

HISTORY OF ROGERS CORNERS SCHOOL

Dist. No. 2 Fr., Freedom Twp., Washtenaw Co. (became part of Chelsea, 1 Fr., March 1955)

Editor's Note:

This history was prepared as a county project, carried on during the school year of 1940-41.

Word processed by Bonnie Mitchell, June 30, 2005

Rogers Corners School is located on Waters Road, just east of Fletcher Road in Section 9, Freedom Township.

The first settlers came to Freedom Township in 1831. Among the first settlers in this district were Mr. Scott, who settled on what is now the Christain Haas farm, George Peckens on the George Loeffler farm, Prestons on the farms now owned by Mrs. Christain Grau and Clarence Buss, Jud McLean on the William Eiseman farm, Mr. Lucker on Jacob Schneider's farm, Mr. Wellman on Mrs. Charles Buss' farm, another Mr. Wellman on the John Grau place, M.B. Wellman on the Schiller farm and Reuben Wellman on Ezra Feldkamp's farm. Edward Letchfield settled on the Herbert Schenk farm, Jacob Sternberg on the George Hinderer farm, David C. Raymond on the Edwin Kuhl farm, Mr. Rogers on John Wenk's farm, another Mr. Rogers on the place now owned by William Beuerle, and Levi Rogers on the Jacob Koengeter farm.

The first homes of these pioneers were made of logs and built by themselves. Their next big task was to clear and improve the land.

The only postoffice in the town called Freedonia was located about two miles east of the school on the Waters Road. The postmaster was William Pfizenmaier.

There are two Lutheran Churches in the district: both located on Waters Road near the school. The Zion Lutheran Church was erected in 1867 and St. Johns Evangelican was built in 1892.

Rogers Corners School received its name at a time when three Rogers Families owned and resided on the corner right near the school.

The first school was held in the district in 1834. As there was no school building, school was held in the homes of various members. One of these was the Stienberg home, now the Hinderer home.

At a meeting recorded November 18, 1836 in which Lyman Welliams was elected chairman and Levi Rogers clerk, it was decided that there were sufficient members in this settlement to insure the building of a school house. It was voted to raise one hundred dollars or under as the case may be, for the purpose of providing a convenient school house and stove for the use of the district. The school was to be built of logs. We are told that this building stood on the same lot

and just east of where our present school now stands. The meeting adjourned and was recorded in the district book by Daniel Rouse, Director.

The next meeting recorded was held May 27, 1837. Thirty dollars was allowed for the use of the summer school, which was to be continued for five months. New officers elected were as follow: Moderator – Alexander Peckens; Director – Daniel Rouse; Assessor – Manassah Wellman. The officers received 75 cents per day for their services.

The same year, in October, ninety dollars was voted for the use of the school the ensuing year. The school year was to consist of four months of winter school to begin about the first of November and five months of summer school, if there was money enough. New officers again were elected.

In the year 1838 the district voted to put a tax on each scholar. This tax amounted to sixty-four feet of wood two feet long to be furnished by the parent or guardian within ten days from the time that each scholar entered school. If the wood was not furnished the deficiency was furnished by the director within ten days thereafter at the rate of three dollars per cord, to be paid by the delinquent.

During the next four years no special business was transacted. The by-laws of 1838 concerning the furnishing of fuel and having nine months of school were continually adopted. The officers were changed each year. However, the only new names listed were Frederick Lee – Moderator and S. Woods – Director in 1839 and William Preston – Assessor in 1840.

The officers elected in 1842 were Levi Rogers – Moderator, Frederick Lee - Assessor, and William Preston – Director. On June 5, 1843 a petition was presented to the officers to call a special meeting June 17 “for the purpose of raising such sum as the district shall think best, also to establish a site for a new school house, and to choose a committee to draft a plan for the house”. The petition was signed by Ruben Williams, S. S. Peckens, Nelson Wells, G. Raymond, G. N. McLean, Solomon McArthur, Robert Truggs, G. S. Peckens, Edward Moon, and Seth Chase.

At the special meeting it was voted to raise two hundred dollars for the purpose of building a school house to replace the log school. The committee appointed consisted of S. C. Barber, Seth Chase, and Levi Rogers.

At the regular meeting of the district of this year new officers elected were Seth Chase, Moderator; Jeremiah Honer, Assessor; and L. R. McLean, Director.

A special meeting was held the eleventh day of December 1843 for the purpose of selling the log school and the stove to the highest bidder. The house was sold to Mr. Gerald for four dollars and fifty cents. The stove went to Frederick Lee for four dollars and fifty cents. The money thus received was paid toward the purchase of a new stove.

