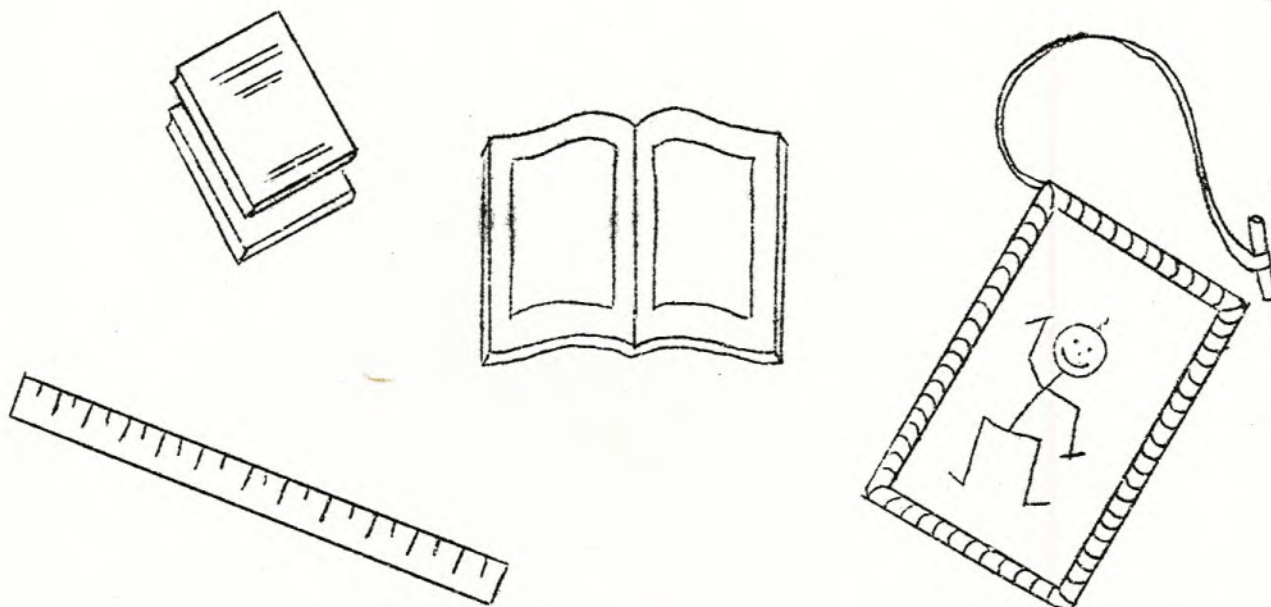


SASKATCHEWAN ARCHIVES QUESTIONNAIRES.

No. 3

Pioneer Schools.



(Drawing by Richard Graburn)

Please print name and address in capital letters.

Your full name Mrs Ellen Hubbard.  
Present Address Grenfell Sask.  
Pioneer Address Grenfell Sask.  
Year you came to Saskatchewan Nov. 24th 1894.  
(Throughout the questionnaire, "Saskatchewan" means the area  
which is now Saskatchewan)

PLEASE NOTE

This questionnaire is intended for persons who came to Saskatchewan before 1914, and most of the questions are about that early period, although in a few questions information for later years is asked for.

If you cannot answer a question, leave the space blank. We realize that any one person will not be able to answer all questions, so answer those that apply to your experience and that you can remember, and leave the others.

Use extra sheets of paper if there is not enough space on the questionnaire

Your co-operation in answering this questionnaire will be very much appreciated, and all questionnaires are preserved in the Saskatchewan Archives as part of the permanent record of our province.

Please send your completed questionnaire to:

Saskatchewan Archives Office,  
University of Saskatchewan,  
Saskatoon, Sask.



