MEEME

The township of Meeme was one of the four original townships organized from the Manitowoc county area of 1848. It then consisted of the present townships of Schleswig, Meeme, Centerville, and the south one-third of Eaton, Liberty, and Newton. It was not until 1850 that Centerville was detached and Meeme limited to the present townships of Meeme and Schleswig. The township of Abel (Schleswig) was detached from Meeme in 1855. The first school districts in the original areas included in Meeme township were organized around the settlements along the old Green Bay military road, now highway 42. The first districts were set up in the Osman and Meeme villages. The numbering of the districts is explained in the individual district school articles.

MEEME JT. 1 — PIGEON RIVER

Marion Wesener

Meeme Joint district No. 1 was given the name of Pigeon River school because it is located near a branch of that river. It is usually called the Olm school because it is near the Olm homestead.

Meeme school districts numbers 1 and 5 were one district in the 1850’s. The schoolhouse for this combined district stood on the county line opposite the present Schwinn home. The school was then a log structure and was used for school purposes for about ten years. It was then abandoned and soon became delapidated until a Mr. Muetzleburg bought the property and turned it into a residence.

The town assessment rolls indicate that the two districts were divided by the year 1856, and this area became school district No. 1. By 1856, this district was made up of sections 29, 30, 31, 32, 33 and the south half of sections 19 and 28. It was not until 1918 that the Herman Koester property in the town of Schleswig was attached to this district and it became a joint district and designated Meeme JT. 1. Since its organization many parcels of land have been attached and detached.

The log schoolhouse for this district was built about the year 1862, and was located a few rods north of the present building. The site was purchased from Maurer who then owned the present Wm. Olm farm. No record is given as to size and cost of the school. The hand-made seats and desks were large enough to accommodate six to eight pupils. These seats were not adjustable so they were made of varying heights. Wooden blackboards were used. Sander’s first to the fifth readers were used. The other subjects taught in this pioneer school were arithmetic, geography, and spelling. No report was made of the disposition of this log building when it was abandoned.

The next schoolhouse, the northern half of the present structure, was built in 1883 at a cost of about $600. That school then had windows on the north and south side with the entrance and windows on the east side. The building was then about 24 x 30 feet and without a basement. The main floor had a combination entry and cloakroom which was shared by the boys and girls. Two doors lead into a classroom which was scantily furnished according to the present day standards. The pupils used slates and slate pencils. The long homemade seats were replaced with double desks and the room was heated by an old-fashioned stove in the center of the room. Drinking water was obtained from the neighbor’s well and was delivered to the school by the larger boys or by the teacher. The water was used from the pail by a dipper which everyone used. In 1909, a school well was dug by Andrew Philips. School was called by means of hand bell. A new woodshed was built in 1901. As time went on, a large Webster dictionary and real blackboards and other equipment were purchased.

By 1910, the enrollment being 70 and therefore above the number set by law for one teacher, the district voted a two room school. The voters decided to put an addition on the old school instead of constructing a new building. Accordingly, the
southern half of the present structure was added at a cost of about $800. The new part, about 20 x 20 feet, consisted of an entry-cloakroom and a classroom for the primary grades. It has windows on the south and west sides. The old school was remodeled by putting more windows in the northern and western walls. Since there was no basement, the two rooms were heated by stoves.

In 1924, the enrollment had dropped to about 27 and school reverted to a one teacher school. Since that time only the older and larger room has been used for classes. The new addition now houses a large, well-built library cupboard. The new entry is used as a storage room. Today the Pigeon River school has electric lights, single, adjustable seats and desks, a floor furnace, recitation tables and chairs, and modern teaching and learning aids. The lack of a basement, indoor toilets, and running water keep it from being classified as a modern rural school.

A year after the school building was enlarged, additional land to add to the school yard was purchased from Wm. Olm for $20. It is said that in this new plot two children of the Maurer family are buried. A belfry and bell were added at the time that the new addition was built. The flag was flown from this belfry until 1926 when the present flag pole was erected. In 1913, the children each contributed ten cents towards the purchase of two pictures. These pictures, with the names of the pupils contributing toward them are still on display. The first teachers in the graded school were Evelyn Dunbar and Stella Geraldson.

The rise and decline of the number of children of school age is shown by the changing of the school from one to two to one room. The county records do not show that two terms per year were common after 1872, but it is reported that religious instruction and German were taught in this school. County records also reveal the fact that until the 1900's the enrollment never was large. The average attendance from 1870 to 1905 was between 35 and 60. It was not until 1910 that the yearly enrollment went above 60. At present the enrollment averages between 15 and 20 yearly out of a total of about 35 children on the census list.

Some of the early settlers in this district were H. J. Schneider, H. Kuester, F. Maurer, N. Dittmar, M. R. and H. Roethal, and G. Meyer. Nicholas Dittmar, owned about 360 acres in 1878. The first 160 acres were acquired as a bonus from the government for his services in the Mexican War. Mr. Dittmar was the first white man in Meeme to be married in the township, being united to Caroline Ecke on May 9, 1846. Nicholas Dittmar also served in the assembly for two terms in the 1860's. Herman Roethal served as assemblyman in the 1900's. F. M. Schneider has been prominent in Meeme governmental affairs for almost a half century as town clerk, town chairman, and school officer. Wm. Bennett, a graduate of this school, became a prominent doctor in Milwaukee. Walter Staefler was with the Manitowoc Public Utilities for years. Three graduates who entered the teaching profession in recent years were Viola Olm, Elmer Dirks, and Emma Roethal, now librarian in Sheboygan.

