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[Madison, Wisconsin]: Thoreau Parent Teacher Organization, 1982

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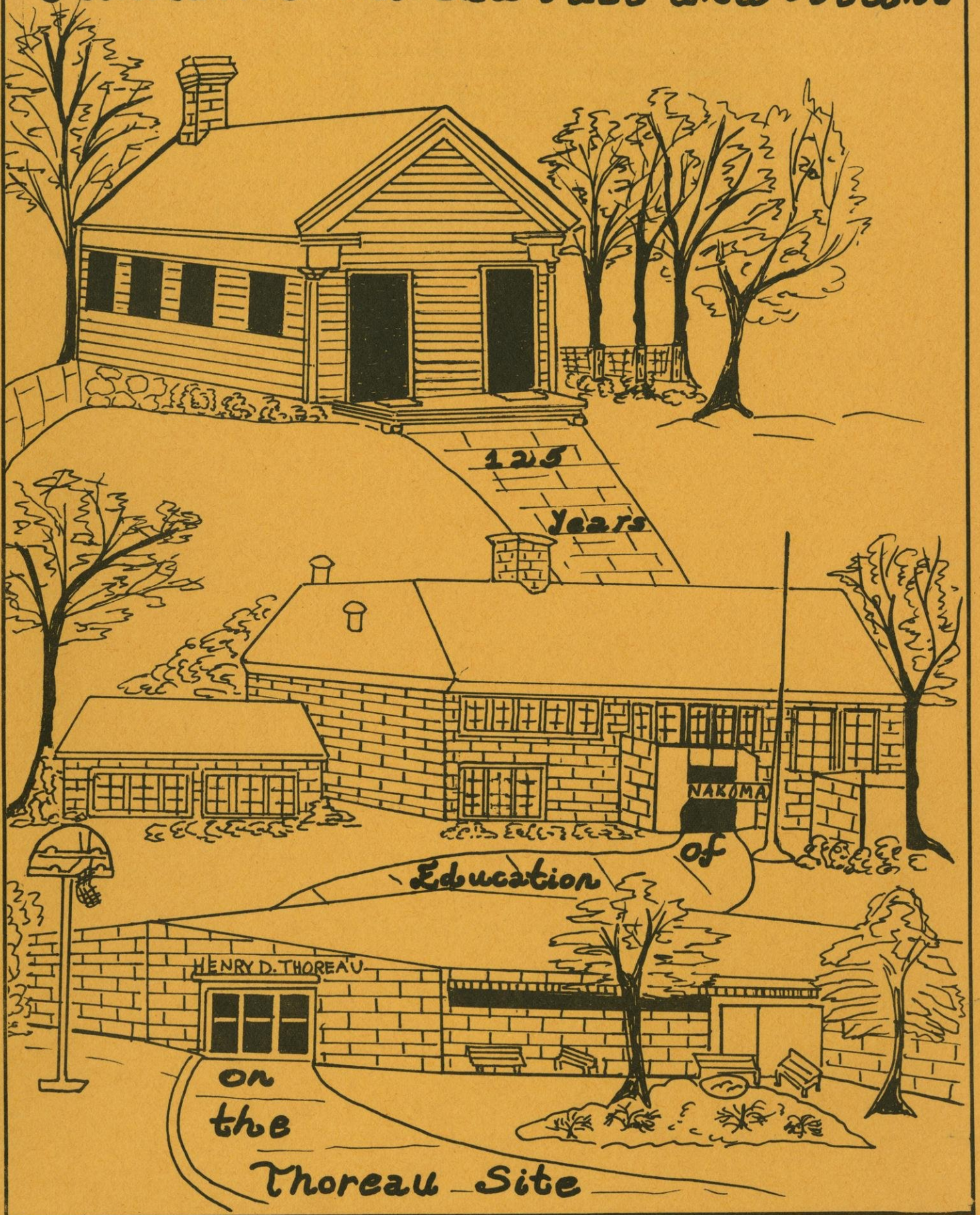
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Madison's Thoreau Past and Present



This booklet could not have been published without the cooperative financial support of several organizations. We wish to thank the Thoreau School Parent-Teacher Organization, Dudgeon-Monroe Neighborhood Association, Dunn's Marsh Neighborhood Association and the Nakoma League. Additionally, thanks to the parent members of the History Committee for volunteering their time to research, write and produce this booklet. Lastly, a special thanks to the teacher members of the History Committee and the rest of the Thoreau Staff for putting together an outstanding program for the students this past year. Education and history are an ongoing process and this is only the first step in recording these past events. Hopefully this booklet will spark interest in others to continue researching the past and to record the present events for posterity.

Jerry Paulson, History Committee
Jane Goemans, President, PTO

Cover Design: Lynn Conwell

Title Credit: Ed Corcoran
Ritch Stoffels

K-Print Specialties
Madison, Wisconsin
1982

Madison's Thoreau Past and Present



125 Years of Education on the Thoreau Site

Gerald H. Paulson

Thoreau Parent Teacher Organization

INTRODUCTION

The history of education on the site of Thoreau School cannot be written without first reviewing the early history of the area. The Monroe Road (Monroe Street and Nakoma Road) was a primary traffic route for both the Indian and the early settlers enroute to the mining regions of southwestern Wisconsin. For this reason, the history of early Wisconsin, Dane County and the Town of Madison are included. A brief summary of the history of education in both territory and statehood are covered. However, these sections are only briefly touched. If more information is desired, the bibliography provides our resources.

Lastly, we tried only to present fact and tried not to enter into the politics and personalities that promoted change within the school district over the years.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Many people provided us with first hand information in doing this research. We are greatly indebted to the following for sharing their knowledge of the past:

George Hammersley, alumnus	Ruth Ann Piper Dykeman
Walter Engelke, former principal	Rosa Zingg, parent
Marion Blum Sweet, alumna	Marveen Phelps, parent
Vera Hammersley Olson, alumna	Charlotte Helstad
Mary Kier, former teacher	Mary Odell
Florence Kessenich, former teacher	Jean Dyer and her
Mr. and Mrs. Fred LeFebvre, former school board member	staff, Public Information Office
Mr. and Mrs. Warren Southworth, parents	Madison Metropolitan School District

Our thanks also to Connie Villac of the Wisconsin State Journal for her continued interest and support. Also to Sue Parman for proofreading the copy.

Jerry Paulson
Polly Colby

WISCONSIN HISTORY

The state of Wisconsin was created out of the Northwest Territory. Prior to the passing of the Northwest Ordinance of 1787 the French fur traders were the only non-native residents of the area. The British later gained control of the area. The Ordinance provided an equitable method for the territory to gain territorial and statehood status based upon the population. Additionally, it provided for an orderly rectangular survey of the land into mile square units, called sections, with a regular system of numbering. A township was divided into 36 sections of 640 acres each. Sections could then be subdivided into halves, quarters, etc. This simple but adequate system of land measurement has been followed by all states and territories since that time. Wisconsin was part of the Indiana Territory from 1800 to 1809, part of the Illinois Territory from 1809 to 1818, and part of the Michigan Territory from 1818 to 1836 when it became known as Wisconsin Territory. During this period the only settlement of major population was in the lead mining region of southwestern Wisconsin. There were small populated areas on the major waterways as well: Prairie du Chien, Green Bay, the portage, that area between the Fox and Wisconsin Rivers and Milwaukee. All but Milwaukee were military garrisons.

The Black Hawk War of 1832 was the last major Indian uprising in Wisconsin and the population of the interior of the territory began increasing thereafter. Black Hawk and his tribe of Sauk had been pushed off their land at Rock Island, Illinois by the arrival of settlers. After being relocated in Iowa, Black Hawk wished to reclaim their land and live peacefully. He led a band of 1,000 Indians back across the Mississippi. The settlers panicked and the militia was alerted. Black Hawk and his followers retreated northward up the Rock River Valley, crossing into Wisconsin Territory. The Indians continued north from Lake Koshkonong thru the isthmus of Madison and on to LaCrosse where they attempted to cross the Mississippi River. They were defeated there and only about 150 of the Indians survived the ordeal.

The United States Government sent in teams of surveyors during the year of 1834 to 1836. They implemented the requirements of the Northwest Ordinance for the orderly

survey of the land. Future land sales were made much easier by this, in comparison to the difficult land boundaries of the eastern states. These early maps were drawn on linen cloth, thus if they got wet, they were easily dried out without damage. The population increased so that by 1836 Wisconsin gained territorial status and in 1848 joined the Union as the 30th state.

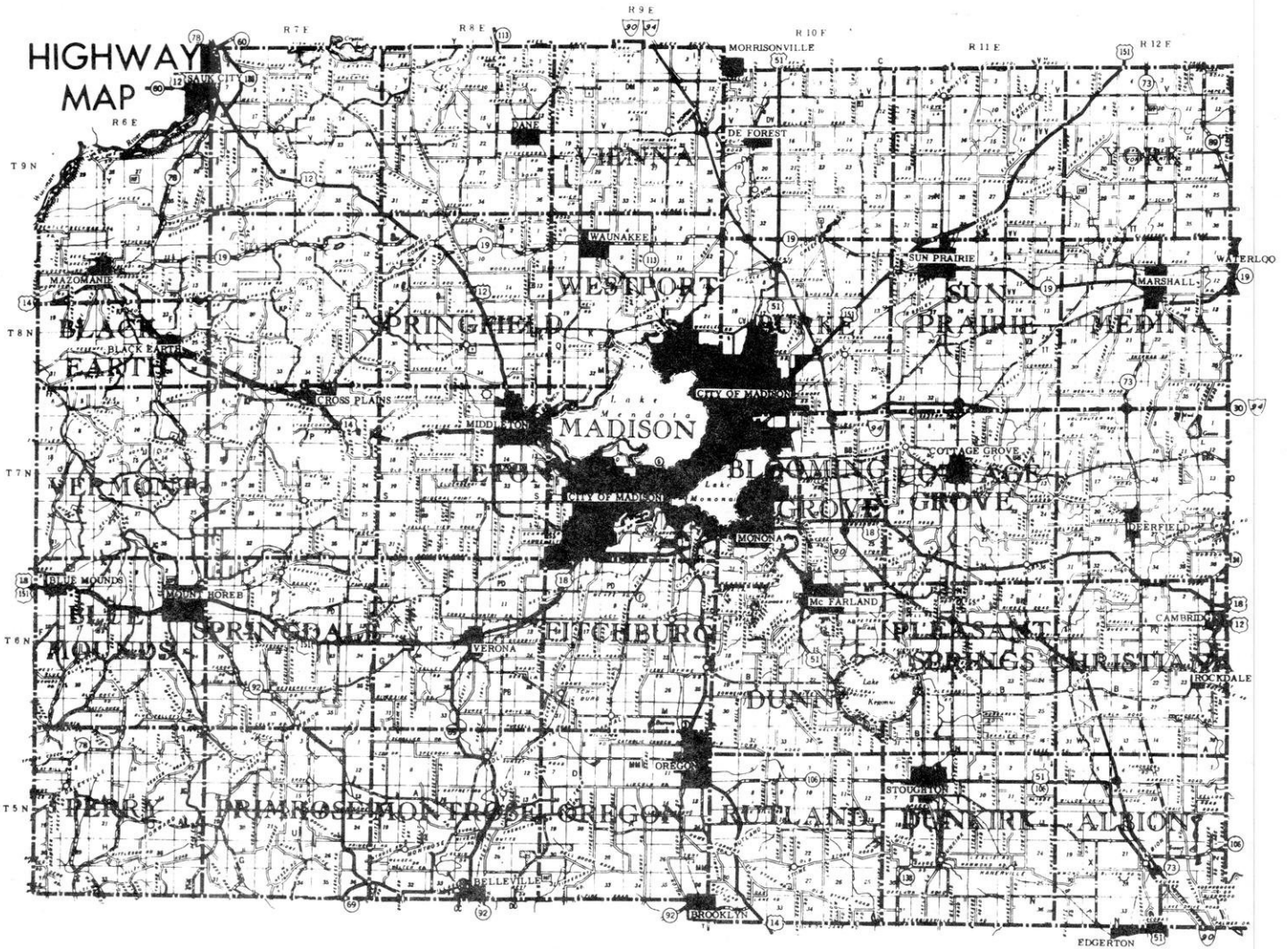
Dane County Wisconsin was set off from the western part of Milwaukee County and the eastern part of Iowa County in 1836. It was chartered as a separate county in 1839. Governor James D. Doty named this new county, Dane, in honor of Nathaniel Dane, who introduced the Northwest Ordinance to the United States Government.

Dane County was viewed as a real jewel by the first settlers. The rolling prairies of eastern Dane County were only topped by the hills and valleys of western Dane County. The soil was rich and black, the lakes and rivers most pristine. Such good land would produce great crops.

The first settlers of Dane County for the most part were Yankees. They came out from the east, mainly New York state, as the soil there had worn out from lack of crop rotation. The primary crop grown had been wheat. The Yankees continued to desire to conquer new horizons, and when crops failed due to cinch bugs and the economic panic of 1857, many of them moved westward. Large groups of people from Norway, Germany and Ireland settled here to replace the Yankees. These European peoples helped to introduce the dairy industry to our state.

The Town of Madison was the parent town of Dane County, the first named and the first organized. The Town of Madison, when first established, included all of the territory now constituting the towns of Mazomanie, Black Earth, Vermont, Blue Mounds, Perry, Primrose, Springdale, Cross Plains, Berry, Roxbury, Dane, Springfield, Verona, Middleton, Montrose, Westport, Vienna, Burke, Windsor, Blooming Grove, Cottage Grove, Pleasant Springs and Deerfield. As the population of the area increased, townships were formed so that by 1850 the present town boundaries were set. The rural area of the Town of Madison was described as follows:

"the land is undulating, generally covered with oak openings, with occasional marsh and meadow land. The latter are found south of



Dane County map showing locations of the various townships.

Lake Wingra, and on section 16 south of Lake Mendota. The soil is rich and most productive. Excellent quarries are found in some parts. The farms lead all other pursuits."

The village of Madison and the township remained as one unit of government until Madison was incorporated as a city in 1856. From that point in time, each became a separate unit of government. The area of the Town of Madison has slowly shrunk over the years as the City of Madison kept expanding. An 1861 plat map of the township shows the city boundaries approaching the area of Camp Randall. By 1911, the city had enveloped over half of the township with additional plats farther west of the city. Today, the township is scattered in small islands throughout the city. From being the largest in the county, it has finally become the smallest of the townships of the county. The Town of Madison offices are located at 2120 Fish Hatchery Road, Madison. Unfortun-

nately, the township has been overshadowed by the city so that not much history has been recorded. No churches were established in the township to shed light on its early days. Newspaper coverage of events that occurred in the township are rare indeed.

