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Highlighting Town of Croghan History

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ROGERS CROSSING SCHOOL, DISTRICT 11, WILNA AND CROGHAN

In 1841, the first year of the organization of the town of Croghan, 73 children were taught in the township’s original six districts—Nos. 1, 2, 3, 9, 11 and 15. Of these districts, only No. 11 has any bearing on the Carthage Central district. The area about Rogers Crossing, one of the oldest settled regions in the town of Croghan, was known as the Irish Settlement long before the coming of the railroad. There was a school district here, too, when this section was still part of the town of Watertown.

District No. 11, partly in the town of Wilna, had its school-house off the Texas road in the town of Croghan. Directly across from the school, a connecting road leaves the Texas Road, and goes in a direct line to Rogers Crossing, a short distance away. The school house can be seen plainly from the Crossing. The outlook on the northerly side of the school site is somewhat bleak, being mostly low ground, covered with brush and some woods.

Many years ago, this school was also known as the “Red School”, because it was painted red. After the building was sided with green shingles it also became known as the “Green School”. The term “Rogers Crossing School, only used occasionally years ago, became more prevalent in recent years.

What is Rogers Crossing? To be specific, it is where the road to North Croghan crosses the Adirondack branch of the New York Central railroad. There is also a four-corners of roads there, located just inside a corner of Lewis county. The railroad was first built in 1869, when the Black River and St. Lawrence Railroad company constructed a line from Carthage to Natural Bridge, using wooden rails.

The District 11 schoolhouse is at least 110 years old, though its actual date of construction is not known. No deed is recorded for the lot. The “Guyette deed” - to a plot of land adjacent to the schoolhouse— provided space for a playground. Inhabitants of the district used to

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The Town of Croghan was formed from the Town of Diana and Watson on April 5, 1841

Rogers Crossing School, District 11, Wilna and Croghan cont.

hold such popular events as box socials in the schoolhouse, and from the proceeds brought extra equipment for the school. A victrola was purchased in later years to make these events more entertaining. Drinking water was brought from nearby farms, but a well was dug before the school closed. There was a woodhouse in the rear and inside toilets were installed.

The Roll of Teachers: Teachers before 1900 included Maggie and Catherine Foley, Mrs. Lizzie Branagan, Katie Murray, Minnie Shaver, E.L. Foley, Ellen Delmore and Alice Howard. Among those who taught after 1900 were Jean Shetland, Emma Burns, Switzer Smith, Rose Mosher, Florence Douglas and Marie Shetland. The roll of teachers beginning in 1914-15 is incomplete. The late Mrs. Emmett A. Martin, for example, is known to have taught in the school some time in the 1924 to 1928 periods. With omissions owing to incomplete records, the roll follows: 1914-15, Florence Fitzsimmons; 1915-16, Florence McAvoy; 1916-17, Edith M. Shafrey; 1918-19, Ester B. Clark; 1919-21, Eulalie O'Brien; 1923-24, Blanche Clark; 1928-29, Veronica Thompson; 1931-31, Mary Pratt; 1932-33, Ruth Pratt; 1932-33, Ruth E. Clark; 1933-34, Doris Exford; 1934-35, Geraldine Clark; 1935-38, Frances Shinbourne; 1938-40, Rose Charles; 1940-41, Suzanne B. Gill; 1941-42, Mrs. Grace W. Martin; 1942-44, Mary S. Jarvis; 1944-45, Mary S. Jarvis, Mrs. Loretta O'Neil.

Cyril Kempney was trustee when, on August 23, 1945, it was decided at a special meeting to close the school. At the last annual meeting, held in 1953, it was voted to keep the school closed and the trustee was authorized to contract for transportation. Seven voters were present at that meeting.

Source: Thirty-Two into One: the Schools That Became the Carthage Central School District.)

There were five Town of Croghan country schools in the Carthage Central School District that helped form the Carthage Central School District. They were District No. 6 (Rock Bound School), District No. 11 (Rogers Crossing), District No. 13 (Beartown School), District No. 14 (Squash Hole School) and District No. 23 (Texas Road School).



CEMETERY DOCUMENTATION

It had been hoped to start the documentation of the Town of Croghan cemeteries but due to illness, rainy weather, etc., this project was not started in 2011. As the year 2012 is here, it is hoped to start the documentation in May. We have two volunteers and if there is anyone else willing to help, please call Jack and Mary Sweeney—346-6201 for further information.

The following is a list of the cemeteries located in Town of Croghan:

- Sunnyside Cemetery, Zecher Road
- Evangelical Baptist Cemetery, Route 126 near Naumburg

burg

- Union Free Cemetery, Route 126 near Naumburg
- Riverside Cemetery (Annex), Main Street, Beaver Falls, NY
- Beaver Falls Cemetery, Main Street behind the Salem Christian Fellowship, Beaver Falls, NY
- Basselin Cemetery, Main Street, Croghan
- First Amish Mennonite Cemetery of Lewis County located on private property on the Zehr homestead, Main Street, Croghan, NY.
- St. Stephen's Cemetery, Belfort Rd
- Gospel Hall Cemetery, Tan-

nery Lane, just off Belfort Road

- St. Vincent DePaul Cemetery next to St. Vincent DePaul Church, Belfort
- small cemetery (no known name) located on the Long Pond Road
- Jacox Cemetery, Long Pond Road
- Indian River Cemetery, Indian River off of Route 812. The cemetery can not be seen from the road.
- Naumburg Mennonite Cemetery, Route 126, Naumburg (This is the newest cemetery located in the Town of Croghan.)



**Town of Croghan
Historian's Office**

“History with its flickering lamp stumbles along the trail of the past, trying to reconstruct its scenes, to revive its echoes, and kindle with pale gleams the passion of former days. What is the worth of all this? The only guide to a man is his conscience; the only shield to his memory is the rectitude and sincerity of his actions.” —Winston Churchill

The Town of Croghan Historian's Office is located at the Town of Croghan Municipal Office, 9882 State Route 126, Beaver Falls, New York. If you have any questions or additions to the articles in this newsletter, please feel free to contact us at our home phone: (315) 346-6201

This and previous newsletters can also be downloaded from Town of Croghan web site: www.townofcroghan.com

If there is a special topic you would like to see in a newsletter or if we have made an error, please let us know. Thank you.

Jack and Mary Sweeney

Effects of a Rainy Day in January 1916

An article in the Riverbank News written by Mrs. M. F. Meister, Correspondent described what happened when it rained one January day on the River Road (Route 126).

“The heavy rain of Saturday caused the water in the creek at Fred Bingle’s to rise to within a few inches of going into their barn, and was nearly over the road, while on the river side of the road the ice was no higher than usual. The culvert not being large enough to carry the water, it finally tore its way through

under the road by the side of the culvert. The water rushed through, thus saving Mr. Bingle’s barn from being flooded. The tar road was not broken through, although it sunk down onto the top of the culvert. Teams have cross although it is “skeery.” The flood stopped ice cutting. Monday morning Fred Zecher and his men crossed the river by taking the horses one at a time; the men drawing the sleigh over. When across they found they could not cross the flats to the Basselin barns, as the ice would not hold. They

came back, the same way they went over. The sleighing is poor.

Monday afternoon the wash-out at Rock Creek, near Fred Bingle’s was visited by Clarence Putman, of Indian River; Messrs. Carlisle, Ripley and Carroll, of Watertown. They engaged a large force of men and teams and began the repair work of filling in Tuesday morning.”

(Source: THE JOURNAL AND REPUBLICAN, THURSDAY, January 27, 1916.)