GIBSON

Gibson township was added to Manitowoc County in 1850 and was originally a part of Mishicot. It remained a part of Mishicot township until 1858 when the town of Gibson was organized. While it was a part of Mishicot, school districts were set up in the combined township. The Gibson school districts were numbered to conform to the combined Mishicot area of 1850 to 1858. After Gibson became a township by itself in 1858, the school districts were re-numbered from Number 1 to 7 inclusive.

GIBSON 1 — LARRABEE
Marion Novachek

Early in the year of 1858, Darius Peck, Ben and John Birdsell, and several other families came to this area from Gibson, Pennsylvania. The post office in their old home in the East was called Larrabee, so these early English settlers called this little settlement Larrabee. As the school for district No. 1 is located in this village, it is only natural that the official name of Larrabee school be given to it.

This area at one time was a part of the Mishicot township. Then this district was set up as Mishicot district No. 2, but when Gibson became a township by itself in 1858, this district became Gibson school district No. 1. Since its organization many changes have occurred to its boundaries, especially to the south when Gibson Jt. 7 was set up.

The first settlers found a need for a store and a school. Wencil Charvat built the store at the location of the present Graycarek garage. The post office located in the present Wencil Ramesh home west of the village was moved to this store, because it was more convenient to get the mail at the store. This post office continued in operation until the rural free delivery began.

The English settlers in this community built their first school somewhere east of Larrabee. Just where it was located seems to be unknown. It was said to have been one of the first schools in the town of Gibson. Much of the early history of this school was furnished by Mrs. Leopold Kind and Mrs. Henry Heap since it was not until 1883 when Charles Kind moved to Larrabee and became the district clerk, that written records were kept.

It is supposed that the first school was a log building, but nothing is known of its size or just how it was erected. Mrs. Kind and Mrs. Heap remember that the seats, desks, and blackboards were hand-made and that the rest of the furniture and equipment were meager and crude. Since this was the only public building in this vicinity, it was used for religious purposes. If a funeral was to be held, the pupils were dismissed. Later, about 1875, a Methodist church was built. That has been abandoned, moved to the village, and is now used as a blacksmith shop. The church was very likely located north of the village because there is an abandoned cemetery there.

The second school was erected in 1884-5. The electors decided to buy one acre of land from Wencil Charvat for $20. This site was across the road from the present schoolyard. Leopold Kind supervised the construction of the building. He and his brother did the carpenter work, hired the masons, and the other helpers. The total cost of the brick school was $551.98. The school was about 24 x 30 feet with four windows for each long side. The front of the building had one door leading into a combination cloak and storage room. The classroom was furnished with double desks, a stove, and the usual equipment of a school for that period. The old building is still standing at the location where it was erected, for when the present building was erected, the school site and brick school were sold to Fred Graycarek. He is using the building for a storage garage and the yard for a storage space.

The third and present modern brick building was erected in 1920-21. In preparation for the building of the new school, the voters in 1919 authorized the purchase of one acre of land from John Fimmel for $500. It was also voted to dig the basement that fall and to begin building early in the spring of 1920. The new school is modern in all respects, having a full basement divided into lavatories, furnace, fuel, and play rooms. The entrance way has a stairway leading to the basement and one leading to
the main floor cloakroom. From this semi-partitioned cloakroom two doors lead to a large classroom with windows from the left and rear. A library alcove on the west houses a well-built library cupboard to store texts and library books. A small teacher’s room is also provided off the classroom. The schoolroom itself is equipped with bulletin and blackboards, a piano, radio, electric lights, single adjustable desks, maps, and all of the best and latest teaching and learning aids.

Gibson No. 1 has maintained a school with a continued large enrollment throughout the past decade. During the later 1800’s, between 40 and 60 pupils attended yearly, but by the first years of the 1900’s, there were over 60 enrolled. The lowest attendance records were for the early 1940’s when only about 20 pupils attended. The number of children enrolled during the early 1870’s was high because the total number attending for the winter and summer sessions was given.

In its 90 years of existence, the Larrabee district has had thousands of pupils become leaders in this and other communities. Louis Sediacek, the present town chairman, lives in the district as did Harvey Strouf, the present clerk of circuit court. Teachers have come from the Maly, Rehbein, Finnel, Novachek, Kasten, and Chaloupka families. Schoolboard members in 1863 were Charles Kind, Darius Peck, and John Smith. In 1885 when the second school was built, the board consisted of clerk Chas. Chatterton, treasurer Chas. Burt, and director Darius Peck. Others serving on the board before 1906 were R. McCollum, Luther Pellett, Alfred and Henry Heap, John Strouf, Jos. Sediacek, and Jos. Wanish.

Ambrose Pellett was said to have been the first teacher. Often two teachers—one for the summer and one for the winter term, were hired. The salaries of the teachers in the 1860’s were between $25 and $30 for each 22 day teaching month. Sanders readers, arithmetic, and spellers were used. The list of teachers is complete from 1869 to the present time. The names of the teachers who taught this school before 1906 were: Daniel McCarthy 1869, Lucille Wood and Jessie Decker 1870, S. Camright 1871, Kate Crowley and W. Hutchinson 1872, Henry Flagg 1873, Catherine Stitt and Floyd Benedict 1874, Byron Oakley 1875, Mary Honey 1876, Mira McMillan 1877-8, Mary Doutett 1879, Alice Symes 1880, May Shaw 1881-3, Ida Mason 1884, Ella Magee 1885, Ella Brown 1886, Alice Garnett 1887-88, Kate Sechrist and Lena Miller 1889, G. A. Magee 1890-1, Jos. Shambeau 1892, Susan Ludowise 1893, Lizzie Peppard 1894-5, Mat Ludowise 1896-7, Alice Thompson 1898-9, Dora Claussen 1900, H. E. Madison 1901, Wm. Samz 1902, Belle Baugniet 1903-4, and Walter Reich 1905-8. Those teaching after this date are listed in the Manitowoc County School Annuals.

