

# Letter from Nora Holgate Carlson Answering Survey Questions about the History of East Beaver Creek School

Feb. 20, 2001

Dear Mr. Bones & Students,

I will be happy to answer as many of your questions as possible.

Our school, East Beaver Creek, was very small. Most of the years there were less than a dozen students, so we had one teacher each year, and she taught all grades. There were never all eight grades at one time that I can remember.

I think we all liked our teachers pretty well. I started school in 1921 and made 1st & 2nd grades that year.

The teachers were Cora Finch, Annie Newberg, Miss Beatrice Sheldon and Mrs. Edith MYERS Creecy from 5th grade to 8th grade.

My favorite teacher was Mrs. Creecy. She was a motherly type. I believe that all of us liked her very much.

Each student carried their own lunch, and we decided we wanted hot lunches so each one would bring something from home. Mrs. Creecy would heat it on the heater in the middle of the room. Our milk was all put together in a two-pound coffee can, coca added, heated and we had hot cocoa.

One year I lost 1/2 day of school because I tried to take the can of hot cocoa off the heater and dropped it scalding my leg. Teacher made me go home to have the burn treated.

She would often peel and "fry" potatoes in an aluminum kettle for us.

One of my fondest memories is of her peeling and slicing potatoes while she listened to the students recite their lessons. (And once in awhile she'd eat a small slice of raw potato.)

We didn't have a principal.

Our clothes were just clean everyday wear. The girls always wore dresses. The boys wore shirts and jeans.

For the lack of students there was no school for three or four years around 1917 until 1921 when I started. A family named Phelps moved into the neighborhood, and they had three school-age children. So with my twin brother and me there were enough students to have a school the next year.

Phelps moved in mid-year so for the rest of that year their three children attended Hemlock School, and they drove a horse and buggy to get there.

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Our school was new when I first started. It was remodeled later with large windows along one side and across the back so there was good lighting.

We had no electricity, and our drinking water was carried to school in a pail from a home nearby. A student or students performed that task. There was never a shortage of volunteers.

The wooden floor was oiled to keep down the dust, and wood for the heater was furnished by our parents. It was always hauled in and piled in the woodshed during the summer by whichever parent furnished it that year.

The teacher usually took care of the fire and did the janitor work. I know that Mrs. Creecy received \$15. a month extra for this work.

During the summer that I was in the 4th grade our parents constructed a play shed so that we could still go outside when it rained.

The school yard was fenced with boards. A "privy" was built in each of the far corners, one for boys, and one for girls.

Baseball was the favorite game and all students were allowed to participate. Many times even the teacher played, too.

One time during a baseball game our teacher, Miss Sheldon, sprained her ankle so badly that she thought it was broken. It was so painful that she sat on the ground and cried. It was many weeks before she was able to walk without limping.

Other games we played were Ante over and Care Base. Sometimes the boys played marbles. There were other games that I can't recall too well.

Four times a year we had spelling exams. The Superintendent of Schools sent out lists of 51 words that the teacher would give to us to spell. They were sent back to his office in Tillamook where they were graded, and we received certificates for excellent grades.

As you can see, our school was so small that we could not assemble a team of any kind, so there was no interaction with other schools.

We had no mascot nor motto.

The first four years we walked to school unless it was very stormy. Then Dad would take us in the car. Quite often when we'd walked to school in the morning and it was raining hard he'd come pick us up in the evenings at 4 o'clock.

I can remember walking to school those first four years, and the neighbor would let his cows out to pasture along the roadside. I would be so terrified to pass the animals. Of course they would never hurt me, but I didn't know that.

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Our fifth year the teacher drove her car, and she would pick us up on the way. So we always had transportation after that. There was only one road to the school and no little side roads. Students lived on either side of the school house. We had around 4 miles each way to walk. *(Hm . . . it was actually a mile or less from the Holgate farm to the school house. db)*

The first four years all the teachers boarded with a family, so they walked too.

Sometime after I had graduated East Beaver Creek School consolidated with Hemlock. And then a man was hired to drive school bus for transportation.

One year we had quite a snowstorm, and cars couldn't travel the road. So one man would take his wife (who was my teacher's sister and taught school at Hemlock Erma MYERS Gilbert) to school by horse and sled along with his milk cans to the East Beaver Creek Cheese factory. Then he would bring our teacher who lived at Sandlake and us to school. That was fun!

You can find pictures of our school & pupils along with my older sister's, Mae's, eighth grade diploma plus her teacher's names in the years around 1910 - ? in the Pioneer Museum in Tillamook.

I had three sisters and three brothers. I am the only one of my family still living. I do have three children of my own and many nieces and nephews.

I am 86 years old, and three years ago I had a new valve put in my heart. It's working great, and I am able to do a fair amount of work.

Much luck on your project,

Nora Holgate Carlson