

McKINLEY SCHOOL



TOWNSEND NORTH SCHOOL

# HISTORY OF VASSAR UNION SCHOOL

IDA R. LOVEJOY

**A**FTER the early settlers had made a home for themselves, there came to them the necessity of educating their children. As soon as the people had come to this decision, T. North, of whom every one has heard, spent three days plodding around through the forests to find people to sign a petition. The desired number having been obtained, what was known as the "Curtis Shanty" was made over into a school house and Miss Augusta Slafter hired to conduct the school for a term of three months during the summer of 1851, at a salary of one dollar and a half per week and the privilege of "boarding around" among the patrons of the school.

This old school building should ever be dear to the people of Vassar for it was there that the start was made. In 1852 a frame school house was built, which is now known as the "Moore House" and the school was taught the winter and following year by D. G. Wilder. This served as the school building for several years and, having been built near the river, afforded the children much amusement.

In 1860 a brick school house was built on "The Hill."

The school was graded in 1864 by ex-congressman, E. P. Allen, but diplomas were not granted until 1871.

The number of pupils yearly increased and in 1881 an addition was made to the school house, which left it almost as it is today.

Later excavations were made for basements under the rear of the building but the work has never been completed. The side entries to these basements were added at the same time. Cement steps in place of the old wooden ones have been built.

Pupils began to come from the East side as well as the West, and in 1886 a ward school, known as the McKinley School, was built on the East side. The basement in this school house, through the efforts of the Mothers' Club, has been remodelled into a modern and up-to-date play-room for the youngsters.

Finally, in 1896 another ward school was provided on the West side, known as the Townsend North School, which made three schools in Vassar.

The number of teachers has been increased from time to time to supply the demands of the pupils.

There are now fourteen teachers in all. It must have been a source of joy to the early pupils of Vassar School to watch the school grow, to see the number of pupils increase, and to perceive the interest taken by the pupils in almost everything. We now have an orchestra, a fairly good sized chorus and a male quartette.

While reading over the old school records, we came across many pleasing and interesting things which we give in connection with this history.

At a meeting of the school board held at the Post Office on the 26th of July, 1861, an order was drawn in favor of Wm. Lee for taking care of school rooms at \$6.00 per week.

A meeting of the school board was held at the old post office building in 1861 to "consider the propriety of hiring Seth N. Bedan for teacher."

At a meeting of the Board of Trustees held at the old post office building on the evening of Saturday, October 5th, 1861, it was voted unanimously to "instruct the Secretary to address a letter to Miss Lizzie Griffith, of Ypsilanti, requesting a reply, stating her terms for teaching in the place of Miss Sophia Metcalf, who has decided to teach in the Union School no longer." It was "also voted that Miss Mildred Padman be employed during the coming winter term to teach in the primary department at \$3.50 per week."

At a meeting of the district board September 6th, 1859, a contract was given "for the delivery of 15 cords of stone upon the school house site as cheap and as soon as practicable."

It was further voted at a school meeting to "employ some person to pile up the wood in school yard in a good workmanlike manner." "G. C. Bratt has this 15th day of August, A. D. 1865, agreed to deliver at the woodshed belonging to the Vassar Union School District, seventy cords of sawed beech and maple wood for the sum of one dollar and fifty cents per cord."

"February 2nd, 1860. At a meeting of School Board met at the office of B. W. Huston for the purpose of adopting some means of procuring a plan and specifications for our contemplated school building, it was agreed that F. Bourns, T. North and J. Coleman be and constitute a building committee."

"At a meeting of the School Board held at the office of the Secretary, on the evening of June 29, 1863, numerous matters connected with the interests of the schools were discussed.

"For the better efficiency of the School, and protection of the House, it was resolved that the request of the Eureka Lyceum to use the House for their Exhibition be not granted, that the janitor, Wilful Kellogg, be instructed to keep two of the keys to said House exclusively in his possession, and to use them for no purpose except that for which the school demands, and that he close the House at all times whenever he leaves it at night.

"That the House shall for NO PURPOSE be kept open evenings LATER than one-half past 9 P. M.

"That the teachers be requested to use all due diligence in preventing scuffling in the House at any time."

W. R. BARTLETT, Sec.

"At a meeting of the School Board, held at the office of T. North, on Friday evening, Sept. 18, 1863, it was agreed that T. North be appointed a committee to secure the services of a competent person to superintend the grading of the School grounds, as well as to have a general supervision of the matter."

"At a meeting of the School Board held in the office of T. North, on Monday, Nov. 30, 1863, the following resolution was unanimously adopted: Resolved, that the use of the Upper Room of the Vassar Union School House be granted to the Baptist and Methodist societies of this place every Sabbath evening, also the Saturday next preceding the Quarterly Meeting of the Methodist Society, during the term of office of the present Board."

### THE JANITORS

Mr. McDonald has rung the bell which has called us together at the old red brick school house on the hill for two years as sole janitor and as assistant to his father three years previously. We have always found Mr. McDonald willing to have the building warm and unlocked at any time.

Mr. Graham has always shown great interest in the welfare of the little children at the McKinley School for four years and we trust that he will continue his services there.

Mrs. Loss has cared for the Townsend North building for thirteen years. She has shown much enthusiasm in caring for the youngsters and great interest in their progress.

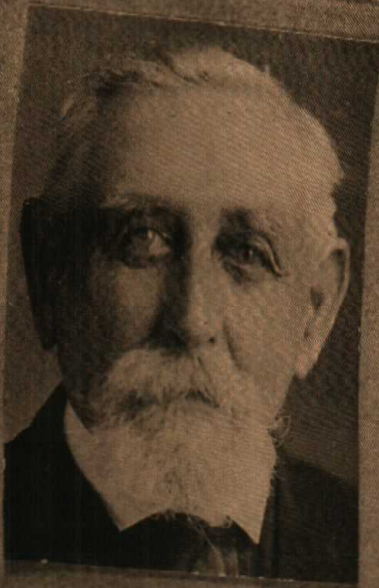
These three trustworthy characters have done many things for our comfort that they were never paid for doing, and we wish to express to them our gratitude.



LEW. McDONALD  
Central High School



MRS. LOSS  
Townsend North



MR. GRAHAM  
McKinley