This district has several places of scenic and historical interest. The Gibson town hall is located a short distance north of Larrabee. Scenic West Twin River meanders through the western boundary of this district. A cemetery to the north of the village is the final resting place of the pioneer settlers. To the east, where the newly re-located county trunk crosses the river, there are to be found the ruins of Indian camping and burial grounds. The latter historical spot is relatively unknown even to the residents of this community.

Gibson No. 1 is a community of progressive farmers and businessmen. The purchase of the feed mill in the village was one of the first cooperative businesses acquired by the Manitowoc County Farm Bureau in 1947. Leaders in this town are looking forward to the time when the Larrabee school will serve a larger community than it now does.

**GIBSON 2 — HOLMES**

Violet H. Markwardt

Gibson district No. 2 is known as the Holmes school. In 1918, the voters decided to give it this name in memory of the famous poet, Oliver Wendell Holmes, whose poems the pupils liked so well. The school is located near the southeast corner of the SW1/4 of section 11, Gibson. The land on which the school site is located was deeded to Feidel Reich by Pres. James Buchanan on February 22, 1858. One acre of this land was in turn sold to this school district for a school site for the sum of five dollars. Since it was a part of the original tract of land of the late Feidel Reich, the school was originally known as the Reich school.
Gibson No. 2 was originally a part of the township of Mishicot. The Mishicot assessment roll of 1858 shows that Gibson 2 then was called Mishicot No. 7 which included sections 1, 2, 11, 12, 13, 14, 23, 24, and the E½ of sections 3, 10, 15. After Gibson became a township by itself, this area became Gibson District 2. Today the district consists of sections 1, 2, 11, 12, 14 and most of sections 13 west of the East Twin River. When Mishicot Jt. 2 was organized in 1865, the land east of East Twin River in section 13 was attached to the Mishicot district because it was difficult for the children to cross the unbridged river to get to the Reich school.

The first one-room log school building was erected about 1858, although there are no school records available before 1872 to prove just when the building was erected. In this school the outer wraps of the pupils were hung at the back of the room. The numerous lunch pails were placed on a long bench nearby. The room was heated by a box stove. The heat from it often blistered the varnished desks nearby but did not remove the frost from the desks on the opposite side of the room. Blackboards were truly “black boards” in those days.

In 1872, the logs of the building were covered with siding and painted white. This did not add a great deal to the children’s comforts in the school, but it added a great deal to the outside appearance. As the interior walls were whitewashed, cleaning the school consisted of scrubbing the floors and wainscoting, washing the windows, cleaning the stove pipes, and whitewashing the walls—all for the sum of about five dollars.

In 1910 a belfry and a bell and an entrance hall were added to the old building. In 1913 a well was drilled by William Reif. Since the school is built on rocky land, it was necessary to go down only sixty-five feet to get good water. Before the well was drilled, water was obtained from the Hodek farm across the road. The old school was sold to Wencel Honzik, Sr., for forty dollars. He razed the building and used the lumber and timbers for a barn. The old double desks were sold at public auction for twenty-five to thirty-five cents apiece. The desks, while in use in school, caused many a quarrel between the occupants as to the exact dividing line.

On March 24, 1919, the first special meeting was held to plan for a new school. At a later meeting the type of school to build was voted upon. It was agreed that the site used up to that time was satisfactory. The new building was to be brick-veneered with a full basement consisting of a playroom and a fuel and furnace room. The first floor has a large classroom, a library alcove, and a large cloakroom. Louis Zeikner contracted to build this school for $4,940 but the cost eventually was about $5,500 due to changes and additions. To help keep down the costs the patrons agreed to do all the hauling of lumber, brick, and other materials necessary. In order that something of the old be kept in the new building, the bell was transferred to the new structure. In 1920, Stephen Rozik agreed to erect a flag pole for six dollars. The school is modern except that outdoor toilets are still in use.

The enrollment in the Holmes school from decade to decade shows the same trends as in other rural schools. During the later 1800's some of the pupils were young men women of seventeen to twenty years of age. One of the older residents states “There were more of us then, but some went to school then until they were men and women”. Since 1870, when the enrollment was sixty, the number of pupils has declined steadily about ten per decade. At the present time the enrollment has remained at about fifteen to twenty pupils.

The Mishicot assessment roll of 1858 lists the names of these early settlers for this district: John Barr, Louis Roullier, Gottlieb Winters, John Wegner, Wm. Siewert, Joseph Roullier, Dan Westcott, Fred Borcherd, Peter Hansen, Mathias Wirth, and Feidel Reich. During the past years many of the district voters have served on the school board. Those of whom there are records were: John Dobre, Geo. Eckart, John Bodwin, August Stueck, Rudolph Reich, Wencel Honzik, Henry Kempfert, and William Reich.

Records show that summer and winter terms were held in this district during the 1870's. It is interesting to note that this district usually paid more for teachers’ salaries than did surrounding districts. If a female teacher was hired, the salary ranged from twenty-five to thirty dollars per month, but if male teachers were engaged, the salary ranged from thirty to forty dollars monthly. Men teachers seemed to have been preferred as the records show these teachers as having taught in the district: Celia Fitzmaurice 1872-3; Ernest Pries 1874; Jessie Ross 1875 and 1877; Wm. Ross 1876; Aggie Scott 1878; Floyd Benedict 1879; Jos. Scheurer 1880; Jerome Craite 1882; Blanche Pelishek 1883; Wm. Brown 1884-96; Peter Federspiel 1897-98; Leona Wellip 1900; Elsa Thompson 1901; Henry Duckart 1902-04; and Adolph Kazda 1904-05. Those after 1905 are listed in the county school annuals.

