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An Oral History of Alice Walters

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An Oral History of Alice Walters
By Julie Hughes and Carol Walters
Fort Hays State University

Carol: Hi, I'm Carol Walters and I'm doing my master's thesis with Julie Hughes, and we're going to do an oral history and we're going to talk to my mother, Alice Walters, who was a teacher in a one-room schoolhouse. Alice, could you tell us just a little bit about yourself, please?

Alice: Hello, I'm Alice Walters and I'm 81 years old, and I was born and raised in Kingman County. I've lived here all my life, except for a few years in Sherman County when we were first married, and five years in Florida. I was a teacher in a, when I graduated from high school, I taught three years in country schools.

Carol: What were the names of the schools and when did you teach?

Alice: The fall of '29 and '30, I taught in Honey Creek School south of Spivey, and the fall of '30, I taught Spring Creek School south of Nashville, Kansas.

Carol: O.K., when and where did you get your training to become a teacher?

Alice: At that time, they were offering courses in the high school at Kingman, Kansas, and I took the normal training course and in that course, and our last year, our senior year, was devoted entirely to learning about the teaching and methods and management of schools. When I graduated from high school, then we took an examination, or a test, just like the eighth grade had to take, and if we passed that test with an 80 degree average, well then, we were granted a normal training certificate that lasted two years.

Carol: After the two years, did you have to go, how did you...?

Alice: In two years, we went back, we had to go to nine years in summer school in the summer to renew it again for two more years.

Carol: Where did you go?

Alice: The first year I went to Manhattan and renewed it there for my nine years.

Carol: Hours? Right?

Alice: Nine hours, O.K.

Carol: O.K. You said nine years. That would be a long time!

Alice: I'm sorry.

Carol: It's all right. That's okay.

Alice: And the second year I went to Manhattan and had nine hours.

Carol: Manhattan or Hays?

Alice: Hays, Kansas. I'm getting all mixed up.

Carol: I think we're both a little nervous here, we'll do just fine! So the second year, you went to Hays, Kansas.

Alice: I went to Hays.

Carol: And how long did that take you? Two months?

Alice: It took me...

Carol: To get your nine hours?

Alice: Six, eight weeks, twelve weeks.

Carol: O.K. How many people took your normal class training in high school?

Alice: I think there were 19 or 20 of us. We were all girls but one, and there was one boy in the class.

Carol: Did you say something about, earlier, that this was the last class in Kingman that was able to do this?

Alice: Yes, after that, why they didn't graduate, didn't give any more normal training certificates. Then they had to go three years of college before they could teach school.

Carol: You answered all my questions then. Now I'm going to switch and talk about the district. What were the boundaries of your school jurisdiction?

Alice: In the early days they set the boundaries so that they were on a section of land three miles apart, and this was one acre of land that was taken from the land owner by the government, and then a one-room schoolhouse was built here, and it was decided according to the population. Some real thinly populated areas, especially in the ranch lands were farther apart.

Carol: How was it decided who went there?

Alice: Within that three mile radius of square miles of the district were the ones that went to each school.

Carol: Why did they choose three miles? Was there any significance?

Alice: Yes, in those days, the method of travel was either by walking, or by horseback, or by driving a buggy. So they chose the distance so that they could accommodate most children without having to go too far in any one time.

Carol: So if they had to walk, the furthest they would have to walk would be about three miles?

Alice: Yes.

Carol: What was the schoolhouse? Was it used for community, social activities, or anything else besides just education?

Alice: Some schools were used, where they were in the more thickly populated area, were used as a kind of central meeting place when they needed one. Many of them were not, were only used only for schools.

Carol: So would you explain the difference between a rural school and a city school?

Alice: Well, in a rural school, there was only one teacher and then just the pupils within that come around within the radius of that. Then the city school, why there was many rooms, many teachers, several teachers, and the ones within the city. They also had urban schools, where there was more than, too many, for one school so they had a two-room schoolhouse. The first four grades were taught by one teacher and the upper four grades were taught by another teacher.

Carol: But when we're talking about city schools, like when you told me earlier one of the city schools was Nashville, that was still a very small town, right?

