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THE PATHFINDER

The Historical Preservation Journal of Westlake

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The PathFinder is a publication of the Westlake Historical Preservation Board.

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The view from the Timbers …

EDITOR'S PAGE

Arthur McWhirter

The editor's essay often opens with a view of the Cross Timbers landscape in its seasons—colors, textures, smells—but this time begins with what I cannot see, but know was once there, a school named Possum Trot. Yes, Possum Trot. Charming name, don't you think? Standing at the entrance of Westlake Academy looking south where Ottinger and Dove collide—and I do mean run into each other—I know there was once a school by that name.

Stone, mighty timbers and mortar stand ready to protect and defend without and within.

East and a little north, close to the Solana complex, was Sams School remembered with a street sign, "Sams School Road." I can't see it either because it, too, is gone now. Both Possum Trot and Sams were within the limits of Westlake but in the 1880s, long before there were boundaries.

Changing locations to the intersection of Dove and Ottinger and looking north to the top of the hill, I see another school—a new, modern one —Westlake Academy. Not only is the building and equipment new, but everything that goes on inside the place is fresh, too. But more of that later from those who dreamed, envisioned, planned, enacted, designed, crafted and implemented, both building and curriculum.

The sight reminds me of a medieval castle atop the heights, commanding the hill with flags flying from the battlements. Stone, mighty timbers and mortar stand ready to protect and defend without and within. A moat of oaks and native growth surrounds and forbids direct entrance without first passing through the natural world.

Although I cannot claim anyone consulted my romantic perceptions of the place, many must have had similar musings. Indeed, Westlake Academy fulfills the promise and hope of the ideal, both materially and philosophically—at least where school buildings and education are concerned.

This issue, then, is devoted exclusively to local schools and the educational processes. Beginning with the way things used to be—the one and two-room schoolhouses and the systems of teaching in such places—the journal steps to a lively beat provided by personal reminiscence from one local historian, Conway Peterson. Westlake Academy from start to finish takes up the march. Returning to the past with a look at school lunches, called "lunch buckets," the journal closes by inviting readers to membership in the new Westlake Historical Preservation Society.

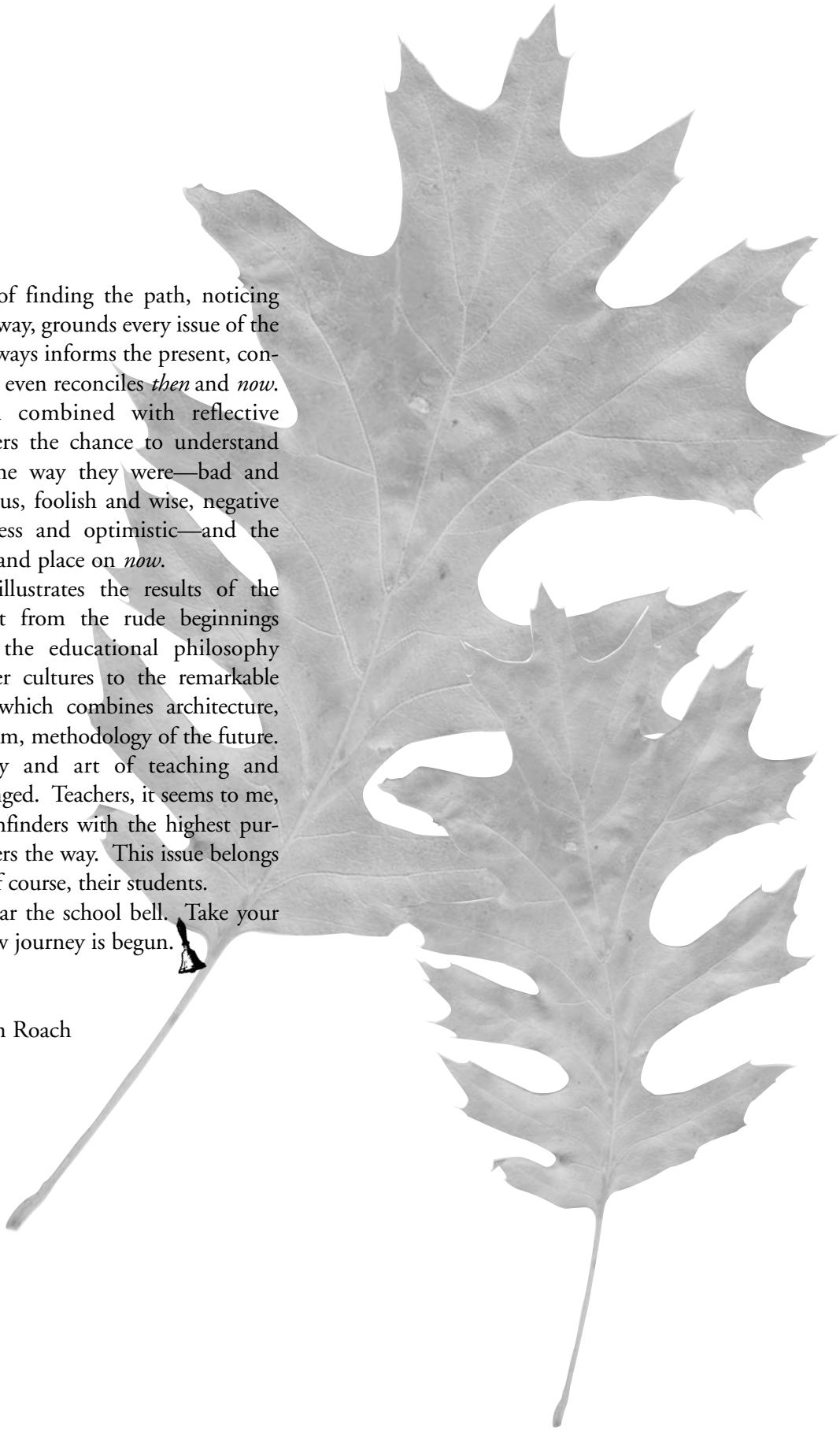
The image of finding the path, noticing the trail, tracing the way, grounds every issue of the journal. The past always informs the present, connects and sometimes even reconciles *then* and *now*.

Information combined with reflective thinking gives readers the chance to understand why people were the way they were—bad and good, silly and serious, foolish and wise, negative and positive, hopeless and optimistic—and the effects of their time and place on *now*.

This issue illustrates the results of the past on the present from the rude beginnings of "schoolin" and the educational philosophy embraced by frontier cultures to the remarkable Westlake Academy which combines architecture, technology, curriculum, methodology of the future. Yet, the philosophy and art of teaching and teachers is little changed. Teachers, it seems to me, are the ultimate pathfinders with the highest purpose of showing others the way. This issue belongs most to them and, of course, their students.

Listen! I hear the school bell. Take your places. Come! A new journey is begun.

Joyce Gibson Roach
Editor



Then . . .
The Empty Schoolhouse: Memories of One-Room Texas Schools

by Luther Bryan Clegg

Throughout its history, the species *Homo sapiens* has desired to pass to its offspring the knowledge it deemed important. In primitive eras children were taught skills that promoted survival. As societies became more sophisticated, the body of knowledge that was passed to succeeding generations became more complex. It was no longer sufficient to teach boys the means of providing food and shelter and girls the ways of homemaking and child rearing. They also needed the ability to store and access information, that is to read and to write. It became important to preserve the collective knowledge of the group: the history, values, and function of the society as well as mathematical and scientific discoveries. Because the task was too enormous for each family, groups pooled resources. Hence, the birth of the school.

As one looks at the history of education in the United States, it is evident that schools reflect, and have always reflected, the society and times in which they operate. For example, the religious fervor of the Puritans resulted in reading being taught for the purpose of understanding the Bible. Formal education was reserved for those preparing for the ministry. As the colonies grew, an increasingly diverse population saw need for broader opportunities. Four types of schools evolved: the dame school, the town school, the Latin grammar school and the college.[1] Soon after the end of the American Revolution, with the establishment of our nation, the idea developed that a democratic government in a democratic society necessitates that the majority of the people be literate, hence, the birth of the common school with its primary goal of promoting literacy.

The rise and fall of the rural school mimicked the rise and fall of the nation's population patterns. As settlers migrated westward in larger and larger numbers, schools were established to accommodate increased populations. These rural one-and-two-room schools in . . . Texas were distinguished by certain characteristics.

The population of the school was largely homogeneous. The limitations of transportation decreed that school districts be quite small, usually thirty-six square miles. The families within this radius were neighbors, often related, who not only shared a common school but also often worshiped at a common church, pursued common goals, and were beset by common problems, such as grasshoppers, drought, hail, and epidemics. There was little ethnic, economic, or employment diversity.

The length of the school year was variable and was affected by sundry factors. School began in the fall when crops were harvested and ended in the spring when it was time to plant, as it was accepted that children were needed at home to assist with farming. The calendar was always flexible and was based on money available. If the money ran out after four months, then there was only a four-month school term. If an adverse problem arose, such as a teacher's leaving or becoming ill within the school term, school might be terminated for the remainder

of the year. An epidemic within the community usually closed the doors for the duration of the illness. Thus, school was in session when conditions allowed. In 1910, the average length of the school term in rural schools in Texas was 117 days compared to 160 days in non-rural schools. [2]

The trustees of the school were given large powers of control. They were usually three men (always men) respected by the community, who had the responsibility of making all decisions related to the school. They hired and fired teachers, set the school calendar, made arrangements for supplies, such as fuel and water, settled moral issues, and often lent a hand in disciplining and punishing pupils. One account relates that trustees assessed the number of squares of toilet tissue each child should use in a day! As they were the ultimate authority, a teacher must please them not only in punctuality, methodology, and classroom management but also in the length of one's skirt, or the length of one's beard, and in the "moral rectitude" that one exhibited.

The curriculum reflected the values of a rural society. There was strong emphasis on the basics, with little time devoted to creativity, art, music, hygiene, or even physical education outside noon recess. For example, trustees looked askance at an applicant who offered to teach tap dancing. These rural parents were men and women attempting to wrestle a living from an austere and sometimes hostile environment, and they desired for their children a no-frills education. Emphasis was placed on reading, spelling, handwriting, and arithmetic. History, geography, and science were regarded as less important and were taught when time allowed.