The school has had many graduates since its organization. All of them have been successful in their fields of endeavor. Dr. A. F. Stueck, a physician of Manitowoc, was a former pupil. Graduates who became teachers were John and Ben Reich and Adeline Honzik. Frances Rebitz has entered governmental service in Minneapolis.
School fairs, contests, and Christmas programs have been common to the community. As far as records could be found, only one box social was ever held. At this social many beautifully decorated lunch boxes were put up for auction. The most ornately and intricately decorated lunch box was that of the teacher, but one of the young women of the district matched her artistry with the result that an embarrassing complication arose when the boxes were auctioned off. This complication was the undoing of any future plans for a box social. The members of the community are deeply interested in all functions of the school. Hot lunches were being served in cooperation with the district mothers.

The district has no places of historical interest. Branches of the East Twin River wind their way through the district and serve as picnic and fishing spots for local residents.

**GIBSON 3 — ZANDER**

Lorraine Kasten

Gibson district No. 3 is known as the Zander district because it is located a short distance from that village. The school has always been so designated. The hamlet of Zander built at a crossroad was named in memory of John Zander, one of the early settlers.

The Mishicot assessment roll of 1858, when Gibson still was a part of Mishicot, shows that the present Gibson district 3 was then made up of parts of Mishicot school districts 7 and 9. When Gibson became a township, this area became Gibson No. 3 and consisted of sections 3-4-9-10 and parts of sections 15 and 16. Since that time many boundary changes have occurred, but these sections still serve as the nucleus of the district.

The first log schoolhouse for this district was built about 1858, although there is no written record of its construction. It is known that it was located nearer Zander’s corner than the present school is. This building was sold to Helmuth Zander on September 15, 1870 for $10.50. What he did with the structure is unknown.

The second school, a frame structure, was located on the present school site, about 20 feet south of the present building. It was built in the summer of 1870 by John Ording, a local carpenter, at a cost of about $400. According to an old picture of the school, the building had no porch so the school door led directly into the school from the schoolyard. It is thought that the building was about 24 x 36 feet and one story in height. The structure had windows on the long sides. There evidently was no cloakroom so the children’s wraps were hung on hooks in the rear of the schoolroom. An addition was erected in 1885 at a cost of $340 according to county records. This addition was made necessary because of the large enrollment during the 1880’s.

The seats and desks in this school were double and constructed entirely of wood. The blackboards were just “black” boards. The building was heated by a boxstove. The rest of the equipment consisted of a water bucket, a dipper, a teacher’s desk, and a few maps — equipment common to our pioneer schools. When the voters decided to erect a modern structure for school purposes, the second school was sold to William Wachholz of Francis Creek for $90. This building became a part of the present Wachholz garage at Francis Creek.

The third and present school was built in 1916 at an approximate cost of $3,000. When erected, it was considered one of the most modern school buildings in the county. The school is about 36 x 36 feet. It has a large entry which is used as a basement entrance and the main hallway to the school. The hallway leads to a large cloakroom from which a door leads to a small storage room which is walled off from the entrance, and two doors leading to the classroom. The schoolroom which is about 22 x 34 has a large built-in bookcase along the north wall. The room is equipped with all of the latest and best teaching and learning equipment. Electric service was installed almost as soon as it was available. The basement houses a heating-ventilating plant, a fuel storage room, and a large playroom. The playground which was enlarged in 1940 by purchasing a quarter acre to the rear of the school for $50 from Chas. Spenvecek has more playground equipment than found for most county schools. The original plot of land was given to the school district in 1870. With the exception of outdoor
lavatories, the school is now considered modern and shows the pride that the community takes in its educational institution.

The Zander school was always a large school until very recently. All during the last half of the 1800's, the enrollment averaged between 60 and 80. The attendance, according to county records, has been high in proportion to the children of school age residing in the district. In the 1860's the school age pupils in the district numbered 160. In 1946 that figure had dropped to 51, just one-third of the number residing in the community 60 years ago. That is a good illustration of why rural school attendance is as low as it is at present. At one time in 1875, there were 85 pupils going to school. In the 1940's the average yearly attendance was between 20 and 30 pupils. This community is not affected by parochial schools, and yet it has experienced the same decline in enrollment as other rural schools.

Two terms of school were held until 1875. Although the district paid the highest salary in Gibson, the teachers usually stayed only for one term. The terms fluctuated from year to year. As early as 1871, a seven month term was held but that was not the average term length. It was not until 1895, that a nine month term was held. The first teacher in the old log school was said to have been William Kind, while Geo. Anderson was the first teacher in the second school and received $44.50 per month. Other teachers listed in county records as having taught this school prior to 1906 were: Wm. Ross 1870 S, Jessie F. Decker 1871, James L. Stitt 1872 and 1876, Josie Howarth 1873, Henry Flagg 1874, Harold Whitmore 1875, Ed. Brown 1877-8, James O'Hara 1879, J. B. Rick 1880, H. J. Westgate 1894, Isabel Troelsen 1895-6, Louis Troelsen 1897-8, and Geo. Sladky 1904-5.

The early classes consisted of what we now think of as grades 1 to 4. Beyond that the classes were known as "A" and "B" classes. The town clerks' reports to the county superintendents list the Sanders and the Swinton spellers, and Sanders and the New Education readers; Ray's arithmetic, Cornell's and McMurry's geography, Guffey and Swinton histories, and Wells and Kerl's grammars as common texts for the 1870's and 80's.

The district officers have retained their offices for long terms and have taken a deep interest in maintaining the best school possible. John Rick served as clerk from 1870 to 1876, while Helmuth Zander, Sr. served as treasurer from 1870 to 1900. His son, Helmuth Jr. served from 1912 to 1935. Others on record before 1906 were Clerks Wm. Zander 1877-80, H. C. Ellingbo 1880-1898, and James Holly 1904-05.