## Pioneer Schools.

## YOUR EXPERIENCE OF EARLY SCHOOL ACTIVITY

1. Persons answering this questionnaire will have learned of school life in the early days in Saskatchewan in different ways, and in order that your answers may be of the most value, please put a check mark beside each of the following which apply to you, giving dates wherever possible:

You went to school in Saskatchewan winter of 1898 <sup>Dates</sup> Jan. - April  
 Your children attended school 1914 - 1935  
 You taught school no  
 You were a school trustee my husband was trustee 1909 - 1945  
 Other (ratepayer or resident, school inspector, etc.) Explain and give dates. residents on farm 1907 - 1946

If your experience in different capacities took you into more than one community (for example, if you taught in various districts, or taught in one place, then married and lived in another part of the province), make it clear in your answers which place and time you are referring to in each question, or explain here which of these you intend to deal with in this questionnaire. (If you would like separate questionnaires for different roles which you played, please ask for another copy).

my husband John Hubbard was school trustee & sec treasurer. Gettel S. H. 1904. for 36 years.

## BUILDING AND EQUIPMENT

2. Was school held in your district before a school building was erected?

If so, describe the arrangements, telling where school was held, how many pupils attended, who the teacher was, how long this system continued, as well as any other details which you may remember.

Before I married I attended Weldon School No 65. school had been held in deserted homestead house but was closed lack of pupils & not suitable. closed Dec. 1894.

3. When was the school in your district built?

weldon school built 1896 July & opened August

4. Who designed and built the building?

Mr A. M. Fraser, Grenfell carpenter.

5. What material was the school made of (logs, lumber, stone, or other material)?

lumber

6. What was the size of the building?

Of the classroom? (if more than one classroom, give number and sizes)

1 classroom & porch about 10' x 10'

Were there cloakrooms for coats, or were they hung at the back of the classroom?

Hung at back.

Did the school have a basement?

What use was made of it?

no,

If the building included any other rooms besides those mentioned in this question, tell what they were used for, and their sizes.



7. Were there any additions or major alterations in the school later?

If so, explain what these changes were, giving sizes, and explain the reason. (that is, was it because of increase in number of pupils, or for extra convenience, such as adding a porch or coal shed).

New school was built 1922, with basement and toilets and cloak room.

8. Is this first school building still in use? *old building sold to a farmer*

If not, give the reason. (burned, new school built, school closed because of lack of pupils, etc.). Give dates if possible.

Too small for number of pupils.

9. Describe the window arrangement in the classroom, telling how many, how placed (all on one side, on two sides of room, etc.) whether provided with blinds, etc.

Old school had blinds, new school modern.

Was there any kind of lamp in the school, or other provision for artificial light? Explain.

1898 had 3 bracket coil oil lamps,  
1899, also, 1 large hanging coal oil lamp.

10. Describe the school equipment, - desks, (kind and number), blackboards, maps, etc.

Small desks in front & medium & large size.  
2 rows each to seat 2 pupils.  
Equipment very good 6 or more large maps,  
globe

#### ORGANIZATION AND ADMINISTRATION.

11. How many families with children of school age or younger were active in getting the first school started? *2 or 3*

How many children of school age were there in the school? *6 or 7.*

How many bachelors or others in the district helped in establishing the school? Explain.

*one bachelor helped get new school, it had been voted down to keep down expense but new family came in with children*

Was there any opposition within the community towards the idea of starting a school? Explain.

The number of children had greatly increased and April 1896 had votes in favor of erecting ~~the~~ new school. The crops had been small and frozen or dried up no one could afford many taxes.

12. Describe the steps taken towards the starting of the school.

Miss Creighton from Toronto was 1st teacher

13. What was the name and number of the school district? *Weldon School No. 65*

Who suggested the name? *Geo. Weldon, station agent, C.P.R.,*

Who or what was the district named after? *presented school with large dictionary,*

Was there any difficulty or disagreement over choosing this name? *and that is still the name*

14. How many women, if any, were on the first trustee board set up? *no.*

How many women have served on boards since? Give dates if possible. *no.*

How many bachelors were on the first board? *none,* since? *none.*

15. Was it difficult to get people to act as trustees? Explain.

*The trustees were fathers of big families.*

16. Were school trustees usually parents with children going to school? *yes.*

Was it thought that the teacher "favoured" the children of trustees? *no*

Did the trustees try to do their best for the school, or were they mainly interested in "keeping down expenses"? Explain.

