



Embro  
Continuation  
School

1924 - 1947

History  
and  
Memories





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# Embro Continuation School

## History

by  
Mary (Matheson) Scott  
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## EMBRO CONTINUATION SCHOOL

Secondary school education in Embro had its beginning in 1924 when the first Form 1 class of 25 pupils gathered in the "third" room of the Embro Public School with their teacher Mr. W.T. Boyes. The pupils had graduated from Senior Fourth in the various Township of West Zorra Public Schools and Embro Public School.

At this same time the union of the Presbyterian, Methodist and Congregational churches was in progress which resulted in the formation of the United Church of Canada in June 1925. Embro had a congregation of each denomination. Knox Presbyterian became Knox United, Ebenezer Congregational became Ebenezer United and the Methodist congregation closed its church on Commissioners Street West moving to join the Knox United congregation. However, Knox Presbyterian did not disappear entirely. A portion of the congregation remained loyal to the Presbyterian Church of Canada and worshipped temporarily in the Town Hall.

The ratepayers, noting the success of the Continuation School in its initial quarters, and realizing its future potential, purchased the Methodist Church on July 13, 1925. In September of that year the 1924 class, now in Form II, and the Form I students, gathered in their new quarters, with their teacher Mr. Boyes. The school at that time, was entered by the church entrance and the classroom set up in the church proper.

Renovations the following summer saw the church divided laterally into two classrooms, the entrance closed up, and window walls built in on both the north and south ends of the building. An addition was built to the east which included the entry, cloakrooms, washrooms, and steps leading to a second story teachers' room, and supply room. September 1926 now enrolled Forms I, II, and III, and the teachers were Miss Mary Knott & Miss Constance Heal. By 1927 instruction was being offered for both Lower School (Forms 1 and 2) and Middle School (Forms 3 and 4).

By 1930, it was obvious the school had to be bigger, and in May 1931 tenders were called for remodelling. Ten contractors applied, with McKinneys of Woodstock being awarded the contract. The shed on the property was moved to the public school along with the wood for heating purposes. Jas. McDonald's tender for 15 cords of beech and maple wood at \$2.75 a cord was accepted.



A two room addition with a connecting door was built to the east replacing the 1926 addition. The entrances at ground level were from the north and south in the area between the two former classrooms and the two new ones. Here too, were the washrooms at ground level, and stairs leading to the staff rooms at the south side, and to the library at the north side.

During the years of the existence of Embro Continuation School many events, educational and otherwise, occurred. Agriculture became a feature of the curriculum, and in connection with that a school garden was established in the vicinity of the Hydro Station. An incubator was purchased in 1931 and eggs for same at the cost of 6¢ a dozen. In 1938 this was replaced with an electric brooder.

The playing field across the street to the south was increased in size in 1934 with the purchase of property from George Wadland. Mr. Wadland requested that a high board fence be built to protect his property, and materials for this were ordered in June at the cost of \$157.39. More land to the north was purchased from Hugh Matheson and later from Charles Jewell.

In 1935 tenders were called to drill a well and Mr. McBeth of Ingersoll was awarded the contract. This same well still supplies the adequate needs of the eight apartments in the Wallace Building converted from the former school.

Music instruction was introduced in 1939 and Miss Margery Youngs was employed as the teacher.

The records of the board meetings list many interesting purchases. In 1932 a film slide lantern was bought with the stipulation that it was not to be loaned outside the school. In 1937 a typewriter costing \$20 was obtained and later the old duplicating machine was traded for a new Gestetner (\$150 less \$35 trade-in allowance). It is interesting to compare the cost and quantity of equipment with today's educational expenditures.

September 1937 Dr. J.E. Jackson, Medical Officer of Health, addressed the school board regarding the polio epidemic which was sweeping the country, and advised that the schools be closed. This advice was not followed, however, because no local case had occurred. Medical inspection in the school was introduced in 1940.



