

# Upper Plum Creek or Sunnyside Elementary School



**This school had grades 1-8. The Misch kids had to spend at least 2 years at the Catholic school in Independence in order to get first holy communion. Classes ran from 9:00 -4:00. In some of the schools in this area they let the youngest kids out a half hour early because they couldn't walk as fast.**

## Saints Peter & Paul School. 1910



Boarding house for this school.



The average number of kids attending this 8 grade school was 240. There were 6 classrooms/nuns. They would run the grades together. 1&2, 3&4, 4&5, 5&6, 6&7, 7&8. Depending on enrollment this varied from year to year.



# Saints Peter & Paul Church





# Zimmer/Farmers School

Agnes may have attended this school

## ZIMMER /FARMERS SCHOOL -- DISTRICT 2

Farmers School of Travis Valley had the distinction of being the only school in the county named for the predominate occupation of the community. Although it was called "Farmers" School for almost fifty years, it was originally named after District 2's first clerk, John Jacob Zimmer.

John Zimmer and his wife, Margaret Wunderlich, came to Trempealeau County in 1865 with a government land grant given to Mr. Zimmer for his participation in the Civil War. Enlisting in the 12th Wisconsin Battery in 1862, he was wounded in the leg at Corinth and later discharged. Settling in Travis Valley, the Zimmers farmed and were instrumental in planting woodlots on their land and encouraging others to do so as well. At this time the valley and hillsides were bare of any tree cover, it having been burned regularly by the Indians. The Zimmers farmed until 1892 when they retired. Their daughter, Eliza, married a member of another pioneer family of the Independence area, Giles Cripps, Jr.

Other early settlers in the valley were Jessie and Lovell Kidder, Elias and Albert Spaulding, Frank and L.D. Tubbs, Theodore Hutchins, John Raymond, Irving and Washington Vance, John Bugby, Martin Jellen and Warren Post. A Mormon elder by the name of Isaac Hickey stayed for a brief time in the valley. The first Polish settler was Theodore Sluga.

The school records start in 1865, written in the beautiful, flowing penmanship of John Zimmer. It is not known what the first school looked like, but it was probably a small, rough structure. In 1866 a stove was purchased to heat the school. \$16.50 was raised to pay for it, plus \$1.00 to have it freighted in from Eau Claire. The first two teachers were W. Mayess and W.P. Mosier, teaching a split term of five months. One year later, improvements such as glassed in windows were made to the school and Mary Daniels and D. Rogers were hired as teachers. (Male teachers were usually recorded by their initials and taught the winter term when the older, rougher boys would attend classes.) In 1868 school books were bought for \$33.60--a hefty sum in those days. The school was repaired and Albert Rathburn built a privy in 1869. That same year, John Zimmer was paid \$1.00 to draft a plan for a new schoolhouse. Mr. Zimmer donated one acre of land to build the school on and it was known as the "Zimmer School". In 1873 a new school was built (or the old one was added on to, it is not made clear in the school records). Whatever the case, John Zimmer was paid \$50.00 for his work in constructing the building. James Reid recorded spending \$100.00 for materials and \$21.90 for a new stove. Members of the community donated their time and labor to hew lumber for the schoolhouse. The first teachers in the new school were Laura Campbell, Kate Maloney and Warren Post.

Over fifty students were enrolled at the Zimmer School in the 1870's, and their ages varied from seven to twenty-five. Several of the men were married and had families of their own but wanted an education. Many had lacked the opportunity to do so earlier in their lives and would attend the winter terms. The school children of Travis Valley came to school speaking a variety of languages. Some spoke "Low Dutch", others German, Polish, Swedish and Norwegian. The teachers would start by teaching the English



alphabet and grammar and then went on to arithmetic and geography. Over the years the school was equipped with new items--a globe was purchased in 1879, maps the same year and a flag in 1894. The building was kept up with new plaster applied by William Dota in 1880, new shingles nailed to the roof by K. Nelson and an exterior paint job in 1886. Different men of the community were hired to build a furnace fire on cold mornings in the winter so the school would be warm for the teacher and her pupils. Every fall the foundation of the building was carefully banked with straw or leaves to keep out winter drafts. The outhouse was cleaned and whitewashed every year and A.J. Bautch of New City repaired the school pump in May of 1899.

