized as the Teacher of the Year in Nowata County before her retirement. Charlie Bill retired after forty years in the classroom. She is now seventy-six year old and lives with her husband in Nowata.

Isolation of the teachers from other teachers was beginning to disipate due to better transportation and the telephone. In the next teacher story, communication between a new one-room teacher and one with experience took place on a nightly basis. Charlie Bill's husband, Hawkeye, was hired and taught at Hoffman, a one-room school in School District Five for a year and one-half. Hawkeye shares his memories of teaching and reflects on the attitudes and support of the rural community.

HAWKEYE

Biographical Information

Hawkeye was born in 1920 and grew up in Nowata County in the small town of Lenapah. He started first grade and graduated from High School in the Lenapah school system. He attended Northeastern State Teachers College in Tahlequah, Oklahoma for his teacher training. He started teaching with a Life Certificate in Elementary Education after about 70 college credit hours. He then taught during the school year

and went back in the summers until he received his bachelors degree in 1944. He later attended Oklahoma State A & M and graduated in 1951 with a Masters Degree. Additional classes were taken at both Tulsa University and University of Oklahoma. Hawkeye later became a High School and Jr. High principal in Nowata County.

Hawkeye's Story

In the spring of 1940, Hawkeye, knew he needed a teaching job. His sweetheart was already teaching in a one-room school in Nowata County. He came home one weekend with another student to look for a job. Two jobs were open in the county. Both Hawkeye and the friend applied for the job in both schools. "We were both closed mouth about it," Hawkeye remembered. "I applied for a job at Hoffman and South Coffeyville. I got the job at Hoffman and he got the South Coffeyville job. At that time, it was common for the teachers to go out and meet with the board members. The County Superintendent could recommend you, but generally, he'd send you to see the board members." Two board members had the control over Hoffman. There was another school in the same school district (Witwer) that the other board member supervised. Hawkeye went out to see the first board member. When he arrived, Frank was working on a small tractor. Hawkeye stated, "No one in this area except Frank, that I know of, had built a small tractor." This schoolboard member got up from his work and talked to

Hawkeye for a while. "I convinced him right off" said Hawkeye "that I could do the job." Frank decided that they should go and talk with the second school board member, Ira. When they arrived, Ira was in the barn milking. Hawkeye remembered, "Jobs were scarce--hard to get, and I was really out beating the bushes for a job. We talked to Ira quite a while and finally Frank said, 'Ira, I believe he can do it.' and Ira said, 'I believe he can too.' So I whipped a contract out of my rear pocket and we signed the form on the side of the barn."

Later, Hawkeye discovered that the students at Hoffman had run three or four teachers off the year before and that the schoolboard members were not discussing his teaching ability. "They were saying that I was big enough to handle the job. The worst ones quit school or graduated or didn't come back or something--because the children I had were real nice kids."

Hawkeye returned to Tahlequah with his signed contract to finish the Spring and Summer terms. Before returning to teach at Hoffman, he and his sweetheart secretly married.

Hawkeye soon learned that the school board left most of the decisions and control of the school up to him. They controlled the finances but Hawkeye set his own policies. "If we had any outside activities, so forth, I set the dates for it and set the programs and just manned the school. I was only 20 years old, so I was pretty young." Although he

was young, Hawkeye had one advantage many beginning one-room teachers didn't have. His wife, Charlie Bill, had two years of experience in a one-room school. "My first grader was one day behind Charlie Bill's first graders because I got the curriculum that year from her each night and then I taught my first grader the next day. When Charlie Bill made her seatwork for her first graders, she made mine. We didn't have any fancy printing presses like we have today. We had a 'jelly-like' substance that we used in a Hectograph that made our copies. I got help (in teaching) at home. Charlie Bill had been teaching already, so if I had any problems--I just brought them home and we discussed it."

Hoffman was a typical one-room school in 1940. It was a frame building with a porch and cloak room for students to put their lunches and coats before entering the classroom. Students had a desk with the bench attached in front of the desktop. There was a teacher's desk at the front of the room and a recitation bench. Little money was spent on supplies and teaching materials. Paper, pencils, crayons, and two cans of filler for the hectograph were bought by the school district. Hawkeye had to supplement the purchased materials and used things that were 'at hand' in order to teach the letters of the alphabet. "We took some magazines at home. Our family wasn't quite as poor as most families." Pictures were cut from magazines and catalogs by young

students to make alphabet books. "We had to improvise and do the things that we could do without money."

The school library consisted of two book cases similar to those used at that time in a law office. The school had a well for drinking water and was heated by a coal stove. The stove had a jacket to help distribute the heat. Corn cobs and kerosene were used to light the fire each morning. Hoffman had electrical lighting but Hawkeye described it as "just a bare bulb hanging down from the ceiling." Outside the school was a barn that was used for the children's horses when they rode to school. Another part of the barn was sectioned off for coal and corncobs. Playground equipment included swings and a bat and softballs.

An eighth grade student was paid \$5.00 a month to do the janitor work. "I got \$75 a month for teaching and \$5 a month for building the fire. I had a pretty good job--paid \$80 a month."

Hawkeye followed the state curriculum guide provided by the State of Oklahoma. The students worked independently and sometimes with help from older students. "We had a recitation bench, just a long bench that would hold three or four kids. It would hold a entire grade up by my desk, and they would come up there and we'd discuss a day's lesson. When that group was finished--another one would come along. Everyone recited their lessons on that recitation bench except my first grade student. She did her recitation

sitting on my desk--she didn't sit on the bench where the other kids sat--she was a privileged character and everybody treated her as such. She wasn't spoiled, mean, or anything--but she was like a little sister to a lot of the kids that were in that school. She learned to count using the pennies, nickels, and dimes I kept in a coin purse in my car. She learned to count what money was worth--because kids were aware of what money was."

Hawkeye believes that parents were a little different fifty years ago. "I don't remember having many problems. You had to solve your problems--you didn't have anybody to solve them for you." He could only remember one problem with a student in which he paddled during his one and one-half years in the one-room school. "In those times, if you got into trouble at school--you got in trouble at home." Hawkeye communicated to parents about how the students were getting along in school during social events in the community.

Hawkeye was with the students all day. When they went outside for recess--he played with them. They would often play ball. The student age span didn't seem to create any problems. The older students helped him with the younger students both on the playground and in the classroom.

One-room schools had a fund raising tradition called the "box supper." This was held in the fall of the year. The students would practice for the program and the

community would come. "All the women in the community brought a box with a pie and sometimes sandwiches, fruit, and so forth. They decorated the box and the bidders, most generally, the husband bought it. At that time, these boxes could go for the fabulous price of a \$1.50 or \$2.00. Sometimes for fun, other men might gang up on a husband and run up the bid. "At my first box supper at Hoffman, I got so nervous, I couldn't handle it. My brother had to take over as auctioneer--I was out in the horse barn 'throwing up.' "

Money from the "pie or box supper" was used to buy the Christmas tree, candy, oranges and apples for the Christmas treats. "We'd have forty to sixty dollars to buy these treats. A few mothers would come to school and sack the Christmas treats. It would be a pretty healthy sack of candy, oranges, and apples. Everybody that came to the Christmas program would get a sack of candy. Of course, the kids would put on a Christmas program. The schoolhouse would be full. The community seemed to enjoy every bit of it. Things were simple--they didn't have TV to stay home and watch--if they had a meeting at school, why, everybody came."

The County Superintendent came during Hawkeye's second year at Hoffman to ask him to move to a job in Childers. Hawkeye didn't want to leave. "I said, No, I wouldn't take the job and quit right in the middle of the year without

someone to take this job." The Superintendent had someone to fill the job at Hoffman and needed him to replace a seventh and eight grade male teacher that had been drafted. So Hawkeye moved to the Childers job.

Reflecting on his experiences in a one-room school at age seventy-four, Hawkeye said, "I thought the children that attended rural (one-room) schools in the elementary grades couldn't get a better education anywhere. When I moved to Lenapah as the high school principal, I had some of the same kids that had gone to Hoffman. They were good average students and could distinguish themselves in lots of ways."

Many educators agreed with Hawkeye's evaluation of the one-room students. These students usually continued their education and graduated from high school.

Another educator that began her career in a one-room school near the Oklahoma-Kansas state line was Marianne. She taught at Snow Creek three different times for a total of fifteen years. She shared her impressions of the changes that took place from 1928 to 1965. She reflects on the changes in what was considered curriculum and taught in the early years, expectations of rural students, and cooperation between rural parents and teacher.

MARIANNE

Biographical Information

Marianne was born in Coffeyville, Kansas on November 30, 1909. She grew up in Coffeyville and attended Coffeyville Public Schools. After graduation from high school, she attended two years of college at Coffeyville Junior College and began teaching in 1928 with a one year certificate that was renewable for five years after one year of successful teaching. She received a degree in education and math at Northeastern State Teachers College. She later did graduate work at Oklahoma State University and Northeastern State University. Marianne was eighteen years old when she began teaching. Her first job was at Snow Creek, District Three, in Nowata County.

MARIANNE'S STORY

Marianne's teaching career began at Snow Creek, a white frame one-room school in the northeastern half of Nowata County. She enrolled and taught many students during that first year. "I think my first year I enrolled about forty-two pupils, but I didn't have that many attending all the time because there were many people who rented their farms and they would move at [the] New Year." Marianne studied the manuals supplied by the county superintendent to organize her program. She didn't find this task difficult, "I was too much of a child among the children to think anything was difficult." Marianne also used the course of

study provided by the state to decide what to teach in each grade level.

The original Snow Creek school was rebuilt in about 1926, so the building was modern for the time. "It had a large classroom, a library, a boys and girls cloak room and a little kitchen. It was a modern school. I don't mean physically but, it was modern for that time. It had a large cement porch in front that served as a playground on rainy days. The restroom facilities were outside. It was a well equipped school." Marianne had not attended a rural school as a child, instead she went to a large two-story school that had grades first through seventh. Her education classes at Coffeyville Junior College had provided visitations experiences in rural schools, including one-room schools; therefore, Marianne was prepared for conditions that existed in the rural schools. "Physically, it was one of the better schools. In those days the State School Board inspected and we had standards to meet. We had good maps, a globe, and adequate physical equipment outside for recreation. Every teacher strove to make her school a 'model school'." Marianne had a few workbooks, a hectograph for duplicating student worksheets and a few consumable materials. The children supplied their own paper, pencils crayons, and scissors. At the end of the year, Marianne decided to leave Snow Creek. "There was a little

disagreement among the patrons and I couldn't take sides so I just left."

Marianne moved to a school on the far south side of the county named Terrel. She taught at Terrel for four years. This school had not made the modern advances nor did it have the equipment like Snow Creek. "It might have been because nobody was anxious to push it. The library wasn't as adequate, and it was only one room. The coats and hats were hung in the back. We used a water bucket and dipper and every child was supposed to have an individual cup." Terrel did not have any kitchen facilities. Light was provided by three windows on opposite sides of the room. There wasn't electricity, so lanterns were used at night but most of the programs were held in the daytime. Unlike most rural schools, Terrel did not have the traditional Pie or Box Supper and Christmas programs. "They didn't want it." While teaching at Terrel, Marianne began going to college during the summer break. "I went during the summer, but I wasn't forced too. When my five year certificate expired, it became a Life Certificate with my sixty hours of college credit. I went to school the second summer I taught. I took Oklahoma History and Oklahoma School Law, and two courses in agriculture."

Marianne quit teaching after she married, but not for long. "The president of the board at Salt Creek had to have a teacher and wanted me to start. It had been a two teacher

brick school but was now a one teacher school. So I started and I continued for the year. Then they decided to close it down because I think we only had about eleven or twelve pupils." After teaching one year at Salt Creek, Marianne taught at Childers school which was east of the town of Nowata.

She returned to Snow Creek and taught there before and during World War II. Marianne didn't think the war affected her students as much as it would today. "They were well aware of it but they didn't have television. They didn't know the horror of it. I taught up to 1943 at Snow Creek. I quit afterwards and wasn't going to teach--but I went back. . . because people came after me and I helped them out a little bit." The patrons of this rural school appreciated their teacher. "I had a double major of math and elementary education. I could have gone into the Coffeyville Junior College [to teach] but my school board at Snow Creek didn't want to release me. It wouldn't have been any better position. They said, 'They can find somebody else and we can't.' They prized me!" Marianne returned to teach at Snow Creek three times during her career for a total of sixteen years.

The curriculum changed through the years including the teaching of ethical behavior. "In our early time, we tried to teach children ethical conduct. Then all religion went out [of the schools]. I can remember the day I heard not to

have prayers. I always had prayer in all the schools I ever taught. Just a little bible verse and the Lord's Prayer and the flag salute. The schoolhouse had the Ten Commandments on the wall . . . and a picture of Christ, usually as a boy."

The early science books were little textbooks that were more like a reader. Marianne often used these books as a reader for the primary grades. "I remember one little fella read the sentence about setting eggs under an old hen to hatch. 'We must keep a rooster.' It was early in his reading, but the words were 'We must keep a record.' He was going with the first sound and his knowledge of nature than, I guess, science."

Marianne believes the expectations of the rural child were different than students attending larger schools. "I never found anything hard about teaching in a one-room school. The children knew why they were coming to school when they were in a one-room school. They were coming to learn and not be entertained and not to be running around." Teaching children with varying ages can be difficult but Marianne explained how the children worked. "They learned from each other. Some of the best learning that I have seen took place in the rural situations--in the one-room schools. Somebody in the third grade would finish and listen or watch a fourth grade lesson. During my last years [of teaching] I had another hitch at Snow Creek for five years after

Childers closed down. They sought me out. Back then the teacher was it! And if the child was disciplined at school, they usually got it at home. I did not have to paddle much. In the early days we did a little--but the parents were supportive."

During the second time Marianne taught at Snow Creek, electricity and running water were installed. The library had dictionaries and good sets of encyclopedias. Every grade level had at least twenty-five books. "Of course, the sixth grade could drop down to the fifth grade or jump up to whatever they were capable of reading." It wasn't difficult to work with the rural students. "The individual could learn, was exposed to more learning where there were more grades. I didn't try to keep them on levels. I tried to let them go as far as they could. You would find a fourth grader reading at a sixth or seventh grade level. When they began testing [standardized achievement tests] by the county superintendent there might be some child in the eighth grade that was just reading on a fifth or sixth [grade level], but usually there was a reason such as a broken home or many absences from school." It wasn't unusual for students to already have a working knowledge of a concept before it was taught. When this happened "we'd talk about it, but usually it was something that could be absorbed rather quickly." When Marianne did have a student that was having difficulty, she worked with the parents to help the student. "When I

found that out [student below grade level], I'd let him stay with the class but I gave him special work to do, and his parents usually were cooperative. You'd be surprised, if you meet parents in the right way and say, 'I've got a problem, I want you to help me.' how willing they are because they know that and they usually recognize the deficiency. The last years I taught at Snow Creek. . . I laid my answer book down and said, 'Whoever finishes first go over and check your paper. Then go to the chalkboard, if you missed it put it on the board. You'd be surprised at the 'ah's' and oh's' you'd hear. They'd find their error-- or maybe some little sixth grader would look up and say 'You didn't add that right.'" This became a team approach to solving the problem. They students helped each other regardless of the grade level.

Marianne liked to teach reading to the primary children using a phonetic approach. "In first grade, we started with the word 'mother' and listened to the sound. Then we looked at the letter and we tried to find other words that began with the 'm' sound. I tried to stay with phonics. While many teachers didn't like the Scott Foresman series of "Dick and Jane," I always said 'You didn't follow the manual, because if you did you taught phonics along with it. It was one of my favorite books."

Magazines and catalogues were used when primary teaching supplies were scarce. These were used to make each

child an ABC booklet with pictures. She also used sentence strips for stories for the children to read. "In the first grade, I made big charts with the nursery rhymes. After we'd read the rhyme with the picture--Jack and Jill falling down the hill--they always had a picture. I would manuscript it on the chalkboard and have them read it there."

When teaching math concepts, Marianne used items of nature as manipulatives. "We used rocks, laid them out like two twos make four, or two plus two. We used little pebbles most of the time in the earlier years. Of course later years we had things especially for that [purpose]."

The Snow Creek parents took an active role in the student's education. "We began the school and the parents all got acquainted with a big "weenie" roast. Getting to know the parents, knowing them and having them for friends certainly helped me."

The students at Snow Creek got to know each other well too. They worked together in the classroom and on the playground. "And more or less the older ones were protective of the smaller children. They didn't torment them, at least, not much, that I knew of. I had one boy that couldn't be handled in the Nowata school. He got a bad name. He wasn't a bad boy. They [his parents] brought him up to Snow Creek to his grandmother's. He either had to stay in school or they'd lose their welfare check. One of the

proudest moments of that family's life was when this boy graduated from the eighth grade. He was older than the [other] boys I had in school and he had a smoking habit. He and I agreed that there wasn't going to be any smoking in school. But I understand when he got close to home, under the bridge there was a pack of cigarettes--but that wasn't my problem that close to home."

Programs at Snow Creek were frequent. "You were expected to put on three or four programs a year. Every child got some training in appearing in the play." Marianne used the school curriculum in the programs by integrating science experiments into the program. "I remember one time we had a science program. One little fellow filled a glass with water and said, 'Now, I'm going to turn this upside down, with just this little square of paper over it.' You've seen it--but they [parents] hadn't and there was 'ahs' and 'ohs'. One year I presented a minstrel and I never worked any harder in my life. You had to put blacken on their faces and get it removed. Usually we sang songs and had little plays. A lot of the program would be built about the classroom work."

Snow Creek school did not have a stage, so the program was staged at the front of the room. "Sometime in late October or early November we had a big Box Supper. The Box Suppers were especially large on an election [year] because all the politicians wanted to make an appearance. And I

provided the program for both--a short program for the Box Supper, or if the politicians came--we just forgot the program and let them put it on. They had a committee that would buy the Christmas treats. They would meet near the schoolhouse and sack the candy before [the program]. There was always a nice big sack of candy, an apple, an orange, and some nuts for each child. We drew names [for the gift exchange]. Somebody in the community would go down to Cedar Creek and get us a big tree. We'd decorate that tree and get it put up about the Monday before Christmas. We didn't keep it long. Then we would have a Christmas program. It wouldn't pass now because it was always built around the 'story.'"

Snow Creek did not have a school bus. The children rode horses or walked when Marianne first began teaching. "They would have liked to have had horse races at Snow Creek, but I wouldn't let them. I put my horse up when I got to school and they put their horse up, too." Parents were responsible for providing transportation for their students. "In later years they wouldn't let any of them walk--afraid of traffic."

In 1965, Marianne left Snow Creek to teach in Lenapah. She taught at Snow Creek for for a total of sixteen years. Snow Creek honored her by naming her teacher of the year with a big party and big purple banner. She taught in one-room schools for twenty-three years. While teaching in

Lenapah, Marianne was selected as Nowata County's Teacher of the Year in 1971. "It was nice after so many years to be selected as Teacher of the Year." Marianne retired after forty-two years of teaching. Only one year was outside of Nowata County. At age eight-five she currently resides in the city of Nowata with her husband.

By 1965, few one-room schools were left in Nowata County. Most experienced teachers, like Marianne, could see the "writing on the wall" and began to look for employment in independent school systems within the county. This left a few positions open occasionally in the one-room schools. Elaine was looking for employment and found it at Diamond Point, District forty-four. She was young, energetic, and needing a job. Elaine discussed the cooperation between students, the strong sense of family and community that the rural children had. She also reflects and describes the "learning environment" that developed within the walls of the one-room schoolhouse.

ELAINE

Biographical Information

Elaine grew up in the Nowata area. She attended first and second grades at Elm Bend, a one-room school. When the Elm Bend was forced to consolidate because of declining population, the students were transferred to Delaware Public Schools. Elaine continued her education through high school in the Delaware school system. She attended Northeastern

State College at Tahlequah. She taught in California under a provisional certificate for one year. She returned to NSC the following summer to complete her degree. She was married, a mother of a young child, and twenty-four years old when she began her teaching career in Oklahoma.

ELAINE'S STORY

Elaine needed six hours to complete her bachelors degree at Northeastern State University. "We needed the money, so I went to the placement office at Northeastern State and put my name up on the board and said I would take an out-of-state job because I knew there were states who would take a teacher with a provisional certificate."

Elaine was fortunate to be hired to teach in a small three teacher school in California. She taught third, fourth and fifth grades. She returned to Oklahoma and completed her degree. The only opening in Nowata County was at Diamond Point. Elaine was hired to teach at Diamond Point in the fall of 1964. Diamond Point had been a one-room school averaging between sixteen to twenty-two students; however, the previous year the attendance was large enough for the school to qualify for two teachers for the 1964-65 school year. Elaine was hired first and then another teacher was added to the staff. Elaine taught fifth through eighth grades that year. "Well, I felt very comfortable with the atmosphere there, I had gone to [a one-room] school, and felt like I could do it. I didn't back off from it one

bit." As expected, the student population did not continue to allow the school to have two teachers for the second year so Elaine continued at Diamond Point and it returned to a one teacher, one-room school.

There were three one-room schools remaining in Nowata County in 1965. This school was different than the one attended by Elaine as a young child. "Well, my situation was a little different . . . because when I was there the building was a nice building. We had outdoor toilets, . . . tile floor, small school bus, a cook and bus driver, and hot lunches. We had propane stoves, I had a record player, and a TV, which helped with the educational channel and schedule. So if there was anybody that had a good situation, I felt like I had it. It was a good one, so therefore, I didn't hesitate to go into it. I had a rude awakening the first time I had to keep a school register, the attendance register, because I was so afraid of making a mistake. I knew it was important. I was in charge of the menus for lunch and everything. I had to be sure that it was all sent into the state department and be sure the right amount of milk was bought each week so that our milk count would tally out with the number of lunches, too."

Elaine's two years of experience in a three and two teacher schools was helpful that year she was alone at Diamond Point. But she did find working out the scheduling of all the classes to be difficult. "The year I was by

myself, I did have difficulty with scheduling, but it takes a while to work into it. Kids are very aware of the time. I was fortunate to work with the kids that grew up in the same community. They were almost like brothers and sisters--they took care of each other. They helped one another. I would work with the lower grades, for instance, in language arts. I think I had one first grader, a second grader, two third graders, and two fourth graders. I would work with them in language arts type things. Then I would get the older kids started on social studies or science because I needed to be with them with the reading and everything else. They were very good. I used some clipboards for scheduling too, and if they finished one job, then they went to the clipboard to see what was next. I could also have the kids working in their penmanship books when somebody was doing their reading out loud. Another group could be working on English. I had them in different sections of the room so those that were reading didn't bother those that were working on their social studies, or science. I had reading workbooks that were available. I didn't leave until I had the next days assignment on the clipboards for those kids."

