

## DISTRICT #3 – TURK HILL ROAD

One of the earliest schools in Perinton was District School #3, located on the east side of Turk Hill Road south of Ayrault. The first school building was built in 1822 by Aruna Bradford on land donated by John Peters. School records note that Bradford was “exonerated from the residue of his tax . . . viz 148 cents” for his efforts.

Familiar Perinton names like Ellsworth, Slocum, Arnold, Hannan, and Ayrault appear frequently in the records of District #3’s annual meetings as clerk or trustee. The elected officials dealt with such issues as hiring teachers, collecting and allotting funds, building repair, maintenance and use, and the ever-present need for wood.

Darius Arnold was paid \$7 for building a “backhouse” in 1825. A Franklin stove was purchased in 1827 for \$20 and a new chimney was built. In 1828, each student was required to provide 1/2 cord of wood. If the wood was not procured in a timely manner, the family had to pay 67 cents per cord for someone else to supply it. 1845 saw the purchase of an 8-day clock for \$6.50 and a bell for 38 cents, and the library was opened to the community from “12 ½ o’clock to 4 ½ o’clock p.m. on Friday of each week for the inhabitants to draw and return books.”

In 1850 Thomas Slocum was paid \$388 to build a new one-room structure, just to the north of the old one, which was “painted on the outside with two good coats of good white lead & linseed oil”.

The School Commissioner’s Report for 1905 found the school in good condition, with 24 students, an excellent teacher in Emma Fisher, who was paid \$34 per month, and only in need of a new “closet.” The school was enlarged in 1929; electricity was added in 1932, followed by running water, a new roof and flush toilets in 1935.

Sara Casella Smith and Lettie Ellsworth Bortle recalled what school was like during the first half of the twentieth century. There were approximately six rows of desks, a long blackboard and a furnace in the one big room. The bench in the front of the room was used if someone was ill or misbehaving. A second room (and teacher) was added in 1929. School began at 8:15 with the ringing of the bell and the pledge to the flag. Grades one through three had basic reading, writing, spelling, and math. Books included those subjects, plus geography and civil government. Everyone had art, writing, and hygiene on Fridays. All students were required to help with the cleaning, appointed two at a time. The older boys also had the responsibility of adding coal to the furnace and cleaning out the ashes. Homework was rare; students completed work while the others were having lessons.

School was decidedly not all work, however. Ten a.m. was recess time when all went outside for the fresh air, a “cold dipper of fresh water,” and games like “snap the whip” and “drop the handkerchief.” Major school events included an annual spring “Month of May” hike to study and pick flowers, a June picnic with games and prizes, and a Christmas party with plays, recitations, and singing.

By 1950, with students in grades seven through twelve already attending West Avenue High School in the village of Fairport and centralization a foregone conclusion, District #3 voted to close for one year and send all students to the village. The change was made permanent in 1951, and the school, having provided a “good basic education” for well over 100 years, closed for good. The building, however, still survives. It was the Fairport American Legion Brooks-Shepard Post 765 from 1957 to 1981, and since 1981 has been a private home.