Alice: Yes. That was a small town, and so were many of the others around. People were living grouped together, were living there in that town, so there was a larger school.

Carol: So like on "Little House on the Prairie," that would be considered a city school, because it was in a town?

Alice: Yes, it would.

Carol: Okay, thank you. Was there a school board for your school?

Alice: Yes. It consisted of three members. They had complete charge of the hiring and firing of the teacher, and the setting of the salary and the things that would come up

within the district. The school board was elected by the entire school community at a meeting once a year, which was usually held in April, a regular school meeting.

Carol: How long were their terms? Did they just serve that one year, from year to year, or were they elected every year?

Alice: No, I think their terms were three years, I think. I don't remember for sure, but I think they were for three years.

Carol: Do you remember any of their names?

Alice: Yes, I remember a few of them. On one board, there was a man by the name of Mr. Duckworth, and Mr. Newberry, and on the other school where I taught, one man was Mr. Robertson, and Mr. Morrisee, and I don't remember the name of the other one.

Carol: You said that they were in charge of hiring and the firing of teachers. Did anyone else have any input, or was everything strictly up to those three men?

Alice: It was usually up to those three men. Sometimes they were guided by the teacher whether they hired or fired, or either kept the teacher back again by how she was accepted in the community, and how the school pupils liked her and her success within the school.

Carol: Were there any activities that took place between the different schools?

Alice: Not too many. In the urban schools there were, but in the smaller one-room schools there weren't enough pupils. They were all so many different ages that they didn't have enough.

Carol: So even though your schools were only three miles apart, you never really went over to another school to do anything with them?

Alice: Not very often.

Carol: Did the school make any lasting contributions to the community, do you think, or was there really a community where you were at? In the school like at Spring Creek, was there a community right close?

Alice: Not really. Seems like they were scattered and I really never did get to know and meet all the parents of the children that I had. And the same way, it was true at the Honey Creek school. It was a cattle area, and they were more scattered, and they didn't have the means or transportation to get their kids to school.

Carol: Were there any controversies surrounding your schools or the schools that you taught at?

Alice: Not that I can remember.

Carol: Why did the schools close?

Alice: Because from lack of pupils. When they began to get automobiles and more transportation, why then the older children would go to high school, so the younger ones would go along with them and go to the grade schools so that they would only have one car, one person going one way to take them.

Carol: We went down this morning to the Kingman County treasurer's office and we got a map of all the schools. In Kingman County alone, there were 101 rural schools. This wasn't including the city schools, it was strictly 101. So it's kind of amazing to think that there's 101 and now Kingman County is down to just five schools in the bigger towns. So to me that was really amazing. You said that back when you were still teaching before it changed, they went to eighth grade with you?

Alice: They went from the first to the eighth grade in a one-room schoolhouse.

Carol: Then if they wanted to go on to high school, where did they go?

Alice: Well, there's usually rural high schools close by that they were able to go to. Sometimes they were close enough that they could ride a horse, but mainly they needed an automobile for transportation.

Carol: So in Kingman County, how many high schools do you think there were?

Alice: I expect there was five or six.

Carol: What were some of the subjects that you taught?

Alice: I taught all the subjects. There's reading, writing, and there was arithmetic, and there was civics and history, geography, spelling, classics, but that went along with the English.

Carol: How did you cover so many different age levels and subject areas? That's a lot to teach.

Alice: It was rather difficult at times. But it was by working it in. Sometimes the smaller students, you had their class first and you taught them. Then you gave them some

busy work to do while the others would be studying their lessons while you were working with them. And then I would go on into the other classes and give them their lessons and give them assignments to work and work up then to the others.

Carol: Did you ever use any of the older students to help teach the younger ones or was it mainly your job?

Alice: No. I never, because I never had enough older ones to do that.

Carol: What was the length of a school day and the school year?

Alice: The day was seven hours and the year was eight months.

Carol: What month did you start in?

Alice: We started in September and we ended in April.

Carol: Could you describe a typical school day?