School records for this district were written in German until 1902. The following served as clerks before 1906: Nick Dittmar 1872-4, Martin Roethal 1875-7, A. Dittmar 1878-80, Chas. Roethal 1891-6, and F. M. Schneider 1897-1908. Others who served on the board were Fred Roeder, Geo Meyer, H. J. Schneider, and Oscar Huber.

There is no record of the first teachers, but it is believed that Wm. Leich was the first male teacher. Mr. Leich was from Manchester, England. He died on April 22, 1861 and was buried in the cemetery near the Liberty Pole. Quincy Danforth taught this school in 1865. His teaching certificate is preserved by his son Dr. J. S. Danforth at Sheboygan. The certificate indicates that he completed the grades and took a teacher's examination in orthography, reading, mental and written arithmetic, primary language, and geography. The marks were then given on the basis of 10. Mr. Danforth got a mark of 7 in each subject. A later teacher, Joseph Stephenson from Liberty, boarded at Nic Dittmar's and later married one of the Dittmar daughters.

The names of teachers teaching this school from 1871 to 1906 are quite complete. Those teaching this school were: Quincy Danforth 1865, B. Danforth 1871, Jos. Stephenson 1872, Maggie O'Rourke 1873, M. J. Ward 1874-5, Faye Richardson 1876, Thos. O'Neil 1876-7 and 1879, Wm. Barnes 1878, K. E. Duesy 1879-80, Amor Hinze 1890, Anne Jenkins 1891, J. S. Danforth 1892-93, Anne Danforth 1894-6, Nellie Egan 1897, Chas. Reinke 1898-99, Norma Garry 1900-02, Agnes Conway 1903, and Mary Holfeltz 1904-05.

When Meeme Jt. 1 became a graded school, sewing and manual arts were taught. The materials made by the classes were displayed at school and town fairs. Spelling matches were common in the early 1900's. By 1920, town and achievement contests were popular. The winners of town contests entered the finals at county contests.
During the spring or fall the school children usually went on field trips to the surrounding woods and kettle moraines.

Today the district school is located in one of the more inaccessible parts of Meeme. Its isolation was brought out quite forcibly in the winter of the deep snows during 1936 when no mail was delivered to the school for 61 days. The district residents have been among the progressive farmers of Manitowoc county for many years.

MEEME 2 — SPRING VALLEY

Nora Griffin

Meeme school district No. 2 includes the village of Spring Valley, so it was natural to name the public school the Spring Valley school when official names were given in 1918. The village got that name from the fact that many springs are found in the valley in which the hamlet is located. Today the schoolhouse is located on a site on the northwest corner of the NW 1/4 of the NW 1/4 of section 23, Meeme.

Meeme No. 2 was organized about 1850 according to the township assessment rolls. It then included all of sections 13, 14, 15, 23, and 24, and parts of sections 9, 10, 11, and 22. Since its organization many pieces of land have been detached and attached, but in general the area is about the same as it was in 1850.

There are no written school records of this district before 1900. All historical facts recorded in this article were obtained from old-timers and from county records. The first school was a log structure built soon after 1850. Just where that school was located is unknown, because it was not until December 17, 1870, that the present site was sold to Meeme No. 2 by John Bohn for $40. The description, as given in Vol. 16, p. 93 of the deed as filed in the Register of Deeds office, is as follows: Commencing at the center of the Green Bay road as now (1870) traveled on the section line running between section 14 and 23 in T. 17 N., and R. 22 E., thence running due west 6 1/2 rods, thence due south 6 rods, then due east 6 1/2 rods, thence due north 6 rods to place of beginning, making 39 square rods in all. In 1903, an additional one-half acre of land to add to the schoolyard was purchased from Fred Bohn for $75.

The second school was a frame building built in 1871 for $600 according to county records. It was about 24 x 30 feet with a little storm shed attached at the entrance. Three windows made up of many small panes on each long side provided the natural lighting. A framed picture of this school now on display in the new building seems to indicate that the single entrance door led into a combination cloak and storage room extending across the front of the building. Two doors from the hallway opened into the classroom. It is said that Henry Langenhahn made the first blackboards from 2 inch planks. These were later replaced with slate boards because of the cracks between the boards. The seats and desks at first were homemade affairs which were later replaced with patented double desks. The usual boxstoves, water bucket, dipper, woodbox, and teacher’s desk on a platform completed the old schoolroom furniture.

About 1903, the little frame schoolhouse became too small for the growing school population with the result that an addition was voted to the west end of the building at a cost of $700. The addition was of the same construction as the old frame schoolhouse and added about 16 more feet to its length. An entrance shed was added to the southwest corner of the new addition. A woodshed was attached to the rear of this new structure. The chimney was between the two rooms. Two small outdoor toilets and shade trees were located on the school grounds. When the enlarged building was abandoned, it was torn down and the lumber sold at auction to Wm. Diedrich for $125.
The third and present school was erected in 1920 and finished in January, 1921, at a cost of about $15,000. It is of brick construction with a full basement which houses a Wausau furnace heating and ventilating system. The old dry toilets, a part of the equipment connected with the furnace, have been replaced by flush type lavatories. The basement has a playroom, a fuel storage space, furnace room, and toilets. The first floor entrance leads into a small hallway from which steps lead to the basement and another stairway leads to the cloakrooms on the first floor. From these cloakrooms two doors open into a large class-room furnished with single desks, sand table, steel filing case, a piano, radio, maps, globes, and adequate blackboards and bulletin boards. An open alcove library addition on the west houses the hundreds of library and text books. A well-equipped kitchen is a part of the building in a small room next to the library. Running water is available throughout the building, making the Meeme No. 2 school one of the modern schools in Manitowoc county.

