Reprint
SCHOOL SKETCHES

[A TWENTY-ONE PART SERIES OF DEARBORN'S
PUBLIC AND PAROCHIAL SCHOOLS]

(Reprint of the 21-part illustrated series by Tara B. Gnau, Curator of Education at the Dearborn Historical Museum, which appeared in consecutive issues of THE DEARBORN HISTORIAN, Volume 17, Number 2, 1977 - Volume 22, Number 2, 1982.)

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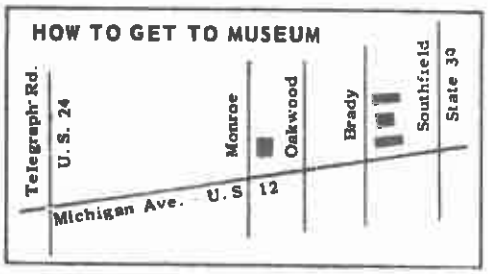

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SCHOOL SKETCHES

This 21-part series gives a brief historical account of the public and parochial schools in Dearborn. It was decided at the time the series was begun that all of the standing schools within the boundaries of the Dearborn Public School system as of January, 1977, would be included in the article. Therefore, nine school buildings are listed that, as of September, 1982, are no longer being used for educational purposes or are no longer standing. Clark, Oxford and Roulo schools have been demolished. The remaining six schools have been sold or are currently for sale. The author was able to locate more information on some schools than on others. Any further materials or information will be gratefully received by the Research Division of the Dearborn Historical Museum. All photographs are from the Dearborn Historical Museum Photograph File unless otherwise noted. [TBG, September, 1982]

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EXCERPTS FROM "DUTIES OF TEACHERS - SPRINGWELLS UNIT SCHOOLS, 1920-1924"

Section 1. Teachers shall take care that their school room furniture and other school property are not defaced or injured, and shall report at once all such to the Superintendent or Principal. They shall have regular and systematic inspection of books, once each month.
Section 2. Teachers shall maintain high degree of discipline in their respective rooms, and shall assist in maintaining order and decorum in halls, closets, and on school grounds, as directed by the Superintendent or Principal.
Section 3. Teachers shall open and remain in their respective rooms thirty minutes before time for opening school in the morning and fifteen minutes in the afternoon, and shall, if required by the Superintendent or Principal see that their rooms are vacated and locked before leaving them, both at noon and night.
Section 5. Teachers shall devote themselves faithfully and during school hours, exclusively to the interest of their schools.
Section 7. Teachers shall keep a carefully arranged program posted in their respective rooms.
Section 8. Teachers shall not vary the regular program of work without consent of Superintendent or Principal.
Section 9. Teachers shall not permit the distributing of handbills or reading of notices except those pertaining to church or school matters, unless by consent of the Superintendent.
Section 10. Teachers shall not dismiss their schools before the regular hours, absent themselves or employ a substitute without the consent of the Superintendent. They may be allowed not more then five days with pay during a year for absences caused by sickness if the Superintendent is satisfied that such absences were unavoidable.
Section 15. Teachers may exercise such judicious means as they deem necessary to enforce the observance of the rules of school or the Board, exercising, at all times, care and good judgement not influenced by temporary excitement, anger or a spirit or revenge. All cases or corporal punishment shall be reported to the Superintendent.

SCHOOL SKETCHES

Part I

[With this issue of THE HISTORIAN we begin a series of outlines of the schools in Dearborn. This is another way we at the Museum attempt to make you more aware of our community's heritage and growth. Tara B. Gnau, Curator of Education, is compiling these sketches. We are publishing them in alphabetical order. We will start with two public schools each issue and conclude with the parochial schools. W.H.A.]

ADAMS JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL

Built as Dearborn High School in 1926, Adams Junior High School currently has an enrollment of 515 students. Following the opening of the present Dearborn High School in 1957, the school underwent extensive remodeling. In 1961 the building was dedicated as the Ray H. Adams Junior ~~High~~ School.

The name was chosen to honor the former Superintendent of Schools, Ray H. Adams. In 1917 Adams, following several years of teaching in small school districts, came to the Detroit area to seek a position. He had applied in several districts but the only reply came from Dearborn District #7 (West Dearborn). The reply had come from S. B. Long (Samuel Long after whom Long School was named) stating: "There will be a vacancy in the superintendent of Dearborn schools." Ray Adams did not think he was interested in the Dearborn opening; however, upon passing through Dearborn on the train, he had second thoughts. As the train pulled into Ypsilanti, he jumped off with his luggage, came back to Dearborn and was hired as Superintendent. Among the highlights of Adams' career in Dearborn were: the building of six new school buildings, the introduction of the music and kindergarten into the schools, the establishment of domestic science and printing in the high school, the establishment of art and the merger of the Fordson and Dearborn school districts in 1944. Ray H. Adams retired in 1958 having served as Superintendent of District Number 7, Acting Superintendent and Deputy Superintendent of the Dearborn Public Schools and head of the personnel department for the schools.

The building was opened as a facility for grades 6-12 and gradually was reduced to a four-year and then a three-year school. The June, 1957 class was the last Dearborn High class to graduate from the building. The following September the 2nd and 3rd floors were opened as a 9th grade facility with the 7th and 8th grades being added in the fall of 1958.

Photo courtesy of Ronald Tront

CLARA BRYANT JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL

On October 12, 1949, the Dearborn Board of Education employed an architectural firm to start plans for a new junior high school building to be located north of Cherry Hill and West of Telegraph. A year later the plans had been drawn up and suggestions offered by junior high school teachers in the system and in September of 1951 Clara Bryant Junior High School was opened. Dedicated to Clara Bryant Ford (1866-1951), the wife of Henry Ford, the building was opened for 771 students in the 5th through the 8th grades. However, the building was not fully completed until February of 1953. Though the school was designed to hold only 900 students, the fall of 1953 brought an enrollment of 1,100 students in grades 5 - 9. The current enrollment is 464 students in grades 7 through 9.

Clara Bryant Ford, after whom the school was named, was born in 1866 in Greenfield Township, Michigan. Clara was the oldest of ten children, being eighteen when she met Henry Ford at a New Year's Eve party. Clara was quiet and demure - Henry serious-minded and shy. The attraction was immediate and the couple were married at the Bryant home on April 11, 1888. The first sixteen years of the Ford's married life were quiet. They began, as had their parents, as simple farming people. On September 25, 1891, the Fords moved to Detroit into a house on John R. The Ford's only son, Edsel, was born in Detroit in 1893. At first, Henry Ford worked for the Edison Illuminating Company. However, he was soon tinkering with a gasoline engine in the brick shed behind the house on Bagley Avenue. The interest in the engine led to working with a new-fangled contraption called the "automobile." The rest of Henry Ford's life is well-known history. Clara Ford was quietly in the background, watching her famous son and husband as they revolutionized the world of industry.

Clara Ford remained interested in the social life of the Dearborn community. She was the spark that started the Garden Club in 1915, and was the impetus behind the Dearborn Public Library, now the Mason Branch. When Henry became interested in reviving the old-fashioned square dances, Clara could not have been more pleased - she loved to dance and Henry had never been very enthusiastic about it! No matter the rise and fall in the fortunes of the Ford Motor Company Clara Ford remained a popular figure in Dearborn. Therefore, it is no wonder that the new school, which was dedicated only days before Mrs. Ford's death, has become a living memorial to a vital member of Dearborn's past.

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Photo courtesy of Ronald Tront

SCHOOL SKETCHES

Part II

WILLIAM H. CLARK SCHOOL

William H. Clark, after whom the Clark School was named, was an early member of the Dearborn District #7 School Board. Clark was born in Wayne, Michigan, in 1840 and moved to Dearborn after the Civil War. He began working as a brakeman on the Michigan Central Railroad and was gradually promoted to the position of Depot Master at the Third Street Depot in Detroit.

Mr. Clark became especially well known in Dearborn when he advocated the construction of a new brick school building on the corner of Garrison and Monroe. The land, part of the Detroit Arsenal tract, was given as a grant in 1891. Though most Dearbornites never thought the building would be filled, Clark earnestly promoted the financing and construction of the building. This structure, built in 1893, housed all of the district's students, first grade through high school, in seven rooms. William Clark became prominent enough in local affairs to be selected as first Village President in 1893.

In the late 1940's and early 1950's, during the expansion of schools in West Dearborn, many pioneer or early family names were discussed for school naming. Construction of the new school building, known as Clark School and located at Silvery Lane and Lawrence, was begun in March, 1950. The school was to be five rooms, with the completion date set for September. One of the most unusual features of the building was to be its non-institutional architecture - the school was designed to resemble a one-story ranch house! Clark opened to 225 students, grades K-3, in January, 1951, to relieve the overcrowded conditions at Haigh School. An activities room, kitchen and office were finished during the spring. In the summer of 1954 four more classrooms were added. Haigh and Clark were operated under the same principal. Due to a declining enrollment Clark was closed in June, 1976, and the building is not in use as of this writing.

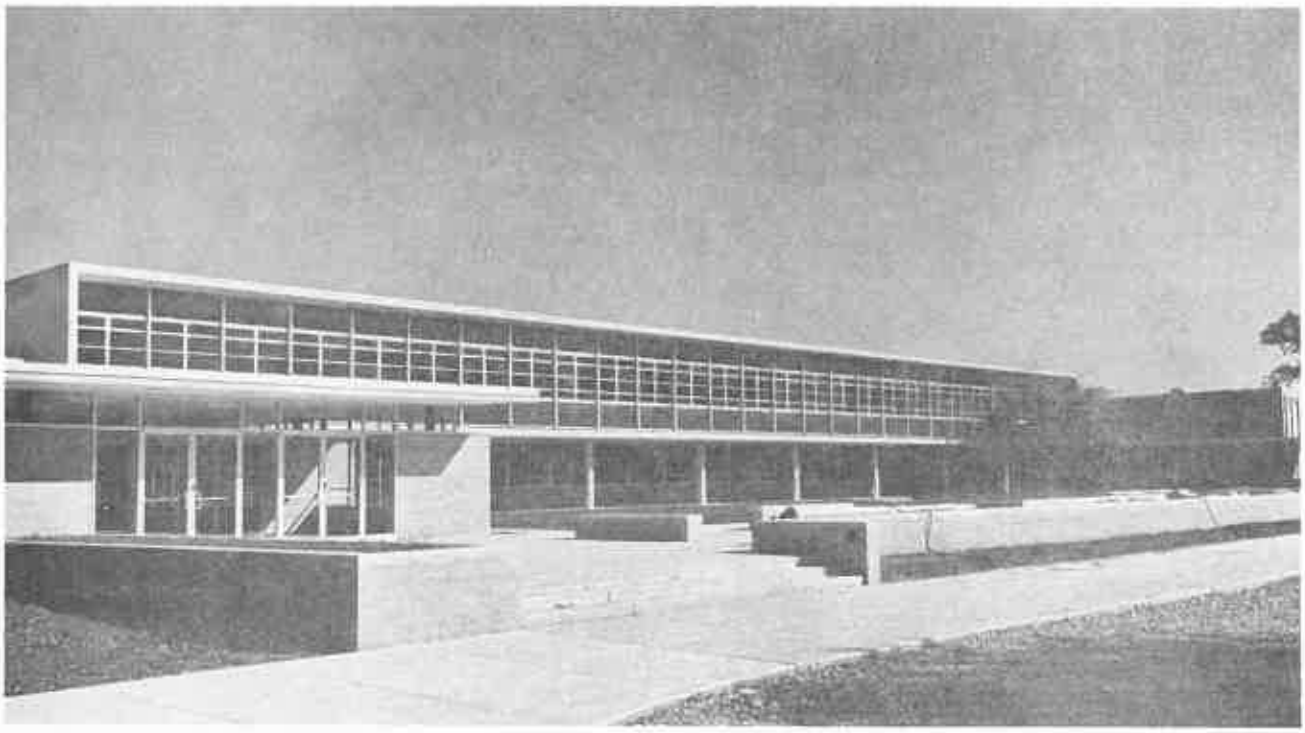
Photo courtesy of Ronald Tront

DEARBORN HIGH SCHOOL

The first graduation from Dearborn High was held in 1897 with one graduate, Arthur G. Clark. The first building used for high school classes was the one built in 1893 at Monroe and Garrison. All of the high school was in one room! In 1917 the population had sufficiently increased to build a new school - now known as the Salisbury School. The old school was given an annex just to the west and the complex of three buildings was used for all students in Dearborn - grades 1 through 12. Ray Adams, hired as Superintendent in 1917, encouraged the small school system to expand with the community. In 1925 the building now known as Ray Adams Junior High was constructed and was occupied in the fall of 1926 by grades 6 through 12. As the Dearborn School System (West Dearborn) gradually expanded and grew the high school became a facility for grades 10-12.

The high school students chose the name "Pioneer" and have used it for their yearbook and sports teams since 1922. A school newspaper variously called the "Orange and Black" and "The Observer" has been published since 1921. Clubs and sports activities have been a vital part of the school scene since very early days. The school population has grown from a few with one graduate to 1685 students in the 1976-77 school year and a graduating class of 480 students in June, 1977.

In July, 1944, the school districts of Fordson and Dearborn merged into a consolidated system. One of the very last acts of the old Dearborn (West Dearborn) School Board was the purchase of 26 acres of land from St. Joseph's Retreat. In 1954 another 37 acres was purchased from St. Joseph's Retreat, the combined 63 acres to be used for a new high school building. Planning for the new school was begun in 1954 with the actual groundbreaking taking place on April 6, 1956. In the fall of 1957 students occupied the present Dearborn High School building. The school boasts the most modern facilities, including printing and automotive shops, sports fields and a driver education range.



SCHOOL SKETCHES

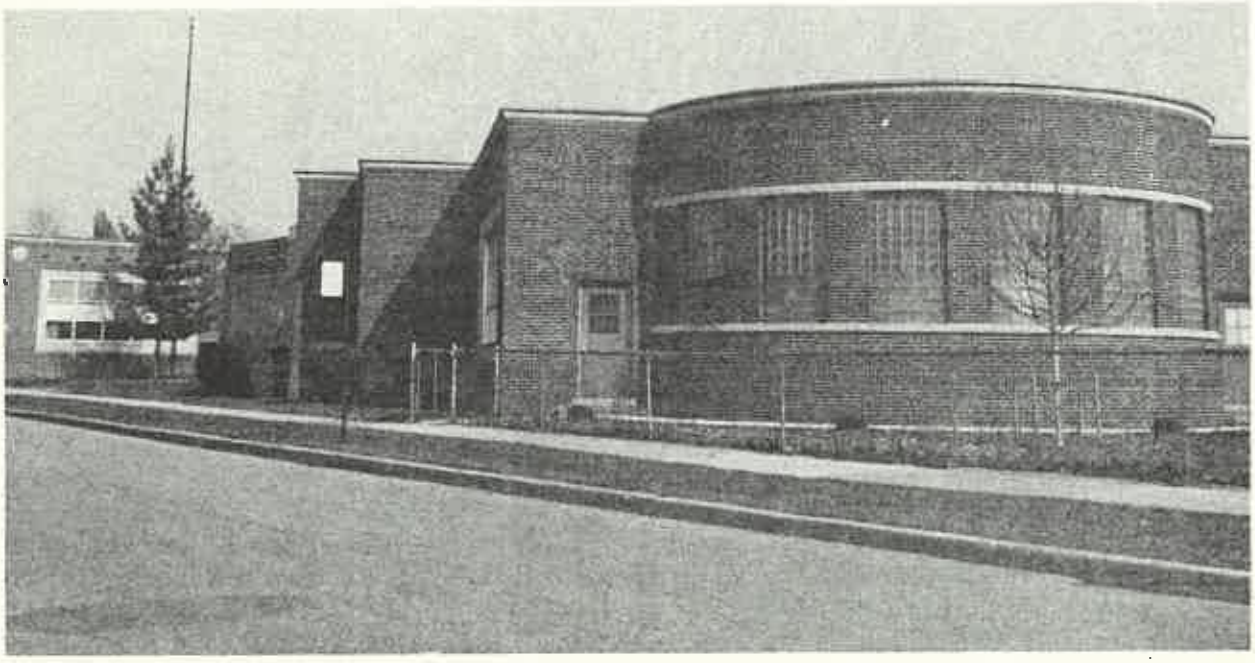
Part III

DuVALL SCHOOL

The development of the Ford Motor Company in Dearborn brought many changes to the community. Of course, many men came to work for Henry Ford in Dearborn and brought their families. A new neighborhood sprung up - now called the "Ford Subdivision" - and the children needed a school. In 1921 Southwestern School, at Beech and Francis streets, was built to relieve overcrowding at the Garrison School (now Salisbury). By 1928 there were 320 children in grades kindergarten through six. In 1931, after Edison School was opened, Southwestern had grades kindergarten through four. There was no hot lunch program, gymnasium or library. During the Second World War there were only 12 teachers and each class averaged 55 students.