Our immediate neighborhood wasn't settled until the late 1830's and early 1840's. The first land purchased was by a man named Maurice Pixley in 1836, a land speculator. He bought the land from the United States Government Land Office and later sold it to settlers to gain a profit. This was a common practice when new territory was opened for settlement. Prior to settlement of the land, the area had long been used by Indians. The mound builder's had located 6 mounds on the Gorham property. The area of Waban Hill was known as a "dozeera", a Winnebago summer village. The Indians would spend their summers here, hunting, fishing, and growing some crops. The first settlers

were Yankees with a few English and German families as well. Farming was the principal occupation with a scattering of other small businesses that supported the agricultural community. The Indians continued to come back and spend their summers along the shore of Lake Wingra for many years after the area became settled. Some of the early settlers and the locations of their farms will now be discussed.

W. C. Colby, farmer and stock grower, Section 30; came to Madison in 1855. Born in New Hampshire in 1830; married Hannah Lawrence in Madison, 1862. He has 120 acres of land.

August Fidler, farmer, Section 32; came to Madison in 1853; a native of New York, born 1799. His first wife, Polly Clapper, bore him 7 children; his present wife, Polly Post was born New York. He has 80 acres of land.

E. C. Hammersly, farmer and stock grower, Section 31; came from England as a child in 1850. His father died of yellow fever during duty in the Civil War. E. C. took over the family operation since; he is single; his brother G. H. is in partnership with him. Together they have 160 acres of land.

Benjamin Piper, farmer and stock grower, Section 29; came to Wisconsin in 1836, and to this locale in 1855. He was born in New York in 1827; he married Amelia Webber in 1856; they have 4 children. His farm has 135 acres of land.

S. C. Post, farmer and stock, Section 30; came to this locale in 1854; a native of New York born there 1811. His first wife, Katie Miller bore him 6 children; his second wife, Mary Sanders. His farm has 150 acres.

D. G. Sheldon, farmer and stock, Sections 31 and 32; came to this locale in 1849. A native of New York, born 1823. He married Adeline Curtis, 1851 and they have 3 children. His total land holdings amounts to 240 acres.

George Larkin, farmer, Section 32; a native of this locale, born here 1844. His parents are Jonathan and Cynthia Newcomb Larkin. His wife Addie Sweet, born in New York. His farm consists of 80 acres.

William W. Swain, farmer, Section 28; came to this locale in 1869; born in Pennsylvania

in 1825; he married Roxannie West in 1852; he is the father of 3 children. He operates a 10 acre farm in addition to running the Plough Inn.

J. T. Marston, farmer, Section 28; came to this locale in 1870 when he retired; a native of New Hampshire, born 1806. His wife, a native of Vermont, is Miranda Dodge; they are parents of 3 children; his farm consists of 200 acres. (While not an early settler in our area, he was an interesting addition to the neighborhood. His home located on the site of Dudgeon School was moved to the corner of Monroe Street and Baltzell Street when the school was built)

Andrus Viall, farmer and stock, Section 33; came to Wisconsin in 1840; came to this locale in 1859; born New York in 1827; married Mary Lemon in 1847; they have 5 children. He was a well known Madison builder as well as owning 88 acres. (This land was first owned by Charles Ferris, who leased the land to the school district.)

Charles Morgan, farmer, Section 28; first built the Spring Tavern. He later sold it to the Gorham family, but continued to farm in the area.

Owen Evans, farmer, Section 28; first built the Plough Inn. He later sold it to a Whare family, and continued to operate a small farm in the area.

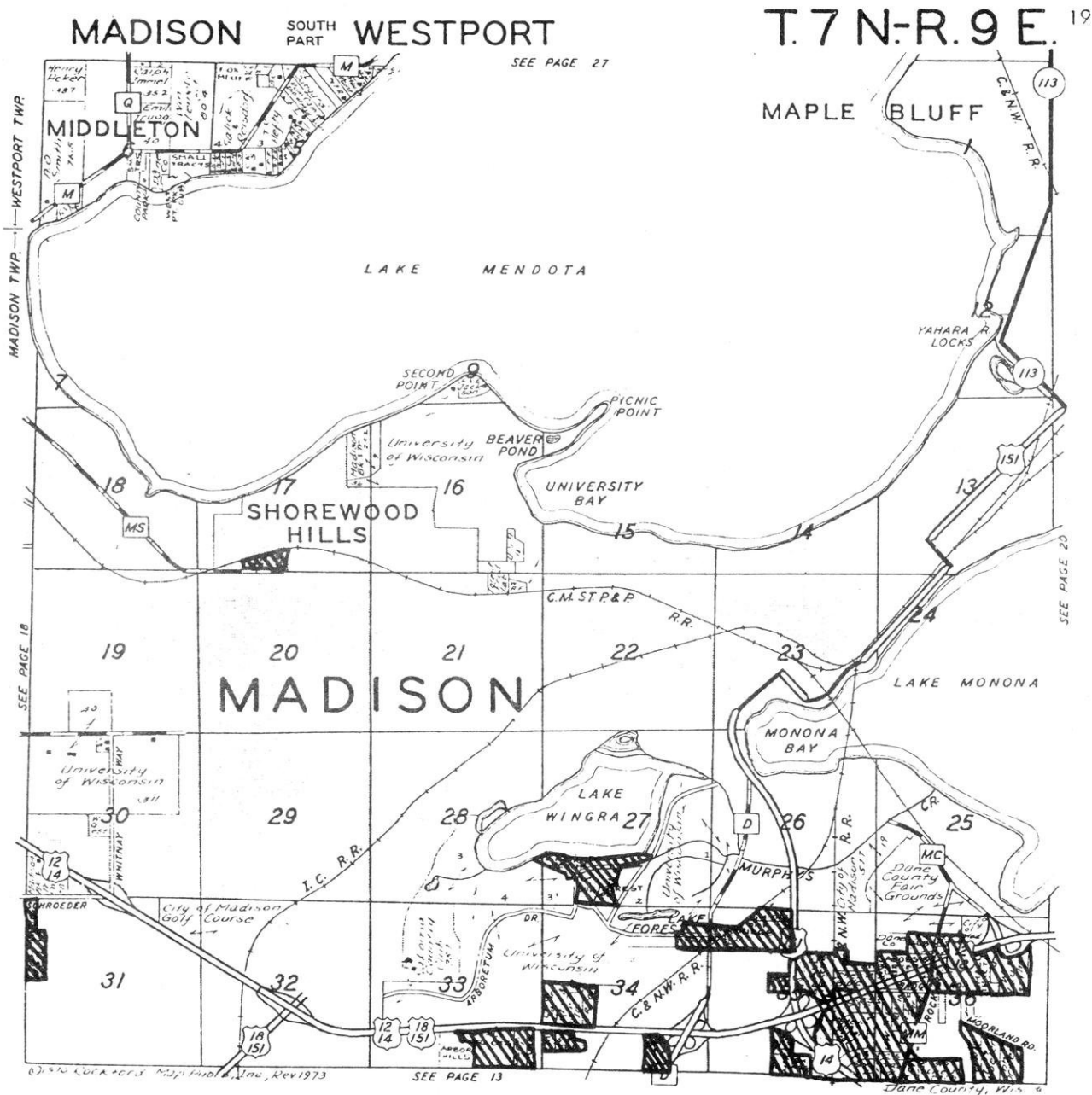
W. R. Warren, farmer, Section 28; born in state of New York in 1819; located in this area 1854; married Catherine Larkin 1849; they have 2 children. He has a farm of 100 acres.

These were some of the early settlers who were involved with the formation of the District 6 school. While there are other names that will be mentioned later, information was not readily available about them.

The main road thru our school neighborhood was the Monroe Road. This road had been an Indian trail originally and later became the major way to the southwestern part of the Wisconsin Territory. When the Spring Tavern was built, the road went on the other side of the building, so that part that faces Nakoma Road today was the backside. The road returned to its present route in the area of Huron Hill.

The area between the Tavern and what is known as the Duck Pond was low and somewhat marshy. Thus the Tavern had a clear view of the lake from the porches across the back of the building. The only other "roads" in the area were farm lanes that later developed into the present streets.

Odana Road, Glenway Street, Seminole Highway and Hammersley Road were such lanes. Going to visit a neighbor was fairly easy to do though, it was just a matter of cutting across the fields to their house.



This map shows the size of the Town of Madison. The areas labeled Middleton and Maple Bluff were also a part of the township. The lined areas indicate the areas that are still under town control.

Neighbors were very dependent on each other during the early settlement of the school neighborhood. Illness or accident could be the ruin of these farmers, so they willingly helped out when needed. Barn raising was another event that called the whole neighborhood together to complete the job quicker.

Older homes that remain within the boundaries of the old school district today will now be discussed. While this list may not be complete, it is based on the information available.

1612 Seminole Highway Albert Lamson farm home. Mr. Lamson was well known in the area as he had been taken a prisoner during the Civil War. He escaped twice and finally made it back to the Union forces. His home is now Tony Franks Tavern.

4325 Nakoma Road William Crawford farm home. As you drive west on Nakoma Road you can spot the original portion of this house. Sunnyhill Nursing Home is the present occupant.

5309 Hammersley Road George Hammersley farm home. Mr. Hammersley attended school at the Viall School. His parents home (no longer standing) was located at the site of Channel 3 on the Beltline. He served many years as Town of Madison Assessor. His wife, Clara was a member of the schoolboard. Hammersley Road named for this pioneer family. (Please note, George had an uncle also named George, that served as janitor of the school about 1930.)

4975 Hammersley Road The Charles Messerschmidt farm home. Mr. and Mrs. Messerschmidt were both active with the district school.

4718 Odana Road Charles Piper farm home. Built by his parents, this probably is the oldest home remaining in the neighborhood. Charles taught for a short time at the school and also was active in district affairs. Piper Drive, Charles Lane and Orchard Drive were named after this family.

4214 Odana Road Louis Parman farm home. Parman Terrace named after this family.

3902 Odana Road Frederick Tillatson farm home. The Tillatson's were both graduates of the school and active in the district. Frederick Lane is named for Mr. Tillatson.

3865 Nakoma Road Viall farm property. The house located here is not the original farm home, but was probably built by Viall's son Edward. He lived on the property until he sold it to the Madison Realty Company and moved to California.

749 Baltzell Street Jeremial T. Marston farm home. This brick house stood on the site of Dudgeon School. The house was moved to it's present location when Dudgeon was constructed in 1927.

3402 Monroe Street The Plough Inn. So named because one of the early owners sold farm ploughs from the sideyard. Built in the early 1850's by Owen Evans. It changed ownership several times before being owned by the Swains. While not always operated as a hotel, meals and liquor were always available. A popular stopping place for farmer coming and going to Madison. The top floor was a ballroom. Later it was converted to a private residence and currently houses Newport Galleries.

3606 Cross Street While not certain, it is thought that this house was built by John Whare. He formerly operated the Plough Inn and after selling it, continued to farm a small farm close to the Inn. This house is the only one of the age to agree with this.

3706 Nakoma Road The Spring Tavern or Gorham Hotel. Built in the early 1850's by Charles E. Morgan. He later sold it to James Gorham who operated it for many years. The Tavern only sold liquor for a short period in it's earlier days. A favorite place for the Union officers stationed at Camp Randall to meet and dance with the young ladies of the area. Mrs. Gorham was known near and wide for her coffee and tollhouse cookies. The Gorhams also operated a brick kiln in the area of the Duck Pond. The Gorham family owned the Tavern until 1925. The William Stephens have owned the property since 1939.

SCHOOL HISTORY

Another provision of the Northwest Ordinance was the encouragement of schools. The Ordinance provided that section 16, of each township, be preserved for the maintenance of public school, within said township. While still a part of the Michigan Territory, a statute required legal obligation to maintain schools, supported in part by general property taxation. Needless to say, the area that was to become Wisconsin, being far removed from the territorial government in Michigan, paid little attention to such a law. Also, the population of the area was so scattered that it was difficult to operate schools.

The first schools in Wisconsin were run by Jesuit missionaries to teach the Indians. Later on, at Green Bay and Prairie du Chien, "subscription" schools were held. People who wished to have their children attend would promise to pay the teacher for the term. These schools were sporadic and held only if someone wandered into town interested in teaching. The quality of the teacher many times was questionable. They would resort to teaching school only if no other work could be obtained. Many times the parents would default on their payments and the school would close. The following letter addressed to John Lawe and Louis Grignon of Green Bay and dated October 17, 1820 shows the qualification of such a teacher:

"Gentlemen,-as I have meniond to you boath, that I intend to keep school being the onley means for a Liveleyhood. I shall con sider it a great Obligation if you will favour me in obtaining Scholar, which I promis to do & act faithfully my duty as a school Master toward them &c.

Respectfully, Gentlemen your

J. B. S. Jacobs" (sic)

The issue of public education was never truly resolved during the years of the Wisconsin Territory. The district school plan, which will be described later, was implemented though not acted upon. This system was modeled after the State of Massachusetts plan. The territorial legislature debated the issue but could not reach a decision. When the Wisconsin Constitutional Conventions were held, the issue of public education drew much debate. Michael Frank of Southport (now Kenosha) was a strong supporter of public education. He had pioneered it for Southport and led the fight at the conventions. Finally the issue passed and was incorporated into Article 10 of the state Constitution.

The original plan of allocating section 16 of each township for supporting its own schools, made it almost a lottery since chance determined the value of the section. The section might be good for agricultural purposes or it might be swamp or under water. To solve this problem a plan was implemented placing all lands into one state fund called the Common School Fund. Along with other land grants, Wisconsin had 1,705,622 acres available for the Common School Fund. The control of this land was vested in a Board

of Commissioners consisting of the Secretary of State, State Treasurer and Attorney General. The omission of the State Superintendent of Public Instruction from this board was a serious mistake and a mismanagement of the fund. The monies realized from the sale or rental of this land was to help support public education. The amount of money a school district could receive was determined by the school population of that area, between the ages of 4 and 20 years. Anxious to convert land to cash in as short of time as possible, most of the land was squandered away at much less than its appraised value. Also, some of the individuals involved in the actual sale of the land were of questionable character. Much of the land ended up being sold for less than the government price of \$1.25 an acre. The legislature of 1856 appointed a committee to investigate, but unfortunately it was too late. The School Fund sustained great losses due to embezzlement, fraud and misrepresentation. Much as the Superintendent of Public Instruction complained, he did not have a voice on the board, so his cries went unheeded. The next blow came during the Civil War when the legislature voted to turn monies in the School Fund over to supply and support the Union troops from Wisconsin. These bonds were not realized after the war ended and it wasn't until 1915 that the legislature decided that the state was obligated to pay back this debt. Comparing other states to Wisconsin it is obvious that much money that would have been available to support public education was lost.