The Spring Valley school district has had a large enrollment except during the past 20 or 30 years. During the years from 1903 to 1910, this district maintained a two-room graded school with an enrollment of about 70 pupils yearly. After the school again became a one room rural school in 1910, the enrollment averaged around 50 to 60, although the average daily attendance was around 40. The fact that the older boys and girls attended only during the winter months brought down the average daily attendance for the year. By the time that the present school was built in 1920, the enrollment averaged about 30 yearly out of a school census of over 100 children of school age. The establishment of the parochial school in this community has affected the enrollment in the public school.

The early assessment rolls show that these were pioneer settlers in Meeme No. 2: A. Herr, W. H. Smith, H. Kolwey, A. Kleiber, C. Conway, M. Madigan, W. Lorfeld, C. McCarthy, F. Bohnen, P. Hoffmann, and C. Willmas. Hubert Simon, one of the first two white children born in Meeme, was born in this district on February 2, 1848. The same year the first religious services were held in this district by Father Brunner in a private house in section 10. Among early day businessmen, there was Mich. Herr who founded the village of Meeme located a half-mile south of the public school. He settled there in July, 1847, and began a trading post handling dry goods, groceries, liquors, and tobaccos. The post office named Meeme was located in this building until the establishment of the rural delivery system. Mail for the surrounding countryside was gotten from Meeme.

A water power site was located on the H. Kolwey farm now the Fred Langenhahn property. Kolwey operated a grist mill. Residents of this district have become well known in politics, business, farming, and the professions. Pat Conway and David Lorfeld became assemblymen, while Paul Hertel became town clerk of Meeme for many years. The list of those who became prominent is too long to include in this school history.

Since there are no written district records, it is unknown what residents served on the first school boards. Those names on file in county records are clerks Peter Phillips 1872-5, C. E. Conway 1876-80, John Hertel 1894-98, Paul Hertel 1899-1904, and John Bertsche 1905-. Other board members before 1906 were Fred Bohnen, Math. Hauch, and Ed. Oehse. A later clerk, C. F. Heckmann, served on the board for 25 years from 1919 to 1946.

The salaries paid teachers of the Spring Valley school were usually the second highest in the town. Irish teachers seem to have been favored according to the following names recorded: Mary Sexton 1872 S., John A. Stewart 1872-3, Pat Donohue 1874, Mary Lantry 1875, Peter Brady 1876, Thos. Gallohy 1877, Lizzie Donohue 1878-9, Kate Donohue 1880, Maggie Hayes 188-, A. J. Taughner 1894, Maggie Garry 1895, Hubert Jenmarie 1896, Mary Conway 1897-8, Prin. Alice Finch and Nellie Laughlin 1904-5, Prin. Rose Voboril and Nellie Laughlin 1906. Prin. Agnes Conway and Anna M. Pritchard were the other graded school teachers while this school had two departments. The names of teachers after 1910 are listed in the County Annuals. Two terms of school were common up to about 1890. The fall term began in October or November and lasted for about three or four months. The spring term began about March or April for two or three months. The first nine month term was voted in 1878. Two old textbooks used in the 1880's and now in the possession of Henry Langenhahn are Montgomery's "American History" and Swinton's "Condensed United States History".

Places of historical interest are found in this district. The building housing the Meeme post office still stands on the old Green Bay road. This structure was the stopping place for early travelers. The old Green Bay trail wound its way through the district and past the school. The ruins of the old grist mill and dam are to be found on the present Henry Langenhahn farm. The hamlet of Spring Valley itself has an interesting history. Today Meeme No. 2 with its modern school is able to pro-
vide its children with modern rural school conveniences. Whether it will serve a larger area remains to be seen. It has served the township for years as an examination center for its eighth grade graduates!

MEEME JT. 3 — OSMAN

Lucinda Dill

The Osman School is located near the village of Osman. It is located near the northeast corner of the NE3/4 of section 11, Range 22 E. The district is now joint with the towns of Newton and Liberty. The land on which the school is located once belonged to Eleanor Peppard. This site she leased to the district for two dollars for a period of fifty years. About 1900 the Peppards sold their farm to Millers, and at about that time too the district bought the school site from Miller. Since that time the district made three more purchases from the Miller family to add to the original school site.

Since the district was first formed, several changes in its boundaries have been made. In 1903 the district became joint with Newton by adding most of the SW1/4 of the SW1/4 of section 31, township of Newton. In 1917 the district became joint with Liberty by adding the SW1/4 of section 35, township of Liberty.

Not only did the district have property added to the original boundary, but it lost some also. In 1915 the W1/2 of the NE1/4 of section 10, township of Meeme became a part of Meeme District No. 2. In 1908, the north half of the NE1/4 of section 4, township of Meeme was taken into the Liberty 4 district, making that district joint with Meeme.

