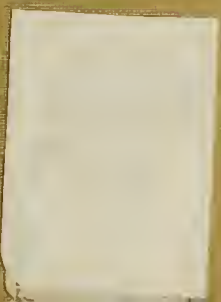
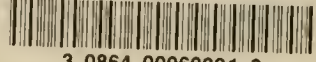


S
371.009
P11E
1964



MONTANA STATE LIBRARY
S 371.009 P11e 1964 c.1
Early schools in Montana.



3 0864 00060221 2

STATE LIBRARY COMMISSION
SOUTH
MISSOURI

WISCONSIN
MONTANA

MONTANA STATE LIBRARY
900
Avenue
3601



Digitized by the Internet Archive
in 2011 with funding from
Montana State Library

<http://www.archive.org/details/earlyschoolsinmo1964mont>

DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC INSTRUCTION
Harriet Miller, State Superintendent
Helena, Montana

April, 1964

E A R L Y S C H O O L S I N M O N T A N A

- Early Schools of the Montana Frontier
- Public School Development
- Organization and Administration of Pioneer Public Schools
- Course Offerings in Early Montana Public Schools
- Additional State-Supported Educational Facilities Established Prior to 1900
- Superintendents of Public Instruction--1865-1964
- Statistical Data--Montana Public Schools--1868-1962

(Information in this bulletin has been compiled from data recorded in the annual and biennial reports of the Superintendents of Public Instruction of the Territory and the State of Montana, 1881-1914; from the official Courses of Study for the State of Montana, 1899-1914; from the Third Annual Report of the State Board of Education, 1895; from the Biennial Report of the State Superintendent of Public Instruction, December 1, 1962; from public school statistics on file in the office of the State Superintendent of Public Instruction, Helena, Montana; and from the 1963 "Teachers' Reference Manual for Montana History, Geography and Government," Harriet Miller, State Superintendent of Public Instruction, Helena, Montana.)

STATE LIBRARY COMMISSION
SOUTH AVE. & MIDDLESEX
MISSOULA, MONTANA

EARLY SCHOOLS IN MONTANA

Early Schools of the Montana Frontier

The private schools of pre-territorial Montana were the forerunners of the state's public school system. The first school on record in the area that is now Montana was conducted at Fort Owen during the winter of 1861 and 1862 for the children of employees and of trappers and their Indian wives.

In the summer of 1863, Miss Kate Dunlap opened a "subscription" school at Nevada City in Alder Gulch; in the autumn of 1863, 20 pupils were enrolled at Bannack in a subscription school opened by Miss Lucia Darling (the niece of Sidney Edgerton) in the Edgerton home. In 1863-1864, another subscription school, this one at Virginia City, was started by Thomas Dimsdale, a graduate of Oxford University and author of the first book to be published in Montana; tuition at the Dimsdale school was \$2.00 per week. (In 1865, Mr. Dimsdale was appointed by Governor Edgerton as the first Superintendent of Public Instruction of the Montana Territory.)

The first missionary school in Montana was opened at St. Ignatius in the fall of 1864 by the Sisters of Providence of Montreal.

Other early schools were maintained through a combination of both public and private support: for example, available tax funds were paid to J. P. Patch of Helena to help support the school which he opened in the spring of 1865, and to thus lessen the tuition costs for his patrons.

Public School Development

The first public school district was organized in 1866, in Virginia City; classes which began on March 5, 1867 were held in the Union Church. The school was taught by Miss Sarah Raymond and an assistant; the textbooks used were those which parents of the students had brought to Montana with them from all states in the Union and differed widely.

The first high school was established in Helena in 1876.

Organization and Administration of Pioneer Public Schools

The pioneer public schools were one-room schools, which operated usually four to five months during the middle of the winter when children's help was not needed on farms. In communities where children did not ordinarily have farm work responsibility, school was held during the summer months in order to avoid severe winter weather. The early school houses were rough buildings, poorly

lighted and heated; desks and benches were apt to be crudely made; there was no running water. By 1872, Deer Lodge had the only frame school building in Montana Territory; Missoula, the only brick building; Helena held school in the basement of a church. Children often traveled many miles to school, often on horseback. (There were no school buses.) Eventually, some high schools established dormitories; the first of these was at Flathead County High School in 1914. Teachers often "boarded around" with families in the community; later teacherages were built in connection with the schools.

