

THE PARISH HOUSE SCHOOL - DISTRICT #14

The old Baptist Church Building was moved to the corner of Grand Street and Union Avenue on June 13, 1871. A porch was added and the one large room as divided into four smaller rooms. This became the second school in Scotch Plains and was known as District Number 14. The first classes met in this school on October 18, 1871. This second school remained under the direction of Westfield until 1877, when Scotch Plains separated from Westfield.

The new school far surpassed the first school. From school records, we learned that the school was furnished with both double and single desks. There were nine grammar desks, nine intermediate desks, nine intermediate double desks, nine primary desks and one rear row of seats. The teacher's desk was the best that could be made but was not to cost more than \$13.50. The school was painted the color of Mr. Brower's cottage. (We are not told what color this was.) The school was heated by a furnace. Drinking water was obtained from a well. The sidewalk in front of the school was made of planks. The curriculum was enlarged and the children studies history and geography as well as the three "r's".

In 1871, there was one regular teacher who was paid \$700 a year and an assistant who received \$350 a year. The first teacher was Mr. Strong and his assistant was Miss Rhoda Hallock. By 1874, there was a principal and two teachers.

Some of the other teachers and principals were Chauncey Ripley, Stephen Day, Mr. Seamon, Irving Towne, O. M. Putnam, Mr. Calkins, Mrs. Thomas Paff, Miss Harriet Squier, later principal of School One, and Mr. Louis R. Goodenough, first principal of School One.

When the school opened, there were 107 children registered but attendance was very poor. Thirty-nine pupils came for four months of the year, twelve came for six months, but only four pupils came for the whole eight months. Even after the passage of the free school law in 1878, attendance was no better. The Trustees urged the parents to come to school to discuss school problems. The Trustees suggested that this would be better than "sitting around the local stores discussing school matters from hearsay."

The school house was used not only for classes but several groups held meetings there. The Baptist Church held services there while the new church was being built. The Ladies Aid met one afternoon a week, and a social club held meetings every Saturday night. This building was used for a school until 1890 when School One was opened. The building has been altered a little and is now known as the Memorial Parish House.