New names appearing in the list of officers from 1843 to 1875 are: James Raymond, Mathew Butler, Horace Rogers, Samuel Gressor, Alexander Peckens, Stephen Tucker, John Essig, H. J. Davidter, William Pfitzenmaier, John Huel, Sr. Frederick Eiseman, John Schenk and

John Messner. All officers were changed each year until 1860 when the present method was adopted.

In 1875 the district again decided that a new school building was needed. A building fund was started with two hundred fifty dollars raised by tax. It was also stated in the minutes of this meeting that the four months of winter school were to begin the first of October and the summer term after the closing of the German school.

At the regular meeting in 1876 the district voted to build a new school the coming year, 1877. Three hundred dollars was added to the building fund. Joseph Daviditer was elected director. The other two office holders were moderator – John Messner, and assessor – Frederick Eiseman.

January 5, 1877 a special meeting was held. At this meeting it was resolved that the district build a brick school house 26 x 46 x 15 feet. This is the school in use at present.

The election of officers, deciding the length of the school terms, and the letting of contracts for furnishing and sawing wood were the important items of business transacted during the next few years. New names appearing in the list of officers from 1877 to 1900 are: Gotfried Grau, Henry Kuhl, Barney Bertke, Dan Strieter, Herman Niehaus, Christian Grau, and Lewis Geyer.

In 1890 the plaster of the ceiling was removed and the ceiling sealed with lumber. The interior was then painted.

In 1891 the district voted to have the teacher board himself.

In 1904 the board fence was removed and replaced by a chain fence in front of the school. In 1902 the building was painted both on the exterior and interior. The following year it was rodded. In 1908 the school was equipped with a slate blackboard. It was also voted to keep the children in the school yard.

A platform was built on the steps and a new floor put in during 1909. About 1911 the winter, spring, and fall terms of school dropped, and a continuous term of nine months was adopted. A cement porch with a roof was built in 1912.

October 13, 1913 a special meeting was held for the purpose of deciding about a new heating plant. A furnace was installed.

After 1913 there were no further changes until 1934 when the C.W.A.¹ made extensive alterations on the building, making it a nearly standard school.

The first teacher of which we have record is D. F. Rockwell. He taught in 1839 during the winter term for fifty-six dollars and seventy-seven cents. The summer term of that year was taught by C. C. Auger for \$32.00. The winter term was taught by a man, and the summer term by a woman.

Mrs. Alice Guinan Nordman of Brighton who taught this school in 1881 and 1882 is the oldest living teacher.

John Grau of Chelsea and Charles Eschelbach of Grass Lake are the oldest living scholars.

Many of the parents and grandparents of our children enrolled in school today attended Rogers Corners School, among them are:

Marilyn and Wanda Eschelbachs' mother and father attended; also both paternal and maternal grandparents.

David, Betha, and Kathryn Haas' father, and their grandmother Haas were former pupils.

Clarence Buss, father of Doris and LeRoy, and Walter Buss, father of Esther and Walter Jr., attended school here. Also, the father and mother of Clarence and Walter Buss Sr. were former scholars.

Grace Schenk's father, mother and grandfather Schenk's names are to be found in the former list of pupils.

Alton Grau's parents and both grandfathers names appear.

Ruth Beuerle's mother attended.

Robert Heller was preceded by his mother and grandmother Schiller.

Ruth Eiseman's father, grandfather and grandmother Eiseman, and grandfather Buss were among the former pupils.

Norman Feldkamp's father and grandfather Feldkamp attended Rogers Corners School.

The following is a list of the former teachers of Rogers Corners School:

1839-Isaac Magoon and Miss H.C. Chipman Miss A. Foster - \$1.50 per week	1881-Alice Guinan Nordman, W.A. Easton, Mrs. Nordman is the oldest living teacher.
1840-Miss Foster, Gilbert Hudson, Miss Hill	1882-Alice Guinan Nordman, Luke Guinan
1841-H. Becker, Miss Boye - 25¢ a day	1883-84 Charles Thompson
1842-L.R. McLean, Miss Underhill	1885-Anna G. Blan, Charles Thompson
1843-L.R.McLean, Miss Crane	1886-Addie Westfall, O.A. Vaughn
1844-A.H.Crane, Miss Foster	1887-Emma R. Kempf Winans, Chas. Thompson
1845-J.B.Watson, Miss Foster	1888-F.L.Feldkamp
1846-Wm. Magoon, A. Crane	1889-Jessie Flagler
1847-O.H. Easton, Helen Dond	1890-F.L. Feldkamp, Clayton Goodwin
1848-A. King, Helen Dond	1891-94 Ben Huehl
1849-O. Easton, Susan A. Smith	1895-Flora R. Schaffer, Austin Houlett
1850-Lafayette Arnold, Susan A. Smith	1896- Flora R. Schaffer, Fred Feldkamp
1851-A.C. Gillet, Miss Truchel	1897- Flora R. Schaffer
1852-no record	1897-1903-Julius Schmid