There was freedom to engage in Christian instruction, including daily prayer and bible reading. Religious exercises were performed with the blessing of the school board. When the community was primarily of one religious faith, trustees deemed it not only appropriate but also important for the teacher to instill religious principles in the children. Likewise, practices or tenets that might be at odds with community standards were not permitted entrance into the schools. . . .

Teachers were expected to control students and were allowed extraordinary freedom in punishing them. The right to maintain order and, indeed, the responsibility for assuring children exhibited appropriate behavior, were given by the parents to the teacher. It was rare for parents to complain or question the wisdom of the teacher in disciplining pupils. While some of the punishments described in these accounts were excessive and inhumane, the use of corporal punishment is best understood in the light of mores of the day. "Spare the rod and spoil the child" was an oft-repeated adage. Fathers were known for their use of the razor strap—"for the child's own good," of course, and many mothers gave their children healthy doses of "peach tree tea," administered by switching the legs of a naughty child with a peach tree limb. Children were sent to school with the admonition to the teacher "You make him behave." It is not

A teacher had to be a generalist since he or she must teach all subjects in all grade levels.

surprising that children were punished by being spanked; it is startling, however, that the punishments often went beyond spankings to beatings—and that there was no ensuing outcry of horror and outrage from the parents and community.

Despite the aura of nostalgia that surrounds the one-room schools, there were distinct limitations to their effectiveness.

Teacher training was minimal, especially when compared to today's standards but also when examined in light of non-rural schools. Certification included three levels of certificates: third grade, second grade, and first grade, with first grade certification being the highest level. A permanent certificate was granted upon completion of the study of specified pedagogy and a bachelor's degree. Teachers in rural schools fell far behind their urban counterparts in advanced levels of certification. For example in 1909-10 only 32 percent of teachers in rural schools held first grade and permanent certificates compared to 78 percent of non-rural teachers.[3]

A teacher had to be a generalist since he or she must teach all subjects in all grade levels. In non-rural schools, larger school populations meant teachers could specialize and teach only one grade level, or in some instances, one discipline.

Pupils were given little individual attention from the teacher. Although a teacher was listening to recitation most of the school day, each child's recitation time was limited. This resulted in time spent in boredom, daydreams, or mischief. Exceptions might occur if enrollment was small.

There was no means of controlling the pupil-teacher ratio. The teacher was expected to teach all who appeared at the ringing of the bell. It was left to the discretion of the trustees to decide when to enlarge a school and add an additional teacher. Even then, enrollment might be large. . . .

Facilities were limited and often woefully inadequate.

Prior to 1918, when legislation was enacted providing for free textbooks, poor farm children who could not afford to purchase texts simply did without. Library books and supplemental reading materials were virtually nonexistent. For example, in Texas schools in 1908-09, the average expenditure for library materials in rural schools was nine cents per capita; in non-rural schools, the expenditure was eighty-five cents per capita.[4]

No provisions were made for education beyond the seventh or eighth grade. If one desired a high school diploma, it necessitated leaving home and boarding in the village or town to complete one's schooling.

School districts made no provisions for children with special needs, such as learning disabilities or physical impairments. All efforts to provide for these children were left to the teachers.

The lack of compulsory attendance laws enabled parents to keep children home to help with farm chores. Consequently, a large percentage of pupils dropped out of school before completing seventh grade, due to the vagaries of weather and to the harshness of terrain. Clothing and footwear were often inadequate for the conditions.

In spite of the limitations inherent within small rural schools, there was much that educators in subsequent decades would come to admire and seek to incorporate into the large urban schools.

Rural schoolteachers typified old-fashioned, enduring qualities that are still viable today. Although ill prepared professionally (and there are grim tales of inadequacy) . . . they were, as a group, hardworking, generous, concerned pedagogues who wanted to give their pupils a chance at success. Working within a small community in which they knew each pupil well, where they had easy access to parents, and where all community resources were readily available, they fostered a family-like atmosphere that was to be envied by urban counterparts in later decades.

These rural teachers saw their task as "lifting up" their students to try harder, see farther. They motivated with praise, encouragement, awards, and an occasional unexpected treat. Although their districts largely ignored special needs of impaired children, individual teachers [sometimes] made provisions for handicapped pupils long before inclusion became a topic tossed about in educational circles. In Boyer's book, *The Basic School*, he gives the teacher's task as "reaching every student rather than covering the curriculum, connecting to all learners rather than merely offering education."[5] It would seem many rural teachers were intrinsically aware of this decades ago.

The one-room school has served as a prototype for the non-graded or multiage classroom used in many of today's schools. The theory behind the non-graded school is that students, regardless of age or achievement level, can progress through designated subject material at a speed and on a level appropriate to their ability. Hence, third-year pupils may take a fourth year if necessary in order to complete the material expected of a third-grader. This practice was universally employed in the one-room school. Children continued to read from a reader for as long as was necessary to complete it, whether through one, two, or more school terms. A fourth-year student might be in a fifth-grade reader, a third-grade speller, and a fourth-grade arithmetic text.

The rural one-room schools served as the embryonic stage of student-centered instruction. Cuban in *How Teachers Taught* defines student-centered instruction as dividing the class into small groups and letting individuals work independently as opposed to a teacher teaching the entire class as a unit.[6] The pattern of instruction in one-room schools involved the teacher calling one group of pupils to the recitation bench while the remainder of students worked on various assigned tasks in small groups or independently. Student-centered instruction was more clearly defined and considerably enhanced by later reformers attempting to move methodology away from teacher-centered instruction, but its rudimentary stages were found in rural classrooms.

The open-concept schools prevalent in the 1970s were also loosely patterned after the one-room school. Although much larger than their earlier cousins, open-concept schools sought to bring children of a variety of ages and abilities together for the purpose of instruction. Team teaching was a widely touted adjunct to the open-concept school, intending to use the strengths of two or more teachers for the enhancement of instruction. One interviewee, when comparing her early experiences of teaching in a one-room school with her later years, said, "When they started talking about team teaching in Fort Worth in the sixties and seventies, I said, 'Mercy goodness! That's what I started with, you might say, team teaching.'" Several teachers, especially those who taught in a two-room school with a colleague, told of combining classes for instruction, planning programs that involved both groups, and bringing the pupils together for Friday afternoon activities. Often teachers helped each other when one had expertise the other did not. . . .

While the pedagogical jargon varied, early teachers utilized good teaching practices long before they became the "innovations" of modern education. [One teacher] . . . employed cooperative learning techniques as early as 1910. If the teacher asked a question to which a child did not know the answer, the child could ask someone else. "That would give you a chance, don't you see? She said that a-way each of us would learn faster than we would otherwise. We should learn from each other."

An additional innovation practiced by teachers in one-room schools was peer tutoring. Lack of time often necessitated this, as the teacher was unable to listen to all lessons each day and would pick one of the best pupils from the top grades to assist with the younger children. Enough

mention was made of this practice to assume it was common. This technique is similar to that used today in many classrooms, particularly where multiage grouping is practiced, but in others as well. For example, fifth-graders might read to first-graders, or sixth-graders might present a class-written play to third-grade children.

The one-room school was a reflection of its time, the means by which a community could teach curricula, values, and mores it deemed important. Although beset by limitations, it was a noble effort to provide instruction for the young, exhibiting practices and concepts that later educators admired and sought to emulate.

Notes:

1 Edward J. Power, *Main Currents in the History of Education*, 433.

2 Milam C. Rowold, "The Texas Rural Schools Revisited, 1900-1929" (Ph.D. diss., University of Texas at Austin, 1983), 46.

3 Rowold, 42.

4 Rowold, 60.

5 Ernest L. Boyer, *The Basic School: A Community for Learning*, 43.

6 Larry Cuban, *How Teachers Taught: Constancy and Change in American Classrooms, 1880-1990*, 132.

Luther Bryan Clegg is Professor Emeritus of education at TCU in Fort Worth where he chaired the education department, taught curriculum and instruction and children's literature. Texas A&M Press published *The Empty Schoolhouse: Memories of One-Room Texas Schools* in 1997. The introduction of the book is used with permission.

I Remember . . .

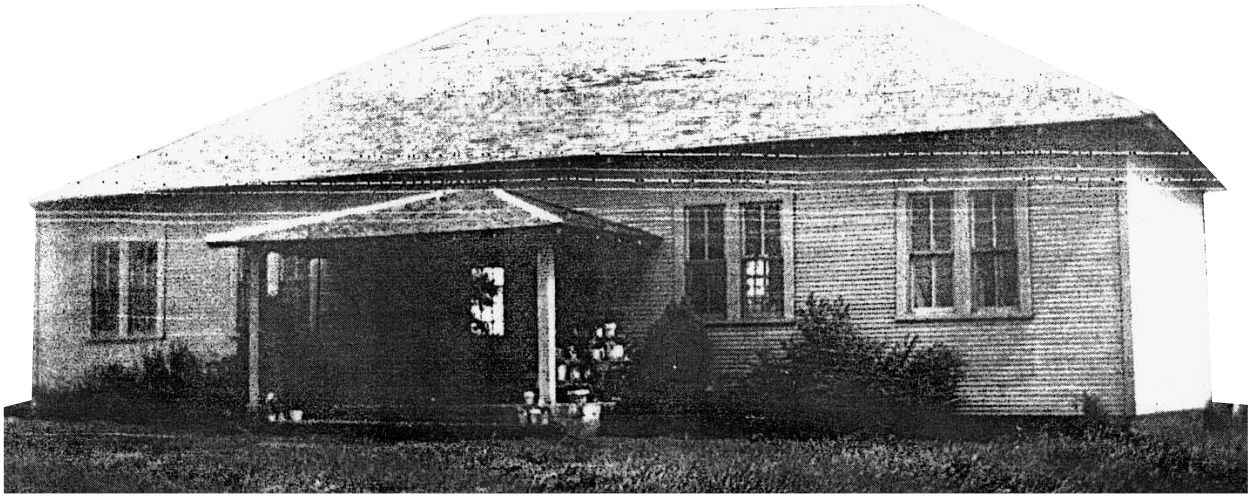
Conway Peterson remembers the Two-Room School House at Elizabeth

Conway Peterson, a long-time resident of Roanoke whose kinfolks were among the first settlers in the area, remembers the two-room school at Elizabeth, typical of early schools in Texas.