In 1958 Southwestern was remodeled. A gymnasium was added along with two new classrooms, the kindergarten was expanded and a library was created out of two classrooms. The PTA went to a Board of Education meeting and requested that the school be re-named in honor of Leo DuVall, principal since 1928. These changes in 1958 created the DuVall School that we know today.

DuVall School is the only Dearborn school that has a living namesake. Leo DuVall came to Dearborn from Deckerville, Michigan in 1928 to be principal of Southwestern School, In those days of schooling, however, a principal was more than just the manager of a school building. Leo DuVall also was the child accountant during the Depression - responsible for the location of children during the year. DuVall was also in charge of transportation for the Dearborn Schools. With a large and scattered district many students were bussed - including some to Sacred Heart School! In addition, Mr. DuVall served as the system's purchasing agent. The principal of each school submitted a budget and list of materials needed to DuVall whose job it was to purchase the materials at the lowest price possible. In June, 1959 Leo DuVall retired as principal of DuVall/Southwestern School, having served the school for thirty years.

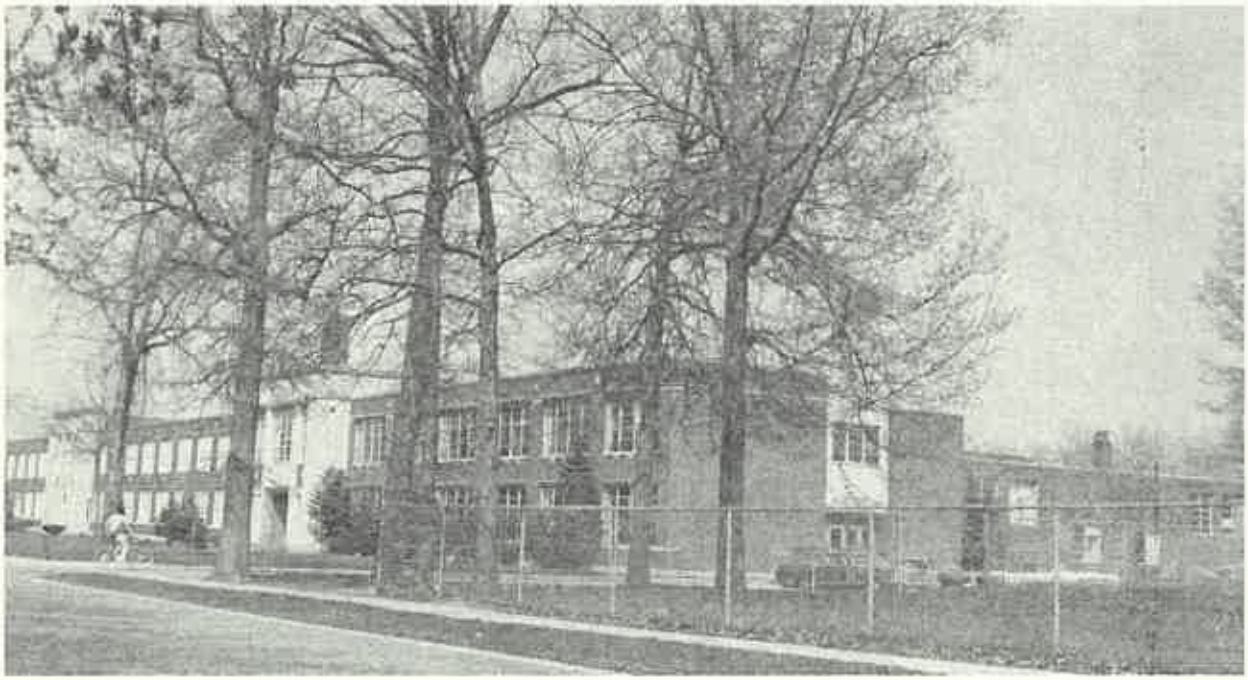


EDISON SCHOOL

When Thomas Alva Edison came to the Edison Institute, stepped off the train - with assistance from President Herbert Hoover - onto the platform of the Smith's Creek Station, lit the first fire at the Clinton Inn and recreated the development of the incandescent light bulb for the Golden Light Jubilee in 1929, Edison School was already under construction. Harry Vicary, a Dearborn architect, drew up the preliminary plans for the building, calling for a 2-story brick building, 220 feet long and 30 feet deep, with 10 classrooms, a kindergarten room, library, auditorium and gymnasium. The new school was designed to relieve congestion at both the Southwestern and Garrison Schools (see the previous history of DuVall School). $225,000 in bonds were sold and the Board of Education purchased the building site from the Ford Motor Company. The area around the Edison School was to be a community recreation area and all of the landscaping was done with plantings native to this part of Michigan.

Edison School was opened on January 26, 1931, with an enrollment of 289 students and Raymond Good as principal. The school had cost between $183,000 and $185,000 to build and included the most modern equipment. The school was not formally dedicated until February 11, 1932, - the 85th anniversary of Edison's birth. William J. Cameron was the principal speaker and a personal friend of Edison, with Mrs. Edison and son Charles as special guests. However, neither the Edisons or the Fords were able to come to the dedication.

Edison School grew rapidly - in 1940 eight classrooms were added and the 7th, 8th and 9th grades were included. In 1952 Edison also became a junior high and 36 classrooms were added, including a new auditorium and gymnasium, an expanded library, cafeteria, three complete shops, a home economics room, an art room, an audio-visual room and band and choral rooms. In 1953 a swimming pool was built. The new junior high was to serve 900 students with 200 in grades K-3. By 1976 the elementary wing was closed and the junior high school facilities expanded. The junior high is scheduled to be closed in June of 1978.



SCHOOL SKETCHES

Part IV

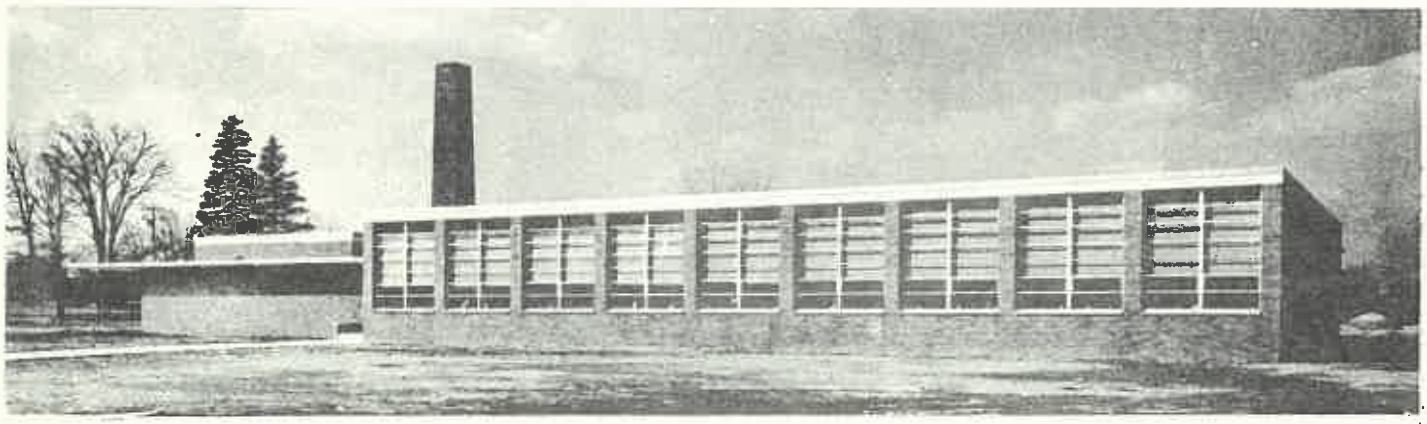
FAIRLANE MIDDLE SCHOOL

Built in 1951 as the Clara B. Ford Elementary School, Fairlane Middle School was one of two schools acquired by the Dearborn Board of Education in the spring of 1971. Ann Arbor Trail and Outer Drive was originally the site of the Coonville School. Coonville, named after the Valentine Coon family, was a small settlement on the Rouge River with a general store and blacksmith shop. The first school building, built in 1841, burned in 1896 and a new one was built on the same site in 1899. In 1944 a portion of the Coonville district was annexed by the School District of Dearborn, and an agreement between the Dearborn and Coonville districts allowed high school students to attend Fordson High School at a reduced tuition.

Following the Second World War the population of western Wayne County expanded greatly. In 1949 a bond issue was floated by the Coonville district along with a millage increase for the construction of a new school. The property on which previous schools had stood was now the intersection of Ann Arbor Trail and Outer Drive, so the new school was built on the northwest corner of that intersection. A sturdy brick elementary school, it was quickly named the Clara B. Ford School, in honor of Mrs. Henry Ford. In 1950 the name of the Coonville District #2 was changed to the Fairlane School District, again in honor of the Fords who owned land in the area. By 1952 the district had grown to the point of adding seven new classrooms, with a junior high, called Fairlane, being added to the school in 1956.

The 1960's were prosperous years for the Fairlane District. However, the Michigan State Legislature began pushing for a consolidation of small school districts. The first attempt at a merger of the Fairlane and Dearborn districts was in 1967 with Dearborn voters defeating the proposal. In 1971, with more encouragement from the state, a new tactic was used - this time only the Fairlane District voters needed to approve the merger under a 1955 law in the State of Michigan School Code. By March of 1971 Fairlane ceased to be an independent school district.

Fairlane School was used as a 6th through 9th grade facility by the Dearborn Public School until June, 1977. The building will be used by Henry Ford Community College as the Dearborn Heights Center. After some minor remodeling, including the creation of additional laboratory and parking space, the building will be opened in September, 1978.



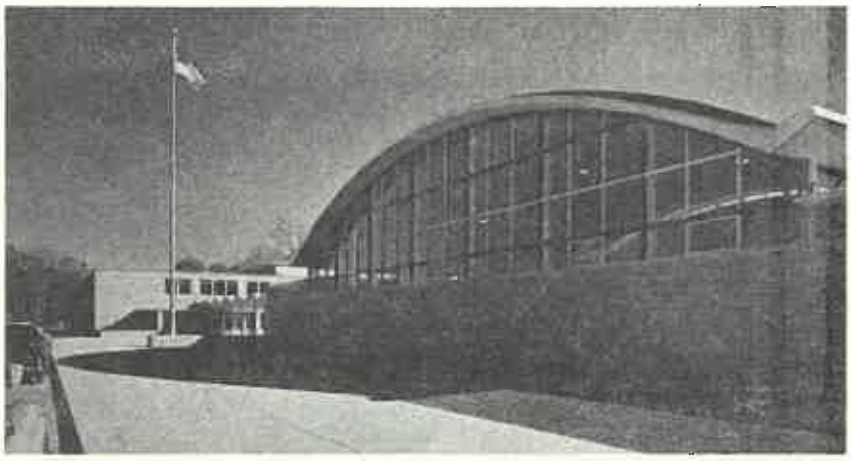
EDSEL FORD HIGH SCHOOL

Completed in 1956, Edsel Ford High School was named after Henry Ford's son, Edsel. By 1951 the 40 acre site at Rotunda and Pelham, donated by the Ford Motor Company, was designated as Edsel Ford High School. The School Naming Committee in Dearborn chose to honor Edsel Ford because of his many contributions to education through the Ford Foundation. Edsel Ford began working on the development of the Ford Motor Company's Rouge Plant in 1912, which in turn led to the great expansion and growth of the City of Dearborn. As a pioneer in the field of airplane manufacture Edsel Ford supported the development of the Ford Tri-Motor and was active in the administration of the bomber plant at Willow Run. Following Edsel Ford's untimely death in 1943 it seemed fitting that a modern, innovative school be named in his honor.

Edsel Ford High School is a truly unique school. The planning for this school was begun five years before the actual construction. The Edsel Ford Staff Planning Committee met with the architects from 1951 to 1953 putting together a curriculum and planning the physical layout of the building. Ideas were also generated by the Citizens Planning Committee as well as through student committees and a series of student questionnaires.

The Fund for the Advancement of Education, a division of the Ford Foundation, provided a six month study program for 27 Dearborn teachers at the University of Chicago. Another two years of follow-up work were conducted in Dearborn which resulted in the development of a new curriculum. Thus Edsel Ford has stressed this Humanities-oriented curriculum during its twenty year hsitory. Following the Second World War educators changed the direction of curriculum from a vocational one to a more general attitude. More stress was placed on the Humanities and college preparatory courses with Edsel Ford High School striving to develop the "whole person." Many of the programs and concepts pioneered at Edsel Ford are now a standard part of the curriculum of high schools across the United States.

The enrollment at Edsel Ford High School as of January, 1978, was 1595 students. The building was constructed in 1955 for 1440 students with additional space being created in 1960. Eberle M. Smith Associates, Inc. were the architects and following much discussion over the physical design of the building developed a "courtyard" plan allowing for the preservation of many species of birds, including some wild turkeys! Not only does Edsel Ford High School have a unique curriculum but also boasts a fine athletics program. Each of Dearborn's high schools has made important contributions to the school system, but Edsel Ford has contributed not only to Dearborn but has helped to develop a new philosophy of education in the United States.



SCHOOL SKETCHES

Part V

HENRY FORD COMMUNITY COLLEGE

Henry Ford Community College, the ninth largest of Michigan's 81 colleges and universities, is the outgrowth of two Dearborn educational institutions. In 1938 parents of Fordson High School students petitioned the Fordson Board of Education to add two additional years of study (grades 13 and 14) to the Fordson High curriculum. Fordson Junior College was the result of the petition - with the basement of Fordson High School being used and classes being held during the lunch hour and late afternoon. The Fordson High School faculty taught the college classes in addition to their regular classes. The first semester (Fall, 1938) saw an enrollment of 88 students, with the curriculum being copied from the University of Michigan. Fordson Junior College credits were transferable to both Wayne State University and the University of Michigan.

The onset of World War II retarded the growth of Fordson Junior College, though the first set of diplomas were awarded in 1940 along with the regular high school graduates. By the spring of 1941 enrollment reached a peak of 189 students. The fall of 1943 saw the registration of only 65 students with men leaving for service daily. The school was closed for the duration of the war.

Following the consolidation of the Fordson and Dearborn school districts, Dearborn Junior College was formed in 1946 to replace the old Fordson Junior College. Again, classes were held at Fordson High School, but with the passage of the G.I. Bill institutions of higher learning all across the country were flooded with returning servicemen. Dearborn Junior College grew so quickly the basement of the Miller School was pressed into service. Space was at a premium students from both Fordson High School and Dearborn Junior College were trying to use the Fordson High School Library and there was the problem of what to do with students between classes. By 1949 Dearborn Junior College was put on the accredited list of the North Central Association of Colleges and Secondary Schools.

On March 5, 1952, the trustees of the Henry Ford Trade School voted to transfer all of their assets to the developing junior college. The Henry Ford Trade School had been started in 1916 at the Ford Motor Company plant in Highland Park. The Trade School was a unique concept, allowing young men to receive wages for their work while earning high school and college credits in industrially related subjects. The Dearborn Board of Education was now the parent of a burgeoning junior college - combining the assets and facilities of the Dearborn Junior College and the Henry Ford Trade School. The school was named the Henry Ford Community College to honor Henry Ford and to stress the growing trend away from junior colleges to increased community involvement. The liquidated assets of the Henry Ford Trade School raised $1.4 million dollars and land was purchased east of the Miller School building.

