

The History of VCS & Its Buildings

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Victor Intermediate School~4th Grade
2010



Cobblestone School on High St./Rt. 96

Source: Victor Town Historical records/ Historian
Babbette Huber

How Victor Central Schools Began

In 1825, during the state education reforms of the Dewitt Clinton administration, the town of Victor was formally divided into 13 public school districts permitting all the children in the town to get a basic education within walking distance. Construction of new schools got underway with the creation of one-room school houses.



Map shows locations
and the distance
between schools.

Source:
1874 Map of Victor
from Town of Victor
Historical
Records/Town
Historian Babette
Huber.

First School Houses

1825- Town of Victor was formally divided into 13 school districts.

Schools were gradually built in all areas of the town and by the 1830's there was a total of eleven schools in use. These schools were located at Fishers, School Street, East Victor, Victor-Egypt, and Gillis Roads, Gillis Roads and Cline Roads, High Street and route 96, Lane Road, Dryer road, Malone Road, North Road, and Boughton Hill and Victor-Holcomb roads.

There was one teacher in each school, with the responsibility of instructing grades one through eight.

Source: A History of Victor, New York
By Fagan, Guiffre, and Snyder, 1976.



One Room Rural School Houses:

By the 1830's, there were 11 one-room schools houses. The school houses were very simple. There was no light but there were lots of windows. They had a lot of windows because it was the only light source. They had a fireplace or wood burning stove. Blackboards were three boards nailed together. The playground consisted of four horseshoes.

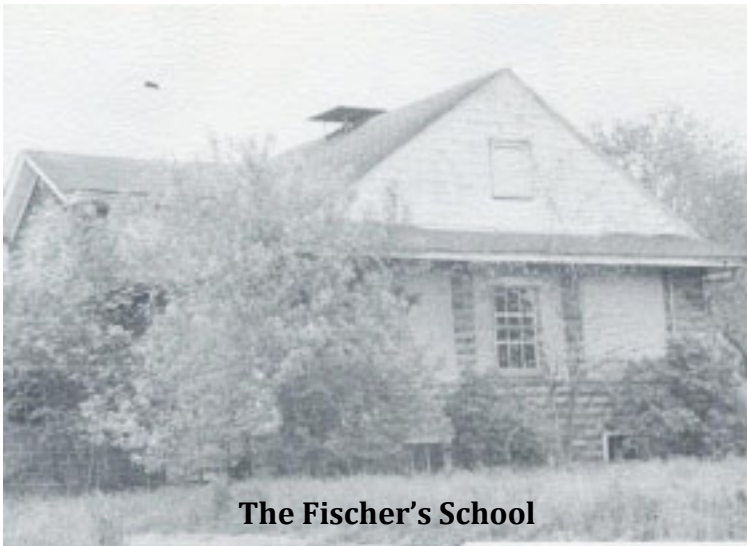
Source:

Town of Victor Historical Records /
Town Historian Babette Huber

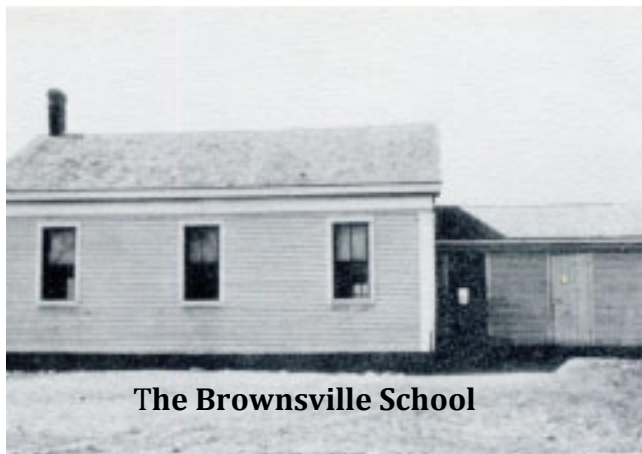
Rural schools

By 1830 there were 13 rural School Houses

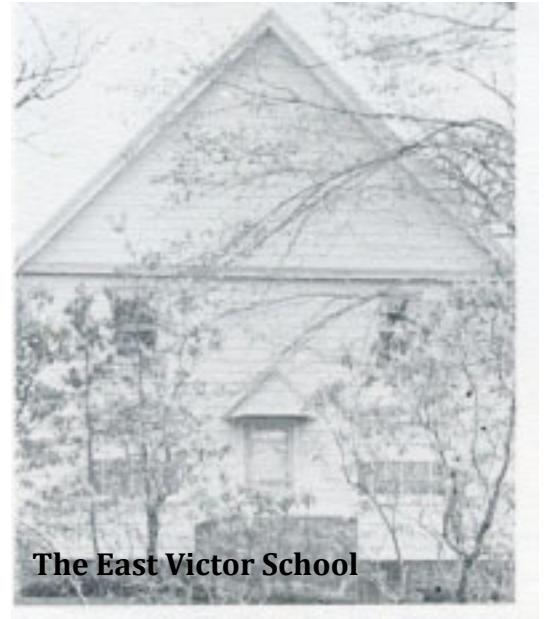
Most of these schools are privately owned today.



