

Chapter IX

Early School Days

A one room school was the common source of all educational provisions in our early days, when the school year was often shorter than today. Students attended during the winter months, but often in the spring and summer they helped on their parents' farms. In theory, school was limited to months when the need for farm help was less.

Early Springettsbury Township schools were small. Some had only one room. These early schools are known: Millers, Stony Brook, Witmers, Glades, Mt. Zion, Pleasureville, and Lefevers.

In 1912, Lefevers was torn down and the Hiestand School was built. Sketches about these schools have been written from available information.

From a York County and City directory of teachers and school directors, we find that for the school year 1905-1906 in Springettsbury Township, these teachers were employed for a seven-month term at a monthly rate of \$38: Nora Wolf, Abbottstown; Clara G. Wolf, Abbottstown; O.H. Conway, Stony Brook; H.W. Lehr, York; Ruth E. Cooke, Dillsburg; Ozella M. Sweeney, York; Ora M. Boyle, York; Frank Snyder, York; Martin Heiland, York; and John Innerst, Springet. The school directors for that year were: President William Nye, Springetts; Secretary Jere Miller, Springetts; Treasurer Henry F. Dietz, Springetts; Members Jacob A. Landis, Springetts; Daniel Heidelbaugh, Springetts; and Charles B. Snyder, Springetts.

In the school year 1906-1907, these teachers earned \$35 per month for a seven-month term: Roy C. Brown, York R.F.D. 7; Frank B. Snyder, York; John M. Innerst, Springetts; Martin B. Heiland, York R.F.D. 7; J. Wiley Thompson, Stewartstown; B.F. Kauffman, Dallastown. School directors were President Daniel Heidelbaugh, Springetts; Secretary Charles R. Snyder, York R.F.D. 5; Treasurer William W. Nye, York R.F.D. 7; Members Jacob A. Landis, York R.F.D. 12; Jeremiah Miller, York R.F.D. 7; and Henry F. Dietz, Stony Brook.

By the school year 1911-1912 in Springettsbury Township, the teachers were earning from \$40 to \$50 monthly. The average attendance was 87 percent. The average cost of each pupil per month for the year ending the first Monday of July 1911 was \$1.66. Also, the number of children between the ages of six and sixteen years was 379. Teachers at that time were C.W. Gemmil, Windsor; W.S. Gemmill, Windsor; Helen Gable, York; Bessie Beaverson, R.F.D. 7; John Innerts, R.F.D. 5; O.H. Altland, R.F.D. 5; Virginia Billet, R.F.D. 10; M.B. Heiland, R.F.D. 5; Mabel Stine, York; Viola Nelker, York; D.F. Abel, Stony Brook. The school board directors for the year were: President William Dietz, Stony Brook; Secretary Jacob Beaverson, R.F.D. 7; Treasurer E.S. Beaverson, R.F.D. 7; Members John C. Miller, R.F.D. 7; and A.N. Diehl, R.F.D. 5. Taxes for school purposes were 2 ½ mills.

During these years, Dr. N.C. Schaeffer was State Superintendent of Public Instruction, C.W. Stine was York County Superintendent, and A. Warner was City Superintendent.

Just for reference, Woodrow Wilson was elected in 1912 and World War I was brewing among many nations.

East York at this time was a suburb with few automobiles and few roads, aside from the city streets.

Three men had a vision of promoting a better education for the children of this area. These three men were: Colonel John S. Hiestand, John Longstreet, and Curvin Baumeister. Their leadership helped create Springettsbury Independent School District, which included Longstown, Yorkshire, and Hiestand Schools. John Longstreet donated land to build the Hiestand School, named for Colonel Hiestand, who lived in the "Maples." This school is now known as the Autumn House. The Hiestand School replaced Lefever's School, which was located in the area of Haines Road and Eastern Boulevard. It was built as a two-room school with electricity, running water, and indoor bathrooms. The Hiestand School remained a two-room school for fifteen years until two more rooms were added in 1927.

The court-appointed school board directors at the time the new school district was created were: Robert Frey, Mahlon Haines, Geroge Stallman, James Poorbaugh, and Clayton Dietz.

In a personal interview, Ms. Arlene Dietz Imes stated that she attended Hiestand School from 1922 to 1929. Her father, local blacksmith Clayton Dietz, made a metal flagpole for the school. A ceremony was held for the installation of this flagpole while Arlene was a student at Hiestand School. She especially remembered their annual, lovely May Day programs and, each year at Yuletide, their special Christmas programs.

In 1937, Mrs. Imes became a teacher at Hiestand, which by then was a six-room school. She taught there for six years.

In 1942, she started classes for homebound students and devoted the next 28 years to teaching the physically handicapped in York City schools.