State statute dictated that control of the school be on the town level. The town superintendent had the authority to locate the school districts, supervise the schools, examine the teachers and to levy the necessary tax for the support of the schools. The town superintendent was soon replaced by a county superintendent which provided a more uniform system. The major problem that remained was the fact that the superintendent did not visit the schools on a regular basis. They were paid on a per diem basis, so the fewer days they functioned, the less their expense. That looked good on their record when it came time to be reelected. Some of the reasons given in their annual reports are amusing: the horse was sick, the roads impassable, too much farm work or just not feeling well. Dane County had two superintendents, one for the eastern portion (District 1) and one for the western portion (District 2) of the

county.

The local school district was governed by 3 people elected for 3 year terms. Each township would usually have 5 to 6 school districts depending on the population and geography of the township. The districts were to be arranged so that no child would be more than 1 to 2 miles away from the schoolhouse. State statute dictated that a newly formed district could apply to the School Fund for monies to help build and furnish a school. A group of legal voters would petition the county superintendent stating that they wished to form a school district. Upon his approval, officers would be elected, a school built and a teacher hired. The terms of office for the district officers were alternated so 1 new person needed to be elected at the annual district meeting. The officers and their duties are as follows:

Clerk--took minutes of all meetings
filed annual reports with
county superintendent and
hired the teachers

Treasurer--handled the financial
aspect of running the
district, payed the bills,
collected the taxes and
received the school moneys
apportioned to the district

Director--acted as the voice of
the people of the district,
co-signed the orders of
the treasurer and assisted
in whatever manner the other
officers.

The whole board had charge of the schoolhouse and all district properties. They also had the say as to what books were used and approved the course of study. In all reality, each district operated as an independent empire picking and choosing the quality of the education the students would receive.

The annual meeting of all legal voters of the school district would take care of the business to operate the school. A moderator for the meeting would be elected first. Following this election would be the reading of the minutes from the last annual meeting and any other meetings held since. The proposed budget for the ensuing

school year would be discussed and approved. The treasurer would report the financial status of the district and his report would be audited by a committee. The voters were also responsible for the following items:

-whether to hire a male or female
teacher for the ensuing terms

-the length of the ensuing school
year

-to set the upper age limits for
students

-whether to allow foreign students
to attend

-the amount of money to be
raised by taxation

-whether to provide free text
for the students.

Now to explain some of the above matters. Because the common school was a country school, boys didn't go to school if they were needed at home to work. Usually they only attended the winter term as they got older. Discipline during the winter term sometimes was a problem. These older boys sometimes were about the same age as the teacher. It was thought best to hire a male teacher during this term. The state statute only required school to be kept 3 months a year. The district could have a longer year if they so desired. Many students never finished the 8th grade because they became to old. Mainly this occurred with the boys who had to stay at home and work part of the school year. Foreign students were students that lived outside the school district. It maybe that their home was closer to a schoolhouse than the district they belonged to. The amount of money needed to cover the expenses of the district; the teachers salary, fuel, supplies and any improvements needed. If free text were not provided, the parents would buy them if they could afford them. However, lessons were usually written out by the teacher on the blackboard and the children committed them to memory, thus eliminating the need for a text.

This system of education continued almost unchanged until the 20th century when transportation improved and school districts consolidated to provide a better education for greater numbers of students. Mrs.

Florence Kessenich taught rural schools for 40 plus years. She states,

"I am not sure that larger made better. There was a feeling of family that just didn't exist in city schools. I was qualified to teach in city schools, but never did. Those rural schools taught the kids so much more. By the time students got to the 7th and 8th grades they knew much of the material because they had been hearing it for so long. I had to find high school work for the upper classes usually. Lunch was put together on a 2 burner kerosene stove by the students along with the teacher. Everyone helped to serve and clean up. I was always made to feel at home with any of the school families. Many times I would be invited home for dinner and afterward would help some older student with a problem. No, those one room schools just couldn't be beat."

Teacher certification and education has changed most dramatically over the years. State statutes in 1848 required only the teacher to pass an examination by the town superintendent, which was good for 1 year. Most of the early teachers only possessed an 8th grade education and many were no more than 15 or 16 years of age. Occasionally some of the students were older than the teacher. The quality of the examination that was given was dependent upon the superintendent and the need for teachers. Some of the exams were very brief, while others asked more detailed questions. The state statute was changed in 1862 creating a system of graded teacher certificates. The teacher examination was now on the county level and would authorize the teacher to teach in any school in the county. These certificates were good for one year. To qualify for a third grade certificate, the applicant needed to pass an examination in orthoepy, orthography, reading, penmanship, arithmetic, primary grammar and geography. A second grade certificate required proficiency in all of the third grade subjects plus grammatical analysis, physiology, physical geography, elementary algebra, United States history and theory and practice of teaching. The first grade certificate required the knowledge for the third and second grades plus higher algebra natural philosophy and geometry.

Teachers possessing a first grade certificate usually demanded a greater salary. Most districts sought teachers hold-

ing third grade certificates and most teachers of the time only qualified for that level. Each county superintendent was required to conduct a teacher seminar at various locations in the county to help these teachers improve their lot.

A change in state law in 1868 granted authority for state teacher certification. In the early 1900's the law was strengthened, requiring expertise in more subjects. Eventually the county certification was eliminated.

Various levels of education were provided in the past. Some high schools had a one year course offered during the senior year that trained students to teach in rural schools. Two year county teacher colleges were established to help train teachers. The University of Wisconsin, of course, had a School of Education and Whitewater State College specialized in educating teachers. Also, some private schools, such as Milton and Beloit had teacher training. However, the bulk of rural schoolteachers only possessed the minimal requirements until the state statutes were changed to improve the situation. Opportunities were provided later so that teachers could attend summer school to improve their status and finish their degree work.

Truancy remained a serious problem to rural schools until the state law was changed mandating the age of 16 as required before students could drop. Parents used the following excuses:

- the school house was poorly lit and ventilated
- road conditions, especially in the spring and fall were poor
- the districts were too large, so children had too far to travel
- the teachers were not adequately qualified
- because these were farm families, thus the children were needed at home to help with field or domestic matters.

While the last reason was understated, it probably was the real reason for much of the truancy. Mr. Hammersley states:

"My Dad usually hired farm hands, but one year he couldn't get anyone. We raised

hops and sold them to the Fairbach Brewery. I don't remember for sure how old I was but I didn't get to go to school that winter as I had to drive a team of horses to haul the hops. Each day I would go down the road past the school, acting big, but still wishing I could be in the schoolyard with my friends."

The other reasons given were things that the parents had control over, as they were in charge of their own district. They could have improved the schoolhouse, sought a better teacher and improved the roads all by taxation. Instead they chose to give their children a basic education in reading,

writing and arithmetic and not much more. Mrs. Eva Swain Hanon provided the following:

"In 1871 I taught my first term here, received \$22.00 per month, later I applied for a winter term and asked \$25.00. Another teacher offered to teach for \$22.00 and another one underbid her and got the school."

Over the years the state statutes have changed so that education is more regulated. The number of school days, subject matter, age limits and attendance requirements are mandated by the State Department of Public Instruction and are tied into state school aid.



Madison Township 6th District Schoolhouse
opened fall of 1850 ~ used about 60 years

Town of Madison District 6 School. Known as the Viall School.
(courtesy, Wisconsin Historical Society)

The lease for the land for the school district was handwritten by Charles E. Morgan, Justice of the Peace. It was registered with the Dane County Register of Deeds on October 23, 1857. This lease has been preserved by Mr. Walter Engelke and will be turned over to the Wisconsin State Archives.

Lease.

This Indenture Made this sixteenth day of August A.D. 1856, by and between Charles L. Ferris and Lucy A. Ferris his wife of the Town of Madison, and County of Dane, in the State of Wisconsin; party of the First part, and School District number Six of the Town of Madison aforesaid party of the Second part.

Witnesseth, that the said party of the First part doth hereby lease, demise, and let unto the party of the Second part, all that certain piece of land situate in the County of Dane and State of Wisconsin and known and described as follows, namely, commencing on North line of Section numbered thirty three (33) in Township numbered Seven (7) North of Range numbered Nine (9) East three chains and ninety six links (3 chs. 96 lks) East of North West corner of said section running thence East on section line six chains and seven links (6 chs. 7 lks) to centre of Mill Creek and Madison Road $\angle 38^{\circ}54'$ West 3 chs. 85 lks. thence at right angles with said road four chains and seventy one links (4 chs. 71 lks) to place of beginning. To hold the same so long as said District shall use the said premises for ^{any} school purposes in consideration of the erection and maintenance of a school thereon, and

the party of the Second part doth hereby covenant and agree to build and maintain a fence on the south west side of said leased premises, and to pay all taxes or assessments of whatever nature which may be levied on said property, and the party of the Second part doth further agree that they will not suffer or do any waste of said premises, and that they will use the said premises for the purposes above mentioned.

In Witness whereof the said parties have hereunto set their hands and seals the day and year above written.

Signed, sealed and Delivered

In Presence of
 the word "Common" inserted
 before "schools" before
 signing: Chas. E. Morgan Justice
 Chas. E. Morgan
 James Ferris

Charles L. Ferris (L.S.)
 Russell A. Sheldon District board of
 Augustus Fuller School District No. 6
 Charles L. Ferris of the Town of Madison
 (dist. L.S.)

Stat. of Wisconsin } Be it remembered that on the 29th
 County of Dane } day of September A.D. 1856. before the undersign-
 ed Justice of the Peace in and for said Coun-
 -ty personally seen the above named Charles
 L. Ferris and Lucy A. Ferris to me known
 and acknowledged that they executed the
 afore mentioned article for the purposes
 therein mentioned

Charles E. Morgan, Justice
 at the Peace

DISTRICT 6

As the area around our school was being settled, the Yankee parents felt the need of education for their children. The subject of starting a school was discussed among the new settlers and finally application was made to the town school superintendent. The district was approved on August 5, 1854. The district as established was to include the land lying in sections 31 and 32, the south half of sections 29 and 30, southwest quarter of section 28, northwest quarter of section 33, southeast quarter of section 28 bounded by Lake Wingra and not included in District 3 of the Town of Madison. A meeting of all the legal voters of the new district was held October 5, 1855. All voters were notified personally. Those notified were:

Thomas Griffith, Samuel C. Post, Benj. Piper, David Piper, John Killoughy, William Willey, Joseph Tillatson, Russell A. Sheldon, Samuel P. Simmons, George Neal, Charles E. Morgan, Augustus Fidler, Amos Lavie, Benj. Piper, Jr, Jacob Bence, William Hammersley, George Barrow, David G. Sheldon, John P. Simmons, William O'Leary, Owen Evans, Charles H. French and Miles Sweeny.

The first officers appointed and later elected were:

Clerk Charles Ferris
Director Russell Sheldon
Treasurer Augustus Fidler.

The site for the school, as offered by Mr. Ferris, was accepted and a committee of 3, consisting of Charles Morgan, Russell Sheldon and Charles Ferris were appointed to study plans for the schoolhouse. It is interesting to note that the land for the original school was leased by Mr. Ferris for the use of school purposes and stated in the lease (which is now stored in the State Archives) "if the school is discontinued, the land reverts back to the original owner". This handwritten document was signed by Charles and Lucy Ferris on August 16, 1856. After the various plans were studied, the district voted to build a brick schoolhouse and to raise \$500.00 by taxation and to borrow \$500.00 at a rate of 12% if neces-

sary. In February of 1856 they resolved to build a frame schoolhouse and on May 20, 1856 the first meeting of the district was held in the new schoolhouse.

The first teacher hired was Miss Lucina Larkin. She was the daughter of Jonathon and Cynthia Larkin who were nearby farmers. She taught terms regularly during the early years of the school district. There were 13 students for the first term of school.

The residents of the school district took pride in the school and took care of cleaning the building and keeping the yard neat. One of the students would be hired to serve as fireman during the cold weather. His job was to arrive early to school and get a fire started so that by the time the teacher and other students arrived the building was warm. For this he might be paid as much as 25¢ a week.

The interior of the school was described by alumni from their memories. Mrs. Eva Swain Hanon recalls;

"The schoolhouse was neither lathed nor plastered and benches and desks were of home construction."

She later gave this description of the building when she was teaching:

"The old schoolhouse in the 1860's and 1870's housed between 50 and 60 pupils and when it was set aside was in better condition than in those days. The floor was of soft pine, seats and desks also (and so easy for the small boy's knife) rough plastered walls, never guilty even of a coat of whitewash. The blackboards were veritable black boards, being matched siding or flooring and painted black, containing 15 or 20 square feet of surface."

Mr. George Hammersley, a student in the late 1890's provided the following verbal picture of the school:

"There were 2 doors into the school, though we always used just one. When you came in there was a cloak room across the front where we hung our coats and left our galoshes. It wasn't heated, so sometimes we didn't leave our lunches there. The schoolroom itself had blackboards across the front with the teacher desk in front of them. Next came a long bench where the

classes would go when it was time for them to recite. Behind the bench was a large round oak stove. That stove was great when you were next to it but away from it, you would get cold. After the stove, which had a pipe running up to the front, were long benches and desks, maybe room for 2 or 3 kids. There were windows all along the side and I don't remember that we ever had electric lights, only kerosene lamps that got used for night programs. Out behind the building were 2 outhouses, one for the boys and one for the girls. We didn't have water on the schoolyard, so each day a boy and girl had to walk down to the spring (the Duck Pond) for water. Viall had water on his farm, but it was soft and not good for drinking. When I was in the 6th or 7th grade, I served as fireman, had to walk 1 1/2 miles to school, start the fire and shovel the snow out front and back to the outhouses."

The schoolhouse served as the social center for the community. Both the Spring Tavern and the Plough Inn had ballrooms, but that was only for the adults. To the question how did you entertain yourselves during your school days, Mr. Hammersley responded:

"Once in awhile 2 schools would get together for games and races. We had a debating society that my brother Charlie started. He was a good talker, but my brother Fay was something. Charlie always said Fay should have been a lawyer. Any-

way, one night after the debate finished, Sam Brown (former school board member) said he just couldn't decide who the winner was. Sometimes we would have sings, that was later when we had a piano. Most of the teachers could play the piano. The whole family would come those nights. We had barn dances too, though not at the school. That's how I learned to dance, you see, when I was young. Then we would have sleigh ride parties, you know the roads were not so good back then. Everyone from 4th grade would go, the teacher too. So you had to behave and not be too noisy. One month we would go to Hillcrest or Gannon School and the next month they came to our school. We would get a farmer and his team of horses to take us. The other school would have refreshments when we got there. Then we would visit or maybe sing. That was fun."

Mrs. Eva Swain Hanon recalled:

"In way of social affairs, we had singing schools and Good Templars Lodge (a Methodist Temperance organization). We never had 'eats' though as we do now. Sometimes after lodge was out we all started out together to a neighbors and danced for several hours."

While the official name of the school was Town of Madison District #6 School, it became known as the Viall School because of being located across the road from the Viall farm.

The names that appear in the left hand column are students. The names that appear in the right hand column indicate a person from the neighborhood that married one of the students.