The district had its first meeting in 1851 at the home of H. Muhlolland. The first school was held in the John Stuart home. The building is now the home of Arno Kraemer. John Stuart was the first teacher and was paid fifty cents for the term for the use of his house for a school. The first term of school began in June and lasted for three months.

The first log school house was erected in 1853 by members of the district who helped cut and haul the logs. The building was 16 x 22 x 8 feet and was completed by May, 1853. It was located on the present school site. At first the building had only crude benches and no blackboards, but in 1855 benches, desks, and blackboards were supplied.

The second schoolhouse, a frame structure located on the same site, was built in 1858. The building committee consisted of Anton and Peter Walterbach and M. Gallogly. District members hauled the lumber for a building 32 x 24 x 12 feet. The lumber cost $71.25, and the shingles $13.82. The school was furnished and ready for use by 1859. In 1863, a stone foundation was put under the building. In 1868, window shutters and maps were purchased. New seats and a dug well were added in 1878.

At the annual district meeting in 1883 the voters decided to build a new school but at the next annual meeting in 1884 they decided to repair the old building. The schoolhouse was then repaired and two new lavatories were built. In 1893 a new woodshed was built. The plan was made by Michael Egan, James Ryan, and John Hofhetz and they were paid fifty cents apiece for their planning. In 1903 the schoolhouse was moved slightly for some unknown reason. A new well was drilled in 1912. A year later the school was reshelved. This schoolhouse was sold after the third building was built to John Hoban who is using it for a granary.

The third and present school was built in 1920. This brick veneer structure cost $16,000, had a full basement, basement furnace, indoor toilets, and electric lights. The lights were added in 1939. In 1933, when Highway 42 was relocated, the school was moved slightly to the east. It cost $6,025 to move and have certain changes made. These changes included moving the indoor toilets and the library room, building a new basement, and re-setting the furnace.

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The Osman school has always been a one-room school. During the 1890’s, the enrollment was between 70 and 100 pupils. The average enrollment in recent years has been about 20 pupils. The decrease in enrollment in recent years is due to smaller families and to the building of the parochial school in the village of Osman in 1925.

Some of the graduates of the Osman school who became local and county leaders were Michael Kirwan who became Circuit Judge; James Kirwan, Circuit Judge of Calumet County; Jos. Connell, the first highway commissioner of Manitowoc County and income assessor; John Nagle, who became county superintendent of schools; Peter Burns, a Chicago doctor; Luke Burns, a lawyer; Jos. Peppard, who became principal of a school in Milwaukee; the McMahons, and many others of whom there are no definite records. Some of the noted “teacher” families were the Sullivans, Schneiders, Hobans, Carys, Egans, Hayes’s, Fitzgeralds, Conways, Holfeltzes, Pinters, and the Millers.

The first district clerk was M. Mulholland, and the first director was John Stuart. Some of the other early officers were H. Mulholland, Patrick McKenering, Dennis Nagle, Anton Walterbach, Michael Gallogly, and Patrick McMahon. The first officers were paid one dollar per year. In 1907 their salaries were raised to five dollars yearly.

John Stuart, the first teacher, received fourteen dollars per month for three months. Some of the teachers after him were William Goodwin, Patrick O’Shea, H. Mulholland, John Cary, Patrick Nagle, Mary Richardson, James Kirwan, Katie Dempsey, Peter Burns, Verona O’Grady, J. W. Hogan, Katie Egan, Julia Hayes, Katie Hayes, Neil Cary, Tom Walsh, Teresa Hoban, Lizzie Peppard, Nellie Brady, Katie Finnegan, M. H. Garry, Elizabeth Fitzgerald, Mary Conway, Lizzie Schneider, and C. J. Moldenhauer. The demand for Irish teachers is very apparent.

Some of the subjects taught in the early years were orthography, reading, grammar, geography, and United States history. Many pupils from the surrounding districts came to the Osman school to get the required subjects necessary to acquire a teaching certificate.

The early settlers banded together to form a society which is still the subject of conversation for old-timers. This was the Temperance Society sponsored by the “Old Irish Society”. They had a hall in Osman which was known as Temperance Hall. Christmas programs and St. Patrick’s Day parties were held in it. It also served as a meeting place for the society. This hall was later moved from its original site, and it is now used as a barn.

MEEME NO. 4 — MINERAL SPRINGS

Olga Voss

Meeme District No. 4 was given the name “Mineral Springs School” in 1918 because of the many springs with high iron content found in that vicinity. To many of the older residents of the county and of the community, this school was often called the “Liberty Pole School” because it is situated near the Liberty Pole. To the real “old-timers” it was known as the Danforth School because of the many connections that the Danforth family had with the early history of the school, and as the Welsh school because the district was settled largely by Welsh immigrants.