Mrs. Margaret Crist was a student and then a teacher at Hiestand School. Arietta Stambach, mother of Margaret, taught school at Hiestand in early 1940s for ten years and then taught the second grade for 20 more years at Yorkshire. She enjoyed teaching and said this was a nice community with nice people. Mrs. Crist remained in the Springettsbury Independent School District until the late 1940s.

When the York Suburban School District was formed in 1955, the schools from the Independent School District merged with it. The remaining schools in Springettsbury Township became part of the Central School District. When Hiestand School integrated, grades seven and eight went to Phineas Davis Junior High School and Hiestand then became a six-grade school.

Just as the Springettsbury Independent School District was separated from the Springettsbury Township School Districts long ago, it remains apart from that group of schools as a member of the York Suburban School District.

With the area becoming more densely populated, the PTA adopted a project to determine the number of children who had to cross Market Street to attend school. In 1951, the PTA hired its own crossing guard, Mr. Charles Swigert, to stand guard at Royal and Market Streets. A year later, Mr. George Street began helping the children safely cross the busy highway, a job he performed for the next 25 years. Sixth graders served as "safeties" at the other crossings.

The Suburban School Board decided to close Hiestand School after 66 years of community service for financial reasons and because of declining enrollment. A special farewell picnic was held May 23, 1978, and the school was closed in June of that year.

After closing as a school, the Hiestand building was used by various groups, churches, and Christian fellowships.

Austin Stiles was the first principal of Hiestand School. In 1912, the first teachers were Florence Cleavers and Hazel Quigley. Miss Florence Cleaver had grades one to four. Miss Hazel Quigley had grades five to eight.

Another noteworthy teacher in the one-room schools of Springettsbury Township was Mary H. Lloyd, who retired in 1977 after teaching for 33 years. She taught for seven years in the one-room Witmer School.

Mary says she wanted to teach from the time she was a little girl. She did housework in a private home to put herself through college and feels her years of service to young people were "a great privilege." Mary liked children and felt it was a challenge to get them to like school and to appreciate "their parents, other people, and their country." She taught her brother, daughter, and granddaughter at Pleasureville.

Mrs. Lloyd instilled her love for and devotion to her profession in her daughters. Her children who became teachers include: Rebecca L. Hester, daughter; Christine M. Test, daughter; and Carla Werner, granddaughter (the child of Mrs. Test).

"A teacher must make learning fun, not drudgery," says Mrs. Lloyd, who feels the most important qualities a teacher can have are "caring, respect, and love."

In 1946, there were five one-room schools in the district while the Pleasureville School had four rooms. All were operated on a budget of \$45,000 a year.

When Ralph Cannon, a member of the Springettsbury Township school Board, died suddenly, Leslie Clough, Jr. was appointed to fill the position left vacant. A few years later Mr. Clough was elected secretary to replace Dan Hursh. At that time, the operation of the school system conducted from Mr. Clough's dining room involved interviewing and hiring teachers, ordering textbooks, and buying coal for the schools' pot-bellied stoves. (One coal dealer offered to fill Mr. Clough's coal bin if he would order the school system's needs from him. He declined.) Mrs. Clough, who often assisted, wrote up the tax book annually for Tax Collector C.C. Innerst. More often than not, Mrs. Clough found it easier to go herself as a substitute teacher than to find others available and qualified to take over when needed. Mrs. Clough's biggest problem was keeping the coal fires alive. Many times a call would come to Mr. Clough's office announcing, "The fire is out. It's cold in here."

The first modern township school, located adjacent to the township offices, was built on fifteen acres purchased from Alva Long, with the provision that his grandchildren might attend this school tuition free, even though they lived on the South side of Whiteford Road in the Independent District. Young Russ Horn of Buchart's was the field engineer, and the school board worked with him to build the best schoolhouse possible. They used less than a ton of steel in the building, most of it lintels over the windows and doors. The rest was wood and brick.

The opening of Springettsbury Elementary School in September 1952 resulted in the closing of all the one-room schools, and that was "progress." The Witmer School, for example, never had electricity installed. When it was too dark for the children to see, teacher Erma Daron would sit close to a window and read to the children.

The next change was the formation of the Central Joint School System, now York Central, in 1952. Mel Rife, of the North York School District, and Mr. Clough, secretary of the Springettsbury School Board, got the two school boards together and convinced them that there was every advantage in joining forces. North York had a high school that was far from full, and Springettsbury had none. Most of the township's girls and boys went to William Penn on a tuition basis. Mel Rife was elected president of the new school system and Mr. Clough was secretary until he retired in December 1954.

Mr. Clough relates: "For five days a week my noon hour as an engineer at the "York's" (Borg-Warner) was spent at the North York, now Central, High School. A secretary typist there would have my lunch ready on my desk and I'd read mail and dictate replies as I munched on a sandwich. This was my daily routine for four more years.