The farmers of Travis Valley prospered and by 1904 they decided to build a new schoolhouse. John Schneider was hired to do the construction. Made of brick, the school was built over a full basement. John Hunt hauled the rocks and sand for the basement and John Konter did the cement work. New seating was installed in the place of the old benches and non-adjustable seats used by the students. Maud Hunt and John Weideman were the first teachers in the new school. Zimmer School at this time was one of the finest, best-equipped rural schools in the county and people of District 2 were justifiably proud of it. The name change to Farmers School is thought to have taken place at the time of the opening of the new schoolhouse, although the records made no mention of it. Two major pieces of equipment added during the 1920's were a Victrola in 1923 and a telephone in 1925. The school attendance held steady at twenty to thirty pupils until the 1940's when it started to drop off. Herman Pape was contracted to bus the Travis Valley students to school until 1954 when the school was closed and became part of the Independence district. The building was torn down and today no trace remains of the fine school built on the banks of Travis Creek.

#### Teachers

1866	W. Bayess & W.P. Mosier	1898	Ella Carlson & Clara Eichman
1867	D. Rogers	1902	F. Hunt
1868	Frances Ingalls	1904	Mina Hunt
1870	Mary Daniels	1907	John Weideman & Maud Hunt
1871	W. Masuire & Emily McKenny	1908	Lizzie Van Slyke
1873	Daniel Gault	1909	Ida Rogers
1874	Laura Campbell	1910	Sadie Cole
1874	Kate Maloney & Warren Post	1911	Aurie Nichlai
1875	Hannah Duckers	1913	Emma Scholz
1876	Ella Burt	1914	Edith Rossman
1879	Hattie Pierce	1915	William Huettel
1880	Ellen Shaw	1917	Mary Harndon
1882	Alice McKiverngin	1919	Miss Truax & O. Bosse
1884	Henry Ashton & Ella Rainey	1920	Mae Klein & Albert Bautch
1887	Ella Parker & Alice Allen	1921	Ingeborg Tweet
1888	Maggie Ashton & Jessie Bennet	1922	Verda Cantlon
1889	Isabel Martin	1924	Mary Jellen
1890	Lewis Runkel	1925	George Filla
1892	Lilla Bennet	1926	Agnes Filla
1893	Cecilia Ziegweid	1930	Evelyn Duff
1894	Effie Olson	1931	Clifford Kwosek
1896	Charles Kidder	1933	Helen Skroch
1897	Elmer Olson	1934	Philip Roskos



1936 Theresa Walders  
 1937 Virginia Kokott  
 1938 Marcus Urbik

1940 Eugene Bautch  
 1942 Mary Elstad  
 1949-1954 Margaret Kulig

#### School Board Members

1865 John Zimmer, Clerk  
 D. Hunt, Director  
 James Reid, Treasurer

1906 Louis Lyga, Clerk

1915 Joe Bautch, Clerk

1916 Theodore Sluga, Clerk

1926 T.M. Sluga, Clerk  
 Peter Steler, Treasurer  
 Joe Bautch, Director

1954 Joe Bautch, Clerk  
 Alozy Prokop, Treasurer  
 Carl Matchey, director

#### Sources

Histories of School Districts of Trempealeau County, 1948, p. 12.

Pierce, Eben and Franklyn Curtis-Wedge, History of Trempealeau County, 1917, pp. 221, 280, 624.

School Records of District 2, Town of Burnside, 1865-1954.



Farmers School 1951. Back row left to right- John Lyga, Adolph Lyga, Herman Bautch, James Pampuch, Ivadell Powell, Janet Killian  
 Row two-Delphine Smieja, Darlene Sluga  
 Front row-Donna Powell, Nadine Powell, Phyllis Symicek, Delores Powell, Melvin Powell  
 (Photo-Margaret Woychik)