The earliest report on file in the office of the State Superintendent of Public Instruction is the report written in 1881 by Mr. R. H. Howey, Superintendent of Public Instruction, Territory of Montana, from 1881 to 1883. In this report, Mr. Howey records that in 1868 Montana Territory had been divided into only twenty-five school districts, and that there were 1,359 school census children (aged 4 to 21 years), 15 school houses and 27 teachers.

In 1881, the Public School System of Montana was composed of Ungraded District Schools, Graded Grammar Schools, and City Graded High Schools. The officers of the public school system included the Territorial Superintendent of Public Instruction, County Superintendents, District Boards of Trustees, and District Clerks. There were annually several teachers' conferences and associations: the County Teachers' Institutes, the Territorial Teachers' Association, the District and City Teachers' Associations and the Graded School Teachers' Meeting.

By 1881 there were 9,479 children numbered in the school census, 5,112 of them reported as enrolled in the 132 public schools and taught by 177 teachers, and another 300 in attendance in private schools. Of the 132 public schools, 91 were of log construction, 29 were frame and 12 were brick buildings. At this time, there were 144 school districts, most of which had only one school, despite the size of the district, and some of which had not yet a school at all. Schools were in session in 1881 on the average of five and one-half months (110 days) with sessions actually varying from 8 or 9 months duration in the city "graded" schools to as little as 3 months in the ungraded, rural schools.

The first compulsory attendance law, passed in 1887, proved difficult to enforce, and it was not until 1903 that a more realistic and practical measure was enacted. Attendance at the rural schools was extremely difficult and irregular, due to problems caused by long distances and inclement weather. For example, we learn from the early reports that one school district in Gallatin County was 3 miles wide by 100 miles long; another in Meagher County covered an area of 4,000 square miles. The problem of adequate educational opportunities for children in the sparsely settled rural areas was a very real matter.

By 1901, Montana, a state of 94,000,000 acres, had yet only 696 school districts (an average of only one district per 135,057 acres).

During 1901, 182 rural schools were maintained with less than 15 children enrolled for the entire year, and an average daily attendance of less than 8 children. School sessions ranged from 2 months to 6 months in these ungraded schools. Superintendents of Public Instruction since 1902 are on record as requesting Legislative assistance for transportation of rural students, as well as for the consolidation of the single room schools into larger units with more inclusive programs, for more students.

Course Offerings in Early Montana Public Schools

According to Mr. Howey, the training of Montana teachers compared favorably with that of teachers in most other sections of the country. At this time, average monthly teacher salaries, computed by counties in Montana, ranged from \$53.00 to \$155.00 for men, from \$44.00 to \$70.00 for women, with an overall average for both of \$51.56. County Superintendents' salaries were based on the number of school census scholars and the number of school districts in each county, but no figures are available to indicate the range of remuneration for these supervisors.

By an act of the Legislature in 1881, the first uniform textbook law was passed and the following textbooks were adopted for use in the schools in Montana Territory:

1. Watson's Independent Series of Readers.
2. Watson's Independent Child's Speller.
3. Swinton's Word Book.
4. Moneteith's Elementary and Comprehensive Geography.
5. Robinson's First Book in Arithmetic.
6. Robinson's Complete Arithmetic.
7. Sill's Practical Lessons in English.
8. Barnes' Brief History of the United States.
9. The Spencerian Copy Books.

Rules and regulations for teachers and pupils, together with the course of study (outlined below) were published with the Teacher's Register, and furnished to each school.

An outline for study by the students in Montana Ungraded (rural) schools included these subjects:

Studies for Pupils in First Reader

1. Reading - First Reader.
2. Spelling words in reading lesson.
3. Writing on slates, using script speller.
4. Read and write numbers to 100. Addition and subtraction by 1's, 2's, 3's and 5's to 25.

Studies for Pupils in Second Reader

1. Reading - Second Reader.
2. Spelling - Oral, written and phonic, words used in reading lesson.
3. Writing - On slates, or using copybook, writing with pencil.

4. Numbers - Addition and subtraction tables to 12's.
Reading and writing numbers to 10,000.
Roman numbers to 100; multiplication tables to 6's.

Studies for Pupils in Third Reader

1. Reading - Third Reader.
2. Spelling - Oral, written and phonic. Use Swinton's Word Book.
3. Reading and writing numbers of two periods; add, subtract, multiply and divide. Begin Robinson's First Book in Arithmetic and complete one-half.
4. Geography - Oral - Geography of Montana, and draw map of same.
5. Writing.

Studies for Pupils in Fourth Reader

1. Reading - Fourth Reader.
2. Spelling - Swinton's Word Book.
3. Writing - Spencerian Copy Book.
4. Geography - Monteith's Elementary.
5. Grammar - Ginn & Heath's Elementary Lessons in English.