*The trustees were all very generous, in getting necessary equipment.*

17. Were the ratepayers' annual meetings well attended?

*yes,*

18. How long did teachers usually stay at your school - a year, less than a year, for several years?

*some 1 year and some 2 years*

19. Did the teacher "board around" from one place to another, have a regular boarding place, a teacherage, etc.? Explain.

*boarded with a ratepayer. There were 4 houses who would take them so had*

*How much was charged for board? about 10-12, turn about, a month.*

20. How did the teacher get to school?

*drive with school children in winter & walk or ride a bike.*

How far did he or she have to go?

*2 boarding places were 2 1/2 or 3 miles & 2 nearer if it was convenient for them to keep teacher.*

21. In choosing a teacher, was preference shown to either sex?

*mostly ladies but had several good men teachers.*

Did a man receive a higher salary? *no* How much were the salaries?

*1898 & 1899, man teacher got 400 year, John Secord of Regina*

Was a preference shown to any nationality or religion? Explain.

*There were no Catholics in our several districts, and all were Canadians, for 10 or 15 yrs but district now is mostly Lutherians.*

22. What was the approximate age of most teachers in your school? *20 years*

In choosing a teacher, was preference given to any particular age group? Explain.

*Teachers were in their 1st or 2nd year as after 3 years they could go to a village school*  
 What were the teachers like, - mix with people in the district, take part in community activities, etc.?

*The teachers helped with every thing going on but to get a teacher from nearest town was not as good as they went home weekends.*

Did many of the teachers marry someone in the district?

*only 1 in 50 years in weldon district*

23. How much did older pupils help the teacher with smaller ones at school? Tell whether it was a regular custom, or only once in a while, and what they did to help - mark arithmetic questions, hear reading, give spelling, etc.

*no, all pupils were busy with own learning  
 7 or 8 older children had come back to review what they had forgotten in 1887/1899. pupils in grades 7 & 8 came for winter months.*

24. Were report cards sent to parents? How often?

*no.*

Were any other means used to let parents know how their children were doing in school? Explain.

*The teacher visited week ends and parents were kept posted on progress, if children attended regularly.*

Were parents usually interested in finding out how their children were doing, and in what activities were being carried on in school? Explain.

*parents were very much interested.*

25. How often did the school inspector visit the school? *Twice a year.*

What means of travel did he use? *drive horses until about 1915*

Were his visits considered of benefit to the school? Explain.

*The teacher was glad to see him to get advice & encouragement and pupils liked to see someone from outside world.*

Was the character of the inspector such that he was respected by trustees, teachers and others in the district? Explain.

*The trustees took advice in equipment & books from inspector, we were glad to see him.*

26. Who did the janitor work and lit the fires?

*a school boy light the fire, 1 hr before school, 50<sup>cts</sup> a month*

Who looked after the fire during the day?

*teacher or told bigger boys to put in more wood.*

What kind of a stove or furnace was used?

*large boy stove.*

What fuel was used?

*wood in wood pile & some in porch.*

During cold weather, was the school always warm enough in the morning to start school on time? *mostly.*

If not, what did the pupils do to keep warm (play running games, etc.)?

*march and sing hymns or songs or drills.*

27. Did school always start at 9 a.m. and close at 3:30 p.m.? If not, tell what changes were made, and reasons. (for example, if opening time in winter was 9:30 a.m. etc.)

