

# First year at Salisbury school

by Peter F. Klassen

Sixty years ago a brand spanking, new school, modern in design and construction according to the latest specifications of comfort and safety, opened its doors for the first time to students of the Morse Place area. Not a great deal is known about this first year. What little information we have comes from phot-static copies of four half-yearly returns. These half-yearly returns were filled by the teachers twice a year, on June 30 and December 31. Legislative grants were based on these returns and form exhorts the teacher as follows: "The Legislative grant for the half-year is not payable to any school until its half-yearly return is fully and accurately filled up from the school register,

certified to by the secretary-treasurer and the teacher and sent to the Department of Education. Grants were issued retroactively (as they are now) and the school board had to borrow money either privately or from the banks to operate schools, pay salaries and maintain buildings. The basis of grants was made on pupil-days of attendance.

Our records show that attendance for that first term of school; September to December, 1915, was anywhere from 1.5 days to 76 days. It would seem that 76 days is the possible attendance. We further find out that only two pupils had attended for 76 days. They were Gladys and Doris McKnight, both 12 years old. Could they be

twins? They were both in grade 4.

We also find that classes were rather large. Grade one, for instance has enrolled 42 children, ages 6 to 10, in all one room. They were taught by Mrs. JB Lothrop.

The other teachers were: Mrs. MP Duffin with 43 grade 2 students in one room. Grade 3 and 4 were combined in a room with 45 students: 23 grade 3's and 22 grade 4's. Their teacher was Miss Lillian Campbell. The senior class was taught by the principal, Mr. James Hilton

Mori, who combined the grades 5, 6, 7 in one room with a total of 28 students.

Altogether there were 158 students in Salisbury that first term. Students who were in Grade one that first school term now all qualify for Old Age Pension. We salute all Salisbury students of 1915.

*This is the second in a series of three articles written by PF Klassen, principal of Salisbury school, which is celebrating its diamond jubilee this spring.*

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