The fall of 1954 was the groundbreaking for two new buildings behind Miller School. One of these buildings, the Frederick E. Searle Technical Building, is still part of the Henry Ford Community College. The science building, named for Russell Hudson McCarroll, was sold to the Detroit College of Business in 1962. The first nursing class was graduated in 1955, and the nursing program quickly became a vital part of the Henry Ford Community College curriculum. In May, 1956, two cooperative programs were developed between the college and local industries. The first of these was Cooperative Engineering, a program of alternating 12 weeks of classroom work with 12 weeks of employment at the Ford Motor Company. The second program was in Cooperative Accounting where students attended classes on a full time basis the first year and then alternated 10 weeks of classes with 10 weeks of work at the Ford Motor Company or the Chrysler Corporation the second year. By the fall of 1956 Henry Ford Community College was Michigan's largest community college with a total enrollment of 8,412 students!

In April of 1957, the Dearborn Board of Education requested 100 acres of land adjacent to the University of Michigan - Dearborn property from the Ford Motor Company. On June 7, 1957, the Ford Motor Company presented the Board of Education with 75 acres at Ford Road and Evergreen. A Henry Ford Community College Planning Committee was formed, composed of faculty members and Dearborn citizens. The total funds available were $8.67 million and a building program was established. In fact, that building program is now being completed - twenty years later - with the announcement of the plans to break ground for a fine arts building in the spring of 1978.

Henry Ford Community College is a growing complex of modern buildings with a spring, 1978, enrollment of 15,824 students. The main campus includes the Fred Aechelman Library, the Walter Reuther Liberal Arts Building (Reuther was a graduate of Fordson High School), and the Charles H.Patterson Technical Building. In addition, classes are held at the Searle Building on Lois and the Miller School has again been occupied by college classes with the closing of the elementary wing. Stout Junior High School is being used for night classes and the former Fairlane Middle School is scheduled to become another branch of the Henry Ford Community College. From its small beginnings 40 years ago the Henry Ford Community College has become a vital and active part of Dearborn's educational community.

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SCHOOL SKETCHES

Part VI

HENRY FORD SCHOOL

Of all of Dearborn's present public schools Henry Ford Elementary has perhaps the most unusual background. Until its consolidation with the Fordson School District in 1942 the Henry Ford School represented its own district. Dearborn District #5 was formed in 1837 in the east half of Dearborn Township. The first school, a one-room brick building known as the Dort School, was located on the banks of the Rouge River south of the Michigan Central Railroad. In 1912 this building was closed as Henry Ford began to acquire land for the Rouge Plant. Ford traded the old school site for five acres on the Reckner Road (now Southfield Road) and the funds to build a new frame school. As this district, now called the Henry Ford School District, encompassed Henry Ford's estate it was able to tax all of Henry Ford's stock in his company. The result was one of the smallest and richest school districts in the nation.

In 1926 the white frame school had become too small for the rapidly growing population of Ford Motor Company employees and their families. A new brick building containing five classrooms, an auditorium, a boiler room and two offices was constructed on Driscoll Avenue at a cost of $400,000. By 1929 and the school's dedication, the building had expanded to sixteen classrooms and included a gymnasium, swimming pool, library, cooking and sewing rooms, a music room, shop facilities, science laboratories, a kindergarten and the superintendent's office. The students ranged from kindergarten through junior high with a capacity enrollment of 515.

In addition to the above mentioned unusual facilities for a school of the 1930's Henry Ford provided land for garden plots. During the Second World War the earlier frame school was converted into a canning factory to process food raised by the Victory gardeners. Not only did Henry Ford provide the present building, but he had the students take dancing lessons as well as hiring a nurse, and doctor and a dentist for the school. Mr. Ford also served as a member of the five-man School Board.

The 1942 repeal of the intangibles tax allowing the Henry Ford School District to tax Ford stock brought the school to a financial crisis. The solution was consolidation with the Fordson School District. The early 1950's brought the construction of the Ford World Headquarters and the 1912 frame school was used as an office for the construction company. Following the dedication of the "Glass House" in 1954 the old school was torn down. The Henry Ford School

became part of the Dearborn Public Schools with the consolidation of the Dearborn and Fordson School Districts in 1944. Today the school serves 339 students from kindergarten through the 6th grade.

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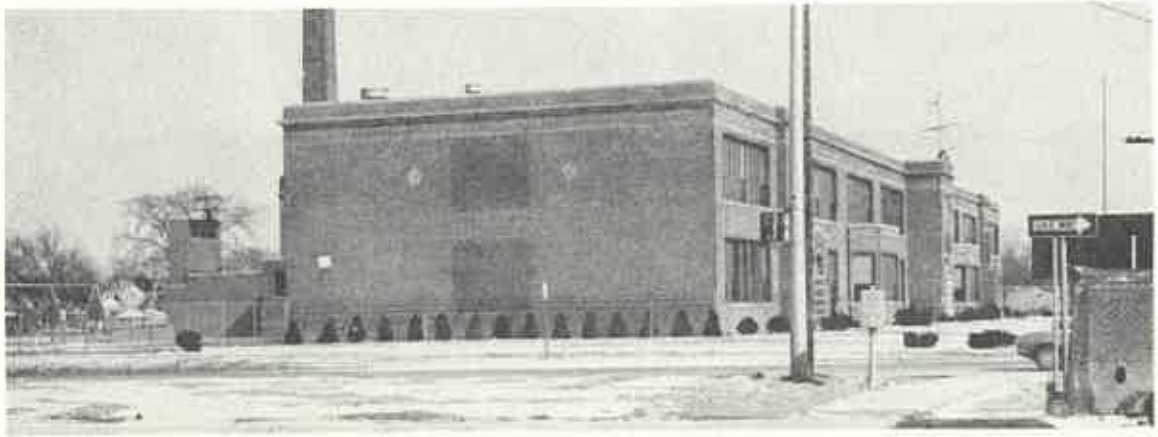
WILLIAM FORD SCHOOL

William Ford School was the first school built in the Springwells School District. When it was constructed in 1922 the Springwells School Board was criticized for building a school in the wilderness! The site, at Chase and Ford Roads, having been part of William Ford's original farm, was purchased for $1.00 from Henry Ford. The school was built with six rooms to accommodate 200 students. The north and south wings were added in 1924 increasing the size of the school to 31 classrooms, a gymnasium and auditorium. By 1928 the enrollment hit a peak of 1,030 students and 40 teachers. The school also had a program in special education for children who did not fit into the regular classroom. In 1935 a proposal to add junior high facilities to William Ford was defeated and Woodworth School became a K-9 facility. With a declining population William Ford absorbed the elementary students from St. Clement's School following its closing in 1971. Extensive renovation has been done including the replacement of wooden windows and the modernization of gymnasium facilities. Today the school has 361 students, grades kindergarten through 6th.

William Ford, after whom the school was named, came to the United States from Ireland in 1847 with his parents, grandmother and six brothers and sisters. They came to the Scotch Settlement, today in the approximate area of Ford, Greenfield, Joy and Southfield roads, to join Samuel Ford, William's uncle. They found that Samuel had died but that his two sons had prosperous farms in the neighborhood. William Ford's family soon had purchased land in the adjoining corners of Redford, Greenfield, Springwells and Dearborn townships. William helped his father on the farm as well as working on the Michigan Central Railroad. Many local men helped supplement their farming income by laying track for the railroad crossing Michigan. When the railroad reached its end at Lake Michigan, William returned to the Dearborn area to work on the Patrick O'Hern farm. The O'Herns had adopted a daughter, Margaret Litogot, who married William in 1861. In 1863 their second child and first son, Henry, was born in a house shared by the Fords and O'Herns. After the O'Herns died and William Ford had purchased a portion of his father's farm, the William Ford landholdings were quite extensive. William served on the local school board and was a respected member of the community until his death in 1905 at the age of 79.



SCHOOL SKETCHES

Part VII

FORDSON HIGH SCHOOL

Fordson High School has an extensive and proud history. Groundbreaking ceremonies for the school were held on April 19, 1926, with the original building costing $1,946,043.20. The architect was H. J. Keough of Detroit whose inspiration came from the Memorial Quadrangle at Yale University, the Lawyers' Club at the University of Michigan and Rushton and Apethorpe Halls in Northamptonshire, England. The rapidly growing community of Fordson, encouraged by the development of the Ford Motor Company's Rouge Plant, decided to build the school on a fifteen acre plot of ground in the center of the city. Prior to the building of Fordson High School all K-12 classes for Fordson/Springwells were held at the Miller School which was built on Lois in 1918. Three high school classes were graduated from Miller before Fordson was opened.

The official dedication of Fordson High School took place the week of March 19-23, 1928. Among the week's festivities was a presentation of "Peg O' My Heart" by the Senior Class. 2000 junior and senior high school students occupied the school during the first years. In addition to classrooms, laboratories and other high school facilities the building also housed the school administrative offices and the Fordson Junior College (see: DEARBORN HISTORIAN, Vol. 18, No. 2). Though the building has undergone several expansions and renovations the crowded conditions of the 1960's forced the administrative offices to be moved to Miller School in 1967.

Among the major changes in the building during the past fifty-two years have been the addition of music rooms, the enlargement of gymnasium facilities and the current 8.5 million dollar general renovation. It is perhaps the present renovation which is proving to be the most controversial in Fordson's history. In 1974 a feasibility study indicated that a renovation of the school was both possible and practical. The renovation, however, has created many headaches. Work has been slowed down by the discovery that the blueprints for the original building do not always match the actual construction. It has not always been possible to reproduce original materials and the construction companies have been accused of creating conditions hazardous to the students. Fordson High School remains calm and serene through this - a stately landmark on Ford Road.

HENRY A. HAIGH SCHOOL

A five room school unit appeared at the intersection of Silvery Lane and Coburn in 1946. Part of the post-war building "boom," the school was soon named the Henry A. Haigh School. The original intention was that both Haigh and Howard schools would handle overflow students from Lindbergh Elementary. Harold Myler served as principal of both Lindbergh and Haigh under this plan until 1949. However, the neighborhood grew so rapidly that the school acquired additional classrooms each year from 1948 to 1954, and Pat Fordell was made principal of Haigh in 1949. The staff grew along with the building, increasing from five to fifty in less than a decade. The original design of the school was to resemble a home with an informal atmosphere in the classroom. Despite the many additions to the school in the late 1940's and early 1950's conditions were so overcrowded that Clark School was built in 1951 to relieve congestion at Haigh. During the declining enrollment years of the 1970's Clark School was closed (see: DEARBORN HISTORIAN, Vol. 17, No. 3). Though the student population at Haigh is not as great as it once was the school remains a vital part of its neighborhood.

Henry A. Haigh was born in Dearborn in 1854. The son of Richard and Lucy Haigh, Henry remained one of the community's favorite citizens until his death in 1942. Henry was educated at Michigan State University and the University of Michigan, and was known in the Detroit area as a farmer, lawyer, financier, promoter, writer and speaker. As a businessman he was interested in the railroad industry and founded lines from Detroit to Cincinnati as well as developing the interurban line from Detroit to Ypsilanti. As a local historian Henry Haigh formed the Dearborn Historical Commission which led to the establishment of the Dearborn Historical Museum. However, one of Mr. Haigh's most outstanding contributions to the preservation of Dearborn's history was his own diary - kept each day from his entry to Michigan Agricultural College (Michigan State University) in 1875 until his death. The community was honored by Henry Haigh's tireless efforts in historic preservation and the School Naming Committee of 1949 felt that Mr. Haigh's contributions should be recognized.

SCHOOL SKETCHES

Part VIII

JOSHUA HOWARD SCHOOL

York School was built in 1946, on North York Street, as part of the rapidly expanding development in post-war Dearborn. The school opened in February, 1946, with five rooms handling grades K-3. The streets around the building were unpaved and the neighborhood was just beginning to develop. Lindbergh School continued to absorb the 4th-6th graders. February, 1948, saw the addition of four new classrooms. The kindergarten enrollment alone had grown to 1151 By the fall of 1948 plans were made to expand the school into a K-6 facility. Edward and Oak avenues were closed and three blocks were set up for the school, playground and park. In September, 1949, the school was renamed Joshua Howard Elementary and 521 students in grades K-6 reported the first day. Since the new classrooms were not ready students were put on half day sessions. On September 27, 1949, the new rooms were completed and full day classes began. The new playroom, activities room and office were occupied in December. The school continued to prosper and thrive through the 1950's and '60's with the addition of six classrooms, a teachers' room, supply room and storage room in 1953. By 1970 enrollment had begun to decline, but Howard School continues to serve as a vital part of the community.

The renaming of York School in 1949 was part of the expansion of the Dearborn Public Schools. The school naming committee was kept busy - fourteen new schools were named in the late 1940's and early 1950's. The committee relied on Dearborn's pioneers for school names. Colonel Joshua Howard was sent to Dearborn as supervisor of construction for the new Detroit Arsenal at Dearbornville in 1832. Howard quickly became involved in the growing community and built one of the finest houses in Dearborn in 1834. The house (later called the Haigh Mansion) was located on the Chicago Road (Michigan Avenue) where the Dearborn Towers stands today. The Howard Family was vital in the development of Dearborn and Michigan. In addition to his duties as an officer with the U. S. Army Corps of Engineers, Howard served as a United States Marshal. Many Howard descendants still number among Dearborn's residents.

LOUIS W. HOWE SCHOOL

One of the last phases of the Dearborn Public School's post-war building program, the Louis W. Howe School, on Oakwood Boulevard, was opened in September, 1955. Designed by Jahr-Anderson Associates, the building featured a walk-through classroom system instead of long corridors. At the time of its construction, Howe School relieved overcrowding at Snow and Ten Eyck schools as the neighborhood around Oakwood Hospital began to grow. With the declining enrollment of the 1970's Superintendent Anthony Witham became involved in the closing of schools. Howe School was one of the first to be suggested for closing. However, after a dramatic school board meeting the school was left open. By 1978, though, the enrollment had declined to such a degree that the facilities were closed in June. At the present time the building is being used by the Dearborn Public Schools as a facility for the trainable retarded.

The Howe School was named for Louis W. Howe, one of Dearborn's pioneers. Louis Howe was the son of Elba Howe, Dearbornville's station agent for the Michigan Central Railroad and the community's first undertaker. Louis Howe was born in 1873 in Dearborn and served as township clerk and treasurer and then village clerk and treasurer after the incorporation of the Village of Dearborn. He personally conducted the 1900 census in Dearborn, and in addition to counting the people Howe found himself counting chickens for the Federal government as well. He served on the school board from 1918 to 1924, was a charter member of the Dearborn Rotary Club and served as a Master of the Masonic Lodge. Howe followed in his father's footsteps, serving as Dearborn's volunteer fire chief, a funeral director and insurance salesman. A good friend of Henry Ford, he inspired Ford to build the Dearborn Country Club and convinced Ford that Dearborn High School needed an athletic field (the present Ford Field). When the school was named for Howe in 1955 he remarked that school-naming was becoming a tradition in the family as his wife, the former Jennie Clark, was the daughter of William Clark after whom the Clark School was named.

SCHOOL SKETCHES

Part IX

DAVID P. LAPHAM SCHOOL

In 1951 $244,799 was appropriated for a new primary school at Westwood and Union streets. The post-war "baby boom" was bringing thousands of students into the early elementary grades in Dearborn causing overcrowding in many buildings. Two of those buildings bursting at the seams were the Long and Oxford schools. Therefore the Dearborn Board of Education approved plans for a new school to house 200 students from kindergarten through the 3rd grade. Jahr-Anderson Associates were selected as the architects and plans were drawn up for six classrooms and an all-purpose room. Built with the same scope as the William Clark School (see DEARBORN HISTORIAN, Vol. 17, No. 3, Summer, 1977), Lapham shared a principal with Long School. Declining enrollment hit Lapham School in June, 1972,and without fanfare the school was closed. The building is currently leased to the Dearborn Association for Retarded Citizens.