*school opened at 9. & closed at 3:30*

*The parents felt the children would lose 1/2 hour of schooling.*

28. To what extent did the school board buy text books to supply free to the pupils?

*They only bot desk copies for teachers use to resell to the pupils? pupils bot own.*

Did the school board supply pupils with scribblers, pencils, or other school supplies? Explain.

*Pupils bot their own*

If each family bought their own books and supplies for school, where did they usually buy them - (at the local store, send away for them, teacher send for them)?

*at local store.*

#### SCHOOL ATTENDANCE.

29. How many pupils attended your school?

*Weldon School started 1896 with 12 but increased to 15 or 16 in 1898 & older pupils up to 20 & soon to 22 or 24.*

30. How far were you from school?

*3 miles from school.*

How did most of the children in the district get to school (walking, riding horseback, etc.) in summer? *some drove mostly walked.*

in winter? *drove.*

- Was there a barn for the horses? *yes*

how large? *at first to hold 4 teams then to hold 6 teams.*

31. Do you remember the pupils ever having to stay at school all night because of a blizzard, spring time floods or other such conditions? *never*

*but sometimes about once a year too stormy to go.*

Describe the circumstances.

*In 1899 the teacher had an older pupil drive him to school & no one else came a blizzard on. also in 1901*

32. Was it the custom to have the school closed during the winter months? Explain. *no.*

*in the fall or other time so children could help with work at home? after there was compulsory education. The pupils, were allowed to stay out for a few weeks or a month for harvest*

33. Was the school ever closed because of epidemics of diseases?

*yes. closed for scarlet fever, and diphtheria & smallpox*

Tell what diseases, and give dates and length of time school was closed.

*The Kettel school, no 1904, where I lived when married was closed scarlet fever 1912 for 2 weeks & again 2 weeks & flu: 1918 or 19, for month. 1921 from 11st - 1 March scarlet fever small pox 1922 - 2 weeks.*

34. How much did pupils have to miss school to help with work at home?

*some families kept children home until fined after compulsory education. but most were anxious to learn because of bad weather?*

*if weather was not too bad they came.*

35. What was the attitude of most of the children towards going to school (dislike it, like it because of teacher, other pupils, get away from work at home, learning to read books, etc.)? Explain.

*If teacher were considerate and thought more of teaching than of just her salary the pupils liked school*

36. Were any children in your district taught at home instead of coming to school? *no*

Why (distance, weather, not wish children to associate with others, etc.)?  
*some were started because of distance.*

#### CLASSROOM ACTIVITIES

37. Did the subjects, reading, writing, and arithmetic, make up most of the school program? Explain.

*drawing grammar, geography, history, health, physical drill, posture.*

38. Was reading taught mostly by "sounds", or by some other method? Explain.

*The reading was taught by sounds*

39. How large a part did oral reading play in school work (how often did pupils in lower grades read aloud from their readers, in what grade was this discontinued, did pupils ever read aloud from other books besides their readers, did pupils in higher public school grades ever read aloud, and from what books, etc.)?

*The pupils in lower grades read once a day.*

40. Were pupils given much "memory work" to learn from their readers or from other books? Explain.

*pupils were given memory work from the readers*

Did the teacher usually ask pupils to recite memory work, or write it on the blackboard, or in scribblers, etc.?

*To recite and also to write & had dictation in scribblers*

41. Describe the nature of writing lessons and practice, - were they from copy books, from the readers, writing so many lines of a certain letter, etc.?

*we had copy books but also wrote single letters & lines as advised by Mr. J. M. Anderson, who taught in Greenfell in 1907 & 1908.*

How much was printing used in the primary grades instead of writing?

*no.*

42. Describe any particular features of arithmetic classes which you remember. (For example, were questions written on the blackboard or were books used, was adding, subtracting, multiplying and dividing of extremely large numbers required, was much use made of practical, everyday problems in arithmetic?)

*questions were written on blackboard also arithmetic books were used. The arithmetic study was very general. to make it interesting, also quick mental arithmetic, at closing time.*

43. Did you have much formal grammar (parsing words, picking out subject, predicate, object, etc.)?

yes.