On September 24, 1853, at one o’clock P. M. the voters of this district met in the schoolhouse of District No. 2 (Spring Valley) and voted to build a schoolhouse in their own district. Evidently the pupils of this vicinity had attended the Spring Valley School. T. G. Jenkins was chosen as the first clerk, W. Danforth director, and J. Danforth treasurer. It was decided to lay a tax of one dollar on each eighty acres to finance the new building and to pay other expenses. It was also decided that a three month school term beginning about the first of December be maintained and that a female teacher be employed. Miss Lucetta Danforth was the first teacher employed.
On October 7, 1858, the voters met again at the home of Jonathan Danforth to select a site for the schoolhouse. The voters decided to lease one-fourth acre of land of the old Thos. Jenkins farm, said lease was to continue as long as the land was used for school purposes. The site selected was the present one in Section 21 on the present highway 149. At that meeting it was decided to raise an additional tax of $1.50 on each eighty acres to be paid in the form of labor, helping to build the schoolhouse. The voters evidently were dissatisfied with the proposed three-month winter term for they voted an additional four month summer term, very exceptional for those early days. Miss Eliza Weed was the summer term teacher.

During the winter of 1853 a log schoolhouse was built at a cost of $98.99. Forty cents was spent for a pail and a broom! Although the equipment was meager, the spirit was willing. The first two teachers were hired at salaries of $11.00 and $12.00 per month respectively. Twenty-five children were enrolled in the first year and they were given instruction in spelling, reading, geography, and arithmetic.

In 1854 the school term was increased to nine months, divided into a winter and a summer term. The same year the voters requested that a male teacher for the winter term be hired. There, very likely, was a definite reason for that request! The summer term usually commenced about June, while the winter term began in December. Probably both terms were so arranged because the 14 to 20 year old boys and girls were needed on the farm during the summer and fall.

In 1859 the voters decided to “modernize” the school house. The windows were fixed so that they could be lowered and raised for better ventilation purposes. By 1860, forty-six pupils were enrolled. The subject of grammar was added at that time to the course of study. The district added a blackboard to its school equipment about 1860. At each annual meeting the voters decided who was to furnish the fuel for the year. Wood was purchased for 49 cents a cord in 1859. In 1869 the task of furnishing the school with wood was “struck off” to J. L. Williams for $1.18 per cord. The wood had to be in two-foot lengths, delivered by a certain date, be neatly piled, and of hardwood. School district meetings were well attended in those days. In 1870, for instance, there were twenty-six voters present.

In 1871, the thirty-six voters present at the annual meeting voted for a new school building. The contract for the new schoolhouse was let to Charles Friberg for the consideration of $675.00. It was completed by September 1872. To this new building were added a stove, table, and two chairs. The seats and desks were made of pine lumber and not adjustable. This resulted in physical discomforts and difficulty in keeping the room well swept. The desks and seats were made by the contractor who built the school. In 1875 a dictionary and another blackboard were added. The same year it was voted to whitewash the schoolroom. In 1887 provisions were made to provide the school with a well. Since this is a region of natural springs, it was voted to bore a fountain on the school lot. The contract was let to Wm. Jenkins for $25 with the provision of “no water, no pay”.

In 1887, the district voted to buy “patented” seats. Some voters also expressed a wish that a wish that early date for free textbooks but without result. J. S. Danforth, now living in Sheboygan, remembers hearing his father say that there was always considerable confusion every time a new teacher was hired because the new teacher wanted to use her favorite texts. To avoid this, the district finally adopted the texts to use. They were furnished at cost to the pupils by J. S. Edwards who lived across the road from the school.

During 1914 a steeple and a bell were added and a bubblers was attached to the fountain which they had struck in 1891. In 1915 the voters voted to remodel the building by putting a foundation under the building. A hot air furnace was also installed. All members of the district were asked to help in the remodeling. They were to receive 20 cents an hour and if they used a team, 33 cents an hour was to be paid. From 1916 to 1935, the Board was given the authority to install indoor toilets, to equip the schoolhouse with lightning rods, to erect a flag pole, to purchase a teeter-totter, and to install electric lights.

From time to time the boundaries of the school district were changed. The original plot of land on which the schoolhouse was built was leased until 1872 when the land was purchased, plus one-fourth acre from F. G. Jenkins. In 1863 a portion of the district was attached to District 6. In 1871 the district and District 1 made an exchange of certain pieces of land. In 1872 a part of section 18 was made a part of District 7, Schleswig, and in 1925 a part of section 29 was taken from District 1 Meeme and attached to this district.

The highest enrollment for this school occurred in 1872 when about 70 children attended. The present enrollment averages between 15 and 20 yearly. Records show
that district residents served many three-year terms on the school board. Ed. Siemers served as clerk for 21 years; Chas. Heckman was treasurer for 27 years; Ed. Heckman, his son, succeeded his father and served 18 years.

Teachers reported for this school were Lucetta Danforth, James Benson, Mary Maloney, James Connell, Sally Abrams, Peter Burns, Mary Hayes, Ed. S. Crowe, Nellie Carey, Paula Nielson, Minnie Morris, Kate Mullins, Will Heckman, Otto Krieman, P. J. Taugher, Betsy Danforth, Susie Danforth, Elizabeth Pritchard, Chas. Brady, Mary Conway, and Anna Pritchard. Many of the former teachers became well known in education, medicine, law, and business.

J. S. Danforth, a former pupil of this school, reported that many pupils of the Meeme No. 4 school district became prominent in the state and through the mid-west. Dr. Louis Jermain became dean of the Marquette Medical school; Dr. Hubert Jermain, a physician of Milwaukee; Dr. Quincy Danforth of Oshkosh; Will Heckman became a teacher and was head of the manual arts department at the Ellenton, N. Dakota Teachers College; Will Siemers was ordained a minister; Peter Jermain invented the first of the present hospital bed; Geo. and Will Danforth became lawyers in the Dakotas; Cora Bean was elected superintendent of schools in the state of Washington; Anna Jenkins, Mary Davis, Anna, Emma, Gertrude, and Lucetta Danforth became county teachers. James Danforth is practicing dentistry in Sheboygan.

