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Jerri A. Bomgardner Fort Hays State University

Naomi Brown Germany

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AN ORAL HISTORY

on

TEACHING in ONE-ROOM SCHOOLHOUSES

Ъy

Jerri A. Bomgardner

In partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree, Master of Science, Department of Education, Fort Heys State University.

Summer, 1985

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

Purpose of Study

The purpose of this study was to collect information from a former teacher, who had attended and taught in the one-room schoolhouse.

Variables

Independent variables pertinent to this study were: the former teacher; the physical facilities; curriculum; statistics on the schools; qualifications and role of the teacher; and interesting and/or unusual events about one-room schoolhouse experiences.

The dependent variable used in this study consisted of constructed questions used as a guide for the oral narration. This oral narration served as an informational tool to better understand the experience of teaching in one-room schoolhouses. The narration was recorded on cassette tape as well as in written transcript form.

Definitions

The narrator in this study was the former teacher, Mrs. Naomi Brown Germany.

The teacher was that person, Mrs. Germany, who had taught in a one-room schoolhouse.

Curriculum was the subjects and materials included in the educational process.

Physical facilities referred to the school building, lighting, heating, size, and restrooms.

The school statistics in this study were the length of the school year, number of students, number of grade levels, the range of ages of students, and teacher's salary.

Dackground

As a professional educator, I found the one-room schoolhouse experience interesting and valuable historically to education. Many of the concepts and ideas of present day education have been tried and used in the one-room schoolhouse era. An example might be the concept of peer tutoring proven to be successful in one-room schools. Another example of an educational concept practiced successfully in one-room schools was ability grouping across grade levels.

This particular study had personal interest to me because the narrator taught both my parents and me.

The investigation of past historical events provided for a stronger understanding of the teaching profession today. Significance of Study

This project investigated the teaching techniques used in one-room schoolhouses and collected information that developed a better understanding of the responsibility of the teacher in that setting.

A major significance of this study was the opportunity

to gather factual information from a primary source. Since oneroom schoolhouses were an important step in education, it is important to preserve that history. There are fewer and fewer persons still living who taught in the one-room schoolhouse. We need to get their stories while we can.

Objectives

This study consisted of the following objectives:

1. To understand the role of the teacher in a oneroom schoolhouse.

2. To determine the structure of the curriculum,

3. To identify statistics on one-room schools.

4. To distinguish the qualifications required for a teacher in a one-room schoolhouse.

5. To appreciate interesting and/or unusual events about one-room schoolhouse experiences.

CHAPTER TWO

ORAL MISTORY TRANSCRIPT

I started to Sunnyside School, District 28 in Graham County, Kansas, a one-room schoolhouse, three and one-half miles west from Palco, at the age of seven with twenty-seven other students. The students ranged in age from five years to seventeen years. Some students lived as far as two and one-half miles from the school but I lived only two miles. I traveled in different ways to school such as horseback; rode with neighbors in a one horse drawn buggy; a wagon drawn by two horses; or walked. All of my eight terms were seven months long except one which was eight months long.

The first year I went, school started September 13, 1909 and ended April 1, 1910. The school day started at nine o'clock and was dismissed at four o'clock with an hour off at noon and two recesses of fifteen minutes each. The day's routine usually started with opening exercises from five to ten minutes. My first classes were reading, numbers, and writing, with the following subjects being added at different levels: language, grammar, geography, spelling, math, physiology, history, government, and Kansas history. In 1912, classics was added and in 1915, agriculture was added for eighth and ninth grades. Some perfect attendance awards were given. School lunches consisted mostly of sandwiches, cake, and sometimes fruit, mostly apples. We had to take our own drinking water in containers because there was no water at the school.

The kinds of games we played were: races, crack-thewhip, blackman, marbles, anto-over, drop the handkerchief, hide and seek, Rover, Rover, come on over, and baseball. One day when J was playing ball, the teacher and some of the younger children in the schoolroom found a nest of baby nice, so they tied one to my desk. They thought I would be upset or excited but mice were trapped continually at my home so it didn't bother me. Someone still wanting some excitement, threw the mouse at the teacher and it landed inside her blouse. She was unable to find it until school started. She called me to the entrance area and I rescued the creature.