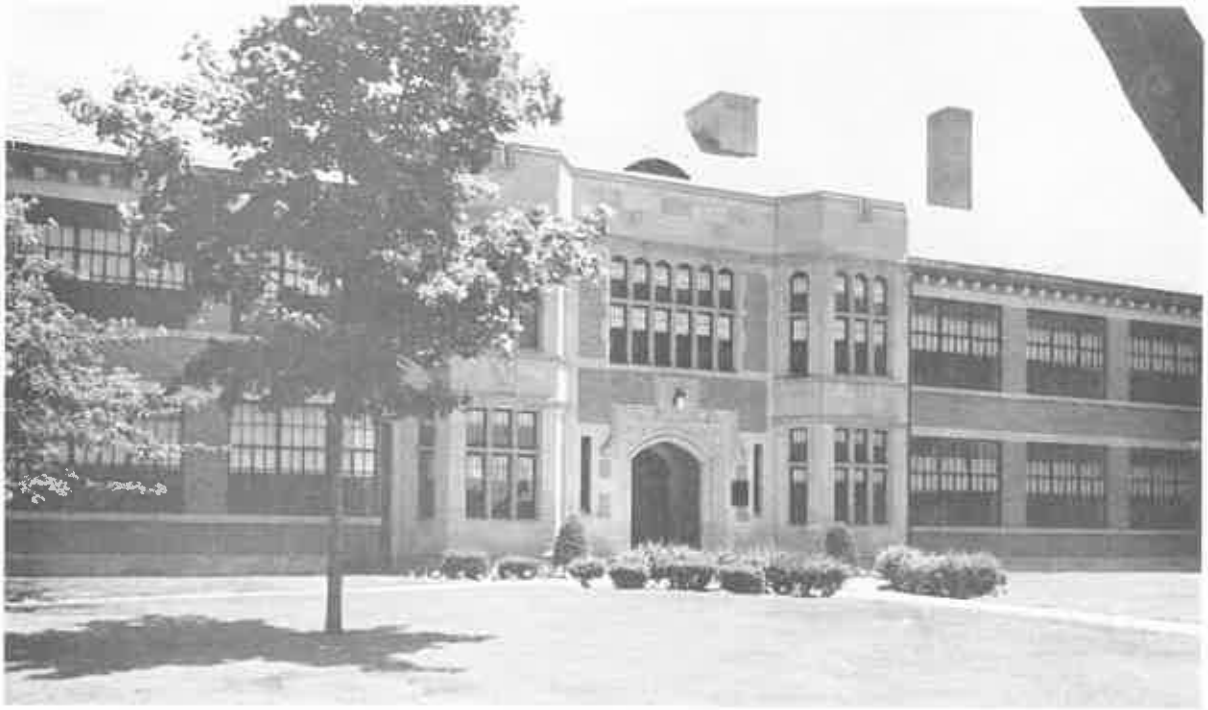
David P. Lapham was born in Dearborn in 1851. The Lapham Family owned a 100 acre farm in what is today the region of Military and Monroe. David established Dearborn's first bank in 1896 and sold it to Henry Ford in 1916. The Laphams also operated a general store and a butcher shop. David Lapham served on Dearborn's Board of Education when Dearborn's first high school was built. He also advocated the building of an eight room school to prevent future overcrowding. David Lapham died in 1926 in Birmingham, Alabama, having been injured by falling timber in Pensacola, Florida. The Lapham Family, in its sixth and seventh generations, remains a vital part of the community.

[*Photograph courtesy of Dearborn Public Schools*]

CHARLES A. LINDBERGH SCHOOL

Named after the famed aviator, the Lindbergh School was begun in 1928 in an area of Dearborn known as "the sticks." The area around the southeast corner of Telegraph and Cherry Hill was just beginning to develop and parents were concerned that there was not a neighborhood school. A local real estate developer offered the Dearborn Board of Education a small piece of land for a school and the Board approved the building of a four room school. However, Superintendent Ray Adams farsightedly pushed for the building of an eight room school. Ray Adams could see the community beginning to develop and as a result of his urging a larger school was built on Waverly Street. The school was originally designed to serve 1st through 8th grades (no kindergarten was planned as there was only one kindergarten aged child in the area at the time). High school students then attended Dearborn High School.

Dedication exercises for the Charles A. Lindbergh School were held in the school library in 1929, Ray Adams' predictions of community expansion having come true with the consolidation of Dearborn and Fordson earlier in the year. Colonel Lindbergh was not able to attend the dedication but his mother was the guest of honor. Despite the depression years and hard times the area around Telegraph and Cherry Hill continued to grow. By 1938 it was obvious that the Lindbergh School would have to expand with the community. Again Ray Adams proposed the addition, doubling the building to sixteen classrooms and adding an auditorium and gymnasium. There was opposition to the proposal both in the community and on the Dearborn Board of Education, but it passed on a ballot proposal by a margin of 11 to 1. The addition was completed in 1940. Despite Adams' work toward the future Lindbergh School needed further additions with the flourishing community of the post war years. In 1948 additional property was purchased on Highland Avenue and the playground was expanded. In 1954 the last addition of modern kitchen facilities, a teachers' dining room and work area, an art work area and a multipurpose room was begun. The school has survived the expansion and decline of Dearborn's school population and in 1979 enters the second half of its first century.



SCHOOL SKETCHES

Part X

SAMUEL B. LONG SCHOOL

Samuel B. Long School, opened in 1946, was one of the many schools to be built in rapidly-expanding, post-war west Dearborn. Long was begun with five classrooms as the neighborhood at Telegraph and Oxford began to develop. In 1947 an addition of 4 classrooms was made and in 1949 eleven more classrooms were added along with a gymnasium, library, cafeteria and service areas. The school building was made adaptable to community service so that it would receive maximum use. The physical site of Long School is a beautifully wooded area in the southwest corner of Dearborn. In 1951 Long was joined by the David P. Lapham School (see: THE DEARBORN HISTORIAN, Vol. 19, No. 2, Spring, 1979) to relieve Long's overcrowded conditions. Until the Lapham School was closed in 1972 the two buildings were frequently referred to as one: Long/Lapham. Despite the declining enrollment of the Dearborn district Long School continues to serve the community as a vital part of the educational scene.

Long School was named in honor of Samuel B. Long, who served as a director on the Board of Education in Dearborn District #7 for over twenty years. Long's parents came from England to Michigan in 1850. Thomas Long walked from Detroit to Dearborn and purchased a twenty-one acre farm along the Rouge River. The family built a house, still standing at the corner of Military and Long Blvd., and were soon prosperous farmers with 197 acres of land. In 1864 Thomas Long died of blood poisoning and the family moved back to England. Jane Long (Samuel's mother) married Robert Walker in 1868 and the family returned to Dearborn. At 14 Samuel Long entered Michigan State Agricultural College and graduated with honors in 1896. After two years in the west, Sam Long returned to Dearborn and was elected school inspector. In 1881 he married Ann Brainard and settled in the family house. The Longs continued to be a farming family though Sam was very active in local politics. He served as Supervisor of Dearborn Township, Township Treasurer, County Auditor and Justice of the Peace. In addition he had the distinction of being elected both President and Councilman of the Village of Dearborn on the same day! Among the improvements made in the community as a result of Long's interest were the paving of many roads and the decision to keep the polls open until 8 P.M. so that working people would be able to vote. When this vital man died in 1944 Dearborn had lost a great pioneer.

HARVEY H. LOWREY SCHOOL

Certainly the most unusual and unique school in the district, Lowrey School has served the community since 1927. Lowrey was built to relieve the overcrowded conditions at Thayer and Miller Schools. The 1920's saw tremendous growth in the Springwells Township Unit School District (later the Fordson School District) due to the coming of the Rouge Plant to the area. As the number of students swelled so did the school system. Lowrey School was designed by H. J. Keough who had also served as the architect for Fordson High School. Built in the Gothic collegiate style, Lowrey was set up for K-9 students. In addition to a complete library and the cafeteria in the basement, Lowrey boasted a fully equipped orthopedic department. The building was designed for all students including the handicapped. Another special feature of the school was a complete gymnasium with a gallery in the pool area. As the school population continued to grow so did Lowrey. Additions were made to the building and by 1949 a complete high school was incorporated into the building. From 1949 to 1969 Lowrey housed students in K-12 levels along with the large special education department! As one teacher remarked: "All a student needs to do is to be born - Lowrey School will take care of them until they graduate from high school!" Major renovation was completed on the building in 1963. Today Lowrey continues to serve the community with grades K-9 and a special education department.

Harvey H. Lowrey was hired as superintendent of the Springwells Township Unit School District on February 15, 1922 and served until his retirement in 1946. Lowrey's teaching career lasted 50 years, having begun in 1896 when he began teaching at Berlin Center, near Ionia, Michigan. He also served as principal of Saranac High School, Superintendent of Pewamo High School and Commissioner of the Ionia County Schools. Lowrey then became Registrar and a teacher at Mt. Pleasant Normal College (now Central Michigan University). He resigned from Mt. Pleasant to complete his doctoral degree at the University of Michigan. In 1922 he came to the Springwells School District as superintendent. It is obvious that Dr. Lowrey was immediately successful as superintendent as it was only five years before the school was named in his honor. During Lowrey's tenure in Fordson and Dearborn he saw both the political consolidation of Dearborn and Fordson in 1929 and the consolidation of the Dearborn and Fordson Public Schools in 1944. Lowrey was an active and influential member of the community, serving on the Charter Commission in 1924 and 1942. Following his retirement, Lowrey left the Dearborn area and died in 1961 at the age of 82.

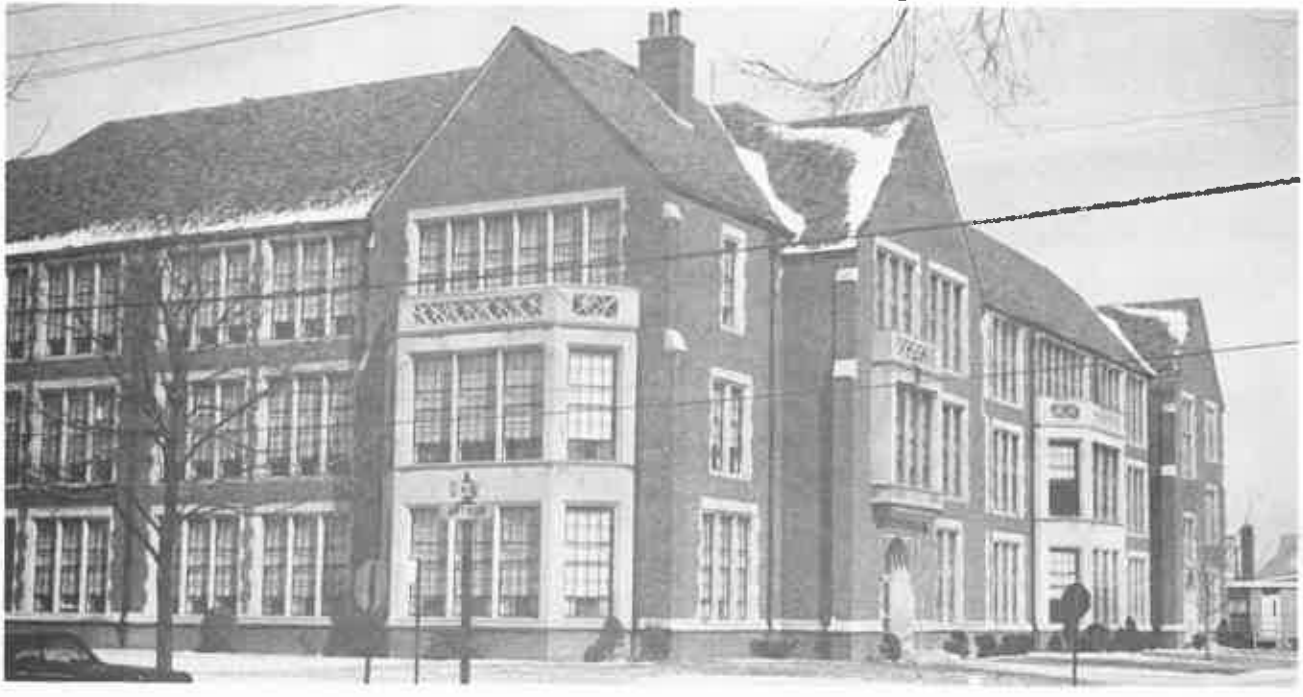
SCHOOL SKETCHES

Part XI

FRED E. MAPLES SCHOOL

The Fred E. Maples School, another school built by the Fordson Public Schools during the growth years of the 1920's, was actually the eleventh school to be erected in the district. Like its predecessors Fordson High, Lowrey and Oakman, Maples was designed by noted school architect H. J. Keough. The building was begun in 1929 with Walter Iams turning the first sod. The Iams family had been responsible for circulating a petition in the neighborhood calling for additional school facilities. In addition, Iams helped to secure land for the school building. The decision to name the school in honor of Fred Maples was not made until August 19, 1929. Maples was a member of the Fordson Board of Education at the time and was also a member of a pioneer Springwells/Fordson family. Formal dedication of the new school, designed to accommodate 1280 students, was held on June 3, 1930. Today, though the school enrollment has declined drastically, the school continues to serve the community with grades kindergarten through nine.

Fred Maples was born on May 16, 1873, in the family home in what is now the area of Schaefer and Rotunda. His grandfather had come to Springwells Township in 1829 and settled in a log cabin on the banks of the Rouge River. The Maples family, like other pioneer families, had been farmers but they also kept a tavern on the Ann Arbor Road (now the site of the Rouge Plant). Fred Maples married Catherine Campbell in 1897 and settled in the village of Springwells. As western Wayne County expanded after the beginning of the twentieth century Fred Maples soon was involved in real estate. He became active in the building and development of both commercial property and housing. A well known member of the community he served on the Fordson Board of Education during one of its busiest periods. He was also well known for his charities - though he never sought recognition or praise for his works. Maples died very suddenly on June 5, 1931. The Maples family name is still known through the community in the heritage of the Fred E. Maples School.



JOHN C. McDONALD SCHOOL

The John C. McDonald School was named for a distinguished member of one of Dearborn's notable pioneer families. Richard McDonald, father of John, came to Detroit as a boy in 1812 with his parents. In 1820 at the age of twenty Richard purchased one hundred acres in Greenfield Township, in the vicinity of what is now Warren and Wyoming. The McDonald family homestead was built on what is now Lonyo south of Warren. It was in this house that John C. McDonald was born in 1834. In 1861 John married Margaret A. McFarlane and built a house on the corner of Warren and Wyoming. Still active as a farmer in 1882 McDonald started a brick and tile yard on the north side of Warren east of Wyoming. In addition to his business ventures John C. McDonald had an interest in civic affairs. In 1876 he was elected treasurer for the township of Springwells and later served on the Wayne County Poor Commission. He also served on the board of the McDonald School for twenty-five years. In fact, McDonald was so interested in education that he made sure his son, Fred, attended school every day, no matter how busy the farming season. It was Henry Ford who suggested the new school being built at Diversey and Normile in 1928 be named in honor of John C. McDonald.

The present McDonald School is the third school to be known by that name. The first McDonald School was a frame building, facing what is now Warren Avenue, built on Richard McDonald's farm. The second school, still one room but built of brick, was constructed at Warren and Wyoming, a few feet west of the first building. This school was still in use in the 1920's when the City of Fordson began its rapid expansion due to the development of the Rouge Plant. As part of the growth of the Fordson Public School system a new school, soon designated as the John C. McDonald School, was begun in 1928. It was the first three story elementary school in Fordson. The school contained some unusual features - an auditorium with a fully equipped stage, a gymnasium, a library and a cafeteria. With fourteen classrooms the new building was a drastic departure from its predecessors. The dedication of the school in the fall of 1929 was attended by many members of the McDonald family and the dedicatory address was given by Fred J. McDonald, one of John C. McDonald's children. No major alterations have been made in the school's fifty year history, though renovation and modernization have brought the building up to current standards.