Studies for Pupils in Fifth Reader

1. Reading - Fifth Reader and History of the United States.
2. Spelling - Swinton's Word Book.
3. Writing - Spencerian Copy Book.
4. Geography - Sill.
5. Arithmetic - Robinson's Complete.
Declamation and composition throughout the course.

Because adequate materials had not yet been printed for the study of Montana geography, the Monteith Company was requested to prepare a special edition of Monteith's Comprehensive Geography which "should contain a reasonable and proper amount of special geography of Montana and a full-page map of Montana." The adoption of the above uniform textbooks and the use of the study outline assured some consistency in educational offerings and reduced considerably the number of classes necessary in the ungraded schools.

As for the Graded (urban) and High Schools of the Territory, Superintendent Howey reports in 1881:

"The Graded and High Schools of the Territory deserve special mention, as the improvement of these schools has been marked and highly satisfactory. In all of these schools a course of study has been adopted, including Primary, Intermediate and High School Departments. Helena, Butte, Bozeman, Deer Lodge and Virginia City possess handsome well-arranged school buildings, supplied with improved styles of furniture, library, apparatus and musical instruments.Mention might also be made of the schools at Benton, Missoula, Philipsburg, Glendale, Bannack, Dillon, Sheridan, Radersburg, Jefferson, Wickes, White Sulphur Springs and Miles City."

The first uniform course of study for the "common schools" of Montana was adopted in 1899. The course was "arranged to cover a period of eight years, of eight months each, and...to give a thorough, common school education as well as to prepare pupils for admission to any of the high schools of the state." The course content included "reading, language, numbers and arithmetic, geography, writing, spelling, U. S. history, physiology and hygiene, civics, culture studies, literature and nature studies."

By 1906, courses of study for Montana elementary and secondary schools had been revised and were well established. Eighth grade examinations were given for graduation from the ungraded schools, and a passing grade on said examination admitted the successful student to any of the accredited 25 district or 15 (free) county high schools in the state. In 1906, there were as many as 25 teacher applicants (many of them from "the East") for every teaching position in the graded schools of Montana; average monthly salaries for teachers ranged from \$56.07 for women, to \$87.30 for men. The old log school houses were being replaced with frame, brick or stone buildings. Uniform free textbooks for all schools were required by law, and children between the ages of 8 and 14 were required to attend school during the entire time school was in session. (As of 1892, the school census ages had been fixed at 6-21.)

By 1908, the course of study was revised and extended to include materials for the accredited high schools of Montana. Since that time, course of study revisions have been made periodically to accommodate the expanding body of available knowledge.

Additional State-Supported Educational Facilities Established Prior to 1900

By 1881, procedures had been started for the establishment of a university in Montana. Under Congressional Act, seventy-two sections of the unappropriated lands of Montana were to be selected by the Secretary of the Interior and approved by the President. These sections were then to be withdrawn from market, for sale only at public auction, after appraisal by a Board of Commissioners, for no less than \$2.50 per acre. The money derived from the sale of said lands was to be invested in United States Bonds and deposited with the Treasurer of the United States, and was not to be used either for buildings or professors' salaries until such time as the money amounted to fifty thousand dollars, and then only the interest on said fund until the fund should amount to \$100,000.

On February 17, 1893, action by the Montana State Legislature provided for the organization of the University of Montana, and placed the University under control of the State Board of Education.

In 1893, the Agricultural College of the State of Montana (now Montana State College) began operation at Bozeman; in 1895, Montana State University at Missoula held its first classes. In 1897, the State Normal School (the present Western Montana College of Education) opened at Dillon, and in 1900, the Montana School of Mines was established in Butte.

The Montana School for the Deaf and Dumb was opened in September, 1893, in Boulder, for the purpose of teaching the English language to the deaf and dumb children of the state and to furnish all children who are debarred from the public schools by reason of deafness, blindness, dumbness, or feeble-mindedness, with at least an ordinary public school education in all customary branches, and to train them in the mastery of such trades as shall enable them to become independent self-sustaining citizens. (In 1937, the Montana School for the Deaf and Blind at Great Falls was established and services to deaf and blind children were transferred from the State Training School at Boulder to the School at Great Falls.)

The State Industrial School at Miles City was founded in 1893 and opened in 1894. The Montana Children's Center at Twin Bridges was originally established there as the State Orphan's Home in 1889.