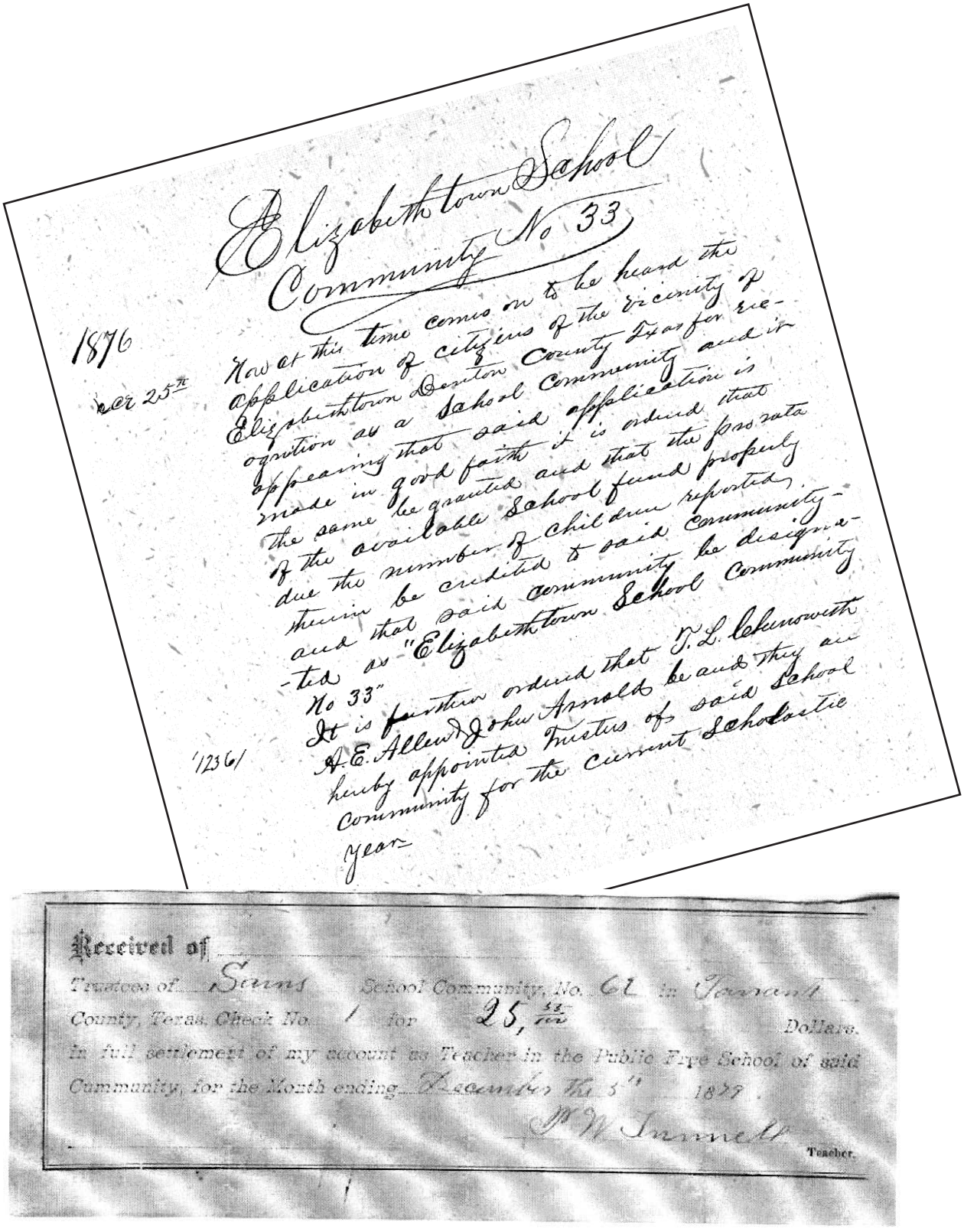
It was a two-room school. It had a shingle roof and great big windows all on the north side; in fact the south side didn't have many windows because the cloakrooms were on the south side. We had a big porch where we went in. The smaller grades would go to the left, the higher grades go to the right and in between would be a folding door, like an accordion door, that you close up and open. They'd get Mr. Jenkins' lumberyard to loan them some lumber and they would build a stage and put on a big play there for everybody to come see.

South of the school building were horse sheds. They had a long tin shed that had stalls in it. I rode a horse for four years and then the school bus came by and picked us up. We would ride our horses and put them in the shed. The horses didn't get any feed or water all day long because they ate before they left and we would cross the creek on the way to school and they could drink and then drink again when we went back across the creek to go home.

Drawings were made by E.I., Jack, Wiesman, Associate Editor of The PathFinder



Elizabeth School House, Elizabethtown, Texas, 1934



Elizabethtown School
Community No 33

1876

Dec 25th

Now at this time comes on to be heard the application of citizens of the vicinity of Elizabethtown Denton County Texas for recognition as a School Community and it appearing that said application is made in good faith it is ordered that the same be granted and that the pro rata of the available School fund properly due the number of children reported therein be credited to said Community and that said community be designated as "Elizabethtown School Community No 33"

1236

It is further ordered that J. L. Isbunworth A. E. Allen and John Arnold be and they are hereby appointed Trustees of said School Community for the current Scholastic year

Received of

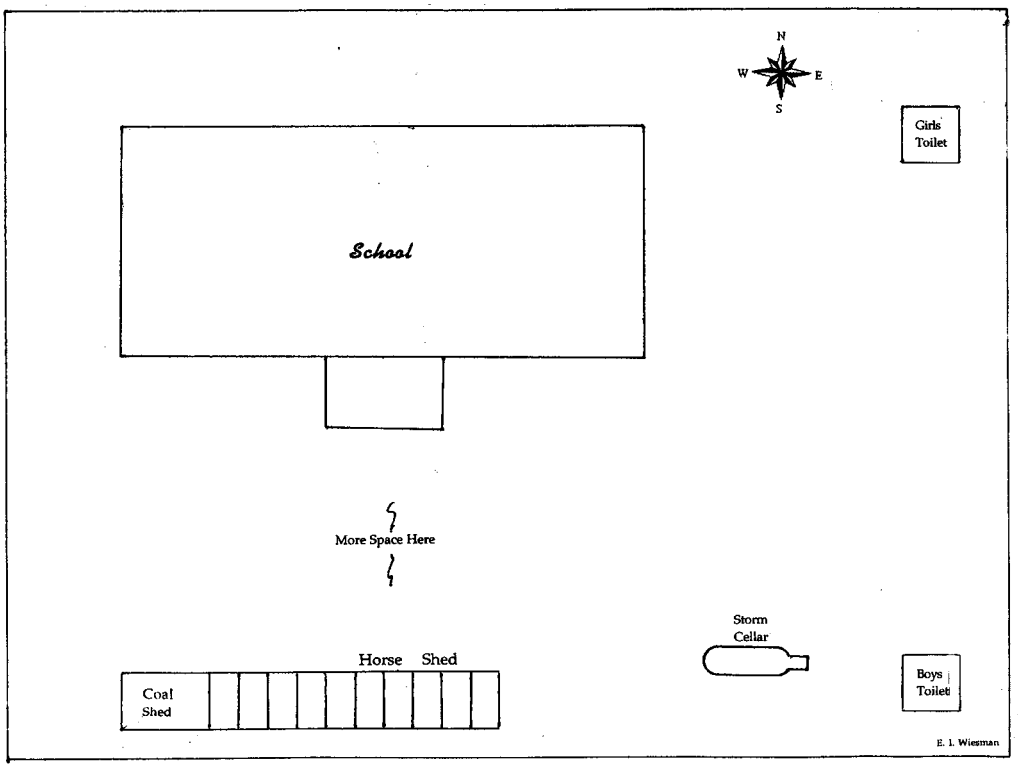
Trustees of Sams School Community, No. 61 in Tarrant County, Texas, Check No. 1 for 25, 52/100 Dollars.

in full settlement of my account as Teacher in the Public Free School of said Community, for the Month ending December 7th 1877.

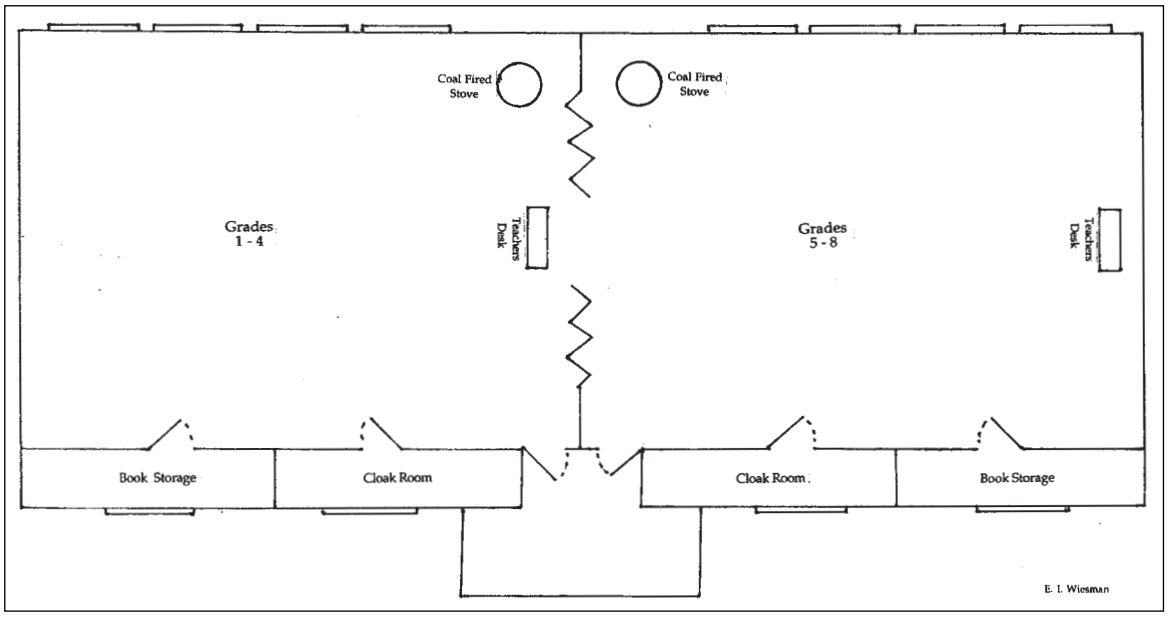
W W Sennett

Teacher.