While Elaine was occupied with a class, other students were expected to study and work independently. One-room schools encouraged students to become self-starters and responsible students. It also provided opportunities for students to tutor younger students as well as their peers.

"I was very fortunate to have kids that were very mature. Pete and Marsha were the eighth graders. When Pete finished his work. . . he loved to read--so I didn't have to worry about behavior problems." Elaine had several older girls besides Marsha that were good students and loved to help teach the younger children. "If some student needed help, they'd hold up their hand. If a hand was up I would just scan the room and if some [older] child was finished or it wouldn't disturb them too much to leave their area and do what they were doing, they would go help the little one to get them started back again on track. I was fortunate to have students that would love to be teachers. Several of those students are teachers now. The little ones were not offended when the older kids helped them. They had somebody besides the teacher to help them. It worked out pretty good, I guess. I look around at the kids and wonder--if I did what I was supposed to do being a fairly new teacher with not that much experience. I see all these kids and where they are today and I've taught with some of them. So I guess it worked--anyway, we got through every lesson every day. Once the kids had the concept . . . they could go ahead and do their seatwork, and the other activities in the room didn't seem to bother them."

Elaine was able to include the whole school in many learning situations. The older students would set up and prepare a science experiment. They would be in charge of

that project for the week. The student was then expected to share this experiment with the whole school. "And when they told about it, they had to make their presentation to the whole school. So we taught that way too. They [the students] were also teachers, I was just kind of the coordinator." Elaine also used educational TV to expand the curriculum for the students. Spanish was offered twice a week. She used the adopted textbooks to help her set up the curriculum.

Elaine relied on her instincts with one student. One primary child was a nonreader. He was not comfortable coming to school and had great difficulty with paper and pencil activities. Elaine had difficulty finding activities for this student that would benefit him academically and he would want to do. "I had to make it so he wanted to do it, so I gave him some clay and asked him to make his letters of the alphabet out of clay. He loved to play with clay. So I bought some sticks of clay and that way he could write. Then I would go check his clay--I didn't check his papers--but I checked his clay. So he was learning to recognize the letters that way. We worked some with soda straws, and things like that--bending them to different shapes and gluing them on paper. We cut them so they would make a letter and glued them on construction paper."

Teacher isolation was not as great of a problem for Elaine as it was for earlier rural teachers. She had

contact with a few other teachers as well as the County Superintendent. She would talk to one if she met them in a store or call on the telephone. She could find out what they were doing with their students. Elaine also had an aunt who taught in rural schools for many years in which to consult. "But mostly, I guess, I relied on instinct. When something didn't work I kept trying until I got something else. I've known all my life that I was to be a teacher, so it was just like being a mother--you just have a certain way, and if one thing doesn't work then you try something else. I'm sure there were lots of days when I didn't do a very good job with some students--but there were also lots of days when I did a good job. Most of the time I just relied on my own instincts to figure out what to do best. I also relied on working with my own kids, my teacher training, and talking with other teachers."

It was difficult to arrange time for each group of children in a one-room school. Elaine used an early lunch period for the younger students to allow time for the older students. The cook supervised the younger students until Elaine and the older students went to the cafeteria. "So they [younger students] went to eat first and that left me some time with the older students, to bring up anything that they needed help on, or for me to just have little discussions with any of the older students. So I tried to isolate some time for each grade level during that time--the

sixth graders on Monday, seventh graders on Tuesday--and try to get with them to see if there was anything they didn't understand, and had discussions with them."

The tradition of the fall Pie Supper and Christmas programs provided opportunities for the students to perform for the community. "So I tried to organize some things for all of the students to participate together at the first [of the program]. Then I would work out individual skits, a group poem, or readings together. I can remember, our Pie Supper was close to Halloween, and I had three boys that were in the seventh grade. I encouraged those boys to dress up like witches. I couldn't do that today, you know. The parents did not know--we didn't tell them, what they were going to do. So I had all little black clothes and black hats--they stood around like they were stirring in the pot. I had a black pot (an old flower pot), and put it up on the stage. How I ever got those boys in those black skirts and wigs--I had them fixed up with big old eye brows and everything else. Those boys didn't sing at the opening of the program because I already had them "made up," and their parents would have known if they'd sang. They were about middle way in the program and they hooted, and laughed, and hollered. They thoroughly enjoyed it. Those three boys sang in a high voice, as though they were girls. They walked around there and finally the crowd began to realize that these three boys were our three seventh grade boys,

dressed up like witches in wigs and stuff. They begin to notice, 'That's my son up there--dressed up like a witch. 'I borrowed everything I could get from everybody and [the act] just brought the house down."

Scheduling practice for the programs while keeping up the student's studies was complicated. Elaine would have one group practice while she conducted classes with another group. "If the older kids were involved in a short skit or play, then they practiced while I worked with the little kids. This [program] was kind of left up to me, to plan it, whenever it was, and whatever I did, was very well received. People were very receptive and had a good time about it." The annual Pie Supper was a big social event in the rural community. Most everyone came, parents, grandparents, and anyone interested in the community. "There would be standing room only. I can still see myself there talking to the group and being scared to death. And worrying that they would think me not worthy of being with their kids, and stuff, you know, that first night, the first time I was up there and talking to them, and worried what they would think, if they thought what I was doing was stupid. I can still see the first night, the first program, that I was in charge of, and still feel the electricity before it started and the happiness of the group and everything else, you were accepted in a positive manner."

After the program, each of the families would bring a decorated box for the auction. Sometimes the box would contain sandwiches, or fried chicken, fruit, and always a pie. "Most always, the husband would buy his wife's pie, but occasionally, there were some spirited bargaining. The money was spent on a few incidental things for the school, but mainly it was for candy treats and the Christmas celebration in the community."

The students of Diamond Point came from the farm families of the community. Most of these families owned land and had lived in the community for many years. Several families had more than one child attending. Elaine did not encounter any problems from siblings attending school in the same classroom. "I never had any . . . I think our children, particularly the rural children, were raised differently then. They took care of each other and also they were good friends with other families in the community. So it wouldn't bother one of the older family kids to go help a little brother or sister or any other child. With those kids and with that situation, I would say that they helped one another. They protected one another--almost as if they were family. You know, how you have the instinct to protect your family--and that was the way they cared for one another." The one-room school provided a unique opportunity for multi-age grouping. Children from age six to fourteen years old were attending the same school and playing on the

same playground at the same time. The children had to learn to get along with each other. "We had a few kids there. So they didn't think of hurting one another's feelings or being rude or mean to anybody else because you valued your friendships. It's almost as though it were one big family. That was the idea."

Playground duty was handled by Elaine. She had very little time to eat lunch. The older students would go to lunch after the younger students. " And this was back in the time when we could have the blessing and everything. As the little ones were finishing their meal, we were going in and we would have the blessing. I could sit in the cafeteria, where I could see where the little ones would play. . . eat lunch and watch them, and as soon as I ate, I went onto the playground. And often times I joined in with them, because I was twenty-four at the time and had been raised up very athletic, so it wasn't unusual for me to be the pitcher on the softball team. I remember one of the worst 'charlie horse' up my back leg. I thought the kids were going to have to drag me inside bodily. I would watch my watch, and when it came time for us to go inside for the afternoon session, I tell one of the little ones to go ring the bell. I was there with them--I didn't just sit."

Discipline was not difficult to maintain at Diamond Point. Parents, students, and teacher worked together to provide an atmosphere that was conducive to learning. "I

did have one young man that was being . . . somewhat naughty. I called his mother and told her what he'd been doing and I had immediate reaction from home. That young man straightened right up and I had no more problems from him. So I had the support of the community. Those children wanted to learn. I could trust them with anything that was going on in the room. If one of them walked outside or if they had finished their work and saw that the erasers needed to be dusted--they did it. I didn't have to supervise them. The children that I had were very happy, very cooperative. Whatever [activity] we did was just fine. Really, there wasn't just one teacher there. There were lots of [teachers] us there. We taught one another because there's no reason why a seventh grader couldn't teach a fourth grader about division and work with them. Some people can get children to [understand] division real easy and then others cannot. It takes some time to catch on. So if they were free and it didn't cut into their work, then they were most willing to help out."

Elaine remembers how much fun they had each morning at Diamond Point. "Of a morning, I had a record player and I had bought a patriotic record. It started out on each side with the "Star Spangled Banner." And I would put it on and then we would all stand up for the 'Star Spangled Banner' and sing along with it. Then we took turns putting up the flag. The next song would be 'Stars and Stripes Forever' or

something. We'd march out to the flagpole and we'd have a flag raising ceremony. Different kids would have a turn to raise the flag each day. I'd just leave the record on until the whole side played and we marched out to the gate and then back up. We could still hear the music because we put it on loud if the weather was nice. Then we would go back in the classroom and I was leading the way and they would march all around the classroom with the kids following me. The 'mother duck' was up in front and those kids, and they loved it--even those big kids--they loved to do that or at least, I didn't know it if they weren't having a good time, but from the oldest one right down, we would march around the room until the record was over. I miss those types of things--the spontaneous things you could do with the kids and stuff."

Elaine felt the most difficult part of her job was teaching the nonreader she had. Now she believes she didn't have enough skills at the time to best help that student. "Maybe somebody could have told me a little better how to deal with that situation. It wasn't my fault, I know, but I wish I would have had somebody to teach me how to teach him too. Maybe I could have helped him more."

Elaine doesn't believe a one-room school with eight grades would work today because the children are so much different. "So in today's society and children, I don't think it would work. Now, it may work on a smaller scale

within one or two grade levels where you can intermix children with different ages. I'd like to see that tried. I'd like to try it. But working with these children [of today] in that situation--NO! You couldn't pay me enough."

After teaching two years at Diamond Point, Elaine was offered and accepted a job in the Nowata Public School system. Today, at age fifty-two, she continues to teach in the elementary school with thirty years of experience. She currently holds a masters degree from Northeastern State University and recently completed a Bachelors of Science in Accounting from the same institution in 1991.

Teaching in a one-room school was not an easy job as Marianne, Izzie, Alice, Charlie Bill, and Hawkeye have described. It required tremendous diversity and management skills of both curriculum and people. Throughout the records found in the Nowata County Teacher Employment Records, the same teachers were hired year after year. They often changed schools--but teachers that were successful in the one-room school setting were as Marianne said, "Prized." These rural teachers knew each other well and information about job openings and teacher availability were passed among them. Like many other female teachers, Wahneetah resigned her position in Nowata when she married. But the war was responsible for many changes, including restrictions many school boards had for married female teachers. Wahneetah's one-room school teaching years are spaced over

twenty years apart which provided the opportunity for her to compare the changes rural schools had made.

WAHNEETAH

Biographical Information

Wahneetah was born August 13, 1911 in Nowata, Oklahoma. She was the youngest of four daughters. She lived on a small farm with her family until age seven when her father was killed by a bull. She and her mother then moved into town.

Wahneetah attended Nowata schools grades first through sixth. They moved to Tulsa and Wahneetah went to the Tulsa Public school until her graduation from Tulsa Central High School. At that time, Central was the only high school in Tulsa school system. She attended Northeastern State Teacher's College at Tahlequah and received a Life Certificate for elementary. Like many other teachers, Wahneetah taught during the winter and obtained her bachelors degree from Northeastern State College in English and Biological Science by attending summer sessions and doing correspondence work. She began her teaching career at age nineteen.

WAHNEETAH'S STORY

Wahneetah graduated from Tulsa Central High School on the last day of May in 1929. Her mother wanted her to attend college but didn't know how much financial help she

could give Wahneetah. "I graduated. . . got my little trunk, which was about two feet by four feet--everything I owned that I took to college was in that little trunk. I went to Tahlequah on the bus, by myself. I didn't know one single soul in that town. I didn't know anybody in the college. I had a room, so I got a cab to take me to this room. Then I went to the college and enrolled. I didn't know any of them. . . but I soon got acquainted." The college did not have dormitories at that time. Students stayed in the town of Tahlequah and walked back and forth to campus each day. "It was at least a mile or more. We had better figures then, than we do now, going up that hill. I enjoyed it--it was a good experience." Wahneetah attended college that summer and the August extension, which was three weeks. She continued college for the Winter, Spring, and Summer semesters. By the end of her second August extension, Wahneetah was ready to teach. "By that time, I lacked about one hour and I did that by correspondence. That gave me enough for a Life Certificate."

Looking much younger than nineteen, Wahneetah began searching for employment. "The Superintendent at Slick thought I was too young and would get homesick. He was afraid to hire me because he thought I would quit and go home. But his wife convinced him to give me a chance. So I was hired to teach first grade. I also had to teach eighth

grade math for a while. I think the Superintendent was trying to test me--to see if I would stay."

She didn't get homesick because she made several lifelong friends while teaching in Slick. Later, she and her mother purchased a small house, so her mother moved to Slick. Wahneetah taught primary students in Slick for eight years. After she had taught for a few years, one school board member asked the Superintendent if Miss Wahneetah had learned how to teach well enough that she could be moved to a higher grade. "He didn't understand that experienced teachers make better primary teachers." While at Slick, Wahneetah often had to wait for the school to get more money before she could cash her warrants.. "At Slick, sometimes we would have to wait. One year, especially, we got one month's salary on time, then we had to wait two months, then we got two month's salary on time, then we had to wait three month for another pay day, then wait again a few months for another pay day. But we always got all of our money." After eight years Wahneetah decided that she would enjoy a larger community, so she moved back to her childhood town of Nowata and taught first grade in the elementary school for three years.

Nowata was an oil community and county seat. When Wahneetah arrived to teach, it was a thriving town. She met a local farmer and they were married on March 1, 1940. "I got married, and in Nowata or most of the schools, if you

were married, you could not teach any longer because they wanted to save the positions for the men. It was a different setting a few years after that, but that's the way it was then. But after I got married, I just went on and taught the rest of the term. I didn't know it, but a mother went around to my patrons and asked them to sign a petition so I could teach the rest of the year."

Wahneetah moved twelve miles from Nowata to live with her husband and his family. "Then that winter, after I was married, someone from the High Prairie school board came. They had a teacher but she only stayed a week. So they came and asked me to teach there. I had never even been in a rural school--not for any reason until then. I got a rude awakening when I walked in but that was my first experience. I was expecting a nice little, cheery place. It was dirty, had coal dust on everything, and the building was dreary looking. But we worked on it. I stayed after school and painted around the walls and washed the wood-work. I tried to fix it up."

Much of Europe was already involved in war. The Fall brought many days of rain. Rural roads were not paved--often not even graveled. This made travel to High Prairie difficult for Wahneetah. "That was the year of Pearl Harbor, and it rained, rained, rained, so much. We were going to have our Pie Supper program in the Fall. We had it all prepared and it rained every day. It came down in

sheets every day for thirty days. So we couldn't have our Pie Supper for thirty days. I remember that well. We had a cistern in the schoolhouse. We had it turned off but it still filled up until it ran over in the floor sometimes." The continuous rain posed transportation problems for the students and Wahneetah. "It was very uncomfortable for the children who came because they had to get to school anyway they knew how. . .walk, their parents brought them, ride horseback, or something. And the roads were muddy, muddy. I had a muddy road that had deep ruts and you would hit high center. If you slid off of those ruts--you just had it. So my husband had to take me sometimes, clear around by town--it was so bad. It just rained until it was impossible to get through."

High Prairie had very little to offer Wahneetah. There was a teacher's desk and desks for the students "and dust everywhere. On the teacher's desk, this man on the school board had left my supplies for the year, which consisted of three Big Chief Tablets and six pencils. That was my supplies that I was to use to teach school with that year. There might have been a little chalk in the cabinet. It was a pretty nice building, but it was so dirty. It had never been kept up. It wasn't that they couldn't afford it, but most of those school board members had no children at all. Well, in fact, none of them had any children. So they didn't know what school was about. They were nice people

but they just didn't know what you needed. I had a few library books--about six or seven books and that was the library, but we got along. You used what you had--and the blackboard, if you needed too. I made flash cards and sentence cards and those kind of things. Now, that was for me to buy and make and take care of--but that's just what I had to do. I had to prepare those myself outside of school time because they [students] had to have something, or I felt like they did."

Wahneetah had never used coal to heat a classroom. She remembered her first experience with building a fire in the potbellied stove at High Prairie. "Well, we didn't have any kindling. You have to have a little bit of kindling first, so some of the children went out and tried to find some dry [corn] cobs, which was impossible. So the next day, I brought some kindling from home and we'd dry out some of those corn cobs during the day and use them for kindling the next day. They didn't furnish me any kindling--there was coal in this room. That's what made the school so dusty because they scooped the coal in through a window in a corner room. When they'd scoop that in, all that coal dust sifted in through the schoolhouse." The school did not have electricity even though the high line went by the schoolhouse. Lanterns were used when lights were needed. "The high line went right by the schoolhouse, just right outside the building but the electric company wouldn't tap

it, at that time, to serve the people along the line. Until Rural Electric came along, they couldn't get electricity from the public utilities."

Wahneetah had eleven years of teaching experience in the primary grades but none with all eight grades in one classroom. "It won't take you long to figure out what to do when you're up there and you have all eight grades and classes that you have to meet for everyone. It takes a while but you soon get the hang of it and you learn to combine some of the classes. I had one first grader who was a little Mennonite boy. He was my only first grader. Then I had two second graders. I think I had someone in every class that year. You just have to combine their classes and that's not hard to do because there will be some [students] a little faster and some a little slower. They will adjust themselves."

The thirty days of rain delayed the Pie Supper that year. Wahneetah and the students were glad to finally have the program. "It was already worn out--we did it so many times [in practice] that we'd worn it out and lost interest and everything. But we went through it anyway. By that time it was close to Christmas, so we had to get our Christmas program ready. I had only a few children so it was hard to get very much of a program, but we did. They all performed and we got our Christmas program over with. I don't remember so much about the weather at Christmas time

but I do remember about the Pie Supper so it was probably about the same at Christmas time. They say when the country's in war it rains a lot, that was true that year, but we enjoyed each other."

Wahneetah used the many days of inside recess to clean the school. "We had to do something, so we just cleaned those rooms out. We used cold water or we'd leave a little water on the stove and use some soap. We just cleaned up those shelves and things and made it look presentable." She also fixed up a small room for the children to wash their hands and face. "They hadn't been used to washing their hands before they ate their lunch, so I got them a pan and towels and soap and that sort of thing. I put up a mirror and had combs. The cistern room had a nice little window, so I fixed it up for those children to have a little place to comb their hair and wash. One little boy had such curly hair that he couldn't get his curls combed out but he would stand there and wet and comb his hair. They just really enjoyed that little make-up room they had."

The community of High Prairie at that time was predominately Mennonites. These people were hard workers and did not have cars or electricity. Wahneetah had two Mennonite brothers that were very different. "One of these boys loved cowboy things, the brother did not. He did exactly the Mennonite ways." There was a parade in Nowata that would have many cowboys and Tom wanted to go to see.

"So they came to school and he came up to the desk and said, 'Mrs. Wahneetah, I want to go to Nowata to that cowboy parade at 1:00.' And his brother said, 'Now, Tom, you know dad told you, you could not go.'" Tom said, 'I don't care if he did, I'm going to go.' Well, I listened, sympathetically with their stories and I didn't voice an opinion either way. So they went on out to play a while and when it was recess time, Tom just sat in his seat. Then the noon hour came and they brought their lunch and they ate, and then went out to play. In a little while, Tom came back and sat down and he said, 'I'm going to go to that cowboy parade.' I said, 'Well, you know what your father told you. You just use your own judgement.' And that's all I said. He sat there for quite a while. He thought it over and he didn't go. I felt sorry for him. I thought he was of strong character to do that because he loved cowboy things and that wasn't what his Mennonite teachings wanted him to love."

The schools began to receive commodities while Wahneetah was at High Prairie. The students brought their lunch from home but occasionally some canned or fresh fruit was sent to supplement the student's meal. "That was the beginning of any commodities that I knew about. Once or twice they sent us some applesauce in gallon cans. We got about two or three gallon cans. Then once they sent fresh apples--great big apples. They didn't send too many, so I

just proceeded to cut them in half and gave each student a half of an apple every day. One of the parents said, 'Well, it's a funny thing, she can't give them a whole apple.' Well, it wouldn't have lasted very long if I had. But the kids didn't want a whole apple anyway. They didn't have time to eat that much." Most of the students had good lunches sent from home. One student, whose mother was an excellent cook, always wanted Wahneetah to 'guess what kind of "sammich" she had that day.' "It would be a thick pork chop or something like that. It made my lunch of a jam sandwich less inviting."

Wahneetah decided not to return to High Prairie for a second year. "No way did I want to drive through that mud, clear around town. It took half of my salary to pay the gasoline bill. I was getting eighty dollars a month, so my husband wasn't in favor of it either. He had to do his own work besides taking me back and forth to school." So Wahneetah stayed on the farm and built a home, took care of their children, raised a garden and made a home life. When the youngest child began first grade at Diamond Point, Wahneetah went back to teaching. She substituted in Nowata almost everyday in any level from first through twelfth. "While I was still substituting, one of my friends asked me to teach with her in a two-room school she was going to have the next year. Her attendance was enough, so she asked me to teach with her." So Wahneetah taught the next year with

Nancy at Adair. But Adair returned to a one-room school after one year.

Wahneetah also taught at another two-teacher school in the southern part of Nowata County called Watova. "I was always called. I wasn't going to teach the next year--and they came after me and they'd lost their teacher and would I come and teach. That was the way I'd get back into the business again. Each year my husband would say, 'Why don't you stay home?' Well, he didn't care whether I taught or not but he just liked to have me at home. So I'd stay home a while, but then I didn't stay home long till someone wanted me. That's the way I did my teaching." Wahneetah taught fifth grade through eighth grade her first year at Watova. Then she taught the primary children for seven years. Most first graders at that time did not know the alphabet or their phonetic sounds. Wahneetah would have the first graders practice cutting pictures from magazines to develop their fine motor skills. "I always took magazines with colorful pictures, if I could find them, and if not I took the catalogs. At the first of the school year, I would put scissors in the child's hand and teach him how to cut. I would tell him to cut out anything he wanted to in that magazine while I was having another class. And they cut--sometimes they tore it out--but then they cut it part way. I didn't have time to make things for them to color and this answered several needs, to hold the scissors, coordination

of hands and fingers, recognizing pictures, and cutting what they wanted to make it interesting for them. Later we looked at what they had cut. We showed it to other children, and [would] have them tell what they liked about it. Sometimes we would paste it on paper to make an alphabet book."