Inter-school field day competitions were a pleasant diversion from classroom routine. Embro Continuation School competed with other nearby continuation schools. Some years it was with Thamesford and Thorndale. Other schools involved at different times were Plattsville, Princeton and Drumbo. In 1937 the School Board allocated \$4 for a shield for field day if the other participating schools would contribute likewise. The school colours were red and white and later changed to a combination of three tartans--Dress Stewart, Royal Stewart and Gordon.

Another memorable extra-curricular event was the annual play, where aspiring actors and actresses performed to a filled house at the Town Hall. There was also between-act "entertainment" which involved other students with diverse talents. Awards and certificates were presented as a part of this event.

Permission from the School Board was needed for any variation from the regular curriculum. One such concession was granted when Mr. R.A. Kennedy requested that a classroom could be used for a dancing class sponsored by the Caledonian Society. In 1941, with the country at war, a Platoon of the Oxford Rifles was granted the use of the basement for drill purposes under the supervision of Lt. C.F. Beagley.

In 1947 Embro was admitted to the Woodstock High School Area with Mr. Wesley Wallace as Chairman. The same year the Continuation School was closed and the pupils were taken to Woodstock Collegiate by bus for higher education.



TEACHERS

1924 - 1926	Mr. W.T. Boyes
1926 - 1927	Miss Mary Knott, Miss Constance Heal
1927 -	Mr. G.F. Coates, Miss Irene Sleightholm
1929 -	Mr. George Currie, Miss Irene Sleightholm
1930 - 1931	Mr. H.E. Fawcett, Miss Evelyn Downing
1931 - 1933	Mr. H.E. Fawcett, Miss Ruby Atchison, Miss Dorothy Nixon
1933 - 1934	Mr. H.E. Fawcett, Mr. J.M. Robbie, Miss Atchison
1934 - 1937	Mr. R.A. Kennedy, Miss Alice McKay, Miss Connie Crockett
1937 - 1938	Mr. R.A. Kennedy, Miss Alice Gibbs, Miss Ruth Partridge
1938 - 1939	Mr. R.A. Kennedy, Miss Margaret Dickson, Miss Ruth Partridge
1939 - 1940	Mr. R.A. Kennedy, Mr. W.T. Boyes, Miss Besley
1939 -	Miss Margery Youngs (Music)
1940 -	Miss Isobel Lindsay, Miss Besley, Mr. A.P. Werner (to Dec.), (Dec.) Mr. Cameron Stewart
1941 - 1942	Mr. Stewart, Miss Besley, Miss Lindsay
1942 - 1943	Mr. C. Stewart, Mrs. Hawkins, Elda Stein
1943 - 1944	Mr. K.R. Duff, Miss Mildred Anthistle (to Dec '43) Miss Torrance, Mr. Cameron Stewart
1944 - 1945	Mr. Carman E. Powell, Kathryn Riddell, K.R. Duff
1945 - 1946	Mr. K.R. Duff, Mr. C.E. Powell, W.T. Singer Jean McCaul (Music)
1946 - 1947	Mr. K.R. Duff, Mr. F.W. Bagnall
September 1947	School Closed



Embro  
Continuation School

Memories

by

Former Students



Name: Helena (McKay) McRoberts  
Present Address: Embro, Ontario  
NOJ 1J0  
Years at E.C.S.: 1924-1925-1926

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#### The Beginning - 1924

The Continuation School, a new venture for this area, was to open in September 1924. The class was to be held in one of the rooms of the Embro Public School--the brick building east of the present Presbyterian Church. The classroom of the first year students was the room on the north side facing out to St. Andrew's Street. Those eligible to attend were the students in the Senior Fourth or Entrance Class in the one-room rural schools or the two-room village schools in the surrounding area.

To gain admission each student had to write the Entrance Examinations that were set by the Department of Education in Toronto and obtain a passing mark. The students were required to pay a fee and wrote the examinations in their nearest village school. Before Easter we wrote some subjects such as Reading, Writing and Art. At the end of June we wrote the rest of the examinations--Arithmetic, History, Geography, Spelling, Hygiene, Nature Study, English Literature and English Composition. During the summer we anxiously awaited the arrival of a letter from the Department of Education.

At that time there were no school buses and each successful student had to arrange for transportation to and from school. A number of rural students drove to Embro every school day with a horse and buggy. Several residents of Embro had small barns where the horses were kept during the day.