Elizabeth School was first established in 1876

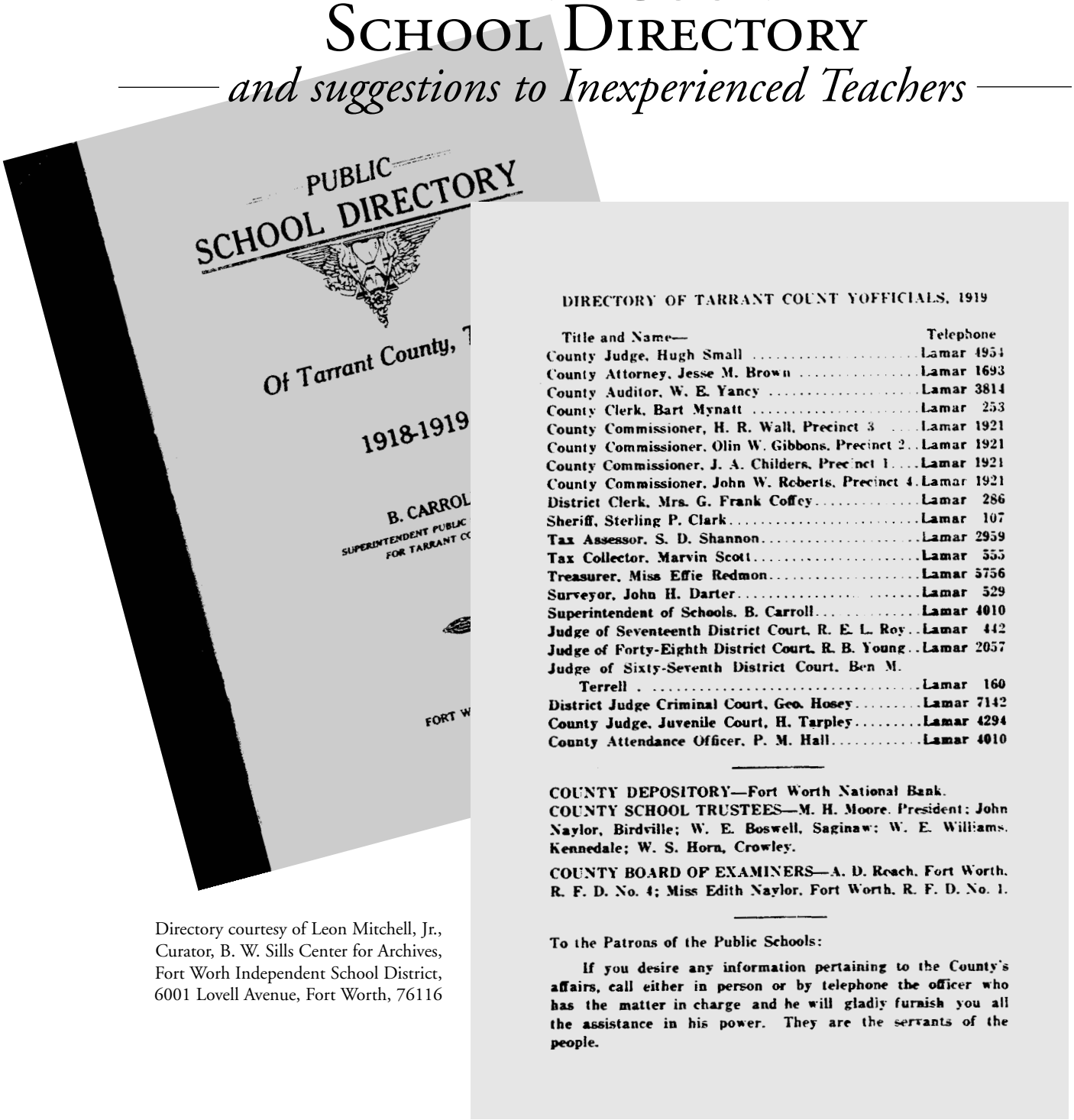


Elizabeth School
Denton County
Elizabethtown, Texas



Tarrant County School Directory

and suggestions to Inexperienced Teachers



PUBLIC
SCHOOL DIRECTORY

Of Tarrant County, T

1918-1919

B. CARROL
SUPERINTENDENT PUBLIC
FOR TARRANT C

FORT W

DIRECTORY OF TARRANT COUNT YOFFICIALS, 1919

Title and Name—	Telephone
County Judge, Hugh Small	Lamar 4954
County Attorney, Jesse M. Brown	Lamar 1693
County Auditor, W. E. Yancy	Lamar 3814
County Clerk, Bart Mynatt	Lamar 253
County Commissioner, H. R. Wall, Precinct 3	Lamar 1921
County Commissioner, Olin W. Gibbons, Precinct 2	Lamar 1921
County Commissioner, J. A. Childers, Precinct 1	Lamar 1921
County Commissioner, John W. Roberts, Precinct 4	Lamar 1921
District Clerk, Mrs. G. Frank Coffey	Lamar 286
Sheriff, Sterling P. Clark	Lamar 107
Tax Assessor, S. D. Shannon	Lamar 2959
Tax Collector, Marvin Scott	Lamar 555
Treasurer, Miss Effie Redmon	Lamar 5756
Surveyor, John H. Darter	Lamar 529
Superintendent of Schools, B. Carroll	Lamar 4010
Judge of Seventeenth District Court, R. E. L. Roy	Lamar 442
Judge of Forty-Eighth District Court, R. B. Young	Lamar 2057
Judge of Sixty-Seventh District Court, Ben M. Terrell	Lamar 160
District Judge Criminal Court, Geo. Hosey	Lamar 7142
County Judge, Juvenile Court, H. Tarpley	Lamar 4294
County Attendance Officer, P. M. Hall	Lamar 4010

COUNTY DEPOSITORY—Fort Worth National Bank.
COUNTY SCHOOL TRUSTEES—M. H. Moore, President; John Naylor, Birdville; W. E. Boswell, Saginaw; W. E. Williams, Kennedale; W. S. Horn, Crowley.

COUNTY BOARD OF EXAMINERS—A. D. Reach, Fort Worth, R. F. D. No. 4; Miss Edith Naylor, Fort Worth, R. F. D. No. 1.

To the Patrons of the Public Schools:

If you desire any information pertaining to the County's affairs, call either in person or by telephone the officer who has the matter in charge and he will gladly furnish you all the assistance in his power. They are the servants of the people.

Directory courtesy of Leon Mitchell, Jr., Curator, B. W. Sills Center for Archives, Fort Worh Independent School District, 6001 Lovell Avenue, Fort Worth, 76116

A FEW SUGGESTIONS TO INEXPERIENCED TEACHERS

Visiting Schools

1. When I visit your school it shall not be my purpose to find fault with your work, but instead I shall be glad to assist you in making such improvements as may be necessary.

Teachers and Principal

2. Unless there is harmony among the teachers, and between the teachers and principal, the school will not be a success; but if all the teachers and the principal have an interest in the school, the school will be a success.

It is the duty of each teacher to assist the principal in disciplining, not only her own pupils, but she should correct or report to him the misconduct of any pupil in the school.

The principal should see that all the pupils obey and respect the assistants if he expects the co-operation of the assistants in maintaining order.

Order

3. Secure order first and then teach. If a teacher has the ability to maintain good order in her school without too much punishment she will always have a good position, although she may be weak in many other ways. The best disciplinarian is the one who is able to secure the best order with the least punishment.

Do not threaten; ASK the pupils to do what you wish them to do, in an unexcited manner, and then see that they DO it.

Stay on the grounds at recess. You can learn more about the character of the pupils on the ground than in the school room.

Do not allow talking during school hours without permission, and then know that it is necessary. Never allow more than one to talk to you at a time and let that be by permission. Do not allow pupils to move about over the room without permission.

If you teach your pupils all that is in the book and fail to teach them good manners and to respect the feelings of others your work is a failure.

Class Teaching

All lessons should be planned in advance. No general ever won a battle by wandering around in the bushes to see whom he could shoot. No teacher ever had a successful recitation that was not carefully planned in advance. Excessive talking by the teacher in the recitation is evidence of low efficiency. If you repeat your question and repeat the pupil's answer and then say "all right" you are wasting much valuable time.

Decoration

The pictures on the wall and the arrangement of the work should seek to enhance the attractiveness of the room as a whole. Flowers arranged in a vase or bowl placed on the teacher's desk often change a dull, uninteresting room into a cheerful place to work.

Slapping Children's Faces

This is inexcusable and unpardonable; it is neither discipline nor punishment; it may be both injury and insult. If you do this once ask God to forgive you for your bad temper; if you do it again resign.

Teacher's Mental Condition

"The public is entitled in our teachers to patience, sympathy, cheerfulness, encouragement, confidence and inspiration. A scolding, nagging gossip who may know the dictionary entirely is as proper a candidate for dismissal as the pronounced illiterate. It should be the nature of a person teaching to be affectionate, considerate and to enjoy the business as all artists do from Parhasius down, who was forever singing while he worked."—Francis W. Parker.

The Highest Criterion

The highest criterion in most school questions is the welfare of the child affected; only one criterion is higher, the welfare of all the children affected.