In the school year 1966-67, Wahneetah once again came out of retirement to teach in a one-room school. This time at Diamond Point. "Elaine was hired to teach in Nowata at the last minute so again I was called to help out a school without a teacher." The school had added modern bathrooms over the summer--something most rural one-room school never accomplished. Wahneetah was related to many of her students that year. In fact, two of the students were her great-nieces and two were great-nephews. She didn't believe teaching her relatives caused any difficulties.

Wahneetah's experiences in one-room schools were twenty years apart, but she talked about their similarities and differences. "Both of the schools had a family atmosphere, the children with the teacher as well as with the parents. I've always had good relationships with the parents and with the children. One of the things I think is commendable about a one-room school is that the teacher is the sole advisor or manager. When she says 'No,' it means no. If she says 'Yes,' it means yes. The children look to her for advice, comfort and guidance. The big children take care of

the little ones. They help them with their lessons in school, with their coat, or if they are lost or sick or anything that was needed. The children learned to put up decorations for the programs, plan the programs, costumes-- they did a lot of that on their own. One year, one of the bigger boys pinned sheets on the little girls to make angel costumes. . . just like the teacher would. The big ones [students] helped them--that's something that the city schools had lost sight of. Also I think that in this family type atmosphere, you have to be fair in everything that you do, especially if it's a one-room school. You're the only teacher and the only one they can go to--so you have to practice fairness and equity in all things. They learned that too, so they passed that on. One thing that I just absolutely demanded in my children was to be truthful, and I taught it."

"In comparing these two schools, it was the same type of child that I had, but much different times. There was about twenty years in there and that made a lot of difference. I think the children in the rural schools play together well. They cooperate and they aren't wanting something all the time. In a rural school you go there, sit down, and do your work. You're not jumping up and down all the time--to run to see a film or to do something else. There aren't so many disturbances or interruptions. The children learned to sit down and they knew when reading came

or spelling or whatever--and they finished their work. While the teacher was listening to another class recite, the ones at their desks knew that they were supposed to be preparing for the next day's work. Even the little ones did. They knew they were supposed to be studying or getting their lessons ready for another day unless the teacher gave them a specific activity. The rural children learned to manage their time."

The 4-H Clubs at the rural schools played a major role in the student's development. Wahneetah helped students with their projects, demonstrations, speeches, and fair exhibits. "In the upper grades, 4-H helped them to learn to be managers."

The teaching curriculum changed drastically after the launch of the "Sputnik" for all children. "I think it changed our whole lifestyle. It was a new world after that. We couldn't use old stories and methods in teaching like we did before because we were now in the Space Age. The children were interested in space and our vocabulary was different--our grammar was different--our language was different--and our stories were different. I believe that's one way that we had to advance and it's one reason the one-room school is not with us today, like it used to be. Because, we have advanced to be a consolidated people and that consolidated the schools and children. Instead of two or three first graders. . . there were twenty-five or

thirty, which gave them competition and experiences with each other. This is good, because we have to learn to get along with each other and to learn from each other. When the first man went up in space--we had a television at school and we were all watching that television to see man in space. I thought it was a wonderful experience for those children. Our curriculum has changed due to the Space Age."

Wahneetah chose to "stay at home" after her year at Diamond Point. She retired from the one-room school with twenty years of teaching experience. "I decided to stay home and enjoy ranching with my husband and family." At age eighty-three, Wahneetah attends many teacher organization meetings, church services, and community activities.

Wahneetah's experiences in one-room schools provided a good comparison of similarities and changes that took place in rural schools. Her experiences focused on rural schools in the central and southern areas of the county. Mag Kerr spent most of her career in Nowata County at Thompson. She began teaching there approximately one year after Charlie Bill left. Mag's many years at Thompson provides an opportunity to reflect upon interaction of school, teacher, student, and community. She shares her experiences, philosophy, and teaching methods that she developed during her career as a one-room school teacher.

MAG KERR

Biographical Information

Mag Kerr was born five miles west of Tahlequah, Oklahoma, on August 16, 1915. Her family lived on a farm and grades one through eighth were in a rural one-room school. She attended Tahlequah High School and graduated in three years.

While attending Northeastern Teachers College, her father, ill with asthma, could not work to support the family. So Mag and her brother milked nine Jersey cows and sold milk, cream, and eggs to buy gasoline, groceries, and clothes.

Mag began her teaching career with a two year certificate at the age of eighteen. She taught one year in a one-room school in Cherokee County. She married and quit teaching in 1934. Her son was born in 1935 and she was divorced soon afterwards. She went back to teaching and attended Northeastern Teachers College during the summers to keep her teaching certificate. Mag received a Bachelors of Science in Education from Northeastern State College. She moved to Nowata County, married, and taught one year at Thompson. They moved to Craig County and she taught four years in a one-room school. During World War II, Mag moved to Labette County, Kansas with her family and taught three years in a one-room school and two years in a two teacher rural school. She moved back to Nowata County after the war

and taught fourteen years at Thompson, a one-room school located close to the Kansas state line. Mag also taught for twelve years in Lenapah Public School.

MAG KERR'S STORY

Mag Kerr began her teaching career in a one-room school located near Tahlequah named Strader. She had nine students. During the school year many children became ill with whooping cough. "But they wouldn't let me stop school, I had to keep teaching." Mag remembers that the children loved to come to school. "... it was a privilege to go to school." Mag would let the older children work with the beginners while she worked with the intermediate students. "They would help the little ones. They would teach them to count and they loved to read to them, which was helping them. It was just one big happy family really." One young fourth grader would never play with the other children during recess. He would target practice with his "shooter and slugs" and straws on the barbed wire fence. It was his job to hunt meat for the family's meal. "At evening he walked through the woods and he'd kill squirrels and that's why he practiced at noon. I often wondered how we kept some of us [from] getting shot. But that was what he had to do-- shoot squirrels so they would have something to eat."

Conditions in Mag's first school were primitive and materials were very limited. She had an old hectograph that she used to prepare seatwork, no playground equipment, a

well that furnished water some of the time, a wash pan, bucket, and dipper. "No hot meals at all, we had to bring our lunch. I believe that even the teachers desk was a homemade table and just a straight chair. We did have a chalkboard, but if I remember right, I think I bought the chalk. And I did the sweeping--we had a broom. I had to sweep in the afternoon after school was out. The school had three windows on the north and three on the south. It faced the west, but we didn't have any shades or anything on those windows--the glare of the sun came in." Mag would use magazines that she could "borrow, beg, and cry" for to decorate the school room. "I don't believe we even had a picture of the president. I always so loved the picture of George Washington and I always had to have his picture. I found that in a magazine so it wasn't a beautiful picture or very large, but I put that up in our classroom." Mag received a salary of sixty-five dollars a month for her first year of teaching. "You couldn't cash your warrant--there wasn't any money. The state didn't have any money, so I sold mine to a funeral director for forty-five dollars a month and paid my room and board out of that."

Mag taught in a similar school in Craig County but she remembered having more equipment. ". . . but not more than I had in Nowata County because I had a new school." Mag began teaching at the Thompson one-room school in the school year of 1940-41. The school was new but a construction

error had effected the windows. "And there was always someone there trying to work on those window." The school was heated by coal and the pot bellied stove that had a long pipe along the north side of the school room. Mag will never forget the day she looked up and saw the stovepipe falling. "Well, it was a rainy year . . . and we had that stove pipe up all summer. I just happened to look up--I guess I heard a cracking sound and the pipe was falling. It was full of water and soot. I hollered for the kids to run, I don't remember what I said, but they got out of the way. Can you imagine that mess? Well, the bigger kids took care of the little ones. I didn't have a phone--I don't know how I got some of the mothers there. We washed and cleaned all afternoon. It was on books, pencils--it was the most horrible mess you ever [saw], and stained the floor and desks. Some of it I don't suppose we ever got out."

Mag had twenty-one students her first year at Thompson but she did not have all eight grades. She helped sponsor the 4-H program and worked with the students with their speeches and demonstrations. "I remember one time I was embarrassed. The county superintendent came, it was a man, and I was listening to the [4-H] speech demonstration, having a class, and was overhauling something else. I can't remember what it was, but I remember I was trying to do three thing at once." Mag had learned from her first year of teaching in Cherokee County that teaching wasn't just in

books. Books couldn't predict what children and parents would say or do. "They [books] tell you this [is] what you do--but it didn't work and you had to do your own thing. You had to be your own psychologist and just use common sense--what the occasion, whatever happened--you had to deal with it there. Most of the time you didn't have time to really study about it. I guess I was too naive. I just did what I thought was right. For a while I tried to please everyone. That didn't work, I wasn't even pleasing myself. So I learned to do what I would want done if it was me or my child. After I became a mother, I became a better teacher, or that was my opinion, because I think I had the child at heart more and not so much book theory--more the human side of life. I pleased more people that way. I didn't please everyone, of course, but I think I did a better job."

Mag had some unusual experiences at Thompson. One year she had a young student, age nine or ten, that was addicted to tobacco. His parents would purchase it for him and he brought it to school. "I told him, 'Well, I can't tell you not to smoke when your parents are buying it. I'd rather you wouldn't. But you can't have it on the school ground. Put it on my desk and when you start home you can have it back.' He rode a horse to school." Mag often wondered what the state inspector thought about the sack of tobacco that he found sitting on her desk. She didn't explain and he didn't ask. "That was kind of embarrassing when I thought

about it. I never did smoke--I never had enough money to smoke. I suppose he knew I didn't smoke. I think you can always tell when people do, but that was one embarrassing occasion."

Mag's many years at Thompson allowed her to develop a relationship that extended beyond the classroom. She was interested in the student's life away from the school and her knowledge of the student's home life made a difference in the classroom. "I knew each child's home life. I knew their grandparents, I knew their parents. If they were ill, it was a great concern. And if the parents weren't there to pick them up after school, I'd bring them home with me or I'd take them home. It was good knowing the background of each child. Not every child had a good background--but you knew it. You could make allowances for their behavior or why they weren't at school."

Another example of Mag's experiences with family backgrounds involved the academic development of three siblings. Each young student was an average student until sixth grade. Then in adolescence, each boy began rapid growth into an excellent student. "I had one family that was really average students. I don't know what would happen but when they began to develop in adolescence--their brain developed. They were just like a field of wheat, I mean, they [grains] don't all ripen at the same time. I remember this one little boy and another child, I think they were in

the fifth grade. There was no competition at all between them. Then when they started in the sixth grade this little boy had developed so much that he just really competed. And what happened--I don't know. I'm not a doctor. But it did happen that way." Mag taught all three siblings from this family and watched each one follow the same pattern of development. Mag also remembered having six or eight sets of twins at Thompson.

The patrons of Thompson were very appreciative of their teacher. They showed their support and appreciation in many ways. "But very few evenings, [when] I went to my car to come home, there wouldn't be a dish or some sort--a loaf of homemade bread--sometimes a whole meal. The mothers would come after their children and there would be--it might be a jar of strawberry preserves, it might be a jar of honey, it might be a platter of fried rabbit, or a salad, or I even had one lady at Thanksgiving bring me a dressed turkey. It was like that all the time. At Christmas, they brought me such beautiful gifts--they shouldn't have--I didn't want them too, but they did it and the last of school, they always brought a nice gift for me. I remember one time I was so surprised. They gave me a beautiful clock--it was just almost like being home." The community generosity was not limited to Mag. This community worked together and took an active interest in all community members. "We were a close knit community. They not only helped me--they helped

each other. That was just the community. If someone was ill, all the neighbors went in and helped--a can of food or harvest the crop or whatever it was--put up telephone line, whatever was needed. I know one family moved in and the mother was expecting. They didn't have a telephone and the father was gone a lot. So when they moved in on Saturday, they [the community] went to the woods, cut some poles and strung about three miles of telephone lines so they [the family] would have a telephone at night. That was the kind of community it was. It was very caring, and very honest, and hard working. They didn't have a lot of money but they were well off farmers. It was just a good, good, Christian community. I knew the background, parents or grandparents, even some of the grandparents of the students because I lived there and they lived there for all those years. We were just one big family, really."

Mag was taught to use flash cards in her methodology courses at Northeastern Teacher's College. She taught the primary students reading lessons twice a day, early morning and right after lunch. "I always felt like they were fresher, and I was. I'm such a stickler for reading. I thought if they could read, they could get the other [subjects]. So I did reading and math each morning, early. That was the subjects that I liked to get over with first." Mag taught the old 'Dick and Jane', "Mac and Muff," and Tipp and Mitten' primary reading series. "We did art a lot in

the first three grades. Sometimes we would sing little songs and while the others were settling, I'd get them in a corner where we would be quieter and not bother the others. We'd do finger puppets and little puppets. Sometimes we'd have a puppet show. We'd make puppets out of paper--so they would make those. They liked to do the stories like 'The Three Bears,' or 'Cinderella.' We'd act those out a little bit. We might make a crown or a witches hat--or whatever we needed to do, not elaborate, but just enough for fun."

While Mag worked with the primary students, the older students had assignments and projects on which they worked. She remembered that her students read about their grade level. "I'd have third graders and it wasn't very long until they would be reading [on] sixth or seventh grade [level]. They didn't have television [at home] and their parents read. They were taught to read at school, and they liked to go home and show what they had read--what they could read. And I think hearing [others]--it was such an incentive for the first grader to learn to read so he could read like someone in the second grade, or the third grade, or the eighth grade. They had almost a hero worship for the older students. I believe that hearing the lessons and things discussed--they may forget it one year--but they hear it again the next year, and the next, and again the next year and it just soaked in." Mag would use the chalkboard

to work with her students in math. "I would notice the other children, the little ones, would raise up and watch-- they were learning. They [students] didn't get much of my time at one time, but it was over the years that they got [attention], and they knew what they were going to do in the third grade or they knew what they were going to do in the second grade. They knew what sixth grade was like." She used peer tutoring to help students. Instead of remediating or grouping with younger pupils, she would have a student work with another student as a tutor. This provided remediation but kept the self esteem intact. "What I did, I'd tell him to help someone in the lower grade. . . . what I was really doing was helping him, but I wasn't telling him I was putting him back. I'd ask him to help them do something. Well, he would read to see what he was supposed to do and he learned and improved his [own] work."

During the Korean War, Mag was distressed to learn her students knew more about Korea than Oklahoma. She decided to take her older students on trips that would encourage their interest and increase their knowledge about their state. "We would go on a Saturday and I'd take them all down through Muskogee, Tahlequah, and Grove. We visited all the historical places I could get in one day. They really did enjoy that." The younger students were also interested and listened to the history lessons and often liked to join

in the discussion. "When you asked a question, you might have a response from someone else, not even in that grade."

Mag liked to teach science. Her students were especially interested in animals and insects. One fall during the monarch butterflies migration, Mag and her student noticed a large swarm of monarchs flying into the high chicken wire backstop on the playground. One of her young students became very upset because when the butterflies hit the backstop, they were tearing their wings and could no longer fly. "He was so upset that I said, 'Let's take some scotch tape and we'll tape their wings.' I'd thought about it just to satisfy him, because he was so disturbed about the beautiful butterflies." Mag and the children at Thompson spend the noon hour inside the school taping the wings of the monarch butterflies. "And by the way, they flew off. I don't know how far they got--whether they got to Mexico or not. I thought the weight of the tape would make a difference--but it was like they had new wings. That was quite an experience for me because I didn't really --I thought they might get out where he would not see them--but I watched them--they just fluttered off--just like their wings were new. We used lots of scotch tape."

Mag used this experience initiate a study of butterflies in the classroom. She learned "how they laid their eggs, about the metamorphosis of a butterfly, and how they lay their eggs on milkweed." Although the butterflies never

again passed through the playground at Thompson in such great numbers, the students often observed the migration of the monarch butterflies. Mag used nature around the school to teach the students. She kept a cyanide jar in the trunk of her car so the class could preserve insects for study. "I didn't want to keep poisonous things around the students, so I kept it locked in the back of my car and if we needed it, I could get it out." The students would write reports about what they had learned and observed about nature. "One time I looked out and our [school] yard was yellow with finch. We talked about that. One Sunday I was in Muskogee and got the nutmeg from a tree and brought it to school the next day with a can of nutmeg spice and our lesson developed. Of course, that's the beauty of farm boys and girls--they know plants. When you mention one, you seldom had to show them because they already knew. That's the advantage of teaching rural boys and girls, they have so much common knowledge. They knew about the plants and the anchor roots and the trees, leaves, and worms. They were always catching snakes and they'd holler, 'Oh, Mrs. Kerr, We've got a snake.' And I'd say, "Well, wait till I get there to see if you can catch it." Mag and her students caught many snakes to study. The students weren't afraid but Mag encouraged a respect for nature in her students.

Mag and her students had many group projects. "I know we made soap. We quilted quilts, and we made butter and

bread when we would study pioneers. Mag used these projects for learning experiences and to keep the interest of the children. "There were things they didn't do at home--or their mothers didn't do."

Thompson school had all the teaching materials that Mag needed. "We had a wonderful library, art books, supplemental readers, and just good materials." The equipment included a radio, slide projector, filmstrip projector, record player, and microscope. The building was improved to include brick on the north side of the building and glass tile in the faulty windows. The bathrooms were outside. "Water was scarce there, we just had the outside toilets but we did have well water." The school had a telephone, gas heat, and tile floor. Also provided were a half-day per week Music teacher and a janitor. The playground had slides, swings, and a see-saw. Across the pasture fence was a big baseball diamond that the community and school used. It had a high chicken wire backstop. Although Thompson never had a cook, the school had a well equipped kitchen. "The children would bring their potato wrapped or their dish that they wanted heated and at recess we would put it in the oven, light it, and by noontime we had a hot meal. They took their dishes home and brought them back the next day. Thompson did not have a school bus to furnish transportation for it's students. Parents brought their children or found an alternative. "There was

one family, they had a little tiny car, 'Crosley,' and they came in it. They weren't old enough for a drivers license. . . but they were very responsible children. They wouldn't start their car until the other children had gone. They just drove it in and turned the switch off."

Thompson school had the traditional Box Supper and Christmas Program for the community. One Christmas Mag built a huge Christmas tree from cardboard. Holes were cut so the children's faces became the tree decorations. "We painted it and had a frame behind it so they could stand on it. I had one little first grader. She had the sweetest little voice. She was going to sing 'The Littlest Angel.' I put her at the very top on a twelve foot ladder. She was at the top of the building. Then I had a boy and girl in the eighth grade right by her so she wouldn't fall. She sang so sweet through every practice--she was perfect. But that night she had stage fright, and the eighth grade girl just picked that song up and most of the people didn't even notice that the little one wasn't singing. It just went on perfect. I thought it was one of the best programs we ever had." Everything we did, we did behind that tree--or on it, there was no moving off and on [stage]. Although Mag did not play the piano or sing, she always had music in her programs. "A mother would come in and help play a piano for programs. The last six or seven years, we had a Music Teacher to help. I had lots of help--lots of cooperation

from mothers. If I hadn't, I couldn't have gotten through those years."

Another tradition of the rural one-room schools was county Eighth Grade Graduation and the trip to the State Capitol Building. Mag had been taking her students on trips for many years before the County Superintendent began arranging the county trips. "I always took them on a trip. I would take them to Oklahoma City. We went to the legislature and some of them got to be Pages." One year the students chose to go to Grand Lake instead of Oklahoma City. "We went down there. They were given plane rides and I let them go and their graduation was that night. It made the boy sick. I hated that so much but I never thought about him getting sick. They went up and flew over the lake and back and that was quite a thrill to get an airplane ride. He was there [at graduation] but he sure didn't feel good." Most years, Mag took her eighth grade graduates to the Capitol building, Historical Society, or the zoo. "I started [trips] before the others did, because I wanted them to know their state. I liked for children to be proud of where they're from and to know . . . Oklahoma."

In the fall of 1966, Mag left Thompson to teach in the Lenapah Elementary school. "I hated to leave Thompson. But I felt like it was getting to the place where the schools were--all they were talking about was closing [rural] schools. I hated to leave the community." At this time,

the fate of the rural schools was clear, they would close; however, no one knew when. "I could have gone to Lenapah or Nowata, but it was closer to go to Lenapah and I felt like I needed to change." The transition from a one-teacher school to Lenapah was not easy. "I was always scared that I would make a decision that somebody else was supposed to make-- because I made them before. There I was scared to death I would make the wrong decision sometime or make one that the principal or superintendent would disagree with."

After Mag moved to the Lenapah school system, she was able to observe her former students in the high school. Mag's students from Thompson were top students in their graduating class. "Nearly all my students all through the years were in the upper percentile of the graduating classes [at Lenapah]. I don't know how many valedictorians that came from Thompson--there were several of them--or if they weren't valedictorians, they were salutatorians. . . I guess that's probably the reason I was asked to come there to teach."

Mag Kerr's teaching philosophy believed that children should be given every opportunity to develop. There were two words that she wrote every year in her grade book: respect and expect. "And that is what I tried to live by. I expected them to do as much as they could do. I respected them and expected them to feel the same way towards me. I think love. . . I can't teach them if I don't love them. I

sat by them in the chairs and had my arms around them. I never dreamed about charges of sexual abuse. Because I don't care what color they are--when they are mine--they are mine. I'd see little kids on the playground [in Lenapah] and I'd think 'Those are bad little fellows.' When I got them--they were the nicest kids, just because they were mine. I was defensive of them. I had them where I could love them and they were just my kids. I bet I had more sleepless night over their health than a lot of their parents did. Because if they had a cold or something I worried about them. I think we should think of the child and try to take them as far as we can. We can't give them something God didn't, but they can improve [what they have] through repetition and hard work. You [teachers] do the best you can."

Mag believes it would be advantageous for children to spend more than one year with a teacher and students. She sees peer tutoring and open schools as a return to the rural school. "Children learn from each other. They just love teaching. Children play teaching school all the time. I think that's one way to do it. I just think it would be an advantage to a child." Mag knew her students. She knew their strengths and weaknesses. "If they're a little slow in math, you reinforce that with other children helping. That's the way you have to do it at a rural school--let other children help you. They learn to be comfortable . . .

at first they are shy but when they learn you like them-- that you're going to be their friend--well it goes back to love. That's what's wrong with our world, we don't have enough trust. . . and love to go around. We don't show it."

Mag retired from teaching after thirty-six years. At seventy-six, she now lives on a farm outside of Nowata County but is still very active in several teacher organizations. She states that she has had a wonderful life as a rural person. She's happy to live in this part of the country with wide open spaces and to know her neighbors. "I wouldn't want to live in New York City or Los Angeles. They have lots of advantages that I don't have, but I'm happy here. There's enough coyote about me--I like to look and see what's behind me."

Mag Kerr's knowledge of the community and familiarity with families gave her greater insight into instructional needs of each student. Another teacher that had longevity at one school was Nancy. Nancy taught at Rutherford and Elm Bend before teaching for seventeen years at Adair. She used her extended contact with parents and community to help her students. She describes her "implicit theories and experiential knowledge about teaching, learning, and sharing with children.

