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Saunders County Bicentennial Educational History

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1976

District #39 - Wahoo

Office of the County Superintendent, Saunders County

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The first school in Wahoo was outside of what is now the city limits. It was a one-room building in the southwest corner of the old town, near what is known now as the Lindau farm.

The first West Ward school was also a one-room frame building on the corner of 6th and Sycamore, one block north of the Court house, facing west. This was built in the late seventies or about 1880. Shortly thereafter a second one-room brick building, still in use was built on the present site in 1903 at a cost of \$8000.00.

In the spring of 1954 the taxpayers voted \$243,000.00 in bonds to erect the new West Ward building and to build additions to the North Ward and the High School. The West Ward building cost approximately \$175,000.00. The equipment for the building was purchased through a Federal grant allotted to the district because of the number of Ordnance Plant children being educated by the district.

On the site of the present High School there was a one-room school which began at about the same time as West Ward. This was known as Central and remained until 1948 when it was cleared away to make room for the present gymnasium.

The first High School was a two-story frame building, with three rooms on the first floor and three on the second. The story is told of Supreme Court Judge Reese, who in the early eighties was attending a program in this school. He arose and in his best judicial manner asked that the people leave the building. They did so and when it was evacuated it was discovered that the floor had sunk several inches. Just a few days later the building burned. It was replaced by another frame structure which also burned. In 1913 the old part of the present High School was built.

The North Ward School seems to have been developed a little later than the others, and has always been on the same site. The first school was a frame building which burned. While the building was being replaced with a small brick building, the children were housed in the Congregational Church. At that time there was a creek behind the church and the bank was so steep that a rail had to be built to keep the little ones from toppling in. The front portion of the present building was built in 1914. Another addition was built in 1936.

A bond election in the amount of \$225,000.00 was approved by the taxpayers on May 12, 1964 for an addition to West Ward Elementary school. All elementary pupils from the North Ward were transferred to the West Ward in the fall of 1971 and the North Ward building was designated as

a "Middle School", housing the 6th, 7th, 8th grade students.

Another bond election was presented to the taxpayers and approved on November 13, 1973 in the amount of \$2,750,000.00 for the purpose of purchasing a site and erecting a building to house the Middle School and High School. This building is presently under construction with completion date expected for the fall term in 1976.