Friedrich Willert, John Zander, Knud Thompson, Sven Olson, Friederick Damrow, John Miller, Byron Markham, Peter Hansen, Gottlieb Winters, and Mathias Wirth were early Norwegian and German settlers in this community. Today there are very few of these family names remaining, being largely replaced by later settlers of Bohemian extraction. The hundreds of former pupils have gone forth from this school to become prominent farmers, teachers, businessmen, and mechanics. Among the more recent graduates who have become teachers are members of the Kasten, Foreman, Lukes, Redein, and Mueller families.

Gibson No. 3 has no important areas of scenic interest. The once thriving hamlet of Zander has become a crossroad stopping place with most of the first buildings built in the 1860's and 1870's either torn down or repaired or remodeled into homes. Many of the foundations of the first buildings remain as mute evidences of the importance of this hamlet to the community. The Zander church and public school are the two institutions which remain of all the attractions that Zander once had.

GIBSON JT. 3 — JAMBO CREEK

Esther Kasten

At the annual school meeting in 1919, the voters of this district decided to name their school the Jambo Creek district because it is located in the area where Jacques Vieu (or "Zhambol" as the Indians called him) set up one of the first trading posts in Manitowoc county along a small creek. Prior to 1919 this school was usually referred to as the Jambo school.

The present Jambo Creek district was among the first organized in Manitowoc county. It was originally a part of Mishicot No. 2. In 1858, when Gibson became a separate town,
ship, this area became Gibson district No. 7. About 1874, a small area of land was attached to this district from Kossuth and so this district became Gibson Jt. 3, because there were already joint districts 1 and 2 between Mishicot and Gibson. In 1914, when Gibson Jt. 7 was organized, this district no longer was joint with Kossuth, but it retained its designation of Gibson Jt. 3 for identification purposes only. Since its organization many changes have occurred in its boundary lines.

The first log schoolhouse was erected about 1847 and stood about one-eighth of a mile northwest of the present schoolgrounds. Nothing is known about the size of the building nor of its equipment. It is known that it was also used for a church by the residents. After having served its purpose, the school was sold to John Ploecklemann for $19. His family used it as a kitchen for many years.

The second and present school was built in 1873 at a cost of $378 and was located on the present site purchased from John Croton. At first the voters at a special meeting on April 18, 1873, voted to buy a site located at the S.W. corner of the SE1/4 of the NW 1/4 of Sec. 26 from Jos. Mann Co. That vote was rescinded at another special meeting held on September 13, 1873. The clerk's records show that at the special meeting held on October 12, 1872, the voters voted a new school building 40 x 22, with a hall 6 x 22 feet that had one outside and two inside doors. The building had to have eight windows — three on each long side and two for the front of the building. The walls were to be wainscoted up to the window sills with the rest of the walls and ceiling lathed and plastered. The school was set on a stone foundation 2 x 2 feet. The roof was to be shingled with a Star Shingle. Specifications were also voted as to size and type of sills, rafters, joints, etc. The scholars' desks were to be made of good pine or hardwood 1¼ inches thick. W. Hony and Fred Cook were appointed on the building committee to supervise the construction. In 1874, after the building was occupied, the voters voted for stone steps at the front door at a cost of $7.

A privy, 9 x 5 feet, double boarded, partitioned through the middle, and having two doors was also voted for that year at a cost of $12. The homemade desks and seats were replaced in 1883 when new patented double desks were ordered by the voters. Two of the old seats and desks were donated to the Lutheran minister and the rest were to be placed on the grounds for the "accommodation" of the pupils. A woodshed 14 x 10 x 3 feet was voted in 1882. The construction of this building was let to Ole Thiedemann for $28 which included the labor and lumber costs. In 1886, an addition 10 x 12 was ordered for the woodshed and was constructed by John Stueck for $11.50 including labor. The woodshed was framed and moved off the schoolhouse by Adolph Schwartz who is using it for a granary. A new hardwood floor replaced the pine schoolroom floor in 1894. Another toilet was built in 1896. A flag pole was first erected in 1900. The record book records the fact that yearly bids for whitewashing the schoolroom walls and for supplying firewood were let at the annual meeting. For some reason the district did not need to raise taxes during the years 1891 to 1893. Single adjustable desks and seats now in use were purchased in 1919.

In 1932, the school was remodeled to provide more conveniences. The entrance door was moved to the southwest corner of the building; a basement built, a basement heating and ventilating system installed, and a stairway to the attic provided. Electric lights were installed in 1946. Today the Jumbo Creek school is a semi-modern building with cross-lighting and outdoor toilets. It has always been a one-room school.

The school has experienced the same fluctuation in enrollment as other county schools have. In 1871 there were 74 pupils enrolled for the two terms — about 45 for the winter term and 30 for the summer term. The average enrollment in the 1800's was about 60. Today the average yearly attendance is between 15 and 20 out of a school census of about 40 children.

The clerk's record book, dating back to 1870, shows that this area was settled by Norwegians, Germans, and French. Adolphus Hudson served as school clerk from 1870 to 1894. Others serving on the school board before 1906 were Clerk Edw. Eckhardt, treasurers Geo. Wilson, Ole Thiedemann, Jos. Luiser, Camille Brouchoud, H. Hony, and John Stueck, and directors Mike Olson, Stephen Rebardz, Fred Stueck, H. Eckhardt, and Solomon Vertz.

Annual meetings were held at four, five, or six o'clock in the afternoons until 1884 when 7 o'clock was set as the meeting time. Up to 1875, annual meetings were held the last Monday in September. From 1875 to 1882, annual meetings were held the last Monday in August. After 1883, annual meetings were held the first Monday of July according to this district's records. The clerk was voted a $5 yearly salary from 1871 on while the directors and treasurer were not paid until 1874 when $5 yearly was voted for them.