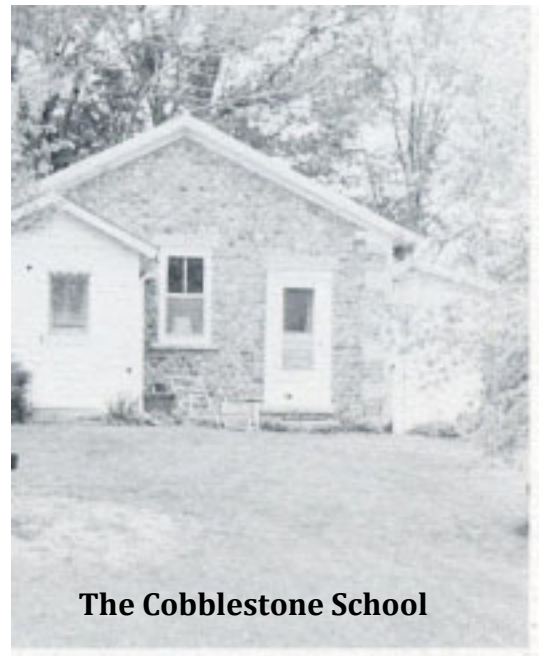
The Fischer's School



The Brownsville School



The East Victor School



The Cobblestone School

Source:
Book: A History of Victor, NY by
Fagan, Guiffre, & Snyder, 1976.

Rural School Houses continued:



The Kamp School



The Park School



The North School

Source: A History of Victor, New York
By Fagan, Guiffre, & Snyder, 1976.



This picture shows students from the Victor-Egypt School from 1886. The teacher's name was Mr. Walrow, and he was fourth from the right on the top row.

We observed from this photo that the boys wore boots and trousers and the girls wore long sleeve dresses with high collars.

Source: A History of Victor, New York
By Fagan, Guiffre, and Snyder, 1976.

Vera Brown was a teacher in Victor for 54 years from 1904-1958. We read about her experiences in a typed interview of her from 1979 and learned what it was like to be one of the early teachers of Victor.

According to the interview, Vera Brown disciplined her children fair but firm. She dealt her punishments justly. She got her kids interested in school because it was the only way they would learn. We found out that when she worked in a rural school, she rode a pony to school. She said, "My pony doesn't like the snow."



Here are some interesting quotes from Vera that helped us learn what it was like for early teachers in Victor.

"You've got to create interest in the child if you want them to learn. And when they want to they'll go to it. "

"Of course in the rural school, with so many grades, it wasn't it wasn't as interesting as when you had a group that was all at one level. I liked one second grade, or one third grade- all on one level. Then you can do work you'll be satisfied with."

"So, I was going to go to Rochester, but I heard that they were very much supervised, and that you couldn't use a lot of your own ideas. Everything had to be laid out. I didn't want to do that! I wanted to teach my own way."

"I chose second grade because with first grade they would have a little start, and you could go on from there, but with the third grade they're likely to pick up faults and things. They're a little harder to manage. Third-graders are more apt to be smarties. I just love second grade."

Source: Typed interview with Vera Brown,
July 9, 1979 (interviewer unknown)
From Victor Town Records/Babette
Huber, Town Historian



Victor Villages Greek Revival schoolhouse was built on School Street in 1846. It was only used for 40 years. The school only had one room.

Source: A History of Victor, New York
By Fagan, Guiffre, and Snyder, 1976.



Students of the Victor Village School around 1889

In this picture is the elm tree of the Village School property in 1846.



In 123 Years Victor Village Has Had Only Four School Houses

The first schoolhouse in Victor Village was built in 1816, near the site of the present canning company. The first teacher was Melancton Lewis, who came here from Massachusetts and became one of the most prominent men of the town. He received \$20 a month for five months. The town of Victor was divided into 13 school districts in 1825. Later a cobblestone schoolhouse was built in the village south of the present building.