Alice: Well, usually I would try to get to the school between 8:00 and 8:30. School started at 9:00. And before, in the cold weather, then I had to start the fire. Then I would plan the lessons for the day, put on any material on the blackboard that needed to be put there, and get things ready for the pupils when they started coming. Usually they started coming about a quarter to nine. Then they would all be there by 9:00, very seldom were any of them late. Sometimes they were earlier than that. They'd come early and play outside until time for the (bell). Then at a few minutes to nine, we had a warning bell. So that warned the pupils so they could go to the outside toilets or else get them a drink of water, and at the last bell, they would line up in a march and march in. Then for opening exercises, before they were seated, we gave the Pledge of Allegiance, and said the Lord's Prayer. Then the opening exercises varied. Usually I read some scriptures to them, and then we'd occasionally have a song or two. And sometimes, then I would read to them a story that they wanted to hear, usually get a book that was interesting to all of them, and read maybe a chapter a morning. It varied for that. Then we'd start in on the classes, they'd all get busy with their study and their work. I'd start with the beginners. In the first, I had two beginners. We had our reading, it came first. I'd help them with learning how to read and getting started with the reading, which took about 15 minutes, I expect for them. It took longer for them, and then I'd give them some busy work to do, then they went back. Then I usually listened to the second grade and then the third grade, then I had two in the fourth and fifth, and we usually had our reading first, so we'd have our reading classes. Then after that I had two

in the fifth grade, and had the fifth(sixth) grade and then I had a seventh grader. Besides reading, I had to work in the classics for him there. I don't remember just when that was worked in. Then we had a 15 minute recess. And after recess, why then, they had arithmetic. I had the beginners. The others were working their problems and solving their arithmetic while I had the beginners. I taught them and helped them to get started on some busy work. It would take, I expect, around 20 minutes. Then I'd gradually, like I'd say, work up through second and third grade, although then I think I worked in the seventh grade math class before I finished the fourth and the fifth. Then I had the fourth and the fifth, and then we went to the seventh grade history lesson. Then we had an hour for noon. We all took time to eat our lunches and then they went out to the school ground to play. Usually I either went out and played with them for a while or monitored for a while, and then maybe for a while I arranged things for the afternoon work and got things ready for that. In the afternoon, after noon, why then we had an opening exercise and usually I read another chapter of the book. Then we had our language work for the first and second and third grades, they were put together then for the language work, and then the third grade was by itself. And then I had the fourth grade, and fifth. Then I had the seventh grade, I think in there, and then the, well, I had the fourth and then the seventh grade and then the fifth. Any way I worked it in. I had to have a civics class for the seventh or eighth grade, whichever it happened to be. Then I may have forgotten some of the classes we had, but I think that was the way. Then we had a 15 minute recess. And then after recess, then it was geography time. For the younger ones, first, second, and third grade, we had some spelling, and then worked mainly with their letters and if they were any farther advanced, the second and third with their spelling. Then the other, the fourth and fifth, had language and the seventh and eighth had geography. Then after the geography, why then, we had the spelling, the third grade had their spelling, then the fourth grade spelling, and then the fifth grade, and then the seventh grade spelling. Then after that, sometimes while we were having the spelling classes, why I would let the smaller in the first and second grade go outside and play in nice weather because they would be getting restless and tired of sitting. Then by that time, after spelling classes were over, why it was the end of school. If we had a little bit of time, why then they studied their lessons for the next day till 4:00. Then after the pupils all left, why then it was clean up time. I did my own janitor work, and so we had to, usually I'd have some of the older ones to dust the erasers and clean the blackboards, but then I would empty the wastebaskets and sweep the floor. In the winter time, why then I'd have to get in the kindling and the coal and lay things for a fire to get the fire started the next morning, empty the water bucket, if we had a water bucket, which we filled from our pump outside in the

yard. Each pupil brought his own cup. And see that everything was ready, and in readiness for the next day's work and then after that, why I worked on my lessons or studied until time to go home.

Carol: Did you have a set time that you'd go home or was that just kind of up to you, whenever you were ready?

Alice: That was just up to me, whenever I was ready to go.

Carol: Did your schools have a library? You talked about reading books to your students?