NANCY

Biographical Information

Nancy was born December 4, 1916 in Nowata County just west of Chelsea, Oklahoma. Her first memories are of the oil fields east of Delaware. As a child she attended a rural one-room school in Bugscuffle. This school's name was later changed to Smith School (District 49). She attended Alluwe High School. She attended Northeastern State Teachers College in Tahlequah in the fall of 1935. During her time at Tahlequah, Nancy lived with her aunt and uncle for one semester before moving into two rooms with a screened porch that she shared with five other women. At that time, the college did not have dormitories. Nancy walked back and forth about a mile twice a day to attend classes. She went for two years obtaining a Two-year certificate. Later she got a Life Certificate and B.S. which certified her to teach elementary, grades one through eight, and secondary Social Studies and English. Her teaching career began at age 20, in 1937, at Rutherford, a one-room school in Nowata County.

NANCY'S STORY

Teaching jobs in Nowata county were listed at the County Superintendent's office. Nancy learned of the teaching job at Rutherford. "That was all that was available at the time. Rutherford was the first school that

I put an application in for and got it. I think there were about seven people applied for the job--but I got it. There were three members on each school board and teachers visited each one and talked with them." After the board members interview the job applicants they would hire a teacher.

In 1937, Rutherford was a small building with no inside water facilities. The school was heated by a pot-bellied stove and had kerosene lamps on the walls around the room. "I was the janitor and the teacher and everything." It was Nancy's job to fill the lamps and clean the globes. "We didn't use those very much because one whole side of the school building was glass windows, so we had plenty of light unless it was some night affair that we had or something. Once in a great while, we would have to light the lamps--if it was real cloudy and dark in the very middle of the winter." Nancy had six students her first year of teaching. She roomed with a family that furnished her with a horse so she could take the family's granddaughter with her to school each day. Nancy cooked her own meals on a stove in her room and packed her lunch each day.

Nancy described the children of that school as "very respectful and helpful" with what needed to be done. Recess and noon were thoroughly enjoyed by the students; however, when recess was over, the children were ready to work and discipline was not a problem for Nancy. "I didn't have much to work with, as far as materials were concerned. They had

their pencil and their tablet and I had a book just like their's and that was it." Students were expected to furnish their own crayons and scissors. "We were allowed ten dollars for purchasing school supplies for the year. But that had to include the chalk and the erasers. Then anything else we needed that ten dollars would buy--it didn't go far. I think we had ten dollars allowed for library books."

Nancy used the state curriculum guide to know what to teach each grade and what the students should accomplish during the year. "The first graders were supposed to know so many words at the end of the first year--and so many at the end of the second year. We didn't have any materials to work with other than the textbook. I made copies of some work and put some on the chalkboard. But first and second graders couldn't read that very well. I had to make copies for each child [first or second grader] of anything I wanted [them] to do. I had an old hectograph that I made some copies on, but it was very crude."

Nancy used a hectograph to make copies for her students. This copier was about ten inches by twelve inches in size. Teachers could make copies, one at a time, using this method. It was necessary to wait several days before using the hectograph for different worksheet. Nancy bought the hectograph paper that she used with her own money.

Nancy had attended a one-room school as a child. Her college courses did not help her know how to teach in this type of school. "I don't think they told us a thing. I don't think I knew anything. I based my teaching very much on the rural school that I attended, plus the high school I attended. Also the people who taught at Alluwe, Mr. and Mrs. Franc. And I patterned my teaching after Mrs. Franc because I dearly loved her." Using her own experiences as a student in a rural school, Nancy planned and scheduled her time with the students. "I always began with the first grade and went all through to the eighth. I didn't have very much time, so the children had to study each lesson. I had reading first thing in the morning, and then I had reading for the first three grades the first thing in the afternoon. When they finished with one lesson they had an assignment for the afternoon lesson. After the afternoon lesson, they had an assignment for the [next] morning lesson. They had to study their lesson and have it ready. Most of the work that I did was preparing them for the next lesson each time. I would introduce the new words--we would talk about them and how they could be used in different ways. The back of the textbook would have a list of the new words for the next lesson. So, then they would read, the pages were built on those words plus the other words that they already had. So--they would study their lesson."

While Nancy worked with another group, each student was

expected to work independently on their lessons. "They worked and never looked up--they didn't interrupt me for anything. They just did their work. They had their assignment and they were prepared for it--each assignment I'd given them."

Before school, at recess or noon, and after school, Nancy helped students that needed additional help. "But during the school hours we went straight through with everything--each day. But I was always ready and willing to help them after school or at noon or at any recess or of a morning before school began."

One day a local rancher brought a new child to Rutherford for Nancy to teach. At this time it was against the law for children of color to attend the same school as white children. "I had a school law book and it was against the law and I had to show him. I had the book there at school--so I showed him that they [colored] couldn't attend school in a white school. The rancher then proceeded to see the school board, and they told him the same thing--that it was a state law that they [colored] could not go to school with the whites. So he had to take him back home and I imagine the family moved on somewhere else so the child could go to school." Nancy feared that she could have been dismissed from her job or had her certification taken away if she had made an exception for this child. "I don't know

how drastic they would have gotten--but that was just the school law, at the time, and you couldn't do it."

In the fall of 1938, after teaching at Rutherford for two years, Nancy married John. She quit teaching and worked on the farm helping her husband and his family. After three years, Nancy decided to return to teaching and was hired to teach at Elm Bend, a school that was about four miles from her home. Elm Bend was similar to Rutherford but the district was more thickly populated so she had more students in her new school. "We still had the old coal stove, and lights around the wall--there hadn't been much progress made from one school to the next. The school had a cistern with a hand pump for water. Playground equipment was limited to teeter-totters and a ball and bat, furnished by Nancy. The children and Nancy brought lunch from home each day. I taught there three years--the last two years that I taught there, John was serving in the army." World War II made life difficult for all Americans trying to help the war effort. Nancy was responsible for issuing the rationing stamps for her area. "Every so often new books were issued--about once a month--I guess." The stamps limited the amount of sugar, gas, fruit, and coffee that could be purchased by an individual. "That cut down on the amount that some people, if they had money, would be able to buy. They got the same amount per child or per family member."

Some of the time Nancy walked to and from school to

save gasoline because gas was difficult to get during the war. Later years she had a car and she drove. "But during the war. . . it was hard to get gasoline. The Nowata school bus picked me up and I rode to school on the Nowata school bus. I called the superintendent and asked him if it would be possible for me to ride the bus to the Elm Bend school and he said it was fine. So I rode down [to Elm Bend] --the bus went that direction. And in the evening the bus came back this way [reversed the route]--so I rode it home. It was very nice of them [Nowata school system] to do that, of course, everyone knew that gasoline was rationed. They could get gasoline for the school buses so they were very good about letting people, that needed to, ride the buses."

The curriculum remained the same as what Nancy had taught at Rutherford. Most of her teaching instruction was done in small groups. Older children helped the younger students or Nancy helped them before and after school. "The children had more responsibility in those days--they studied their lessons and worked at it until they could get it. I spent some extra time at recess, at noon, or before school. If some child needed help, they came to me and I helped them--even after school. The other children were very good to help each other. They were more like a family--they helped--and seventh and eighth graders were very eager, always, to help a child, too."

After the war, John returned home and Nancy again quit teaching to help at home. "I spend another three years at home, working on the farm, milking cows, gathering eggs, gardening, and canning." Nancy served as a school board member for the Adair one-room school for several years. Rutherford school had consolidated into the Adair district so Nancy was now living in that district. The teaching position became available. "I decided I wanted to teach [at Adair] so I resigned [from the school board], someone else took my place and I applied for the school and got the job. Nancy taught at Adair beginning in the fall of 1948 until the school was forced to consolidate with Nowata schools because of declining enrollment in 1965.

During that seventeen year period, Nancy saw many changes in the one-room schools and developed friendships with the families of the Adair community which continue to the present time. Families in the area were stable and Nancy often taught the oldest child through the youngest. "They were just like families--the whole school was just like a big family. Little children, babies born in the community, knew me well by the time they were old enough to go to school. So I didn't have any problems with beginners being dissatisfied or anything. They were ready to come to school--they knew me--it wasn't anything new to them. They had been there for the box suppers, Christmas programs and community Easter egg hunts. At the end of the year, we

always had a day that we took the children somewhere--like Woolroc, or the Tulsa Zoo. We took them over to the lake and took them on the boat up the lake--we always did something. The children were just always eager to start to school."

When Nancy first went to Adair school, conditions were much the same as what she had experienced at both Rutherford and Elm Bend. Soon many changes were made to the building which made teaching easier and more convenient. "We had quit oiling the floors so the school put down tile on the floor and it was much nicer and we put in propane [for heating]. When I was first there I had a coal stove, the old pot bellied stove, and it wasn't too long before we got propane. We had two nice propane stoves--one at the back and one at the front--[they] heated the room real well. We could leave it on over night. When we got electricity through in 1950. . . we had electric lights. When I first went there, for two or three years, I had the same kerosene lamps around, some were on chains that you pull down from the ceiling."

At first, the children brought lunch from home. Later a woman who lived in the teacherage was hired to cook lunch and bring it to the schoolhouse to serve. After a few years, the teacherage was vacant, so a cook came daily and prepared lunch in the teacherage. The large room of the teacherage was furnished with tables and benches. Lunch was

served there instead of in the schoolhouse. Nancy was responsible for keeping all of the lunch program records, collecting the money, going after the commodities, and planning the menus. "At that time we got a lot of commodities--and very nice ones. We always got flour, lard, turkeys, chicken, gallons of peaches, vegetables, canned applesauce, and fresh fruits. We had good, good lunches." The cost of the lunches in the 1950's was twenty cents per day or one dollar a week.

Other changes were occurring for the one-room schools and their teachers, money for supplies and materials became available and was used to improve the curriculum for the students. "Well, I had all the supplies I needed. I could order any supplies that I needed: workbooks, dictionaries, enough for a whole class to use at one time, encyclopedias, record player, and the last few years, I had a television. We did some lessons in Spanish."

When Nancy began teaching, science textbooks were not available. She and the children would make their own booklets for science. "The year I had nine first graders, I ordered paper by the ream that had the top half blank and the bottom half lined to write on. Each day we would choose a subject that we wanted to find out all we could about it, like the moon or sun or a tree and they would tell me all they knew about it. I'd write it on the board and we'd read it and work on it. They'd draw the pictures. I had a set

of encyclopedias with some pictures that the children could look at. The school inspector came about the first of December, and they had their little workbooks stacked up. He picked up one and came back to me (I was having class) and said, 'What grade is doing this?' I told him the first grade. He and I went back to them and he said, 'Well, they can't read this, can they?' And I said, 'Well, that one belongs to that little girl, let her tell you about it.' She got up and read it to him and he turned over to another story and she read him that one and he put it back down and said, 'I've never seen anything like that.' But when they put up the first satellite and things, we began getting science books then, and they changed quite often, because they were putting new things in them all the time."

Science was not the only subject that became more important in the 1950's. "We began to be conscious of other countries, their language and transportation. There were many advancements in transportation through that time [period] too. Anything modern coming out, we would work on that and investigate it and find out the advantages and disadvantages. The children became more conscious that there were other continents and other states besides Oklahoma. . . . Then we began getting a geography book that had colored maps. I think that was one of the greatest progresses that we made. That made an impression on the children to see the different colors--each country was a

different color. When I started to school the map was just black and white."

Rural one-room schools usually had an active 4-H program for the students. The teacher usually served as a leader along with volunteers from the community. Nancy worked with the 4-Her's at school to prepare their speeches, demonstrations, sewing or wood working projects. "I had help from usually one or two women in the community. . . . They would come to school and practice for their speeches and demonstrations and things like that. But the school bought a sewing machine, ironing board, and a steam iron. I had anything to work with at Adair that I wanted. Whatever it was--they got it for me. The boys had the saws, hammers, nails, tacks--anything they needed to work with, and they kept them in the boys' coat room." Nancy allowed the boys and girls the last thirty or forty minutes of the school day to work on their projects if all school work was completed. She would supervise the work done on these projects at school. "Some of the girls would be basting--others could be cutting out [material]. And some would be sewing and some would be pressing something. But that's why, for one reason, that I didn't have any discipline problems. A child saw that he had his work completed--that came first."

Nancy believed that her students should be busy learning and studying during the school day. Many children were able to do their work and listen to her teaching

another class. Her students were eager to learn and often studied and practiced work Nancy had on the chalkboard for older students. "I did teach some penmanship--but I didn't a whole lot because by the time the children were in the second grade they could write [cursive]. If they didn't do anything else, they would copy things from the board, that I had written up there. It was seventh and eighth graders [work]. They would see it on the board and if they weren't working on another lesson they'd practice. It didn't take them more than about eight weeks or maybe nine weeks in their workbooks. I had Puzzle Pages, that had everything in them for them to do. If they found something they didn't know how to do on a page--they'd hold up their hand to a seventh or eighth grader. The older student would get up and explain and go back [to their own work]. But by Christmas time they [primary students] would turn that book around and read 'To the teacher:' and turn the book back around and do it. They were just that type of children. They were responsible for what they did and I didn't have any interruptions because I had my classes." Nancy always had extra activities for her students to do when they finished their assignments. These activities usually came from booklets published on current events and geography. The students would work together.

One year Nancy was involved in a serious car accident. Her substitute had noticed two second grade students working

with the globe and wondered what they were doing. Nancy remembered, "I had these two children in the fourth grade booklet. They had done all through [to] the fourth grade [level]. One of them went to ask my substitute something. The substitute looked at it and asked, 'What are you doing with that book?' They told her I had given it to them [to work in] when they didn't have anything else to do. The substitute looked inside the booklet and every answer was correct. She told me, 'I just couldn't imagine them doing that kind of work and just in the second grade.'"

Nancy believes the experiences her students had in the one-room school enriched their lives as children and adults. The Box Supper, Christmas programs, along with the 4-H program provided opportunities for the students to perform. "I think it helped the kids that went through the rural schools. I think they were well equipped to go right on through high school and do a good job. Well, it was just proven, I had a good return from the children that would go on to school in Nowata. The Superintendent would always say, 'You sent us some good students.' And he'd say that every year. Well, whether they knew so much or not, or whether they were smart or not--they knew how to go about finding what they needed to know. They knew how to go to the dictionary and find out things they wanted to know. They knew how to go to the encyclopedias and find what they needed. They knew how to get up and give anything they

needed to give and do anything they needed to do. But as I said--if you gave a child something to do--man--they took it home and they knew it the next day. . . .They'd memorized it and learned it. The children were so responsive and used to completing everything and were interested in everything and did their best--they did the best they could do. You didn't find any quitting or goofing off, or anything like that. They were really interested in whatever you wanted to do. They were interested in one another. They knew everybody--all the parents because they were coming to programs and things. That's what I missed more than anything else--was the attitude of the children."

During her years at Adair, Nancy was able to establish a relationship with students and parents that enabled her to enrich their lives in more ways than just academically. One parent told her that she had to always be right. "And I said, 'Well, why? No one can always be right.'" The parent explained that the children believed everything she said to be correct and parents couldn't and wouldn't dispute what she had told them. "And that's the way it was--whatever I told them or whatever I said was right!"

Another example of the support Nancy received from the parents involved the rules of Adair school. "The first day of school I took the time to talk to the children and tell them what I expected from them, why they were there, and what they could expect from me. I would state the rules.

One of them was: Nothing was to be thrown in the school room. The playground was the place to throw the ball or throw their cap, or whatever they wanted to be playing with --but not in the school room. One day two boys decided they would try that rule out. They were in the cloak room and one pitched the ball to the other one and he didn't catch it. The ball went through the window. I told them I would go to town and get the new pane for the window and the putty. They would put it in the next day at their noon hour. They had to work at putting the window back and they were to pay me. I would buy it, but then I would divide it and they were to each bring me so much money--to pay for it. I said, 'The school board will see that we have anything repaired that is accidentally torn up, damaged, or broken. But I don't call this an accident, because you'd been told not to do it.' So the morning after the boys had repaired the window, a parent and school board member came in the school. "I thought that he must be displeased about something because he was walking fast and came in and went into the cloak room. So I went back and asked him, 'Is there a problem?' He said, 'No. I just came to inspect this window--if they hadn't done a good job of it, they would take it out and do it again. This was a great learning lesson for my son.'" The father told Nancy he had insisted that his son pay for the window pane from his own

money, so they had gone to the bank and made a withdrawal from the son's savings account.

Since the school did not furnish transportation for the students, parents were responsible to get their students to school and home. It wasn't usual for parents to drop their students by Nancy's home. She would take them and pick up others along her way to school each morning. There was a spirit of cooperation in the classroom between the older and younger children that continued on the playground during recess. The older children protected the younger children on the playground. They had respect for one another. "I designated eighth graders that helped with the playground." Adair always had a good softball team and would sometimes play other one-room schools in the area. "The older students taught the younger children how to play ball. I had a problem with one student. He had quite a temper and he'd get angry with the little kids if they missed the ball or something. He got real perturbed at the younger children. In other words, his patience was short, but he got that changed. I just called him in and said, 'Now this is stopping and isn't going on. You were little one time and that's how you learned to play, because I was here and saw it. You learned to play by the older children teaching you. So you are going to teach the younger children without this throwing a fit about everything.' I had him sit over by the window until he could tell me he could go play

without losing his temper. He sat there and watched them for about a week. Then he said, 'I can go play without doing that.' and I said, 'All right.' And that fixed it right there."

At that time, the average daily attendance of fifteen was needed to maintain the continuation of the school. Nancy was the representative for the rural schools in a county teacher association. The Nowata School Superintendent would often inquire how many students Adair had. "He was always kidding me about how many students I had out here. When it got down to sixteen, he'd say, 'You can't possibly have fifteen daily attendance average out there with sixteen children.' I'd tell him, 'But they come to school.' Children didn't stay home unless they were really, really sick. And you didn't have a whole lot of that either, not like you have now. Because the children didn't stay up late at night. They went to bed instead of staying up till midnight or one o'clock watching television--they went to bed. They had chores to do when they got home from school, got those done, got supper over with, and they played a few games, like checkers and domino's. And by that time, we had other little games out--Monopoly, and some of those, and then they went to bed. They were ready and bright eyed and ready to go to work." One year the Nowata Superintendent sent some students to Adair from an area that had consolidated to Nowata. "They were slow learners and so

Nowata gave them permission to come out to my school. He'd [Superintendent] laugh about that and he'd say, 'Well, I sent you some students or you wouldn't have sixteen--you wouldn't have an average of fifteen.' I said, 'Yes, but you didn't want them.'"

Adair had many social events including Box Suppers, Christmas programs, picnics, and Easter egg hunts. For the box supper and Christmas program the children sang songs and did readings. A talented parent would volunteer to play the piano for the programs. At Christmas, Nancy would purchase a tree from the box supper funds. Sometimes the children would exchange names for a gift exchange. "And sometime if there was enough money, we bought each child [preschool] a little gift. Right after Thanksgiving the girls would begin. They would make all the little children a gift. Sometimes they'd make their father and mother something. The 4-H girls made their mother a Christmas apron. I bought felt with school funds and we'd cut out designs to put on the apron. One year, the boys collected cigar boxes. I bought a sheet of thin plywood and they made little cradles out of those cigar boxes. I bought decals and put on it. They varnished and fixed them up for the little girls in the community who weren't old enough to go to school. The 4-H girls made little sheets and pillows and put them on the beds. And believe me those little girls were glad to get that. I could buy a little doll for nineteen cents. The

boys made ash trays and tie racks and all kinds of things for the fathers and mothers. I didn't ever have a discipline problem, the children were eager to get their school work done so they could work on some projects we always had going."

Easter was a fun time at Adair, too. The community mothers would come bring their pre-school children. "The older children, usually the eighth grade children, would hide the eggs. There would be prizes and the mothers brought refreshments. We'd always have cookies, cupcakes, and all kinds of things. We had a nice time and the children thoroughly enjoyed it."

Adair school was consolidated into the Nowata School District in the fall of 1966. Nancy, using her secondary degree in Social Studies, was employed at the Nowata Middle School. The next year, a position in the elementary school was available, so Nancy began teaching sixth grade. She talked about the differences she experienced in the 'town' school from what she experienced in the three one-room schools. "Well, I know the city schools could offer more subjects and had more teachers who had degrees in just that subject or math teacher, English teacher. . . where the other [rural] teachers had to teach everything. I think a lot was lost because in the rural school the children are all more like a family. They had more respect for one another. I think that bothered me more than anything, when

I went to Nowata to teach, was some child was continuously trying to tattle on some other child. I never had that in the rural schools. They more or less protected one another and helped one another, they didn't have that attitude. They were very protective of one another and made exceptions for short comings. . . where in the city school--they had to put up with someone making fun of him or snickering about it or being crude when some child had a handicap. I think that was one of the big differences--and the love and respect the rural children had for me in the rural school. . . . The main thing about the difference in the two types of schools, the rural teacher had to make all the decisions. In the city school, the principal went to the superintendent and the superintendent went to the school board. At Adair, I'd always take it to the school board. I'd tell them I think we ought to start [school] at this time, and usually, I set up the time for the programs. I always went to the school board meetings. I would tell them when we would have the programs and if there was any conflict. . . we could change it. They were just men on the school board. They were farmers and ranchers and busy. They didn't give much time to it. They met once a month but the rest of the time--all the decisions were yours. And you had it--it was quite a weight to place on you to be sure you made the right decision. In the city school, you went to the principal and

he would solve the problem. In the rural [school] you had to solve it yourself."

When asked how she developed her pedagogy, Nancy said, "Well, I don't know exactly. You just learned from experience for one thing, and each year you thought you did a better job teaching . . . based on the accomplishment that the children made."

Nancy retired from teaching in 1979. She taught twenty-two years in one-room schools and a total of thirty-six years. She continued to substitute in the Nowata elementary school for several years after her retirement. Today at seventy-eight, she is an active member in the Retired Teachers organization in Nowata County.

As these schools closed, the desks were cleaned and emptied, the books replaced upon the shelves, the floors swept, and the chalkboards erased. The students went home from the one-room schools for the last time. The door is locked and the key returned to the school board. It was a sad time for many rural communities.

Within a few years, the neglect and inactivity of the buildings was noticeable. The Adair school burned to the ground. No one knows how the fire started. Some of the buildings continued as community centers while others are sold and torn down.

The remaining teachers found jobs elsewhere or retired. The larger school systems consolidated the remaining

dependent school districts into their busing routes and absorbed the students into their classrooms. And life went on--but different than before. Marianne, Mag, Nancy, and Elaine had teaching jobs in Nowata, Lenapah, and Childers. Wahneeta had retired a year earlier. They faced different problems with children and parents.