(courtesy, George Hammersley and Vera Olson)

School District No. 6. Town of Madison,
 Dane County, Wisconsin.
 Mr S. L. Hooker (County Superintendent)
 of Schools, Dane County, Wis
 Mrs M. L. Brazeel, Teacher, Summer 1865.
 Enrollment of pupils as follows;

Age 14	Carrie Moore	1	
" 4	Lucy Moore	2	
" 14	Nettie Gorham	3	Albert Lanson
" 13	Mary Tillotson	4	Royal French
" 9	Alice Tillotson	5	Royal French
" 5	Isabel Tillotson	6	J. Will Rowe
" 12	Ella Viall	7	Edward Hammerley
" 10	Eva Viall	8	Isaac Bailey
" 12	Alice Gilbert	9	Lewis Post
" 8	Bertha Gilbert	10	
" 5	Jessie Gilbert	11	
" 9	Helen French	12	
" 3	Katie French	13	
" 9	Fannie Mayhew	14	
" 7	Martha Mayhew	15	
" 7	Mary Falon	16	
" 9	Mark Bantz	17	Wesley Reese
" 8	Hattie Hammerley	18	Peter Fergen
" 11	Katie Simmons	19	
" 10	Mary Willey	20	
" 8	Alice Miller	21	Roy Binton
" 12	Levi Sheldon	22	Alice Fidler
" 8	Walter Sheldon	23	
" 11	Henry Tillotson	24	Nettie Merion
" 6	Willie Tillotson	25	
" 4	Fred Tillotson	26	Sarah Piper
" 10	Eddie Viall	27	
" 10	George Hammerley	28	Angusla Walters
" 4	Charles French	29	
" 8	Willie Piper	30	Pettie Herrick
" 6	Frankie Piper	31	
" 8	John Falon	32	
" 8	George Moore	33	
" 9	Frank Wilson	34	
" 7	William Willey	35	
" 6	Eugene Miller	36	
" 8	Richard Rowe	37	Maria Miller
" 6	Willie Rowe	38	Isabel Tillotson
" 10	Willie Welch	39	
" 7	John Welch	40	

The number of students attending the Viall School would vary from year to year. Mrs. Ella Hammersley (mother of George) provided the school census for the year 1865. There were 40 children between 3 and 20. Usually there were 10 to 12 students during the summer term and as many as 60 for the winter term. If the attendance dropped they would close the school for a term and combine with one of the neighboring districts. The Viall and Hillcrest schools would combine if necessary. Also, if there were only one student for 7th or 8th grade at one school, that student would go to another where more students were present. Mr. William Gilbert normally attended Hillcrest School except for one year for that reason. He relates:

"For 8th grade I attended the school over in Nakoma. I would ride my horse from home (666 Whitney Way) and while I was in school the horse stayed in the barn at the farm across the road (Vialls)."

Most of the teachers that taught at the Viall School were single and lived with a family in the district or boarded at the Plough Inn or Spring Tavern. Some did live in Madison, but the trip out from town in the spring could be difficult. A marshy area ran from the lake up to the edge of the Monroe Road and many times the area from Commonwealth Avenue to Odana Road would be under water and impassable. Mrs. Eva Swain Hanon mused:

"Mrs. Gorham and my mother boarded many of those who desired board. Many of the teachers lived in town and walked to and fro. The sidewalks in those days ended at the fire station on West Johnson Street. You of the present complain of the moderately bad roads from here to town. You should have seen Monroe Road from the city limits to Camp Randall then. One teacher whose name Mother does not recall, wore rubber boots in order to get through."

That the teachers were young has already been stated and Mr. Hammersley related the following:

"I remember one time before I had started school, the new teacher was coming to our house for supper. My mother kept looking out the window down toward the route my brothers and sisters took from school. Much to her dismay when she looked, for here come the kids and the teacher, long

skirts and all, playing leap frog! That just wasn't considered to be dignified for a teacher! When I was in the 7th grade, I was 14 and Miss Hill the teacher was just 16."

Charles Piper, one of the few male teachers of the Viall School and an alumni of the school was only 18 when he taught there. He only taught a term or 2 and then entered business with his brothers.

Many of the teachers that taught at the Viall School also taught terms in a number of the other district schools in the area. A number of these teachers continued to live in Madison or the area after their teaching days were over.

Former pupils of the school that later taught there were:

Fannie Crawford, Jennie Crawford, Marion Crawford, Ann Gorham Marston, Charles Piper, William Piper, Eva Swain Hanon and Eudora Viall Larkin.

Additionally, 3 former teachers had daughters that taught at the school later, namely:

Lucina Larkin Terry

Grace Terry Lincoln

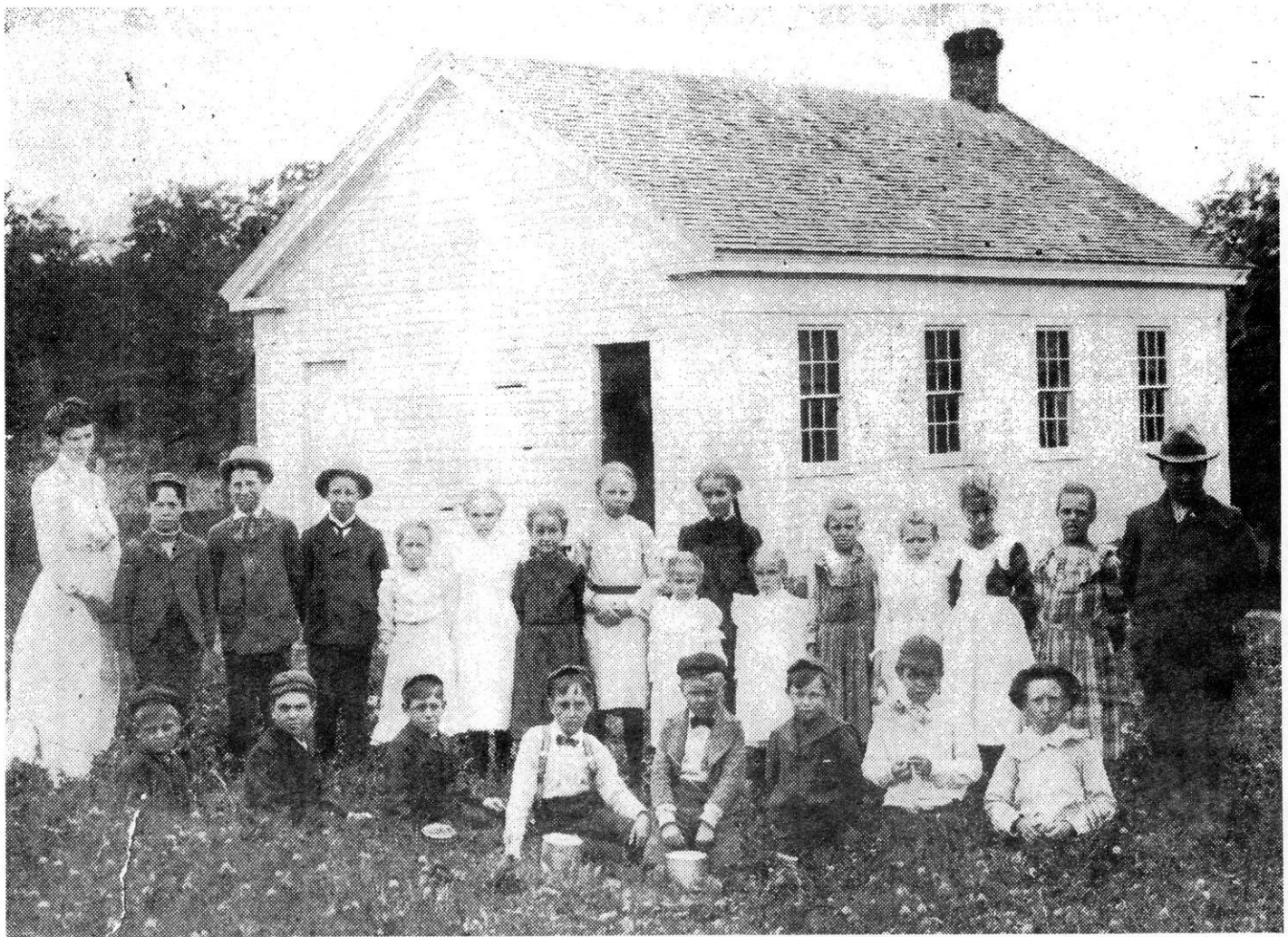
Eudora Viall Larkin

Helen Larkin

Eva Swain Hanon

Elsie Hanon Broad.

While many of the original families moved, the Hammersleys, Pipers and Tillatsons were long time residents of the district. The children were educated here, grew to adulthood and served on the schoolboard themselves. Many of them married classmates from their schooldays. Two and three generations of these families have attended the Viall School.



School photo taken about the turn of the century.

Front row, left to right: ??, Hugh Nelson, Eddie Worth, Harvey Nelson, Leslie Messerschmidt, Earl Brown, Reuben Brown, Roy Sharp. Back row: Grace Chamberlain Herling (teacher), Harley, Brown, George Hammersley, Morris Hammersley, four girls unidentified, Erna Schlotthauer, 2 girls in front of Erna unidentified, Anna Schimming, Katherine Marston, Edith Schimming, Judson Blizzard.

(Courtesy, George Hammersley and Vera Olson)

"The extreme cold weather and deep snow of last winter seriously interfered with my visitations."

Annual Report
District 2 Supt. of Schools
Dane County, Wisconsin
November 10, 1885

"Motion was made to adjourn and lost but after some talk and laugh another motion was made to adjourn and carried."

from District minute book
Sep 29, 1862

"It was moved and seconded that they should build a double privy for the schoolhouse."

28 Sep 1868

Subjects covered at the 1870 teacher seminars included the following:

- Study of Grammar
- The Tones of Human Voice
- The Origin of Language.

Annual Report
District 2 Supt. of Schools
Dane County, Wisconsin

"Moved and carried that we have 5 months of school for the winter and 3 for the spring term and that the winter's school commence about the latter part of October and that we have a vacation of a week or 2 during the holidays and that the spring term commence after a vacation of a week or 2 at the close of the winter school."

from District minute book
Jul 9, 1888

The Schoolhouses of the Town of Madison. The districts were only given a number, but many of the schools were named for a nearby farm or landmark. Of the early sites, only Thoreau is still presently used for educational purposes. The District Eleven building wasn't built until 1905 and is the only original building remaining.



District Two

located on Mineral Point Road about where Racine Road intersects. This school was known as the Hillcrest School.



District Three

located east of Prangeway on the Beltline. Known as Silver Springs School. The former school now used for commercial purposes.

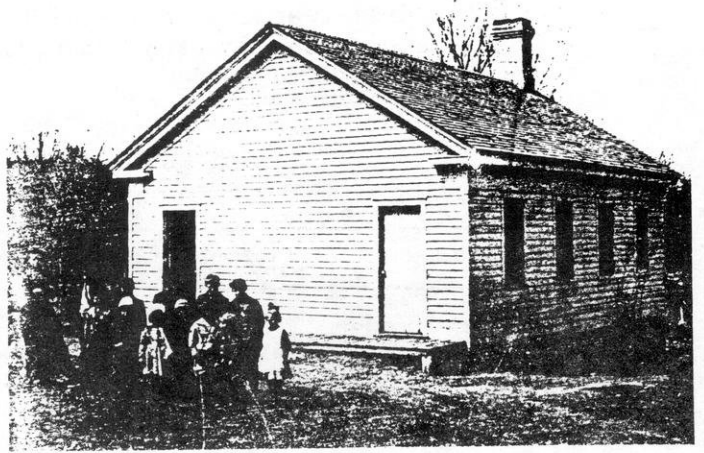


Joint District Five

located on East Badger Road. Present building now houses Madison Association for Retarded Citizens. Last used for school purposes in 1972.

District Six

The first school on the site of the present Thoreau. Of the town schools, this site has been used longer for educational purposes than any other.



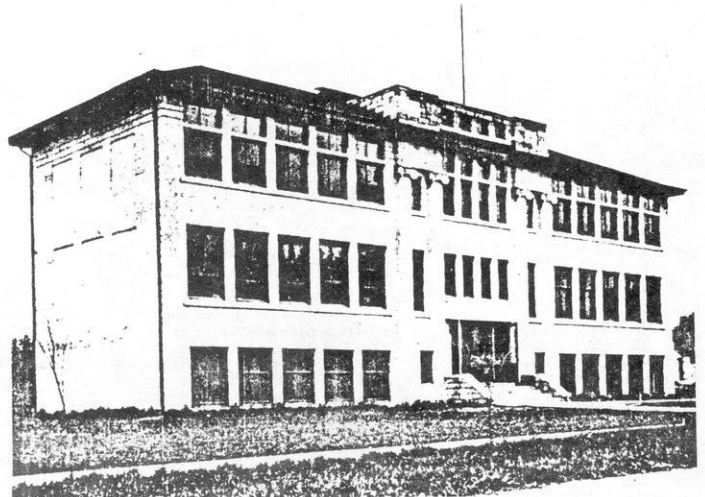
District Seven

located north of University Avenue and slightly east of Century House. Known as Post School.



District Eleven

South Madison School opened in 1905. Annexed into the city 1923. Now called Franklin School.



The State Department of Public Instruction used this guideline for rural teachers in the 1920's. Needless to say, the day was a busy one for the teacher.

DAILY PROGRAM FOR A DISTRICT SCHOOL

RECITATION PROGRAM		STUDY PROGRAM							
Time	Subject	First Year	Second Year	Third Year	Fourth Year	Fifth Year	Sixth Year	Seventh Year	Eighth Year
9:00- 9:10	Opening Exercises				Op. Exercises				
9:10- 9:25	Arithmetic 7 and 8	Reading	Reading	Reading	Reading	Dictionary	Dictionary	*Arithmetic	*Arithmetic
9:25- 9:40	Reading 1	Reading	Reading	Reading	Reading	Reading	Reading	Library	Language and Grammar
9:40- 9:50		Seat Work	Reading	Reading	Reading	Reading	Reading	Library	Language and Grammar
9:50-10:05	Reading and History 3 and 4	Seat Work	Seat Work	Read. MTW History TF	Read. MTW History TF	Reading	Reading	Language and Grammar	Phys. and Hygiene
10:05-10:20	Reading and History 5 and 6	Recess	Recess	Arithmetic	Arithmetic	Read. WTF History MT	Read. WTF History MT	Language and Grammar	Phys. and Hygiene
10:20-10:35	Physiology and Hygiene	Recess	Recess	Arithmetic	Arithmetic	Library	Library	Language and Grammar	Phys. and Hygiene
10:35-10:45					Recess				
10:45-10:55	Language and History 1 and 2	Lang. MTW History TF	Lang. MTW History TF	Arithmetic	Arithmetic	Arithmetic	Arithmetic	Language and Grammar	Language and Grammar
10:55-11:10	Language and Grammar, 7 and 8	Reading	Arithmetic	Arithmetic	Arithmetic	Arithmetic	Arithmetic	Language and Grammar	Language and Grammar
11:10-11:25	Arithmetic 3 and 4	Reading	Arithmetic	*Arithmetic	*Arithmetic	Arithmetic	Arithmetic	Civics and History	History
11:25-11:40	Arithmetic 5 and 6	Recess	Recess	Recess	Recess	*Arithmetic	*Arithmetic	Civics and History	History
11:40-12:00	Civics and History	Recess	Recess	Recess	Recess	Geography	Geography	Civics $\frac{3}{8}$ History $\frac{3}{8}$ even	History, odd
12:00-12:30	Dinner.								
12:30- 1:00	Games supervised.					NOON			

Morning Exercises: Monday—Music. Memory gems and poems committed. Tuesday—Nature study, Fall and Spring. Civics, Winter and on election days. Wednesday—Hygiene and Sanitation. Thursday—Current Events. Stories. Friday—Biography of great men and women. Humane treatment of animals. Accident prevention.