Often we washed the chalk boards and dusted erasers for the teacher.

Sometimes on Friday afternoon, we would have a spell down; a geography contest; a book read by the teacher; or games such as clap in and clap out, fruit basket upset, or pussy wants a corner.

At Christmas, we usually had a Christmas tree with exchange of gifts. We might have a Christmas program for the patrons of the district.

I took part in the county spelling contest once and spelled the word judgment, "j u d g e m e n t" which was wrong and now is an accepted spelling of blue word.

Punishment in school was mostly by having to stay in or stand on the floor.

One of my teachers told me she thought I would become a teacher because I liked to be the teacher when we played school. Her prophecy came true since I was an elementary teacher for forty-two years.

I began teaching in 1920 and taught for fifteen years in one-room schools. They were: Evening Star School, Graham County, 1920 and 1921; Sunnyside School, Graham County, 1922 for six months and finished three months in Palco as the home school had consolidated with Palco in Rooks County; Union School, Trego County, 1926; Brownville School, Graham County, 1920, 1929, and 1930; Fairview School, Graham County, 1931, 1932, 1933, and 1934; Prairie Glenn School, Graham County, 1935, 1936, and 1937; Stone School, Rooks County, 1952.

I started at seventy-five dollars per month and made up to one hundred dollars per month in those early days. Some teachers got less than soventy-five per month.

We had opening exercises which consisted of songs, the flag salute, poems, and so forth at the beginning of the day and I read books often for the opening period after lunch and G

noon recess. I tried to do what the children seemed to enjoy. I usually started the day with reading and math, and worked other subjects in, as seemed best according to the number of classes and/or the number of students. The subjects taught, in addition to reading and math, were writing, spelling, language, grammar, geography, physiology, United States history, government, Kansas history, and agriculture. The percentage method of grading was used except in 1952, when I used A--B--C--D--F grades.

As to punishment, I tried talking to the student or by having them stay in. I did whip two boys as punishment.

The schools I attended, as well as those in which I taught, were financed by taxes much the same as today. Most of the time, I contacted the board treasurer for my monthly pay. One school had monthly board meetings. The rural schools were eight month terms. The teacher was the custodian. One year, I got forty dollars extra for doing the janitor work.

I bought some of the school supplies but I was fortunate to have boards who were willing to pay for most of the supplies.

Teachers were supposed to be good examples for the students. I never had any difficulty that way, as I was associated with a church group and was a part of the activities such as youth group, Sunday school teacher and other offices.

The County Superintendent would visit at least once a year and would offer suggestions as needed. The State Course of Study was our guide. I think most of the teacher turnover was due to salaries. Of course, the School Board of three members was the governing body and also did the hiring and firing of the teachers.

We usually had Christmas programs, last day of school picnics, or dinners. In the 1930's, we had a few zone programs where several schools would meet to put on planned programs. One evening in the "Dust storm days of the 1930's", while attending a Zone Program at Penokee, all of a sudden it sounded as if loads of sand were being dumped against the north outside walls of the building. When coming home by sdme of the blowing, plowed fields, my husband drove the car slowly while I walked and felt the edge of the road to give directions as to where to drive. We were certainly glad when we arrived home safely, having driven approximately twenty-six miles.

I don't know when the schoolhouse I attended was built nor who did it. A family by the name of Darnell bought it when it was no longer used as a school, and converted it into their home. It later burned.

In the early days, most schoolhouses in this area were frame buildings. I was very fortunate because all of the ε

schools I taught in were very nice buildings and well-kept. Sometimes the schoolhouses were used for revival services. One school where I taught was used for Sabbath School on Saturdays. The people always left the building neat and tidy. They left a tall plant for us to use at school for numbile one year before it got too cold.

The boundaries were already set for the districts where I taught except for District 28 who consolidated with Palco in 1922 or 1923.