The voices of the one-room school teachers in Nowata County were silent. Stories once told to entertain families and friends about incidents at school are left untold. Reflections of classroom experiences and the playground are forgotten. New experiences and stories were told. The one-room school stories remained silent, unheard, and untapped until now. But only nine voices have been heard and recorded for future generations. The others have been lost forever--never to share their experiential insight and reflections of teaching in rural one-room schools. What has been lost can never be regained--but must remain voiceless throughout eternity.

CHAPTER V

TEACHER VOICE: GEMS FROM THE PAST

Teacher Lore like many other kinds of lore can be entertaining while providing the reader or listener an opportunity for learning. Nine teachers (eight females and one male) shared their memories of teaching experiences and events that happened during their one-room school teaching years. These teacher's experiences cover the years from the fall of 1928 to the spring of 1967. The recording of this oral history provides opportunities for others to share and learn from "experiential knowledge" gained by the one-room school teacher.

Many of today's educators are beginning to think that something that served these one-room teachers so well then may serve as well today (Williams, 1986). What made these schools successful then? What did the teachers do so well? Is there something to be learned from them and used in today's schools?

Clandinin (1986) believes that teachers have developed notions about themselves as teachers and what worked for them in the classroom. This chapter will look back at what Clandinin refers to as teacher's notions of the rural one-room school teachers in relation to the five study assumptions in Chapter One. Within these teacher lore stories are pedagogy and instructional "gems from the past"

as told by the interviewed teachers. These education "gems" reveal their reflective insights and intuition.

The first study assumption made in Chapter I stated that the praxis of the one-room school teacher played a significant role in the creation of knowledge about education. Like reflective teachers of today, these teachers thought about "what" they did and "why" they did it. They analyzed daily situations and anticipated student response and consequences. Due to their isolation, these teachers relied upon their own resourcefulness to meet the challenges of the one-room school management and curriculum. Their resourcefulness came from intuition that can not be taught or learned.

Alice Hanna began teaching with only a few college hours. She remembered her own school life and that of her younger brother. She made up stories about the children and wrote them on the blackboard or made little books. She relied on "just plain trial and error." If she found something the children liked and it worked, then she continued its use. Izzie prioritized the subjects and taught the ones she believed most important daily. In addition, she taught reading first. She theorized that reading was the most important because "They cannot do other subjects if they can't read." Charlie Bill remembered knowing that she had a job to do and she "just started finding ways to do things." She acknowledged there were

times when every subject wasn't covered each day. "But you'd have to pick it up . . . the next day." Hawkeye was the exception. He discussed his problems with Charlie Bill nightly at home but was still on his own in the classroom.

Marianne didn't try to keep students on levels. She exposed her students to as much as possible and tried to let them go as far as they could each year. She believed the multiple grade levels in one-room schools provided more opportunities for the students to learn. Duckworth (1987) titled one of her chapters in The Having of Wonderful Idea, Either We're Too Early & They Can't Learn It, or We're Too Late & They Know It Already: The Dilemma of "Applying Piaget". Marianne's school philosophy allowed the student to decide when the time was right.

Elaine remembered her own experiences at Elm Bend. She believed the scheduling of all the classes was difficult. She organized the curriculum into two categories: subjects that needed her direct instruction and subjects that could be done by the students without her supervision. She organized her schedule and used clipboards to make assignments for the students. Wahneetah didn't have previous experience with one-room schools but learned to combine classes or grades whenever possible for instruction. She also learned to combine fine motor skills with early reading skills to make the activity interesting for the students. "Rural one-room teachers used mixed forms of

grouping because students spread across eight grades required varying amounts of attention" (Cuban, 1984, p. 124).

Mag did what was right based on her intuition. She was her own psychologist and relied upon her common sense. In fact, Mag felt she became a better teacher after she was a parent because she treated her students like she would her own children. Nancy based her teaching on the rural school she attended as a young child and two teachers that she admired. A few of the teachers interviewed did not remember receiving any helpful teaching ideas or methods from the college they attended before entering the one-room schools to teach. Several teachers commented that by the time they received coursework in teaching methods and did their student teaching--they had already been teaching for several years in one-room schools. They believe they learned techniques on their own or from talking with peers whenever possible. Izzie described one college class that helped her learn about scheduling classes that she found useful in the classroom. Marianne remembered visiting rural one-room schools as part of her college preparation.

It is apparent from these interviews that many one-room teachers had governance and relied upon their teaching intuition. What is teaching intuition? Jagla (1991) associates intuition with "gut" feelings or sensations perceived in the body. Jagla states "Intuition, then, is

beyond the grasp of systematic rational analysis, and difficult to define with words. It is something felt from within, instinctually, something that defies logical explanation" (p. 66). Nodding and Shore (1984, p. 57) define intuition as "that function that connects objects directly in phenomena. This direct contact yields something we might call 'knowledge'." While Nodding and Shore see intuition as an unconscious process, Jagla states: "For me, intuition is a grasp at knowledge that connects the subconscious and the conscious mind--pulling prior knowledge synthesized in the subconscious to the conscious level at an opportune moment for immediate insight" (1991, p.66). Teacher intuition, then, comes from prior experiences that can be put together into a relationship in which a teacher can make instructional decisions. The one-room teachers could not observe and discuss teaching strategies with other teachers. They were isolated by the very nature of the rural school concept. Nancy discussed how she made most of the decisions that involved the school. Hawkeye told of making all the decisions except the ones involving the finances of the school. Better communication and transportation systems improved the opportunities for sharing teaching ideas and strategies, but they were still alone in the schoolhouse and on their own to make most of the daily decisions.

This leads to the next study assumption. Did rural one-room teachers reflect upon their daily teaching experiences to develop this teaching intuition? Nancy reflected there was cooperation among her students--between the older and younger children. She discussed the atmosphere of learning at her schools. Her students were not only busy doing their assignments, but listening to what others groups were discussing. She used their current level of knowledge and the resources around them to make booklets for their science curriculum.

Mag used her intuition when dealing with children because she had the child's interest more at heart. She also scheduled certain classes when she felt the children were "fresh" and ready to learn. Her reflections led her to express her belief that students that listened while they worked to other students lessons allowed more time to absorb and assimilate information. She also experienced the "teachable moment" and used them in her classroom whenever possible. Wahneetah also used intuition when she developed her grooming and hygiene curriculum at High Prairie. The necessity to provide a clean environment and good health habits was what Dewey (1897) described in his pedagogic creed as real and vital to the child as he interacts at home, in the community, or on the playground. Wahneetah intuitively saw this need in her students and provided for it. Elaine used her intuition with her little non-reader.

Nothing had prepared her to instruct this child but she relied upon her "gut feelings" to make school a comfortable place for that child. The use of clay and straws in place of pencil and paper for assignments showed her imagination when planning his day-to-day activities. Elaine increased the use of manipulative whenever possible with this student. She worked to make learning enjoyable for all her students. She described her methods in relationship to parenting, ". . . and if one thing doesn't work then you try something else." Elaine used her intuition to do what she believed was best with her students. Hawkeye stressed the need to improvise and provide learning activities that didn't require expensive teaching materials. He used coins from his coin purse to teach the first grader to count because money had meaning to her. Charlie Bill "got busy" and found ways to do what needed to be done.

Izzie's intuition led to the use of games to teach sight words. This made the lessons fun for her students. By reading the social studies lesson to her students and having them retell the information in their own words, her teaching intuition led her to adapt the lesson to the student's comprehension level. She also integrated this same social studies lesson into the reading curriculum. She believed it helped her students understand concepts in social studies and improved their reading ability. Her

intuition also guided her to provide activities, such as dancing, for the older students on rainy days.

Did the one-room schools provide an openness for students and teachers to experience educational alternatives? Curriculum outlines were provided to the teachers but the implementation and methods of instruction were left to the imagination, inventiveness, and intuition of the teacher.

Marianne adjusted the work for students allowing them to remain with their grade level peers. Alice described writing and making little books about her primary students for them to use learning to read. She was free to use what teaching methods she believed effective in the classroom. She also included "the classics" and taught rules about highway safety in her curriculum.

Several teachers included county extension programs in the school curriculum. Nancy used the 4-H program daily in the Adair school curriculum. The boys and girls worked to complete their work so they could sew and construct their projects. This project work provided experiences that are invaluable to students. "No training of sense-organs in school, introduced for the sake of training, can begin to compete with the alertness and fullness of sense-life that comes through daily intimacy and interest in familiar occupations" (Dewey in Archambault, 1964).

Mag described her Saturday trips to historical sites with her students and nature studies that interested her students. The discoveries made through science projects with snakes and insects found on the playground gave these rural children experiences that would be difficult to duplicate elsewhere.

"We cannot overlook the factors of discipline and of character building involved in this: training in habits of order and of industry, and in the idea of responsibility, of obligation to do something to produce something, in the world. . . . Again, we cannot overlook the importance for educational purposes of the close and intimate acquaintance gotten with nature at first hand, the real things, and materials, with the actual processes of their manipulation, and the knowledge of their social necessities and uses. In all this there was continual training of observation, of ingenuity, constructive imagination, of logical thought, and of the sense of reality acquired through first-hand contact with actualities" (Dewey in McDermott, 1973, p. 457).

The Box Supper programs performed for the community in the fall and the Christmas Programs provided opportunities for these one-room school teachers and students to intergrate classroom curriculum with performance skills,

music, and student leadership. Marianne used science experiments in the programs to share the curriculum with parents. She believed the school programs provided additional experiences that benefited the student. The students planned the programs, made costumes, decorated the schoolhouse, and made the props. Wahneetah remembered how the older students dressed younger students as angels. Nancy's students made Christmas gifts for the pre-school children in the community. The entire community participated in these school events, and as several teachers remembered, there was standing room only in the schoolhouse on program nights.

Most all of the one-room teachers used peer-tutoring in some form. Izzie found that older students were "wonderful little teachers" for the younger students. She used them to reinforce the lessons she taught. Charlie Bill used an older girls to help with the younger students. Mag Kerr often used older students who needed remediation as tutors for younger students. She believed this situation provided the necessary remediation and left the self-esteem intact. Elaine used students as teacher helpers for younger students but also as teachers. She gave them responsibility for science experiments and sharing the project with other students. She referred to herself as "a kind of coordinator." Nancy and Elaine told how their older

students were eager to help a younger student. The students were good to help each other.

Marianne used peer-tutoring at Snow Creek in many ways. She felt some of the best learning took place when students were helping other students. Her students worked together to solve problems or find errors. Like Mag, she believed many students learned by listening to other groups discuss and recite their lessons.

Slacks (1938), Associate Professor of Rural Education, Iowa State Teachers College, believed teachers of the one-room schoolhouse experienced the widest opportunity for initiative and originality. Greene (1988) champions the opportunity for openness in curriculum and scheduling in schools. She is troubled by the subservience to routinization of teaching in today's classrooms. I believe the rural one-room teachers of this study described the type of educational situation Greene seeks in that it "recognizes imagination as fundamental to learning to learn, essential to the feeling that life is more than a futile, repetitive, consuming exercise" (p. 48). The opportunity of freedom of action and the lack of interference from outside agencies gave the rural one-room school teacher what teachers of today wish for--long periods of uninterrupted time that can be used for projects, investigations, and instruction.

The fourth study assumption also relates to time and space. Teachers of one-room schools and their teacher lore

differs significantly from the lore of today's classroom teachers as evidenced in Schubert and Ayers' Teacher Lore: Learning From Our Own Experiences and Nodding and Shore's Stories Lives Tell: Narrative and Dialogue in Education.

Nancy talked about children in the community who knew her and what to expect before they came to school. She related events in the school year when children came to school for parties or programs. She described the experiences of teaching the same children and their development academically as well as maturation.

Mag also characterized the life of the community and the support that was given to members of that area. Her insight about the siblings that all developed academically at the same age illustrated her knowledge of the family's development. Out-of-school curriculum and experiences combine the life histories of the individual teacher and his or her students. Many of these teachers were rural people themselves. They lived in or near the community in which they taught. Even those that later drove from the southern end of the county to teach in the one-room schools in the north understood rural life and taught in the same school for several years.

Marianne knew the parents, aunts, uncles, and grandparents of most of her students. She believed it was important to know the history of her students. Charlie Bill's family lived in the district and she taught her

younger siblings her first year. Wahneetah had several great nieces and nephews in her classroom at Diamond Point.

Elaine told of the "electricity" and happiness she felt through her nervousness before the first Pie Supper program and how accepting the community was of her and her teaching methods. Most of these teachers referred to the support they received from the student's parents. Mag told about the food gifts she found in her car. These teachers had the advantage of watching their students "grow up" and take their place in the community. For some, it was after they began teaching in one of the larger independent school districts. The one-room teacher's interest in their students did not stop at the classroom door--but followed them into the community and into adulthood. This intertwining of school, social, and family life provided opportunities for communication between parent, student, and teacher beyond that of report cards, conferences, and PTA meetings as we know them today.

Although not all of the memories of parent interest in the schools were positive (one parent's criticism of Alice's makeup and Charlie Bill's refusal to date resulting in the loss of her job), most of them were. Selective memory has affected what was remembered and forgotten from this time period as illustrated by Charlie Bill's remark when asked to describe her experiences in more detail, "It's been a while--I don't remember."

Stories about cleaning the schoolhouse, building the fire, cleaning and filling the kerosene lamps, and riding a horse to school are far from the stories that are told over coffee in the "teacher workroom" today according to Schubert and Ayers (1992). Sadly, also missing are the stories of participation, interest, and support from the total community.

The fifth and final study assumption stated that the one-room schools provided a space that dealt in caring educational experiences. Nodding (1991) suggested that elementary students should remain with the same teacher for several years in order to establish an intimate and caring relationship.

Mag (Thompson), Nancy (Adair), and Marianne (Snow Creek) taught in the same school for many years. The knowledge acquired and relationship built with each student helped them provide the educational and caring atmosphere. It extended beyond the walls and playground of the school house. All three described the concerns they had for their children. They and others (Elaine, Wahneeta, Izzie, and Hawkeye) referred often to the family atmosphere, the caring and protecting that the students felt for each other. Elaine said, "They didn't think of hurting one another's feeling or being rude or mean to anybody . . . It's almost as though it were one big family." Mag related the stage fright of the Christmas Angel and how the eighth grade girl

took care of the situation with few people in the audience realizing what happened. It would seem that these teachers succeeded in providing an atmosphere like Dewey described:

"There is a great deal of talk about education being a cooperative enterprise in which the teachers and students participate democratically, but there is far more talk about it than the doing of it. To be sure, many teachers, particularly in the kindergarten and the elementary schools, take the children into sharing with them to an extent impossible and inconceivable under the old system" (Cuban, 1984, p.113).

Nancy described the "spirit of cooperation" in both the classroom and on the playground between the young and older students. Her story about how the students learned to play ball is another example of the cooperation and sharing that took place in the one-room schools.

Mag also told how she loved her students. She couldn't teach them without loving them. She related her secret "gem" for teaching. It was "respect and expect." Two very powerful words in a loving and caring atmosphere. Nancy also talked about the love and respect her rural students had for her and for each other. She missed the protectiveness and way they allowed for individual shortcomings.

Although many schools and teachers were authoritarian during this time period and corporal punishment could be

used, most of the teachers did not remember much spanking. Their strong memories were about the parental support from the community. Hawkeye remembered that students were "in trouble" at home if they caused trouble at school. Nancy's window replacement at the young student's expense and loss of recess displayed the support rural parents gave these teachers. Elaine stated that discipline was not a problem in the school where she taught. She believed that the parents, students and teacher worked together to sustain an atmosphere that was conducive to learning.

It cannot be generalized that all rural one-room schools provided the warm, caring, and nurturing atmosphere described by these teachers, but the one-room school and its surrounding community did provide the necessary time and space required by students to develop caring, "family-like" relationships with their peers. The very organization of the small community school and its core group of students encouraged the development of this atmosphere.

Today's schools could provide a similar atmosphere by combining several grade levels into one self-contained classroom. The core group of each level would remain together for several years. These students could remain with the same teacher for several years. This would provide the teacher time and space to use previous knowledge and understanding of the student. This extended time with one

teacher could provide flexibility in the curriculum to better meet the needs of the students.

Societies are held together by common elements. The rural community was organized around the home and land management. They had common problems (weather, harvest, cattle, etc.) and similar lifestyles. As Nancy described, the rural society worked hard, did their chores, visited around the kitchen table, valued family time and went to bed early. The school was a focal point of the community. It provided entertainment, social opportunities, and education of the children. Dewey believed that school could no longer organize as a natural social unit because common elements and productive activity was no longer present in schools. Our society has become mobile and diversified. We have fewer and fewer commonalties between members of our communities.

One-room schools met the student needs in ways that Pinar believes too many of today's schools fail because they are too large and have factory organization.

"Size is an element of school organization crucial to issues of relationship. While the anonymity of large school buildings 'reproduced' the anonymity of mass production, such impersonality is now educationally dysfunctional" (Pinar, 1988, p. 274).

The one-room school contained eight grades due to necessity. Today, through better roads and faster transportation, the one-room, eight grade schoolhouse is no longer needed and has become extinct in Oklahoma. Through the zeal of progress, technology, mobility, changes in family lifestyles, and the decentralization of the community, schools lost their importance and focus in the community. A revival of the strong sense of community support within and around the school that the rural one-room school processed is needed. This support from the entire community must be resurrected if the school is to have the necessary resources to provide a caring, nurturing environment for students.

So, should education revert back to the 'good old days' of reading, writing, arithmetic, and one-room schools? Of course not! And as Elaine emphatically stated, "You couldn't pay me enough." Society and education cannot go back to the simpler, less complicated time experienced by the one-room school teachers. Education can, however, analyze the reflective experiences of these one-room teachers and use what worked so well for them to improve education for today's students. To quote Dewey:

". . . it is useless to bemoan the departure of the good old days of children's modesty, reverence, and implicit obedience, if we expect merely by bemoaning

and by exhortation to bring them back" (McDermott, 1973, p. 458).

We cannot go back--we can only go forward. The rural one-room teachers had to use their intuition in their classrooms. Over and over again, these teachers stated "No one told me to" or "because it worked" or "it was trial and error" and "I did what I thought was best." They used ingenuity, persistence, and what materials they had at hand to do the best they could. They knew their community well and interacted socially with this community. They used peer-tutoring, the spirit of cooperation, and leadership of the children to provide an atmosphere conducive to learning. Those teachers that could use their intuition to solve the day to day problems that occurred in the rural schools were as Marianne said, "Prized!," and those that couldn't, usually didn't last very long (Nowata County Teacher Employment Records).

Today, educators, parents, students, and all members of the community must question: What is the goal of school and education?" If the goal is learning facts to be recited, then the teacher must devote time, effort and discipline to that goal. If, however, the goal is the development of a spirit of social cooperation and community life, then discipline and effort of the individual teachers and philosophy of the schools should reflect this (Dewey in Archambault, 1964). The school is a mini-community within

and dependent upon the larger surrounding community. What impacts the school will impact the community and what effects the community will effect the school. As we continue moving forward and into the next century, community members must remember: "What the best and wisest parent wants for his own child, that must the community want for all of its children" (Dewey in Archambault, 1964).

Recommendations for Future Research

Oklahoma is rapidly losing the history of it's one-room schools and the stories the teachers have to tell about it. I believe additional research is needed in this area before all of the remaining oral history is lost. I found little in my review of the literature that recorded the events and happenings of Oklahoma one-room schools. In addition, "stories" from the students of these one-room schools could provide additional insight to the one-room schools difficulties and successes in meeting the needs of the students.

We cannot replace the oral history that has already been lost--the stories that will never be heard and enjoyed socially and educationally. But those one-room school teachers still living can "voice" their experiential insights and memories of how teachers "held school" in Oklahoma one-room schoolhouses through autobiographies and teacher lore. There is much to be learned from these pioneers of Oklahoma education.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX A
PICTURES

Snow Creek

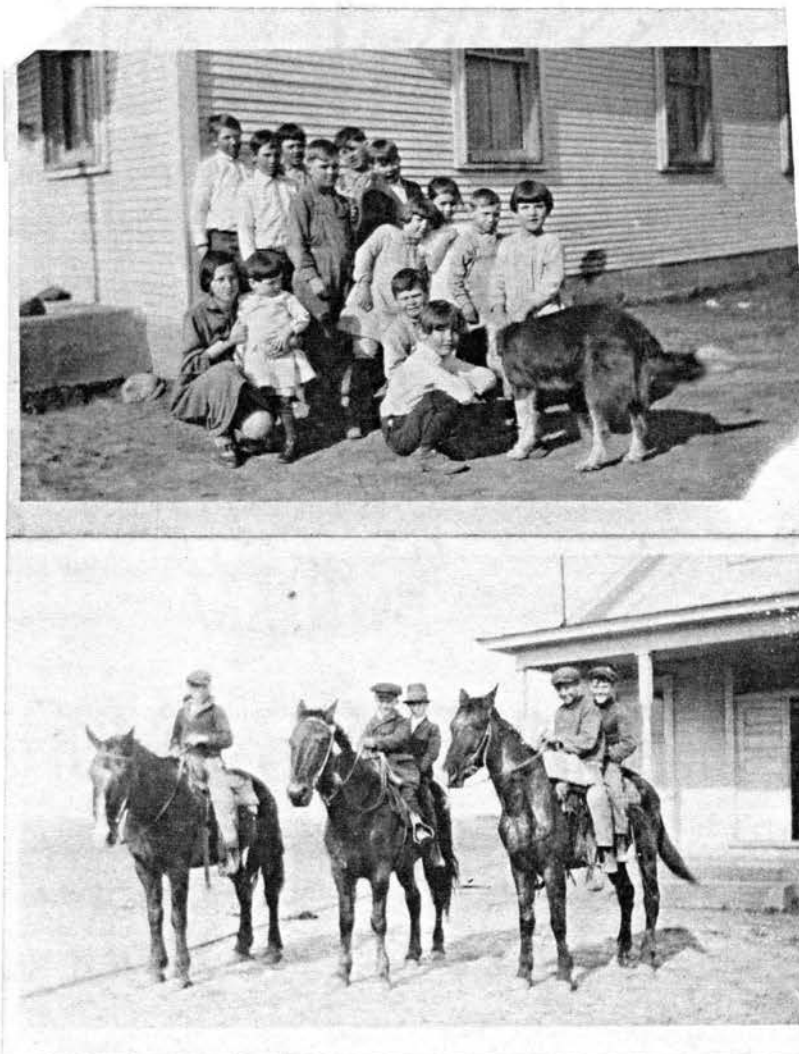


Above: Snow Creek school and students in 1916-1917.
Below: Snow Creek school, District III in 1922-1923.