This district had two terms of school until 1895 but usually one teacher was employed for both terms. The voters usually stipulated whether a male or female teacher was to be hired. The district during the 1800's raised about $250 annually for the teacher and his other expenses. The names of teachers from 1870 to 1906 are: Libbie Puffer and Peter Harrigan 1870, Thos. S. Cleary 1871, Ada Pellet and Mathew Smith.

The early records show that the American Educational Readers, Swinton’s spellers, word primers, geographies, and histories, and Robinson’s arithmetic were used. School fairs were held in the early 1900's. Later a “Community Club” was organized and meetings held in the schoolhouse.

The first three families in the district were the Wilsons, Thompsons, and Browns. The Wilson family came 100 years ago in 1845. A descendant of this family, Norman Wilson, still lives in the district. His grandparents were married in the first schoolhouse. The first white girl born in this district was a daughter of the Thompsons.

A historical marker placed on the schoolgrounds was dedicated on June 25, 1922. A bronze plaque on this stone informs the public that the first white man's trading post in Manitowoc County was established just 60 rods south of that spot by Jacques Vieu. An interesting feature of this stone is that it is shaped like Wisconsin except for Door and Kewaunee counties. The old Green Bay Trail passed the old trading post. Remains of this post still remain.

**GIBSON 4 — MAPLE VIEW**

Lydia Soukup

Gibson No. 4 was given the name of Maple View in 1918 because of the fact that there are a number of maples planted in the school yard. This school was and is sometimes still referred to as the “Brick School” because it is believed to have been the first brick school built in this area. By some of the present day residents it is often called the Lyons school since the old Lyon homestead adjoins the school site.

While the township of Gibson was a part of Mishicot up to 1858, this district was set up as Mishicot district No. 6. By 1857 the combined Mishicot-Gibson township districts were redistricted and the present Gibson No. 4 became parts of Mishicot districts Nos. 6, 9, 10. District 6 then consisted of sections 6, 7, 18, 19; district 10 included sections 5, 8, 17 and the N1/2 of section 20; while district 9 included sections 4, 9, 16 and the W1/2 of sections 3, 10, 15, all in the present Gibson township. When Gibson became a township by itself in 1858, the town was again redistricted and then this area became district No. 4, Gibson. At present the district consists of sections 5, 6, 7, 8 and parts of sections 4, 17, 18.

The first schoolhouse, a wooden structure, was erected about 1859, although there is no exact record of just when it was built because the earliest records of the district date back to September 26, 1870. No one knows how large the building was, what its cost was, or the type of structure. The site of the first school was near the present school location.

At a school meeting on August 27, 1877, a motion was made to build a new school, but action on this proposal was evidently postponed for a second meeting called on September 24 of the same year, the proposition was voted down by a vote of 18 to 11. Two years later in the spring of 1879, the first school was destroyed by fire. It is believed that this fire began as a result of burning stumps, because the woods for a distance west of the school also burned. Since school was in session when the fire occurred, the children had to walk south for a distance before reaching their homes in the western part of the district.

On June 2, 1879, a special meeting was called to discuss the problem of replacing the burnt structure. At this meeting the voters favored an immediate building program with the new school to be located on the present school site which is the southeast corner of section 6. The site, containing one-half acre, was purchased from H. Heiser for ten dollars. The building was to be brick-veneered, and each taxpayer was given the privilege of hauling one load of brick to the site, receiving $2.50 per M for his services. A building committee consisting of Gilbert Ellingboe, John Wegner, Emory Chase, Ole Mattieson, and John Duckartt was selected to supervise the con-
struction. The final cost of the building amounted to $359.87, while the furniture and equipment costs were $164.05. The school still stands today and serves the community. It has one large classroom, a spacious entry-cloakroom, no basement, four windows on each long side, a floor furnace, a built-in library, electric lights, single seats, and a steel filing cabinet. A floor furnace heats and ventilates the room. The outdoor toilets are constructed of cement blocks. A large woodshed at the rear of the school serves as a fuel and storage place.

Early attendance records show that two school sessions were held yearly—a winter and a summer term. The winter session began about October 15 and ended about March 15. The summer term of three months began in March and closed in June or July. In 1879, the district voted for a single seven month term, but in 1882 two separate terms yearly were again in vogue. By 1906 nine month school terms were established and maintained ever since. As this was one of the smaller districts of the county, the enrollment has never been as large as in some other districts. The highest attendance was 68 in the latter 1880's. The average enrollment, according to the town clerks' reports to the county superintendent, for the latter half of the 1800's was about 50. During the 1900's the enrollment has averaged about 20. At present there are 15 pupils attending school. Texts used in the 1870's were Sanders' readers and spellers, Ray's arithmetic, Montieth's geography, and Phineas' grammar.

Early settlers in this area according to the Mishicot assessment roll of 1858 were Christ Evenson, Niels Knudson, Henry Nachtwey, Ben Wood, James Hunter, Charles Johnson, Niels Christiansen, Friedrich Willert, John Landers, Knud Thompson, Sever Olson, Friedrich Damero, John Miller, Ole Christensen, Joseph Warren, Niles Anderson, Ole Evenson, William Wilson, and B. T. and Timothy Chapman. A very few of these family names are now common to the district.

Records of school officers date back to 1868. Chas. Steinbrecker is listed first, holding the office of clerk for four terms. Christopher Evenson was treasurer for five terms, while Ole Knudson was director for two terms. Others holding school offices prior to 1906 were Knud Knudson, Emory Chase, John Wegner, Wm. Eggert, Nick Heiser, and Anton Mathieson.