The usual starting age for children was six years, however, some children did start at age five. All children in the district were expected to attend until they graduated from the eighth grade or were fifteen years of age.

. The A B C method was used for beginners when I started to school. My Dad taught the ABC's to me and also the multiplication tables up to and including the twelve's by third grade.

As a teacher, I used the phonics method, also word method and taught the children in groups. Even in the years when the word method or sight reading was stressed, I used phonics also because I felt combining the methods was the best way.

When I was a student, in the seventh and eighth grades, as well as a teacher, six weeks tests were sent out by the state to be given by the teacher. We had final tests in a

central location where we would meet. The seventh grade took physiology and geography final tests and the eighth grade took final tests in the rest of the subjects taught.

Coal stoves were used for heating and outdoor toilets were avuilable. As to water, it was sometimes carried from a near-by home by some of the students. A few schools had a well with a hand pump.

Usually the blackboards were in the front of the room with the teacher's desk and chair near-by. The recitation bench was close to the teacher's desk. At one school where I taught, we had a piano but this was out of the ordinary. A lady in the community played for our Christmas program.

Religious faiths represented in District 28 were Catholic, Church of God, and Methodist and the children that I taught were involved in the Catholic Church; the Methodist Church; Church of the Mazarene; Church of God; Seventh Day Adventist Church; Lutheran Church; and the Christian Church.

Eighth grade graduation exercises were held in Hill City with the County Superintendent in charge. Eight years was close to an average for years spent in school by students.

After some schools were closed, they were used by 4-H groups and for county elections. Consolidation closed most of the schools. Buses were sent out to the rural areas to transport students. Two of the one-room schoolhouses I taught

in are still standing, I think. One of them is frame and the other is stone. There may be some desks and benches still available.

My students eventually took up various occupations such us: forest ranger; owner and operator of restaurants; teachers; police officers; two ministers; special church workers; farmers; farmer's wives; ceramics worker; writers and authors; construction workers; drafters, builder of churches; office workers of different types; store clerks; and bankers. Many have moved to other parts of the country but I still keep in contact with several of them.

As far as outstanding accomplishments of the students; three of them are writers with published works in books or periodicals; one is a building contractor who has been involved in building one hundred churches or more; and one became a forest ranger. He and his family were transported to Japan by plane with their household goods. He now hives in Fort Collins, Colorado and gives a lot of help and time to foreign students and also gives a lot of time to his church. He (Hubert) graduated from the eighth grade in the spring of 1921 and was eligible to go to high school, but for fun, his mother said, "Hubert didn't know how to keep his ears clean, so she thought he should repeat the eighth grade." She really thought he was too young. If my foresight had been as good as my hindsight,

I would have given him some high school work, but having sixteen students in various levels, I was a busy teacher. He doesn't seem to hold it against me, as he told me he thought I was the first teacher he ever had who really wanted him in school. He was smart and mischievous. For punishment, some of his former teachers put him under the teacher's desk or made him stand on the floor near the blackboard with his nose in a circle. I just talked with him about his conduct. He would promise faithfully not to do it again and he would keep his promise. However, he would think up something different which was very amusing to this teacher and a bit disgusting at other times. I, very recently, had a letter from him inquiring about my health and expressing his interest and concern as to how I was getting along.

I attended Institute at the county seat and wrote on an examination to get a Second Grade Certificate which was valid for teaching for two years. Because of my work in high school and with a high school diploma, I did not have to get a Third Grade Certificate. I could start out with a Second Grade Certificate. In 1922, I wrote on the examination for the Certificate of the First Grade which was valid for three years. The examination covered seventeen subject areas with a required average of ninety percent and a minimum grade of seventy-five percent. To renew the First Grade Certificate, I had to get at least eight hours of college credit.

Over the forty-two years of teaching, many changes have taken place. Changes in methods, curriculum, materials, salaries, and facilities were most evident. However, children are basically the same in responding to attention and love.

Teaching has been a rewarding experience for me. If I had my life to live over, I would become a teacher again!

