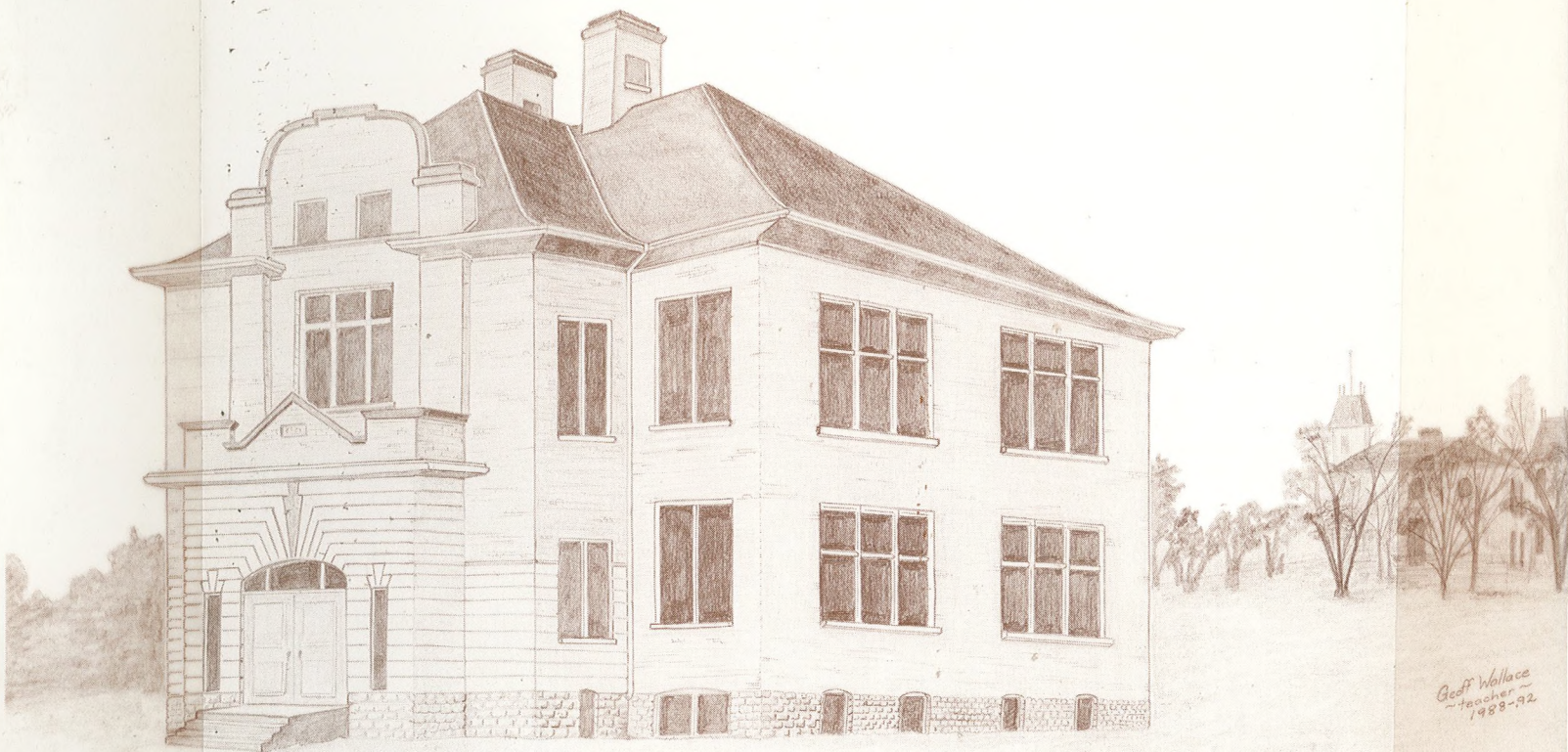


Memories



The New Public School © 1910

now Princess Elizabeth P.S.

*Geoff Wallace
teacher ~
1989-92*

Ward School/Princess Elizabeth 1867-1993



REF
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Educ.

The pencil sketch of the 1909 school was drawn by Geoff Wallace. Geoff taught art at Princess Elizabeth Public School from 1987 to 1992. The original sketch has been framed and will be presented to the school at the reunion on Saturday, May 15, 1993.