The first teacher on record was Mary Spencer in 1870. Other teachers in order of their succession of which there are records were: Sarah Eatough 1870; Ada Robinson 1871; James L. Stitt 1872; Ella B. Ross 1873; Henry Walsh 1874-5; Leroy Backus 1876; Mamie Richardson 1877; Lizzie Kelley 1878; E. K. Gibson 1879-84; Katie Finnegam 1894-96; Dora Clausen 1897; M. Ludouise 1898; Julia Evenson 1904; and Olga Nelson 1905. The salaries of female teachers in the 1880's averaged about $25 per month, while male teachers received about $30 monthly.

The school curriculum in 1871 advocated the following: alphabet, spelling, reading, writing, orthography, grammar, mental and practical arithmetic, and primary and intermediate geography. History was added later. A notation in one of the old school registers noted that the scholars had difficulty with the subject of history. There were no grades, but there were three divisions or "forms" consisting of primary, intermediate, and upper forms.

School fairs were conducted in the early 1900's. Various garden products were brought, judged, and prizes awarded. These fairs were concluded with a program given by the school children or by a box social. These gatherings were featured events and participated in by old and young alike.

**GIFFON 5 — LAKESIDE SCHOOL**

*Emma Rehbein*

Gibson district No. 5 was given the name of Lakeside because it is located near the shores of Mott's, Ording's, and Herman's lakes. By old-timers it is often referred to as the Mott school because of the close connections that three generations of Motts had with this school.

This district was set up about 1859 according to district records. When Mishicot and Gibson were one township up to 1858, the present Gibson No. 5 was parts of Mishicot school districts numbers 6, 8, and 10 according to the Mishicot as-
sessment roll of 1858. After Gibson became a township this area became Gibson No. 5. At this time the district consists of parts of sections 17, 18, 19, and 20, all in Gibson. The land on which the school is now located was purchased by Henry Taylor from the government in 1850 at $1.25 per acre. It was sold to Felix Walsch in 1853 and in turn to James Hunter in 1857. On January 26, 1861, James Hunter leased one-half acre of the S.E. corner of the SE¼ of section 18 to Gibson No. 5 for school purposes for $5.25.

The first schoolhouse was a frame building located on the present Jos. Ramesch farm adjacent to the present school site. No record is given as to its size or cost. The schoolroom furniture was crude and locally made. There were no blackboards. The teacher's salary was about $9 a month, and the total expense of running the school for a year was about $59. When the second school was built, the old structure was used as a home for a short time and is now used as a granary.

The second frame schoolhouse was located on the present school site. No report was given as to what year this was erected, but it is believed to have been before 1870 because no record of expenditure for a new building is made in the town clerk's reports to county superintendent of schools from 1870 to 1885. Nothing is known regarding the size, cost, and other interesting construction facts. The building was furnished as crudely as the first school was. The members of the building committee were Jason Pellet, Michael Smith, Jim Hunter, and John McMullen. When this building was abandoned, the lumber was used to build the woodshed.

The third and present school was voted for at the annual school meeting held July 28, 1888. The voters decided to raise $200 to build the new school, and Harry Wood was chosen as the building contractor. The structure was to be brick-veneered, 22 x 24 feet and cost about $1,000. Ralph Peterson and George Mott were appointed as members of the building committee. Residents received $3 per thousand for hauling brick and lumber, and $2 per day for short hauls. After this school was in operation the walls were whitewashed and the room cleaned yearly for $3. By 1911, it cost $25 to do the same work plus cleaning up the schoolyard. Cordwood was obtained for firewood in 1882 for 69 cents, but by 1907 the price had risen to $2.40 per cord. A well was dug for about $40 in 1897. Evidently this water supply was unsatisfactory for in 1907, at a school meeting, $300 was raised for digging a well. In 1910, a new woodshed was built, and in 1915, the sum of $400 was raised to build an eight-foot addition to the front of the school. This addition was and is now used as the cloakroom for the boys and girls. The front porch was added to the building a few years later.

The schoolhouse now is 22 x 32 feet in size and has one large classroom and a cloakroom. There is no basement, so a floor furnace furnishes heat and ventilation. Cross-lighting, that is window lighting from both sides of the room, is prevalent. The room equipment consists of modern seats and desks, a built-in library, space, plenty of black and bulletin board space, and much of the best learning and teaching aids. The other schoolyard buildings consist of a woodshed and outdoor toilets. Some playground equipment is available.

During the first fifty years of this school, boys and girls from six to twenty years of age attended. The older pupils attended in winter and stayed home to help on the farm when the weather was favorable. The records in the county office show that this was never a very large school. In 1870 there were 51 pupils enrolled. The average from that time to 1905 was between 35 and 45, although the records show that in 1889, for some unexplained reason, the enrollment was only 17. Parochial schools have little effect on the attendance in this school, yet other rural factors have decreased the enrollment to an average of about 12 for the past few years.

The early settlers consisted of a mixture of nationalities, as the following family names will denote: Jason Pellet, Henry Taylor, Benedict Meyer, Felix Walsch, Michael Smith, Jim Hunter, John McMullen, Charles Johnson, and Christian Nelson. In more recent years, new families have moved into the district and a few family names of the early residents remain. Some graduates since 1910 who have become teachers are Edward Ramesh, Viola Ording, and John Kunz.

The first school officers of 1859 were Charles Johnson, Jason Pellet, and Christian Nelson. Others who served from 1872 to 1906 were Clerk John Johnson 1872 to the 1880's; Forrest Palmiter, Ralph Peterson, and Frank Kriwanek from about 1886 to 1894; and Peter Bartelme, D. Strouf, and Martin Nelson from 1896 to 1906. Wenzel Ramesh and later his son have held the office of school treasurer since 1904.