Flags and Patriotism

The law requires that each school have a suitable flag and

flagpole. The law also requires that each teacher devote at least fifteen minutes each day to the teaching of patriotism.

Libraries

Most of the schools in this county have libraries. If your school does not have a good library you have an opportunity to have your name long remembered by securing one for your school. This may be done by giving a few entertainments. Your people will be glad to attend and pay their money to help the school.

The Teacher and Trustees

No teacher should assume the responsibility of conducting a school independently of the trustees. I do not mean by this that you should worry your trustees with little things but you should counsel with them when their assistance is actually needed.

Trustees should inform assistants when they employ them they will be subject to the principal's supervision. Most assistants understand this but occasionally we hear of one who does not.

The Teacher and Trustees

When the teacher makes a mistake, the trustees should encourage him to do better by assuring him of their support and co-operation. Make him understand that his position is secure as long as he does his best. This will make him feel more hopeful and give him new courage and cause him to do better work.

Courtesy

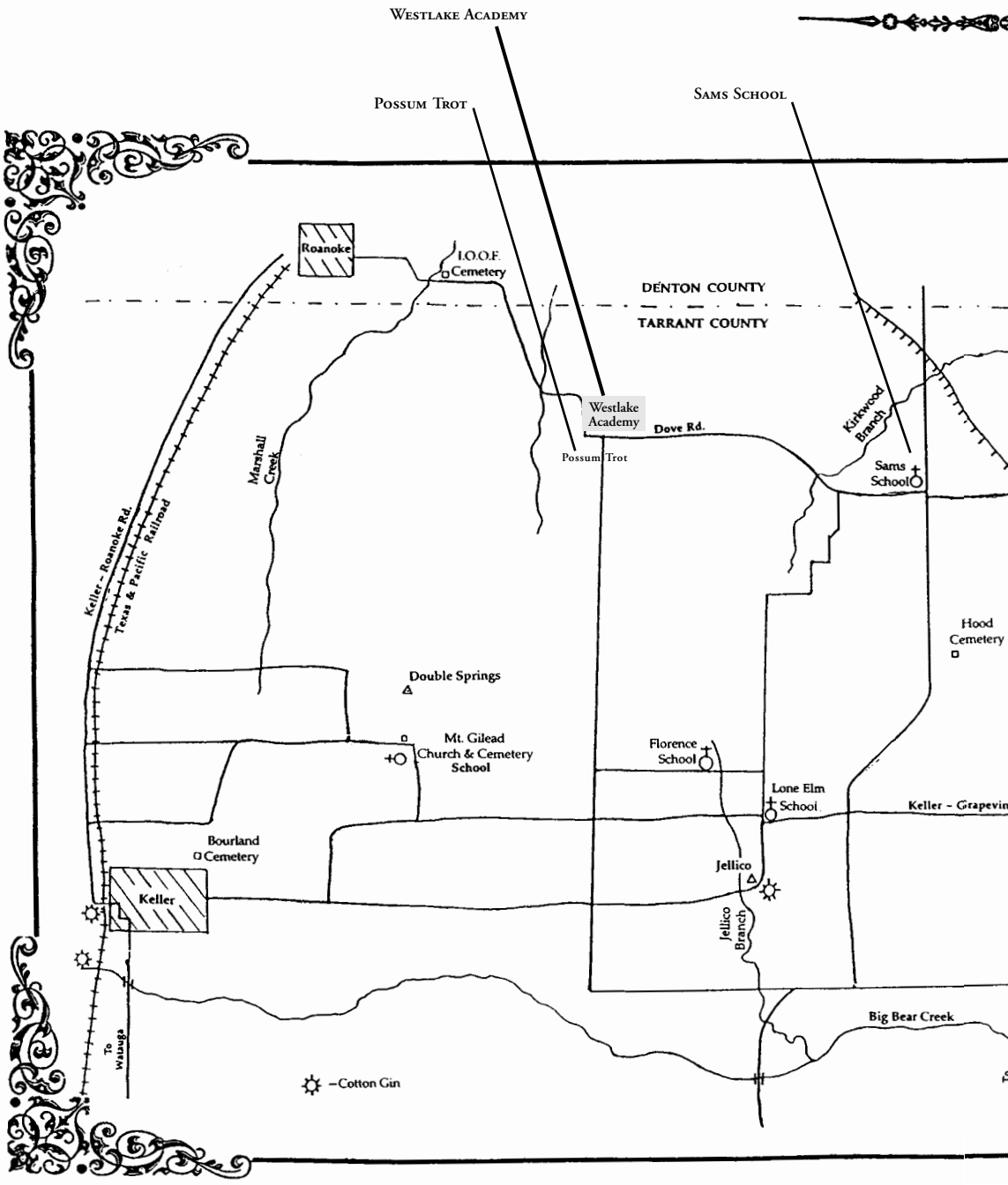
Courtesy pays larger dividends on the investment than any other effort in school work.

If you have a grievance against another teacher—get busy and forget it.

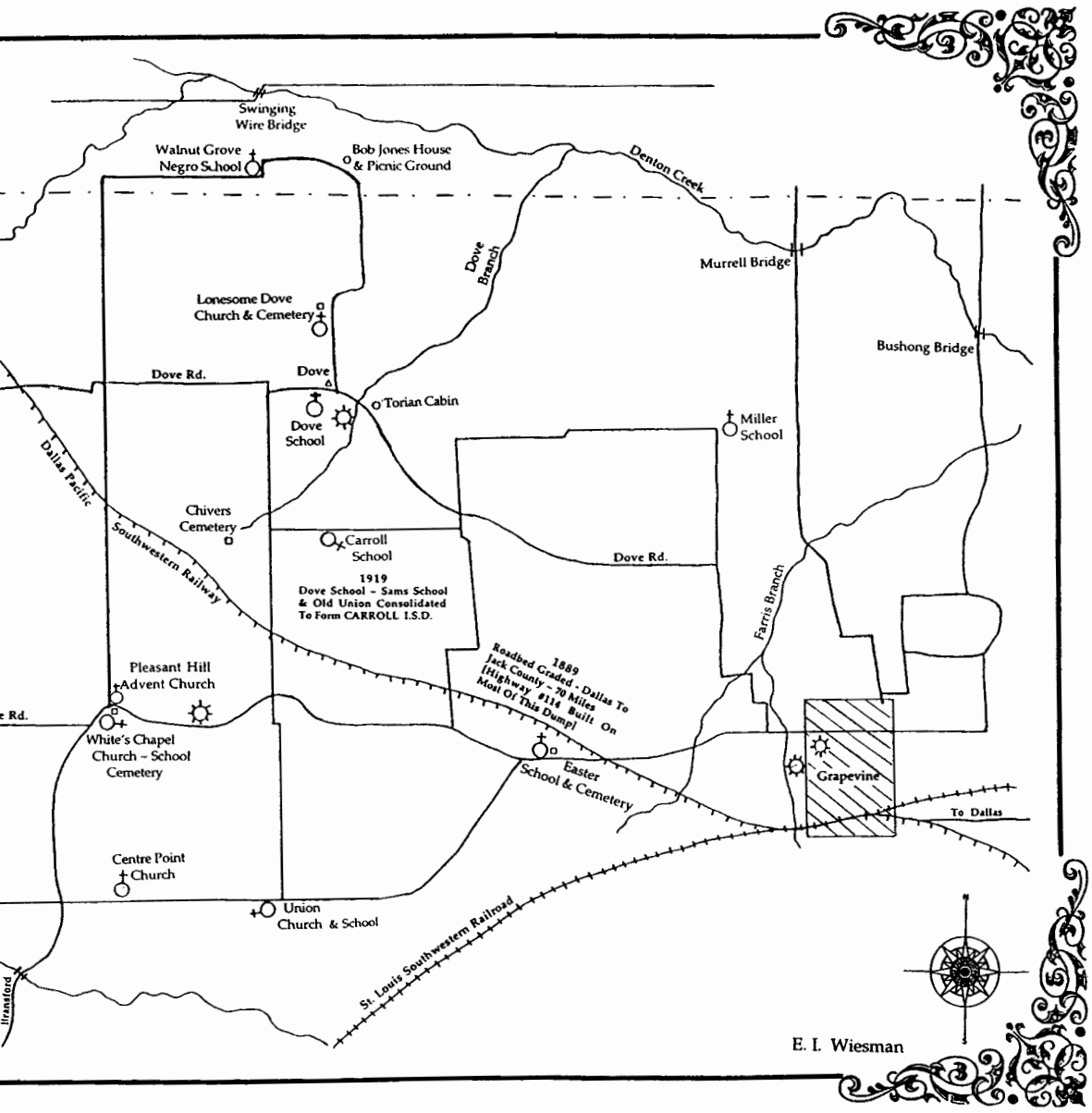
Kindness to Animals

Especial attention is called to the law that requires all teachers of the primary grades to give a lesson once each week on kindness to animals and the protection of birds and their nests and eggs.

Northeast T
1846



arrant County
~ 1920



And Now . . .
Of Dreams and Visions

by Scott Bradley, Mayor of Westlake & President of the Board, Westlake Academy

It was the first Monday in March 1978. Early that morning children from the Circle T Ranch, the Elder Ranch and Paigebrooke Farm gathered at Paigebrooke Farm's front gate to await bus transportation to public school. The Loftis children, living across the road, had already left for school with their mother, who taught in the Keller Independent School District.

As the children from the Circle T Ranch and the Elder Ranch bashfully introduced themselves to the newcomers from Paigebrooke Farm, a bus from the Northwest Independent School District arrived and whisked the Circle T children several miles to the west to begin their school day. A second bus soon came to transport the Elder children miles to the east to the Carroll Independent School District campus. Then a third bus arrived from the south, turned around at the Paigebrooke Farm gate, and boarded Paige and Brooke Bradley for a lengthy trip to attend their first day at Florence Elementary in the Keller Independent School District.

That was the day the idea, indeed the dream, of a community school for Westlake—where neighbors could attend school together and strengthen their community bonds—was born.