SCHOOL SKETCHES

Part XII

GEORGE T. MARTIN SCHOOL

Martin School, named for Judge George Thomas Martin, was used by the Dearborn Public Schools for 3 1/2 years. Built on a 9.5 acre site at the cost of $250,000 in 1955, the school was originally designated as the Springwells Park School to be used by the primary (K-3) students of the Springwells Park neighborhood. The building was designed with four classrooms for a total capacity of 125 students. Martin School was planned to eliminate the problem of young children walking along Greenfield Road and crossing Michigan Avenue in order to reach Henry Ford School. As in the cases of Clark and Haigh and Long and Lapham, Martin and Henry Ford shared a principal. A small school, Martin had a staff of three full time and six part time teachers. However, by 1959 the enrollment had declined to 53 students and the school was considered a "white elephant." Following taxpayer encouragement the school board decided to close the school in June of 1959. The closing caused considerable discussion of alternative uses for the building. Many residents felt it should become a community center, though the proximity of the Youth Center made that proposal a bit weak. Finally the building was leased to the Dearborn Association for Retarded Citizens until 1975. At that time Gibson School for the Gifted leased the building and is still there at the present time.

George T. Martin has been a well known figure in Dearborn since his graduation from Fordson High School in 1925. Active in almost every high school committee and serving as president of his class, Martin went on to the University of Michigan where he received a law degree in 1931. He returned to Dearborn to start his legal practice and quickly became involved in local politics. In 1933 Martin was elected to the Fordson Board of Education, being one of the youngest members at 27. In 1942, following nine years of service on the Board he was elected Justice of the Peace. In 1945 Martin sponsored a charter amendment creating a municipal court and subsequently became its first judge. Among his outstanding judicial programs was the "Home and Family Institute," a "school" for parents. This program brought recognition to Dearborn's court as "the Best Court in the United States" from the American Bar Association and the National Safety Council.

MILLER SCHOOL

Named after a prominent Springwells Township farming family, Miller School has occupied three builidngs on approximately the same site. Historically, it is one of the oldest schools in the district, a log school having been constructed in 1830. This was replaced with a frame school (the one Henry Ford and Eleanor Woodworth attended in the 1870's) in 1856. This one-room school was used until 1918 when the present building was erected. In 1920 the frame school, in disrepair, was razed and in 1943 Henry Ford had a replica built at Greenfield Village, using one old photograph and his own memory for resources. The replica, still being used for educational groups at Greenfield Village, was built with lumber from the sawmill working in the Village.

The present Miller School, on Lois and Michigan, is the second oldest school building in Dearborn and was originally only 8 rooms. It has had numerous additions and structural changes and has housed every grade from pre-school day care students through college. Only four rooms were used in 1918-19, with grades six, seven and eight combined and taught by the principal, Ellen I. Leahey. The school staff was doubled in 1919 to eight teachers and doubled again in 1920 to sixteen teachers - all due to the exploding population with the development of the Rouge Plant. In the fall of 1921 high school classes were added and for six years the building accommodated grades K-12. At the same time new classrooms, a gymnasium, auditorium, cafeteria, music room, art room, library, homemaking room, new offices, a health room, a new kindergarten section and a large shop room were added. Fordson High School was officially opened in 1927 and grades 7-12 moved to the new building. The elementary enrollment reached an all time high in 1927-28 of 11,125 students and 45 teachers in grades kindergarten through six. During World War II organizations such as the Red Cross and the Rationing Board made use of Miller and administrative offices were also housed in the building during a renovation of Fordson High School. In 1949 the newly created Dearborn Junior College occupied the basement and two-thirds of the classroom space. Until 1963 and the opening of the present Henry Ford Community College campus Miller School housed both K-6 and junior college programs. After the community college moved all central administrative staff were moved from Fordson High to Miller School where they remained until the development of the Ten Eyck Resource Center in 1977. The elementary grades were phased out of the building in 1976 and the Henry Ford Community College again began to use the building for additional space. At the present time the building houses administrative offices, HFCC classes and a day care center.

SCHOOL SKETCHES

Part XIII

WILLIAM NOWLIN SCHOOL

Built in 1946 and known originally as the Penn School, the William Nowlin School has grown from five classrooms to sixteen classrooms, activity room, health unit, gym, library and teachers' room. The growth, however, was a gradual one. The building was begun during the rapid growth years of the post-war era in west Dearborn. Penn/Nowlin School was built to relieve overcrowded conditions at Oxford and Whitmore-Bolles schools and was used for grades kindergarten through third for its first six years. In 1949 the first addition including a kindergarten, junior primary room, lavatories, classroom, office and main entrance was added. The following year Bennett and Straight Architects completed the building by adding eight classrooms and the remaining school facilities. In the fall of 1951 the name of the school was changed to the William Nowlin School and in the fall of 1952 the curriculum was expanded to the present kindergarten through sixth grade program.

William Nowlin was one of Dearborn's best known pioneers. The Nowlin Family came to Dearborn in the spring of 1834 when William was thirteen. The Nowlin farm was located in what is today Dearborn and Dearborn Heights but what was then Dearborn Township. The Nowlins are best known because of the Bark Covered House, a first hand account of Dearborn pioneer, life written by William Nowlin in 1876 for the United States Centennial. In the book Nowlin told of his experiences as a Michigan pioneer and of the development of Dearborn Township. Nowlin was married twice; first to his close neighbor, Adelia Travis, and following her death in 1882 he married Anna Crandell. William Nowlin was survived by three sons, but none of them were interested in the family farm and the property was later sold and subdivided. The decision to rename the Penn School in honor of William Nowlin was made because much of the land in that area had been owned by the Nowlin Family.

ROBERT OAKMAN SCHOOL

Built at a cost of $341,594.00 the Robert Oakman School was opened to students on March 8, 1927, with seven teachers and 285 students, kindergarten through sixth grade. Only three classrooms were available at first, though by June, 1927, nine rooms were being used. Oakman School was designed and built by the H. J. Keough Company and constructed of Indiana limestone. The school was located to accommodate the overflow of students from William Ford and Thayer schools during the 1920's growth period of Fordson. The official dedication of the new building took place on September 27, 1927, with Robert Oakman giving the dedicatory address. By this time the faculty had increased to eighteen teachers and a principal with a student body of 560. Oakman had given not only the land for the school but also the gym equipment, a Steinway baby grand and an upright piano. During the Depression years principal Marshall Becker formed a Boy's Club to give students recreational opportunities and Robert Oakman donated food and clothing to economically stricken families of the neighborhood. In 1977, during the 50th anniversary of the school, the cornerstone box was uncovered and opened. Many items including a dedication program, local newspapers and a directory of the Fordson Public Schools were inventoried and new items of the 1976-77 year were added. The box was replaced in the cornerstone to be opened in the year 2027!

Robert Oakman was a pioneer in real estate development in northwest Detroit. Starting as a printer's devil for a local newspaper Oakman became a secretary to Detroit Mayor Hazen S. Pingree, worked for the Detroit United Railroad, was involved in politics and was instrumental in the residential development of northwest Detroit. Oakman, a well-known and influential citizen, was honored in both Dearborn and Detroit with the naming of the school and road (Oakman Boulevard). He was also a devout member of St. Paul's Cathedral and a Knight Templar.

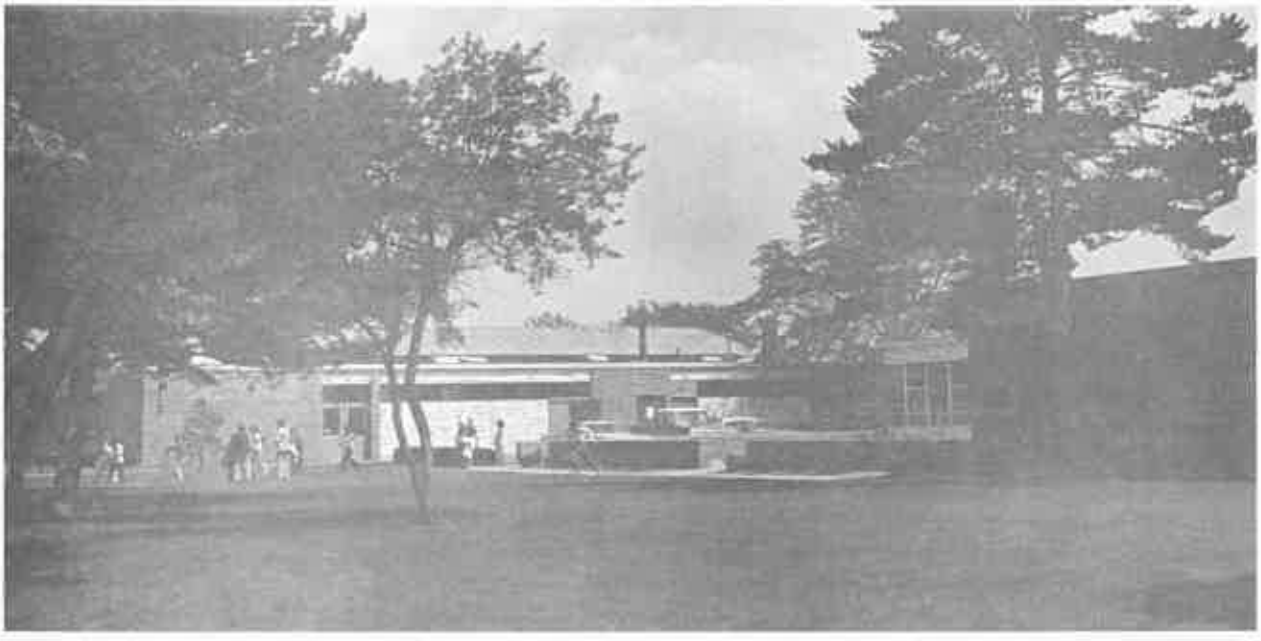
SCHOOL SKETCHES

Part XIV

RIVER OAKS SCHOOL

River Oaks School, built in 1959 on land purchased from the Ray Dahlinger Family, was annexed to the Dearborn Public School system as part of the Fairlane School District merger in 1972. In the late 1950's as the area at Ann Arbor Trail and Evergreen was developing school facilities were badly needed. When members of the Fairlane Board of Education, formerly the Dearborn "Coonville" District #2, looked for land for a new school they went to Mrs. Ray Dahlinger. Land on Ann Arbor Trail was purchased on October 21, 1958, and the school was opened in September of 1959. The first enrollment was 275 students, kindergarten through sixth grade. Peak enrollment was over 500 students in 1966-67, by which time River Oaks was being used only as a primary facility (grades K-3) and all other students in the district were attending Clara B. Ford and Fairlane schools at Ann Arbor Trail and Outer Drive (see: THE DEARBORN HISTORIAN, Vol. 18, No. 1). In 1969 two rooms were added to River Oaks and in 1971, with a declining enrollment, the fourth grade was returned. In 1972 the fifth grade was added and in 1977 River Oaks again became a kindergarten through sixth grade facility.

The Dahlingers purchased their 150 acre farm from the Fords in the 1920's. Construction was begun in 1930 including a Gate Barn, a Kentucky Show Barn and two race tracks, since Mrs. Dahlinger was very much interested in racing. The test track area was chosen as the site of the new school. At first Mrs. Dahlinger wanted to donate the land for a school providing that the school was named after her. However, the land had to be subdivided before a school was built and Mrs. Dahlinger sold the land for the River Oaks subdivision and school to the Rotunda Land Company. In turn the Rotunda Land Company developed the neighborhood. Seven acres were then sold to the Fairlane Board of Education and River Oaks School was built for $581,000.



OXFORD SCHOOL

Following the development of the Ford Motor Company's Engineering Laboratories and Tractor Plant in Dearborn after World War I, the neighborhood south of Michigan Avenue between Monroe and Telegraph began to grow. In 1919 all of Dearborn's students attended the Garrison School (now Salisbury). In 1921 Southwestern School (now DuVall) was opened to relieve overcrowding. In that same year Ernest Walborn was appointed to fill Roy Bryant's seat on the Dearborn Board of Education. Immediately Walborn began to campaign for a new school to accommodate students near Oxford and Telegraph. A 15 acre wooded site on Oxford was chosen and $6100.00 was paid for the land. In April, 1924 the Oxford Street School was opened with eight classrooms, seven teachers and 150 students. By 1926 the school had grown to 21 classrooms, 4 special rooms, an auditorium, library and gymnasium. The student enrollment was 456, grades kindergarten through 8, and there were eleven teachers. The official dedication of the school was held in February, 1927 with W. J. Cameron of the Ford Motor Company as the principal speaker. Between 1924 and 1935 Oxford School served as both an elementary and junior high school. In 1935 all of the 9th grade students were moved to Dearborn High School and in 1953 all junior high facilities were moved to the new O. L. Smith Junior High School. The enrollment of the school followed the development of the neighborhood - in 1926 there were 456 students, in 1932 there were 692 students, in 1934 there were 710 students, in 1944 there were 640 students and by 1951 there were 810 students (the building capacity was only listed as 800). With a declining enrollment in the 1970's the student population had dropped to only 448 students in 1972. As the Dearborn Board of Education began to consider the consolidation of schools Oxford School was soon slated for closing and eventual demolition. In 1976 a citizens group was formed to save Oxford School, but despite court appeals and recall measures against three members of the school board Oxford School was torn down in September, 1979.

Oxford School had a proud academic tradition. It was the first school in west Dearborn to teach science through an elementary science center. The first Science Fair was held at Oxford in 1941 and became an annual tradition. The oldest PTA, organized in 1926, was located at Oxford. The land vacated by the Board of Education in 1979 is currently slated for subdivision. A school with a proud history, Oxford stood for fifty-five years as a symbol of a growing neighborhood.

SCHOOL SKETCHES

Part XV

ROULO SCHOOL

Peter Roulo gave one lot to the City of Detroit in 1906 for a new school building. The lot was in Springwells Township on the border of Detroit and with an additional land purchase the Detroit Public School system was able to build the first Roulo School - a wooden two room building. The Roulo School served as an annex to the Bennett School to accommodate the overflow of primary level students. In 1920, following the establishment of the Springwells Township Schools, Roulo became a part of the new school system with two teachers and grades kindergarten, 1st, 2nd, 4th and 5th. After one year of this arrangement Roulo was again used only as a primary facility (kindergarten and 1st grade) and all older students attended Salina School. As the Springwells Township School district had rapid growth with the community, by 1925 there was a desperate need for bigger and better schools. The City of Springwells purchased more land adjacent to the Roulo School, moved two houses and began to excavate for a twelve room, one story school. The school was used as soon as possible - with students and workmen sharing hallways and space. The building was officially dedicated in 1926. Due to structural problems at Salina School (see following article) the new Roulo School was immediately overcrowded. Roulo students had classes in the morning, Salina students had classes in the afternoon and the high school students were taught wherever space could be found in the building. Fortunately, this situation was corrected by March, 1927 with the completion of construction at Salina. However, the community continued to grow and soon an addition, including a gymnasium, was planned for Roulo.

Between 1930 and 1960 the Roulo School served a constantly changing community as a K-6 facility. In 1959 the Dearborn Board of Education began to talk of closing the school. The neighborhood had become more industrial and Salina School had adequate facilities to serve the educational needs of the area. In 1961 Roulo was closed and the Board of Education talked of selling the building to the Detroit Baptist Church. The following year, however, the City of Dearborn purchased the property and leased it to the Ambassador Baptist Church. By 1965 the old school building had become a center of controversy between the City of Dearborn and local residents. Some wanted to see the building used as a community center providing counseling service, medical and dental services, meeting room and recreation facilities. Others in the area wanted the building targeted for demolition as part of the urban renewal. In 1972 a fire, caused by vandalism, sealed the school's fate and in 1979, after years of vacancy, the school was torn down.

SALINA SCHOOL

The present Salina School is an outgrowth of Springwells District #2 school, known as the "Rouge School." The first building was a four room school at Miller and Dix which was purchased by Henry Ford before 1917 for the development of the Rouge Plant. There were only two teachers and a declining enrollment. In 1917 a new school of two rooms was built on Mulkey (now Wyoming) Avenue. The enrollment dropped to 25 students and one teacher, Anna Henn, taught all grades. The Rouge Plant caused a rapid increase in enrollment and the two room building was only used between 1918 and 1922. In 1921 a new building was begun that is the basis of the present Salina School. It was named after the street on which it was located, Salina, and consisted of 12 classrooms, auditorium, gym and boiler room. By 1922 Salina had seven teachers and served grades kindergarten through eight. Enrollment increased at a tremendous pace and in 1925 plans were made for a larger school. The addition was to include thirty-seven classrooms and a swimming pool. However, only three days before school was scheduled to open in September, 1926, part of the gym wall collapsed into the swimming pool. All students then had to attend Roulo School, with a complicated arrangement of half day sessions for both elementary and high school students. In March, 1927, students were able to return to Salina. September, 1927, marked a full enrollment at Salina of 904 students and 60 teachers. The school housed all grades including 10 graduating seniors who briefly attended the new Fordson High School. Graduation was held at Fordson in June, 1928, for students who had attended both Salina and Fordson.