During the winter some of the rural students "boarded" in Embro as the roads in many places became almost impassable. There still were some rail fences that held the snow on the roads and no ploughs to move it off.

On the first day of school we were given a list of the subjects we were required to study and the books we needed. The first day was rather a short one. We were assigned our desk, addressed briefly by the teacher, given the list of books we needed and dismissed to purchase our books. We were able to get the textbooks, note-books, etc. that we needed at Mr. Robert Duncan's Drug Store located



where the Highland Restaurant is now. The next day we started classes and were students of Form I, Embro Continuation School (E.C.S.). Mr. W.T. Boyes was our teacher.

At the end of each school year we tried Departmental Examinations. During the summer holidays we received our grades and certificate. If we were successful we had completed the first half of the Lower School as it was known then.

The next September we were in Form II. If we passed the Departmental Examinations at the end of the second year, we had completed Lower School. In the third year we were in Form III or Middle School. At the end of June in each school year, we wrote examinations set by the Department of Education in Toronto.

The second year the Continuation School classes were moved to the former Methodist Church located where the Wallace Apartments are now. The first year we entered through the church doors on the southside of the building. The two classes, Form I and Form II met in the auditorium of the church. Mr. W.T. Boyes was the teacher in charge of both classes.

Before the third year a new part was built out to the east side of the church. The school entrance was in the new part as were the cloakrooms and the teachers' room. This year we had two teachers. Miss Mary Knott and Miss Constance Heal. To accommodate the classes the main auditorium was divided into two rooms.

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Name: Albert (Bert) M. Innes  
Present Address: R.R. #3  
Comber, Ontario  
Years at E.C.S.: First three years, 1924, 1925 and 1926  
Occupation Now: Retired Mechanical Engineer

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Name: Charles G. Munro  
Present Address: Embro, Ontario, NOJ 1J0  
Occupation Now: Farmer

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What I remember.....It happened in a Form III - Canadian History class, when Miss Nixon proceeded to poll the class as to who each pupil felt was the greatest man in early Canadian history. "Sir Wilfred Laurier" or "Sir John A. McDonald. I know that each in his own way served Canada well in his time.



The class responded one after another--"Sir Wilfred Laurier", which really was not a surprising answer, knowing the political bias of the Embro-Zorra community. However, my answer "Sir John A. McDonald" raised horror of horrors.

At the time the strong revulsion, I felt, was very biased. But in retrospect to me, I consider this one of the most amusing incidents of my time in Embro Continuation School.

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Name: Mary (Matheson) Scott  
Present Address: 1 Fox Mill Crescent  
London, Ontario N6J 2B3  
Years at E.C.S.: 1929-1933

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Memories of E.C.S. 1929 - 1933....I attended Embro Continuation School from September 1929 to June 1933. So many memories come crowding back that it is difficult to record only a few. My first boarding place was at the home of Mrs. J.M. McKay. Also staying there was Miss Wilma Burrill of the Public School staff. That first year there are memories of:

- . hoping dessert every night would be apple pie
- . roller skating with Mona Johnston at 6 a.m.
- . Mr. Currie accusing us of not paying attention to anything--not even to knowing how many telephone poles there were between the school and the main corner, and how we all were out counting as soon as school was dismissed.
- . the Inspector, so enthralled with being in the famous Scottish Community of Zorra, looked down the class list for a good Scotch name to read a Robbie Burns poem, and how everyone except Helen McPherson breathed a sigh of relief when he chose her.
- . The accident which befell Rollie Berdan when he was janitor of the school, and how four of us volunteered to sweep the school, clean the blackboards, etc. for him. I'll never forget the smell of dust-bane.

The building of the addition in the summer of 1931 was watched with extreme interest. Thus it was that three of us knew that one morning the finish coat of the concrete was poured on the basement floor. We searched out a nail, and when everyone was off for lunch, we went down into the basement, and scratched our names in the wet concrete, adding a fourth name because we didn't want her left out. It never occurred to us that Mr. McKinney, the contractor, would be upset. However he was, and word got around that he was looking for us, and was going to make us pay for a new layer of concrete on the entire floor. Needless



to say, the next time we saw the school was when we enrolled in September.