Alice: They were very inadequate. Most of the books I read to them I got from the library, the Kingman County library, myself and took to them. The schools I had didn't have very many books at all, and the others either. But the school that I went to, when I was in the rural school house when I was in second grade which they built in 1915, they had a much larger school and they had the Books of Knowledge and they had the World Book and anyhow they had a pretty good library. But most schools, those were in the better, more densely populated areas, did have more better libraries. But in the more thinly populated areas they had small libraries, very small.

Carol: Okay, I think we'll take a pause right now. Okay, we're back. Let's talk a little bit more about the, we were talking about curriculum. How did you decide on a textbook? Did the school board decide?

Alice: It was decided by the state board. I think the county superintendent may of had some input in it, but then it was mainly by the state board. They selected the textbooks.

Carol: Did you have textbooks for each child, or was there just a few?

Alice: There were some for each grade, yes. The first grade didn't have very many. There were recommended readers and the primers they were called. And the math book, that was, we had no workbooks at that time, the teacher had to supply the materials like that.

Carol: Did they write on paper or slates?

Alice: They wrote on paper.

Carol: We've heard so much about the McGuffey readers. Did you use them in your classroom?

Alice: No, that was before my time! Even when I went to school, we didn't have the McGuffey readers.

Carol: Were there any special observances at your school, like Christmas programs, spelling bees, music contests?

Alice: No, we didn't have any, because they were too isolated, and separated for that, and at Christmas time, why we would draw names and exchange presents. At the last recess after school, just before Christmas, why we may have a short program of our own. We'd retell the Christmas story, and maybe read a Christmas poem or two, but it was just the pupils and I for that. In the schools I went to, when I was in grade school, we did have Christmas programs, because there were enough of us to have a Christmas program. But I forgot to say, on Friday afternoons usually we would have a spelling bee or a ciphering bee. The ones would choose up sides and different ones would go to the board and cipher and spell to see who could spell down or cipher down. The first school I taught, they were too, they were a variety of ages. There was just one seventh grader, and then two fifth graders, and two fourth graders, one third, one second, and one first. So we couldn't have too many there. But in the second school I taught to, there were more in the upper grades. I didn't have any beginners, so then we could have some spelling and ciphering contests like that after school, last recess sometimes on a Friday.

Carol: Were there any competency tests or grade level tests taken for promotion purposes?

Alice: No, there were none given. It was up to the teacher to promote them and give them the grades. You had a standard to go by to grade them, but then it was up to you.

Carol: You mentioned earlier about an eighth grade test. Was there a test given at the end of grade school?

Alice: Yes, those in eighth grade, when they wanted to pass, had to go to some of these rural schools like Spivey, Nashville, Zenda, and take a state test that was put out by the state in all the subjects that they had studied, like reading and arithmetic, and then if they got an average of 80, why then they passed, and got a grade school diploma. And this was usually granted by the county superintendent. I don't remember how it was done in our schools. I think it was just given to the ones I taught. But later years and the ones my daughters went to, why they all went to a certain area, either to a large city like Harper or Attica, and all of them within that county graduated and went to there for their graduation exercises. One year, it would be Attica, the next year it'd be at Harper.

Carol: So several small schools came together.

Alice: Yes.

Carol: How were teachers expected to conduct themselves in the community?

Alice: Well, they were expected to be a model, a role model, and were usually treated with respect and considered worthy within the community.

Carol: Since you lived in a rural area and you said that you really didn't know much of the teachers, of the parents, was it quite as much of a job for you to do that since, like if you would go down the street, would they know you were the teacher?

Alice: Not too many of them would because I wouldn't see them enough. Usually I didn't spend the weekends down there. I would go home on the weekends, so I didn't spend the weekends there for that, and I very seldom saw any of them outside of the school.

Carol: You didn't run into them at the grocery store?

Alice: No, not hardly.

Carol: Were you in charge of any extra-curricular activities?

Alice: No, I didn't have charge of any.

Carol: Was there a problem of teacher turnover?

Alice: Well, there was a little teacher shortage, at times. When I first graduated, I didn't get a school the first year because there were too many, and I think probably because we had too many in our class. But I did in the second year.

Carol: Were there any causes you can think of that would cause there to be a teacher shortage, or turnover, or anything?

