

FAIRFIELD SCHOOL

Fairfield Public School has had a number of locations. The first school for the Aldershot area was built in 1831 where St. Matthew's cemetery is now located. And so, if you lived in the present Bridgeview Survey area, you attended the nearest school four miles distant! This was a relatively short distance to school! A second school was then built on the West Plains United Church property.

Consolidated schools are not an innovation of the twentieth century as is indicated by the following: "About 1868 both schools became inadequate and it was suggested that the sections unite and build one school. After much controversy it was agreed that a school be built on the boundary between the two sections. A lot was purchased from Mr. Smillie; and Mr. T.L. Townsend was engaged to design and superintend the building in 1870. This school was one-room originally, the east wing being added later. It was considered the finest school in a radius of forty miles around Hamilton. It served the community until 1913. Here Mr. Stewart was principal for more than thirty years." The foregoing excerpt is taken from

the log book of the General Register, 1934 to 1944.

PUBLIC EXAMS

During the nineteenth century public examinations of scholars were held at which the inspector and parents could see the progress of the pupils. On March 22, 1880 there was a "Public Examination with 50 visitors - 95 scholars in both rooms". This note appears in pencilled handwriting in the Daily Register of January 1, 1880 to December 31, 1884. March 21, 1884, was a legal holiday in order to visit the public examinations at Bronte, Ontario.

The above register also gives the information in the "Half Yearly Report" that 145 pupils had enrolled in the two rooms, and also the average attendance was 50 percent in 1880, as compared to 94 percent in Burlington during 1960. The Report of the Minister of Education for 1884 gives the following information:

"The percentages of average attendance, as compared with the total number attending school, was for rural districts, forty-three; cities, fifty-nine; town, fifty-five; province, forty-six; increase, one percent." However, the School Act of 1881 notes, "the parent or guardian of