44. Describe any activities designed to improve the manner of speaking and writing of the pupils, such as written exercises in the use of the correct word, or attempts of the teacher to improve the spoken English of the pupils.

We had a writing period in copy books & practised vertical writing. and in all our compositions our writing was important

45. Were pupils very often asked to write compositions, and how important a part did this activity play in school?

We wrote compositions every day on history or other subjects or on current events.

46. Did any of the teachers encourage pupils to write poetry?

no.

47. Did pupils do much speaking before the rest of the school, such as telling stories, giving talks, holding debates, etc.?

We had debates about once a month, but we had to write on some subject and speak for 3-5 minutes, or give a reading, and often had spelling match or arithmetic matches.

48. Was any language besides English taught in any of the public school grades? Give details.

Grade 9 was taking French.

What proportion of the children, if any, could not speak English when they started school?

none.

Were they given special instruction to help them learn English, or were they left alone to "pick it up" from the other children?

All in our district spoke English.

49. As nearly as you can remember, tell how much the following subjects were taught, - whether they were taught regularly, not taught at all, or only once in a while if a teacher was interested in that subject. Add any details you can remember as to how they were taught, and what activities were carried on in connection with these subjects:

History	English and Canadian, day about,
Geography	Every day.
Nature Science	once or twice a week.
Literature	and composition every day.
Art	once or twice a week; drawing.
Music	once or twice weekly.
Physical Training	every day.



50. Tell about any other subjects studied at school, or activities carried on in connection with school work, which have not already been mentioned.

51. Were slates ever used in your school? *slates were used by grades 1, 2, 3-4.*  
If so, when was their use discontinued?

52. What were the usual punishments for misbehavior? *standing in corner, staying in recess, sometimes strap.*

How much did teachers make pupils learn memory work as a punishment?

*If they did not know their memory work.*

Were they very often required to write lines as a punishment?

*often pages & well.*

Were there any incidents in which parents objected to the form of punishment given by the teacher? What was done about it?

*If kept after school as it delayed all the family, getting home to chores.*

53. What religious observance was carried on in school, such as opening school with Lord's prayer, hymn, etc.?

*Some teachers would read and have Lord's prayer too, and for years a hymn at opening & closing.*

#### SCHOOL HEALTH CONDITIONS

54. What arrangements were made for eating the noon lunch? (Did pupils sit in their seats, go outside, etc.?)

*Mostly sit in seats. Then go out to play.*

in summer?

in winter?

55. Did pupils wash their hands before eating?

Describe the washing arrangements.

*We carried our own drinking water and sometimes used some for washing, but did melt snow in winter in basin. Each had own towel, that is each family. There was a water pail we saved water in & a basin on a box at back of room.*

56. What foods were brought in school lunches?

*98 & 99, sandwiches & little pies and apples. 1910, had an oven in stove pipe to cook potatoes, or warm anything.*

57. Were pupils allowed to eat part of their lunch at recess time?

*sometimes but usually were busy playing.*

58. Was there always drinking water at school?

*each but their own, but later some one brot 3 gal. can & put it in a crock container.*

Where was water secured for the school?

*from a farm where there was a good well.*

Who carried it?

*some scholar who drove was paid to bring it.*

59. Tell what toilet accommodation there was. (outside toilets, separate ones for boys and girls?)

*Outside separate toilets still at Gettle school.*

*Weldon, has indoor toilets since 1921*

*school.*

## SCHOOL GROUNDS, GAMES AND ENTERTAINMENT

60. How large was the school yard? *1 acre* Was it fenced? *yes.*

Describe any efforts at improvement of the school yard, such as planting trees, flowers, gardens, etc. Give dates if possible.

