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In Their Own Words

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As another school year is nearing its end, we fondly remember the one and two room schools of yesteryear. Here is an excerpt from Richard Baker's description of the tiny school he attended almost 100 years ago. To read his entire article, please go to <http://eaglehistorical.org> and find the Fall, 2002 newsletter.

Baker School, 1935-1946 *by Richard Baker*

Baker School stood on the southwest corner of the intersection of Bluff Road and O'Brien/Scout Road in the Town of Troy, Walworth County. This land, as well as the land on all sides of this intersection, was owned by John Baker and subsequently by his descendants.

The school, built in 1856, was a wood frame building with clapboard siding. My grandfather, Richard Baker, attended school there. I graduated from eighth grade in 1946 in a class of three. I believe that was the last eighth grade class to graduate from the school. It closed in 1947. The normal school year was from the day after Labor Day to just before Memorial Day.

The building consisted of two rooms. The entrance hall stretched across the entire front of the building with a rod and shelf for coats and caps on the north end and a cupboard for supplies on the south end. Also on the north wall was a sink and a stand to hold the crock water cooler. There were two doors to enter the classroom from the hall, located near each end. The classroom had four windows, two on the south side and two on the north. Blackboards were located on the front and rear walls of the room. A piano was located between the windows on the north side of the room. The coal/wood furnace was located in the northwest corner of the room. A belfry was located on the north end of the roof.



We were farm kids. We wore bib overalls or what we would now call jeans. Boys wore high work shoes and flannel or cotton shirts, dependent on the weather. The girls wore cotton dresses, or a blouse and skirt. In the winter time they wore snow pants to go outside. Long stockings, both brown and white, were worn in the winter and anklets in the spring and fall. The most common shoe was the brown and white saddle shoe.

There was a flag pole in the northeast corner of the yard. In March of 1996, it was the only thing of the school left standing.