Another interesting building event was when the D.R. Ross residence was being converted to a Presbyterian place of worship, and a manse. One noon hour some of us went to look the job over, finding the bathroom particularly interesting. While we were doing our inspecting a workman nailed the door down shut, and kept us locked in the bathroom until the first bell sounded. Winners of the fastest race on Field Day couldn't have outdistanced us as we made it back to school.

Heading out after supper and roaming the streets was a favourite activity. On one of these occasions a chemist among us knew of a way to make a big explosion. All we needed was a substance from the school lab and a couple of rocks. We obtained the first while some of us stood guard and others went through the boy's washroom window, into the lab and came out with the "explosive". The action took place at the railway bridge. In the middle of the road a rock was placed, and the powder spread on it. From up above, after a few false starts, a rock was dropped that landed in the right spot. The resulting explosion sounded to us like a blast from a cannon. I doubt if anyone in the village heard it. Is there anyone other than me who would care to confess to being a part of this?

Shopping for candy at Steven's store during noon hour was a reason for saving our pennies. It always seemed that when we headed back to school with the bag of candy, people came from all directions to be treated and the purchaser was lucky to get one. One day a co-conspirator and I thought of a way to put a stop to this. We bought a bag of "old-fashioned" chocolates, and headed for my bedroom at Mrs. Kent's, where I was boarding. There we very carefully removed the chocolate bottoms, scooped out a portion of the cream fillings, replacing it with pieces of soap in some and toothpaste in others. The chocolate bottoms replaced, we headed back to school. We passed out the chocolates in the washroom just as the bell was ringing. Those who were fast chocolate eaters burped soapsuds during the afternoon, and maybe ceased being our friends on that day.

I remember being a part of the between-act entertainment at the school play in the town hall. Four of us danced the Scotch reel. We wore borrowed kilts and weren't sure whether the pleats went front or back. This, of course, was before the Embro Community returned to being Scottish with the coming of the Caledonian Games.



We had a supply teacher at that time (Miss Jackson, I think) who made us wear black underwear because she didn't like what she saw. We must have been kicking higher than we thought. At this time, too, travelling shows came to the town hall, and sometimes put on a matinee for the schools. Two I remember seeing were Uncle Tom's Cabin and The Bell Ringers.

Actual classroom memories are limited. One I recall is debating about who was the better Prime Minister, Sir John A. MacDonald or Sir Wilfred Laurier. This was a perfect way to find out the political affiliations of the parents. Another was when we had to fill in the application to write the Departmental Examinations. Two things happened. Elmer Symons asked the teacher how to spell Eliphalet, and Penny Sutherland said there wasn't enough room on the line marked "full name" for Jessie Margaret Penelope Sutherland. Then, too, there were the lift top desks which made perfect barricades for reading True Story Magazines, chewing gum, drawing chalk pictures to amuse the people at the back of the room, etc., etc., etc.

My final year at E.C.S. rather than board, I lived at home, getting to school in the milk truck, and with my father coming to get me. Dad was of the opinion that school was dismissed at 4 o'clock, until he became acquainted with the word "detention". He could always be found in the back room of Bobbie Duncan's drug store, waiting patiently. Never once, as I recall, did he scold me for talking myself into an extended school day. And who could forget the hot lunches served in the school basement, and of taking turns to help Mrs. Agnes McDonald (the cook) clean up?

Nicknames were the order of the day. There was Hookey, Catseyes, Coonie, Whack, Curly, Chuck, Bus, Smokey, Corky and Bish to mention a few.

The teachers I had were Mr. George Currie, Miss Irene Sleightholm, Mr. Herman Fawcett, Miss Evelyn Downing, Miss Ruby Atchison and Miss Dorothy Nixon. Mr. Currie taught in Belleville, St. Catharines, and Simcoe from where he retired to his farm near Belleville. He died December 8, 1976. Mr. Fawcett had a long and successful career in Brantford where a secondary school bears his name. Miss Nixon married Maurice Dobson, a high school principal in St. Catharines and lived in Thorold. She died in the early 1970's. Miss Downing is living in London, and Miss Atchison, now Mrs. Ruby Douglas, lives in Petrolia.