DAILY PROGRAM FOR A DISTRICT SCHOOL—Continued

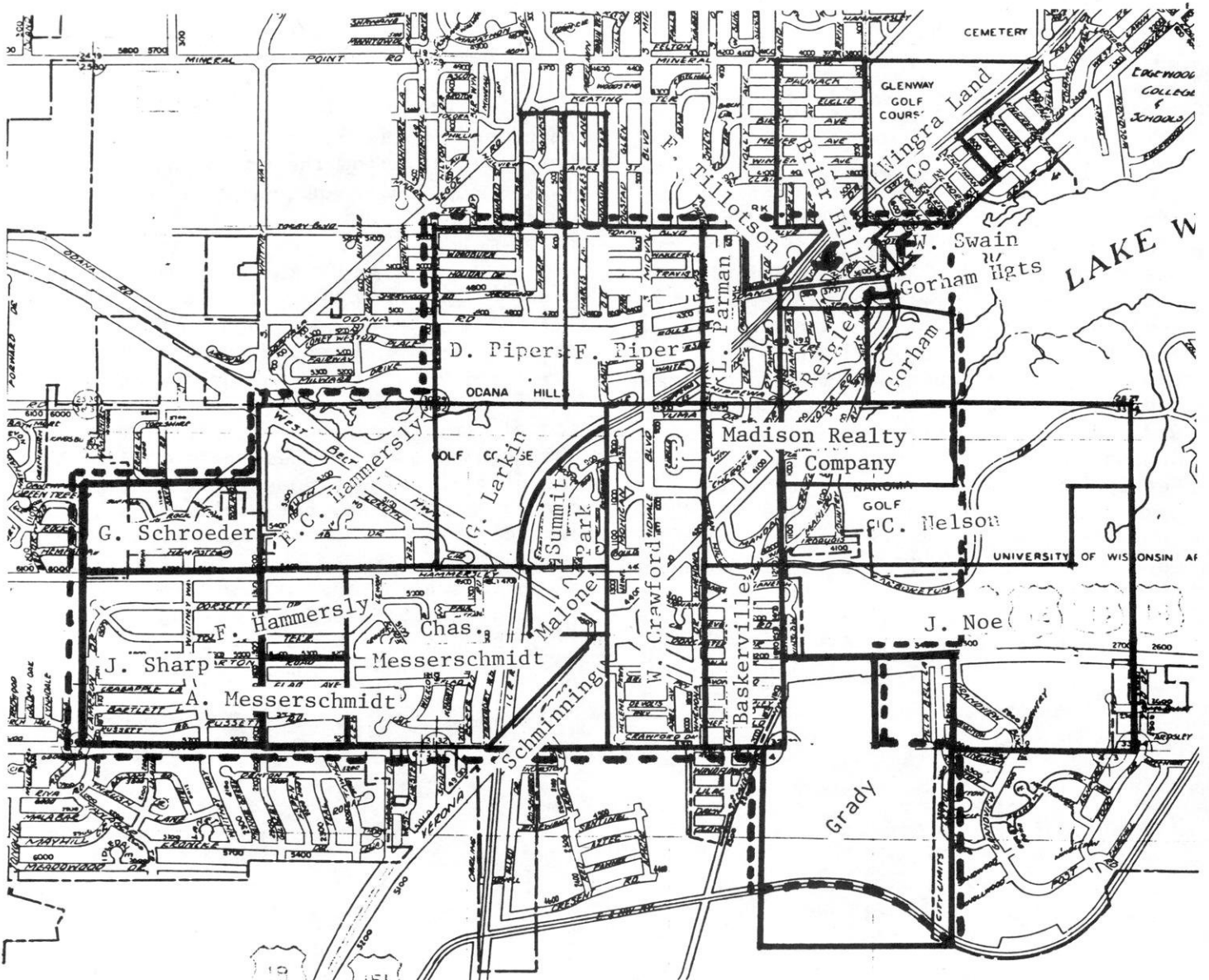
RECITATION PROGRAM		STUDY PROGRAM							
Time	Subject	First Year	Second Year	Third Year	Fourth Year	Fifth Year	Sixth Year	Seventh Year	Eighth Year
1:00- 1:10	Reading 1	Reading	Arithmetic	Language	Language	Geography	Geography	Reading	Reading
1:10- 1:20	Arithmetic 2	Seat Work	*Arithmetic	Language	Language	Geography	Geography	Reading	Reading
1:20- 1:35	Reading 7 and 8	Reading	Reading	Language	Language	Geography	Geography	Reading	Reading
1:35- 1:45	Language and Geography 3 and 4	Reading	Reading	Lang. MTW Geog. TF	Lang. MTW Geog. TF	Geography	Geography	Geography	Library
1:45- 2:00	Writing (3 times per week)	Art 2	Art 2	Art 2	Art 2	Art 2	Art 2	Art 2	Art 2
	Drawing (2 times per week)	Writing 3	Writing 3	Writing 3	Writing 3	Writing 3	Writing 3	Writing 3	Writing 3
2:00- 2:15	Geography 5	Recess	Recess	Recess	Recess	Geography	Language	Geography	Library
2:15- 2:30	Geography 6 and 7	Recess	Recess	Recess	Recess	Language	Geography	Geography	Library
2:30- 2:40					Recess				
2:40- 2:55	Reading 1	Reading	Reading	Reading	Reading	Language	Language	Arithmetic	Arithmetic
2:55- 3:05	Reading and Spelling 2	Library	Reading and Spelling	Reading	Reading	Language	Language	Arithmetic	Arithmetic
3:05- 3:20	Language and Civics 5 and 6	Library	Library	Reading	Reading	Language Civics F	Language Civics F	Agriculture	Agriculture
3:20- 3:35	Reading and Spelling 3 and 4	Library	Library	Reading and Spelling	Reading and Spelling	Spelling	Spelling	Agriculture	Agriculture
3:35- 3:45	Spelling 5 and 6	Recess	Recess	Library	Library	Spelling	Spelling	Agriculture	Agriculture
3:45- 4:00	Agriculture and Spelling	Recess	Recess	Library	Library	Spelling	Spelling	Ag. 12 weeks Sp. 12 weeks Ag. 12 weeks	Ag. 12 weeks Sp. 12 weeks Ag. 12 weeks

This program shows the study and recitation periods for a school of eight grades. If all grades are not represented more time may be given to each grade but the same general arrangement followed. In every recitation, the pupil has had a chance to prepare his work immediately before he recites. Library reading is provided in school hours for all pupils, and what each pupil is doing every period of the day is clearly shown. The course of study is based upon this program and should be taught as here outlined.

All subject matter in grouped classes is alternated by years.

Music *1,2 for primary grades the first and third Fridays of the month.

Music *3,4 for upper grades the second and fourth Fridays of the month. Music for all grades every Monday in morning exercises.



This map based on a 1915 plat book shows the farms involved in District 6. The dashed lines indicate the school district boundary at that time.

CHANGES IN THE NEIGHBORHOOD

The Viall School District remained unchanged until the turn of the century. Around 1902 it became known as Joint District 6, as it took in some students from farms that were in the Town of Fitchberg. The city was slowly progressing westwards. University Heights and Wingra Park had been platted out in the 1890's. The first plat close to the school was known as Gorham Heights and was recorded in 1911. It included the streets now called Huron Hill, Council Crest, Seneca Place, Onedia Pass and Miami Pass. This same area was replatted and added to Nakoma later on. Apparently no homes were built in this plat until sometime in the 1920's. Another area was Summit Park which is in the near western

area of the district. At the eastern end of Joint District 6, Wingra Hill was platted in 1914, but a few homes were already in that area, namely 806 Lewis Court and 815 Minakwa Drive. In addition, there were already some homes in the immediate area of the school that were built prior to the development of Nakoma. The house at 3810 Nakoma Road was built prior to 1915. The house next door at 3808 was built about this same time.

South Madison, which was a separate community, operated a school which was part of the township district system. That building opened in 1905 and is now known as Franklin School. About the time that our school district started to change,

other schools in the township were also undergoing change. Both the Badger and Silver Spring School districts replaced their wooden buildings with more modern structures.

The Viall and James Ferris farms were the first bought by the Madison Realty Company, which was represented by the Paul Stark Company. The Ferris farm included the land west of Seminole Highway and was bounded by Nakoma Road, Mandan Crescent and Waban Hill. The Viall farm land included the area south of Seminole Highway and was bounded by Nakoma Road and Manitou Way. Most of the first homes built in Nakoma were located in the area of the Ferris farm. The first home thought to have been built in this area was at 1022 Seminole Highway. Additional new homes were built and by 1915 the school population was beginning to rise.

The schoolhouse was beginning to show signs of wear after some 60 plus years of

use. The old residents of the school district had strong ties to the building and thought it still to be adequate. The new urban residents felt the building was outdated and should be replaced. The Stark Company, realizing the potential for growth in the area, also encouraged a new school building. Animosity resulted between the rural members of the area and these "foreigners", or city folks, that were taking over. It is only understandable that families that had attended and cared for the school for 2 or 3 generations would be hostile toward newcomers that wanted change. It wasn't only the issue of the school, but the change from rural to urban that caused some of these hard feelings. The District Minute Book for this time period is missing, but would probably provide interesting reading. Finally in 1916, it was decided, at a special meeting of the district, that a new 2 room school be built and \$15,000.00 be spent. A building designed by Alvan E. Small was selected. Mr. Small was a local architect who



District 6 "Nakoma" School completed in 1917. After the additions were put on, the entry doors as shown here were removed. Children not identified.
(Courtesy, Stark Company)

was influenced by the prairie school of architecture, which was reflected in the design of the new building. He had designed several homes in the Dudgeon-Monroe Neighborhood and similarity exists between these and the school. He also designed Randall and Lowell schools in Madison. The building was constructed of hollow tile with brick trim around the entry ways, windows and corners. It had a stucco finish. The interior of the building was finished with 2 floors. The upper floor had one main room with 2 recitation rooms off of it, cloakrooms, bathrooms, storage room and office. The lower level contained a kitchen, a large all purpose room and a furnace room with 2 coal fired furnaces. Construction of the new school took place right along side of the old one so that education was not disrupted. The new building was completed and occupied by the fall of 1917. The old school was bought by Matthew Peck, a bus driver for the Madison Realty Company. He moved it to a lot in Bram's Addition in the Town of Madison. It was remodeled and turned into a residence located at 2030 Baird Street, Madison. When the Madison Housing Authority bought up this area in the early 1960's for low income housing, the school met its final demise.

A dedication night was held on November 28, 1917 at the new school. Students put on a short play and a speech was given by Eva Swain Hanon about the school district in former days. She closed with the following remarks:

"I doubt if ever again there will prevail the spirit of neighborly kindness and helpfulness that used to exist.

As we are gathered here in this new building with its modern improvements, and contrast it with the one that is gone, I wonder if 60 years in the future, people will look back upon this building and wonder 'How did they ever get along with such an antiquated old building?'"

Little did Mrs. Hanon know that this new modern building would only last about 50 years, less than the old one room school-house that it replaced.

The enrollment for the fall of 1917 was 41 pupils and Miss Mabel Pierstorff was the teacher. The new school was unofficially named the Nakoma School. The school board

during these years of change consisted of:

Clerk Thomas Lloyd Jones

Director Frank Piper

Treasurer Charles Messerschmidt

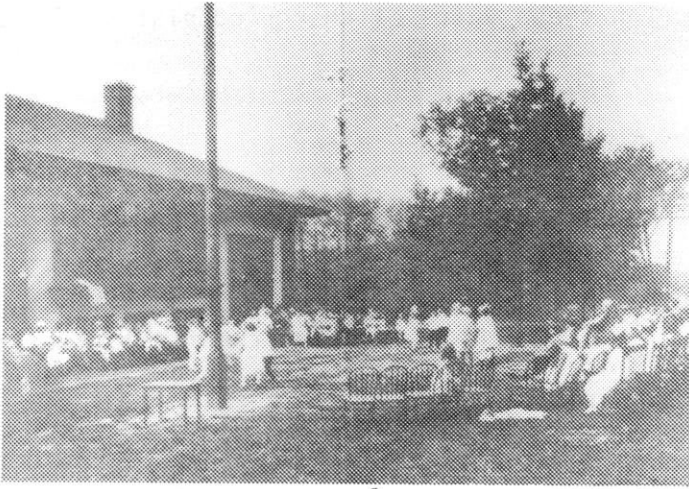
By 1920, there were approximately 40 homes in the school district in addition to the rural homes and for the first time it was voted to provide free textbooks to the students. There were now 2 teachers instructing the 46 children. By 1923 the school census indicated a need for expanding the facility and so an additional 2 classrooms and gymnasium were added to the east end of the building. Additional classrooms were added at the west end of the building in 1928. The district was now heavily in debt due to this expansion and had bond issues for about \$100,000.00. Additional property had been purchased by the district, or given as gifts by residents or by the Madison Realty Company, as the school increased in size. The original leased property site was never bought out by the school district, so that even today, the lease of 1856 is still in effect for that portion of the property.

By this time most of the area east of the original plat of Nakoma had been platted out. Randall's Addition to Nakoma covered the center portion of the district. The eastern end of the school district now included Glenwood and Briar Hill in addition to Wingra Hill (For simplification, this area will be referred to as Briar Hill for the rest of this discussion). This area is bounded by Monroe Street, Glenway Street, Odana Road and the Illinois Central tracks. Marlboro Heights and Rosedale Plat had also been laid out. Dudgeon School was opened in 1927 as a one story building with the second floor added in 1938. This school was to serve the western end of Wingra Park

Some interesting tax reports from 1920 for two homes within the District 6 area.

