

MRS. HAZEL DAVIS

LAKE DORE

My next interview was with another lady who taught in Petawawa. Her name is Mrs. Hazel Davis .Mr. Fraser and Mrs. Logan also knew Mrs. Davis so they decided to come along for the visit. Mrs. MacGarvey drove me to Mrs. Davis and the other two followed.

After the introductions began and we were left alone the interview began. Mrs. Davis tells us a bit about her life and some of her experiences teaching in Petawawa. Mrs. Davis also talks about her philosophy of teaching.

After the interview was finished we all sat outside and talked and had tea. I could tell Mrs. Davis was very excited about all the company she had. After talking for more an hour we finally made our way to the car and headed back to Petawawa.

HERITAGE COLLECTION  
File: Interview Mrs: Callie Logan  
Item #X

DONNA BOWES  
July 26<sup>th</sup> 1982

Taped interview with Mrs. Hazel Davis. July 26, 1982.

(Technical quality is poor on this tape, making it difficult to hear the exact words at times.)

After saying that it was difficult for her to remember after so many years, Mrs. Davis launched into an account of her early life, which had involved a span of teaching at Petawawa in the years, 1923-1925.

I was raised on the Queen's Line, one of the most beautiful farming sections in the country. I had 2 brothers and one sister. Educated at first at #8 school, then I went to Renfrew Collegiate; after that I went to a training school.

My first place as a teacher was at Lake Dore, S. S. #5 Wilberforce Twp. and after I had been there I felt like having a change. At that school I had about 35 pupils and my salary was \$650. I wanted a change. The school inspector then was I. D. Bruels, and I always liked him, so one day when he was visiting the school I mentioned that I would like a change. He sent me application forms. I filled them in. They telephoned me from Petawawa to say "Yes". I was given the senior room. Years that I was there were 1923, 1924 and 1925. I was home after that year because my father was ill and I was getting married that year.

I had the senior grades; there was junior and senior in those days. So I had grades 5, 6, 7 and 8. There were 102 pupils one year. The other teacher had all the little ones. I enjoyed teaching the older ones. "I didn't have any trouble with discipline", said Mrs. Davis in answer to a question. Never used a strap and is not sure if there was one. Mrs. Davis said that she loved the children like little brothers and sisters and feels that love conquers everything. "I think they respected me", she added. She remembered that the children got restless at times, for example if it was snowing or raining. Her solution was to read to them. She kept books such as "Pollyanna" or "Anne of Green Gables" and would offer to read to them instead of teaching. If children asked her to read "five minutes more", she would tell them that she expected good spelling in return, and no mistakes.

She taught spelling in the way that she remembered being taught in Grade 8 by a teacher who circled the difficult parts in red.

Mrs. Davis enjoyed arithmetic, "my favorite subject, never had a child fail." The pupils went to Pembroke for examinations.

She lived with Mr. & Mrs. McInerny and paid \$25 a month for board. Her salary was \$1,000 a year and she thought it was pretty good. Later on when there was a Depression the salaries went down for teachers. "I did not smoke", she said. She had no desire at the time. Some of the other girls did. "I wanted to go to the Holy Land", said Mrs. Davis. Every year she put money in the bank at Cobden. I got to the Holy Land twice. She thought that it cost about \$800. Asked to recall other teachers' names, she mentioned Alice Giesebrecht, now deceased, and Edna Turcotte, possibly still living. Other names are hard to discern on this tape.

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Taped interview with Mrs. Hazel Davis.

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Asked about the social life in Petawawa, Mrs. Davis replied. "Dances?" There was a recreation room in the lower part of the school and we had many dances there. She thought that dances were held every Friday night. Sunshine Orchestra from Pembroke used to come. There was a Christmas Concert at the school and Mrs. Davis recalls "working very hard" for that concert.

"When soldiers came in the spring to Camp Petawawa that livened things up!" There was only a skeleton staff there at the camp during the winter.

We had a skating rink also. Remembers playing "Crack the whip" with the children on the rink. It would start with half a dozen children and get longer and longer string.

Mrs. Davis looked back on the social life in Petawawa at that time with very great pleasure, remarking that the people were very nice. She had very happy memories, had a good time. As a teacher, she wanted the children to get through with honors and do well.

She was thanked by the girl (Donna?) who did the interview.