1853-Wallace Furguson, Jermiah Hoover	1903-1905-Martha Kuhl Huss
1854-A.K. Bush, Miss Orr	1905-Lillian Skinner Lingane
1855-S. Cometack, Mr. Price	1905-1908-Julius Schmid
1856-James Henderson	1909-1911-Martha Kusterer
1857-no record	1912-Mary E. Whalian Cremmel
1858-W.W. Preston, Miss M. Guiring	1913-14-Lucy Stephens Ivay
1859-no record	1915-Gertrude Whiteman Heimedinger
1860-Marvin Raymond, Lucia Fenn	1916-18-Mabel Geyer Feldkamp
1861.-Solomon Underhill	1919-20-Mary Jameson
1862-Mr. Watson, S.M. Wellman	1921-Eunice Fetterly
1863-D.B. Taylor, Mary Tucker	1922-Harriette Sewell
1864-Mr. Howard	1923-Elsie Heydlauff Kalmbach
1865-John Hudson	1924-Sarah Kuhl Braun
1866-no record	1925-Ina Feldkamp Haeussler
1867-Nancy Ferguson	1926-27-Ruth A. Norcross
1868-S. M. Wellman	1928-Theressa Weakly
1869-F. E. Wolcott	1929-Mrs. Gertrude Butler
1870—1871 S. M. Wellman	1930-Mrs. C.A. Whiteman
1872-1876 no record	1931-32 Dorothy Haselswerdt
1877-J. F. Somers	1933-37 Irene Huehl
1878-O. A. Vaughen	1937-40 Mrs. Eugenia Shirliff
1879-S. M. Wellman, Luke Guiman	1940-41 Anna Armstrong
1880-S. M. Wellman, O.A. Vaughen	1942-Gertrude Kinney & Amanda Husted
	1944-52 Hildegard Fontana Mitchell
	1953-Marian Hanley
	1954-57 Rose Anderson

The children attending school this year (1940-1941) are:

8 th grade – Doris Buss, LaFern Moore	3 rd grade –Raymond Moore, Grace Schenk, Kathryn Haas
6 th grade – Marilyn Eschelbach, Robert Moore	
5 th grade – Esther Buss, Alton Grau, Betha Haas, Shirley Moore, David Haas	2 nd grade – LeRoy Buss, Ruth Eiseman, Ruth Beuerle, Geraldine Roach, Walter Buss, Wanda Eschelbach, Leona Moore
4 th grade – Rosetta Morrish	
	Beginners – Norman Feldkamp, Robert Heller, Harold Moore, Wilfred Moore
Teacher: Miss Anna Armstrong	

¹ The Civil Works Administration was created on November 9, 1933. It was intended to be a short term program designed to carry the nation over a critical winter while other programs such as the Federal Emergency Relief Administration were being planned and developed. Its original aim was to put 4 million needy unemployed to work for the winter of 1933-1934. CWA projects were sponsored primarily by local state governments, and every attempt was made to fit the projects to the local people in need of work. On the first payday, November 23, 1933, a total of 814,511 workers received checks from the CWA. Two weeks later, the number had increased to 1,976,625, and by January 18, 1934, there were 4,263,644 workers on the CWA payroll. On average, 80 percent of the funds allocated to the CWA were used for paying wages. Rates of pay were determined by geographic region, skilled and unskilled labor, and the prevailing wages of the area. The CWA used the payment system designed for Veterans Administration payments. This allowed quick disbursement of much-needed paychecks.

"Long after the workers of CWA are dead and gone and these hard times are forgotten, their effort will be remembered by permanent useful works in every county of every state." (Hopkins, p. 120) Roadwork projects constituted the largest part of CWA work. Approximately 250,000 miles of roads and streets were built or improved nationwide. Other projects included sanitation improvements, repair or construction of public buildings, national park improvements, real estate property surveys, library, art and theater projects, and archeological excavations. Another goal of the CWA was to provide funding to start cooperative enterprises such as farming co-ops and small industries such as laundries and sewing centers.

The CWA program ended in the spring of 1934. However, many projects were continued under the auspices of the Federal Emergency Relief Administration.