OXFORD COUNTY LIBRARY

WARD SCHOOL

“MEMORIES”

PRINCESS ELIZABETH

1867 · 1993

BY

KEN MOYER and MARY JANE KEKES

(former student)

(former teacher)

Ken Moyer

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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Don Vyse
Weldon Library (U.W.O.)
Mary White
Florence (Tonks) Williams
Woodstock Public Library

Thanks to all to helped in any way towards the completion of this project.

Thank you ! Thank you ! Thank you!



PREFACE

In preparing the history of the Ward/Princess Elizabeth Schools, every effort has been made to only state that which can be verified. This has been done by consulting files of the newspapers of the time and by the school board records that were available. References will be made to the sources of dates, costs and builders of this, the oldest of Ingersoll's elementary school structures.

Ken Moyer

The response to requests for memorabilia was overwhelming! In selecting the material to be included in our book of memories, a conscientious attempt was made to include a cross-section of photographs and information that was submitted. The goal was to include at least one item of each person's contributions.

The memories of former students were relied upon for most of the names. Spelling errors are inevitable, since many discrepancies were encountered. My sincere apologies for any errors or omissions.

It is hoped that many friendships and memories will be rekindled.

Mary Jane Kekes

3

MY PERSONAL THOUGHTS

BY KEN MOYER

A school is a place where you learn. A school also imparts a feeling of belonging. The Ward School belonged to the people and gave of itself to the people. It was the centre piece of the Ward, and, in so many ways, made the life of the times, somewhat easier to bear.

In the summer months, there were the softball games that were played on the diamond, to provide an evening's entertainment. Always well attended and well played, the games were mainly of the Industrial League. In this league, was a team called "Stumptown", made up of the players from the six block area, near the school. There was also a team of girls from the neighbourhood who played in a town league. Although most games were played in Memorial Park, the girls practised on the Ward School diamond.

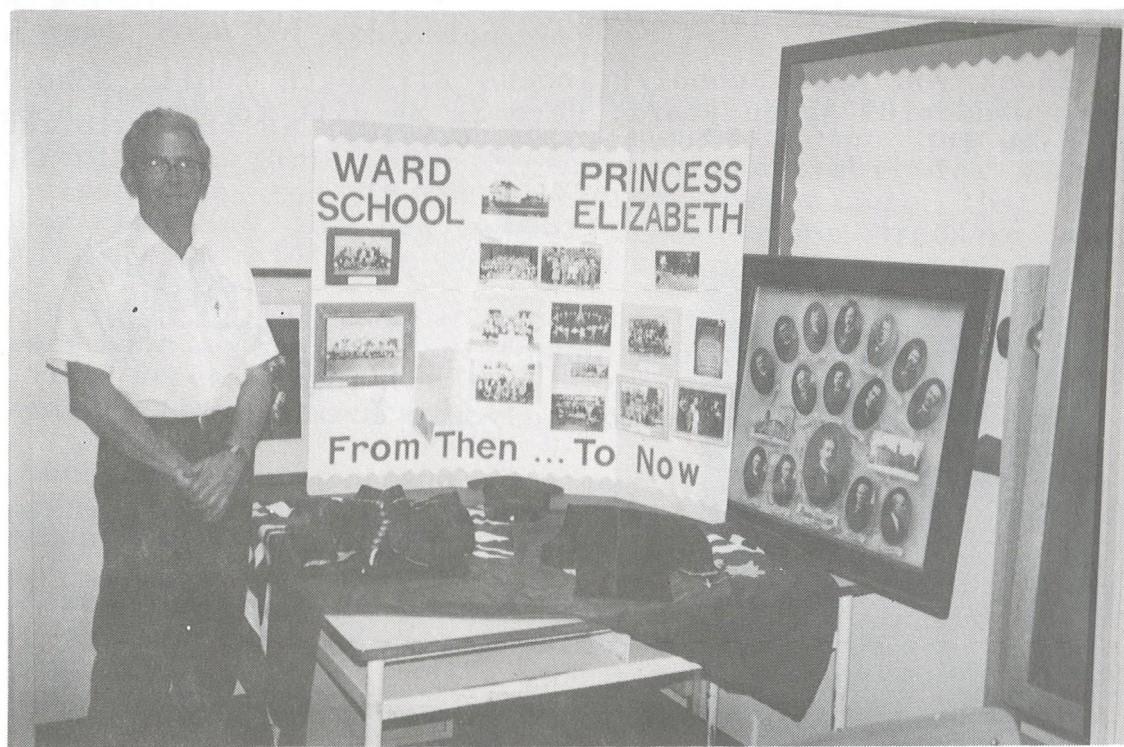
During the winter months, from early December until late March, there was a skating rink on the lawns north of the school. This rink was complete with strings of lights over it, and was really more of a community ice surface than used for school purposes. Many, many happy hours were spent on this rink with hockey and skating. In the late winter, a Skating Carnival took place for all, with races, games and much goodwill. The rink was funded by the Board of Education and looked after by the men of the neighbourhood. Of those men, I remember Mr. Fred Murray, Mr. Bill Smith and Mr. Had Petrie, who flooded the rink using the hydrant on the corner of George and Alma Streets. At times when Mr. Pickard, the janitor of the school, was present, the rear doors of the school were unlocked, and skates could be put on indoors, using the rear stairs for seats. Clearing the snow was done by all.