A pioneer resident, David Davis, donated a site for the Baptist church which was directly across the road from the school site. The church building is now removed but the cemetery, the final resting place of the Welsh pioneers, remains a short distance north of this school. District children attended German parochial schools on Saturdays since no German was taught in this Welsh school.

J. S. Danforth of Sheboygan has in his possession two teaching certificates issued to members of the Danforth family. One was issued to R. Danforth by Michael Galloghy, a town school superintendent, in 1859. The other certificate was issued by Co. Supt. Jere Crowley in 1865 to Quincy Danforth for a one-year term. The subjects in which he was examined were Orthography, Reading, Mental Arithmetic, Written Arithmetic, Primary Grammar, and Geography. The examination was marked on a scale of 10. The certificate was good only in Meeme and was a third grade teaching permit.

District No. 4 Meeme has one place of historical interest—the Liberty Pole. The original pole was a wooden one, but has since been replaced by one of steel. There is an eagle, the symbol of liberty, perched atop of it. Both poles were purchased from funds voluntarily contributed by the people of the community. On legal holidays the flag is raised on the pole. Louis Prueter has done this faithfully for some years now.

MEEME 5—TAYLOR SCHOOL
Phyllis S. Pautz

At the annual school meeting in 1918, the school was officially named the Taylor school. Just why that name was chosen is debatable. Some residents contend that the present school property was purchased from a Mr. Taylor, but records in the office of the register of deeds give no evidence of a Mr. Taylor once owning the property. Others say that the school was so named in honor of President Taylor who was our president in 1849 when the farm on which the school is located was purchased by Peter Dunagan from the government. To old timers the school is known as the Pritchard and Kolb school because of the long connections that they have had with it.

The exact date of the district organization is unknown, due to lack of first year records. The Meeme assessment roll of 1856 indicates that it was set up for assessment purposes at least by that date, but very likely a school was built before that. It is said that Meeme districts 5 and 1 maintained one school building until some-
time in the 1860's, but sections 25, 26, 27, 34, 35, and 36, all in Meeme, were actually in district number 5. Today the area remains practically the same except for small areas attached to Centerville 3 and to the town of Herman, Sheboygan county.

The first log school house serving districts 5 and 1 was built in the early 1850's. It was located on the county line, a half mile west of Edwards. The exact location was taken from Meeme 5, or just opposite the present Schwinn home. After the two districts decided to build their own schools, it stood unoccupied until a Mr. Muetzleburg bought the building and made it into a residence. No written records of this school remain.

The first schoolhouse built especially for district 5 was located on the present site. The date of construction is not definitely known, but according to the historical facts gathered from Meeme 5, it must have been built about 1862. It is said that the present school site was donated by John Bredemeyer so that his children could go to this school since the family lived in Sheboygan county. The deed of 1866 by which Meeme 5 acquired the site from Evan Abrams for $25 makes no mention of such donation. The original building was of frame construction about 24 x 30 feet. As time went on, this structure proved to be too small, so on March 7, 1889, a contract was let to Fred Strovies & Co. to build a new foundation and an 18 foot addition to the south end of the school for $555. When this building had out-lived its usefulness, it was disposed of in September, 1913, for the sum of $225. It was moved a quarter mile west and located on the present highway 42 where it was converted into a cheese factory. At present it is used as a place of residence by the Art Goss family.

The old school's equipment was meager indeed. Geo. Pritchard, a pupil in this school, reports that there was no library, no globe, and only a few maps and a dictionary. Home-made schoolroom furniture was used. Patented double desks were purchased in 1879 for $121. The schoolhouse and apparatus about that date were valued at $720. The question of free text books was voted on as early as 1887, but not passed until 1911. The district made continuous improvements because the record books from time to time list new dictionaries, new chimney built, new teacher's chair, more desks and desks, woodshed built for $25, better blackboards purchased, and the usual maps, chalk, and erasers supplied. "It was crude", stated Mr. Pritchard, "yet we learned. Thanks to the good teachers."

At a special meeting held on January 17, 1913, the vote was for a new school with a basement. The frame building was planned by Edmund Kolb and cost when completed about $3,000. It is heated by a basement furnace. The main floor of the school has a large entry, a partitioned cloakroom, a library alcove, and a modern, well-lighted classroom. The building is equipped with the latest and best teaching and learning equipment. Single, adjustable seats of the latest design, teacher's desk and chair, a piano, radio, phonograph, hectograph, steel filing case, electric service, removable stage and footlights, drinking fountain, and the many other needs of a modern school have been added. In 1940, the walls and ceiling of the school were covered with Nu-wood. The pride of the district in its school is reflected in the excellent care taken.

The yard, enclosed by chain-link fencing and steel piping, houses a new woodshed to replace the old one sold in 1915 for $10.25. In 1927 a garage was built near the northwest corner of the school grounds. Well-kept outdoor toilets are built near the garage. The yard is also equipped with much fine playground material. A well was drilled on the premises in 1918.