Stephens School - April 9, 1926

This dependent district annexed to Diamond Point in 1943.



Students walked or rode horses several miles to school.

Marianne with her students on the porch of Snow Creek School, 1941-1942.

Snow Creek Dependent School consolidated with South Coffeyville Independent School District in 1966.



Elm Bend School - May 4, 1943
This is Nancy's class during World War II.

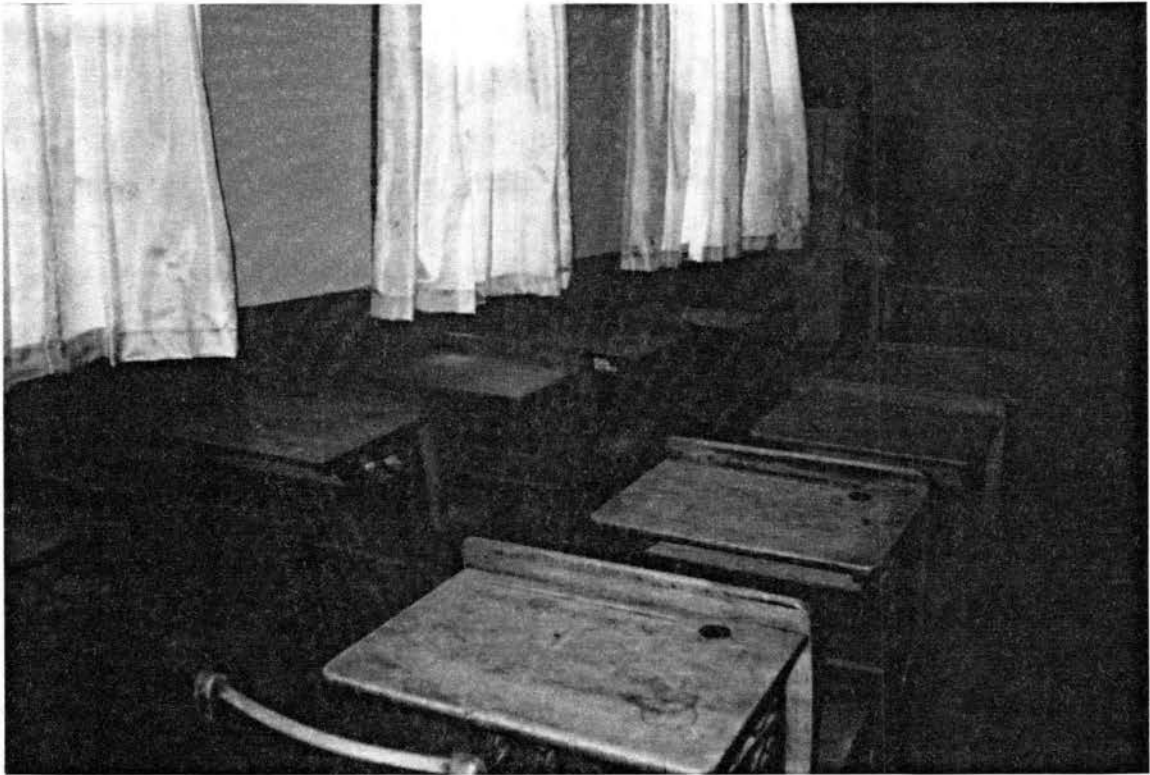




Alice Hanna, Izzie, and Nancy taught in Elm Bend before it consolidated with Delaware Independent District in 1948.
Above: Notice the storm shelter on the left.
Below: Front areas on both sides of the door are cloak rooms.

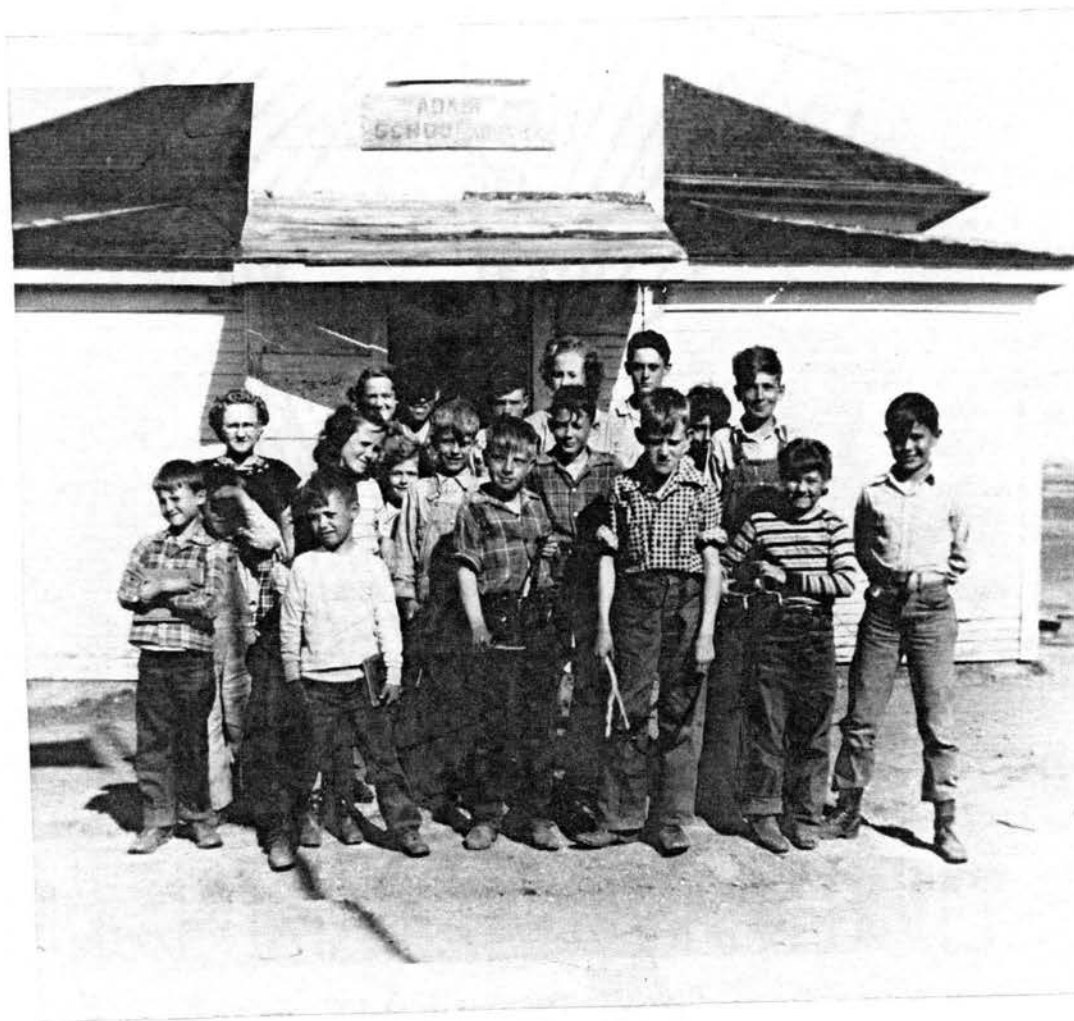


Inside the Elm Bend School, the furniture was not removed when the school consolidated with Delaware Public School.



Wahneetah's students at High Prairie school in 1941-42.

Adair School

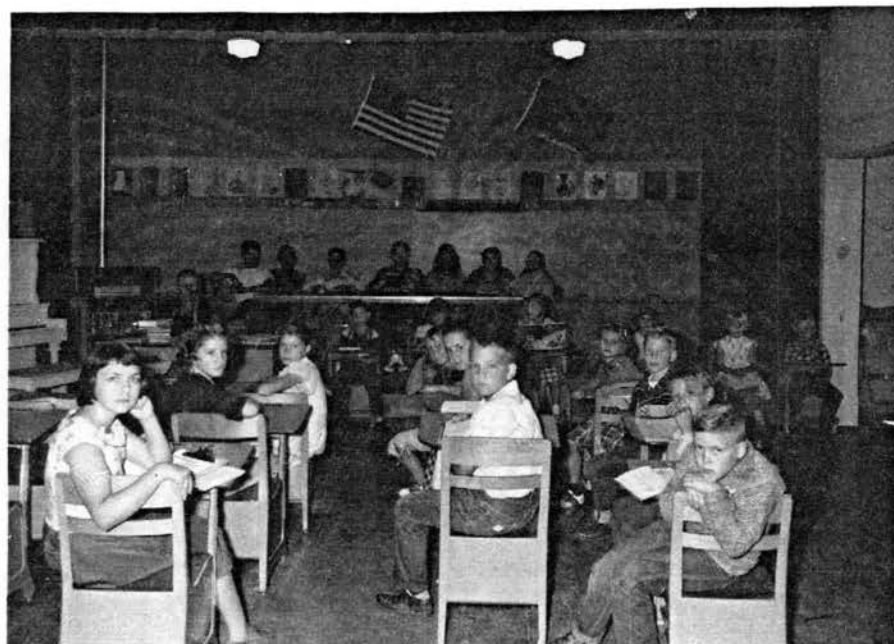


Nancy with her first class at Adair school in 1948-1949.



Nancy (left) with her students, grades first through eighth.

Adair's daily attendance allowed the school to become a two-teacher school in 1957-58. Nancy asked Wahneetah to teach with her. Nancy taught the upper grades and Wahneetah taught the primary grades. The Adair school burned a few years after it consolidated with Nowata Independent Schools.

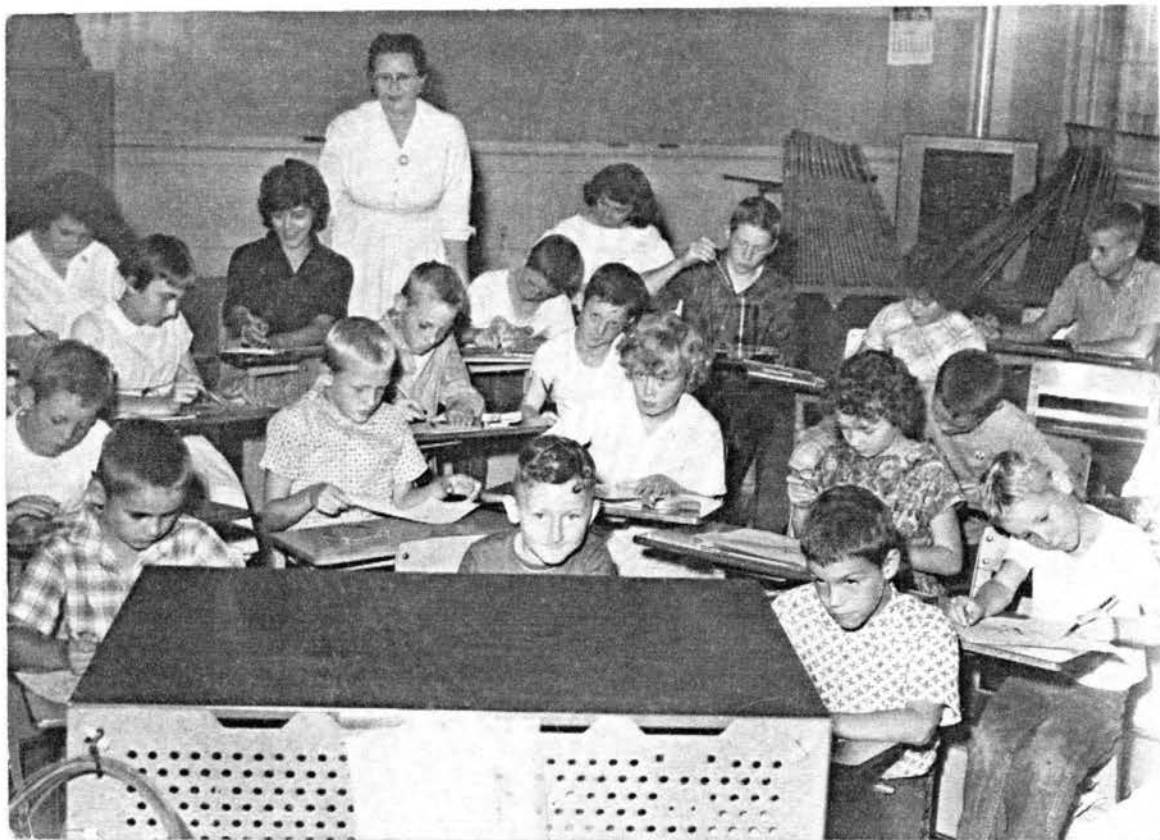


Diamond Point

Above: Diamond Point classroom and students in 1957. For this picture the seventh and eighth graders are seated in the front.

Below: Students at Diamond Point in 1958. The stove (left) was removed and a door added to meet state safety requirements.





Modern technology in the one-room schools included television and propane stoves.

Diamond Point in the spring of 1964. This large attendance entitled the school to have two teachers the following year. Elaine taught here for the next two years. Wahneetah followed Elaine for the school year 1967-1968.





• 29 • MAY 67

Above: Diamond Point (east side) students and bus driver in May of 1967.

Below: Students of Diamond Point school year 1966-67. Diamond Point consolidated with Nowata Independent Schools in 1969.



• 29 • NOV 67



Above: Diamond Point stands today as a reminder of the little red schoolhouse. Playground equipment included a slide, swings, see-saws, merry-go-round, and soft-ball field.

Below: Diamond Point east and north side. Door and porch were added in 1957.



APPENDIX B
TEACHER CONTRACTS

TEACHER'S COPY

Dorsey Douglas, Okla. City—Form 4640-R.

TEACHER'S CONTRACT

W. V. V. V.

STATE OF OKLAHOMA, COUNTY OF Nowata
Contract with Isabel Ekaham
Teacher of Sairis King School District No. 13 Nowata County.
This contract, entered into this 25th day of May 1937 between the School Board of
School District No. 13 County of Nowata, Oklahoma, as party of the first part, and
Teacher, as party of the second part,
holding a certificate of the 5th State grade, valid in said County.

WITNESSETH, That the said Board has engaged the said Isabel Ekaham
as Teacher of School District No. 13 for a term of 9 consecutive months of the school year 1937 to 38 said term to
begin, unless otherwise agreed upon by the Teacher and the Board, on the 6th day of September 1937, at a
salary of \$50.00 per school month, provided that neither the School District nor any member of the school district board
shall be liable for any amount of difference between the amount of this contract and the amount of the estimate made and approved.

The said teacher agrees to keep himself self qualified, and agrees in all things to observe the rules and regulations of the district board,
also to follow the course of study adopted by the State Board of Education, to teach all branches required by law; to keep the daily register
of the attendance and studies of each pupil belonging to the school; to make all reports desired by the County Superintendent of Public
Instruction, and to preserve in good condition and order the school house, grounds, furniture, apparatus, library and such other property as
may come under the immediate supervision of said teacher.

IT IS FURTHER AGREED, That—'Whenever any person shall make and enter into a valid contract with such District Board to teach
school in such district, such contract shall be binding upon such teacher until he has been legally discharged therefrom according to law, or
released therefrom by such district board in regular session; and until such person shall have been thus discharged or released, he shall not
have the authority to make or enter into any valid contract with any other district board or board of education in the State of Oklahoma
to perform services as teacher or instructor for a period of time covered by an existing valid contract, which said person has made.'—Section
80—1927 School Laws.

IT IS FURTHER AGREED, That the teacher herein employed shall make a full and complete term report to the county superintendent
of public instruction before receiving pay for the last month of school and that the board will not approve the claim for the last month's
salary until such board has received notice from the county superintendent of public instruction that the said term report has been received
and approved by the county superintendent of public instruction.

IT IS FURTHER AGREED, That in the event of the destruction of the school house by accident, fire or otherwise, and if no other
suitable building can be secured for school purposes, this contract shall be void.

IT IS FURTHER AGREED, That in case said teacher shall be legally dismissed from school, or shall have his or her certificate legally
annulled by expiration or otherwise, then said teacher shall not be entitled to compensation from and after dismissal or annulment of certifi-
cate.

IT IS FURTHER AGREED, That said teacher agrees to make such reports as the law requires and which may be deemed necessary by
the State Superintendent of Public Instruction, the State Board of Education the School District Board, and the County Superintendent.

IT IS FURTHER AGREED, That said teacher shall become an active member of the County and State Educational Association, attend
all educational meetings called by the County Superintendent, and co-operate with the County Superintendent in the development of the
educational interest of the county; and said board agrees not to deduct from the salary of said teacher for any loss of time occasioned
by attending any of said educational meetings and associations.

IT IS FURTHER AGREED

THIS CONTRACT shall be made in triplicate; one copy retained by the Clerk of the School Board, one copy retained by the teacher,
and one copy filed in the office of the County Superintendent.

(Teacher—Party of the Second Part.) Ruby J. Storm Director.
J. A. Cook Clerk. } Party of the First Part
Member.

Teaching address _____ (Name of Town) _____ R. F. D. No. _____ or Street No. _____

Home address Delaware, Okla. Kind of Certificate held 5th State No. A66414
(If a State Certificate, it is IMPORTANT that number be given)

Is your certificate on file at County Superintendent's office? Yes—No—Reason Yes

Approved this 19 day of Aug. 1937 by me James M. Statten
County Superintendent of Public Instruction, in and for above named County.

OATH OF ALLEGIANCE

STATE OF OKLAHOMA, County of Nowata, I, _____
party of the second part, having been employed by the party of the first part, do solemnly swear (or affirm) that I will support, obey and
defend the Constitution of the United States and the Constitution of the State of Oklahoma, so help me God.

Subscribed and sworn to before me this 19 day of Sept Aug 1937 Teacher.
James M. Statten
County Superintendent or Notary Public.

NOTE.—No District Board shall have the authority to pay any money or issue any warrant to pay any person for services as teacher or
instructor, except for services performed under and by virtue of a valid written contract approved by the County Superintendent of Public
Instruction; and no teacher shall enter into a written contract with a District Board until said teacher has secured a certificate valid to teach
a full term of school in the County in which said District is located. (See Section 80, School Laws of Oklahoma, 1927, for conditions govern-
ing employment of teachers and terms of contracts.)

Note: (The data on reverse side of this sheet must be filled in before Contract will be approved by County Superintendent.)

TEACHER'S COPY.

TEACHER'S CONTRACT

H. Dorsey Douglas, Okla. City.

Emil Deard

This contract entered into this 2 day of July 1938, between the school board of School District No. 23 County of Nowata, Oklahoma, as party of the first part, and Label Graham Teacher, as party of the second part, holding a certificate of the Egan grade, valid in said County.

WITNESSETH, That the said Board has engaged the said Label Graham as Teacher of School District No. 23 for a term of 9 consecutive months of the school year 1938 to 39, said term to begin, unless otherwise agreed upon by the Teacher and the Board, on the 9 day of July 1938, at a salary of \$90.00 per school month, provided that neither the School District nor any member of the school district board shall be liable for any amount of difference between the amount of this contract and the amount of the estimate made and approved.

The said teacher agrees to keep her self qualified, and agrees in all things to observe the rules and regulations of the district Board, also to follow the course of study adopted by the State Board of Education, to teach all branches required by law; to keep the daily register of the attendance and absences of each pupil belonging to the school; to make all reports required by the County Superintendent of Public Instruction, and to preserve in good condition and order the school house, grounds, furniture, apparatus, library, and such other property as may come under the immediate supervision of said teacher.

IT IS FURTHER AGREED, That "Whenever any person shall make and enter into a valid contract with such district to teach school in such district, such contract shall be binding upon such teacher until he has been legally discharged therefrom according to law, or released therefrom by such district Board in regular session; and until such person shall have been discharged or released, he shall not have the authority to make or enter into any valid contract with any other District Board as made.—(Secs. 13 and 13A S. L. 1911).

IT IS FURTHER AGREED, That the teacher herein employed shall make a full and complete term report to the County Superintendent of Public Instruction before receiving pay for the last month of school, and that the Board will not approve the claim for the last month's salary until said Board has received notice from the County Superintendent of Public Instruction that the said term report has been received and approved by the County Superintendent of Public Instruction.

IT IS FURTHER AGREED, That in the event of the destruction of the school house by accident, fire or otherwise, and if no other suitable building can be secured for school purposes, this contract shall be void.

IT IS FURTHER AGREED, that in case said teacher shall be legally dismissed from school, or shall have his or her certificate legally annulled, by expiration or otherwise, then said teacher shall not be entitled to compensation from and after dismissal or annulment of certificate.

IT IS FURTHER AGREED, That said teacher shall become an active member of the County and State Educational Association, attend all educational meetings called by the County Superintendent, and co-operate with the County Superintendent in the development of the educational interests of the county; and said Board agrees not to deduct from the salary of said teacher for any loss of time occasioned by attending any of said educational meetings and associations.

IT IS FURTHER AGREED

THIS CONTRACT shall be made in triplicate; one copy retained by the Clerk of the School Board, one copy retained by the teacher, and one copy filed in the office of the County Superintendent.

Approved this 12 day of Aug 1938
James M. Stature County Superintendent (Sec. 31A S. L. 1911)
W. E. Johnson Director
J. M. Johnson Clerk
M. S. Cody Member

STATE OF OKLAHOMA, County of Nowata, I, Label Graham Teacher, party of the second part, having been employed by the party of the first part, do solemnly swear (or affirm) that I will support and defend the Constitution of the United States and the Constitution of the State of Oklahoma, so help me God.

Subscribed and sworn to before me this 12 day of Aug 1938
James M. Stature County Superintendent or Notary Public.

PERSONNEL REPORT FOR PRINCIPALS, TEACHERS AND SUPERVISORS

County Nowata Dist. Number 23 City Nowata Superintendent James M. Stature

2. Name _____ Grades you are teaching _____
 3. Sex _____ 4. Age _____ 5. Marital Status: Single _____ Married _____ Divorced _____ Widow _____ Widower _____
 6. Annual salary _____ 7. Number H. S. units completed _____ 8. Do you have a high school diploma? _____
 9-10. Name of each College attended _____ Dates _____ Degrees received _____ Dates _____

11. Semester Hours completed in College (eliminate duplication) _____
 12. Name your major subject-matter fields and indicate the number of semester hours you have completed in each field in college:
 a. _____ b. _____ c. _____
 14. Name your minor subject-matter fields and indicate the number of semester hours you have completed in each field in college:
 a. _____ b. _____ c. _____

16. Total number Semester Hours of Professional Training completed in Colleges (eliminate duplication) _____
 18. Name the High School subjects you are now teaching and indicate the number of Semester Hours completed in each subject-matter field in College:
 a. _____ b. _____ c. _____

20-22. What Oklahoma Certificates do you now hold (include only those now in force)?
 Kind—e. g., 2 Year Elem., Life H. S., Second Grade County, 5 Yr. Commercial, etc.
Life General Date of Expiration 6-15-38 Give Number of each Certificate A 66414

23-25. How many years of teaching experience have you had, including this year?
 23. In schools of all States? _____
 24. In all Oklahoma schools? 4
 25. In this school system? 1

26. How many different school systems have employed you (count this year)?
 27. Where were you last year? (Place a cross (X) before the correct answer).
 a. Teaching in this system.
 b. Teaching elsewhere in this State.
 c. Teaching in another State.
 d. Attending college in this State.
 e. Attending college in another State.
 f. Following an occupation other than education.
 g. At home.
 h. Traveling.
 i. Other. Nowata, Okla.
 28. What became of your predecessor? (Place a cross (X) before the correct answer).
 a. Left to teach in another system of this State.
 b. Left to teach in another State.
 c. Entered college in this State.
 d. Entered college in another State.
 e. Quit teaching to enter another occupation.
 f. Left on leave of absence, sickness, etc.
 g. I held a newly created position.
 h. Married.
 i. Died.
 j. Retired. Delaware, Okla.