On the east lawn of the school (presently the parking lot), there were two sets of swings. One set was for the small children. The seats were designed with a front bar for safety. The second set of swings was used by the older and bigger children. These swings were provided by the "Big 8 Society", a local organization comprised of eight service clubs. This society also donated a drinking fountain for the school's use. It was located outside the building, somewhere near where the west hallway now exists. Similar water fountains were placed in different areas of the town and one can still be seen at the Ingersoll Museum.

I remember many things about the old Ward School, but mostly I recall the pleasant days of my childhood - days spent with friends, either at school or at play after school. I recollect the joy it gave my mother, to have the children at school, come across the street and visit her in her flower garden. She looked forward to their visits and took the time to show them all the varieties of flowers she grew. From this garden, from time to time, there were flowers for the teachers. The staff members were not only her friends, but considered friends of the entire neighbourhood. There was a great closeness in this Ward.

While we may not have had the luxuries, that are taken for granted today, we did have one another to rely upon. Many, many small tasks and community responsibilities were willingly shared by those who lived in the area at that time.

Ken Meyer
/93



MY PERSONAL THOUGHTS

BY MARY JANE KEKES

It's hard to believe that when I met Ken Moyer three years ago and said, "Let's get together and write a history of Princess Elizabeth School," that this would be the result!

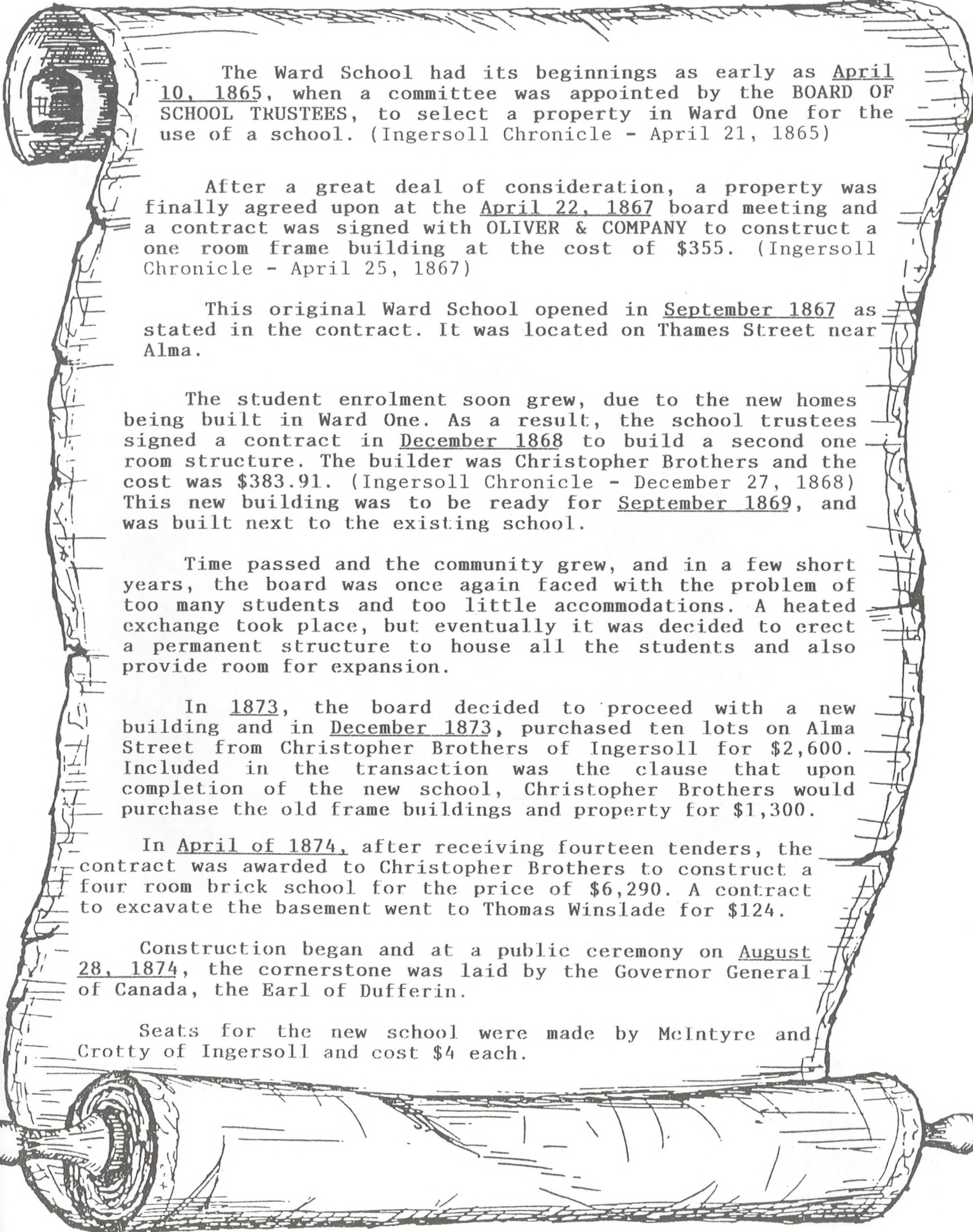
Over the past three years, I have had the opportunity to meet many wonderful people who have such fond memories of this school. The video taping sessions were especially exciting. As I watched and listened to the former students and teachers, I felt their pride and joy as they reminisced of the "good old days".

