

1976

District #50 - Ithaca

Office of the County Superintendent, Saunders County

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The first school in District #50, Ithaca was built by Elijah Dech in Section 20 of Wahoo Township. He built it on his own farm and his daughter Martha was the first teacher. When the new school was built the old schoolhouse was moved into Ithaca and remodeled for use as a home and it is still being used as a home today.

The new two-story school was built across the road from the old school. It consisted of two rooms, one downstairs and one upstairs, and had two teachers. The first school records remaining in the district are for the school year September 4, 1892 to April 28, 1893. The teachers were Gilbert Hoppel and Blanche Roberts. Mr. Hoppel recorded 14 regular students as "A" Grade and "B" Grade on the roll but in his teacher comments he suggested there should be a general promotion through all the grades the following year. He also felt that three of his students were "too strong for C Grade but too weak for B Grade in the same branches." Miss Roberts listed 38 students on her roll but 3 of these appear to be the three that Mr. Hoppel made his comment about. Miss Roberts' students were classified as Intermediate Grade C - first year, Primary Grade D - first year, Grade E - first year and Grade E - second year. Grades used to show a pupil's progress were E, F, G.

In the following term Mr. Hoppel recorded 6 regular students and Miss Roberts recorded 29 students.

In the 1894-95 term J. A. Magnuss and Nannie B. Harris were the teachers. Mr. Magnuss had 15 students in the upper room and Miss Harris listed 47 in the elementary grades. Seventeen of Miss Harris' students dropped out during the term for a variety of reasons. The teachers commented at the end of this term that the work was brought up to grade levels so standard grading could be used for placing students in grades 1 - 6 the following year.

As the school grew and as the students progressed grades were added until they included 1 - 9. In 1908 four students graduated from the 9th grade.

The teachers for the 1907-08 term were the first teachers to list textbooks used in their various classes. They were: Reading, "Stepping Stones and Cyrus"; Writing, Baldwin; Orthography, from Reading lessons; Arithmetic, Walshes; Geography, Frye's "Elementary and Natural Elementary"; Grammar, Hoenshel Elementary and

and Hoenshel Advanced; U. S. History, Barnes Elementary and Physiology, Pathfinder. The students used slates and slate pencils at their desks to do their assigned work and the blackboards were used for other written work.

In about 1908 the schoolhouse was enlarged. Two rooms, identical to the first two were added to the west side of the building. There were three teachers now so each had their own classroom. The fourth room was used as a playroom. There was also a library upstairs on the south side. A belfry with a large bell and a store room were on the third floor. The school was heated by large pot-bellied stoves. The teachers did their own janitor work, doing all the sweeping and cleaning and starting the fires in the stoves in the morning. The students carried water from the home of Mr. Knapp, one block south of the school. He had an open well and they had to lower a long, narrow bucket down into the well. Then it was pulled up by a windlass and the water emptied into their bucket. The water bucket sat on a shelf at the school with the water dipper in it and everyone drank from the same dipper. Children would volunteer to clean the blackboards and erasers every afternoon so they would be ready for the next day. In about 1916 a basement was put under the building and a furnace was installed. A well was dug so the school would have its own water supply.

The children enjoyed spell downs and cipher downs as part of their school work. They still remember memorizing poems such as "The Village Blacksmith" by Longfellow. At recess the favorite games were baseball, football played about like soccer is played today; ante-I-over was played over the coal house east of the schoolhouse, and when there was snow fox and geese was played. In later years, ball games with other schools were played and very much enjoyed by the students. Lunches were carried in gallon molasses pails. Sandwiches were made of homemade bread and molasses or jelly made of homegrown or wild fruit.

In 1922 the school added the tenth grade. It continued with ten grades until May 16, 1947. The present school was built in 1948. It was located north of the old building. Wilson Construction Company of Lincoln, Nebraska did the construction and the well and water system, plumbing, heating and the electrical wiring were done by E. R. Hanson & Sons of Wahoo, Nebraska. The cost of the modern two-room facility was approximately \$30,000.00.

In 1970 District #50 consolidated with District #102 thereby enlarging the district and the number of students. The patrons of the district

voted to contract the 7th and 8th grade students to Wahoo or Mead so they could participate in programs provided for Junior High students in these districts.

When the Methodist and United Brethren Churches united the school purchased the Methodist Church building and had it moved, in 1969 to the east side of the school building and remodeled it into a gymnasium for the students. It was also used for community functions.

Note: This history was compiled from records of the district and from information received from former students. Some of the dates may not be exact and some of the facts are different in different reports.

NW $\frac{1}{4}$ Section 28, Township 14, Range 8
Wahoo Precinct
Ithaca

School Board - Ewalt Hageman
Luella Hanson
Joseph Murray

Teachers - Otilia Heiser
Dorothy Klink

Pupils

Laura Bergwell	Roberta Black
Staci Hass	Craig Crosby
Lara Navakas	Gail Hanson
Ronda Treptow	Julius Izso
Keri Ann Young	Ann Keller
Brett Hageman	Roberta Pafford
Kristine Hass	Merrill Rish
Jeffrey Buckmaster	Howard Dew
Traci Lamprecht	Dennis Hageman
Shawn Liliedahl	Kenneth Pafford
Rhonda Kay Pafford	David Push
Denise Push	Diane Buckmaster
Gloria Jean Williams	Mary Ann Izso
Donna Navakas	Natalie Murray
Robert Treptow	Thomas Simon