

# Jackson Township

Cambria County, Pennsylvania



## Chapter 12

*Annals of Jackson Township*

**Mrs. Betty Burkhart**  
**Nanty Glo Journal**  
**June 25, 1942**

### **Final Installment On Schools**

There have been four schools in the Vinco community. The first was the small frame one-room structure that stood on the corner where the home of Walter Mackall now is, which has been mentioned, and which is now part of the Brethren parsonage. The second school, also containing one room, stood in what is now J.W. Helsel's cow pasture, close by the spot where the two-room structure was to be built later. The second little school faced the road that leads past the church, had shutters and a vestibule, and on the front wall was a slate blackboard. At either side of the front of the room the walls were painted black, as was the lower part of the rear wall which was used as a blackboard.

Among early teachers at the school were Mollie (Burkhart), James, and Loveina (Burkhart) Muller, daughters of Ephraim Burkhart, one of the first settlers in this community, who taught there eighty years ago, Hattie Gettings, James Fees, Elmer Sell, Harvey Thomas, former Sheriff Roscoe Custer, a son of Emmanuel Custer, one of the early settlers, Walter Wissinger and Abbie Hull (from Oklahoma). In more recent years Rev. J. L. Bowman, Norman Bracken, Nora (Bracken) Davis, Elsie Davis, Ida (Carney) Davis, Charles Lowman, David Funk (now pastor of the Lutheran Church at Newport, Ky.), Albert O'Connor, (now Democrat Assemblyman), Mr. McGovern, Irvin and Bess Wissinger, Rev. Earl S. Flora, Herbert Diehl and the girl he later married, Carrie (Mackall) Deihl, Grace (Varner) Stutzman and of course, many others.

The teachers did not "board around" as they did in outlying communities but usually stayed at the Custer or Wakefield homes. When Loveina (Burkhart) Muller first taught there she was 17 years of age and several of her pupils were much older than she, as most of the boys in the community attended school after the farm work was done, regardless of age. Her sister, Mollie, had been the teacher at the school but she left and Loveina finished the term. Her father had just died, the mother had gone to live with a relative. She was versatile, wrote numerous articles for a magazine and was a poet. She was also an historian and spent the latter part of her life in following that hobby. Mrs. William Keppler of Vinco is a daughter of this early school teacher.

When the one-room school was no longer large enough for the children of this fast growing community, it was sold and a two-room structure was built. The old building was bought by the constructor of the new school Web Brallier. During the construction of the new school the tiny old one was used by Mr. Brallier as a shed in which to store the tools and material he was using. Later the lumber was used for a house in Brookdale. The new building seemed allergic to fires, the third of which was final however. Shortly after the Christmas holidays in 1926 a fire started in the partition of the building and gained such headway that before help could arrive it had burned to the ground. Rev. J.L. Bowman was a teacher at the school at the time. Following the destruction of the building, the school

board which was composed of Simon Griffith, Ira Leidy, Isaac Paul, Mrs. Harris Wakefield, who was the only woman school director the township has ever had, and George Dishong made plans to erect a new building and Hersh and Sholler were hired as the architects. Before the opening of the fall term two rooms were ready for occupancy. The building is of brick and was erected at a cost of \$42,000. In recent years other rooms have been completed and now there are four rooms in use at the school with four teachers employed. A large recreation room in the basement is used by the Boy Scouts and other organizations, and another large room is used for Parent-Teacher meetings, banquets and other forms of entertainment.

When the one-room and two-room schools were still in use children would attend from three or four miles away. The children of James Singer, who lived on what is now the Gay farm, attended the school because of the drifts making it impossible to attend the Clinefelter, which would have been much closer.

School was in session four months in the year when the one-room schools were used, but later six months was the usual length. William Rose conducted a singing school at Vinco and spelling bees were something old and young enjoyed. Before the Custer hall was built, which will be mentioned later, "Literary" was often held at the school.

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