My own recollections of Princess Elizabeth School include numerous highlights of my twenty-four year teaching career. In the seven years I spent there, I saw several once-in-a-lifetime opportunities and dreams come to fruition. The students, parents and staff members provided so many memorable moments that it would be very difficult to list them all. However, I do want to mention the new library, the musicals, floats, V.I.P., fun fairs and of course, "The Celebration of Reading". The parent volunteers were incredible. Their constant support and enthusiasm helped make each seemingly impossible task easily attainable.

Thank you Ward School/Princess Elizabeth Public School for a wonderful seven years. Here is my gift to you. I hope you like it!



*Mary Jane Kekes
793*



The Ward School had its beginnings as early as April 10, 1865, when a committee was appointed by the BOARD OF SCHOOL TRUSTEES, to select a property in Ward One for the use of a school. (Ingersoll Chronicle - April 21, 1865)

After a great deal of consideration, a property was finally agreed upon at the April 22, 1867 board meeting and a contract was signed with OLIVER & COMPANY to construct a one room frame building at the cost of \$355. (Ingersoll Chronicle - April 25, 1867)

This original Ward School opened in September 1867 as stated in the contract. It was located on Thames Street near Alma.

The student enrolment soon grew, due to the new homes being built in Ward One. As a result, the school trustees signed a contract in December 1868 to build a second one room structure. The builder was Christopher Brothers and the cost was \$383.91. (Ingersoll Chronicle - December 27, 1868) This new building was to be ready for September 1869, and was built next to the existing school.

Time passed and the community grew, and in a few short years, the board was once again faced with the problem of too many students and too little accommodations. A heated exchange took place, but eventually it was decided to erect a permanent structure to house all the students and also provide room for expansion.

In 1873, the board decided to proceed with a new building and in December 1873, purchased ten lots on Alma Street from Christopher Brothers of Ingersoll for \$2,600. Included in the transaction was the clause that upon completion of the new school, Christopher Brothers would purchase the old frame buildings and property for \$1,300.

In April of 1874, after receiving fourteen tenders, the contract was awarded to Christopher Brothers to construct a four room brick school for the price of \$6,290. A contract to excavate the basement went to Thomas Winslade for \$124.

Construction began and at a public ceremony on August 28, 1874, the cornerstone was laid by the Governor General of Canada, the Earl of Dufferin.

Seats for the new school were made by McIntyre and Crotty of Ingersoll and cost \$4 each.

In December of 1874, insurance was arranged for the building and contents.

