

COVENTRY SCHOOL DAYS

Have you ever wondered what Coventry one-room schools were like? In 1721 there were two schools, one on each side of Coventry Lake. School terms started after the harvest and would last for three months. The educational requirements of the time were few; the ability to read, to write, some skill with numbers and to spell after a fashion; the dictionary did not come about for another 100 years.

The number of school days increased as time passed. In 1835 the school year was 20 weeks spread over two terms one winter and one summer. As the 1800s progressed the school terms lengthened to three terms, fall, winter and spring, for 160 days. By 1900 schools were in session 180 days each year. Even in the 1800s teachers were "obliged to contend with one of the greatest evils," the irregularity of student's attendance.

The Coventry Common School children varied considerably in age. The Pond Hill registration book from 1839 until 1858 lists several three year olds who attended the school as well as students who were as old as 21. Laws in the 1890s required schools

To be open to children over the age of four and that all children between the ages eight and 16 regularly attend school. Children over 14 were exempt from school if lawfully employed at home or elsewhere.

In the 19th century, students were taught the same subjects students learn today: Arithmetic, Geography, History, Spelling and English Grammar. Singing was found to increase interest in school and attendance. In 1895 Health classes discussed the effects of "alcoholic liquors, stimulants & narcotics on the human system." In 1912 girls were taught sewing and cooking while the boys received manual training. Agriculture became a weekly class the following year. Times have changed, sometimes for the better and sometimes not. Many of our one-room school graduates insist that it was the one-room school atmosphere that helped them succeed, as they grew older. In addition to reading, writing and arithmetic they learned discipline, sharing, and community.

Modern Schools

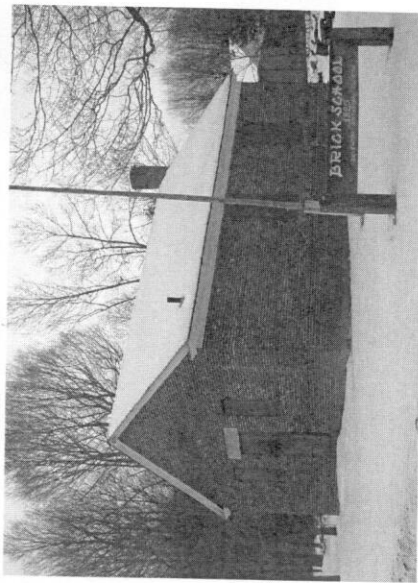
1948 George Hersey Robertson

1955 Coventry Grammar School

1961 Coventry High School

1968 Capt Nathan Hale Middle School

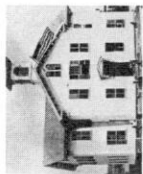
Coventry's One-Room Schoolhouse Map



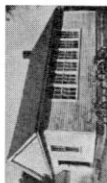
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1. Early District 1 brick school on Monument Hill St precedes the Center School.



1A. Center School was built in 1873 at the corner of Main St & School St. It was sold in 1965.