Discussions among Westlake residents with children in public schools yielded agreement that a public school for Westlake made a lot of sense. Schools, while they primarily serve children, also serve the greater community as parents interact with each other in trying to get the best possible education for their children; and households having no children generally derive civic pride from the accomplishments of the children at the local school. In small communities such as Westlake, the local school often serves as the center of community life.

But how could Westlake get a school to serve its community? It had no resources to speak of. The first notion was that perhaps the Carroll, Northwest and Keller Districts would agree to allow Westlake to form its own independent school district. This idea soon proved to be naïve. All three districts emphatically indicated they would not countenance a new district.

Perhaps, then, they would consider a boundary adjustment so that all of Westlake could be put in a single district? That idea also was shot down.

Time passed. But the dream did not die. In 1982 I ran successfully for a place on the Keller school board. Maybe, I thought, working from the inside would yield progress. But it became apparent that the Keller district would probably never build a school in Westlake; nor would the Northwest or Carroll districts. Because the State pays for transportation of students only if they are more than two miles from their school, public schools generally try to build schools that will draw from a zone at least two miles in all directions from the school. Because Westlake is at the periphery of all three districts, it would be inefficient for any of the three districts to place a school in Westlake.

As it became apparent that Westlake would probably not get approval from the local districts, efforts turned to finding other ways.

In 1984 we found a possible path. Legal research revealed that the Texas Legislature had passed a law in the 1880's allowing municipalities to form their own school districts. But there was only one precedent. The City of Stafford attempted to form a school district in the 1970's and succeeded only after surviving determined and expensive legal challenges (including an appeal to the U. S. Supreme Court) from the Fort Bend ISD and the lobby for Texas' school boards. So Westlake citizens engaged the man who had led Stafford's fight—Leonard Scarcella, Stafford's mayor and a practicing attorney—to assist Westlake residents and some residents from Trophy Club in forming a Westlake ISD. (Trophy Club at the time was an unincorporated area disannexed by Westlake but retained in Westlake's exclusive extraterritorial jurisdiction).

Several committees worked diligently and optimistically to make plans for the district. Kelly Bradley and B.J. Minyard went door to door collecting signatures. Others looked at facilities that would be needed. Still others studied curricula, textbooks and such.

Then one early morning Kelly Bradley heard an announcement on the radio about a presentation to be given later that day about a curriculum developed by the International Baccalaureate Organization. She called me at the office and suggested I attend in my capacity as school board member. But as I had clients in the office that day from out of town, I asked her to attend in my stead. The information she brought back suggested here was a curriculum that could lift the achievement level of students and broaden their learning experience in such a way they, indeed, would be equipped to operate in a global society. So now we had a curriculum.

Alas! As we neared completion of our plans, the Texas Legislature came into session. The education lobby promptly persuaded the Legislature to repeal the ancient law we thought would pave our way!

Years passed, but the dream never died.

Then, as sometimes happens, the world came full circle. George W. Bush, then governor of Texas, used his skills on the Legislature to gain authorization for the creation of charter schools not bound by stale paradigms of education. Realizing that an opportunity presented itself, the Westlake governing body consisting of Aldermen Fred Held, Don Redding, Bill Frey, Buddy Brown, Larry Sparrow and I as mayor set out to obtain a charter for a proposed Westlake Academy. Trent Petty, who had experience in establishing the private Faith Christian School and had been the City of Grapevine's innovative city manager, was hired as Westlake Town Manager. Working with his assistant Mary Midgette, and consultants John Brooks, Diane Rozell, and Brett Barron, Mr. Petty led the successful efforts to gain a charter for the Westlake Academy, awarded on July 13, 2001 by the Texas Education Agency. With subsequent help from Town Finance Counsel Allen Moon, Town Attorney Stan Lowry, Legislative Counsel Jody Richardson, Town Financial Advisor Larry Williamson, State Senator Jane Nelson, Attorney General Greg Abbott and State District 98 Representative Vicki Truitt, construction of the Academy was financed.

The Board of Aldermen then interviewed widely for a head of school, ultimately choosing Barbara Brizuela from Buenos Aires, Argentina, to lead Westlake Academy. Mr. Petty became the chief executive officer of the Academy, and Fred Held, Don Redding, Bill Frey, Buddy Brown, Larry Sparrow and I (as members of the Town's governing body) became the first Board of Trustees of the Academy.

The road to founding Westlake Academy was long and winding, filled with potholes and laced with barricades; but the citizens of Westlake

persevered to the end, proving former President of the United States Theodore Roosevelt's timeless words: "Far better it is to dare mighty things, to win glorious triumphs even though checkered by failure, than to rank with those spirits who neither enjoy nor suffer much because they live in the gray twilight that knows neither victory nor defeat".

Mission Statement:

The Westlake Academy will provide a rigorous curriculum that is international in scope with high expectations by sharing the responsibility of educational development among teachers, parents, community and students. This will be achieved by providing an innovative approach to education that focuses on the needs of each student to develop a thirst for knowledge, produce positive esteem, encourage good citizenship and maximize individual potential. This will prepare students to be active participants and agents of change in a rapidly changing environment that is global in scope.

Of Towns and Schools

by Trent Petty, Town Manager and Chief Executive Officer of Westlake Academy

It does not require a great deal of research to realize that the Town of Westlake is a precedent setting community. Since its inception, Westlake has been a special place where community pride inspires residents to go to whatever lengths necessary to preserve the unique heritage of the Town. Mayor Scott Bradley and the current Board of Aldermen deserve special recognition for the emphasis placed on maintaining a unique community identity unlike any other.

Such vision takes incredible diligence and dedication. Translating it into reality took hours of hard work and detailed planning to identify and assemble the highest quality components of a neighborly community blended into a beautiful setting.

Perhaps the most unique combination is the Westlake Academy/Town of Westlake Civic Campus. The first of its kind in the State of Texas, The Westlake Academy is a Texas Open Enrollment Charter School owned by the Town of Westlake and operated through the Board of Aldermen who is the appointed Westlake Academy School Board. I serve the Board as the CEO of the Academy, supervising Head of School, Mrs. Barbara Brizuela, responsible for the day-to-day-operations of the school. I also act as the Town Manager.

The school is currently comprised of grades one through six and will expand next year to include kindergarten and seventh grade. A grade will then be added each year until the school reaches its maximum designation as K through 12.

The school is a public school. All children of Westlake residents are automatically admitted.

If space is still available after the Westlake residents enroll, the remaining vacant spots are filled by lottery. The first lottery was held May 12, 2003, and established the initial enrollment for grades one through six. The lottery also provided for a waiting list for each grade to which non-Westlake residents wishing to attend the Academy are added as they apply. Vacancies are filled by those on the waiting list.

The school is the only school in North Texas that will deploy International Baccalaureate Curriculum criteria for all three levels — primary years, middle years and the diploma program.

The concept of marrying school and city offices and administration has radically reduced the amount of redundant administrative personnel that must be hired to operate a school. Only two non-teaching staff takes care of administrative business. The efficiencies are further enhanced by an incredible core of parent volunteers ready to perform almost any task at the drop of a hat.

Finally, the Academy has the amazing resources of the Westlake Academy Foundation run by a volunteer board, appointed by the Board of Aldermen and chaired by the dynamic Mrs. Michelle Corson. Not only has the Foundation made significant financial donations, but they have also sponsored a successful Art Gallery event, raising money for the school and increasing awareness of the arts in our area and in our school. The Foundation is a "most valuable player" partner in helping the Westlake Academy to rise to educational prominence.

WESTLAKE
ACADEMY FOUNDATION

Education at Westlake Academy

by Barbara Brizuela, Head of School

When the Town of Westlake wrote the Charter for Westlake Academy it had a great deal of forethought to know that the school should be founded with the intention of becoming an International Baccalaureate school. The International Baccalaureate Organization is dedicated to forming global citizens with a strong academic background which they use to improve their own lives and that of the global community to which they belong.

Founded in 1968 as a program for 16–18 year-olds in the last two years of high school, IB rapidly became recognized worldwide. Those students awarded the IB Diploma are accepted into first-class universities throughout the world and have distinguished themselves in all areas of campus life. They are knowledgeable, mature, know how to think laterally and apply their knowledge to new situations and fields, and involve themselves in community efforts. Their IB Diplomas are awarded only after successfully completing an essay exam, which is externally marked by a group of international educators, an individual research thesis and 150 clock hours of service to the community.

In 1994 IBO added the Middle Years Program for 11 to 16 year-olds. This program can be adapted to any national or state curriculum. The curriculum provides a conceptual framework for study in seven distinct subject domains, emphasizing the interrelatedness of knowledge. It also provides five areas of interaction amongst those distinct disciplines: approaches to learning; community service; health and social education; environment; and *homo faber*—why and how we create and the consequence—which explores the relationship between science, aesthetics, technology, and ethics. The MYP entails the completion of a Personal Project that can take the form of an essay or an artistic production.

In 1997 the Primary Years Program (PYP) completed the IBO's vision of education for life with its focus on 3–12 year-olds. The PYP is a curriculum framework meeting a student's several needs: academic, social, physical, emotional, and cultural. IBO provides PYP schools with a guideline for what students should learn, a teaching methodology, and assessment strategies. At the heart of the PYP philosophy is the Pupil Profile, a set of ten characteristics defining the PYP student that helps teachers and students to establish goals, plan units of inquiry, and assess performance. Structured inquiry defines the curriculum that is organized in six themes that help students and teachers explore knowledge in its broadest sense through the use of concept-based questions. Students acquire and apply trans-disciplinary skills and develop explicit attitudes and expectations for socially responsible behavior.

Today there are 1,293 IB authorized schools in 115 countries with nearly the same number in some stage of the implementation process. Through its commitment to offer all three programs in one school—a very rare possibility in the USA—Westlake Academy will provide our future citizens with a unique opportunity and edge.

The House System

In an effort to create a flourishing and integrated student body, Westlake Academy has adopted a House system that echoes the idea of an

extended family. Every student (and teacher) at Westlake Academy has been assigned a House to which they will remain members throughout their lives. Siblings and, in the future, sons and daughters will become members of the same House. Houses will participate and compete in academic and sporting events and they will work together to organize community service events. Since every grade has members of all four houses, the system establishes a means for students to get to know and create bonds with older and younger students.