Despite the economically depressed years of the '30's Salina enrollment continued to grow. In 1938 enrollment stood at 1200, grades kindergarten through nine. Physical growth of the building continued, with new band and vocal music rooms being added in 1951 and extensive renovation and modernization in 1958. Project Head Start, to prepare kindergarteners for school, was begun in 1965 and was followed by other programs designed to help disadvantaged students. In 1968 the Dearborn Board of Education began to talk of closing Salina Junior High, but in 1970 reversed its decision and the school has remained an elementary and junior high facility. In May, 1973 Salina School celebrated its 50th anniversary. The school, unique because of its bilingual programs and its location in the shadow of the Rouge Plant, continues to serve the community and looks forward to its next 50 years. ^

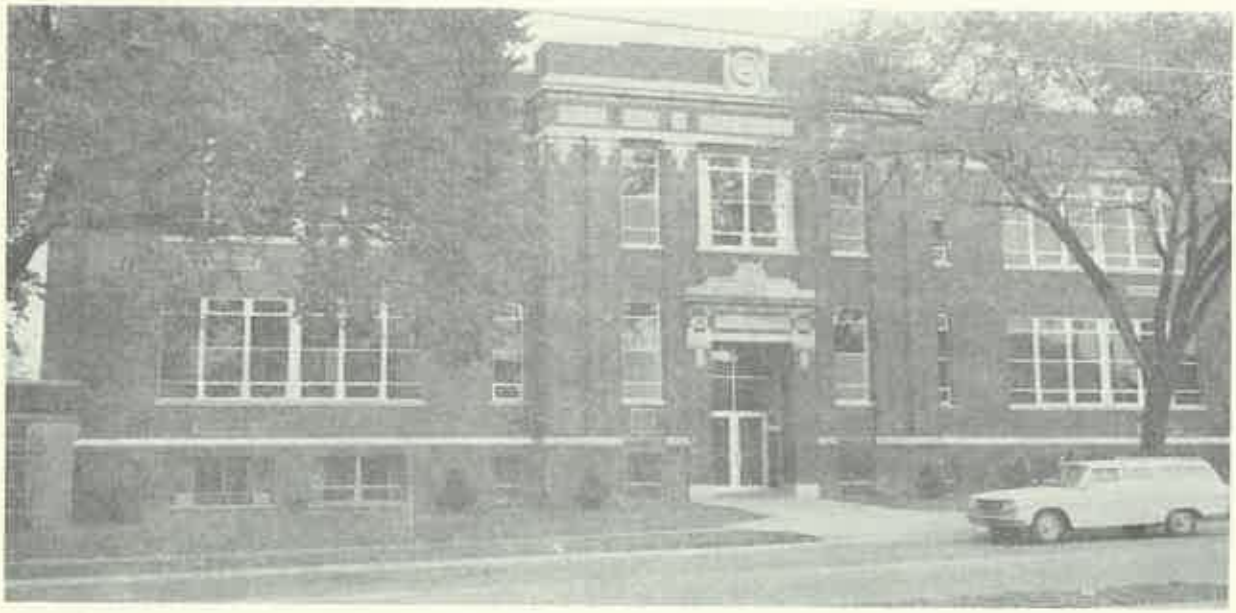
SCHOOL SKETCHES

Part XVI

SALISBURY SCHOOL

Salisbury School, known as the Garrison School until 1937, is the oldest school still in daily use by the Dearborn Public Schools. Built in 1916-17, the building was used as an elementary facility until 1972, at which time it was updated for use in the adult and continuing education division. Originally the three floors housed a kindergarten, six classes, the Attendance department, the Dental Hygiene department, the Visiting Nurses Association and a principal's office. Next to the Garrison School was the High School, built in 1893. The High School at one time housed all twelve grades for Dearborn and was considered large enough for future expansion. However, Dearborn had not planned on Henry Ford and the introduction of the Tractor Plant to Dearborn. With the Tractor Plant in Dearborn and the Rouge Plant in Springwells the area began to develop rapidly. By 1916 it was necessary to put a school bond issue on the Village of Dearborn ballot to relieve overcrowding. The $33,000 bond issue passed by a vote of 234 to 37 and the new building was begun. The Garrison School was dedicated on February 21, 1917, with the principal speaker being Henry R. Pattengill from Lansing. Interestingly enough, Mr. Pattengill had also been the speaker at the laying of the cornerstone for the High School in 1893.

Harry A. Salisbury came to Dearborn as both superintendent and teacher in 1908, having taught in several small Michigan communities. The school was small and Mr. Salisbury taught math and chemistry in addition to his administrative duties. As the system began to grow Salisbury introduced the first commercial curriculum in the high school and brought a part time music teacher into the school. After Ray Adams was hired as superintendent in September, 1917, there was further expansion of the curriculum and Mr. Salisbury returned to the classroom. On Friday, February 26, 1937, the faculty of Dearborn High School celebrated Harry Salisbury's 70th birthday, his 40th year in the teaching profession and his 25th year in Dearborn. That same year the 1917 Dearborn High School graduating class recommended that the Garrison School be renamed Harry A. Salisbury School in recognition of his long and distinguished service.



SCOTCH SETTLEMENT SCHOOL

The first school in the "Scotch Settlement" was built in 1838 on a corner of the Richard Gardner farm. The school was a one story frame building with benches and desks on the outside walls of the room. In 1860 the building was destroyed either by fire or storm and a new school was begun. The new school, built of brick as the community had become more prosperous, was located on the north side of what is now Warren Avenue near Southfield Road. The land for the new school was donated by Francis J. Whitsey and it was to this school that Henry Ford was first sent. There were many teachers in the 19th century but few stayed at a school more than one year. Therefore, the list of teachers is a long one for the nearly century of the school's service. Among the well-known local names on the teaching staff were: Richard Haigh, Mahala Gardner, M. Lathers, Miss L. Ruddiman, Miss Mary Ruddiman and William Stevenson. Many of them had been students at the school as well. They were "boarded around" at the houses of their students and so were generally able to keep all of their $40.00 a year salary! The number of students at the Scotch Settlement School varied greatly but averaged between 30 and 45 each year. The Scotch Settlement, though a large geographical area, was composed primarily of large farms and so did not have a large population.

The Scotch Settlement School was the school for Dearborn Township District #1 which included what are today portions of Dearborn and Detroit. The name "Scotch Settlement" was a local term for an area bounded by Joy Road on the north, Ford Road on the south, the Rouge River on the west and Roulo Creek on the east. The first settler was Richard Gardner in 1828 with the Kirks, Leslies, Ruddimans and Stevensons soon following from Scotland. Hence the name "Scotch Settlement" was used even after Irish and Welsh families such as the Fords and Joneses joined them. The community remained agricultural until its most famous son, Henry Ford, began to change the world's ideas of industry and transportation. In 1923 Henry Ford purchased the Scotch Settlement School for $2,000 and had it moved to the fledgling Edison Institute (now the Henry Ford Museum and Greenfield Village). The building was immediately incorporated into the Village school system and was used as a school building between 1929 and 1969 when the system was closed. The most notable teacher at the Scotch Settlement School during its Village schools period was E. Lucile Webster. Since 1969 the Scotch Settlement School has continued to serve both as an exhibit area and as an educational resource as a "one-room school" for classes visiting the Village. So, Dearborn's oldest school is in its second century of service to youth.

SCHOOL SKETCHES

Part XVII

O. L. SMITH JUNIOR HIGH

O. L. Smith Junior High School was built to accommodate the growing community around Oxford School. As the neighborhood around Telegraph and Carlysle began to grow during the early 1950's increased school space became necessary. The first meeting of the planning committee for a new 7th, 8th and 9th grade facility was held in 1950. A site at Notre Dame and Cornell was chosen and Jahr-Anderson Associates were selected as the architects. The final bid for construction was $2,206,697.00 and the new school was completed in August, 1954. The official date of dedication for O. L. Smith was November 4, 1954, at which time the Smith family presented a formal portrait of Mr. Smith to the school. The O. L. Smith Junior High School contains 37 classrooms, consisting of 22 regular classrooms, a typing room, an audio-visual room, three music rooms, a metal working room, a wood craft room, a homemaking room, an art room, double gym and swimming pool.

Ora Lynn Smith was born in Union City, Michigan, in 1879. As a youth and young man he worked on farms, as a butcher's boy, a day laborer on the railroad and in the cement mills. He did not graduate from Union City High School until 1900. After his high school graduation he attended the University of Michigan for one year and then became a classroom teacher. In addition to his teaching duties he served as a school superintendent. In 1910 he entered the University of Michigan Law School and received his L.L.B. in 1913. Smith started his law practice in Ithaca, Michigan, and in 1914 was elected as prosecuting attorney of Gratiot County. In 1921 he was appointed Assistant Attorney General for the State of Michigan and moved to Lansing. After six years Smith resigned his position with the State to enter private practice in Dearborn. In 1928 he was appointed as the U. S. District Attorney for the Eastern District of Michigan and then as special assistant to the United States Attorney General. O. L. Smith served on the Dearborn Board of Education from 1934 until 1941 as well as being the attorney for Dearborn School District #7. He was instrumental in the drafting of legislation to permit the consolidation of contiguous school districts which allowed the merger of the Dearborn and Fordson districts in 1944. In 1940 he was a candidate for the Republican Gubernatorial nomination. When the new school was being planned at Notre Dame and Cornell the committee very quickly adopted the name of "O. L. Smith" in honor of this well known, public minded citizen.

DR. EDWARD S. SNOW SCHOOL

Edward S. Snow School was built in 1951 at a cost of $861,939.00 to relieve overcrowded conditions at Whitmore-Bolles School. A planning committee was appointed by the Dearborn Board of Education in 1950 to design an elementary school with a "home like" atmosphere. A twenty-four acre wooded site was chosen on Culver and Snow roads and Jahr-Anderson Associates were selected as architects. Construction on the eighteen room building was begun in January of 1951. The first students were transferred from Whitmore-Bolles in February, 1952, where they had been on half day sessions. By September there were 633 students in grades Kindergarten through 6th. As the neighborhood continued to grow 7th and 8th grade students were added. However, the renovation of Edison Junior High School in 1954 returned Snow to an elementary facility. Still the school was overcrowded - 1,094 students in grades Kindergarten through six were registered in the fall of 1954. Half day sessions were introduced with plans for an additional eight classrooms. Louis Howe School, completed in September of 1955, also helped relieve Snow's bulging condition. Todays Snow School continues to serve Dearborn's educational needs with a fine staff and excellent sense of school spirit.

Edward Sparrow Snow was born in Austinbury, Ohio, in 1820. He was one of a family of eight children and he attended the local "common" school. In 1838 young Snow enrolled in the Grand River Institute in Austinburg where he took a standard course in surveying. However, before he could take a governmental surveying position in the Northwest Territory a close friend became ill and Snow remained behind to care for him. This experience interested Edward in medicine and in 1847 he was graduated from the medical department at Western Reserve College in Cleveland. In 1851 Snow married Elizabeth Austin of Austinburg and the young couple intended to settle in Missouri. The young doctor was requested to fill in for Dr. Markham in Plymouth, Michigan, for a year before going to Missouri and so the Snows came to Michigan. Dr. Snow arrived in Dearborn on horseback with a small box of medicine and a debt. He soon returned to Ohio for his bride and they settled in the Dearborn Hotel (presently the site of the Wagner Hotel building). Dr. Snow served as physician and surgeon to the Detroit Arsenal at Dearbornville until the closing of the Arsenal in 1875. He also was a surgeon for the Michigan Central Railroad for forty-three years. Dr. Snow was one of Dearborn's first citizens, being a member of the first vestry of Christ Episcopal Church and serving as a school inspector for Dearborn Township. Dr. Snow is honored in the names of Snow Road, Snow Woods, Snow Hill Apartments and Snow School - all a fitting tribute to one of Dearborn's pioneers.

SCHOOL SKETCHES

Part XVIII

WILLIAM B. STOUT JUNIOR HIGH

Stout Junior High is the last new school to be built in Dearborn. The Dearborn Public Schools purchased ten acres of land at Oakwood and Rotunda from the Ford Motor Company in 1954. The land purchase cost $40,652 and involved the additional sale of land by Edison School to the Ford Motor Company. The site on Oakwood was earmarked for future school expansion as Howe, Snow and Ten Eyck schools continued to grow. In 1958 plans were drawn for a new junior high school facility to be built at a cost of 2.5 million. However, due to economic uncertainties within the school system immediate building plans were postponed. Stout Junior High was opened in September of 1960 and formally dedicated on November 9, 1960. The school has a unique design with a 620 seat auditorium, an indoor-outdoor courtyard and a 10,000 volume library. In addition, the gym and pool areas are connected to the rest of the building in such a way that they can be used by non-school groups in the afternoon and evening. The cafeteria is an especially large one and has been used as a training center for food service employees. The school has been involved in numerous community projects, including several Michigan Week celebrations.

William Bushnell Stout was an American aviation pioneer. Born on March 16, 1880, in Quincy, Illinois, Stout was fascinated with "gadgets" from childhood. After his family relocated in St. Paul, Minnesota, Stout attended Mechanical Arts High School in St. Paul and the University of Minnesota. Stout financed his education by writing articles on his mechanical toy inventions. In 1906 he married Alma Raymond and built their first home and all of its furniture. In 1912 Stout was made aviation and technical editor of the Chicago Tribune and also became affiliated with the Scripps-Booth Automobile. He had soon redesigned the one cycle Scripps-Booth car and in 1914 was transferred to Detroit as chief engineer for the company. The lure of the wind soon caught Stout's imagination and in 1919 he formed the Stout Engineering Laboratories for aeronautical engineering. He built the first American commercial monoplane (the Batwing) and began experiments in aviation engineering for the Army and Navy. It was at this time that Stout met Henry Ford and learned that both Henry and Edsel Ford were interested in aviation. Through the affiliation between Stout and the Fords the Ford Airport on Oakwood Boulevard (presently the site of the Ford Motor Company test track) was developed in 1924-25. In 1925 Stout sold the Stout Metal Airplane Company to the Ford Motor Company. The famous tri-motor plane (Tin Goose) was developed in 1926 and Stout and the Fords made their mark in aviation history

CONRAD TEN EYCK SCHOOL

Conrad Ten Eyck School was built as a five room school for a fledgling subdivision between Oakwood and Outer Drive in 1945. With houses in west Dearborn growing faster than weeds in those postwar years schools were greatly in demand. By 1949 Ten Eyck School had an additional kindergarten wing built at the south side of the school. But the neighborhood continued to grow and by 1956 more classroom space had become necessary. Jahr-Anderson Associates was awarded a $900,000 contract for a major addition to Ten Eyck School. The addition enlarged the school from 6 to 16 classrooms, with a library, gymnasium, science workroom, kitchen and multipurpose room. The plans called for no outside corridors with a five sided court in the center of the building. The court was designed so that it could be used as a garden for science classes. The enlargement increased the enrollment from 240 to over 500 students, grades kindergarten through six, and relieved overcrowding at Snow and Howe schools. In 1959 the school made headlines as it began to sink! A faulty foundation was to blame and in 1960 $35,000 was appropriated for a new foundation. The school continued to serve as a kindergarten through sixth grade facility until 1976 when, due to a declining enrollment, the school was closed. The Board of Education soon had turned the building into the Ten Eyck Resource Center and the building today is used for administrative offices, special classes and workshops for both teachers and students.