CHAPTER THREE

BIOGRAPHY

Baomi Brown Germany was born in Graham County, Kansas, two miles south and eight miles west of Palco, Kansas, in a partial stone house built in the side of a bank. She was born on March 9, 1902 to Emma and J. W. Brown, the oldest of a family of three boys and four girls.

Naomi's formal education began at Sunnyside School in Graham County in 1909 where she completed eight years of elementary school. In 1917, she entered high school at Palco, Kannas and graduated from Palco Consolidated High School in the spring of 1920. Naomi graduated from Fort Hays State University with a Bachelor of Science in Education in 1959.

In 1924, Naomi Brown married Bruce Germany. They were blessed to celebrate their fiftieth wedding anniversary in 1974. The Germanys adopted two girls, Barbara Cole and Patricia Dowis, in 1958.

The teaching career of Mrs. Germany has spanned fortytwo years. She began teaching in 1920 and retired in 1971 with nine of those years spent pursuing other interests. In addition to the years spent in one-room schoolhouses, Naomi taught several years in Bogue, Kansas and Zurich, Hansas. The majority of her teaching years in town were in Palco, Kansas where she taught the last twelve years of her career. Included among her students in those forty-two years were: my father, Hugh Bomgardner; my mother, Lois Domgardner; and me, Jeraldine "Jerri" Bomgardner. My father went to her in 1922 and 1925. My mother had her as a teacher in 1925 and I was one of her students in 1943 and 1944.

After the death of her husband, Eruce, in 1978, Maomi continued to reside in Palco, Kansas where she serves as a member of the Library Board. She maintains her interest in education by her active participation in the Rooks County Chapter of Delta Kappa Gamma. In addition to enjoying her children and eight grandchildren, she is very active at Red Line Church of God, located west of Palco. She teaches the kindergarten Sunday school class and is Chairperson of the church corporation and advisory council.

APPENDICES

Pages seventeen and eighteen

A copy of the Complete Term Register for County and Village Schools for the 1909 - 10 term. This is for Sunnyside School in Graham County. This register shows when Naomi Brown Germany entered school as a first grader. Note #20 on the register.

Page nineteen

This is a copy of a sample Program of Recitation and Study from the Complete Term Register beginning with 1907. Page Twenty

A copy of a picture taken at Christmas, 1914 of the Sunnyside School student body. Faomi Brown Germany is in the back row, fifth from left. The bottom picture is of the Evening Star School, Graham County, in 1920.

Page Twenty-one

The top picture is Evening Star School, 1920, with the children sitting in front. This was the first school where Naomi Germany taught. The bottom picture is a close-up of the children in Evening Star School in 1920.

Page Twonty-two

Naomi Germany standing in front of Sunnyside School, 1922. She attended school here from 1909 - 17 and taught here in 1922. The bottom picture is Mrs. Germany in front of Brownville School on July 15, 1985. She taught here from 1928 - 30.