The records kept by some past county superintendents prior to 1906 indicate that shorter terms of schools were held yearly than in most schools nearby. The teachers' salaries also were below average, consequently frequent changes in the teacher personnel were evident. The names of teachers on record are: Lottie M. Walker 1872, James B. Monaghan 1873, James L. Stitt 1874, Genie Clark taught 3 months in 1875, Hattie Richter 1876, Ettta Solberg 1877, C. C. Blake 1878, Mary E. Burke 1879, Martha

The town clerks’ reports to the county superintendent of schools state that Sanders spellers and readers, Rays arithmetic, Montieths geography, Pinnias and Kerls grammars, and Swintons history were used before 1900. Emphasis was put upon the teaching of the “three R’s”. There are school records that indicate that some books were read at least three times during the school term. By 1915, the school had only 239 library books.

Because of the many lakes and streams in this area, the earliest settlers supplemented their earnings by trapping and hunting fur-bearing animals. When Jason Pellet purchased the present Wenzl Ramesh farm, there was a small store and post-office in the present Ramesh house. That house was built for a hotel and depot because the railroad now connecting Maribel and Manitowoc was expected to take the route of the present highway 147. This district also had a small village called “Sleepy Hollow” along the West Twin River which runs through the southwestern part of Gibson 5. This village was located on or near the present Otto Strouf farm. Michael Smith and John McMullen owned a water-powered mill in that village. The remains of this mill are still in evidence. Several homes which were built in Sleepy Hollow are now no longer in existence.

GIBSON JT. 6 — MELNIK
Dorothy Hamernik

The first settlers in the present Gibson Jt. 6 district migrated from Melnik, Czecho-slovakia. The little settlement in this district was named in memory of their European village. When schools were officially named in 1918, it was only natural to designate this as the Melnik school.

Gibson district No. 6 was first organized as Mishicot district No. 8 which included the present sections 29, 30, 31, 32, and the W ¼ of 33 in Gibson. After Gibson became a township by itself, this area became Gibson school district No. 6. Changes have occurred in the original boundaries as time went on. It was not until 1908 that this district became Gibson Joint 6 when an area of land in Cooperstown was attached.

Written records for this school date back only to 1916. Most of its history was obtained from the older residents and from town and county records. On October 25, 1858, Jos. Richtarik and wife Katherine sold to the district for a school site the S.W. corner of the S.W. ¼ of section 28 for the sum of $30. That is still the school site at the present time.

District residents state that a part of the present building was the original school erected about 1859. It is said to have been built by Anton Kriwanek, a farmer in this district, for the sum of $600, which included labor and building materials. The pioneer residents offered to help in any way possible. Mr. Kriwanek furnished the logs for lumber from his wooded tract. He also agreed to saw these logs into lumber, as he operated a grist and sawmill on the West Twin river. The ruins of these mills are still in evidence.

The original building was about 24 x 28 feet with three windows on each long side. An entrance door led into a cloakroom. The classroom itself was small, poorly-lighted, and poorly heated. The desks were homemade affairs consisting of long benches or planks placed on wooden blocks. These were later replaced with manufactured double desks and seats. Ordinary pine boards about 3 x 12 feet and painted black were the blackboards. A boxstove in the room made the winter days fairly comfortable. A pail and dipper dispensed the drinking water obtained from a neighbor’s well.

With the coming of more settlers and with the increase in the size of families, the little frame school was becoming over-crowded. By 1900, conditions were such that more room had to be provided. Accordingly, the voters authorized an addition
to the original building. The new part, about 14 feet long, was added to the north end of the old building by Frank and Chas. Rezek for the sum of $378. At about the same time a small entrance shed was built on the front of the building. Thus the school built almost 90 years ago with the addition made in 1898 serves the community today.

The building now has a modern heating and ventilating floor furnace located in the southwest corner of the classroom; single, adjustable, pedestal-type desks; a piano and radio; a steel filing case; movable bookcases; modern recitation chairs; and sanitary drinking and hand washing facilities. The entrance shed leads into a narrow hallway with doors leading to two cloakrooms. This district was one of the first to provide electric lights. A well was drilled in 1946, the first for the school. The school yard has toilets to the rear and a fuel shed a few feet west of the front of the school. A few pieces of playground equipment are placed to the front of the yard.

The enrollment in the Melnik school has been fairly constant during the past twenty years. Before the organization of Kossuth Jt. 1 and Gibson Jt. 7, the enrollment became so large that an addition to the school was made necessary. At one time, the matter of organizing as a graded school was considered. County records indicate that the largest enrollment occurred in 1900 when 88 pupils out of a school census of 118 children were in attendance. Today the number of pupils enrolled yearly averages between 20 and 30 out of a census of about 50. Parochial schools have not affected this district because none are located nearby.

Early settlers came to this community from Bohemia. County and local records list the following as pioneers of this district: Jos. Richtarik, John and Wm. Shimonek, Nicholaus Kreis, Jos. Londo, Frank Bohacek, Wm. Pfefferkorn, Wencil Shimonek, Jos. Shara, Caspar Bouda, Anton Lamach, Frank Witt, Emil Kretche, Richard Kubichka, Stephen Dvorak, Gustave Knuth, and Anton Kriwanek. The third, fourth, and fifth generation of many of these settlers are now residing in this community.

The administration of local school affairs has always been placed in the hands of capable residents. The Spevaceks—John Sr., John Jr., and the present Stanley Spevacek, as well as the Hlinkas—Frank Sr., Joseph, and Frank J., have served consecutively on the board. Other residents serving were Jos. Shara 1872-76, John Shimonek 1876-79, Albert Kazda 1879-, Jos. Zivney, Fred Shimonek, Wenzel Podhola, and Milo Dushek also were board members before 1906.