Conrad Ten Eyck came to Detroit from New York in 1802. He was ambitious and energetic and by 1814 he owned a general store in Detroit, was a land agent and had become prominent in Michigan's political affairs. Ten Eyck moved to Dearborn in 1823, long before the first wave of settlers to the area. The Ten Eyck Tavern was built in 1826 after Ten Eyck realized the importance of the Chicago Road which ran through Dearborn. The Tavern was often filled to capacity and thousands of westward bound travelers enjoyed Ten Eyck's hospitality. When the first railroad came through Dearborn in 1837, the amount of travel by wagon and stagecoach decreased rapidly. More people were able to travel faster by train and Ten Eyck's Tavern fell into disuse. When the Tavern burned in 1885 it was being used for the storage of grain for a nearby farm. Conrad Ten Eyck died on August 23, 1847, at the age of 65. His sons inherited his large land holdings and these lands were later sold to Henry Ford and formed the basis of the Fair Lane Estate. Conrad Ten Eyck will long be remembered as an outstanding pioneer and businessman of the Dearborn area.

SCHOOL SKETCHES

Part XIX

THAYER SCHOOL

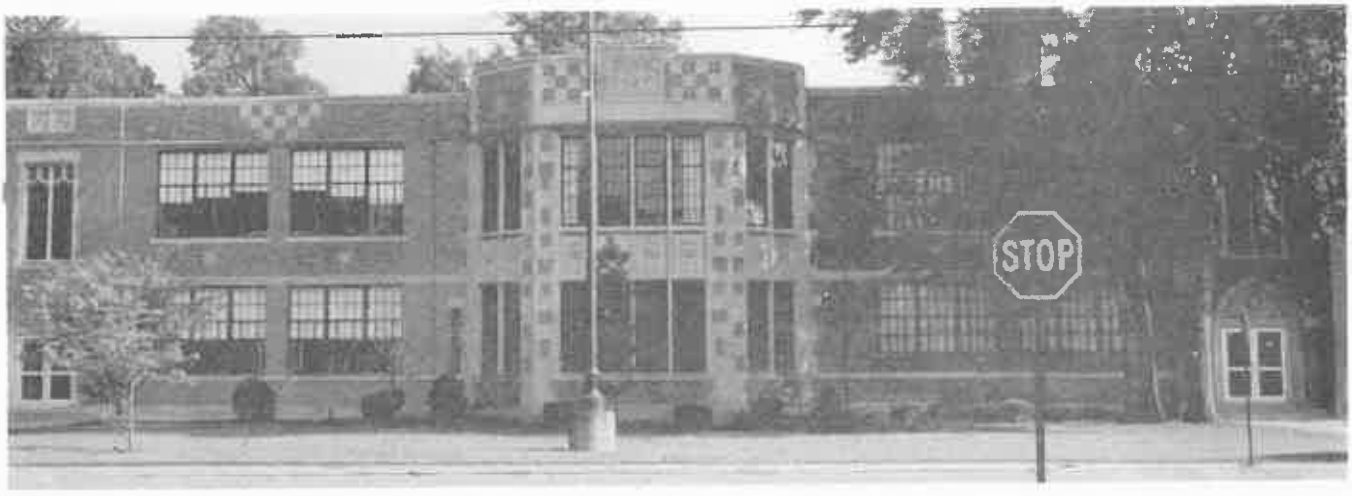
Built in 1924 to replace the brick one room McDonald School at Warren and Wyoming (see: Dearborn Historian, Vol. 19, No. 4) the school was named after the Thayer family. In 1842 N. P. Thayer had leased land in Greenfield Township School District #4 to Richard McDonald for a school and church building. This land was the original McDonald School site at Warren and Wyoming. It is only fitting that when the school known as the McDonald School was replaced that it should be named Thayer School. Nahum P. Thayer came to Greenfield Township outside of Detroit in 1820 as a young man of eighteen. He had soon cleared land for a farm and house and established a farm owned by his descendants for many years. Thayer built the first three miles of the Chicago Turnpike (now Michigan Avenue) out of Detroit. Like many other pioneers Thayer was elected as a representative from Wayne County in 1837, 1838 and 1840, held various local offices and served as a colonel in the state militia. The Thayer family became leading citizens of the cities of Springwells and Fordson (incorporated as the City of Dearborn in 1929). The school was named in honor of the entire Thayer family at the request of the family.

At the time it was built the Thayer School was considered the most modern building of its kind. In fact, representatives from many other school districts came to visit the school to study its plan and use. The building was constructed on the unit plan and contained eight home rooms, a cafeteria, library and combination gymnasium-auditorium. At the opening of Thayer School in September of 1924 only three classrooms were put into use. The following February another classroom was opened. By 1926 the school was so crowded that both locker rooms and store rooms were put into use as classrooms and students were put on part time schedules! In 1927 with the opening of Oakman School and the completion of Lowrey Junior High the crowding was lessened. But population growth due to the great influx of workers to the Rouge Plant was so great that by 1928, Thayer students were being bussed to Miller School. The school changed very little until its closing in 1959. The Dearborn Public Schools, experiencing an enrollment decline, decided to close Martin, Roulo and Thayer schools. Despite citizen protest Thayer School remained both closed and empty until 1962. In December of 1961 the property (a block bounded by Blesser, Pinehurst, Warren and Theisen) and the building were sold to the Pius Society of St. Paul for $51,000. An appeal was filed against the Dearborn Board of Education in an attempt to block the sale. In May, 1962,the Pius Society sued the City of Dearborn for an occupancy permit and subsequently received the permit. The building remains the property of the Pius Society of St. Paul.

WHITMORE-BOLLES SCHOOL

The history of Whitmore-Bolles School begins in 1919 with the subdivision of land east of Monroe and south of what is today Outer Drive. Dearborn was a growing community with the Ford Motor Company and there was a need for housing and schools. In the early 1920's Mrs. Laura Whitmore Bolles donated three acres of land behind the Whitmore family house (still standing on the east side of Monroe near Madison). In 1925 another six acres of land was purchased by the Board of Dearborn School District #7 following the approval of a bond issue by local voters. The chosen site was a grove of trees and a two story brick building was constructed. Dearborn architect, Harry Vicary, was chosen to assist the firm of George D. Mason and Company as designers. The school opened in September of 1927 with a teaching staff of four and an enrollment of 98 students. Because the enrollment was so low only the ground floor classrooms, library, auditorium and gymnasium were used. On May 14, 1928, the school was officially dedicated with William Cameron as the main speaker. The date of May 14 was chosen at Mrs. Bolles' request because it was the date of her mother's birthday and her own wedding anniversary. When school opened in the fall of 1928 the enrollment stood at 200 students and so the second story classrooms were put to use. The Depression years were difficult ones for Dearborn and Whitmore-Bolles School served as a soup kitchen. The Second World War and its aftermath brought another wave of growth to Dearborn. In 1940 the east wing was added, including eight classrooms and a kitchen. The following year brought the passage of $185,000 bond issue and the addition of a west wing. Population in Dearborn continued to climb and despite the addition of kindergarten and junior primary rooms, a cafeteria and combined activities room in 1949, by the fall of 1951 the enrollment stood at 1400 students and classes were crowded. Classes were put on a part time basis, held in storage rooms, the projection booth and even the Church of Christ building! One of the most unique science programs was established at Whitmore-Bolles in the 1950's with the Horticultural Gardens. Garden plots were laid out so that students could study the planting, growing and nurturing of plants. In 1952 a Horticulture building was added to the school complex. In 1957 a six room addition was made to the building and in 1970 a multi-media center brought the building to its present dimensions.

The school name, Whitmore-Bolles, honors two Dearborn families. Mrs. J. E. Bolles, the donor of the original site, had been born Laura Whitmore and was a niece of William Nowlin, author of The Bark Covered House. When Mrs. Bolles made the land donation she asked that the school be named in honor of both her family (the Whitmores) and her husband's family (the Bolles).



SCHOOL SKETCHES

Part XX

WOODWORTH SCHOOL

The Fordson Board of Education purchased land on a portion of the Woodworth farm for a new school in 1927. The cornerstone of the new building, to be named after pioneer Alfred Woodworth, was laid in September of 1927. It was a year before the first portion of the school was ready for occupancy, but in September of 1928 the school was opened to kindergarten through sixth grade students. The official dedication of the school took place on April 8, 1929. The school population was so great that the sixth grade stayed on to become the first seventh grade in the school history in the fall of 1929. It was not, however, until 1932 that the junior high was officially established by the Fordson Board of Education. In 1937-38 an addition of a swimming pool, enlarged cafeteria, music rooms, a small auditorium and classrooms was made. The orthopedic department of the Fordson Public Schools was originally intended for Woodworth, but was moved to Lowrey School in the 1930's. In 1940 the Fordson Board of Education purchased some additional property just to the west of the school for a playground. Prior to that time Woodworth students had been using Miss Eleanor Woodworth's property as a playground and some of those students still remember Miss Woodworth offering them lemonade and cookies after a hard baseball practice!

Alfred Woodworth, born at China, New York in 1818, was one of the pioneers who helped to shape Dearborn's very earliest history. As a small boy Alfred Woodworth came with his father, Josiah, and the other members of the Woodworth family to Batavia, New York in an ox-drawn covered wagon. At the age of ten Alfred Woodworth was bound out to work for four years and when his four years were up he joined his family on another move - this time to Michigan. The Woodworths settled in Greenfield Township and Josiah purchased 48 acres of land and built a cabin on the site of the present Woodworth School. Alfred Woodworth purchased 30 acres of land in 1840 and continued to buy land in the vicinity until his farm totaled 245 acres. Alfred Woodworth married Phoebe Jane Smith in 1843 and they raised nine children. The Woodworth House was built around 1860 to accommodate the growing family. Alfred Woodworth died in 1904 and was buried at the Scotch Settlement Cemetery.

A SUMMARY OF THE SCHOOL SKETCHES

(Please note: This brief summary is not intended as a complete history of the Dearborn area schools. Additional research on the townships which now make up Dearborn is being done and the author hopes to publish a more detailed account of the schools at a later date. However, material on the Dearborn Public Schools, the Fordson Public Schools, the Springwells Schools and the various township district schools is quite scarce. If any reader has information on any of these schools, the teachers, principals, academic or athletic events the Dearborn Historical Museum would appreciate hearing of them.)

What is today the Dearborn Public School system has a long and proud history dating back to the 1830's and the creation of the Dearborn, Springwells and Greenfield townships within Wayne County. Portions of these three townships and their school districts have formed what is today the City of Dearborn and the Dearborn Public Schools. Unfortunately, few records of the early school districts have been preserved so that the foundation history of the Dearborn schools is quite sketchy.

The present boundaries of Wayne County were established on November 20, 1826, and in 1827 the county was divided into nine townships. Two of these townships were named Bucklin and Springwells and in 1829 Bucklin Township was divided into two smaller townships - Nankin and Pekin. The early history of Wayne County was frought with the insanities of local politics which resulted in numerous changes in township names and boundaries. On April 6, 1829, the third annual meeting of Bucklin Township was held in the schoolhouse at Scharzburgh, a small community on the middle branch of the Rouge River in what would be Dearborn Heights today. Bucklin Township was divided into eight school districts at that time. It was not until 1833 that Dearborn Township (approximately the present areas of west Dearborn and Dearborn Heights) was created and that four School Commissioners were elected. The School Commissioners divided Dearborn Township into nine districts.

While the development of the Dearborn Township School districts is not especially well documented the history of the Greenfield and Springwells township school districts is even less clear. The boundary line between Greenfield and Springwells townships was constantly being changed, sometimes on an annual basis, so that school district boundaries are equally vague. Many of these early districts are termed "fractional districts" - when two townships shared a school district. Students whose families owned property in more than one township were able to attend whichever district school they wished. As a result Henry Ford started his schooling at the Scotch Settlement School (Dearborn Township District #1) but later attended the Miller School (Springwells Township District #5). William Ford owned property in both Springwells and Dearborn townships, therefore his children could attend the schools in either area.

The modern Dearborn Public School system is basically composed of four separate school districts. The first of these districts is the Dearborn District #7 which was established in 1835 as the town of Dearbornville, around the Detroit Arsenal, began to develop. District #7 had originally been part of the larger Dearborn District #5, but due to the growth in population a new school was built in 1835 on Chestnut (Park) and Center (Monroe) streets. This

one-room school was replaced in 1857 by the Upstairs-Downstairs School; so named because it was a multiroom, two story building. The Dearborn Public School was built in 1894 on Arsenal land on a block of land bounded by Garrison, Mason, Morley and Center (Monroe) streets. This building contained all of the grades through high school. The first Dearborn High School graduating class consisted of four students in 1897. In 1917 the Garrison School was erected (renamed Salisbury School in 1937) making it the oldest school building still in use in Dearborn. Following the establishment of the Ford Tractor Plant and the Ford Engineering Division in Dearborn, the population and the schools grew very rapidly. In the ten year period between 1921 and 1931 the district added eight new school buildings! In 1944 Dearborn District #7 schools and the Fordson School District (along with those portions of Dearborn School Districts #2 and #4 which fell within the City of Dearborn boundaries) were merged to form the Dearborn Public Schools.

The Springwells Unit School District was established in 1921 to fit the new Village of Springwells boundaries. The Miller School was built at the same time providing the Village of Springwells with its first high school. There was a period of great growth in the Springwells/Fordson School District between 1921 and 1930 due to the development of the Ford Motor Company's Rouge Plant. The district name was changed in 1925 when Springwells was incorporated as the City of Fordson. In that nine year period the district added eleven buildings to its system. In 1941 Dearborn District #5 (also known as the Henry Ford School District) was merged into the Fordson School District. The final consolidation of school districts took place in 1944.

The fourth district to be added to the Dearborn Public Schools was the Fairlane (formerly Dearborn District #2) District in 1972. This addition completed the consolidation of what we call the Dearborn Public Schools. However, a gradually declining enrollment has caused further discussion of new consolidation with neighboring school districts. What was at one time a large group of scattered, individual schools and school districts has become a unified school system. However, a great deal of individuality still remains within the Dearborn Public Schools. Each building and each class has its own identity and personality - that is what a democracy does. The Dearborn Public Schools have strength from a proud past.

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1857 Upstairs-Downstairs School

SCHOOL SKETCHES

Part XXI

DEARBORN'S PAROCHIAL SCHOOLS

The history of Dearborn's parochial schools is a mirror image of the community's development. From the pioneer period to the present day the growth of religion and the subsequent development of parochial education has reflected the Detroit metropolitan area's evolution. Parochial schools have served not only as a method of education but also as a means of preserving religious and even ethnic heritages.

Many of the pioneer families who came into Springwells, Greenfield and Dearborn townships in the 1830's and 1840's were emigrating from a rapidly changing Europe. The Irish, escaping the potato famine, came to the United States and came into Michigan as farmers and laborers on the Michigan Central Railroad. The Germans came to the United States to preserve their Catholic heritage and take refuge from the rapidly changing political boundaries of the German states. Both the Irish and the Germans came into the townships of Wayne County as farming people - eager to keep alive their Catholic heritage.

As early as 1836 a small group of Irish Catholics met in the home of a Mrs. Ryan in the Village of Dearbornville. Here they celebrated Mass with Father O'Kavanaugh who had been sent out from Detroit. By 1840 money was being solicited for a church building, but it was not until 1848 that the small frame church, known as St. John's, was completed. One of the first goals of the new parish was the proper education of its children. A simple frame public school building was already in use by School District VII of Dearborn Township and as early as 1835 students were receiving some education. However, it was necessary that children of the Catholic faith receive instruction for their confirmation. It was to this end that the early priests sent to minister to the pioneer congregation worked. No formal Catholic school was begun until 1873 when Father Henry P. Delbaere opened a parish school in St. John's Church. Fifty students immediately left the public school to attend the new educational facility. In fact, Father Delbaere found it necessary to convert a portion of the parish barn for school purposes! The number of students at St. John's School numbered as many as 100 during the winter and Father Delbaere soon found it necessary to expand the teaching staff as well as the physical facilities of the school. Miss Ella Howard was hired as a teacher. The parish was renamed in honor of the Sacred Heart of Jesus, but it was not until 1918 that the Sisters of the Immaculate Heart of Mary arrived to take charge of the school.