These were good years--in a community second to none.



Name: Mrs. Blanche (Pielt) Bigham  
Present Address: 146 Brycemoor Road  
West Hill, Ontario M1C 2R3  
Years at E.C.S.: 1930-31, 1931 - 32, 1932 -  
Occupation Now: Dental Nursing Assistant

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Name: Melvin Boles  
Present Address: 32 Baybrook Crescent  
Scarborough, Ontario M1H 2R6  
Years at E.C.S.: 1931 - 1937  
Occupation Now: Teaching Master, George Brown College

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Memories of Embro Continuation School....The agony  
of Geometry with Miss Atchison; I never could  
remember theorems, nor follow the sequence of  
problems.

After hating History all through school, because I  
couldn't remember sequences of Monarchs or dates of  
events, to find that I enjoyed Canadian History  
under Mr. Fawcett.

The smell of Sloan's linament in the boy's room,  
when Fall classes started in preparation for  
Field Day.

The taste of cut lemons after an energetic, hot,  
sunny field day in Kintore.

Standing in the wings of the stage during School  
Plays in Embro Town Hall; and another night in Brooks-  
dale Hall.

French Author's with "La Chien du Capitain" and  
Jules Verne's "Voyage to the Centre of the Earth".

Smoking rolled up leaves, or was that in Public  
School?

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Name: Isabel (McDonald) Carey  
Present Address: 64 Craig Drive  
Kitchener, Ontario  
Years at E.C.S.: 1931 - 1935  
Occupation Now: Dietary work at Sunnyside Home, Kitchener

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What I remember.....I remember the rides to and from  
school with horse and buggy, horse and cutter in the



winter with heated bricks to keep our feet warm in sub zero weather. Later when we took turns by car, I remember walking the 5 miles home one night because my dad forgot to pick us up. I remember how I hated Geometry but liked Algebra. Over the years I rode to school with Mabel Hossack who was teaching at the public school in Embro, Helen Howes, Dallas McCorquodale and Ernie and Margaret Wood. I remember teachers Mr. Fawcett, Alice McKay, Connie Crockett, Mr. Robbie, Dorothy Nixon and Mr. Kennedy. I remember the hot lunches we had in the basement with Mrs. Agnes McDonald in charge of the cooking. I remember the huge lunch Mary (Charlie) Matheson could eat and still stay skinny and how clever Penelope Sutherland was.

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Name: Bess (McCorquodale) Loghrin  
Present Address: R.R. #1  
St. Pauls, Ontario NOK 1VO  
Years at E.C.S.: 1936 - 1940  
Occupation Now: Farmer's Wife

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What I remember.....Dad bought a driver named Doll for Bill and I to drive to school. Buggy in spring and fall. Cutter in winter. Wallace Kent and Gordon Gibb drove beautiful horses. Later Bill drove our Model T! We sometimes walked the 5 miles home when our car and driver didn't show. One time Dorothy Nichols got stuck in the mud on the sideroad. When Bill got out to push, the wheel spun and his one and only suit was covered with mud. He got us out! That was before jeans were worn to school!

Willis Blair and I played the lead roles in the III Act play "Aaron Slick from Punkin Crick" in '39 or '40. I never inflicted my acting on the public again!

I remember the school weiner roasts in Matheson Park and the noisy carloads that went to see Suez in Woodstock and other historical movies!

I remember riding with others in the breezy back of Hugh MacLeod's cattle truck to field days in Princeton, Drumbo and Plattsville--no school buses then! In wartime we got out of school in April for farm work.



Name: (Mrs.) Mona N. (Johnston) Harris  
Present Address: Box 1277  
Almonte, Ontario KOA 1A0  
Years at E.C.S.: 1930 - 1935 (approximately)

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"Those Good Old Days"

Remembering--all my school friends and sports mostly; also some of the dearest and best teachers in this world, all of whom did their best to prepare me for this life, and I thank them.