The first teacher in the Melnik school, Chas. Kind, is said to have come from eastern Germany. To get to this school he had to wade across a nearby creek. During the rainy season, he usually removed his footwear and carried them to school. The second teacher was said to have been a Mr. Kolacny. Others listed in county records were Geo. L. Anderson 1872-3; Viroqua Sheldon 1874-5; J. P. Donohue 1876, James O'Hara 1877, Minnie Richardson 1878, Bridget Patnode 1879, Emma Gibson 1880, John Gruber 1894-5, C. J. Mulcahey 1896-7, Jos. J. Gruber 1898, Chas. Skwore 1899, Anton Knutson 1904, and Wm. J. Gill 1905. Others teaching this school prior to 1906 were a Mr. Shimonek, John Shambeau, and Clara Zentner. County records show also that summer and winter sessions were common during the first 20 years of this school. Even after that the five and six month terms were divided by short vacations when the weather and roads were bad.

The pioneer school children had no grades as we have today. The subjects were limited to reading, spelling, arithmetic, geography, and history. Later the subjects of constitution, physiology, and agriculture were added. During the years when Clara Zentner taught this school, the pupils carried on debates with the Greensstreet and Larrabee schools. School fairs at which agricultural products and school work were displayed for prizes were held in the early 1900's. Later on in the 1920's, the pupils from this district took part in town and county spelling and achievement contests. Many prizes and honors were captured by the Melnik pupils.

Early district industries were located along the river north of the school. Anton Kriwanek carried on a thriving grist and sawmill business when this district was first settled. Later a trout hatchery was established along this same river. The business places at Melnik were razed by fire in the 1920's. Mail was gotten from Francis Creek, Larrabee, and Melnik as the years passed. At the time of the first settlement, a post rider brought mail twice a week from Francis Creek. The Melnik post office was established in the 1890's and discontinued when the rural free delivery system became common. Today mail is gotten from Maribel. A well-known proving ground for early cars was Rezek's hill just north the school. Pioneer cars that could climb Rezek's hill on high were considered outstanding and their owners boasted loud and long about the feat. Today Gibson Jt. 6 is a community of prosperous farmers faced with the problem of how and in what way to meet the present and coming trends in rural education with their building erected almost a century ago.
The last school district set up in the township of Gibson was Gibson Joint 7. The district has land in the townships of Gibson, Mishicot and Kosuth. It originally was part of Gibson No. 1, Gibson Jt. 3, Kosuth 5, Kosuth 1, Kosuth Jt. 1 and Mishicot Jt. 4. A casual glance at the district boundary lines will indicate what is meant by a gerrymandered district, since few political lines were followed in setting up the school district in 1914. There seemed to be several reasons for the creation of this new school district. The remoteness of some families from the existing schools seemed to be the main reason.

It is a historical fact that there was a Gibson District No. 7 in another part of the township of Gibson. The school history of Jambo Creek, Gibson Jt. 3, reveals the fact that that district was Gibson Jt. 7, joint with Mishicot, from the time of its organization until about the year 1874 when that district became Gibson Jt. 3. From 1874 on up to 1914 there was no Gibson Jt. 7.

On the sixth day of June, 1914, a meeting was called by Joseph Peroutka at his home for the purpose of organizing a new school district, of electing district officers, and of transacting other necessary matters pertaining to the establishment of the new school. The meeting was well attended and much business was transacted.

At the first meeting at the Peroutka home, the first school officers were elected. They were Clerk Joseph Peroutka, Director John Bouda, and Treasurer John Fischer. It was decided also to build the school house on one acre of land to be purchased from Joseph Kronforst who lived on the farm now owned by Frank Kunz. The location of the building was to be at the northern extremity of the newly formed district where many of the farm homes were situated. It was built on the present County Trunk Q, about a mile west of Fischerville and two miles north of Kings Bridge. The school has been identified as the Fischerville School by residents of this and the surrounding communities. In 1919 the school was named the River View School because of the view of the West Twin River which flows past the school.

Immediately after the first meeting preparations were made to build. The school was constructed of cement blocks and cost $3,300 when completed. It has a full basement and a main floor of one class room and the usual entry and cloak rooms. It has always remained a one-room rural school.

School began in October in the fall of 1914. Roy Sievert, recently deceased, was the first teacher. His salary at that time was $48.00 a month. He was succeeded after two years by Henry Kliment, who now operates a store and tavern at Brockville. The other teachers who taught this school were: Emily Shimak, Ed. Ramesh, Germaine Sinkular, Kathryn Z. Wirtz, Norma F. Stueck, Esther Schroeder, Eugene Peroutka, Elsie Maas, Lester Kornely, George McKeough, Virginia Brandl, and Ruby Skarda.

About twenty-five pupils were enrolled the first year of school. The greatest number enrolled was 47 while the smallest number was eight. The present enrollment averages ten pupils. The small enrollment now is due to the fact that many older residents now reside in the district and due to other factors.

In 1920, the school board set aside a certain sum yearly to be used for prizes to be given at the school fairs which were held each fall. The people of the district exhibited choice selections of fruits, vegetables, and grains, while the pupils had their school work on display. In 1922 a box social was held in the schoolhouse. The money derived from the affair was used to purchase a victrola. During the years from 1920 to 1925, hot lunches were served to the pupils for dinner.
In its thirty-four years of existence the school has had only eleven of its patrons serve on the school board. Those who served in addition to the first ones named above were: Anton Kettner, Frank Kunz, Anton Rozum, Ed. Chaloupka, James W. Kunz, Henry Zeman, Wencil Kouba, Geo. Mott. Anton Kettner, Anton Rozum, and James Kunz have served from fifteen to twenty-five years.

The district has little in the way of scenic or historical interest. The West Twin River affords the residents fishing and camping sites. The area is rich in gravel deposits which are used extensively in county and town road building projects. Fischer-ville, once-a popular gathering place, has gone the way of many other early villages.