

CERTIFICATION OF TEACHERS

Pioneer teachers during the territorial days were hired as teachers if they could read, write, and cipher. Among the early settlers there were usually a few persons who were considered "well educated." Such persons were usually chosen to conduct the district school or they might even set up a private school of their own. No qualification standards were required. After the office of town superintendent was created in 1848, that official was given the power to examine and license teachers. There was no uniform examination and few town superintendents were qualified to conduct examinations. Judge Jerome Ledvina, who wrote an interesting history of the Quarry school in 1907, states that the first teacher was licensed in this manner: "She was given a Bible and told to read a verse. If she read this satisfactorily, she passed in reading. Then she was told to write the verse to qualify for the teaching of writing. Of course, they always passed in writing! She was then given a column of figures to add. If she did this correctly she passed in arithmetic, and she was then qualified to teach school!"

In 1852, the state for the first time, prescribed the form of certificate to be issued each candidate who was found qualified to teach. The form was as follows:

"I do hereby certify that I have examined _____ and do believe that he or she is qualified in regard to moral character, learning and ability to teach a common school in this town for one year from date hereof.

Given under my hand this _____ day of _____ A. D. 18 _____.

Signed _____

Town Supt. of Schools for town of _____."

The law creating the office of county superintendent of schools also provided, for the first time, general control over examinations for teachers' certificates by naming the subjects in which the applicants were to be examined for the different grades of teaching certificates to be issued by the county superintendent. An act of the legislature annulled all teaching certificates granted by town superintendents. The teaching certificates authorized under the county superintendent's act were of three grades, and were to be issued only if the applicant had "good moral character, learning, and ability to teach." The third grade certificate required "passing grades" in orthoepy, orthography, reading, penmanship, intellectual and written arithmetic, grammar, and geography. For a second grade certificate the subjects of physiology, physical geography, elementary algebra, U. S. history, and theory and art of teaching were also required. For a first grade certificate all of the above subjects plus algebra, geometry, and philosophy had to be passed.

Just what a "passing" mark for teachers in 1877 was is indicated by examining a third grade certificate issued by Supt. W. A. Walker to P. H. Lynch and reproduced in full here:

Common Schools of Wisconsin,

MANITOWOC COUNTY

Teacher's ~~Third~~-Grade Certificate.

It is ~~hereby~~ *certified*, that *P. H. Lynch* has passed a satisfactory examination upon all points required by law, for a ~~third~~ *Third* Grade Certificate, and he is licensed to teach in the town of _____ until one year after the date hereof, unless this Certificate be sooner annulled. The following is his standing in the several branches, upon a scale of 100

Pronunciation, 70	Grammar, 63	Physiology, }
Orthography, 64	Geography, 58	Physical Geography, }
Reading, 62	U. S. History, 32	Algebra, }
Penmanship, 49	Constitutions of the United States and the State of Wisconsin, 46	Philosophy, }
Int. Arithmetic, 44	Theory and Art of Teaching, 57	Geometry, }
Written Arithmetic, 58		

Manitowoc, Wis., Oct 2, 1877. *W. A. Walker*
County Superintendent of Schools.

The standards for the three grades of teachers' certificates were raised as the years went by. New subjects were added and by 1939, when spring and summer teachers' examinations were discontinued in Manitowoc county, a second grade teachers' certificate was issued if the applicant had a certain amount of professional training and a minimum of 80 in practice and 75 in all other subjects. A first grade teaching certificate was issued after a certain amount of professional training and a minimum of 85 in practice and 80 in all other branches. Second and third grade certificates were good for one year, while a first grade was issued for two year periods. All certificates were limited to the county in which they were issued.

After 1909, an applicant not only had to pass a teachers' examination but also had to attend a professional school for teachers for at least six weeks. Six years later, an applicant for a teachers' license had to be an eighth grade graduate and have at least two years of schooling beyond that, one year of which had to be devoted to professional training. By 1919, the state required two years of high school and one year of professional training. This standard was raised two years later to high school graduation and one year of professional training. In 1939, high school graduation plus two years of training were required of rural teachers. After 1939, the power of issuing teaching certificates by the county superintendent was abolished and all teacher certification was placed in the hands of the state superintendent of schools.

Teacher certification by the Manitowoc county superintendent of schools after 1902 was reduced to a minimum with the establishment of a teachers' training school, now the County Rural Normal. Teachers' examinations were continued up to 1939 but primarily for the purpose of raising the grade of teaching certificates. By 1920, third grade teaching certificates were almost non-existent in our county. Second grade certificates could be renewed every three years when credits in two first grade certificates had been secured by summer school attendance or by examination. First grade certificates were renewable every five years. All certificates after 1918 could be renewed if the teacher did the necessary reading circle work for teachers in addition to the other requirements given above. After 1939, teaching certificates could be renewed every seven years if the applicant had completed an extra year of professional work during that span of time. This requisite applied to teachers with less than four years of professional work.

COURSES OF STUDY, GRADATION, TEXTS, AND LIBRARIES

The first pioneer schools set up in Manitowoc county were concerned with teaching the children the 3 R's of reading, writing, and arithmetic. Any grown person who could pass a very easy examination in these three subjects could be a teacher if he or she wished! The subjects of reading, writing, arithmetic, and grammar were the principal ones taught until the early 1850's. Geography was added to the course in the 1850's, but the district board was given authority to add such "other branches" as it might deem advisable and necessary. The return of the soldiers after the Civil War brought a demand for the teaching of history and civics. Thus by 1870, spelling, reading, arithmetic, U. S. history, geography, grammar, and in some schools physiology were the subjects taught.

The nineteenth century county school children were not graded as they are today. The irregular attendance of the children plus the intelligence levels existing then, as it does today, made advisable the division of the pupils into A, B, C, D, E, and up to O classes. These divisions were further grouped into primary, intermediate, and upper forms. The A class in the primary form was made up of children in the primers. Those in the upper form were considered the advanced students and were the ones who usually took the teachers' examination. Definite requirements for advancement of pupils from one form to another were set up as early as 1880. (For a citation of these standards, the daily school program, and other interesting educational facts, see the Teacher's Daily Register, No. 822, published by Donohue and Henneberry of Chicago.)

The system of grading pupils into Grade 1 to 8 inclusive was instituted about 1910. Separate classes for each grade were conducted daily with the first and second grades spending their time learning to read and speak the English language. The fifth to the eighth grades were by 1915 studying grammar, orthoepy, physiology, mental arithmetic, U. S. history, civil government, written arithmetic, geography, agriculture, spelling, reading, and nature study. As the years passed, the state legislature required the teaching of more and more subjects which eventually necessitated the grouping of subject matter under more inclusive headings. An example of such grouping is the placing of agriculture, nature study, physiology and health under a science course. To further cut down on the twenty-eight classes which a rural school teacher had to teach by 1930, a system of "block" teaching was inaugurated. In "block" teaching all