

Hibbing - Schools Anne DeCarlo's Memories

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I began teaching in the Hibbing Public Schools at the Glen Location in the years 1924-1925. My first assignment was a combination 4th and 5th grades.

I remember that Miss Ruth Raleigh, the Phy. Ed. Supervisor, would come out regularly to teach folk dancing and games. The music to accompany our dances was played on a Victrola that you wound by hand. The needle had to be changed often. One folk dance I especially remember was called "Roman Soldiers." The boys really liked this dance! One that was a favorite with the girls was the "Highland Fling." I liked it too, and I remember dancing the various steps right with the children as I taught them. It was always a great day when Miss Raleigh paid us a visit for she taught games as well as folk dances. Later, when I taught at the Pool school we learned to dance the "Minuet." We wanted to dance it at a program for the parents so Miss Raleigh helped us make costumes and fashion wigs out of cotton batting. The costumes and wigs helped make this program a great success. Folk dances have continued to be part of the Elementary Phy. Ed. program throughout my teaching career. Now, Square Dancing is gaining in popularity especially in grades 4, 5 and 6.

I was almost 21 years of age when I was assigned to teach grades 1-6 at our outlying Townline School. I travelled

there by school bus which picked me up at about 7 a.m. On the way to this school the bus made frequent stops picking up the country children. Some of these children were going to the Swandale Elem. School, grades 1-6, some to the Townline School, while others were being transported to the 7th and 8th grades and to the High School in town.

At the Townline School we had one large stove that served to heat the classroom. From time to time a load of wood was delivered to us and the Kosluchar family, who lived nearby, would start the fire early in the morning so that when the children and I arrived it was warm. This large stove had an asbestos shield and often, when the children came in with wet mittens, they would hang them over the top of this shield to dry. The children were kept busy filling the woodbox, especially on cold winter days. However, they were used to this chore for they came from homes where wood was their main fuel. Neither did we have running water. From time to time the children would fill a large pail from the pump in the school yard. At first we had only the outdoor toilets but later these were replaced by the indoor chemical type. These country children, being accustomed to the outdoor kind, would often forget about the new indoor convenience and dash outdoors, even when it was

very cold. The lighting at the Townline school consisted of kerosene lamps. These had to be filled often and the chimneys kept clean. John Kosluchar made the fire, filled the water pail, kept the lamps in working order, cleaned the blackboards and swept the floor. For these services he received \$16.00 every two weeks.

At Townline we were one large happy family. Here brothers and sisters worked hand in hand helping one another in lessons and in overcoming difficulties encountered. At noon the older girls enjoyed the duties of preparing the hot cocoa and we all enjoyed drinking it with our bag lunches. We got fresh milk daily from one of the nearby families. At first I furnished the cocoa and the sugar. Later, when the Superintendent heard what I was doing, he not only praised me highly on my interest in the student's welfare, but he gave me permission to order the sugar and cocoa on my supply order.

Noon hours were spent playing outdoors, weather permitting. In warm weather ball games were a favorite, while in winter the children enjoyed playing "Fox and Geese." On some days they made snowmen and snow-angels and had fun sliding on the frozen patches of ice. One of my 6th grade girls, who was more mature than the others and didn't enjoy the outdoor play, would stay inside with me. I discovered that she liked to embroider, so from time to time I bought dresser scarves and pillow cases with stamped designs and she was very content stitching with colored embroidery floss.

School banking was a scheduled weekly activity. Tuesday was Bank Day and the children brought their pennies and nickels. They proudly watched their small bank accounts grow. Parents, too, showed fine cooperation in this activity, for they understood the

importance of thrift and of saving regularly. We often had 100 per cent participation and felt very proud.

Another project of great value was the filling of the Red Cross box to be sent to needy children overseas. For days we collected nickels and pennies. Then we talked about the gift items that we would like to include in the box; things like pencils, crayons, soap, toothbrush, toothpaste, needles, thread, wash cloth, and last but not least, a small toy. One or two children were chosen to accompany the teacher to shop for the items while others enjoyed the privilege of packing them carefully into the special box. In this way the children learned first hand the joy of sharing. One year, we received in return, a little gift from the children in Greece. It was a small box of currants. I made currant cookies so we all enjoyed the treat.

The library bus visited our school regularly about once a month. When it came, the children were free to go in and select the books they liked. Sometimes we would get one or two stereoscopes and several sets of cards to view. The children especially enjoyed these when the noon hours were too cold to play outdoors.

Once a month I would go to the High School Library to select a box of books for our classroom. I tried to choose these very carefully keeping the children's special needs in mind. I always included some old favorites that I liked to read to the children.

Miss Charlotte Hunter was our Elementary Supervisor. When she came to visit us she always brought one or two new books to show the children and to foster their interest in reading. We had neither radio or T.V. so reading was very important in providing background of information, opening new horizons and for enjoyment.

