

*Nanticoke Valley Historical Society  
of Maine, New York*



*One-Room Schoolhouse No. 4  
ca. 1845  
14 Nanticoke Road, Maine, NY*



**Nanticoke Valley Historical Society P.O. Box 75 Maine, NY 13802**

For up-to-date news and information, please visit our website:  
[nanticokevalleyhistoricalsociety.com](http://nanticokevalleyhistoricalsociety.com) and our Facebook page

*Suggested Donation: \$5.00*

*"It has been said that, at its best, preservation engages the past in a conversation with the present over a mutual concern for the future."*

William J. Murtagh, first Keeper of the National Register for Historic Places.



Schoolhouse No. 4 in 1999, located at the corner of Cafferty Hill and E. Campville Roads. It was active from 1845 until 1942. The building was donated by Diane and Larry Thornton.





Edward R. Pomeroy (Sept 1977)  
Collection of Nanticoke Valley Historical Society

The members of the original 1999 Schoolhouse Committee were: Michele Knaul and Pat Stacconi (Co-Chairs), Nancy Berry, Irene Hall, Mary Materese, Jen Palmer and Joanne Weir. This committee, comprised of Maine Memorial Elementary School teachers and NVHS members, decided that a one room schoolhouse would be a great addition to the community. The NVHS donated the land located at 14 Nanticoke Road to the project. The group first discussed building a new "old" one room school but costs and building codes made this idea impractical. They then searched the area for any old schoolhouses that could be relocated to the town of Maine. Schoolhouse No. 4, which was first built and used in the Tioga County School District, was available. In 1845 this original location was part of Tioga County but today it is part of Broome County. The town of Maine was formed on March 27, 1848 when it was separated from the town of Union.

## One-Room Schoolhouses:

- Maine had eleven schoolhouses (districts) until they were consolidated in 1938 and the Maine Central School (1-9) on Church Street was built. A second school was located in Union Center (1-4). Maine students who wished to continue on to high school could enroll in Endicott or Johnson City, however they had to provide their own transportation.
- Schools had two separate entrances- one for the girls and one for the boys.
- Girls sat on one side of the room.
- The youngest students sat closest to the teacher. In Schoolhouse No. 4 visitors will notice that desks are of varying sizes for different aged children.
- Grades 1 through 8 were taught by the same teacher.
- The school day started at 8:00 AM and went until 4:00 PM
- Students arriving later were required to wait outside until recess to be let inside.
- It was common for students to walk to school each day, sometimes a distance of 2 or more miles.
- In cold weather students might bring a baked potato in their pockets to keep their hands warm. They placed the potatoes on the stove until lunch time.
- Typical subjects included reading, writing and arithmetic, sometimes called the three r's: reading, 'riting 'rithmetic. (see School Days song on page 12)
- Arithmetic was taught by memorization (flash cards).
- Small slates were used instead of paper.
- Penmanship was an important subject.
- When a student was answering a question they stood next to their desk.
- Discipline was very important. Punishment might include wearing a dunce cap, getting a hand struck with a hickory stick, standing in the front of the class with one's nose touching a circle on the black board, or doing chores.
- If the weather was favorable, outdoor recess (15 minutes) was held in the morning and the afternoon.
- Lunch was whatever the students brought from home. A drinking bucket of water was filled either from a stream or well and an outhouse was available.
- Schools rarely had books besides the Bible.
- McGuffey Readers were published from 1836 until around 1920 and were used for grades 1 through 6 instruction.
- In addition to academics, teachers taught morals, honesty, courage, kindness, and behavior to their students.

"At the September meeting, *Betty Welch* led a program on the 4 room "old school no.1" of Maine located on Church Street. Other former students of that building assisted in providing a good picture of what it was like to go to school there. It is often confusing to people visiting our little one room school No 4, to hear that there was not actually a one room school within the hamlet of Maine but rather it was a four room school. At the same time there were surrounding one room schools, and each was considered a district in itself. They were: Bowers Corners, Tiona, Gates Neighborhood, Allentown, Mount Ettrick, East Maine, Brocket Hollow, Pollard Hill and Broughantown. In Union Center there was a 6 room school. These all centralized later (1938) into what became known as the Maine Central Schools. In 1833 there were records which referred to this building on Church St. being in use. In 1900 to 1902 the Church St. school was renovated outside and in. At that time the large meeting room with stage, upstairs was changed, to make two more classrooms, and making it the 6 classroom school. Many reminiscences shed light on the school days of the Old Maine School. Walking all the way down King Hill introduced a number of kids to frost bite. On the other hand they were able to slide down the snowy road on hand sleighs, all the way to school, (the road was somewhat different at the lower end then). Going back home, the sleighs could carry what they needed to take home, even though they must pull the sleds up hill all the way.

When the schools all became centralized in the 1938 time frame, it was decided to build a new building where the Old Maine School stood. In order to do that, they lifted the building onto rollers and moved it back far enough to allow the building of the new building (what would come to be called J. Ralph Ingalls) in front of it. It was observed that there were no complications caused by a need to move plumbing and such things, as the same outhouses still stood outside and could continue to be used. Former students remembered that the old building was actually used in its new place until the new building was ready." *from NYHS newsletter 2009*



Note the rear doors: one for girls and one for boys.