TEACHING ADDRESS Nowata, Okla. HOME ADDRESS Delaware, Okla.

TEACHER'S COPY.

TEACHER'S CONTRACT

1187 H. DORSEY DOUGLAS, OKLA. CITY

This contract, entered into this 1 day of July 1939, between the school board of School District No. 33 County of Nowata, Oklahoma, as party of the first part, and Isaac Decker, Teacher, as party of the second part, holding a certificate of the grade, valid in said County.

WITNESSETH, That the said Board has engaged the said as Teacher of School District No. 33 for a term of 9 consecutive months of the school year 1939-40 said term to begin, unless otherwise agreed upon by the Teacher and the Board, on the day of 19, at a salary of \$ 96.00 per school month, provided that neither the School District nor any member of the school district board shall be liable for any amount of difference between the amount of this contract and the amount of the estimate made and approved.

The said teacher agrees to keep himself qualified, and agrees in all things to observe the rules and regulations of the district Board, also to follow the course of study adopted by the State Board of Education, to teach all branches required by law; to keep the daily register of the attendance and studies of each pupil belonging to the school; to make all reports desired by the County Superintendent of Public Instruction, and to preserve in good condition and order the school house, grounds, furniture, apparatus, library, and such other property as may come under the immediate supervision of said teacher.

IT IS FURTHER AGREED, That whenever any person shall make and enter into a valid contract with such district to teach school in such district, such contract shall be binding upon such teacher until he has been legally discharged therefrom according to law, or released therefrom by such district Board in regular session; and until such person shall have been thus discharged or released, he shall not have the authority to make or enter into any valid contract with any other District Board or Board of Education in the State of Oklahoma to perform services as teacher or instructor for a period of time covered by an existing valid contract, which said person has made (Secs. 11 and 51A S. L. 1931.)

IT IS FURTHER AGREED, That the teacher herein employed shall make a full and complete term report to the County Superintendent of Public Instruction before receiving pay for the last month of school, and that the Board will not approve the claim for the last month's salary until said Board has received notice from the County Superintendent of Public Instruction that the said term report has been received and approved by the County Superintendent of Public Instruction.

IT IS FURTHER AGREED, That in the event of the destruction of the school house by accident, fire or otherwise, and if no other suitable building can be secured for school purposes, this contract shall be void.

IT IS FURTHER AGREED, that in case said teacher shall be legally dismissed from school, or shall have his or her certificate legally annulled, by expiration or otherwise, then said teacher shall not be entitled to compensation from and after dismissal or annulment of certificate.

IT IS FURTHER AGREED, That said teacher shall become an active member of the County and State Educational Association, attend all educational meetings called by the County Superintendent, and cooperate with the County Superintendent in the development of the educational interest of the county; and said Board agrees not to deduct from the salary of said teacher for any loss of time occasioned by attending any of said educational meetings and associations.

IT IS FURTHER AGREED.

THIS CONTRACT shall be made in triplicate; one copy retained by the Clerk of the School Board, one retained by the teacher, and one copy filed in the office of the County Superintendent.

Approved this 3 day of July 1939 by James M. Stuten County Superintendent, (Sec. 53-A, S. L. 1933) and Isaac Decker Member.

STATE OF OKLAHOMA, County of Nowata, do solemnly swear (or affirm) that I will support, obey and defend the Constitution of the United States and the Constitution of the State of Oklahoma, so help me God.

Subscribed and sworn to before me this 3 day of July 1939 by James M. Stuten County Superintendent or Notary Public.

PERSONNEL REPORT FOR SUPERINTENDENT, PRINCIPAL, TEACHERS, LIBRARIAN AND SUPERVISOR

Country Nowata Dist No. 33 School Palm Bend Post Office Nowata

1a. Name: Teaching address: Nowata 1c. Home address: 6. Sex: F 7a. Birth-date: Nov 6, 1914 7b. Age: 27 8. Marital Status: Single Married Divorced Widowed 9. Annual salary, \$ 810. 11 Monthly salary \$ 90. 12. Years' college training: 3 13. Names of colleges attend most: C. J. C. Kansas, Northeastern State University of New Jersey

15. Grades to be taught this year: all first 8 grades 1939 16. years experience teaching these grades: 19 17. Subjects taught in H. S. this year: 18. College Sem. Hrs. 19. No. Yrs. Teaching Experience 39-40

20. Type Grade or Subject for which issued: One Year State 21. Time for which issued: 1 yr. 22. Date of expiration: 6-15-40 23. Serial No. of Each: C 15021

24. In all schools of all States? 25. In all Oklahoma schools? 26. In schools of this district? 27. How many different school systems have employed you (count this year)? 3

28. Where were you last year? (Place a cross (X) before the correct answer.) 29. What became of your predecessor? (Place a cross (X) before the correct answer?)

TEACHING ADDRESS HOME ADDRESS

TEACHER'S COPY

Form C. S. 170 SAM'L DODSWORTH STATIONERY CO KANSAS CITY MO 64102

Rutherford

TEACHER'S CONTRACT

This contract, entered into this 1 day of Sept, 1935, between the school board of School District No. 7, County of Delaware, Oklahoma, as party of the first part, and Wanda Rutherford Teacher, as party of the second part, holding a certificate of the Life grade, valid in said County.

WITNESSETH, That the said Board has engaged the said as Teacher of School District No. 7 for a term of 7 consecutive months of the school year 1935 1936, said term to begin, unless otherwise agreed upon by the Teacher and the Board, on the 1 day of Sept, 1935, at a salary of \$ 55.00 per school month, provided that neither the School District nor any member of the school district board shall be liable for any amount of difference between the amount of this contract and the amount of the estimate made and approved.

The said teacher agrees to keep himself self qualified, and agrees in all things to observe the rules and regulations of the district Board, also to follow the course of study adopted by the State Board of Education, to teach all branches required by law; to keep the daily register of the attendance and studies of each pupil belonging to the school; to make all reports desired by the County Superintendent of Public Instruction, and to preserve in good condition and order the school house, grounds, furniture, apparatus, library, and such other property as may come under the immediate supervision of said teacher.

IT IS FURTHER AGREED, That—Whenever any person shall make and enter into a valid contract with such district to teach school in such district, such contract shall be binding upon such teacher until he has been legally discharged therefrom according to law, or released therefrom by such district Board in regular session; and until Education in the State of Oklahoma to perform services as teacher or instructor for a period of time covered by an existing valid contract, which said person has made.

IT IS FURTHER AGREED, That the teacher herein employed shall make a full and complete term report to the County Superintendent of Public Instruction before receiving pay for the last month of school, and that the Board will not approve the claim for the last month's salary until said Board has received notice from the County Superintendent of Public Instruction that the said term report has been received and approved by the County Superintendent of Public Instruction.

IT IS FURTHER AGREED, That in the event of the destruction of the school house by accident, fire or otherwise, and if no other suitable building can be secured otherwise, then said teacher shall not be entitled to compensation from and after dismissal or annulment of certificate.

IT IS FURTHER AGREED, That said teacher shall become an active member of the County and State Education Associations, attend all educational meetings not to deduct from the salary of said teacher for any loss of time occasioned by attending any of said educational meetings and associations.

IT IS FURTHER AGREED

THIS CONTRACT shall be made in triplicate; one copy retained by the Clerk of the School Board, one copy retained by the teacher, and one copy filed in the office of the County Superintendent.

(Teacher—Party of the Second Part)

Preston Majors Director
W. S. ... Clerk
James M. ... County Superintendent or Notary Public

STATE OF OKLAHOMA, County of Delaware,
I, James M. ... do hereby certify that the foregoing is a true and correct copy of the original of the above named contract, as the same appears from the records of the County Superintendent of Public Instruction of the State of Oklahoma, so help me God.

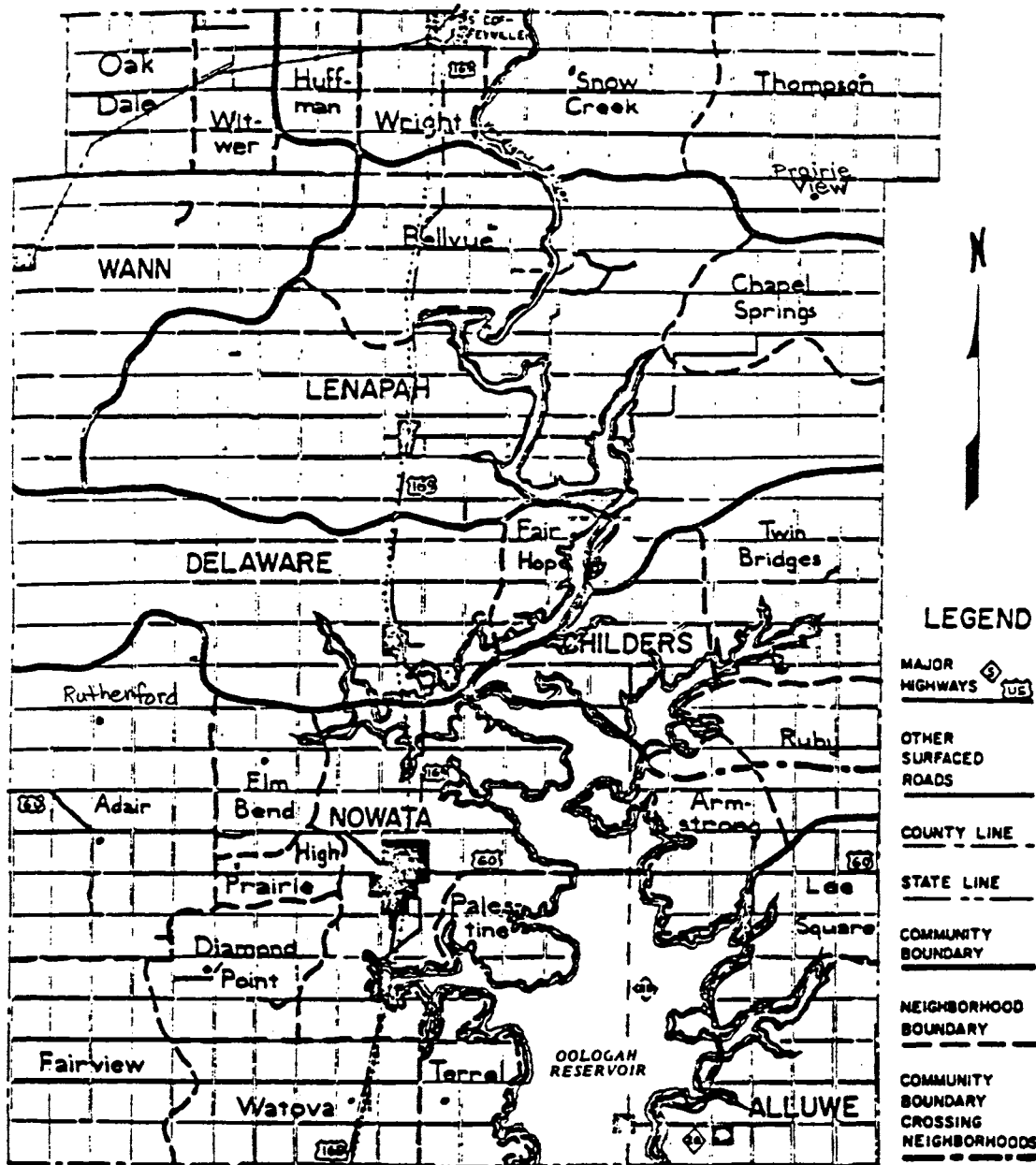
(The Data Called for Below Must Be Filled in before the Contract Will be Approved by the County Superintendent.)
Teaching address Howata, Okla. R. F. D. No. 1 or Street No. _____
Home address Delaware, Okla. Kind of Certificate held 5 year State No. _____
Is your certificate on file at County Superintendent's office? Yes—No— Reason _____
Years of High School Work completed 4 years
Kind of degree held _____ Years of College Work completed 2 years
Sex Female Color White College or University attended Tallapoosa, Coffeeville, Okla., Kan.
Number of years teaching experience _____ Salary for year \$ 450 Term 9 months Month _____
Number of years taught in County _____ Number of years taught in State _____
Approved this 1 day of Sept, 1935 by me James M. ...
County Superintendent of Public Instruction, in and for the above named County.

NOTE.—No District Board shall have the authority to pay any money or issue any warrant to pay any person for services as teacher or instructor, except for services performed under and by virtue of a valid written contract approved by the County Superintendent of Public Instruction; and no teacher shall enter into a written contract with a District Board until said teacher has secured a certificate valid to teach a full term of school in the County in which said District is located. (See Section 80, School Laws of Oklahoma, 1927, for conditions governing employment of teachers and terms of contract.)

APPENDIX C
NOWATA COUNTY MAP

NOWATA COUNTY

OKLAHOMA -- COMMUNITIES AND NEIGHBORHOODS



SOURCE: Overall Economic Development Program

APPENDIX D
COUNTY EXAMINATION

County Examinations

Questions Second Day

ARITHMETIC 8:00 a.m. to 9:30 a.m.

- Show the relations existing among the four fundamental operations in arithmetic.
- (a) Multiply 248 2-3 by 75 3-4 without reducing to improper fractions.
(b) Divide 2.5 by .0025.
(c) Reduce 2-7000 to decimal form.
- Simplify the following: $\frac{2-3 + 3}{1-2 - 1} \div \frac{3-3-4}{3 \times 4}$
- Find the value of $15 - 1 - 6 - 2 - 5 + 3 \times 6$.
- A grocer buys a bushel of onion sets for \$2.00 and sells them at ten cents a quart (using a standard liquid quart measure.) How much is his profit?
- I pay \$150 for a town lot 50 by 150 feet. At this rate what is the price of the land per acre?
- The battle of Manila took place early Sunday morning, and we received news of it the previous Saturday afternoon. Explain.
- (a) A man sold a horse for \$25, less than it cost him, thereby losing 10 per cent. What did the horse cost him?
(b) John is 25 per cent. older than James and James is 25 per cent. younger than Henry. If John is 45, how old is Henry?
- (a) A circular cistern 6 feet in diameter and 8 feet deep will hold how many gallons of water?
(b) How much lumber in a plank 1 inch by 8 inches by 14 feet?
- On July 5th I go to the bank to borrow enough money to meet a \$300. obligation. If the bank lets me have the money at 8 per cent. on ninety days time, what must be the face of my note to the bank, and when will the note be due?

PHYSIOLOGY 9:30 a.m. to 10:30 a.m.

- Give three general rules for the prevention of germ diseases.
- (a) What are the causes of colds? (b) Give method of avoiding the germs producing colds.
- Give important factors in the treatment of consumption.
- Explain how typhoid fever is contracted and give methods of its prevention.
- Define sanitation.
- Give at least six measures to be employed in keeping homes and communities sanitary.
- (a) Describe the structure of a tooth. (b) Explain the importance of good teeth.
- Explain what to do in case of fainting; suffocation; crowning.
- Define digestion. Name the organs of digestion.
- What are the functions of the nervous system.

MUSIC

10:30 a.m. to 11:00 a.m.

- Explain proper breathing.
- Explain the correct position of the head in singing and give reasons.
- Name all the keys and their signatures.
- What are the value of rounds in teaching vocal music?
- Name all kinds of rests and write the characters.
- Name the lines and spaces of bass or F clef; of treble or G clef; of C clef.
- Tell the main difference between major and minor scales.
- Read and explain the following measure signatures:
 $\frac{4}{4}, \frac{3}{8}, \frac{3}{4}$

COMPOSITION 11:00 a.m. to 12:00 m.

- Write to a board of education a letter of application for a position as teacher.
- Write correctly the following sentences, and give in each case full reason for any change made.
 - I can't hardly see the apples.
 - That molasses is suitable to this biscuit.
 - Those, my lassies, are sweet.
 - John hain't come, I don't think.

- Us girls has done been to town.
- Mr. Smith hadn't ought to give to foreign missions.
- And Mrs. Noah hadn't ought to asked him.
- Where was you, John.
- Where is them boys? Them's them, see?
- It don't hardly seem true.
- Write a program for a one hour entertainment at your school. State the full title of each number on your program.
- Give the correct plan for teaching composition to the fourth, fifth, and sixth grades. Give in detail your assignment, and explain fully just what state of progress in composition you expect the pupil to reach at the end of each of these grades.

ORTHOGRAPHY

1:00 p.m. to 2:00 p.m.

- Define cognate sounds, cognate letters, phonology, orthoepy, orthography.
- Name three principles used in determining accent.
- Give synonyms and antonyms of the following words: vex, dull, brave, accept, pride, fertile, obey, docile, conservation, coarse.
- Write the words for which the following abbreviations stand: A. F. & A. M.; Aasm.; obs.; Pac.; q.v.; Col.; gr.; N. S. V. P.; Vt.; S. O. S.
- 5 to 10. Spell the following words:

accompaniment	imminent
admittance	intricacy
aggrieve	ninety
artificial	persecute
berave	rhythm
capabilities	siege
catarrh	souvenir
chieftain	gaseous
convenient	yacht
diary	subtle
duteous	analyse
ecstasy	separate
forfeit	judgment
guyety	discount
peinous	procedure

THEORY AND PRACTICE

2:00 p.m. to 2:30 p.m.

- Will the same methods or devices for holding the attention apply in the country and city? Discuss.
- Of what value from the standpoint of discipline would "child study" be to a teacher?
- What is the evil of "communicating" in the school room? How would you reduce it to a minimum?
- If inaccuracy is a habit of mind, how can it be broken up?
- Are children benefitted by holding up before them such men as Washington, Lincoln, etc., as models? Why?
- Do pupils as a rule do as much real thinking in the school room under the "guidance" of the teacher as they do out of the school?
- What are the technical common school subjects?
 - What subjects should be very largely reduced to automatic processes?
 - In teaching reading, should emphasis be put upon expression, or thought getting, or upon the mechanics? Discuss.
 - Give some method for securing and holding attention.

CIVIL GOVERNMENT

3:30 p.m. to 5:00 p.m.

- Mention three powers and three duties of the president of the United States.
- What are the duties of a grand jury? What is a change of venue?
- What is interstate commerce and what legislative body regulates it?
- Name five prohibitions placed by the constitution of the United States upon state governments.
- Name five powers forbidden to the United States by the constitution.
- Name the sub departments of the executive department and give title of head of each sub department.
- In what ways does the National government get money?
- Distinguish between a national bank note and a United States treasury note.
- Name five important provisions of the Oklahoma Constitution.
- What is meant by emergency legislation? What provision is made for such legislation in Oklahoma and why?

APPENDIX E
INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

Interview Questions

1. When were you born? Where?
2. Where did you spend your childhood?
3. Describe the school you attended as a child.
4. What teacher training did you have before you began teaching?
5. What type of teaching certificate did you hold while teaching in a one-room school?
6. How much teaching experience did you have before teaching in a one-room school?
7. Why did you teach in a one-room school?
8. How old were you when you began teaching?
9. How many years did you teach in a one-room school?
10. Did you teach in a one-room school in another county or state?
11. Describe the building--grounds--students.
12. What were your duties?
13. Tell about a typical day--what did you do first? Next? Before lunch? In the afternoon?
14. How did you organize your students, classes, assignments, etc.? Do you have examples?
15. What study guides were you given?

16. Did your teacher preparation at college help you prepare to teach in a one-room school?
17. How did you know what to do? Did you have any help?
18. How did you teach the beginners to read?
19. Describe the teaching equipment or supplies you had?
20. What kind of interaction did the general community have with the school?
21. Would the concept of a one-room school work today?
22. Is there anything else you would like to share with me?

APPENDIX F
SAMPLE INTERVIEW

MARY

Q. I'm going to ask you some back ground information first. Where were you born and when?

A. November 30, 1909.

Q. Where were you born?

A. Coffeyville, Kansas.

Q. When did you move to Nowata County?

A. September, 1929.

Q. So you were about 20 years old when you moved?

A. Well, I had taught in Nowata County, the year prior, but I hadn't moved.

Q. So you grew up in Coffeyville?

A. Yes.

Q. Did you go to Coffeyville High School?

A. Coffeyville High School and Junior College.

Q. What type of elementary school did you attend?

A. It was an area school that was a large school, a 2 story, had grades 1 through 7.

Q. So you went to junior college and then when did you began teaching, after your college training?

A. The fall after I graduated from junior college in 1928.

Q. How old were you then?

A. I was 18.

Q. And where did you teach?

- A. Snow Creek, district 3, Nowata County.
- Q. And this was a one-room school?
- A. Yes.
- Q. What type of teaching certificate did you have when you began teaching?
- A. A 1 year certificate, renewable for 5 years after 1 year of successful teaching.
- Q. Did you have any other teaching experience?
- A. We had practice teaching in junior college.
- Q. Did you choose to teach in a one room school for any particular reason?
- A. It was what was available.
- Q. Since you didn't go to a one room school as a child, how did you know what to do?
- A. I studied the manuals and things that were supplied by the county superintendent.
- Q. Did the manual help you with knowing how to manage 8 grades in one room?
- A. Well, they helped me to organize my program, as to what I was going to do.
- Q. Did you find it difficult?
- A. I was too much of a child among the children to think anything was difficult.
- Q. So you studied the manuals you had, "Teacher's Guide," or "Teacher Expectations," put out by the state of what to teach?
- A. Yes. The state provided us course of studies, what they provided us.

Q. For each grade?

A. No. It was all in one.

Q. Oh, all in one book?

A. One course of study.

Q. Do you remember how many children you had?

A. Well, it varied. I think my first year I enrolled about 42 pupils, but I didn't have that many attending all the time because there were many people who rented their farms and they would move at New Years, end of the year.

