

Our former Edwards Historian, Leah Noble, wrote that it was found that school was taught in Edwards as early as 1814. She wrote that U. O. Kerr passed on the information that his father, John Kerr, son of 1819 Scottish immigrant, Alexander Kerr, went to school in a barn in 1819 and 1820. This barn was on the property assigned to the Alexander Noble family by Joseph Pitcairn (or his agent, George Allan) and located on County Road #24 where Richard Brown lived until a few years ago.

There were ten districts in the township. The village school was designated #1.

There were five village schools over the years. The first known was a log cabin located on the mainland across from the George Allan brick house.

The next one was built in 1840 of stone beside where the present VFW building is. It was large enough to accommodate the 10-12 students in attendance. About 20 years later a one room wooden structure was erected just east of the Methodist church on Main Street to teach the elementary grades, but not high school. Because of the expanding population, a second room was added in 1887 and a second teacher employed.



In 1898 this school was abandoned when a new one story, three-room school was built on East Main Street where the Assembly of God church is now.

After the turn of the century the townspeople saw the need for a four-year local high school. There was one year of high school, and perhaps two, in place. To make this vision a reality, the roof of the school was raised and in 1914 the first high school graduation was held with three members completing the requirements.

In the 1930's the 1898 school had outlived its usefulness. A vote decided a new, modern school was necessary and a two-story brick school on Trout Lake Street was erected. In June of 1936 the combination gym and auditorium was completed and the first graduation was held from the stage. In the fall of 1936 the Main Street school was permanently closed and classes began in the brick school. School was held in this structure until June of 1989 when it was closed. The brick school on Trout Lake Street was the final location of a school building for Edwards students within the township of Edwards. The present school for Edwards is located on County Route 24, just over the line in the town of Russell, to house the students of our merged districts of Edwards and Russell and is known as Edwards-Knox Central School. This picture shows the brick school on Trout Lake Street when it was new in 1936 before any landscaping was done or cement walks made.



Creek School (or Barraford), Dist. #2, was located on State Highway 58 towards Fine about a mile from the village. There was an earlier school building in the district, but the location is not known. It has been told that the school week at that time included Saturday. The plot of land on which the last Creek School stood was sold for \$1.00 to the farm from which it had been taken, after the school was closed in 1952 (from BOE minutes). The farm was owned by Clarence Given at that time and later he razed the school, built a retirement home on the same spot and sold the farm to Dale J. Freeman, present owner.



Pond Settlement School, Dist.#3, was organized to accommodate the children of the families who lived in the area of the two small ponds “ Smith (Soft Water) and Jones. While it was only a short way from the South Edwards district, it was necessary for the students to have a school within walking distance in order to be able to take advantage of public schooling. Blitha Bullock was the teacher there when the school closed in June 1956.



South Edwards School was Dist. #4. The first settler came to South Edwards in 1824. Others followed and about 1829 Reuben Guiles and his wife, Hannah Shaw Guiles arrived in the young community. Hannah Guiles became South Edwards first teacher. Since she had a growing family, perhaps, she taught school in her own home. So, Edwards has had more than one school building, but the one still standing was probably the first country school in Edwards with two rooms, one for primary grades and one for the intermediate grades. Eventually only the room on the left was needed for all grades taught. In June 1952 residents voted to keep school open another year. The last teacher was Ruth Kerr. After closing the school the residents of the area felt they needed a

place for community activities. Arrangements were made for it to become a community center, which it remains today, hosting Old Home Days, public dinners, and other gatherings that bring together people who remember South Edwards with pride and nostalgia.

Harmon School, Dist. #5, was located on the River Road and the building is still standing. At one time the teacher was Minnie Little Ingraham. She lived on the road that is now State Highway 58, which was across the river behind the Harmon School. When weather permitted, she walked to the river behind her home (Max Lanphear's now), rowed a boat across the water and walked to her teaching position at District #5, saving herself a number of miles daily. This school, which closed before centralization in 1948, has served as a dwelling as well as a school. The Chapin family lost their home to fire, so moved into the empty school, which was on their property, and lived there quite a few years. The building now stands unoccupied.



Talville School, Dist. #6, was actually designated District #10, when separated from Pleasant Valley, but at one time, due to a clerical error, it became District #6 (1896 map shows it as District #10). While the hamlet had an earlier school building, the one presently standing was built in 1894 on land donated by Albert Noble. At that time there were about 50 students and a larger, two-room school was needed. Grant and Bell had the contract to build it. This school served the community for many years, finally needed only one room with one teacher, then closed, in June 1963. The last teacher was Grace LaMora. It was the last country school in operation in Edwards. This photo is a very early view of the Talville school. Note that there are no railings on the steps.

Bennett School, (or Dog St. school) Dist. #7, was located on Dog Street outside of Fullerville headed toward Pitcairn. It is in a remote area and the building is used as a hunting camp now. About 1900 when the district had families with school aged children, a young French-Canadian born girl from Gouverneur, Miss Clara Beaugard, taught there. She boarded at a home three miles away and walked the six miles to school and back daily. This area is now part of the Gouverneur school district.



Brodie School, Dist. #8, was the second country school established in Edwards as that area was settled early in Edwards history. The Brodie family had a schoolroom in their home just outside Edwards village towards Gouverneur and invited the neighborhood children to



come to classes along with their family. In 1881 this one-room school was built by James Webb at the corner of the road to Talcville to replace an earlier school and was attended by the district children until it was closed when there were not enough children in the district to warrant keeping a school open. Mary Tripp Noble, who was the last teacher there, stated that it closed in 1941. Mrs. Noble related that her contract specified that she must resign if she married or the school closed. The school was sold at auction to Ray Webb in 1954. Since then it has been razed and a trailer occupies the lot. This photo of the Brodie School was taken in 1909.

Scotland School, Dist. #9, is still standing and located on County route 24, the road towards Russell. This district got its name from the Scottish immigrants who settled that land beginning around 1823 after their indentures to Joseph Pitcairn had been paid off. One 1897 contract of a teacher of this district, James O'Brien of Rossie, NY, has been saved and is on file. This building is now a rental property of Clifford Bullock. Mr. Bullock believes the school closed when the districts centralized in 1948. This photograph shows the Scotland School in 1908.



Pleasant Valley School, Dist. #10, (called Freeman District #6 on the 1896 map of Edwards) was located about three miles from the village towards Gouverneur. The land for this school was given to the district by Gouverneur Morris on 11 Dec 1843. A bookkeeper's error, at some time, transposed the #6 to Talcville and #10 to Pleasant Valley, which it kept for the remainder of its days. The school closed in 1952 and became a community center for many years. The property was purchased in 1990 by Kenneth and Avis Brown McGinnis. They built a home on their property and tore down the defunct one room school in

1991. Here we see the Pleasant Valley School as it appeared in 1908.