I was often invited to visit the families of my students. One visit stands out in my mind. This family had a new baby so the teacher must come to see him. I was warmly welcomed and the family was so pleased to see me. I not only observed close family ties, but I also discovered the great respect the children had for their parents and the very deep respect both the parents and children had for their teacher.

Discipline in these early days of teaching seemed no problem. Since parents provided strong discipline in the home, children came to school showing consideration and respect for their teacher. Parents backed their teachers so a reprimand in school was most often followed by another one at home.

Birthdays were regularly celebrated by an all class party. The birthday cake, furnished by the special birthday child's mother, was the special treat. Games were enjoyed and we all helped to make this a very special occasion for the child.

Christmas was a very special holiday. The children were kept very busy making decorations for the room and for the tree. At the same time there were verses to be memorized, songs to be learned, little plays to be rehearsed and folk dances to be perfected. Each child had a part and to the parent the part his child played was a very special part.

Parents came from miles around to see their children perform and always went home with a feeling of pride and joy. There were no electric lights on our tree, but it was filled with ornaments and gay chains the children had made and hung on the tree themselves. It was a very beautiful tree and reflected their joy. There were gifts beneath it too, for the children had drawn names and had bought little gifts for one another, as was the custom. Santa, too, usually made his appearance and brought bags of candy for them. Yes, Christmas

was a very joyous time for the children!

Music and art were usually group activities. The children enjoyed keeping the room decorated. They would often help one another. The older children acted as teacher aids as they helped their younger brothers and sisters complete their projects. Music was enjoyed by every member of the class and we often ended the day by singing our favorites together. Singing often accompanied some of our simple folk dances and the children seemed to perform better because they sang as they danced.

Children enjoyed the regularly scheduled spell-downs. They would study very hard for the winners were rewarded with small prizes and that especially pleased them.

One of the last days of school we were transported to Bennett Park for our annual picnic. This was an all day affair and was the big event of the year. The children brought their own picnic lunches consisting of sandwiches, cookies and milk. Later we played games and visited the little zoo in the park. The monkeys were always favorites. Then we took our special walk to Silver's store in Park Addition where the children were treated to ice-cream cones. A happy ending to our school year!

ELEMENTARY EDUCATION General Information

In the early days of Hibbing there were a large number of elementary schools. They were as follows:

In North Hibbing: Washington Elementary School, Jefferson Elementary School.

In South Hibbing: Alice School and later Cobb-Cook School.

Outlying Schools: Brooklyn, Glen, Kitzville, Mitchell, Pool, Webb, Morton, Leetonia, Mahoning, Stevenson, Kelly

Lake, Maple Hill, Brown, Lynwood, Swandale and Townline.

In several of the elementary schools there were teacherages. Those I remember were in the Brooklyn, Alice and Kelly Lake schools.

Citizenship classes were often held in these elementary schools in the evenings. Elementary teachers often taught these classes. Miss Edna Stewart, a High School History teacher, was in charge of this program.

As radio began to become more popular, the elementary teachers were asked to contribute programs. Some of these programs were performed live, while others were taped. I remember my students putting on a live musical type program when I taught in Kitzville. Later, my first grade students at Cobb-Cook School put one on tape for our local station.

Some of our early principals serving in the elementary schools were Lillian Samuelson at Leetonia, Mary Brown at Kitzville, Lee Erickson at Brooklyn, William Landis at Alice, Dorothy Fluke and later Paul Weld at Cobb-Cook. Often these principals were teaching-principals so their time was divided between two duties. Teachers serving in these elementary schools were often assigned a two or more grade combination. (At Townline I taught grades one through six).

Some of the early school supervisors I remember were Miss Charlotte Hunter, Elementary Supervisor; Gertrude Schumacher, Art; Miss Baker, Mrs. Florence Doyle and later Miss Katherine Hessler, Music; Miss Ruth Raleigh and later Miss Laura Thibideau, Physical Educ.; Dr. Karl Nolte succeeded Miss Hunter when she retired.

Superintendents I remember beginning in 1924-1925 were C.C. Alexander, J. W. Richardson, and Sidney Patchin. Later we had James Michie, George Eddie and currently E. W.

Aggers.

There was no hot lunch program in the early days, but often free hot soup was served to the children carrying bag lunches. This soup was prepared in one central location, the High School, and then sent out daily to the outlying schools.

Students' school desks were commonly the stationary type with no adjustment possible. Teachers did their best to try to place each child in a comfortable desk. Each desk had an inkwell and the Palmer Method of cursive writing prevailed. Manuscript writing in the first grade was not introduced until some years later (About 1933-1934 as I recall).

In the early days, transportation for the teachers was usually by school bus or by street car. One street car operated between North Hibbing and the new part of Hibbing, then known as Alice. Another operated between Hibbing and Chisholm. The teachers teaching at Kitzville rode on this one.

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(Courtesy of the Hibbing
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