Schoolhouse No. 4 1915

## The monument to honor Dr. Clement Bowers

*From an article in Tempo of the Times, May 1976*

Dr. Clement Gray Bowers (1893-1973). The plaque says "In Memory of Clement G. Bowers, Ph. D., Botanist, Educator, Friend and Neighbor."

His obituary lists him as an educator, author, researcher, plant hybridizer, planter and professor at Harpur College for 8 years. Member of the Broome County Planning board for 25 years, president of the Maine School board during time of centralization and was largely responsible for the architecture of J. R. Ingalls School. Founding member of Maine Kiwanis Club and Nanticoke Valley Historical Society. His book *"Rhododendrons and azaleas : their origins, cultivation and development ; with illus. in color by Franck Taylor Bowers and Clement Gray Bowers, and pen drawings by the author Bowers, Clement Gray, 1936.*

The monument was erected by the Maine Kiwanis Club with support from the Nanticoke Valley Historical Society. The bell is from the old Maine Central School located on Church St. It was dedicated on the lawn of J. Ralph Ingalls School in 1976 during the towns bicentennial celebration. When the school was sold by the MESD the monument and bell were moved to 14 Nanticoke Road. The monument was moved and put in place by the town of Maine Highway Department. A portrait of Dr. Bowers is shown on page 8.





**Dr. Clement Bowers** painted by Philip Parr as he would appear in 1950. Note the *Rhododendron* in the background indicating his academic research area.

**Minnie La Tourette (1873-1957)** was a teacher at the Bornt Hill school No. 4. She was 17 when she took the position.



#### RULES FOR TEACHERS — 1800's Style

- Teachers each day will fill lamps, clean chimneys.
- Each teacher will bring a bucket of water and a scuttle of coal for the day's session.
- Make your pens carefully. You may whittle nibs to the individual taste of the pupils.
- Men teachers may take one evening each week for courting purposes, or two evenings a week if they go to church regularly.
- After ten hours in school the teachers may spend the remaining time reading the Bible or other good books.
- Women teachers who marry or engage in unseemly conduct will be dismissed.
- Every teacher should lay aside from each pay a goodly sum of his earning for his benefit during his declining years so that he will not become a burden on society.
- Any teacher who smokes, uses liquor in any form, frequents pool or public halls, or gets shaved in a barber shop will give good reason to suspect his worth, intention, integrity, and honesty.
- The teacher who performs his labor faithfully and without fault for five years will be given an increase of twenty-five cents per week in his pay, providing the Board of Education approves.



### SCHOOL DISCIPLINE – 1800's Style (Docent Guide)

Although the frontier was famous for its pure democracy, the pioneers had a different standard for their schools. The teacher was in charge and they expected him/her to enforce rules to keep order. Discipline was strict!

Children were made to stand in line and march to and from their desk. Pupils had to stand in line in front of the teacher to recite. In some classes, they could not even smile or turn their heads.

If the student broke one of the many rules, there were several forms of punishment. A ferule, which was a rod or ruler 15 to 18 inches long, was used by the teacher on children who misbehaved. If they giggled, were inattentive, or recited poorly, they received three or four light blows on the meaty part of the palm.

Really bad behavior was punished by sharp raps across the shoulders and back.

Usually, it was the older boys who received the whippings. Girls were made to sit in the corner on a one-legged stool called the "uniped".

Some of the other forms of punishment were:

1. The dunce cap for pupils who did not recite well.
2. Loss of recess for those who were tardy.
3. Cleaning the floor if the pupil littered or spit.
4. Writing a sentence "I will not..." 100 times after misbehaving.
5. Standing with one's nose inside a circle drawn on the blackboard.
6. Worst of all a boy made to sit by a girl if he misbehaved.

**Taken from One-Room Schools of Knox County,  
by the Knox County Retired Teachers Association**

**The Pledge of Allegiance** was written in August 1892 by the socialist minister Francis Bellamy (1855-1931). It was originally published in *The Youth's Companion* on September 8, 1892. Bellamy had hoped that the pledge would be used by citizens in any country. In its original form it read:

"I pledge allegiance to my Flag and the Republic for which it stands, one nation, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all."

In 1923, the words, "the Flag of the United States of America" were added. At this time it read:

"I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all."

In 1954, in response to the Communist threat of the times, President Eisenhower encouraged Congress to add the words "under God," creating the 31-word pledge we say today. Bellamy's daughter objected to this alteration. Today it reads:

**"I pledge allegiance to the flag of the United States of America, and to the republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all."**

[www.ushistory.org/documents/pledge.htm](http://www.ushistory.org/documents/pledge.htm)

*The Tin Dipper*  
By Margaret Neel

It hung on a pail that stood on a stool  
By the door of an old-time country school.  
And the water it dipped was cool and sweet  
And fresh as mountain dew in the schoolrooms heat.  
The handle was long and its cup was battered  
But to sharing children all that mattered  
Was the clear, cool drink that would quench the thirst

Of the lucky youngster that reached it first.  
And never was water so good, so cool  
As dipped from the pail of that country school.  
Along with the schoolhouse or another day  
The common dipper has passed away.  
But on warm days it's good to think  
Of that old tin dipper's refreshing drink  
From the shining pail, on the wooden stool  
By the door of an old-time country school.