Q. Now what year was this at Snow Creek, your first one?

A. 1928-29.

Q. Then did you continue teaching at Snow Creek?

A. No. There was a little disagreement among the patrons and I couldn't take sides so I just left.

Q. So where did you go then?

A. Terrall's school.

Q. And that was a one room school but it was south by Watova.

A. Yes, east of Watova.

Q. How many children did you have there?

A. It varied from 10 to 20. I was there 5 years.

Q. Describe, first of all what Snow Creek looked like.

A. Well, Snow Creek was a new building, it replaced a school that had been built around 1907. And it had a large classroom, a library, a boys and girls cloak room and a little kitchen. It was a modern school, I don't mean physically, but it was modern for that time. And

my education class from Coffeyville Junior College came out to visit, physically, it was one of the better schools. Well, I should have added it had a large cement porch in front that served as a playground on rainy days, it was a well equipped school.

Q. What do you mean by well equipped?

A. Well, in those days the state school board inspected and we had standards to meet. I wish I could supply you with the things they had, but good maps, and globe and adequate physical things outside for recreation.

Q. Did they call it a model school?

A. Called it model schools. Every teacher strove to make her school a model school.

Q. Yes. I've read some about that, so I know what you're talking about. So was it a frame or brick building?

A. It was a frame building.

Q. Frame building. White?

A. Yes.

Q. Now, you said you had inside kitchen facilities, what about rest room facilities?

A. No.

Q. They were outside?

A. They were outside. Nice little buildings.

Q. Now were you married when you were teaching at Snow Creek?

A. No. Well, yes, I was, but that was in my next hitch, after I left Terrall school, I was invited to come back to Snow Creek.

- Q. Okay, but your first time at Snow Creek, you were unmarried?
- A. Yes.
- Q. You said that you had good equipment inside to teach with, what about consumable materials, supplies, what did you have?
- A. Well, we had some workbooks, but not many, and we had what we called a hectograph, you know what they are?
- Q. Yes.
- A. A lot of them we made ourselves or at least learned to make them. If we wanted something we had to run it off singularly,
- Q. What about the paper and the pencils and crayons and scissors?
- A. Well, most of those were supplied by the children.
- Q. So the parents got them for the children and they brought them?
- A. Yes.
- Q. Okay. Was it the same when you went to Terrall?
- A. They weren't so well equipped.
- Q. Tell me about it.
- A. Well, they just hadn't made the advances that Snow Creek had. It might have been because nobody was anxious to push it. The library wasn't as adequate, and it was only one room, the coats and hats were hung in the back, and we used a water bucket and dipper and every child was supposed to have individual cups.
- Q. What about a kitchen, did you have a kitchen at Terrall?

- A. No. It was just a one room school. It had, I think, 6 windows, 3 on each side, opposite each other, for light.
- Q. Did you have lanterns or did you have electric lights at that time?
- A. There was no electricity in the country. We didn't even have it up at Snow Creek until later. Most of the programs were held in the daytime.
- Q. So you had the traditional pie suppers and Christmas programs?
- A. Terrall school didn't want them.
- Q. Okay.
- A. But we did at Snow Creek.
- Q. So you taught at Terrall, when did you get married?
- A. 1937. I was back at Snow Creek then.
- Q. Now, when did you start going back to school?
- A. Oh, let's see, I went during the summer, but I wasn't forced to, I still had my 5 year certificate and I think, I can't remember how it turned to a life, I must have gone back and taken a few courses. I went to school the 2nd summer I taught, took Oklahoma History and Oklahoma School Law, 2 courses in agriculture.
- Q. Then with your life certificate it was elementary life?
- A. Yes.
- Q. How many years all together did you teach in a one room school?
- A. Well, let's see, I guess, it was 23 years.

- Q. So you had 1 at Snow Creek, and then you had 5 at Terrall, and then you went back to Snow Creek for the other years?
- A. No. For just 10.
- Q. And then where did you go?
- A. Then I quit teaching. That was after I got married. The president of the board, what was that school out east of town where they had the 2 room brick? Was it Salt Creek? Had to have a teacher and wanted me to start, so I started and I continued for the year. And then they decided to close it down because I think we only had about 11 or 12 pupils.
- Q. Then where did you go after Salt Creek?
- A. My next contract was at Childers.
- Q. When you were teaching in the one room school, no matter which one it was, what did you think was the hardest thing about teaching in a one room school?
- A. Well, I never found anything really hard, the children knew why they were coming to school when they were in a one room school. They were coming to learn and not be entertained and not to be running around, we stayed on the playground and I can't put my finger on any one thing. If I pick out a subject, while I was good in music in college, I didn't play the piano and I would love to have been able to.
- Q. Did you find teaching such a wide range of ages difficult?

- A. No. They learned from each other, some of the best learning that I have seen took place in the rural situations, in the one room schools.
- Q. How did this happen?
- A. Well, somebody in the 3rd grade would finish and listen or watch a 4th grade lesson. During my last years I had another hitch at Snow Creek, 5 years, after Childers closed down, they sought me out. I had women on the school board and they were more meticulous than the men on the school board.
- Q. In what way?
- A. That we did things like they ought to be done, you know, if I mentioned something they could see the feminine side of things.
- Q. Were your parents supportive, parents of your children were they supportive?
- A. Oh, wonderful. Back then it was the teacher was it. And if the child was disciplined at school they usually got it at home. I did not have to paddle much, early days we did a little, but the parents, their supportive, the teacher was right whether she was wrong or right.
- Q. So they stuck with you?
- A. Yes.
- Q. You kept returning to Snow Creek and you'd leave for a while and then you would return, what type of improvements did you see happening in the rural schools during your time of teaching?

A. Well, they had electricity and got running water. And they hired a music teacher, came in twice a week, every child learned to play a little thing on the piano, the piano was there for them to use if they didn't abuse it. I could play a little for opening exercises but usually I had a child that had lessons. You were expected to put on, oh, 3 or 4 programs a year, Christmas program, every child got some training in appearing in the play. And I remember one time we had a science program and one of the little fellas filled a glass with water and said, "Now, I'm going to turn this upside down, with just this little square paper over it," you've seen it, they hadn't seen it, some of them hadn't, at least, and there was "ahs" and "ohs" and we did a lot of little things. Then once I took long strips of paper fastened, one just straight then gave another one a loop and then gave the 3rd strip a double loop, you know what happened?

Q. No.

A. Well, the first one, the straight, we'd produce 2 rings the next one, let's see it had one loop, I guess, it was 2 rings hooked together like that, and the 3rd one would be, I just don't remember how it turned out, but seemed like it was all one big loop.

Q. You made a chain then?

A. Yes. We did a lot of silly things.

Q. What type of methods were you taught and did you use in like teaching reading or math?

- A. Well, usually beginning reading, 1st grade, we started with the word "mother" and listened to the sound and we looked at the letter and we tried to find other words that begin with the "m" and tried to stay with phonics. While many teachers didn't like the Scott Foresman series, "Dick and Jane," I always said you didn't follow the manual, because if you did you taught phonics along with it, and it was one of my favorite books.
- Q. So you did have a teachers manual to go along with yours?
- A. Oh, we, I think I had with all my books.
- Q. You found them helpful?
- A. Goodness, yes.
- Q. What was some of the things that, ideas that you thought worked well for you, that you kind of came up with on your own?
- A. Well, I don't know whether it was on my own or not, but getting to know the parents, knowing them, having them for friends. To this day, I see them. Their knowing me and I knowing them certainly helped me. Now, as far as teaching supplies, sometimes when we didn't have very much supplies, we used catalogs and magazines, made our own little booklets of pictures like an ABC book.
- Q. So they cut out and put things that started with "A" on one page?
- A. Yes.

- Q. Did you use sentence strips or write on the chalk board for them to read?
- A. Yes. In the 1st grades, I made big -- what would they have been -- big sheets of paper.
- Q. Like on a chart or --
- A. Yes, made charts, the nursery rhymes and then after we'd read with the picture, Jack and Jill falling down the hill, they always had a picture, I would just manuscript it on the chalk board, have them read it there.
- Q. So, you took the picture away, at that point?
- A. Yes.
- Q. Were there other things that you did?
- A. Teaching multiplication, we used rocks, laid them out 2, twos make 4 or $2 + 2$, we used little pebbles most of, in the earlier years, course latter years we had things especially for that.
- Q. As you were teaching we went through the '40s, were you teaching during the war?
- A. Yes.
- Q. What was it like during the war?
- A. Let's see, where was I during the war? I taught up to '43 at Snow Creek. I quit afterwards and wasn't going to teach, but I went back to teach, because people came after me and I helped them out a little bit.
- Q. Did you find that the war, did the war affect the rural children very much?

- A. Well, I think they were well aware of it, but they didn't have the knowledge about it that modern children have today, because we didn't have television, they didn't know the horror of it.
- Q. As you were teaching the late '40s --the atmosphere of education was a little more laid back, more open to new ideas, and then we hit the age, the Russians launched the 1st sputnik and suddenly we were in a space race, how did that change education for you?
- A. Well, I think right then, more math and science came to the front. I was a math major, and I could have gone into the Coffeyville Junior College but my school board at Snow Creek didn't want to release me, and it wouldn't have been any better position. They said, "They can find somebody else and we can't," they prized me.
- Q. And that's nice, isn't it?
- A. Because I went back again for 5 years after I taught at Childers.
- Q. Did the text books change because of that?
- A. Oh, yes.
- Q. How did they change?
- A. Well, the material in them changed vastly.
- Q. Such as, can you give me a example?
- A. Well, in our early time we had much more -- trying to teach children ethical conduct, I believe, that you would have to say, they were -- (end of side 1)

Q. -- books changed, instead of ethical behavior you concentrated on what?

A. Well, all religion went out. I can remember the day I got over the intercom, we'll not have prayers today. We'd always had in all schools I ever taught, I don't mean preaching but a little bible song and the "Lord's Prayer," and the Flag solute. I remember one place in particular, it wasn't in a one room school, but a mother came to me real worried about her son, he was going to be in the 1st grade and I said, "Well, I wouldn't worry, most do quite well and if he doesn't get a long we'll work it out. I'll talk with you and we'll see what we can do." Well, it came out that his religion, he couldn't' solute the flag and she wanted him to come in late and I said, "Now, I'd have to mark him tardy and don't want to do that." "Well, what about him going out of the room for some reason," and I said, "I don't particularly care for that." We finally decided that I would sit him in an obscure seat in the corner where it wouldn't be noticed so much and he would just stand. And we could have made a situation out of that but we were able to work it out. And it worked very well too. He was a very good student.

Q. Did you teach much science in the one room school?

A. Well, we had little books, little text books more like a reader, could be used for a reader, that began with early science. I remember one little fella read in the sentence, they were setting eggs under an old hen to

hatch, "We best keep a rooster." It was early in his reading, but the words were, "We best keep a record." He was going with the 1st sound and his knowledge of -- there were just little things that more of a nature than, I guess, science.

Q. Did you do special things with your kids, projects, that maybe they were interested in?

A. Yes. We had a strong 4-H club at Snow Creek and we were always up to something. And right there were I had lots of cooperations with parents, in the early 1960's, that was my 3rd time at Snow Creek, I gave the little girls batons at Christmas. There was a woman in the community who had been in the Coffeyville Squad and she took over and taught them. They were marvelous, they appeared at fairs and different programs.

Q. Now you talked a little bit about the library that you had at Snow Creek, tell me what type of books and resource that you had at Snow Creek.

A. Well, we had good encyclopedias, I've forgotten what it was, and every grade had at least 25 books on that level. Course, 6th grade could drop down to 5th or jump up to whatever they were capable of reading.

Q. Did you find that your children achieved more in the rural schools or not at much compared to the children you had.

A. Oh, more, more. As I said before, the best learning, as far as I was concerned, took place in the rural situation.

- Q. You said sometimes the children would read a head or behind did you have problems with keeping them on level, as far as reading?
- A. I didn't try to keep them on levels, I tried to let them go as far as they could. You would find a 4th grader reading at a 6th or 7th grade level. When they began testing out of the county superintendent and their might be some backward child in the 8th grade was just reading on a 5th or 6th, but usually there was a reason for that.
- Q. Such as?
- A. Well, I think broken homes and absence from school.
- Q. Did you have much absence at the rural schools?
- A. Well, children who had been absent.
- Q. So what would you do, let's say a child moved into Snow Creek, he's in 5th grade but he's not working up to 5th grade level, what might you do to help this child?
- A. Well, when we found that out, I let him stay with the class but I gave him special work to do and his parents usually were cooperative. You'd be surprised, if you meet parents in the right way, and say, "I've got a problem, I want you to help me," how willing they are because they know that and they usually recognize the deficiency.
- Q. Did you ever let your children work together?
- A. Oh, yes. The last year I taught at Snow Creek, the last 5 years, I went back and had 5 more years, I laid my answer book down and I said, "Who ever finishes 1st,

got over there and check your paper and go to the chalk board, where you missed it put it on the board and you'd be surprised at the "ah's" and "oh's" you'd hear. They'd find their error, or maybe some little 6th grader would look up and say, "You didn't add that right."

Q. And so it was kind of team project, then at that point to try to find the mistake?

A. Yes.

Q. How did you handle your playground?

A. I liked to clear the classroom and I liked to be on the playground. I felt my duty was to be where most of the children were and they had to have a good reason to stay in at recess.

Q. What were some of the games that the children played?

A. Games? Well at first we had, what is that where you knock where you hit a shuttle puck back and forth? We had basketball goals and some of the old fashion games. What were they? Seems like one was; pump, pump pull away, if you don't come away, I'll pull you away, off a base. Dear me, I can't think of those old games but there were a lot of them.

Q. Running games, then?

A. Yes. Two teams, one at each end.

Q. Now, you mentioned basketball goals did you have any other play equipment?

A. Ball and bat, we had a giant stride, and merry-go-round. The giant stride got removed because somebody

didn't get out of the way of it and turned it loose and hit a little girl in the head and they decided that was a danger point and they took it down.

Q. Did your kids like to play softball?

A. Yes.

Q. Did they involve you in their game?

A. I usually had to be the referee. They would have like to have had horse races at Snow Creek, but I wouldn't let them. I put my horse up when I got to school and they put their horse up.

Q. Well, now, was that when you went there the 1st time?

A. First time, yes.

Q. Did Snow Creek ever provide transportation for the children?

A. No.

Q. The parents always provided their own?

A. Yes. In later years they wouldn't let any of them walk. Afraid of traffic.

Q. Describe how the children interacted, that's a big age range.

A. Well, I think it was pretty good. You see we began the school and the parents all got acquainted with a big weenie roast. And more or less the older ones were protective of the smaller children. They didn't torment them, at least, not much, that I knew of. I had one boy that they couldn't handle here in Nowata school and he got a bad name and he wasn't a bad boy and they brought him up to Snow Creek to his

grandmother's and he either had to stay in school, they'd lose their welfare check for him. And one of the proudest moments of that family's life was when this boy graduated from the 8th grade. And he was older than the boys I had in school and while he had a smoking habit, he and I agreed that there wasn't going to be any smoking in school. But I understand when he got close to home, under the bridge there was a pack of cigarettes but that wasn't my problem that close to home.

Q. So you had the older ones taking care of the younger ones?

A. They helped a lot, that year I had about 5 immature 12 or 13 year olds. They weren't bad, they were just wanting to fun. Life to them was just a picnic and he kept them in line, he helped a lot.

Q. So you won him over. What would you say was the biggest advantage for children that went to the rural school over children who went to Childers or Nowata or Lenapah?

A. Well Childers, Nowata and Lenapah are so close to the rural situation, I don't know that there was a great deal. In Childers and Lenapah, especially, because they were all rural people, there wasn't much of town.

Q. What was the advantage of having 8 grades in one room or was there compared to having them all one grade in a room?

- A. Well, the individual could learn, was exposed to more learning where there were more grades.
- Q. So they heard what was going on around them, as well as their own lessons?
- A. Yes.
- Q. Did you ever have a situation where you started to teach something in a grade and then you thought, well, they already know that.
- A. Oh, yes, yes.
- Q. Did that happen often?
- A. Yes.
- Q. In the rural school, that happen often. So what would you do?
- A. Well, we'd have to teach it because somebody might -- didn't get it and we'd talk about it, but usually it was something that could be absorbed rather quickly.
- Q. So you covered the bases and moved on?
- A. Yes.
- Q. You talked a little bit about 4-H, do you think 4-H was beneficial?
- A. Oh, yes. If parents don't do the sewing and I think there are times when, or there were back years ago when mother or some seamstress helped out a lot. Now, the help was alright but they don't need to do it. And it was good for public speaking, every child got a chance to appear before a larger group than the school group. We always presented the little speeches that they were going to make, but at a community meeting 1st and

usually the people would say if they won a prize. Most of them won something.

Q. So they had opportunities to develop public speaking?

A. Oh, yes.

Q. What about your programs that you did for the community?

A. One we don't do any more is minstrels, negro minstrels, I don't think I ever presented but one, and I never worked any harder in my life.

Q. That was hard to do that?

A. Oh, yes. Blackened on their faces and getting it removed and all that.

Q. What were some of your favorite things to do for a program?

A. Well, songs, and little plays and, as I mentioned before, science experiments.

Q. So you used some of your curriculum, sometimes in your programs?

A. Oh, yes. But a lot of the program would be built around your classroom work.

Q. Did Snow Creek have a stage?

A. No.

Q. So you just did it in the front of the room?

A. Yes.

Q. What did you do for Christmas?

A. Sometime in late October or early November we had a big box supper. The box suppers were especially large on an election, because all the politicians wanted to make

speeches. And I provided the program and for both, a short program for the box supper, if politicians came out we forgot the program a let them put it on. And they had a committee that would buy the Christmas treats. And we then got a young school teacher moved in down here we had ** Then they would meet near the school house and sack their candy the day before, an apple, an orange and some nuts. There was always a nice big sack of candy for each child, we drew names. Somebody in the community would go down to Cedar Creek, you heard of that lake, and get us a big tree. We'd decorate that tree, and get it put up about the Monday before Christmas, didn't keep it long. And then we had a Christmas program, it wouldn't pass now because it was always built around the story.

Q. So it was religious?

A. Oh, I forgot to mention, we always had bible reading before, we had to keep, well, now, I'm not sure that it had to be done, but we had the 10 Commandments on the wall and in someplaces, I don't think I went out and bought a picture, but they had a picture of Christ, particularly in lower grades when he was a boy.

Q. So that right a long with George Washington, was part of the classroom?

A. Yes.

Q. Do you have any particular story that you thought was really one that you would like to share with me that happened to you when were teaching?

- A. Well, it was nice after so many years to be selected as teacher of the year, But my school district had already made me teacher of the year with a big party several years earlier at Snow Creek, big purple banner and all that.
- Q. Do you think rural schools would work today, the concept that they had?
- A. No. There was too much serious study, I mean, the children knew what they were there for and they didn't expect to have excess to cokes and candy all day long, I don't know whether they do that now or not but I have taught in schools where they had those machines.
- Q. You think it would be difficult then to have that same type of atmosphere that you had at Snow Creek today?
- A. Yes. I once said to a little girl who was chewing gum, "It isn't good taste to chew gum like that in public," and she said, "It taste good."
- Q. She didn't quite understand what you were saying, did she?
- A. Oh, I think she was being just a little bit feisty. We had a curtain that rolled up once, and I was back stage and it got my dress tail in it and rolled up and that provided a big laugh for people. People didn't like it, I don't know, there were advertisers going around wanted to paint signs, they would solicit the businesses and the school district never was happy with it so they later just got curtains that could be removed.

- Q. So for your programs, you did have some way of closing curtains or putting one down so the kids could assemble?
- A. Yes. They had side curtains too.
- Q. Are you glad you taught in a rural school?
- A. Yes, I taught in the best of times.
- Q. Why do you think you taught in the best of times?
- A. Well, because of the stories I hear of what teachers have to take now and I don't know whether they're all, sometimes I think they are exaggerating.
- Q. But you felt like you taught at a good time.
- A. Yeah, I think those years were the best of time. We were building a system and I taught in some good schools.
- Q. When you were beginning your teaching career and you were at Snow Creek alone, did you ever feel like, oh, gee, I wish there was someone I could talk to about this or I don't know how to teach this, I wish I could call someone?
- A. There were a number of us there and we talked our situation over.
- Q. A number of who?
- A. Of teachers.
- Q. How did you do that?
- A. Well, I graduated from Coffeyville Junior College and 2 or 3 of the teachers right there graduated, one graduated at the same time and --

- Q. So they taught in schools that were close to where you were teaching, so how would you talk things over with them, then, they weren't right there during the day?
- A. No, but we always discussed our problems when we got together and that might be 2 or 3 times a week.
- Q. So you had a support group?
- A. Yes. We had a superintendent a long time superintendent James M. Staton, he was first an old teacher and he was real good about helping any way he could.
- Q. Well, this group that you meet with, that you were friends with, how did they help you?
- A. Well, I don't know in particular, we did share ideas. There was one teacher that could use a sand pile and get kids out to really set up a pretty sand pile, I never could, I hated the sand pile.
- Q. But she could do a lot with that? So you would share ideas, did you exchange, oh, you had your hectograph, did you trade off work sheets sometimes?
- A. No. I don't remember ever doing that.
- Q. So you were on your own with that.
- A. Yes.
- Q. Well, can you think of anything else you would like to share with me?
- A. Well, I don't really know --

VITA ²

Helen Ann Yirsa Dugger

Candidate for the Degree of

Doctor of Education

Thesis: TEACHER LORE AND THE ONE-ROOM SCHOOLHOUSE: A
HISTORICAL REFLECTION OF LIVED CURRICULUM

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OKLAHOMA STATE UNIVERSITY
INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD
FOR HUMAN SUBJECTS RESEARCH

Date: 04-30-93

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Proposal Title: TEACHER LORE AND THE ONE-ROOM SCHOOLHOUSE: A
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Principal Investigator(s): Dr. William Reynonlds, Helen Ann
Yirsa Dugger

Reviewed and Processed as: Exempt

Approval Status Recommended by Reviewer(s): Approved

APPROVAL STATUS SUBJECT TO REVIEW BY FULL INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW
BOARD AT NEXT MEETING.
APPROVAL STATUS PERIOD VALID FOR ONE CALENDAR YEAR AFTER WHICH A
CONTINUATION OR RENEWAL REQUEST IS REQUIRED TO BE SUBMITTED FOR
BOARD APPROVAL. ANY MODIFICATIONS TO APPROVED PROJECT MUST ALSO
BE SUBMITTED FOR APPROVAL.

Comments, Modifications/Conditions for Approval or Reasons for
Deferral or Disapproval are as follows:

Signature:

Maria S. Tilley

Chair of Institutional Review Board

Date: May 5, 1993