Superintendents of Public Instruction--Montana Territory
(Appointed)

Thomas J. Dimsdale	Feb. 10, 1865 by Governor Edgerton
Peter Ronan	1866 by Governor T. F. Meagher
A. H. Barrett	Sept. 8, 1866 - Mar. 3, 1867
A. M. S. Carpenter	Mar. 4, 1867 - Jan. 4, 1868
Thomas F. Campbell	Feb. 1, 1868 - July 15, 1869
James H. Mills	1869
S. G. Lathrop	1869
Cornelius Hedges	Jan. 27, 1872 - Jan. 15, 1878
Clark Wright	Jan. 16, 1878 - Feb. 18, 1879
W. Egbert Smith	Feb. 19, 1879 - Feb. 22, 1881
R. H. Howey	Feb. 23, 1881 - Feb. 21, 1883
Cornelius Hedges	Feb. 22, 1883 - Mar. 17, 1885
William W. Wylie	Mar. 18, 1885 - Mar. 11, 1887
Arthur C. Logan	Mar. 12, 1887 - Nov. 8, 1889

State Superintendents of Public Instruction
(Elected)

John Gannon	Nov. 8, 1889 - Jan. 2, 1893
Eugene A. Steere	Jan. 2, 1893 - Jan. 4, 1897
E. A. Carleton	Jan. 4, 1897 - Jan. 7, 1901
W. W. Welch	Jan. 7, 1901 - Jan. 2, 1905
W. E. Harmon	Jan. 2, 1905 - Jan. 5, 1913
H. A. Davee	Jan. 6, 1913 - Jan. 1, 1917
May Trumper	Jan. 1, 1917 - Jan., 1929
Elizabeth Ireland	Jan., 1929 - Jan., 1937
Ruth Reardon	Jan., 1937 - Jan., 1941
Elizabeth Ireland	Jan., 1941 - Jan., 1949
Mary M. Condon	Jan., 1949 - Jan., 1957
Harriet Miller	Jan., 1957 -

STATISTICAL DATA -- MONTANA PUBLIC SCHOOLS 1868-1962
 (From annual and biennial reports of the Superintendents of Public
 Instruction of the Territory and the State of Montana, 1881-1962)

DATE	NO. OF CENSUS CHILDREN	RECORDED SCHOOL ENROLLMENT	NO. OF SCHOOL DISTRICTS	NO. OF SCHOOLS	NO. OF TEACHERS EMPLOYED	AVER. MONTHLY SALARY OF TEACHERS	AVER. LENGTH OF SCHOOL TERM	VALUE OF SCHOOL PROPERTY
1868	1,359		25	15	27			
1872-73	3,517	1,881	91	51	99	\$ 68.41	\$	21,192.00
1874-75	3,837	2,498	96	76	99	61.45		48,009.00
1876	4,271	2,734	99	83	110	63.50		56,080.00
1877	4,561	2,625*	103	87	110	61.02		55,485.00
1878	5,315	3,277	105	88	116	59.70		88,284.52
1879	5,885	3,909		99	145	58.45		99,344.60
1881	9,479	5,112*		132	177	62.50	110 days	140,250.33
1882	10,482	6,054	155	143	191	66.26	125 days	235,708.00
1883	12,485		180	160	226	58.80		197,300.00
1884	15,515		216	198	292	67.00		335,370.89
1885	16,626		249	249	337	71.00		377,766.00
1886	20,198		272	250	377	70.00		437,588.00
1887	23,165		289	266	394	65.50		548,367.00
1888	27,600		316	305	442	62.50		646,670.00
1889	36,803		344	419	507	66.56		698,798.23
1890	27,821		361	314	531	60.10		994,378.25
1896	41,201		565	549	953	51.16		1,447,581.00
1900	57,210		696	700	1,214	59.67		2,531,942.00
1905	70,814	48,386	817	907	1,663	83.00 (Men)	6.1 Months	
1910	88,805	66,141	994	1,188	2,250	112.24	7.9 Months	
1961-62	205,729	163,857	1,018	1,157	7,504**	***	180 days	218,678,866.00

* Not all counties reporting
 ** Includes teachers, librarians, guidance and supervisory personnel and administrators
 *** Average annual salaries--
 Elementary - \$5,321
 High School - \$5,930

STATE LIBRARY COMMISSION
SOUTH AVE. & MIDDLESEX
MISSOULA, MONTANA

3376pam-5

STATE LIBRARY COMMISSION
SOUTH AV. & MIDDLESEX
MISSOULA, MONTANA