Thanks to Philip Parr for informing us of this poem and

*The Crooked Lake Review*, Fall 1999, No. 113



## The National Anthem

“On September 14, 1814, Francis Scott Key pens a poem which is later set to music and in 1931 becomes America’s national anthem, “The Star-Spangled Banner.” The poem, originally titled “The Defense of Fort M’Henry,” was written after Key witnessed the Maryland fort being bombarded by the British during the War of 1812.

Before 1931, other songs served as the hymns of U.S. officialdom. “Hail, Columbia” served this purpose at official functions for most of the 19th century. “My Country, ‘Tis of Thee”, whose melody is identical to “God Save the Queen”, the United Kingdom’s national anthem, also served as a de facto national anthem.” President Herbert Hoover signed a resolution declaring “The star-spangled Banner” as the national anthem in 1931.

<http://history.com/this-day-in-history/key-pens-star-spangled-banner#~:text=On%20September%2014%2C%201814%2C%20Francis,during%20the%20War%20of%201812>



This desk was manufactured by Sears Roebuck & Company, Chicago, Illinois. Note the ink well on the desktop. The school would contain desks sized to fit students in grades 1 to 8.



## *Schoolhouse No. 4*

*10 years in Maine*

Sunday, September 26, 2010

### *“School Days”*

Lyrics by Will D. Cobb and Music by Gus Edwards  
1907

<https://kids.mehs.nh.gov/games/songs/childrens/school-days-school-days/index.htm>

School days, school days  
Dear old Golden Rule days  
Reading and ‘riting and ‘rithmetic  
Taught to the tune of the hick’ry stick  
You were my queen in calico  
I was your bashful, barefoot beau  
And you wrote on my slate, “I Love You, Joe”  
When we were a couple o’ kids.

## FARM LIFE IN THE '20S: A BUMPER CROP OF MEMORIES

By JOHN SILLICK,

April 23, 2000 (<https://buffalonews.com/>)

"The dishes were cleared from the table and the coffee served. My father-in-law, Charlie, who's been visiting with us, had helped me unbolt a front loader assembly from a tractor. Now it was good just to sit at the table and talk. I steered the conversation toward his boyhood on a farm in the Southern Tier.

In 1928, when Charlie was 8, his parents, Frank and Anna, moved the family from town to a farm they had bought up on Bornt Hill. Life was different in the country. Charlie smiled as he told stories about the one-room school that he and his five siblings attended, a three-mile walk from home. He remembered how Gus, who came in early to start the fire in the stove, sometimes took it upon himself to discourage troublemakers from interrupting class.

The school featured a hot-lunch program. The students brought whatever food they could spare at home, and then the class put it together as a soup or stew, simmering it on the stove as they did their morning lessons.

His father, a jolly man who served as school trustee, labeled it the "Bring your lunch and we'll help you eat it" system.

Charlie liked the school: "By the time you got to the next grade, you already knew a lot of the material from overhearing it."

*The author's father-in-law lived on Bornt Hill and attended Schoolhouse No. 4. His reflections paint a picture of what life was like back then.*



Maine Central 4-room schoolhouse ca. 1833 on Church Street. This is the building mentioned in the article on page 5.



This map drawn in 1866 shows the town of Maine. Notice that both Lewis Street and McGregor Avenue had yet to be constructed. To the north is the location of Bowers Corners. The major north/south road is Nanticoke Road and at Tiona Road you can turn right (east) and cross Nanticoke creek. A one-room schoolhouse (No. 8) was located in Bowers Corners on Tiona Road (see map). This structure still exists and it was moved in 1939 to the north side of the Bowers home. It is connected to the main house via a runway and was used as a study and guest house by Clement Bowers.



The roof was removed before it was transported. A new foundation was poured and later covered by local stone . The foundation was raised due to the fact that the school is located in a flood zone.



Part of the crowd at the September 2000 dedication and opening of Schoolhouse No. 4. In the front row are (left to right): Marion Gallagher, Ester Frazier, Jennifer Eber and Mary Stevens.

## 1845 flag that flew over Schoolhouse No. 4



**The 27-Star Flag:** “This Flag became the Official United States Flag on July 4, 1845. A star was added for the admission of Florida and was to last for only 1 year. The only President to serve under this flag was James Polk.” [www.chamberofcommerce.org/usflag/the.27.star.flag.html](http://www.chamberofcommerce.org/usflag/the.27.star.flag.html). The Maine American Legion Post 1390 donated the 27-star flag which is flown over the schoolhouse.

“By law, a star is added to the U.S. flag on the 4th of July following the admission of a state to the union. The next change of flag occurred when the state of Texas entered in 1846. It is important to note that no American flag ever becomes obsolete. This flag is still a legal flag and may be flown at any time.” [www.chamberofcommerce.org/usflag/the.28.star.flag.html](http://www.chamberofcommerce.org/usflag/the.28.star.flag.html)