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FOR COUNTRY AND VILLAGE SCHOOLS 18 Term Beginning_Sept. 13 190,9 and Closing april 1 1900 Classes for Next Term Study carefully the model report. Bot space between the purple lines. In the ring each class record for helpful remar foo for next term, it necessary, should a model report in front of those. our classes by giving each individual a number in red ink in the upper half or below each individual's number enter his standings. Use the space foi-This report is to be completed at the close of your term, and the reorgani-arefully shown in the form to the right, headed "Classes for Next Term." Boter your class the space below Classes for beginning of next term, showing promotions and $5\frac{1}{6}$ the month's work each class is to take up. Pupils shown by number. Yeart (Cour Cour Courth (Encor 6 6 7 5 9 10 9 quid 10 must take 7th yr work 94 92 94 92 84 80 othere may take as given. 13 14 # must review 87 90 3,4,5,7,8. 8 1 11 12 13 14 # 85 89 86 86 15 14 17 18 19 must review 15 16 17 18 19 20 93 90 84 87 82 90 21 22 23 24 91 66 87 94 25 91 11 12 13 14 4 1 15-16-17 18-19-20. 3 1 21.22 23 Zy. 21 25-26 25 26 1 1 27 \$8 1 1. 1 7 27. 1 2 28 1228 91 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10. 96 76 90 96 89 89 50 70 9 and 10 must take 7 year 348-678. 8.5. 10 10 10 16 82 87. 11 12 13 14. 9 90 90 90 16 16 17 1" 19 20. 93 90 90 20 21 22 23 24 80 87 80 87. mature 11 12 13-14 51 15 16 11-18 19 =0. 3 2 must neview 21 21 22 23 7 2 1 2 28 87 86 89 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10. 9 96 95 90 89 92 80 80 1-2-28 must review Part III 81 3 4.5-6-7-8. 8 1 11 12. must reviewfrom Beginning 11-12. 41 89 90 94 1 2 28 81 3 4 5 6 1 8 9 10. 89 90 90 85 83 89 80 80 3 4.5-4.7-8-8 1 11 12 4 5 must review from Segurning, 11-12. 7 1 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 98 96 95 97 85 90 75 70 51 completed. 3-4 5-6 7- 8 17 90 95 1 2 28 1 2 28 194 90 96 91 1-2-28. completed 91. 1-2-28 1 2 3 28 ompleted. 1-1-3-28 91 1 2 3 4 6 6 7 8 9 10 59 87 82 98 97 90 93 93 92 78 11 12 13 14. 57 90 14 92. 0 12-3-4-5-67 8. 8 1 1- 12-13-14 5. 1. 1 2 3 4 6 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 20 193 90 95 89 92 87 80 85 80 80 83 80 90 90 93 87 82 84. 2 3 4 6. 6 7 8

PROGRAM OF RECITATION AND STUDY

At the Close of Term Ending April 24, 1907 Following the Course of Study

19

BEGIN		Primer and First Reader First Year	Second Reader Second Year	Third Bauder		Fourth Reader		Pifth Reader	
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10:30	15	RECESS						•	
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1:30	15	Reading	Reading		Physiology		Grammar	٩	Grammar
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27 Recitations should be underscored or writtenin red ink to correspond with bold face type above. Light face type denotes period for preparation of lesson.

TEACHER'S REMARKS

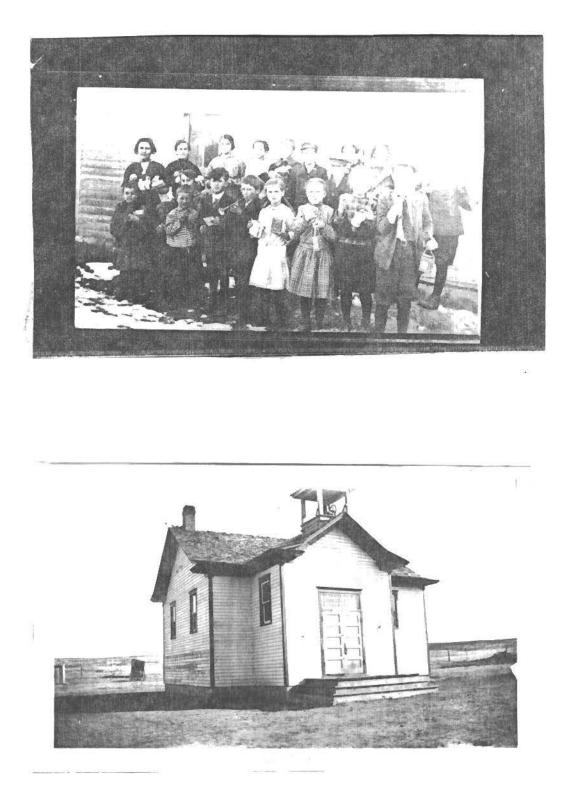
I have followed the plan of alternation given in the course of study, and combined the pupils of the seventh and eighth years into one class doing the eighth year's work. Those of the fifth and sixth years I combined upon the sixth year, and the third and fourth in the main upon the fourth year.