In the townships of Greenfield and Springwells life was much slower. Dearbornville had the advantages of containing the Detroit Arsenal and being a stop for the Michigan Central Railroad. Apart from this small hub of bustling activity the townships of Springwells, Greenfield and Dearborn were decidedly rural. Many families had come to escape the increasing social and religious pressures of a uniting Germany. By 1846 there were enough families and children for the establishment of a school. Since neither Greenfield nor Springwells townships had yet established a complete system of school districts there was little education available. A group of German farm families along

what is now Warren between Greenfield and Schaefer formed a German Catholic school in 1846. The school was just a simple log cabin near Warren and Schaefer and the course work consisted of German reading, religion, English reading and arithmetic. The first teacher was Joseph Hellner who had been a schoolteacher in his native Germany. He was followed by a series of other male lay teachers until the fall of 1880 when the Sisters of St. Agnes came to St. Alphonsus.

The history of St. Alphonsus parish is an unusual one in that the school was started before the church! It was six years between the formation of the school and the first Mass. On May 30, 1852, Rev. Ernest Glaunach came from St. Mary's in Detroit and held a service at the Esper home. In 1851 the Espers had given the Detroit diocese four acres of land at the northeast corner of Warren and Schaefer for a church, school and pastor's house for the German Catholic population. A church was built and dedicated in October of 1852. Sometime in the 1850's the log cabin school began to deteriorate and in 1855 Father Francis Xavier Roth had a frame school built onto the church. By 1862 the school population had outgrown the facilities and a new brick building was begun on the south side of Warren across from the church. This two story structure was used until 1921. By 1880 it was obvious that more organization was needed in the school - the lay schoolmasters had their own families to support and were not able to devote themselves to the school on a full time basis. Two Sisters of St. Agnes from Fond du Lac, Wisconsin, came in 1880 as teachers for the school. The sisters occupied the second story of the school until the first convent was built in 1890. In 1895 the school report lists 64 children at St. Alphonsus School with a school year of 166 days. The students were in grades one through four and the subjects studied included Catechism, German reading, English reading, penmanship, spelling and arithmetic. In 1897 the Sisters of St. Agnes resigned and their place was taken by three Sisters of St. Dominic from Adrian, Michigan.

Up until World War I the villages of Dearborn and Springwells had been bucolic, rural communities that saw few changes. Since the end of the first wave of pioneer immigration had ended by the American Civil War life had become settled and predictable. However, a young man by the name of Henry Ford was experimenting with a new form of transportation in Detroit. The formation of the Ford Motor Company in 1903 was to have a profound and lasting effect on the sleepy little communities of Dearborn and Springwells.

The Ford Motor Company developed the Fordson Tractor Plant in Dearborn in 1915 and began construction of the Rouge Plant in Springwells in 1917. These two events began the creation of modern Dearborn. New residents began to move into the area - the Ford Motor Company serving as the the magnet. The increase in population meant an increase in children and schools. By 1916 Sacred Heart School had outgrown any of its existing buildings and Father Alphonse X.M. Sharpe announced a revolutionary building plan to provide a new school building, convent, rectory and sanctuary. At the same time St. Alphonsus also went on a building spree and in 1922 a new school building was built on Calhoun between Warren and Gould.

There were no regular Protestant parochial schools in Dearborn until 1926. Though several Protestant congregations flourished in the Dearborn area there was no call for a parochial school until 1926. Atonement Lutheran Church started a school in the "Bungalow Chapel" with 19 students and one teacher

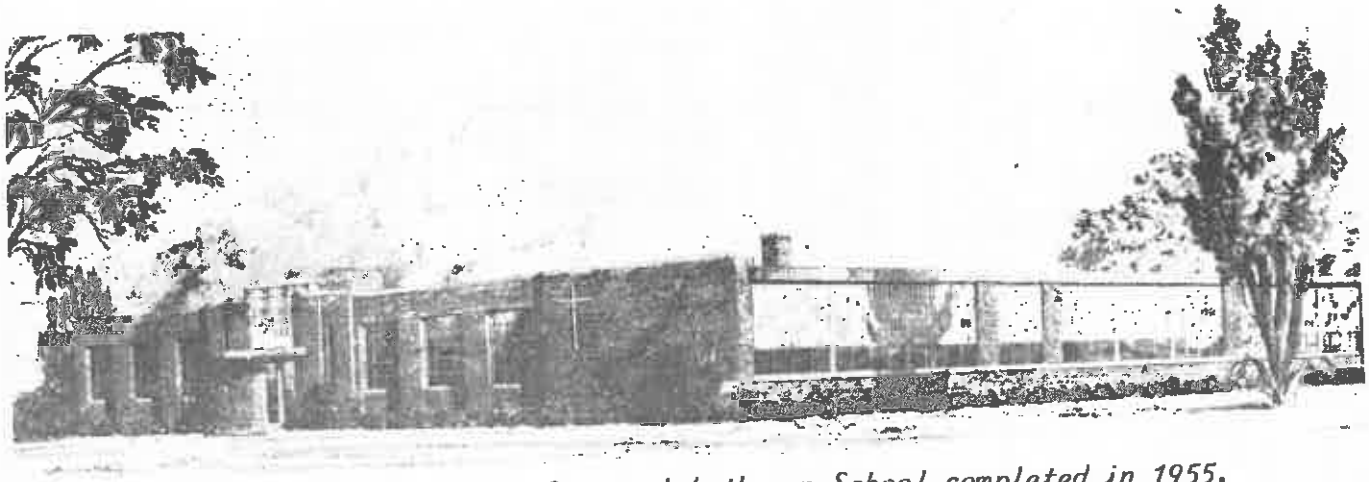
in that year. An earlier reference to a Protestant parochial school indicates that there may have been a "Christian Day School" at Emmanuel Lutheran Church. This was taught by the pastors of the church but ceased to exist in 1913. There are no records to tell of the school's curriculum, facilities or students. However, since Emmanuel Lutheran Church had a large German congregation - as had St. Alphonsus - it is to be expected that part of the reason for a Christian Day School was to foster the use of the German language.*

It was not only the German-American people who were interested in preserving their language and heritage. Among the many people who followed the Rouge Plant to Springwells were forty Polish families who were anxious to establish a church and school. Despite the activities of the St. Alphonsus parish these Polish families requested Bishop Gallagher to allow them to form a parish. The John H. Schaefer family were strong supporters of the project and the first pastor stayed in the Schaefer home. In 1924 the first St. Barbara's Church building was dedicated and in the fall of 1925 a school was begun. During the first year the teachers were four lay women. But in the fall of 1926 five sisters from the Community of the Sisters of the Holy Family of Nazareth in Bellevue, Pennsylvania, took over the operation of the school.

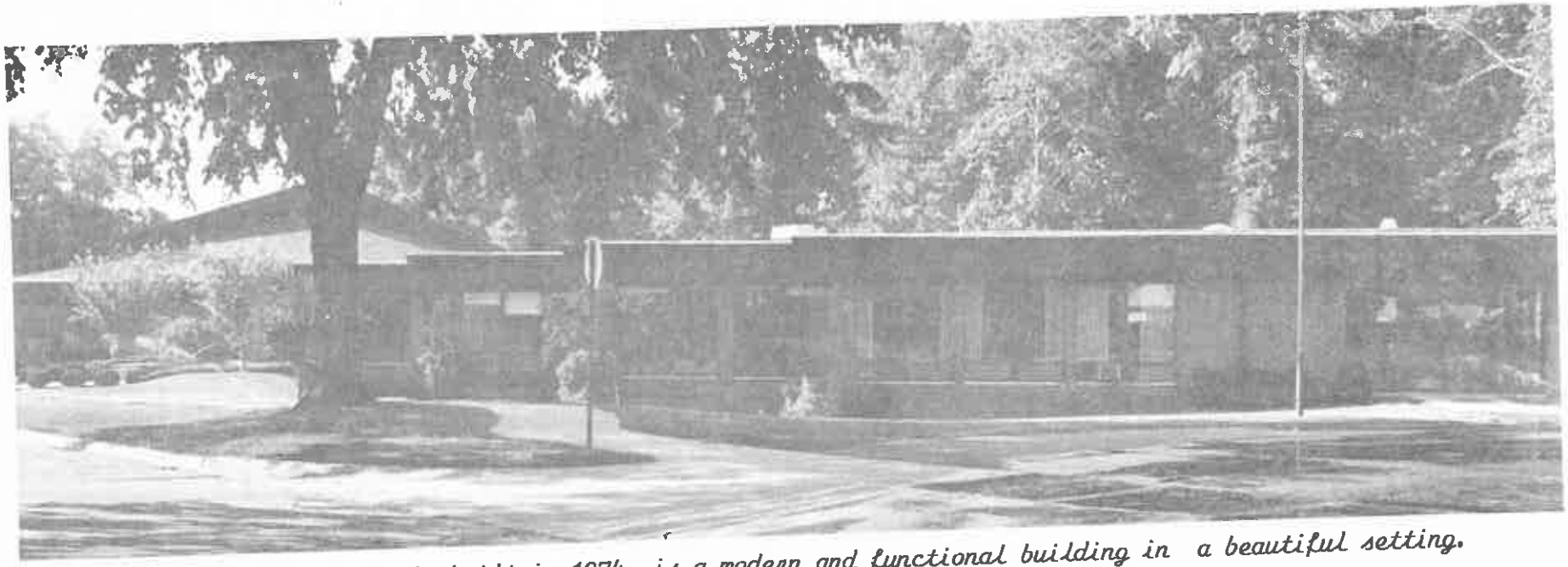
The Depression years of the 1930's were difficult ones for the parochial schools. However, the four existing church schools - St. Alphonsus, Sacred Heart, Atonement Lutheran and St. Barbara's - survived those lean years. The Second World War did bring more people to the community and the now-consolidated City of Dearborn (the former cities of Fordson and Dearborn) had its greatest period of growth. The rapid influx of people into the community again meant that churches and schools were growing. In 1944 the congregation of Emmanuel Lutheran Church purchased property on Morley west of Military, across from the church. They built a one room, cinder block building and in June, 1945, the first eighth graders (six students) graduated from the school. In 1949 the Dearborn Christian Church also purchased property at Outer Drive and Village Road for a church and school. However, financial difficulties kept the Christian School Society from achieving its goal of a school building until 1956.

The 1950's saw Dearborn's greatest period of growth. Houses, schools, churches and businesses seemed to sprout overnight like mushrooms. The established parochial schools took advantage of those "good times" to build new buildings or expand the old ones. Atonement Lutheran School built an entire new school in 1950. The new school boasted four classrooms and two offices. At the same time a new Catholic parish was being established in the northwest section of Dearborn. Divine Child opened its elementary school in 1953 and the high school in 1958. There were 297 students in grades 1-4 on September 9, 1953, at the new elementary school. The high school was opened with an enrollment of 84 freshmen of which 69 graduated in 1962. The Divine Child grade school was originally built as an addition to the temporary church. As with many other Catholic parishes Divine Child had a building "package" which included the church, hall, rectory, convent, grade school and high school built

** It is interesting to note that both St. Alphonsus and Emmanuel Lutheran continued to hold German services until World War 1.. However, after many young German-American soldiers went to fight against their European "cousins" the strong traditions of the German language declined in both school and church.*



Architect's drawing of Emmanuel Lutheran School completed in 1955.



Dearborn Christian School, built in 1974, is a modern and functional building in a beautiful setting.

Guardian Lutheran School was dedicated on March 25, 1962.

Right: Sacred Heart School was the tallest building in Dearborn in 1917.

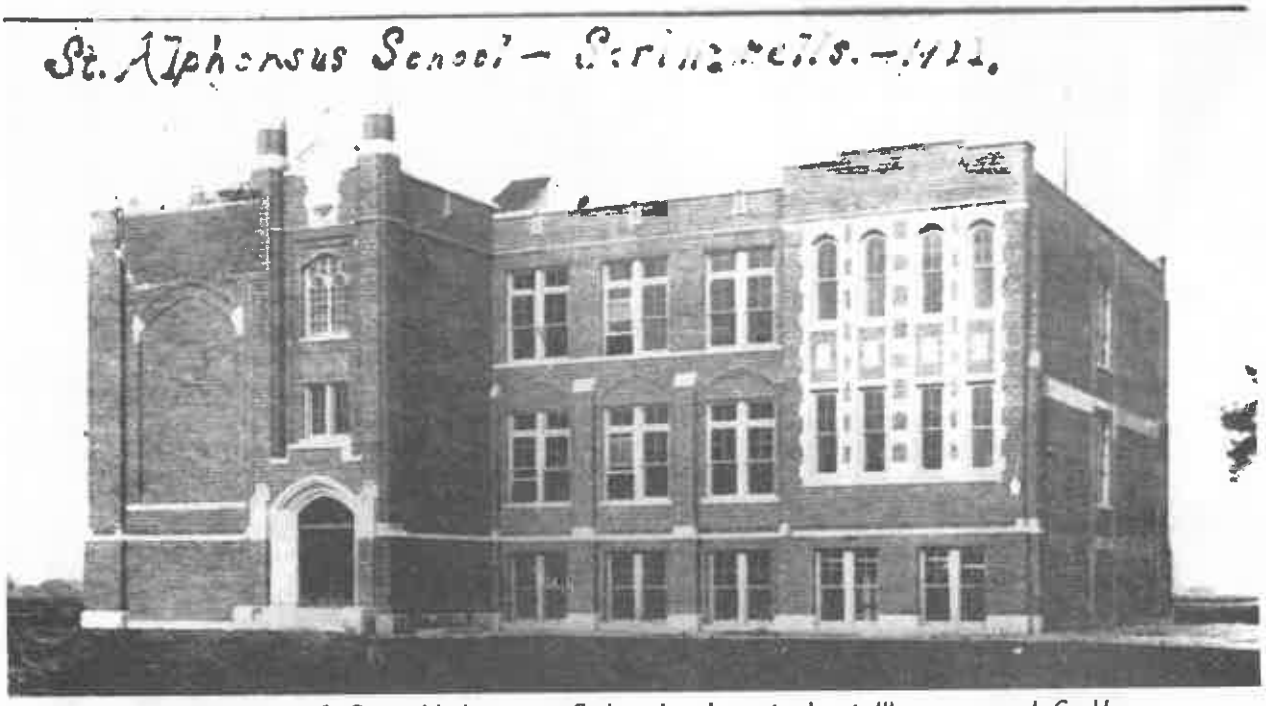
The present Sacred Heart School building was constructed as Sacred Heart High School in 1953.

over a multi-year period.

Another parochial school which was developed in the northwest section of Dearborn was Guardian Lutheran School. Guardian Lutheran Church was organized in 1948 and the following year the Education committee of both Guardian and Emmanuel Lutheran churches met with an eye toward the establishment of a school. However, Emmanuel Lutheran Church had a well established school so in 1957 the Guardian Lutheran Church congregation decided to form their own school. In 1958 the first teacher, Glenn O. Kraft, was called to plan and organize a school at Guardian Lutheran Church.

The 1960's were a time of steady growth for Dearborn's parochial schools. All schools benefitted from the post-World War II "baby boom" and enrollments remained steady. However, by the 1970's the enrollment picture began to change. Though enrollments in the public schools were declining the parochial school population began to grow. A combination of tax millage difficulties in many school districts and court ordered busing in Detroit caused parochial school enrollments to increase. In 1971 Emmanuel Lutheran School completed their school with nine classrooms, a media center, expanded offices and a new heating/air conditioning plant. The Dearborn Christian Church and School moved into new quarters on Donaldson in 1974 and the school wing was specifically constructed so that it was easily integrated with the church. Classrooms used during the day were also to be used for Sunday school classes. The one declining note was the closing of Sacred Heart High School in 1975. This was done despite the protests of many parishoners and students. However, attendance at the other parochial schools in Dearborn is thriving. As the community of Dearborn approaches the end of the 20th century the future of education looks to be a bright one. At the end of each year Dearborn can boast many fine students - a compliment to both the public and parochial schools.

[End of XXI Part Series]



A 1922 view of St. Alphonsus School, located at Warren and Calhoun in East Dearborn.

Dearborn Historical Museum

1833 Commandant's Quarters
(Listed on the NATIONAL REGISTER of HISTORIC PLACES)

Exhibit Annex

Museum Office and Storage Building

McFadden-Ross House and Historical Records and Library
(Originally the 1839 Powder Magazine)