Classes commenced in the new Ward School in early 1875, and the old frame schools and lots on Thames Street were deeded to John Christopher as partial payment towards the construction. (Ingersoll Chronicle - December 11, 1873, March 13, May 7, September 17, 1874, February 11, 1875)



1874 Ward School

(Photo courtesy of Kent Shoults)

Classes continued with two large rooms being used and two rooms left in reserve for expansion. In 1877 a new concept of training "Class 3 Certificate" teachers was introduced. Ingersoll was to have one of the two training schools in Oxford county. To accommodate this new "Model School", changes had to be made in the school system of the town. The "Model School" was to be located in the Central School. To make space available, the two rooms that were used by high school students were vacated and those students were transferred to the two unused rooms of the Ward One School. The "new" (5 year old) school was now filled to capacity with elementary and high school students. (History of Mr. R.A. Paterson - former Inspector of Public Schools)

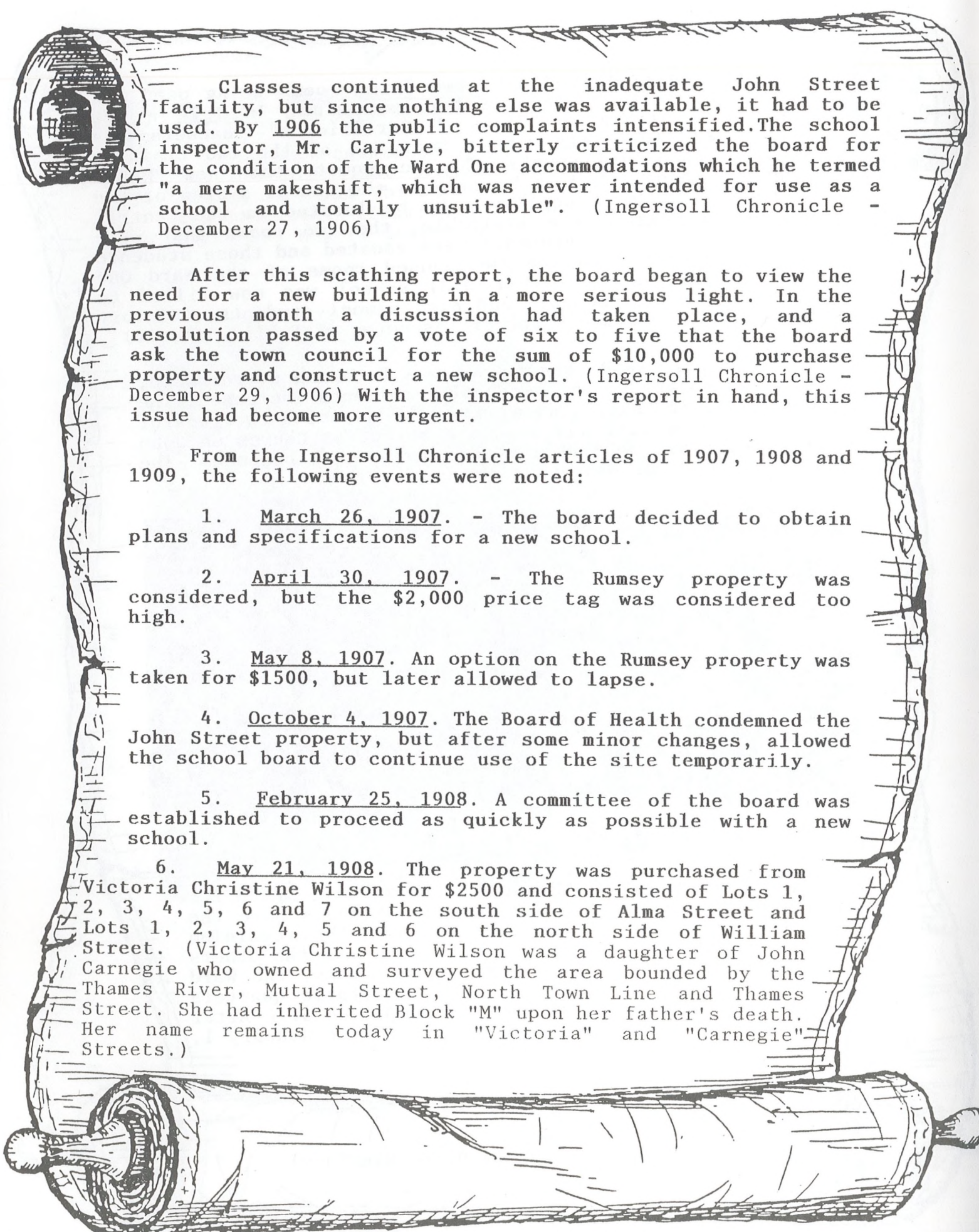
By the year 1880, the school was becoming overcrowded, as both elementary and high school enrolments increased. The school board, in their wisdom, made the decision to transfer one of the elementary classes to a Methodist Church on John Street, which was no longer needed for church purposes. The Ward One School now operated in two locations.