Westlake Academy has four Houses. The names for our Houses were chosen carefully from a long list of great men and women who represent the values inherent in our mission statement. Their deeds and writings provide us with models for our present and future lives.

> *"Students, to you 'tis giv'n to scan the heights*
> *Above, to traverse the ethereal space,*
> *And mark the systems of revolving worlds."*
>
> *Phyllis Wheatley:*
> *"To the University of Cambridge in New England"*

Keller House

Named after Helen Keller who is a model of determination, perseverance and integrity. The color for Keller House is burgundy.

Thoreau House

Named after Henry David Thoreau, one of the first Americans to express a concern for the environment and whose writing demonstrates a love of nature and independence of thought. The color for Thoreau House is khaki, the color of the earth.

Wheatley House

Named after Phillis Wheatley, the first black American poet. Wheatley represents the spirituality of the human soul and the richness in diversity. Wheatley House's color is an ethereal sky blue.

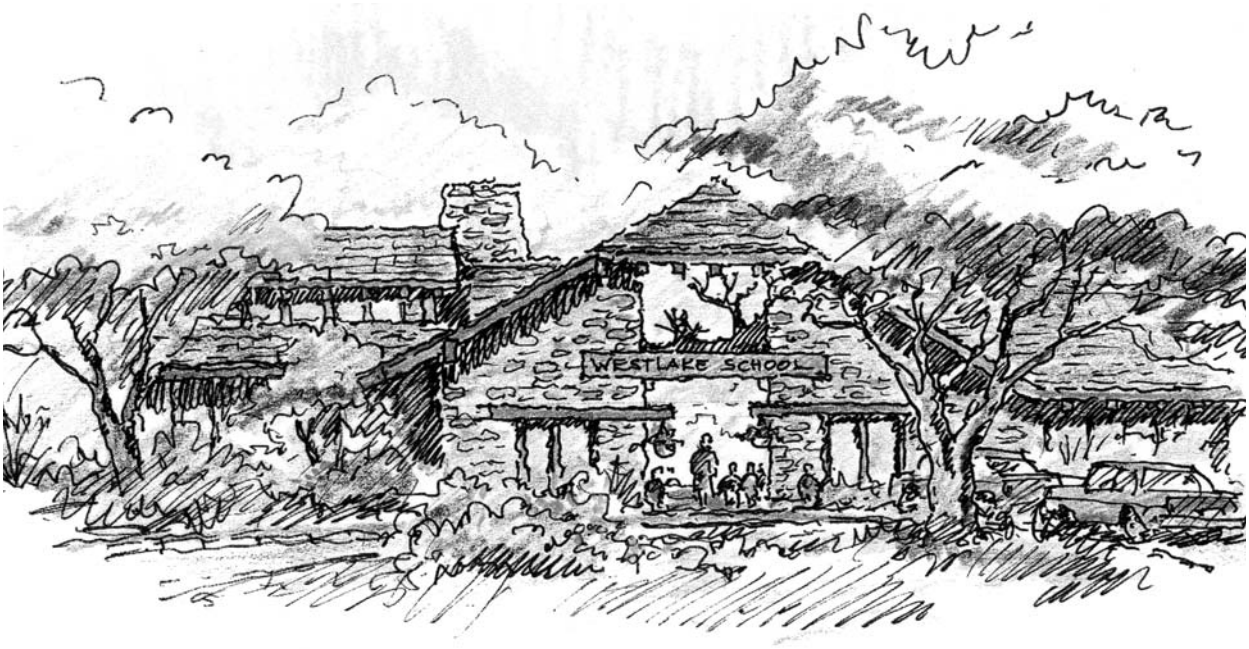
Whitman House

Named after Walt Whitman who represents the American spirit in all its largesse. Navy blue is the color for Whitman House.

Each House at Westlake Academy has a House Captain, Vice House Captain, and Service Captain, voted on in open elections by the Academy student population. The students have had several House meetings to decide upon activities for the year. The first Service activity was held on Arbor Day when nearly forty students volunteered their time to work at all of the stands and on general clean-up for the day. Then they were involved in an inter-house basketball tournament and organized a whole-school Talent Show held in December. The captains along with their teacher House Mistresses have decided to give on-going support to three charitable institutions in the area. The students were most concerned that some of these institutions provide them with opportunities to give volunteer hours to become actively involved in helping others.

The View from the Summit

Hart Howertown Architects, Manhattan Construction and Kaleidoscope Information Services



This fall, the Westlake Academy and Municipal Complex experienced completion of construction and opened its doors. Nestled on a tree-studded hilltop just off Ottinger Road, the complex was designed to take advantage of the natural attributes of the site—distant views of the surrounding Circle T ranch, interesting topography and beautiful old-growth oak trees.

The idea of a school had been visualized by the Town of Westlake for some time, led by the Mayor, the Board of Alderman and the Town Manager. It began to come to fruition when the Town became the first municipality in Texas to be awarded a state charter to operate a school. The vision was for a school that offered an internationally recognized education to the youth of Westlake.

The Town retained the firms of Kaleidoscope Information Services, Inc. as educational consultants, Hart Howerton Architects of New York as planners and architects and Manhattan Construction Company of Dallas as construction managers to help realize its vision. Hart Howerton was the architect and planner of the Vaquero project, also located in Westlake. Manhattan has been responsible for numerous large projects in the Dallas/Fort Worth area, including The Ballpark in Arlington.

There were several requirements that the town expressed to the design team during the initial programming meetings. First, the team was to create a complex of buildings that respected the environment and the special qualities of the site. Second, the school building was to be as flexible as possible to accommodate expected future growth, but also to accommodate future changes in technology. Third, the project's architectural style should be appropriate to the Westlake area and create an example for future projects in the town. Finally, and most importantly, the project should express a level of detail that would complement the high quality of the curriculum. In this way, the project could itself serve as an educational tool for the students, in terms of the building's design and response to the environment.

The master plan for the 22 acre site creates a new town green at the crest of the hilltop site, enclosed by the town offices and a recreation center. The buildings are linked by a covered walkway made of rough-sawn timber. The town green functions as a central gathering place for the town residents and provides a location for events such as festivals, markets and school activities. A fountain located on the south side of the town green is intended to recall the springs that were located nearby and which provided an important stopping point along the stagecoach lines that once ran through the area. The plaza around the fountain includes an amphitheater.

A primary goal of the master plan was to protect the numerous old growth oak trees on the site, two of which anchor the town green. Working with a professional arborist, the design team created a plan to protect the trees and adjusted the building footprint to fit around them, thereby preserving all but a few of the original oaks. A plan to replace the removed trees was developed and implemented according to the Town's development code.

The project has two separate automobile entries for visitors, a north entry for visitors to the municipal offices and recreation center, and a south entry for the academy. The town offices are accessed from a building on the south side of the town green, while the academy entry is accessed from the south parking area.

The buildings were developed as a series of classroom pods, linked by activity and service spaces. There are a total of five classroom pods, ultimately one per grade, with an additional pod planned to house the kindergarten. Two of the pods will be occupied by town offices until school growth displaces them in the future.

Classroom pods have been designed with maximum flexibility and with an eye toward accommodating future teaching and information technologies. Moveable partitions separate two-thirds of the classrooms, allowing teachers to combine two classes for group lectures or presentations. Natural daylight is provided in each of the classrooms and corridors through light monitors and clerestories. In addition to reducing electricity and cooling costs, natural light has been shown to benefit students. Outdoor teaching areas accessible from each classroom provide opportunities for closer interaction between the students and nature.

The two-level recreation center includes a full-size gymnasium, which also uses natural daylight as its primary light source. The lower level of the recreation center houses dining facilities, art/science teaching facilities, and a performance/rehearsal hall with seating for ninety people. The performance hall will also serve as the town council meeting room and includes state of the art video and audio facilities.

Rough sawn timbers were used in the building structural system and are expressed on the building interior and exterior. Milsap stone for the building exterior, retaining walls and some interior walls, was selected for its coloration, which closely matches that of the local stone found on site. Stone

from the site was used for the keystones in both fireplaces located in the commons area of the school.

The commons area, located adjacent to the library near the main entry of the school, is the heart of the academy. In addition to the two fireplaces mentioned above, it features a cupola which brings natural light into the space, custom metal chandeliers, red oak wood flooring, seating and conference areas.

The project was designed to meet the standards of the U.S. Green Building Council's LEEDS requirements for environmentally sensitive design and construction. Irrigation water for the landscape is being harvested from the building's storm drainage system and will be retained in a large water feature at the entry to the site. Landscape throughout the project features native trees and grasses which are hardier to local conditions and require less water. The landscape serves as a teaching tool for the study of local plants and habitat.

Design work on the project commenced in April 2002 with preparatory site work beginning only three months later. The compressed design and construction schedule was achieved thanks to the close cooperation between the Town of Westlake, Kaleidoscope Information Services, Hart Howerton Architects, Manhattan Construction Company and the single vision of making this project a successful reality.