2. South Street School, was located at the corner of South St and Cross St. Closed in 1951.



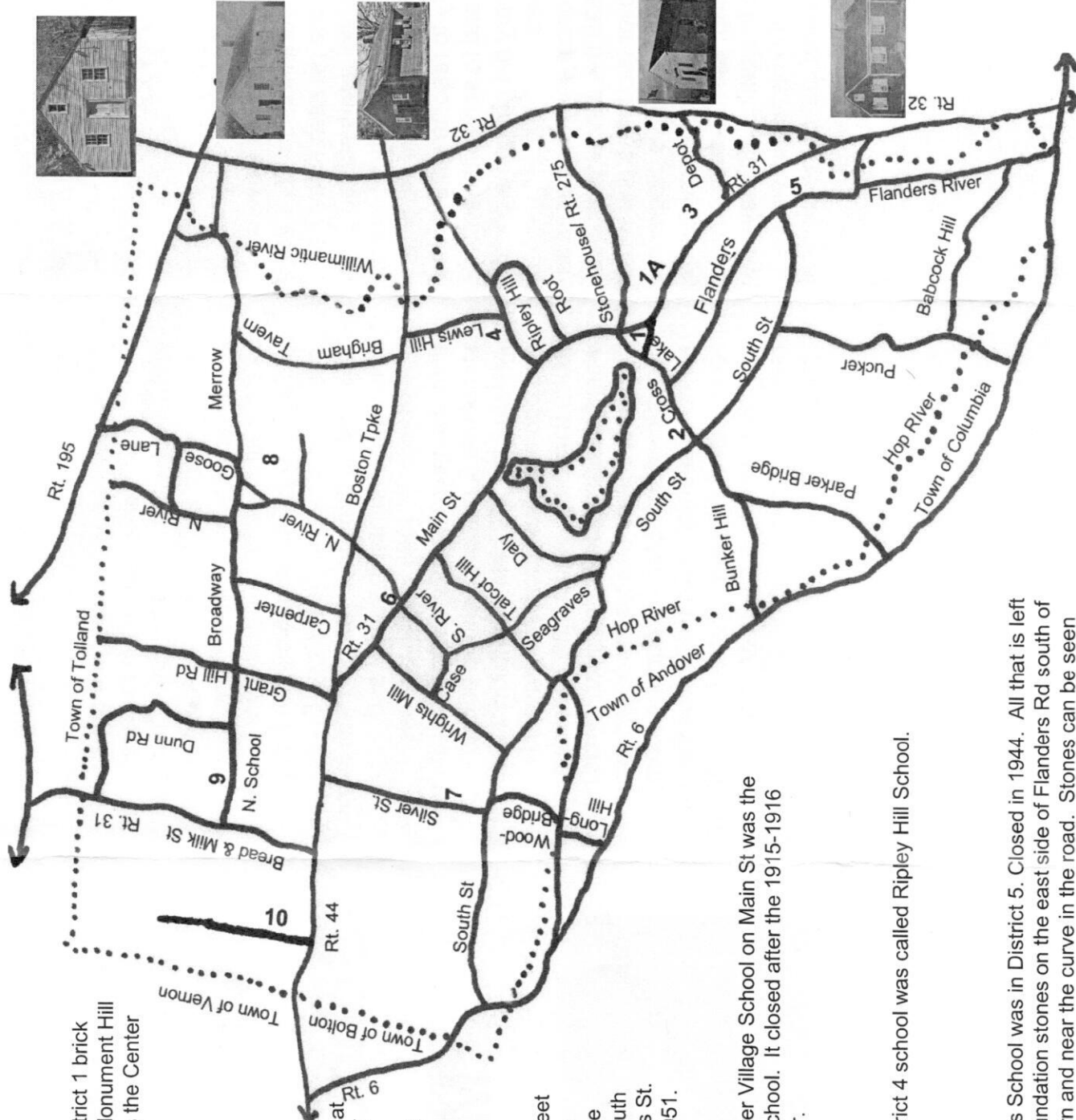
3. The Lower Village School on Main St was the District 3 school. It closed after the 1915-1916 school year.



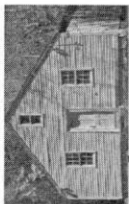
4. The District 4 school was called Ripley Hill School.



5. Flanders School was in District 5. Closed in 1944. All that is left are the foundation stones on the east side of Flanders Rd south of the big barn and near the curve in the road. Stones can be seen most clearly in the early spring.



6. Pond Hill School was located in District 6 and can still be seen on Rt 31 just west of N. River Rd.



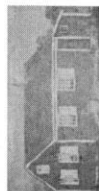
7. Silver St School was housed in 3 different buildings all near the south end of Silver St.



8. The Brick School, 1825-1955, stands in District 8 and is the only 1-room school open to the public. It is owned by the Coventry Historical Society.



9. The North School is no longer standing. Now a concrete block building stands in it's location.



10. The Red School was in District 10. It was burned by the Fire Dept in 1956