John Street School

In 1882, the High School required still more space for its students. Once again, the elementary students bore the brunt of the decision. It was decided that the remaining elementary students at the Ward School would join the others at John Street. Thus in a time span of ten years, the Ward School students were once more in very unsuitable quarters and their "new" school had become the High School. (After expansion, it was raised to collegiate status on January 1, 1886.)

(Photo courtesy of Diane Sinclair)



Classes continued at the inadequate John Street facility, but since nothing else was available, it had to be used. By 1906 the public complaints intensified. The school inspector, Mr. Carlyle, bitterly criticized the board for the condition of the Ward One accommodations which he termed "a mere makeshift, which was never intended for use as a school and totally unsuitable". (Ingersoll Chronicle - December 27, 1906)

After this scathing report, the board began to view the need for a new building in a more serious light. In the previous month a discussion had taken place, and a resolution passed by a vote of six to five that the board ask the town council for the sum of \$10,000 to purchase property and construct a new school. (Ingersoll Chronicle - December 29, 1906) With the inspector's report in hand, this issue had become more urgent.

From the Ingersoll Chronicle articles of 1907, 1908 and 1909, the following events were noted:

1. March 26, 1907. - The board decided to obtain plans and specifications for a new school.

2. April 30, 1907. - The Rumsey property was considered, but the \$2,000 price tag was considered too high.

3. May 8, 1907. An option on the Rumsey property was taken for \$1500, but later allowed to lapse.

4. October 4, 1907. The Board of Health condemned the John Street property, but after some minor changes, allowed the school board to continue use of the site temporarily.

5. February 25, 1908. A committee of the board was established to proceed as quickly as possible with a new school.

6. May 21, 1908. The property was purchased from Victoria Christine Wilson for \$2500 and consisted of Lots 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6 and 7 on the south side of Alma Street and Lots 1, 2, 3, 4, 5 and 6 on the north side of William Street. (Victoria Christine Wilson was a daughter of John Carnegie who owned and surveyed the area bounded by the Thames River, Mutual Street, North Town Line and Thames Street. She had inherited Block "M" upon her father's death. Her name remains today in "Victoria" and "Carnegie" Streets.)



1908 Ingersoll Board of Education

Top Row: Jas. B. Thompson, Wm. Dundas, John A. Barr, H. F. Boyse, Wm. H. Partlo, T. J. Norton, A. Macaulay. Middle Row: J. F. Morrey, R. T. Agar, R. B. Maybee. Bottom Row: T. R. Mayberry (M.P.P.), W. Briden B.A. (Principal - Collegiate Institute), F. A. Ackert (Chairman), H. F. McDiarmid (Principal - Public School - later V.M.S.) W. A. Sudworth (Sec. Treas.)

7. June 30, 1908. The committee visited schools in Guelph and Brantford and decided the new school design would be similar to Ryerson Street School in Brantford. It was thought that the total cost of land and school could amount to \$11,000.

8. July 29, 1908. Taylor & Taylor of Brantford were appointed architects of the new school. Ironically, while all the plans were being undertaken for a new school, a letter was received from the Minister of Education, stating that the "Model School" system which really began the Ward One problems, would be discontinued. (Ingersoll Chronicle - July 30, 1908)