*Weldon school yard was fenced & trees and flowers planted 1905*

*Gettel school yard was fenced and trees planted & flowers 1913 & 1914*

61. What games did the pupils usually play in cold or rainy weather?

*If too wet, puzzles in school, blind mans buff, & such games inside or outside (kick the stick) Hide & seek.*

*in good weather? cricket, foot ball, later soft ball & basket ball.*

What equipment did they have for games, and how was it secured?

*base ball and foot ball, bot by The school district*

62. Were any school teams organized before 1914 to play against teams from neighboring schools? *about that time.*

for what game or games?

*base ball, crickett, Hockey.*

Describe any details you remember about arrangements for such games.

63. Were there divisions or "sides" taken among the pupils because of racial differences, or were some children "picked on" because of that or other reasons?

*No.*

64. Tell what you remember about the school library, as to number and kind of books.

*I do not remember any library in early years, about 1908 the district bot Feather stocking tales and Dickens books, and books for little ones.*

How much use did the pupils make of the library during school hours? *not in school hours if teacher was any good.*

*at recess & noon on stormy weather or home for weekends.*

65. Was Friday afternoon, or some other time, usually used for special activities, such as spelling, arithmetic or geography matches, meetings of a school society, or other activities? Explain.

*and writing. Friday afternoon was usually drawing till recess & then debates, spelling match or speeches & singing.*

## DISTRICT SOCIAL LIFE.

66. When did the annual Christmas concert and tree become an established custom in your school, and in neighboring schools? *a Christmas concert in 1899, and always after. The tree started about 1905.*

How was money secured for the expenses of the concert, and for gifts and treats for the children (if these were provided)?

*The school <sup>district</sup> usually allowed money for treats and teacher usually gave a small gift to each, & all together gave the teacher a gift.*

67. Tell what you remember of the Christmas concerts, - type of program, when it was held, if a platform was erected for it, and other incidents connected with it.

The platform was erected for it. The teacher started early <sup>fall term</sup> training children in chorus and recitations, small plays.

To what extent was the teacher's ability as a teacher judged by the success of her Christmas concert? Give details.

The 1st concert we had at school. The teacher had told the parents we are having a concert and they said with the best concert? Explain. Was there much neighborhood rivalry as to which school could put on the best boys and girls she had it was not possible & it was the best we ever had. The districts try & all have concerts same

68. Tell about any other parties or special events held on particular days, which were a part of the school activity, such as Valentine or Halloween parties, parents visiting the school, etc.

The children give each other valentines & teacher gets treat for them. There also Halloween little brothers & sisters are invited to party, and sometimes parents.

69. To what extent was the school building used as a community hall, for church, dances, concerts, organization meetings, special events, etc.? Describe.

The school house was used for church services, and all different meetings in district. We had a good community club got up plays, and was used some for dancing. The cricket club

70. Was the school yard used for school or community picnics, ball games, etc.? Describe.

had an annual banquet, & a school picnic was held. a tennis club formed in 1901 had 2 tennis courts. Club lasted for 6 years most young folks were married then.

GENERAL

71. What differences were there in the way the school was conducted in the first years you were here as compared with the country you came from?

I came from a town in Ontario & attended a town school. There was also one of the best High schools there, Lebridge Ont.

72. What do you think of the school system to-day as compared with that in the pioneer days?

We had very good teachers but some only thought of closing time and pay and there are many who are same now.

73. Did any teachers or pupils from your district achieve distinction or become well known in later years? Give names and details.

Many of our pupils are Lutheran ministers and several are still teaching. 1 teacher we had in 1901 is still teaching

74. Describe any special or unusual happenings or incidents in connection with school affairs in your district not already mentioned. (Use back of page or extra sheets if necessary.)

in a Hutterite colony in Alberta. She is 82 & as clever as 50 years ago. Mrs Margaret Mc Cabe. She taught grades 1-9 in Weldon school, taught Sunday school, sang & played organ and knitted & helped district sew. She never tired, and at 82 yrs is teaching near Lethbridge Alta