Alice: Not that I can think of now.

Carol: At the time when you were teaching, were you allowed to be married and be a teacher?

Alice: I don't remember, but I know that there were teachers that were married and were teaching. So I think, I don't think there was a restriction there.

Carol: Because I remember reading, in some areas that they'd say that once you got married, you had to quit teaching.

Alice: I don't remember whether that was a requirement they asked when I interviewed with the school board or not. It's

been too many years ago.

Carol: Why did you quit teaching?

Alice: I quit teaching because I wanted to get married and raise my own family for that.

Carol: If you had a problem in your schools, like a student you didn't know how to, like lessons, or just like sometimes with all teachers, we run into different students we don't quite know how to, do to help them, or what subject, was there anyone you could ask for help?

Alice: Yes, I could go to the county superintendent, or sometimes I would ask a more experienced teacher. I did have one problem. There was a family that moved into this community. I think they were there for about three or four months. There was five children, and the youngest child, a beginner, a first grader, was so timid that in all that time, I never heard that child say one word. I could not get her to say one word for me, but she would work every lesson I could give her to work on paper, anything that I gave her. Her brothers and sisters said she knew it. She could read it, that she would read for them at home. And so I talked to the county superintendent, and this other, they said just go on the best you can, because she's learning, and as long as she's learning and her brothers and sisters are teaching her, why she's too timid to work with otherwise. It's better for her to be in school, out among the other pupils. I'm sure she did learn.

Carol: You said sometimes you might ask another teacher. Were you the only teacher in your school?

Alice: I was the only teacher in my school, but I knew other teachers that were teaching.

Carol: Did you ever get to meet with them just to talk?

Alice: Not very often. The county superintendent was in charge of all the county rural schools, and she was supposed to visit once during the school year. She didn't always get around to all of them, but then she was the one that we went to with all our problems and the ones that saw we had requirements and papers and things that we needed for the school.

Carol: So there wasn't a principal for your school?

Alice: No, there was no principal.

Carol: Just the county superintendent and she like only came about once a year?

Alice: Well, she tried to get out to the different schools, but then she was in Kingman County, and we'd usually go up there on Saturdays. She was in the office on Saturdays. Any materials and things like that we needed, well, we'd go then.

Carol: Did you have an evaluation system for the teachers or any way you were evaluated?

Alice: I don't remember.

Carol: Did the school board ever come watch you teach or anything like that?

Alice: No, and I never had any of the parents come either for that, too much. If they were dissatisfied or anything, well, they all took it to the school board. Any complaints or anything like that was taken to the school board and then the school board would notify the teacher, if they thought the teacher needed a notice or corrections.

Carol: How was discipline problems handled with the children?

Alice: Well, they were handled by the teacher and usually there weren't too many discipline problems. Because if they were, sometimes they were kept in at recess, mainly because they didn't get down and study their lesson, or watching the other pupils, and paying attention and not getting their lessons mainly. So they were kept in at recess to finish their work for that. As a rule, there weren't many discipline problems, or I had anyway.

Carol: You weren't very much older than some of your older students. Did that ever cause any problems?

Alice: None at all.

Carol: Were the parents ever involved in the discipline process?

Alice: Well, sometimes if they were unruly at school and had to be corrected by the teacher too much, why the parents usually backed up the teacher, stood behind the teacher, when the kids came home from school.

Carol: Did you ever have to call the parents in?

Alice: Never had to. No, not at any time.

Carol: Did they ever come and talk to you about a problem or anything?

Alice: I had one mother talk to me, but it wasn't about a discipline problem. It was mainly about their child

learning, how she was learning for that.

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Carol: Where did you live while you were teaching?

Alice: I boarded with somebody within the district. Paid \$20.00 a month for board. My first salary I got was \$70.00, and by the time I quit teaching I was getting \$80.00.

Carol: A month?

Alice: A month. I think the most highly paid teacher within the county that I know of was getting \$115.00, and they had taught several years. And she fixed my lunch for that, for the room and board. But I was expected to go home every weekend.

Carol: How far was it from your school to your home?

Alice: It varied between the half mile and a mile.

Carol: From your home to your school?

