

Valentine School, 1857-195?, Michigan Avenue

Location: North side of U.S. 12 between State Street and Saline, Michigan (next to Crispen Chevrolet), in its original location.

Note: This account was written by the students attending Valentine School during 1942-1943 (and deposited in the Bentley Historical Library).

The Valentine School is located in Fractional School District No. 7 and York No. 3 on the North side of U.S. 112 (now U.S. 12) between State Street and Saline, Michigan.



The School received its name from Luke Valentine who was the moderator of the school district in 1841. His farm was located across from the school land. This property now belongs to Dan Hertler.

The first school was located on the land belonging to G.W. Forten. The first schoolhouse cost \$250.

For several years they discussed moving the site of the school to C. Pope estate and it was finally moved in 1857 to the present location.



The present building is a frame building 85 years old (as of 1941) 21 ft. by 27 ft. not less than 11 feet between floor and ceiling. It is a one-room building with a hall. There are 4 windows -- 2 on each side. It cost \$300 for the school and \$25

for the land for the site.

There is no record as to type of the first building but since the records show that \$255 was raised to build the school, one would assume that it was not to be log.

In the early building there was a table for the teacher and benches for the scholars. Later on there was an organ. The stove was then in the middle of the room and the entrance was from the north. There were no lamps and there was no paper on the walls. They were left plain plaster.

Now the stove is jacketed and in the rear of the room. The entrance is from a hall in the Southern end. The school is painted and papered and electric lights have been installed. There is a piano, a victrola, individual desks for the pupils and a teacher's desk and chair. There are many files and cupboards made for material.

In 1837 when the first building was erected, Pittsfield No. 7 was combined with York 3. The building was placed on G.W. Forten's land and, according to reports, it stood on the north side of Bemis Road, across from the present day Fosdick School. This school was only temporary as they only leased the land and evidently planned to move it later into Pittsfield. They discussed moving it in 1838-1841-1844-1845 and finally received a unanimous vote in 1856. It was decided in 1857 to sell the old school house and change its site to the C. Pope estate and buy the land from him.

On 4 October 1846, the records show us that there were 28 children between the ages of 4 to 18 and by April of the next year there were 30 scholars. In 1848 there were 61 scholars.

In October 1838, they voted to hire a qualified teacher for 4 months. In 1843 they decided to have winter school with a male teacher for 3 months and summer school. In 1847 it was decided to have 26 days allowing the teacher one day each alternate week. The teacher was to teach 24 days a month. In 1857 they voted four months winter school and four months summer school. In 1873 they voted that they should have no school for the winter of 1874 and 3 months summer school. In 1879 they started school on October 1 for 6 months. They began spring school in 1884. In 1886 they had 9 months of school, and deviated from 7 to 9 months until 1902, when it remained 9 months.

In the earlier times there were no grades. The children studied from books they brought from home. Often they studied Latin and Algebra in the rural school. In 1889 they had a special meeting to arrange for uniform textbooks according to school law. It was decided that each scholar should buy their own textbooks. In 1894 the following books were given as approved.



Harpers Readers

Swintons Grammar

Swintons Language

Harrington Spellers

Spencerians Copy Books

Barns U.S. History

Townsend's Civil Government

Robinson's Arithmetic

Harpers Geography

Steeles Geography

The organ was bought in 1901 and 1902 for \$25.90 and the wood house was built in 1903 costing \$38.24 and a dictionary and stand for \$11.50 in 1908.

There have been entertainments at the school each Christmas. During the Christmas of 1930 and 1931 there were only a few scholars, and so they combined with the Roberts School in giving their play. In 1940 the children gave a marionette show for Easter and Christmas. There was an Achievement Night held in spring of several different years in which the children showed things they had accomplished during the year and put on a program

In 1939 the school won first prize at the Music Festival for their Toy Rhythm Band. The instruments they made themselves. In 1940 they won on the Marionettes. In 1940 they also won the cup of the Future Farmers for their rhythm band.