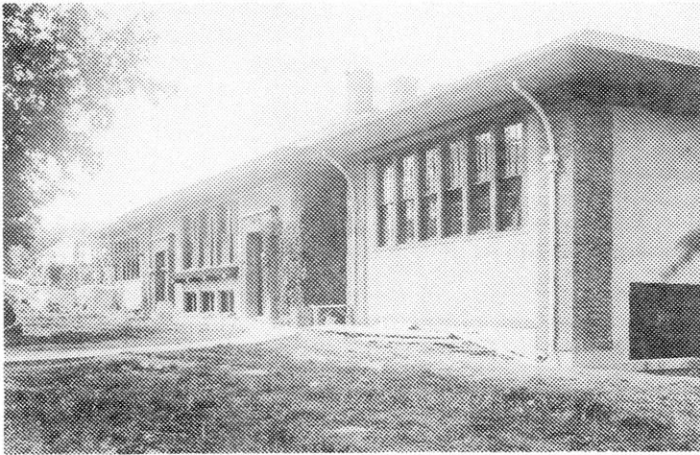
Property	A	B
State	\$ 9.17	\$ 3.90
County	19.38	7.82
Town	13.08	5.56
School	37.93	16.14
	<u>\$78.56</u>	<u>\$33.42</u>

Property A located at 4227 Mandan Crescent.
Property B located at 801 Minakwa Drive.



Play Day at Nakoma School. This event occurred in the spring and would be held jointly with other schools in the district. Three-legged races, broad jump competitions and speed races were the order for the day. A picnic lunch and prizes of red, blue and white ribbons followed.

(courtesy, Stark Company)



This photo shows the original building with the first additions being constructed.

(courtesy, Stark Company)

A suggested schoolhouse plan in 1917 located the boys toilet in the basement with the girls toilet located on the second floor. The explanation indicates, "It isn't considered a good idea to have toilets for both sexes in the basement, unless there are separate stairways going down".

In the 1920's there were 6,474 independent one-room school districts in the state of Wisconsin. Many of those old schoolhouses can still be spotted when driving through the rural parts of our state.

and any new development to the north and south of the school. The city limits of Madison at this time ran down the middle of Western Avenue.

Unlike other Madison suburbs, such as College Hills (now Shorewood) and Maple Bluff, the residents of Nakoma wished to annex into the city. The school district was under financial distress because of the bonds and the Depression had further caused it to default on them. Also, the district was growing and it was becoming more difficult for the three person board to continue managing it. Annexing to the city would put the school into the Madison School District, ease the financial burden and provide greater opportunities for the students. The remaining rural residents realized that the city was ever moving westward and they offered no resistance to annexation of the school. The residents of Briar Hill, however, did hold out and when Nakoma annexed in 1931, they remained in the township. The school was obligated to continue to educate the children in the former District 6 area that did not come into the city. The first year of the annexation, the property owners of the former district did not have to pay school tax as a way of the city reimbursing them for the building and property. The last school board to serve the district consisted of:

Clerk Bert E. Miller
 Director Clara M. Hammersly
 Treasurer Thomas Lloyd Jones.

The teaching staff of Nakoma School for 1931-32 were as follows:

Mr. Earl Brown, Principal
 Miss Ruth Benzie, Kindergarten

GRADES

- 1 Miss Grace Runkle
- 2 Miss Iva Cardey
- 3 Miss Hannah Hovey
- 4 Miss Linda Drott
- 5 Miss Irene Fockens
- 6 Miss Grace Green

7-8 Miss Floy Kendrick

Art Mr. F. A. Buerke

Music Mrs. Earl Brown.

The janitors were Mr. George Hammersley and Mr. Louis Messerschmidt. Mr. Hammersley was long remembered by former students as always having a piece of candy or a sucker in his pocket for a hungry child.

Grace Runkle, Linda Drott, Hannah Hovey and Floy Kendrick remained on staff at Nakoma for many years. Mr. Walter Engelke replaced Earl Brown as principal in 1933 and remained at that post until he retired in 1970.

Due to the length of employment of these staff members the school was able to establish strong traditions. The population of the school in 1931 had increased to 246 students.



"Good Behavior" picture taken by Miss Cardey in 1927. L-R: Marion Blum Sweet, Miriam Kundert, Mary Eleanor Truax.

(courtesy Marion Blum Sweet)

The school continued to be the social center for the community, although some forms of entertainment changed. Scouting activities for both boys and girls, annual Christmas programs, movies and pot luck suppers were some of the highlights.

Prior to annexation, the parents of the school and the Nakoma Welfare League merged to form the Nakoma District Association. They sponsored a school orchestra, purchased needed supplies and equipment for the school and covered the cost of anti-diphtheria toxin for the children.

The second floor of the western addition was finished in 1937 and a junior high program was added. Over the years the educational program varied from kindergarten thru 9, to k-8 and k-6. The location of the school has lent itself well to a variety of outdoor study. Mr. Charles E. Brown, a resident of Nakoma and curator of the Wisconsin Historical Museum, would take groups of children to the area of the Duck Pond to hunt for Indian artifacts. The area around the lake was ideal for nature studies.

Building slowed somewhat during the post-Depression period and was just on the upswing when World War II caused a standstill. The Westside Lumber Company, located in the 3400 block of Gregory Street, had supplied much of the lumber and millwork for homes in the area and was shut down because of the war. After a fire destroyed the sheds, the business closed permanently. During the war years the school continued to be the focal point for activities both for the children and adults. Scrap metal and paper drives, war bond sales and Red Cross knitting and sewing were added. After World War II ended, an upsurge in building occurred and the western edge of the city quickly became urbanized. Briar Hill, Westmorland, Sunset Village and Pilgrim Village were still in the Town of Madison and both Dudgeon and Nakoma schools were bulging with students. Philip Falk, then superintendent of schools for Madison, resisted building any new schools in these areas until they annexed into the city. The township, not wishing to lose this valuable tax source, tried to maintain the area and even located the volunteer Fire Department at the edge of Westmoreland Park to hold the area. During 1948, most of the aforementioned areas annexed into the city. The growth of the city on the western edge



Third Grade students, 1928-29

Row 1, L-R: Richard Jerome, Wesley Jacobson, George Morton, Richard Stark, Loyal Grahn, Bob Bjerk, Edwin Vaughan, Darwin Waters.

Row 2: Charles Orth, Robert Colbert, Harwood Maas, Phoebe Ann Sakrison, Hazel Avery, Beatrice Volk, Bill Zingg, Buddy Wilson, Tommy Fox.

Row 3: Marion Blum Sweet, Doris Showen, Ruby Hintzmann, Jean Parman, Barbara McNeel, Miriam Kundert, Vera Voth, Ann Koch, LoRae Card, Mary Eleanor Truax.

(courtesy, Marion Blum Sweet)

now changed from the southwest to the west. Midvale School opened in 1951 to serve the area north of the Illinois Central tracks. School boundaries were now changed so that Briar Hill was included at Dudgeon School and Nakoma School served only the Nakoma area. Cherokee Heights Elementary and Junior High School opened in 1955 and Orchard Ridge in 1958.

Madison schools built during the period of the late 1920's thru the 50's were built on the neighborhood concept. Children were all to walk to and from school, returning home during the lunch hour. Lunch periods were typically 1½ hours long to accommodate this. The concept of neighborhood schools lasted until the end of the 1960's when

major changes affecting all levels of schools occurred.

State Statute was amended in 1875 allowing women to hold positions on district school boards. This is interesting because women weren't allowed to vote! Mrs. Fred Tillatson was elected treasurer and Mrs. Tom Marston clerk in 1897. They were the first women to serve the district as officers.

Beth Knope, a Nakoma student represented Wisconsin at the 1952 National Spelling Bee in Washington, D.C. She was accompanied by Miss Floy Kendrick.

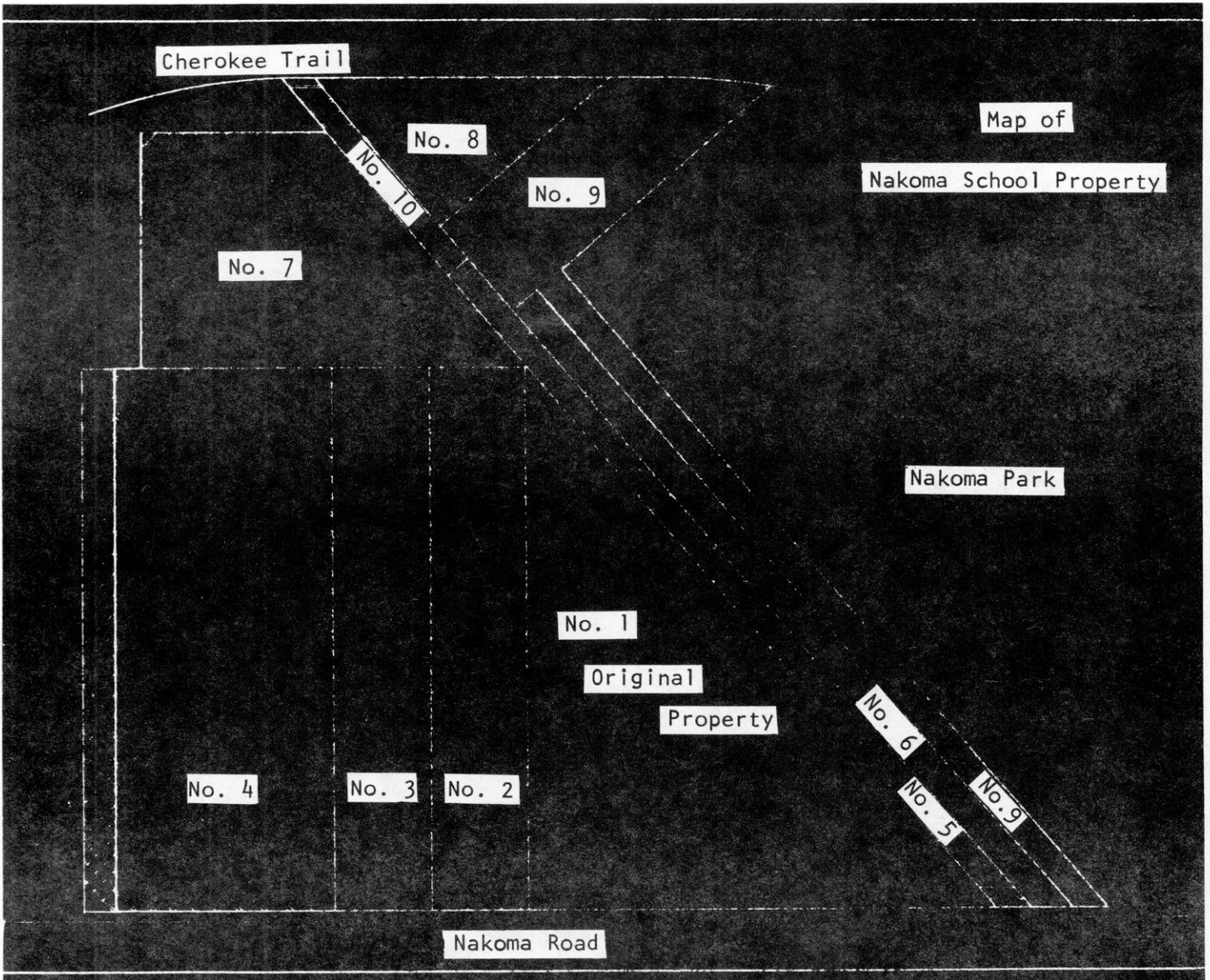
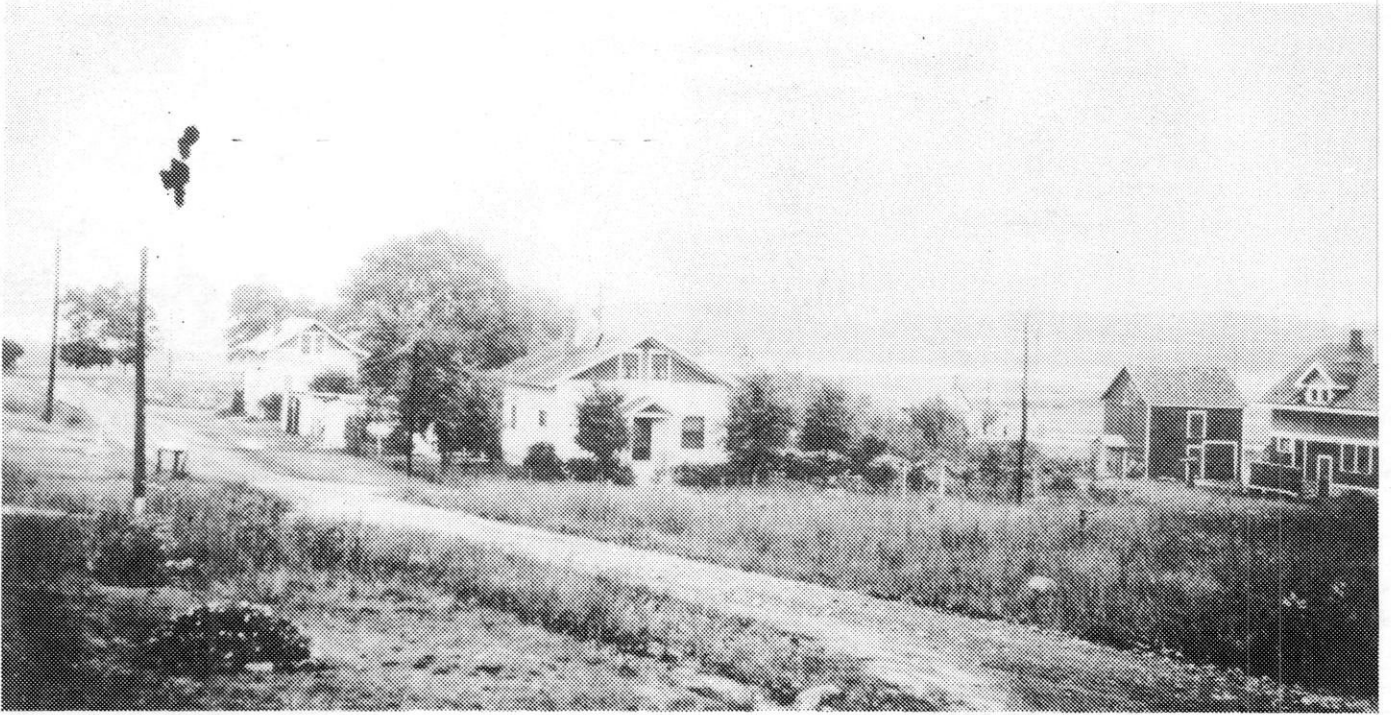