Alice: From the place where I stayed to the school, yes.

Carol: How far was it from the place where you stayed to your real home?

Alice: Well, that would be around, maybe 20 or 25 miles, or 15.

Carol: How did you get there?

Alice: In a car. My brothers or my parents would usually take me down on Sunday night and come and get me Friday night. Some of the teachers had cars and they were able to drive, and some of them stayed at home and drove back and forth from home because they had cars, but others didn't.

Carol: What was your status in the community, such as how the other people viewed you?

Alice: I felt kind of like an outsider in some places for that. Most times I was just accepted in the community for that.

Carol: Do you think the teaching profession was looked up to?

Alice: I think it was at that time, yes.

Carol: When was your schoolhouse built, do you know?

Alice: No, I don't know when the ones where I taught was built.

Carol: Were they public schools?

Alice: Yes, they were public schools. Like I said, I know the one where, when it was built that I went to. I started in the second grade. It was built in 1915, and it's still standing. After school closed, why they moved it to a small town and used it for a church. After that, it was left now to decay, to go to ruin.

Carol: You talked a little bit earlier but would you go into a little bit more about what type of heating, lighting, and toilets were available?

Alice: The toilets were outside toilets. Usually the one for girls were way down one far end and the boys' were over in the other corner of the yard, and the lighting was cross lights. There was three windows on one side and three windows on the other. In the front of the room, why there was the blackboard all across the front of the room, and then there was a row of maps on the top of the blackboard. And then the teacher's desk was there. Usually there's a platform, and the teacher's desk was there in the middle of the platform, and then the seats for the pupils sitting there. Course there were recitation benches there in front, but they were usually, and then the smaller ones usually set on one side, and gradually the seats advanced and the seats were made larger as they grew larger. Then the older ones were on the other side of the building, and they had the large seats.

Carol: What's a recitation bench?

Alice: Well, they would come up and have each class. They'd have you come up to the front of the school, where the teacher was and they'd have their class there, and after class was over, they'd go back to their seats and study their lesson there for that.

Carol: So a recitation bench was really a place for small groups?

Alice: It was the place, yes, where they'd come up and all got together and had that one class, discussed whether the class or the method, or worked the problems, do problem solving on the board, or whatever had to be.

Carol: Where did the school get its water?

Alice: They had a pump outside in the yard.

Carol: It was your job to bring the water in?

Alice: Usually I brought it in. Sometimes some of the older ones did. Most of the time the kids would take their cup and go out to the well, and pump their own and get their drink.

Carol: I think we'll take a break.

Julie: I'm Julie Hughes, and I'm back with Alice Walters, as we are interviewing her as she was teaching in a one-room schoolhouse. Where did your schools get their names?

Alice: I don't know just where they got their names. Some of them were taken from an early pioneer in the community. But where my, the ones I taught were Honey Creek and Spring Creek. I think probably they were from a small creek near by. I don't know where. I never heard that history part of it.

Julie: What were some of the physical problems of the buildings you taught?

Alice: Well, some of them were rather cold, and they weren't airtight, and of course, we had the cross light.

Julie: Which is what? What is cross light?

Alice: Well, lights on both sides of the room, coming from one direction, coming from the east and the west, and none from the other directions at all.

Julie: I see. So depending where the sun was, how much light came into the building?

Alice: Yes.

Julie: What happened, or excuse me, what was the greatest distance traveled by any one student to the school?

Alice: Well, it wouldn't be over three miles, but most of them were within a radius of one and a half or two miles, I'd say. Some of them were even closer, much closer than that. Depends on where they lived from the schoolhouse.

Julie: How many students went to the school?

Alice: The first school where I taught, I had nine. Like I said, I had every grade. Just one person in every grade, except for those two in the fifth, and two in the fourth, and two beginners in the first grades. In the second grade (school), I had ten. I had no beginners, but I had a second grade, and I don't remember just how many in the others, but then I had some fourth and fifth, and then I had three eighth graders that made it more interesting, and there was also one seventh grader. More older pupils in that school.

Julie: Did many of your students go into high school and then college?