As of 1943, there is a Civic Health Club and the girls belong to the 4H club even though there are only 4 scholars. This is the smallest the school has been for a long time. In 1873 there was only one pupil whose name was Estella Tate.

The road U.S. 112 which passes the school was at one time a plank road, which extended from Detroit to Saline. There was a tollgate near Saline, which was later moved to the edge of the district. It cost \$.01 a mile per horse to pass through the tollgate.

The social gatherings of earlier days consisted of parties or dances held in the various homes.

These are the names of some of the old teachers that taught at Valentine School and those up to the present time.

1843 Rachael Valentine

1844 A. Gordon (winter)

1844 M. Hamlin (summer)

1846 Mary Newton

1846 Chester Church

1847 Mary Hamlin

1848 Miss Stelson

1852 O. Gergory

1853 H.E. Smith
1853 Suzan Hammond
1893 Nellie Isbell
1899 Clara Sturm
1908 Luella Nissley
1909 Margaret VanDuzek
1919 Stella Westphal
1921 Marion Rouse
1921 Clara Shroen
1926 Mary Horton
1927 Mary Horton
1928 Lucille April
1929 Lucille April
1930 Melvina Anthony
1931 Melvina Anthony
1932 Ada Mae Bachman
1933 Ada Mae Bachman
1934 Ada Mae Bachman Harwood
1935 Ada Mae Bachman Harwood
1936 Melvina Anthony
1937 Wilma Weiner
1938 Katherine Fleming
1939 Katherine Fleming
1940 Katherine Fleming
1941 Katherine Fleming
1942 Melvina Anthony

The Children in school during the year 1940-1941 were:

Catherine Burger -- 7th Grade

Janice Rentschler -- 7th Grade

Ronald Rentschler -- 4th Grade

Robert Walston -- 2nd Grade

This ends the history report as written by the students.

Through research that I did of school records the following are the teachers for Valentine School that I found over and above those listed above. -- Julius W. Haab

1863 Wm. H. Harwood

1865 Helen O'Brien

1865 May Herbaye

1866 Emma R. Kerr

1867 Louise Cobb

1867 Minervia Kerr

1868 Charles Prestin

1873 M. E. Phillips

1873 Mary Herbaye

1874 E. G. Gill

1875 Mary Herbaye

1876 Mary Herbaye

1880 Luther Shepard

1880 Mrs. M. Briggs

1881 Mrs. H. Briggs

1881 Miss Millie Harry

1881 Jessie Lawrence

1882 W. B. Gildast

1883 Miss N. Holmes

1884 Miss Alice Wheeler

1884 Miss Nellie Avery

1885 Miss Etta Baker

1885 Miss Aggie Clark

1886 Miss Allie Isbell

1886 Miss Minnie Ruckman
1887 Miss Mary Schaffer
1887 Miss Addie Avery
1888 Miss Jennie E. Caldwell
1889 Miss Estella Tate
1891 Miss Estella Tate
1893 Nellie M. Isbell
1894 Nellie M. Isbell
1895 Hattie Walker
1896 Mollie Briggs
1897 Mollie Briggs
1898 Linnie Rogers
1900 Mrs. Mary Fick
1901 Lou Mae Valentine
1902 Lou Valentine
1903 Lou Valentine
1903 Pearl Waite
1904 Amanda Sturm
1905 Amanda Sturm
1906 Amanda Sturm
1907 Mrs. Richard
1907 Eva Sellen
1908 Eva Sellen
1908 Luella Nissly
1909 Agnes Welsh
1910 Margaret Vanduzen
1911 K. Luella Kyte
1912 Miss Thema P. Schnirring
1913 Miss Thema P. Schnirring

1914 Louisa Woelper

1925 Alma Graf

1926 Mrs. Frank Harwood

Source: Pittsfield Township records, box 1, Bentley Historical Library, University of Michigan. This entry is from a history of Washtenaw County Schools written by students in the schools and loaned to the Bentley Historical Library by Julius W. Haab, County Superintendent, August 1943. It has been edited slightly for inclusion on the Pittsfield Township Historical Society Website.