It will be noticed from my program as shown above that with the exception of a third year number class, the school did no work in the third, fifth and seventh years of the course of study. From the list of classes for next term as shown on second page of my report, you will see that I organize classes in the third, fifth and seventh years for next term, thus alternating the work as provided for in course of study. Some time was given after most of the revitations under "Copying" and "Reviewing" for the class to take down work for the next lesson

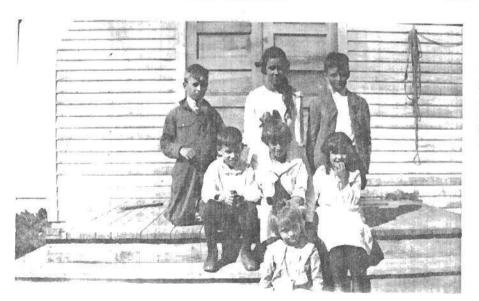
and to assimilate the lesson just passed over. Under the head of "References" in the eighth year, pupils referred to dictionary and other sources for help on difficulties met with in preparation of lesson at home.

The above program was used for the last two months practically as it stands. During the first two months the second year pupils Anished the second year number work and passed on into the third year work.

*Alternate daily recitation with sixth year class.









APPENDICES

Page Twenty-four

A copy of a Teacher's County Certificate of the First Grade. This certificate was the first Certificate of the First Grade that Miss Naomi Brown received. It was valid for three years. It was granted May 8, 1922. To renew this certificate, she had to get eight college hours of credit.

Page Twenty-five

This is a copy of the endorsements for renewal of the Certificate of the First Grade. Signatures are those of several County Superintendents; Rooks County; Graham County; and Trego County.

[Form	32—A]
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TEACHER'S COUNTY CERTIFICATE

..... having furnished

satisfactory evidence of good moral character and of successful experience in teaching, and having passed with credit the examination required by law, and being otherwise legally qualified to receive the same, is granted this

Expires.

CERTIFICATE OF THE FIRST GRADE

which shall be valid in the Elementary Schools of AMANNO County for the term of Three Years from the date hereof, unless revoked.

This Certificate is renewable without examination, if the holder thereof complies with the law governing its renewal. This Certificate may be indersed in any County in the State.

STANDING.

These Presents Declare, That MLAN

HIGH SCHOOL CREDITS.

Seven units required unless holder has taught twenty-one school months. Required average, 90 per cont; miniugum grade, 75 per cont. English Literature and Composition English Literature and Composition Spelling. Physiology and Hygiene, (first year), one unft, ond year), one unit. Reading Elements of Agriculture, . e unite . Geometry one unit. Elémentary General Science, Geography. Incient History. Writing. one-half unit. English Classics. n History Enclish Grammar and Composition, Geography, Principles and Methods of Teaching, Bookkeeping, one-half unit. Agriculture. Music. Civil Government, one-half unit, Arithmetic. Drawing, one-half unit, English History, United States Latin, one unit. Music, one-half unit, Elements of Physic Kansas History Civil Government, . TOTAL CARDING AVERAGE, Given under our hands, at County of Sate of Kansas, this. dav. Associate Examiner Associate Learniner

Stockton, Kansas. 25 June 23-1922. I hereby indorse this certificate in the county of Rooks, Renewed it Still City Sensar Having Expires' May 8th 1928 Emma Contract Contract, Emma Mariand, Classer (C. Stockton, "Enser. on, Ensan. Sept. 17, 1925. Certific te encorsed in R oks County, Tansas. Roland Caritt Endorsed in Frego cunty. Harden ff- So. supt. Wa-Keeney, Kane. Revend at 14ill rev. Kurias Revend at 14ill bity Raiss May 8. 1928 Expiriting 8. 934 Mint. 16, Lupt. Renewed this Tet Lay Sfi May 1931 Oxpines May 84 1934 Everet A Grodinow Co Supt Shaham co. Renewed at Hill City, Graham County, Jay 8,1934. Expire May 8, 1937 Signed _____County tendent Renewed at Hill City, Graham County, Kansas Opril 19,1937.

Expires May 8, 1940.

County Saperintendent