Alice: I think they went to high school. I don't remember, but I think most of them did. They were close enough to a rural high school that they would go to high school when they graduated, and a few of them went on to college, but I didn't keep track of them too much of them going on.

Julie: Were there any outstanding students in your schools?

Alice: Not that I had, there weren't.

Julie: What was the dress code or overall appearance of the students?

Alice: Well, it was varied. The boys wore overalls and the girls wore their gingham dresses, and it was just very ordinary, everyday appearance. Just so they were always clean and neat.

Julie: What about the lunch time? Did the students and yourself carry lunches to school and what did they usually eat?

Alice: Yes, we usually always carried our lunches and usually it depended on what they had. It varied but usually probably a sandwich, and maybe a cookie and an apple or an orange, a fruit. It depended on whatever was available at the time that they had, but that was mainly, but of course, there was no hot lunches, just what they could carry in the cold.

Julie: Did you ever have students that would come from, what we would call, a lower income family that would come without a lunch?

Alice: I never had any that came without a lunch. Sometimes they forgot them sometimes. If they forgot them, why the rest of us would divide our lunches with them, or else sometimes the parents would come and bring them to them, when they realized they'd left them at home.

Julie: What about the cost of education to the student and

their families?

Alice: I don't remember the cost. It was free school. It was all paid for by the tax payers. The tax payers paid for all of their education in the schools that lived within the district. If you lived without the district and came there, why you had to pay a tuition, but I don't know what the tuition was.

Julie: What about some recess activities? What did they do during recess?

Alice: Well, mainly they played games for that, and it just depended on the older the pupils were for that. They would play baseball and then they played Blackman, and they would play Run, Sheep, Run, or Steal Sticks, or games like those, Hide and Seek. They didn't have any playground equipment. Some school had swings and teeter totters, but we didn't have anything.

Julie: As far as finances, was the land purchased or given to the school?

Alice: Well, I think it was taken by the government for one acre. I don't know whether the government purchased it from the original owner or not. I do not know that, but I know that after the school was taken away and they didn't have school anymore, the land went back to its original owner. It was always just one acre.

Julie: Earlier in the interview, you told us your salary was \$70.00 a month.

Alice: I started at \$70.00. Some more densely populated areas where they had more tax payers, probably wheat growing farmers and things like that, why then they started at a higher salary than that, but that's the beginner's salary.

Julie: Did you have a voice in your salary?

Alice: You could ask for what you'd like to have, but sometimes they'd jew you down to what they'd want to pay you.

Julie: How did you get your pay check?

Alice: I got it every month. It was given by the treasurer of the school board. Usually I had to go to their house to get it, or else they would send it to the school by the pupil.

Julie: How did you get money for school supplies and equipment?

Alice: We didn't have very much for that. Usually they

would have what they call a box supper or a pie supper. The ladies would fix a lunch in a box and decorate it all up pretty, or else bake a pie, and decorate it all pretty and then take it over there and then, maybe in the evening, they'd have a ciphering or spelling match. Then the people in the community, then they would auction off the boxes, and the lady would eat with the gentleman that bought their box. The money then was used to purchase, well, I had one in the last school I taught, and the money was used there to buy playground equipment, balls and bats and other things that we needed.

Julie: Do you know what happened to the schoolhouses after you and other teachers quit teaching?

Alice: I think some of them were moved away. Some of them were sold and people took them to their places and used them for frames or whatever. In one community I know, why they left the schoolhouse there and it was used as a gathering place for the whole community, and then some of them were just taken away, and the land was turned back then to the original owner.

Julie: As far as the equipment and supplies, after the school closed, were they redistributed to other schools?

Alice: I think they had auctions. Some of them may have been, but I know some of the larger schools had auctions for that. Some of them may have been sold to other schools that needed more seating and equipment like that in the larger schools.

Julie: This has been very interesting, and could you tell us why you decided to quit teaching?

Alice: Well, I decided I'd quit so I could get married. I wanted to raise my own family and school, which I think I very well did. I had eight children, 19 grandchildren, and I have 15 great-grandchildren for that. I thank you for this interview. It's been a very interesting opportunity.

Julie: Thank you for volunteering your time and your memories. Thank you.