Enrollment records previous to 1870 are unavailable, but for that year the number enrolled, according to the town clerk's report to the county office, was 55. Summer and winter terms were common up to 1875. Although a single term was held thereafter, the year was divided into the equivalent of winter and summer sessions, with the grown boys and girls present when much farm work was impossible. The town clerks' records show that a high of 88 pupils enrolled in 1880 and again in 1890. Up until 1905, the yearly attendance was between 60 and 80 pupils. Since that time a steady decrease has been noted because of rural factors, until now there are about 15 children attending yearly.

Names of the early settlers include John Fenn, Henry Kammann, Wm. Hahn, Ernest Kolb, John Lauer, L. Dittmeyer, Nick Phillips, James and Patrick O'Grady, Fred Haley, Trustrom Dodge, and Wm. Pritchard. The Pritchard deed bears the signature of President Taylor. It is about the only farm in the district owned and operated by a descendant of the original owner. Some of the former pupils who have become well-known are Robert Bauer, a member of Marquette faculty; Robert Fenn, city engineer of Sheboygan; August Westermeyer, manager of a furniture factory in Sheboygan; Roland Kolb, a teacher and now fieldman for the U. S. Dept. of Agri-
culture; Fred Kolb, a doctor; Geo. Pritchard, teacher and now dentist at Milwaukee; Anna Pritchard, teacher and later supervising teacher of Manitowoc county; Robert Pritchard, a former county teacher; and a host of others whose names were and are familiar in the fields of agriculture, business, and the professions. The list would be indeed a long one were all to be named specifically.

William Pritchard was believed to have been the first school clerk, serving for more than 30 years. He was an influential resident who gave counsel in legal matters to others. His son, Robert, served as director for 16 years from 1899 to 1915. It was commonly stated among the district residents that school couldn’t function without a Pritchard on the board. Other officers and their years of service were Ernest Kolb, director for 22 years; Peter Sixel, director for 17 years; Wm. Fenn, clerk for 14 years; Robert Wesener, clerk for 21 years; Alden Kolb, clerk 11 years; Patrick O’Grady, treasurer for more than 12 years; and Albert Axley, treasurer for 27 years. It is interesting to note that during its existence the school has had only 14 people as members of the board. Long terms are a tradition in this district!

The names of the first teachers are unknown. The district board tried to get the leading educators of the times. This is indicated by the fact that some of them became successful in this and other professions, and by the fact that the district paid top salaries at all times. Even in 1872 when the average salary in the county was $35, this district paid $50. Names of teachers on record up to 1906 were: 1872(S) Clara Hopkins; 1872-3(W-S) John C. Smith; 1873(W) James Larkin; 1874(S-W) Alice P. Carrington; 1876 W. Thomas; 1877-8 O. S. Brown; 1879-80 P. H. Hewitt; 1894-95 Geo. Pritchard; 1896-98 Fred Kolb; and 1904-05 Sophie Axley. Other teachers of the last century were A. J. Strassburger who became Sheboygan county superintendent of schools; E. S. Mueller, who became Manitowoc county superintendent of schools; and Charles Lutze, now principal of one of the Sheboygan city schools. Geo. Pritchard, became a dentist, O. H. Brown a lawyer, P. H. Hewitt a prominent educator, and Fred Kolb a doctor.

The town clerks’ records to the superintendents list for the years 1870 to 1890 the following texts used in this school: Sanders and Swinton readers and spellers; Davies and Robinsons arithmetics, Goodrich and Swintons histories, McMall and McMurray geographies, and Clark’s and Harpers grammars. District fairs, at which $10 in prizes was given, were common in the early 1900’s. This school has been a leader in music and singing for the past 20 years. Under the initiative of Freda Hammann, the county school supervisor of that time, music and voice training began. Since then this has been a “singing” school. Under the capable leadership of Dorothy Mueller, Theodore Wimmer, and Phyllis Schmidt, rhythm, harmonica, and tonette bands were organized and were in demand at school programs, music festivals, and graduation. The musical talent developed during the past years is repaying in better and more enjoyable living. The school has always served as a community gathering place of importance for social and business affairs.

This community has produced many successful and progressive farmers and farm leaders. Walter Axley, a district resident, is a qualified county agent, as was Roland Kolb, a former agent. The various county farm organizations have had the name of Kolb, Bender, Wesener, and Kammann on their roster now and in the past.

MEEME JT. 6 — WOODLAND

Dorothy Bosch

Meeme joint district No. 6 was named the Woodland school in 1919 as the result of an essay contest conducted by the school. The name was deemed appropriate because the school is situated adjacent to a lovely wooded area. Prior to 1919, and even today, it was and is commonly referred to as the School Hill school since it is located about one mile northwest of the village of the same name. The exact location of the school site is the northwest corner of section 8, township of Meeme.

Meeme No. 6 was organized for school purposes in 1859
according to the Meeme assessment roll of that date. The assessment rolls prior to 1859 indicate that this area was not included in any other school district. The original district was composed of sections 5-6-7-8, Meeme. Since that time various pieces of land have been detached and attached. Up until 1903-04 the district was wholly in Meeme, but at that time the town clerk's records to the superintendent show that it became joint with Liberty when parts of sections 31 and 32 in Liberty were attached to Meeme No. 6.