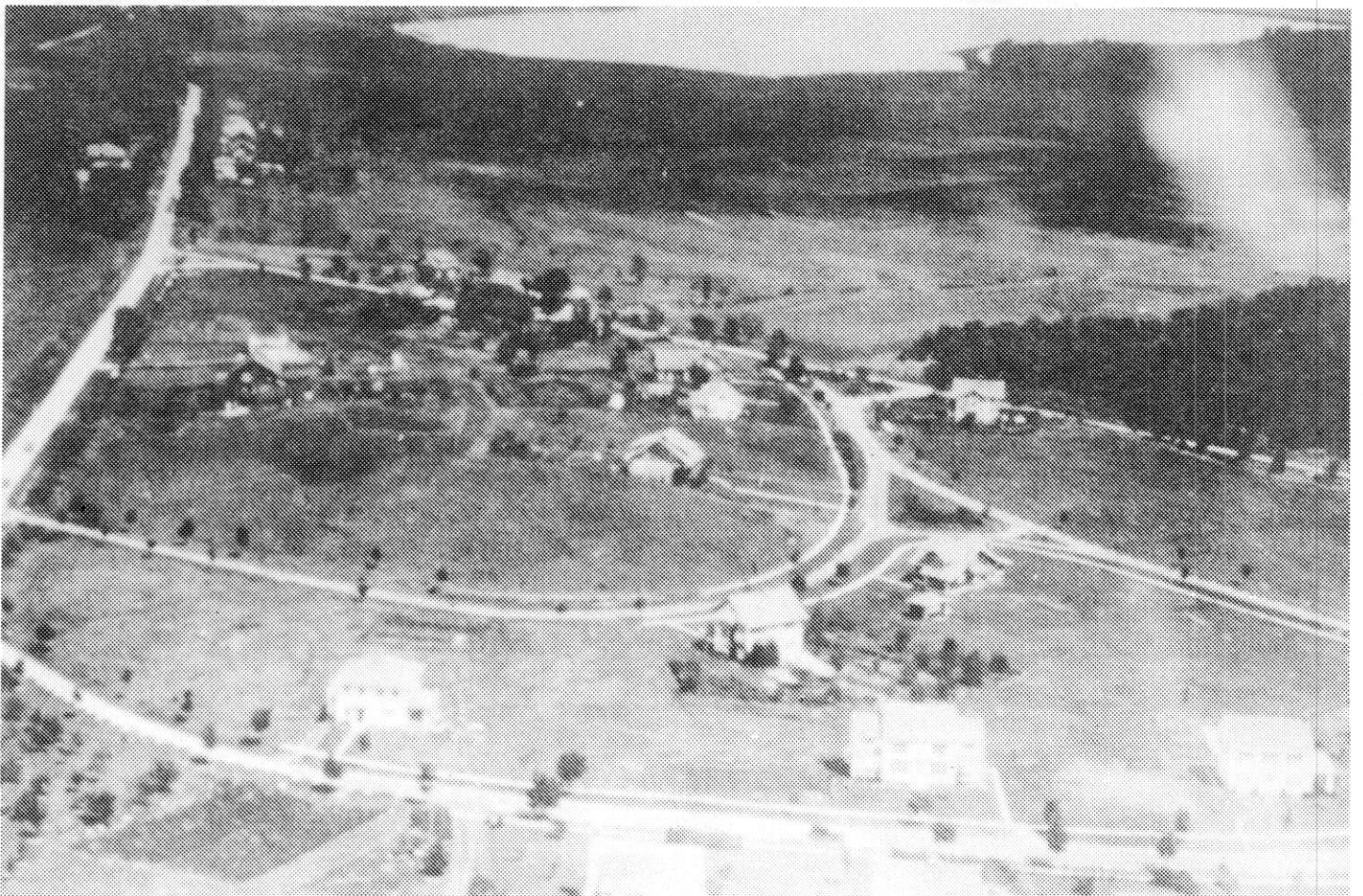
EXHIBIT III

DESCRIPTION OF PROPERTY OF NAKOMA SCHOOL

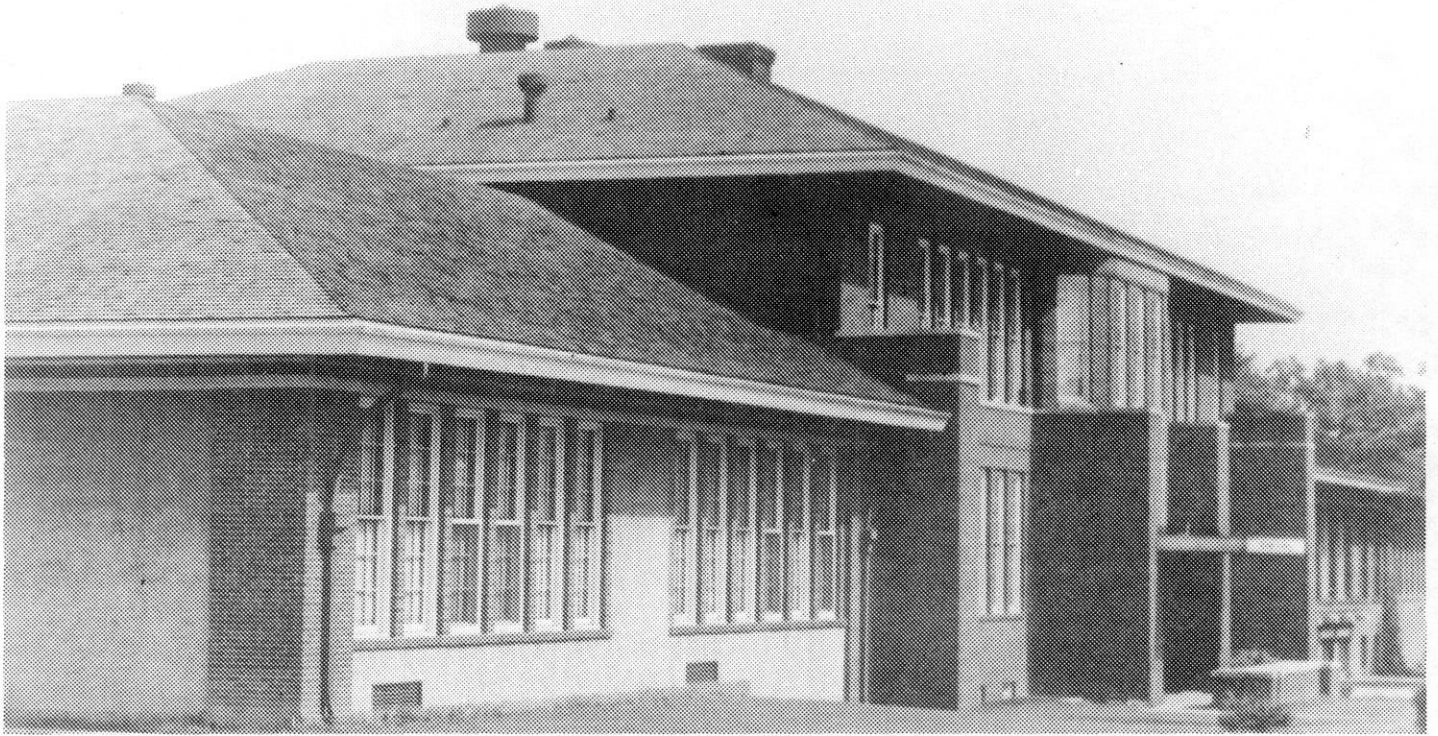
<u>No. of Parcel</u>	<u>Acquired</u>	<u>From</u>	<u>By</u>
1	Original School Property		
2	1921	Fuller	Subscription by Citizens
3	1924	Vehm	Purchase by District
4	1925	Olson	Purchase by District
5	1924	Tieman	Condemnation
6	1924	Public	Street Discontinued
7	1929	Summer	Exchange of Property
8	1929	Madison Realty Co.	Gift
9	1929	Public	Street Discontinued
10	1929	Cherokee Realty Co.	Gift
11	1931	Madison Realty Co. & Town of Madison	Gift



The eastern end of District 6 looked like this in 1927. Mrs. Rosa Zingg snapped the photo from her front yard. Wyota Avenue runs down the left side of the photo and Lake Wingra is in the center background.



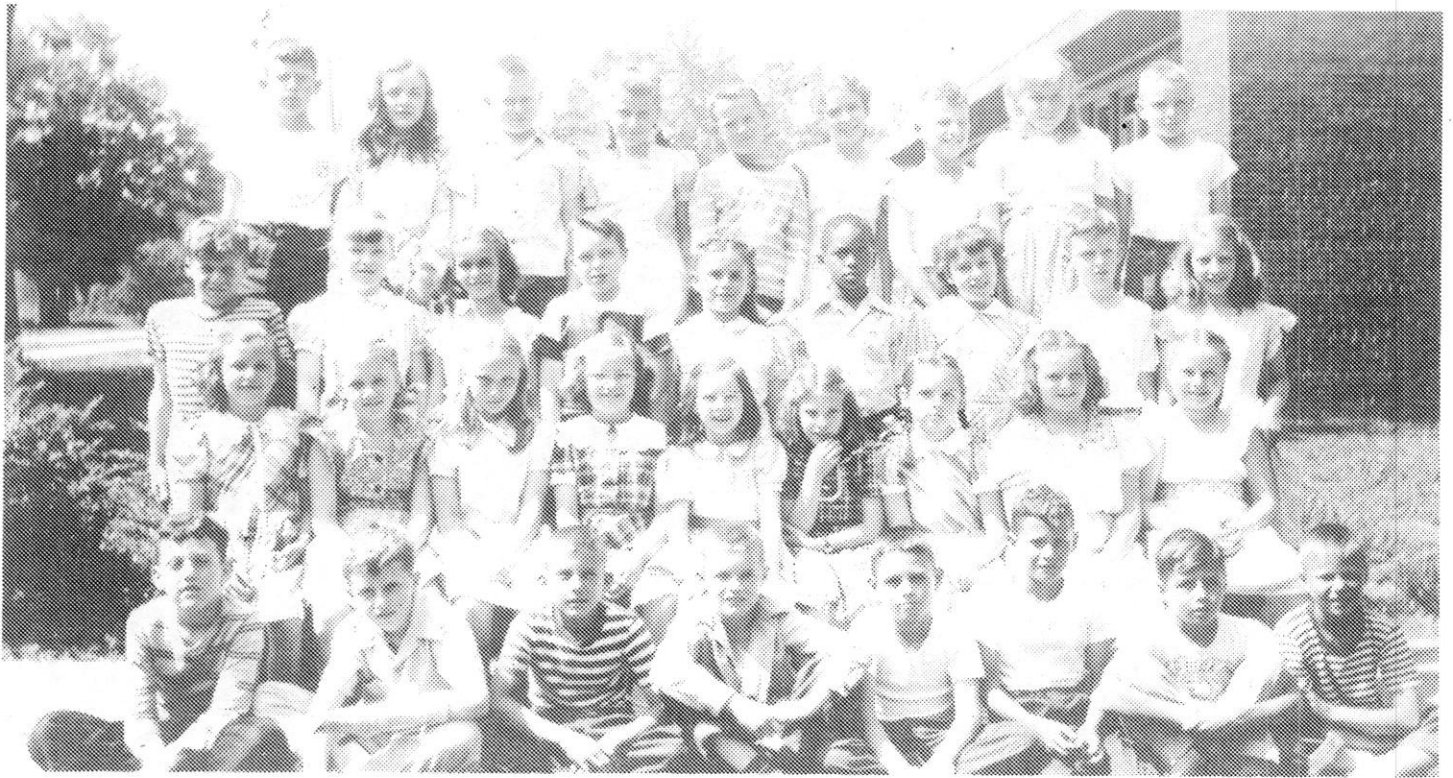
Aerial view of Nakoma looking east down Nakoma Road.
(Courtesy, Stark Company)



NAKOMA SCHOOL (courtesy, Madison Public Schools)



Your kidding, marble tournaments!! Yes they really did happen. During the 1940's and 50's they were a very popular event. A city champ would be selected and go on to the state tournament. This group from Nakoma School are only partly identified. Front row, L-R: Buddy Baer, Dave Johnson, Crissy (the Rehfeld family dog), Tom Towell, ?? (boy kneeling behind Tom), ?? (boy on right)
 Back row: ??, Howard Mead, ??, Bob Anderson, Tom Nissalke, ?? (boy behind Tom), Jerry Frank, Mickie Rehfeld Boehm, Bill Rathbun, Charles Aikens, Bob Beggs, ?? (boy on right)



Fourth grade students, 1947-48. Mary Kier, teacher
 Row 1, L-R: Thomas Nicholls, Scotty Dale, John Annin, Ray Gesteland, David Anderson
 David Koepcke, Denny Reul, Ronny Morrnick. Row 2: Joan Gordon, Judy Dale, Sally Kobs,
 Sonja Lee, Patsy Thomas, Beth Knope, Barbara Reed, Mary Stumpf, Jean Ann Gehner.
 Row 3: Roger Schmitz, Margaret Brink, Lois Nereim, Robert Elvehjem, Doris Kozelka,
 Harry Hamilton, Susan Stauffer, John Wileden, Deanna Wesenberg. Row 4: Bob Goetz,
 Patsy Dugan, Phil Gottschalk, Margaret Capron, Dan Engelke, Carol Culver, Ian Keith,
 Barbara Brown, Richard Beck.

(courtesy, Mary Kier)



Nakoma School. The portion of the building behind the mailbox was the original building built in 1917. The eastern addition is partly seen on the right side of the photo. The two story portion of the building was the addition built in 1928.

(courtesy, Mary Kier)



Fourth grade students, 1961-62. Mary Kier, teacher
Row 1, L-R: Rebecca Crandall, Gilbert Jevne, Marcia White, Steve Granick, Christina Schabacker, Coleen Shaw. Row 2: Susan Elmer, Mark Mau, Patricia Borman, Daniel Fleishman, Amanda Long, Irene Stearns, David Fellows. Row 3: Brian Skinner, Anne Haley, Thomas Leake, Emmett Goodrich, Kolly McKeough, Laura Brynelson, Fredrick Davie. Row 4: Jorja Meloy, John Frank, Peter Rowe, Stephen Scharch, Sanra Faelchle, Steven Lienhardt, Tommy Wirth.

(courtesy, Mary Kier)

ANOTHER NEW BUILDING

By the late 1960's, many changes were occurring that would affect the future, not only of the Nakoma School, but of many Madison schools. Continued expansion of the city, declining enrollment in the more central schools, changing life styles of the community, declining birth rates and a change in philosophy of education caused the Madison Metropolitan School District to devise a Master Plan for the 1970's. This plan created the kindergarten-5 elementary school, 5-8 middle school and the 9-12 high school so that every school in the district was affected. Additionally, it laid the ground work for closing schools to increase enrollments of those remaining open.

Schools within our area affected by closing were: Dudgeon, Badger and Longfellow. Cherokee Heights Elementary and West Junior High would be discontinued to allow the

space they occupied to be used for other instructional programs.

The neighborhood elementary school was to become a thing of the past. Because of the increased complexity that was required of education, those buildings with low enrollment were considered outmoded. The new plan would also lower the per-pupil operation cost. By eliminating the neighborhood school, the hot lunch program was to be expanded, or offered, in buildings that had not had it previously. This change was also affected by the change in society in that more mothers were returning to the work force.