Arts, sports, literature and composition I did for the love of them, mathematics next, then chemistry, history and geography--but physics, I could never understand--and I have worked in an Electrical and Physical Science Division (as a stenographer only). Perhaps I did not devote enough time to that subject or more likely, did not have enough time for everything. Now, I wish I had. (I can fix a cut, electrical lawn-mower cord!)

We had great spirit in those days. I loved to run, to ride our bicycle (shared in those days) down the quiet, tree-lined streets, much to the annoyance of the older generation, and to roller skate at six o'clock in the morning.

I think of those days with nostalgia and fondness--wish I could bring back the spirit we had for sports and mostly everything--too much sometimes, especially when it came to disrupting the class and making a fool of oneself. That I would like to forget.

My regrets are for the lack of time or the mismanagement of it. There just isn't enough to go around. I hope I can catch up on some of it now.



Name  
Doris Priver (McCorquodale)  
10,400 Milford Road  
Holly, Michigan 48442

Years at E.C.S. 1929, 1930, 1931

Close Friends: Mary Matheson  
Mona Johnston  
Verna McKay  
Bobbie Karn - Special

Cousin - Alma McCall - Later went to Nursing School at  
Victoria Hospital together.

Weekends - At friends' homes. Sometimes arriving there by  
horse and buggy.

Dancing- I remember teaching my friends but I can't remember  
who taught me - probably sisters and cousins.

Field Days - Great competition and long trips to other schools.

Hot Lunches - Cook who threatened that serious illness  
came to those who seasoned with pepper.

Studying - Sometimes - getting help from the smart kids.

Miss Nixon - How the big boys intimidated her.

Sex Education - ????????????????

Penny Candy - From the bakery and ice cream parlour.



Name: Agnes (Boles) Muir  
Present Address: Embro, Ontario NOJ 1J0

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What I remember.....In 1931 the board stated that they did not look with favour on dancing in the school building. Four years later whether with a change of heart or by defiance, dancing was greatly enjoyed in the Form I room during recess and the noon hour--waltzing and jitterbugging to the latest hits with Dorothy Nichols at the keyboard. Music course was taught in both schools under the direction of Miss Marjorie Youngs and Miss Marguerite Murray. About the same time, the Caledonian Society was granted permission to use the school room for Scotch dancing classes.

There is talk of hard times now, but in 1934 teachers salaries for public school principal was \$900 per annum as awarded to Mr. Ross Tuck, with assistant teacher Miss Annie Smith being engaged at \$700. Mr. Fawcett, principal of Continuation School received \$1700.00, but a year later the teachers were asked to take a 10% reduction in salary. Without too much controversy the teachers in question agreed.

School gardens were started to coincide with the Agricultural Course. This provided relief from the classroom as well as some idea of the work involved. Pity the poor caretaker who had to look after the gardens during the summer holidays!

April 1939 provided a happy occasion when both schools, public and Continuation took part in the celebration in Woodstock of the visit of King George and Queen Elizabeth. The school board shared in the expense of flags for everyone.

The fashion trend of this era was saddle shoes and white bobby socks. Mr. Fawcett decided to break the trend and ordered the girls to wear nylons. Some of the girls did agree for awhile, but set their own style by wearing nylons with runs galore--much to his consternation.

Practising for Field Day competition was a hi-light of the year. Medals and shields were given to the outstanding athletes.



Name: J. Findlay McCorquodale  
Present Address: 95 Palmer Road  
Belleville, Ontario K8P 4C7  
Years at E.C.S.: 1935 and part of 1936 (I think)  
Occupation Now: Veterinarian

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What I remember.....How cold it was driving the sleigh to school in Embro while feeling envious of the other kids huddled under the blankets.

The knock on the head that I received by Ron Ward's knee when I tried to tackle him (without pads or helmet) when playing our own version of football.

The thrill of having Vic Haliburton loan me his bike during the lunch hour.

My first case of puppy love whenever a girl by the name of Mona Johnson was near.

Failing most of the subjects in First Form.