9. August 7, 1908. - The first call for tenders was made. All tenders were considered too high.

10. September 21, 1908. - A second call for tenders took place. All submissions were considered still too high.

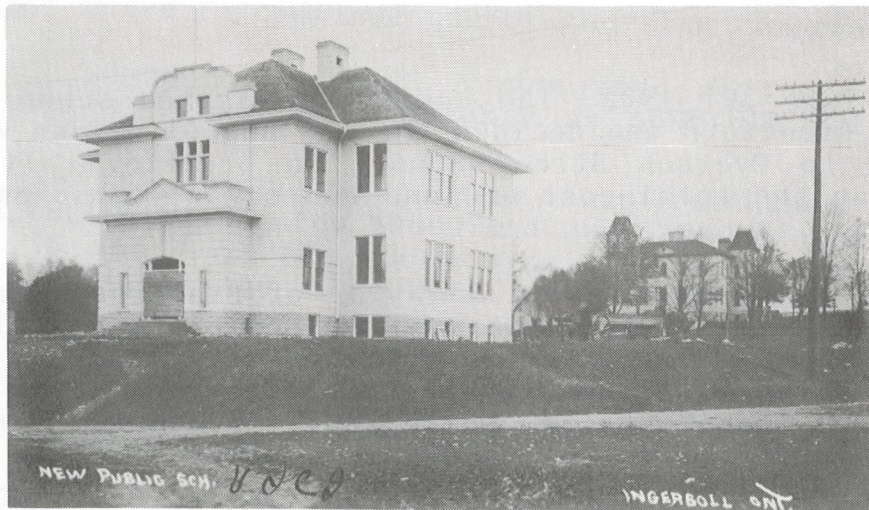
11. October 31, 1908. - The board made some major structural changes to help lower the cost of the building. e.g. shingle roof instead of slate roof, nine inch upper walls instead of thirteen inch, cheaper brick finish, and four rooms instead of the original eight that had been planned.

12. December 18, 1908. - The third call for tenders was initiated. Most of the replies were much closer to the original estimated cost.

During the next three months discussion after discussion took place for and against proceeding with the construction. At one point , building a new collegiate was considered. This would make the collegiate building an elementary school once again. The board was divided.

13. March 30, 1909. - The contract was finally awarded to P.H. Secord & Son of Brantford to build the new Ward One School at a tender price of \$11,311, including the land.

14. September 1, 1909. - The pupils were transferred from John Street and the new school opened for classes.



(Photo courtesy of Kent Shoults)

The official opening ceremonies for the new elementary school in Ward One was scheduled for Monday, November 15, 1909. Due to the sidewalks not being complete and the front steps leading up the bank, not ready for use, the opening was postponed until Friday, November 26, 1909.

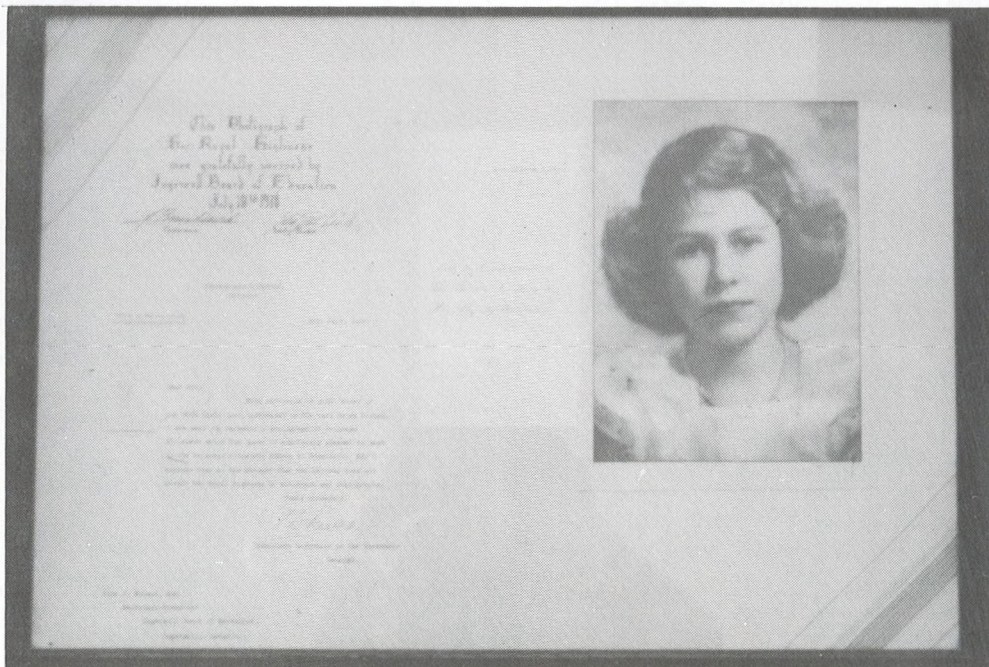
The keys to the building were accepted by the Board Chairman, Mr. Agar and former Chairman, Mr. F.H. Ackert.