“My pay as secretary was \$250 a year for all my noon hours and an average of three evenings a week. Hoping to be fired, I demanded \$1000 a year and it was granted without question. In fact, the board made it \$1200 a year, thinking that \$1000 was insufficient!”

When the school board was applying to Harrisburg for permission to form the jointure, Mr. Clough, as secretary, asked for suggestions for a name. When none was produced from the floor-and since there were already Northern, Northeastern, and Southern School Districts-“Central” seemed to be a simple and logical answer, so that it was and still is today.

Central York District encompasses students from Springettsbury Township neighborhood areas of Stony Brook, Wilshire Hills, Yorklyn, North Hills, and Pleasureville. The York Suburban District includes students from Springettsbury Township neighborhood areas of East York, Fayfield, Haines Acres, and Yorkshire.

The Central York School District

Mr. C. Clinton Ruby, a resident of Springettsbury Township, was appointed supervising principal of the Central York School District in September 1952, and became the first chief school administrator of the new jointure.

In September of 1952, the Springettsbury School was opened. In July of 1954, the Central York school system was reorganized. Central High School's first graduating class numbered 86. An addition to the Pleasureville Elementary School was completed in May 1955. In September 1957, North Hills Elementary School building was completed, and the school's doors were opened to students. The North Hills Junior High School located on North Hills Road, provided a grade 7, 8 and 9 program and was opened in 1957.

An addition to North Hills Elementary School was completed in September 1964. In 1966, Stony Brook Elementary School was opened and the district opened its first kindergarten.

In 1967, Central York School District joined with other districts in York County to form the York County Vocational Technical Schools to provide vocational training and experience for students of the county.

The first superintendent of the district, C. Clinton Ruby, retired in July 1970, and Dr. H. Richard Brothers was appointed to replace him.

The Springettsbury Elementary School was closed to pupil enrollment in 1977. The building is now being used under a lease arrangement by York Technical School.

Dr. H. Richard Brothers resigned as superintendent in August 1979. Dr. William C. Snyder replaced him in October of that year.

The Pleasureville Elementary School was closed in June 1982. The following September, North Hills Junior High School became Central York Middle School.

A major addition and renovation of the North Hills Elementary School is in progress and is scheduled for completion in September 1991.

The York Suburban School District

The school buildings in this district include: East York Elementary School on Erlen Drive and the York Suburban Middle School on Sundale Drive.

The York Suburban School District is composed of the part of Springettsbury Township known as Springettsbury Independent School District. The Joint School System

incorporates grades kindergarten through 12. This school district is adjacent to the city of York.

In 1990, the York Suburban School District consists of one kindergarten center, two elementary schools, one middle school (comprised of grades six, seven, and eight), and one high school. There is a vocational technical school opportunity for students after completing the ninth grade and a diversified occupations program for York Suburban students in eleventh and twelfth grades.

The current superintendent of schools is Dr. Robert Dovey.

Dr. Crandall

The late C. Robert Kopp, a patent medicine manufacturer of "Kopp's Baby Friend", built the old Kopp Mansion on Lincoln Highway East near Stony Brook in 1906. This patent medicine became the subject of federal investigation resulting in the termination of its manufacture.

Built at a reputed cost of about \$80,000, its first floor contained a library, dining room, kitchen, butler's pantry, maid's room, solarium, and an immense reception hall, which also doubled as a living room. The second floor contained 20 bedrooms and baths. A large ballroom was on the third floor. This ballroom was said to have been converted into sleeping quarters for guests.

It was said the health school could accommodate 45 guests. Mr. Kopp sold the mansion to Dr. Crandall in 1923. He operated the health school until his death.

Following the sudden death of George C. Crandall, April 27, 1949, on the golf course, his school was operated by his estate and administered by his son, John. John's mother, Mrs. Helen Crandall, played a part in the administration of the school.

In 1949, it was twice offered for sale, but negotiations were unsuccessful.

On November 25, 1949, at seven o'clock in the morning, fire destroyed the Dr. Crandall's Health School. The origin of the fire was undetermined. The Georgian type mansion was a total loss. A passing motorist observed the blazing roof, stopped at Stony Brook Garage, and told them of the fire. A mechanic at the garage phoned Springetts Fire Company. Within an hour after the blaze was discovered, the mansion was a total loss.

There was no loss of life and no known injuries. A guest and caretaker there was Captain Jonathan Jeremiah Joshua Jenks, Crandall's secretary for 26 years, said to be a retired army officer. Other guests were Mrs. Nettie Lanard, wife of a prominent Philadelphia attorney; Edward Thomas McKelbey of Lancaster County; and the housekeeper, Mrs. Sarah Brenneman, formerly of Wisconsin. All were removed to the York County Home.