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Name: Chris (Innes) McPherson  
Present Address: 304 Huntington Crescent  
Dorchester, Ontario  
Years at E.C.S.: 1938 - 1943  
Occupation Now: Dep Clerk Treas. Twp. N. Dorchester

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What I remember.....It is impossible to put down in a few sentences all the funny, sad, interesting experiences at the Embro Continuation School. The teacher who wept with me when my pet cat died back in First Form; the great English teacher who didn't give me a zero when I painted her portrait in art class in 1939; Mr. Kennedy who told me my voice penetrated through walls--on the occasion of a Calico Dance--the teacher who spent such a short time at E.C.S. and had a bad habit of throwing books at pupils; Mr. Stewart, an airforce officer from World War I who dropped everything and ran to the window to watch the training planes from Crumlin, flying over the school in World War II. The fun we had going to the Field Days at Princeton, Plattsville & Drumbo, when you had to hold the portable radio out the window of the car to make it work. And all the old romances--the ones that "took" and the ones that didn't. Undoubtedly one of the best periods in one's life. What a pity our children didn't have that opportunity.



Name: Mary (Muir) Walton  
Present Address: R.R. #5  
Embros, Ontario NOJ 1J0  
Years at E.C.S.: 1939 - 1944

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What I remember.....the years of E.C.S. from 1939 - 44 were the years spanning World War II. Many of the boys who had attended the school had enlisted and gone overseas. During these years there were three principals. Robert Kennedy, A.P. Werner and Cameron Stewart. The school had three classrooms and the "Science Room". Form I occupied one classroom, Form II another and Forms III, IV and V the third one. Forms I and II were called Lower School, III and IV Middle School, and Form V Upper School. Many pupils didn't take Upper School. A lot of the boys went home to work on the farm or some other occupation. The girls choice of careers was more limited than today. Many became teachers or nurses or took secretarial work.

Very few, if any, in my years of secondary school went on to university. That was definitely for "rich peoples kids" and there just weren't any of these around Embros in those years. Any I knew who eventually obtained a degree got it through summer courses, or went to university in later years.

During those years my parents were janitor of the school. I remember how important was the \$30 a month they received. Someone (usually my mother) would get up early to go down and stoke up the boiler and carry out the ashes. It was heated by a steam heating system and I can still remember the noises the radiators made as the steam built up.

After four it was a family affair with Aunt Mary (Mrs. W.E. Waugh) washing the black boards and my Mother, brothers and I sweeping and cleaning the washrooms, etc. I still remember the smell of the dust bane and how it turned from a green to a dirty brown as it picked up the dirt from the oiled floors.

In the holidays, Christmas, Easter and Summer, all the floors had to be scrubbed and oiled. In the summer the girls playground to the north, and the boys to the south had to be mowed. It was only in the last years there was a motor on the mower too! It was a lot of work hours for a dollar a day, but it saw my parents through some tough years.

Three big events in the year were looked forward to -- The Commencement, Field Day and the At Home.



A three act play was staged at Commencement and awards given out for the previous year's achievements. The title of the play and the cast of actors were duly recorded on the wall at the back of the stage beside the records of plays put on by young peoples groups, etc. Many years of history were painted over when the Hall got a face lift. I'm sure this wall of the Town Hall would have received a lot of attention and recalled a lot of memories if they had left this wall unpainted.

Field Day we were trucked to Drumbo, Princeton or Plattsville to compete in sports events. Every fourth year Field Day was in Embro. No buses to take us then. I'm not sure the cattle trucks were insured for human cargo but no one seemed to care.

The "At Home" or school dance was the highlight. A lot of the younger ones didn't attend as you certainly weren't allowed to date at a tender age. If you went to the At Home without a date, as many did, you sat around the wall, hoping some one from the "stag line", that stood along the back of the hall would ask you to dance. When I go to dances now I often think of that "stag line". It is a thing of the past like many other things.

I would just like to mention a few memories from my Public School years, 1932 - 1939. The "Church Bell" told us it was noon. We went home for lunch and as we lived a fair distance you really had to travel to be back by the time the bell rang at one o'clock. Billie George Saunders, as he was known to every one in Embro, walked to the church four times a day to ring the bell. He let us climb the tower one day and we were there when the bell rang. What a glorious experience.