Since all old records concerning the school have been destroyed, most of the facts about the first school are those obtained from older residents and from county records. The first school site was said to have been located a short distance north of the present site. The first building was said to have been a gray frame building of average size. The equipment was limited, consisting of schoolroom furniture consistent with that period. The pupils had individual slates. The room was heated by an old-fashioned four-legged stove.

In 1882, a new school was erected on the present site for $450 according to county records. School sessions were held in this building until 1906 when it was torn down and the present school built. The new structure, a two-room frame building, was constructed at an approximate cost of $2,500. The new school did not have two entirely separate classrooms since an open double doorway connected the two rooms. When school was in session, this doorway was closed by a curtain. Both rooms, though, had blackboards. Both rooms had their own separate cloakrooms for the boys and the girls. The district maintained a second class state graded school from 1906 to 1915. The first teachers in the new school were Prin. Eugene Knox and Margaret Stephenson.

In 1915, due to decreased enrollment, it was decided to revert to a one-room school status. The unused classroom on the north side became a playroom and was shut off from the used classroom by a wooden, roller panel door which could be raised out of the way when community school affairs were held. The primary cloakrooms became storage spaces. Since 1916, the school board members were given authority to equip the school with lightning rods, to purchase playground equipment, to modernize the heating and ventilating systems, and to install electric lights. The school has no basement, so a floor furnace is used and an outdoor fuel shed and toilets are used. A large built-in library houses the many books found in school. A fire in the school in the 1930's destroyed a large section of the library but, fortunately, early discovery of the blaze prevented the burning of the entire school. Insurance adjustments made possible the replacement of the burnt books and the repair of the building. The district takes pride in maintaining a first class building with the latest and best equipment.

The fact that the school has gone from a one-room to a two-room and back to a one-room system is an indication of the changes in school enrollment from era to era. The town clerks' reports to the superintendent show that in 1870 the enrollment was only 32. Thereafter a gradual increase was noted for every five year period, so that by 1900 the attendance was 68 for the year. A business boom in School Hill in the early 1900's brought an influx of families as is shown by the school attendance records. From an enrollment of 65 in 1900 the attendance jumped to 90 in 1905, to 106 in 1907, and to 108 in 1909. Thereafter the boom must have subsided because by 1911 the enrollment had dropped to 71. Despite the fact that 50 pupils were still enrolled in 1915, the voters favored the return to the one-room school system. At present the attendance averages between 15 and 20 yearly. Much of this decrease has resulted because of the establishment of parochial schools at Osman, School Hill, and St. Nazianz, although the usual rural factors are prevalent.

The assessment roll of 1858 shows that the following were early settlers or land owners in this district: A. D. and W. H. Kettel; A. L. Weeks and Co.; William Langjahr; L. Roundsville; T. Schultz; D. Francis; D. Levins; M. Hosford; S. Schwartz; M. Bast; Wm. Nellis; B. Sanford; G and Math. Brost; N. Brown; and P. Stein. The several thousand children who have attended this school became leaders in their communities.

The first school clerk on record for this district was F. Riplinger, 1872. Sevard Nellis served in the same capacity from 1872 to 1896. Other school officers after that date and up to 1906 were John Bushman, Fred Meyer, Hugo Knorr, Harlefinger, and August Quante. The latter served for a period of twenty years.

The record of teachers who taught in this district is very incomplete prior to 1906 when county school annuals began to be issued. The records kept by the early county superintendents show that the following teachers taught in this district: John Carey 1872; Emily Richter and Katie Donahue 1873; Thos. O'Neil 1874-6; Sara Si-
bree 1877; Emma Atwood 1878-79; Hubert Jermain 1894-5; Will Heckmann 1896; Katie Mullins 1897; Mike Hoban 1898; and Elizabeth Schneider 1904-05. Of these teachers Will Heckmann became a teacher of deaf and dumb in North Dakota, while Hubert Jermain became a doctor. A later teacher, Eugene Knox, also became a doctor of medicine.

The district maintained winter and summer sessions up to 1874 the records show. The salaries paid the teachers were the average for the times. The town clerk's reports indicate that Sander and Swinton spellers, Sander and McGuffey's readers, Davis and Ray arithmetics, McNally and Mitchell geographies, Swinton's histories, Sill, Phineas, and Kerl's grammars were used during the latter 1800's. The parents bought the texts from book agents or from the district.

The schoolhouse has long served as the center of community gatherings. The old fashioned spelling matches were held. School fairs were held as a sort of harvest festival at which district prizes were given. At one time the vacant primary room was used as a basketball court by the young men of the district. Christmas programs are held yearly in the school.

The early community history of this district is interesting. School Hill is so named because it is the highest point in Meeme. The school is situated on this hill. The name "Meeme" was derived from an Indian word meaning "wild pigeons". The first building in the village of School Hill was a store, now used as a machine shed and storage room for a fire engine. The store was begun by Vincent Steffen and later run by Henry Abel. While Mr. Abel had it, it housed the post office. Other business men of early times were Peter Hilgert, mason; Henry Dedering, painter; Math. Graham, wagon-maker; Jacob Schad, blacksmith; George Jermain, storekeeper; Herman Schneider, harness-maker; and Henry Roethal, cheesemaker.

In 1900 the village experienced a boom for at that time John Buschman and Christ Hickman built a grist and saw mill. A year later the School Hill Milling Co. was established by a group of local residents. In 1905 Anton Miller and sons built a cement factory. Today, the village has the usual businesses found in small rural communities of our county.