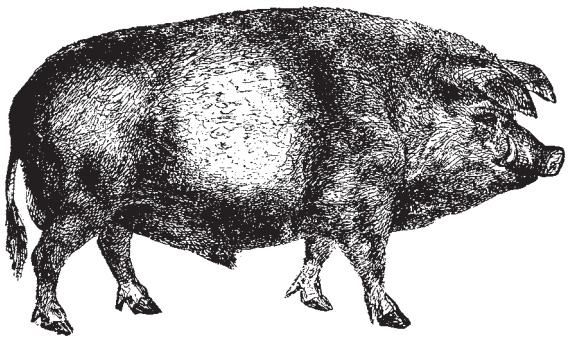
In Search of Yesterday …
School Lunches
by Edward Everett Dale

As the journal began, so it ends—in the past. School lunches—who eats and what's eaten—impact local, state and national educational agendas today. School lunches were not so complicated in the past—except for the person who prepared them. Edward Everett Dale explained the simple arrangement in our part of the county in the late 1880s:

> *The country kids, who constituted the great majority of the pupils, all walked to school carrying their lunches in a tin-covered pail called a "dinner bucket. …. [The] people of the Cross Timbers always called the midday meal dinner and the evening meal supper. Also, the word "pail" was completely alien to their speech. Always it was a water bucket, milk bucket, and dinner bucket.*
>
> *The contents of the dinner buckets varied widely, usually consisting of sandwiches made of large biscuits cut in halves and buttered, with a couple of slices of bacon or a fried egg between the two halves. Sometimes the filling might be a slice of ham or a cake of sausage. Instead of an egg sandwich there might be a couple of boiled eggs. Usually included were some cookies or a piece of cake, pie, gingerbread, or a fried pie. In some cases there might be a teacup half-full of sorghum or a bottle of milk. Generally, the bucket contained plenty of solid, substantial food calculated to "stick to the ribs" throughout a long day, though a modern dietitian would probably hold up her hands in horror at such food for growing children.*
>
> (from *The Cross Timbers: Memories of A North Texas Boyhood,* illustrated by John Biggers, University of Texas Press, Austin, 1966, p. 32.)

Edward Everett Dale, 1879-1972, was born and grew up on a farm between Keller and Roanoke. He left in 1896 to become a field hand and cowboy in Oklahoma. He was a schoolteacher and attended the University of Oklahoma in Norman during the summer, finally earning his B.A. in 1911. He earned an M.A. from Harvard in 1916 and a PhD in 1922, both in history. During his career he authored or co-authored some twenty books, published scores of articles and wrote poetry. He was remembered as one who "represented a rare combination of first-rate scholar, teacher, raconteur, and gentleman."

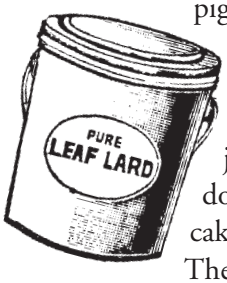
"How 'bout a hand for the Hog!"



Before offering a few recipes for lunch items mentioned in Dale's piece, it seems a good idea to remind readers that none of the ingredients were easy to come by—sausage, bacon and lard for instance. I can only say, in words from the musical, *Big River*, "How 'bout a hand for the hog!"

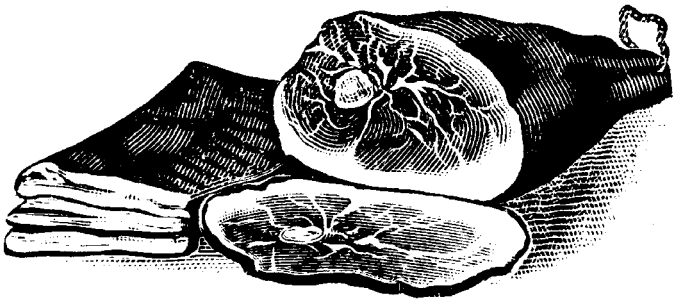
When early settlers talked about meat, they meant pork. Chickens produced eggs and were served as food only as a Sunday dinner treat. Beef—well, beef was even more special. Cows gave milk to drink and for byproducts of cream, butter, cottage cheese, buttermilk and the like. Beef was eaten but not as often as you might suppose. But pork—now there's a real all-purpose animal. Pigs were ideal pioneers, following after wagons without supervision. The animals foraged for themselves along the way and didn't have to be tethered or penned at night.

Hog killing time was a family and community event. The weather had to be cold, preferably below freezing and everyone went at it "whole hog"—literally. Much was butchered for meat—hams, bacon, roasts. But there was also pickled pig's feet, chittlins, cracklin bread and cakes, hog's head cheese or souse, scrapple, and link sausage for smoking packed in jackets made from—well, you don't need to know—or sausage cakes for frying.



Then there was lard—animal fat for cooking. An old-timer described it this way: *There is the fat meat to be cut into cubes, dumped into that indispensable kettle and sizzled into lard. Lard was everywhere. There was so much of it that every year some of it spoiled in warm weather.*

(from *Eats: A Folk History of Texas Foods,* TCU Press, 1989, p.69).



And what about sorghum and how did you get it? Charles Linck described another event in folk life:

> *Besides honey, sorghum and molasses provided sweeteners. In August the settlers would go into the fields, strip the sorghum cane stalks of leaves, cut the stalks, and haul them to the mill. [The] stalks were fed by handfuls into three upright rotating iron cylinders geared to a long pole that a team of mules pulled round and round to keep the cylinders rotating. As the juice ran out, it was funneled into a big bucket beneath the cylinders. The juice was then put into one end of a long rectangular pan made for this purpose. It had dividers, each with a gate. The pan was placed on a slant above a long brick fireplace. Slowly the juice was released from gate to gate until it was thick. As it was moved down and back and forth from section to section of the pan, it would get thicker and thicker. Sorghum is the ultimate product, long in the making. If the sorghum is cooked even longer, it becomes molasses* (Eats, p. 27).

The same bucket into which the sorghum or molasses was preserved often served as the dinner bucket when the contents were used up. The bucket held about half a gallon and had a lid. It was ideal for holding a student's noonday meal. Lard buckets served the same purpose.

Favorite cookies called Tea Cakes

Some guessing is required with this old-time recipe.

2 quarts of flour (8 cups)
1 small teacup of lard (about 6 oz. cup)
1 small teacup of butter (about 6 oz. cup)
(Lard and butter together would equal about one and one-half cups)
3 cupfuls of sugar
3 eggs
1 cupful of cream (sour is best)
2 small teaspoonfuls of soda
1 grated nutmeg

Roll out half-an-inch thick, and bake in a moderate oven. (350 degrees)

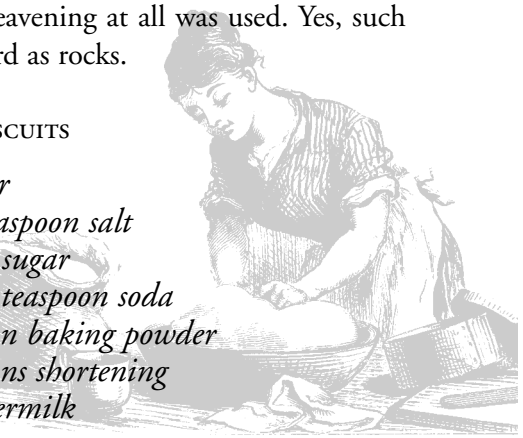
(from *Housekeeping in Old Virginia*, 1879, ed. Marion Cabell Tyree, John P. Morton and Company, reprint.)

Biscuits

2 cups flour
1 tablespoon baking powder
2 teaspoons sugar
1 teaspoon salt
one-third cup lard (vegetable shortening would be substituted today)
two-thirds cup sweet milk

Sift dry ingredients. Measure shortening and cut into flour mixture with a pastry blender or with a fork. Stir in most of the milk. If dough isn't pliable, add rest of milk so that it makes soft puffy dough. Knead (fold over and press with heel of hand) only about six times or so on lightly floured board. (Too much kneading makes biscuits heavy.) Bake at 450 degrees for 10 or 12 minutes.

This recipe is more modern, yielding only a dozen large biscuits or so. Baking powder was considered a new invention on the frontier and while women admired the light biscuit, many men wanted some substance and weight to their bread. One form of leavening was salt and pearl ash, or potash, which was a form of potassium carbonate like soda. Sometimes no leavening at all was used. Yes, such biscuits were hard as rocks.



Buttermilk Biscuits

2 cups flour
one-half teaspoon salt
1 teaspoon sugar
one-fourth teaspoon soda
1 tablespoon baking powder
5 tablespoons shortening
1 cup buttermilk

Directions for mixing and kneading are the same as for biscuits. Cooking time is 12-15 minutes. Grease the pan and tops of biscuits with butter or bacon grease.

Most frontier wives and mothers had a large wooden bowl known as the bread bowl which was kept on the kitchen table or inside the cabinet because it was used everyday. It was never washed after making biscuits or bread but left with whatever flour remained inside it after mixing the recipe. When the cook was ready, she got handfuls of flour from the fifty-pound sack and then pinched, scooped or poured in other ingredients using the "guess" method, (which, incidentally, never failed). This she mixed with her hands.

Remember, too, that food was cooked in the hearth of a fireplace or in a wood burning cast-iron stove. Keeping wood cut for fireplaces and carried inside for ready use was the chore of older children.

"The prairie-grass dividing, its special odor breathing.
I demand of it the spiritual corresponding.
Demand the most copious and close comopanionship of men.
Demand the blades to rise of words, acts, beings,
Those of the open atmosphere, coarse, sunlit, fresh, nutritious,
Those that go their own gait, erect, stepping with freedom and command, leading not following. . . ."

Walt Whitman: "The Prairie-Grass Dividing"

"Read the best books first, or you may not have a chance to read them at all."

Henry David Thoreau

"The highest result of education is tolerance."

Helen Keller

2004 Membership Application
Westlake Historical Preservation Society

Annual dues of $25.00 will entitle members to Westlake's historical journal, **The Pathfinder**, published each fall. Membership benefits also include an invitation to special events hosted by the Westlake Historical Preservation Society. All who join in 2004 will be considered Charter Members of the Society.

Name _____

Street _____

City, State, Zip _____

Phone Number: _____ Fax Number: _____

If you would like to receive notices of special events via e-mail, please include you address below. Your e-mail address will not be shared outside the Society.

E-Mail Address: _____

The Westlake Historical Preservation Society, A Non Profit Organization, Gratefully Accepts Donations To Further The Work Of Historical Preservation. Your Contribution Is Tax Deductible And Your Name Will be Entered On A Permanent Scroll As Evidence Of Your Support Of Local History.

❖ $150.00 ❖ $100.00 ❖ $50.00 ❖ Other _____

Please mail this form along with your check for membership, plus whatever donation you wish to give to The Westlake Historical Preservation Board, 2650 J.T. Ottinger Road, Westlake, Texas 76262.

For more information call 817.490.5710
or e-mail Ginger Crosswy at gcrosswy@westlake-tx.org