We always took a short cut through Geordie McLeod's property, going and coming to school. Geordie was another memory of all who attended Embro P.S.

I also remember with delight the "Bake Shop". They had a counter full of candy and if you were lucky enough to have a penny, what a lot you could get for a penny. It would take a long time to decide. I remember most the bulls eyes--horrible licorice balls that changed colors as you sucked them and in the centre they had something--I don't remember if it was a nut or a seed or what but I don't think any of it tasted that good. Then there were the round candies about the size of a quarter that had little messages printed on them. They came in white and pastel colours. I must mention the licorice pipes with some red stuff on the bowl that was to make it look like it was lighted.



I'm sure this penny candy brought more pleasure than the daily "coke and chips" of to-day, probably because it wasn't "daily".

I remember in the winter there was sulphur burned on top of the furnace, (the furnace was in the class room) to keep us from getting colds. I'm sure now and I was equally as sure then that the cold was preferable to that evil smell.

At recess we often played anti-I-Over the toilets that were attached to the back of the school. We divided into two groups, one on each side of the building. A ball was thrown over and if some one on the other side caught it they would take it and chase the other team around the school building trying to touch as many as possible with the ball. I think if you were touched you were out of the game and the team with the most left at the end were winners.

If the weather was bad we played in the "Play Room" at the front of the building. This would be the room that housed the first Form I in Embro.

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Name: Jean (Matheson) Blair  
Present Address: Embro, Ontario NOJ 1J0  
Years at E.C.S.: 1941 - 1944

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Different modes of transportation to E.C.S:.....I  
used to walk about 1 mile to meet the milk truck to get a ride to Embro to school. This mile was first travelled to one of the neighbours up the road, but later back through the fields to the next road to catch the ride. The cab of the truck was usually full by the time we got to Embro. We later graduated to riding a bicycle the six miles to and from school. In the winter months we boarded in Embro at an elderly ladies' home --it wasn't too warm so sometimes we wore our clothes to bed--very often we could hear the squirrels running around having a field day up over our heads.

I recall one winter there was a terrible lot of snow and my father took me back to Embro in the cutter--travelling through the fields as the snow was too deep on the road for the horse to travel. There used to be a sleigh load of kids come into the school from the west of Embro--everyday. The parents took turns bringing them in.



During my period at the Continuation School we used to exchange sports events (soft ball and field day) with Thamesford and Princeton. We travelled to the events in the back of a cattle truck--lined along the edge with planks to sit on--that was a field day itself.

I'm sure all those children coming into the village to school must have helped the Embro business people.

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Name: Mrs. Esther Nielsen (Lange)  
Present Address: 11421 - 96 Street  
Edmonton, Alberta T5G 1T5  
Years at E.C.S.: 1943 to 1947  
Occupation Now: Organ Teacher-Oblate Missionary  
and Alexander Cree Reserve

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What I remember.....I value the friends I made in Embro--especially Doris McKay (MacDonald) and Anna Bailey (McPherson). I would hesitate even now after all these years to disclose the "mischief" we got in to together--we have kept in touch during the years--when I visit Embro to see Holger and Janet Lange my brother and sister-in-law--I always see Doris and Anna and we relive these years together. Here in Edmonton I see Byrnes Fleuty and we, too, reminisce together of the fun we all shared at E.C.S.

I always remember the first year that I played the piano at the Commencement. Mr. Stewart was the principal and Lynda his daughter my teacher. I was nervous about playing and told Miss Stewart the music was too hard. She just ignored me and called me up to play in front of the whole choir to practice at school. Everything went well and I was never nervous to play in public after that night in Embro. I met Lynda in Toronto a few years after leaving Embro--we talked about that event and she laughed and said I knew you could do it and wanted you to find it out too--This was only one of the many growing "experiences" I had in my years at E.C.S.

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Name: Ruth (Nichols) Ellis  
Present Address: 872 Cromwell Street  
Woodstock, Ontario

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The Final Years of E.C.S. ....I attended Embro Continuation School the last year before it closed its