It was recommended to raze the Nakoma School and replace it with a new building that would accommodate about 500 pupils. The old building was considered a fire hazard for several reasons. The original roof of

the 1917 building had been enclosed within one of the additions. Also, because of the rather haphazard way the additions had been put on, the fire department considered it a fire evacuation problem. Making the building safer was a primary concern and accessible to the handicapped was also a necessity. The cost of making such improvements was such that a new building was considered more feasible.

The new school would have an attendance district including a portion of the Dudgeon attendance area as well as including the Cherokee Heights attendance area. The Marlboro Heights, Rosedale Plat and Allied Drive students who had been bussed to Nakoma and Dudgeon would be going to Odana and Midvale. Events that occurred over the next few years caused these students to be disrupted several times. The plan met with unfavorable response. The Dudgeon District, of course, didn't want to lose their building. The Nakoma District did not agree with the Master Plan in that their general opinion was that the building was alright. The emotional sentiment expressed in 1917 by the old residents were again heard by this present generation. Change of this sort always seems to inflict some pain. The debate created a fervor and, unfortunately, pitted neighborhood against neighborhood. Needless to say the Master Plan won out and the school year 1969-70 marked the end of the Nakoma School. It also marked another sad occasion as Mr. Engelke decided to retire with the closing of the school. He was honored with a retirement banquet attended by former and present staff, students and parents. It was indeed a fitting occasion to honor a man who had served so many years as principal.

In retrospect, the choice of the Nakoma site seems most logical. It is the most centrally located to the attendance area. The Dudgeon attendance area, as planned in the 1920's, never materialized. The land north of the Illinois Central tracks, owned by Wingra Land Company, became Glenway Golf Course instead of residential homes. Also the land south of Monroe Street, which was scheduled for residential development, ended up as part of the University of Wisconsin Arboretum. It was also not known at that time that Nakoma would annex to the city and that the District 6 School would become part of the Madison Metropolitan District. The Cherokee Heights attendance area was handicapped by the construction of the Belt-

line Highway and the commercial development in that area. These areas had also been affected by the post-World War II building and baby boom and as the neighborhoods matured, the school population began decreasing.

The children from Nakoma District attended school at Dudgeon for the 1970-71 school year while the old school was razed and construction of the new building was underway. The parents of these students worked together to help ease this transitional year. The year passed without major crisis while the staff prepared for the opening of the new building. The name selected for the building, Henry David Thoreau, seems fitting with its setting near Lake Wingra and the lovely oaks of Nakoma Park.

The architectural firm of Bowen Kanazawa (now Bowen Williamson Zimmerman) designed the new building. The exterior is red brick and is designed with a low profile on the Nakoma Road side so that it blends into the natural setting of the school property. The interior instructional area is designed so that the Instructional Material Center (IMC) serves as the main hub with the classrooms as extensions. There are no interior walls in the instructional area so the space can be adjusted to fit the needs of the classes. The main floor contains classrooms, IMC, and offices. The lower level includes the gym, kindergarten, art and music rooms and the lunch room. The majority of the windows on both levels are located so they overlook the park.

The fall of 1971 marked the opening of Thoreau with a peak enrollment of 453 students. The staff was composed of former Nakoma and Dudgeon teachers. The principal, Mr. Edward Thomas, had been principal at Dudgeon. Dudgeon School was now closed and Cherokee Heights converted to a middle school. The children and staff adapted themselves to their new environment with little difficulty. Mr. Thomas served as principal thru the 1978-79 school year. Because of major administrative shifts in the district, Mrs. Alice Benn became the new principal and is currently serving in that capacity. Several staff members have been with the school since it opened, namely: Florence Cerrato, Lynn Conwell, Gretchen Morgansen, Gert Thiel, Dorothy Williams, Marge Lueder and Willie Taylor. The enrollment has steadily declined since the opening of Thoreau and the 1981-82 enrollment stands at 276.

Low enrollment continues to be a problem in the Madison Metropolitan School District and more schools have met the same fate as Dudgeon.

are again with the school. The students of Thoreau attend kindergarten-5, moving on to Cherokee Heights Middle School for grades 6-8. They attend Madison West High School for grades 9-12.

The attendance area has remained stable since the building opened except the children from Marlboro Heights and Rosedale Plat

The opening of Thoreau marked the construction of the last new elementary school for the Madison Metropolitan School District.



The 1981-82 5th Grade Class

Row 1, L-R: Paula Sokolow, Elise Matzelle, Betsy Poi, Sandy Thiele, Missy Sullivan, Caroline Norsman, Meg Warren, Julie Harr

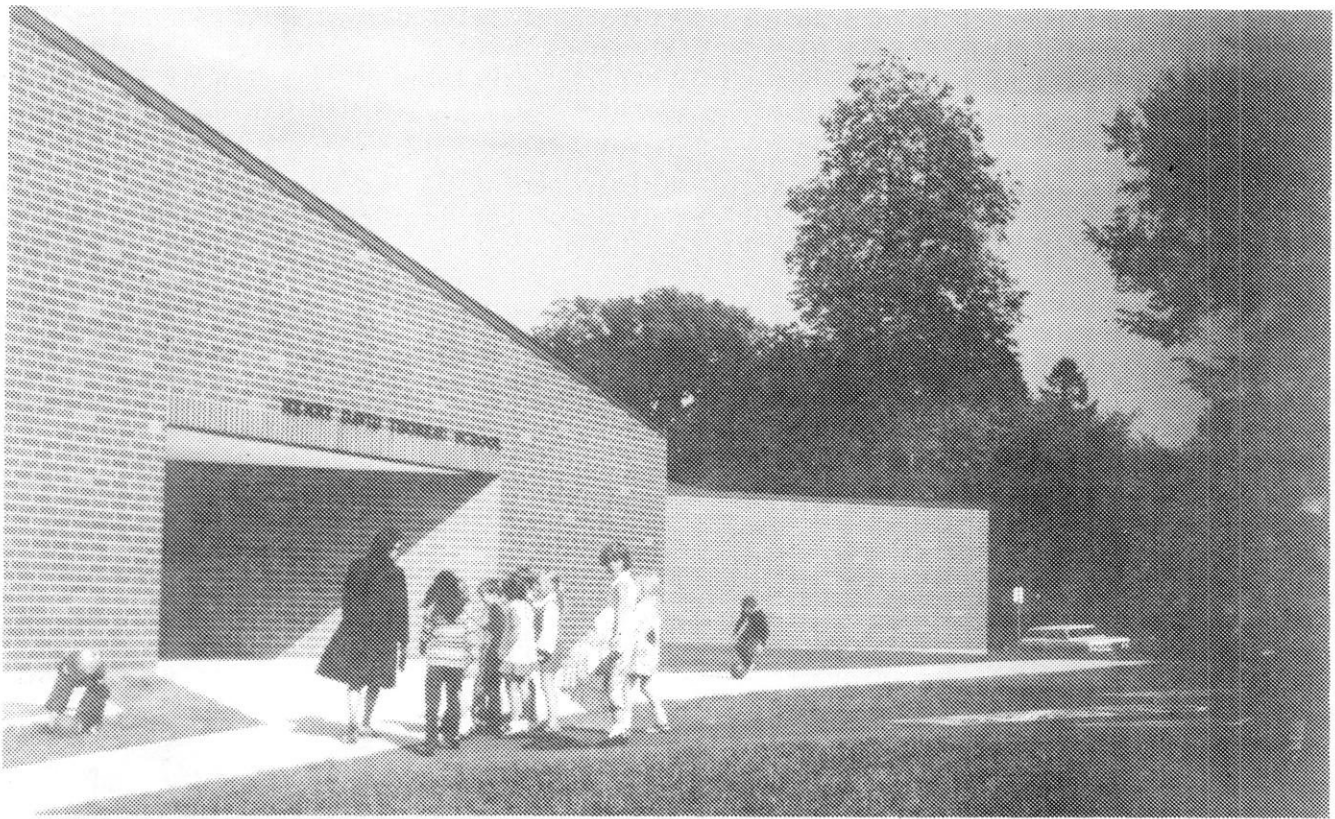
Row 2: Wendy Eherenman, Leah Ramsdell, Betsy Cooper, Shenan Kroupa, Ingrid Thorson, Scott Smith, Dicky Kleiboer, David Lake, Steve Goemans, Gabe Bergemann, Tony Caruso, Peter Rankin, James Zweifel

Row 3: Jenny Minetree, Richie Stoffels, Steve Daniel, Doug Yu, Katie Williams, Amy Belk, Lynn Paulson, Ricky Raterink, Adam Leu, Derek Grams, Jenny Hastings, Judy Wallace, Matt Drahn, Gabe Tate, Sarah Friedlund, Jane Kenny

Row 4: Jason Sprague, Heidi Hahn, Christina Mandt, Jane Laishes, Jennifer Busch, Lisa Sorenson, Joey Williams, Caleb Janus, Melanie Hucherard, Mike Schoenfeld, Heath Whalen

Row 5: Nancy Reynolds, Jerry Markart, Ed Corcoran, Josh Phillips, Bryan Mjaanes, Bernie Caputo, Leslie Williams, Tonja Zitlow, Emily Myers, Katie Haley, Mary Fleischli, Benson Hawk, Judy Linden, Julie Ellis, David Boe, Andy Rice. Absent: Lori Kent and Ben Read

Row 6: Patricia McClure, Berneice Schneider, Barbara Karavolas, Alice Benn



Henry David Thoreau Elementary School
(courtesy, Bowen, Williamson, Zimmerman)



Members of the current staff who have taught since Thoreau opened.
Seated: Lynn Conwell, Margery Lueder
Standing: Gert Thiel, Willie Taylor, Gretchen Morgensen, Florence Cerrato

EPILOGUE

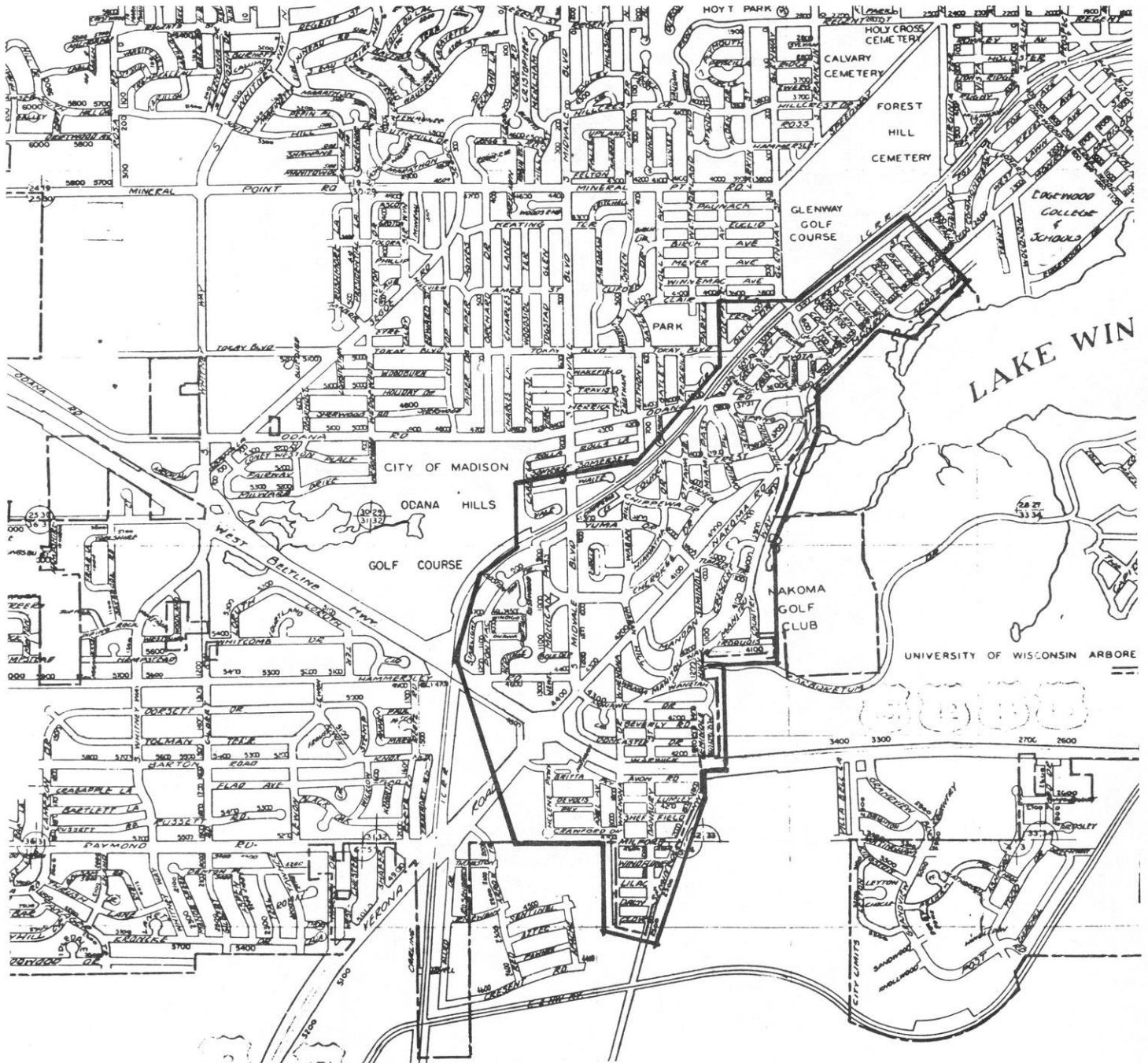
Educational curriculum has changed dramatically over the 125 years since the first school opened on the Thoreau site. Today's students are being challenged to basic computer science on the elementary level. However, the basic 3 R's--reading, writing and arithmetic are still there. The present staff continues to educate themselves to better prepare the students for the future. School buildings come and go and it's interesting to note that the present building resembles the first, with the open classroom concept. Children are no longer structured to a single grade level, but can cross over to higher or lower levels as needed.

The memories attached to a building are really the memories locked away in a parent, teacher or child's heart. Even when the building is gone, those precious memories can be recalled where or whenever desired. Those precious memories of days gone by can never be removed. Bricks and mortar don't make a school, instead it's the relationship between the child and the staff. The smile, touch or hug from a teacher, principal or janitor are as impor-

tant as the curriculum.

Who can predict the future of Thoreau School. Will a school continue to exist at this site in another 25 years, let alone 125? School closings, while not new, have been a threat to all of the buildings on this site over the years. The harsh reality of the 1981-82 ranking of 11th for Thoreau for school closing makes one wonder. The wish of the school neighborhood is that the fine tradition of education can indeed continue on this site for many more years.

The creek has been one of the most popular places for young children for the 125 year history of the school. More shoes, mittens and other outer clothing has spent time drying out in all the buildings on this site because of the creek. In earlier years the creek was above ground behind the school and a footbridge crossed it at Nakoma Road and Cherokee Drive.



The 1981 Thoreau attendance boundary is indicated by the black line.

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