

Schools of St. Mary's Parish

Tom McCloskey Wrote about 1940

In the 1880s the schools were all Public Schools but were taught by Catholic Teachers. No. 7 was the only one in the district until around 60 years ago when the present school was built on the corner of the Malden and South Rear Roads. Then the present division between this School and No. 7 was made on the line between Ed Deehan and Robert Schwertner's. So the children from the village attended the school on the Malden Road (the writer being one of them) until No. 7 was made a Separate School. One of those who left this school to attend No. 7 was Father Arthur Finn.

The teachers who taught in the school on Malden Road were Miss Lewis, J. B. Fuerth, who later moved to Milwaukee and died there, and John Sullivan (brother of Eugene who died here recently) who is at present living in California.

The teachers who taught in No. 7 were Moran Morrison, Alfred Halford, Mary Sullivan (who later married Alfie Halford), Nellie Moynahan, Rose Barrett, Agnes McCarthy (who became a nun), Maggie Halford (Sister Vincent), John McAuliffe, Mary McCarthy (Sister Agatha), and the last to teach No. 7 school before it was built on the present site was Mary Jane McHugh (Mrs. Thomas P. McCloskey). The school was then located on the west side of the Tom Lennon farm where Pat McLean lives and it burnt down during vacation. This site was given for school purposes by James Halford who owned this property before Tom Lennon. No.2 when it was a Public school stood on the opposite side of the road on the McPharlin farm.

The other schools in the Parish were located at the corner of Highway 3 and 6th Concession and two at the extreme north side of the Parish which the children of Tecumseh Parish also attended.

There was another one on the West side of the Parish in the O'Neil settlement taught by John Moynahan who was the first Clerk of this Township (which was part of Sandwich East before) and later Clerk of Ojibway until his death. Nellie Moynahan taught the longest of any of the teachers. She taught in Byrnedale (which is in Woodslee Parish) in the school on the North Rear Road near McGuire's and in 5 & 8 and No. 7. She taught all of the R. A. Halford family including the father and mother. She also taught me and also Mrs. D. Flood and the only slap I got all the time I went to school was from her, that was shortly after I started. Something was done in the school and she could not pick out the guilty ones so she gave all of us a slap.

