

EARLY HISTORY OF BERKLEY - HUNTINGTON WOODS SCHOOL DISTRICT

The first written record that we have of the present Berkley Huntington Woods district bears the date 1867. That year the township treasurer turned over to the treasurer of the school district the following sums:

Primary Fund.	\$71.66
Direct Tax	10.03
Dog Tax.	<u>19.60</u>
Total	\$101.29

That year the only expense of the district was \$60 paid to the teacher for the summer term and \$120 for the winter term. At that time the janitor service was very inexpensive – \$1.00 being paid for the annual cleaning. The teacher, with the help of the older pupils, swept and dusted the building daily. \$4.50 was paid for building fires for the year. Wood, of course, was the fuel used, the annual cost ranging from \$10 to \$18. Our slate blackboards bordering each room would have seemed a luxury at that time for in 1877, \$10.25 was paid for a dictionary and for painting the blackboard.

The amount of business transactions was very small – one double page taking care of all accounts for two to four years.

To give us an estimate of prices in those times, records show that in July 1877 when school opened, 85 cents was paid for a box of crayons, a water pail, a box of matches, and a broom. How much more than the broom could we get today for \$.85; and what horrors that water pail would give Miss Shotwell_

Wages evidently had begun to increase for in 1886, \$7.50 was paid for building fires, – almost twice what it had cost in the earliest records. But in 1890 Miss Emma Brooks, the teacher, built the fires herself and received \$2.00 a year for it. In 1891 and '92, some one must have been interested in the comfort and appearance of the schoolhouse as \$4.40 was paid to bank the building for the winter; and in the spring \$12.00 was paid for repainting the schoolhouse. This \$12.00 included the cost of the paint.

The sister of Mrs. William Sullivan of Royal Oak was a teacher in the school about this time. She says the building was on the east side of Monnier Road – now Coolidge Highway – that the desks

were homemade and built to accommodate two scholars and that they were handsomely carved with initials and pictures., There was no teacher's desk and the only blackboard was about three feet square. Coats and hats were laid on shelves in the back of the room. As near as Mrs. Sullivan can remember the school stood between what is now Dorothea and Sunnyknoll. So our present Berkley High School building is not far from the original location.

In 1893, Miss Clara L. Erb, now Mrs. Clara Kidder of Royal Oak, taught the school. Mrs. Kidder was in the tenth grade at the time and taught for three months for the sum of \$50. She rode to school with the milkman.

From 1893 to 1896 Joseph Rauge acted as clerk. The same book had been used to keep accounts in for over 25 years; (only a few pages having been used) and at the expiration of his term of office, we find this bit of humor:

"Be saving with this book *so* it will last 340 years more."

For teaching the months of May, June, and July, 1896, Miss Mable Baldwin of Royal Oak received \$50. Miss Baldwin was attending High School and as that closed in April, it gave her an opportunity to teach the summer term in District #7.

About this time the site at the corner of the Eleven Mile Road and Coolidge "The Dormitory" was built on for in 1902 the old schoolhouse was sold to a Mr. Lucas for \$12. The first record of tuition being received was in 1899 when \$4.50 was paid to the district. The first record of paying transportation to a board member is in 1901 when \$2.00 was paid Charles Fuellgraf for a trip to Oxford. In 1902 people of the district voted to insure the building - cost being \$8.10. New furniture was purchased, in 1902 to the amount of \$104.60. No doubt the initials and pictures on the desk tops necessitated this expense.

Even in those times the school board found themselves custodians of articles no longer needed to maintain the school for in 1903 Fred Puvogel paid the district \$1.90 for a pump.

The first money spent for reading material was in 1903. Twenty dollars was spent for a chart. All books, of course, were purchased by the children.

In 1907 the teacher's salary was increased to \$33.00 a month. That year it cost \$3.00 to clean the schoolhouse.

In 1908 someone must have felt the need for beautifying the schoolyard. Perhaps the teacher asked for trees for Arbor Day planting, for \$7.50 was spent for shade trees. The following year a flag was purchased. This is the first account of one being raised on the building. That year \$2.00 was paid to clean the yard and pile up the wood.

By 1910 a need was evident for higher learning as \$20.00 was paid for tuition to Royal Oak. Two years later students began to attend Birmingham High School as well.

How modern the district must have felt in 1911 when the sum of \$88.10 was paid in February for a heating stove. At the next annual meeting the old stove was sold for \$1.50.

Names of present day merchants come to our notice in 1911 and 1912.

Mellen Wright was paid \$2.86 for hardware

George Dondero. . . . \$9.00 for insurance

J. F. Codling. . . \$4.50 for lamps

The new heater must have been the cause for a change in fuel for from 1912 and coal was used as well as wood. Mellen Wright received the first order for which \$9.80 was paid.

In 1915 the district was without money and \$200 was borrowed from the Royal Oak Savings Bank. The same year a check writer was purchased. In 1915, 1916, 1917, and 1918 we find Miss Edith Esemán, now teaching in Royal Oak, as the teacher - salary having been raised to \$50, and for the last two years, \$60 a month.

The first money paid for publicity of any kind was in 1918 when \$16.00 was paid the Tribune Printing Company. That year \$300 was paid for printing and selling bonds; and Robert E. Barber, the present attorney' for the board received \$75 for legal services. This was at the time that the present site at Berkley Avenue and Catalpa Drive was bought.

Beginning in 1918 we began to broaden out -- three teachers being employed. This is certainly a contrast to our present day school system with a faculty of 302 teachers.

Blanche C. Beaman

Note from Mrs. Beaman March 3, 1958:

This was written over thirty years ago, which accounts *for* the fact that people mentioned (Mrs. Sullivan and her sister, Clara Erb Kidder, Mabel Baldwin.. etc.) have since passed away. Miss Shotwell was the school nurse. The old frame schoolhouse on the northeast corner of Eleven Mile and Coolidge was remodeled into what was named "The Dormitory" in 1919 as I remember, at a time when the district was trying to force the teachers to live there. After two years it was proven unsatisfactory and the five girls were no longer made to live there. It wouldn't have lasted that long if it had not been that one of the girls -- raised on a farm n could operate a gasoline engine that pumped the water. The drinking water had to be carried down daily from the Berkley grade school as none of the teachers owned a car