At this time, teacher, Miss J. Poole received a gift from her former students. (students far and wide were canvassed) The gift was a velvet bag that contained \$282 in gold coins. It was a very handsome gift for a very dedicated teacher.

The school was insured for \$8500, which insured the building for \$7500 and the contents for \$1000.

15. September 1909 to February 10, 1938. - Classes continued in a more peaceful manner and the school became known as the "Ward School".

In 1938, Royal consent was obtained, and in a ceremony in the afternoon of February 10, 1938 the Ward School was officially named Princess Elizabeth Public School. The principal was Mr. J.A. Turner. He remained principal until the end of the school year. He was the only principal of both the Ward School and Princess Elizabeth Public School. The boundaries of the school had continually changed with the growth of the North Ward following World War Two.





In the spring of 1938, students, staff, town and board officials posed for pictures commemorating the dedication of Princess Elizabeth Public School. From left to right: Mr. Daniels, Larnie Pickard, Miss Jean Borland, Dr. MacKay, John J. MacLeod, Miss Ruth Cuthbertson, Sam Zurbrigg, Mrs. J. W. Counter, Ferris David, Harry Cornell, Tommy Jackson, , Miss Jean Beattie, Jack Mayberry, Howard Esseltine.

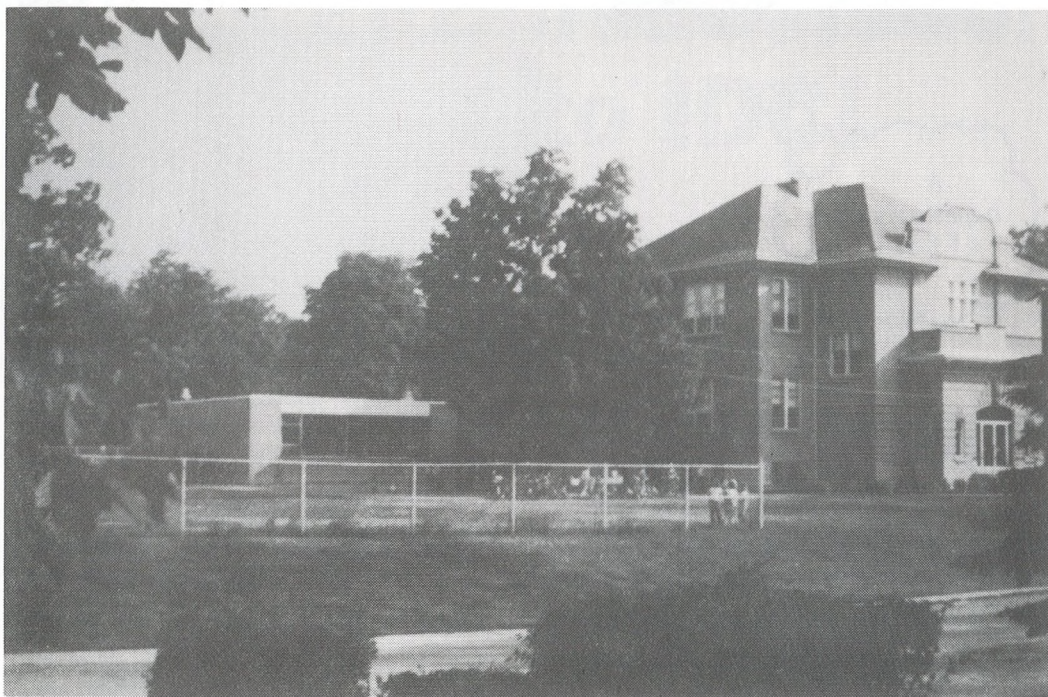


(Photos courtesy of Jean Edmonds)

In February of 1950 a five room addition opened. The contractor for the addition was Swazey Construction from Hamilton. The cost was \$116,000.

For a period of two or three years, kindergarten to grade 8 was taught. Eventual overcrowding, made it necessary once again to send grade seven and eight students to Victory Memorial School.

In September 1964, two additional rooms were added. The contractor was Ross Kilgour of Ingersoll. The cost was \$43,750. One of the rooms was used as a General Learning Disability Class. The enrolment was 306 students.



In 1964 the staff included John Cook (principal), Jean Borland, Jim Dilamarter, Marjorie Daniel, Shirley Gibson, Noreen McCartney, Ellen McGregor, Shirley Smith, Laura Taylor, Ruth Tingle.