The first school meeting took place October 1, 1844. A meeting to consider the building of a new schoolhouse was called in 1845, and the new school was finished in 1846. The building was a three-roomed wooden structure shaded by two magnificent elms, one of which was removed many years ago. The other was named the George Washington Elm at dedication ceremonies conducted by the Rev. C. W. Backus, local Presbyterian pastor, in 1887. That tree stood until June, 1924, when the greater part of it was blown down. Two years later, the remainder was found to be unsafe and was removed. The schoolhouse which preceded the one built in 1846 was sold for \$25. In 1869 the school building was enlarged through the building of an addition.

We learned from the article to the left that the first schoolhouse in the Victor village was built in 1816.

We also learned that the first teacher, Melancton Lewis received 20 dollars a month for teaching.

Sources:

Article and picture from Town of Victor Historical Records / Town Historian Babette Huber



1882 First High School

Crowded conditions were a problem in 1882. A decision was made to replace the frame school with a two-story brick building. It was on the southwest corner of Main Street. An addition was later added in 1911.

Source: A History of Victor, New York.
By Fagan, Guiffre, & Snyder, 1976.

Picture Source:
Town of Victor Historical Records/ Town Historian Babette Huber



This picture shows the first high school built in 1882 demolished in 1971. High school students would now attend high school on the High Street campus.

Source: Town of Victor Historian's
Office/Babette Huber

Some Purposes Of The Central School

The central rural school is designed to enable the people of the area to provide good school advantages near home at reasonable tax rates made possible by a larger unit of administration and by largely increased state aid. Very little of the money used in state aid is raised on real estate, it being derived from some form of statewide taxation. In fact, it is stated that the state tax on real estate has decreased since the central school law was passed.

Sometimes the central school causes a slight increase in taxes in districts which have had a very low rate because they have railroad or other large corporation properties to carry a large share of their taxes. Present indications are that abandonment of branch railroad lines will remove that source of tax money from many rural districts. Every taxpayer in a central district pays the same tax rate.

The more extensive curriculum of the central school helps to hold the interest of pupils who are not interested in courses now provided in rural schools and are inclined to become restless and leave school before they are equipped for really efficient work in any line.

Greater comfort and better sanitary conditions for the students are also matters which should not be overlooked when considering the advisability of school centralization.

From this article we learned schools in the Victor Free School District were getting over crowded and it was time for Victor to do something about it.

According to this article, with a central school, there would be a more "extensive curriculum and the hope was more kids would stay in school."

Also, "Greater comfort and better sanitary conditions for the students are also matters which should not be overlooked when considering the visibility of school centralization." This would include better facilities, better heating and lighting and more space for Victor's growing school population.

Source: Victor Herald August 19 1938.
Town of Victor Historical Records/Babette Huber



This is a picture of the Ladd farm. The generosity of Mrs. Fannie Ladd Locke enabled the school board with the voters' approval, to purchase the Ladd farm on High Street for \$5000.00. This would be the sight for the new Victor Central School.

Source:
Town of Victor Historical records &
Town Historian Babette Huber
A History of Victor, New York by
Fagan, Guiffre & Snyder, 1976.

MAY 5, 1939 4.

Ladd Homestead Is Being Removed From Central School Site

The work of demolishing the Ladd Homestead on High Street, on the farm purchased as a site for Victor's new Central School, is under way, the contract for its removal having been awarded to the American Wrecking Company of Rochester. B. J. Widger and son, Harold, have moved from the farm to Mrs. Roy Battam's farm near Honeoye Falls.

The Ladd farm, now the property of Central School District No. 1 of Victor, Farmington, East Bloomfield and Perinton, consists of the former Perkins and Dryer farms, which were purchased and combined by Hiram Ladd. One of the farm houses was moved by Mr. Ladd to a site further up on High Street, and was later demolished by his son, John M. Ladd. In 1866, Hiram Ladd had the other farm house moved to the opposite side of High Street, adjacent to the present St. Patrick's cemetery, where it still stands. On the site thus cleared, Mr. Ladd had built the imposing and commodious residence which is now being removed that the site may be used for a large modern school building. Two of the small houses on Maple Avenue, south of the Masonic Temple, were built from lumber taken from sheds on the Ladd farm, many years ago.

The passing of the Ladd Homestead touches with sorrow the hearts of many who have spent happy hours within its walls, yet they are glad that it is to be replaced by a public building instead of falling into decay. The house was too large and the village-taxed farm too expensive for profitable operation in these days, but as public property the fine view and natural beauty of the farm can be enjoyed by the community, by Mrs. Fannie Ladd Locke of Dobbs' Ferry and the younger generations of the family. Mrs. Locke's father, John M. Ladd, was for many years a member of the Board of Education of Victor High School, and the family was active in community affairs. It is fitting that their home farm should become an important factor in community life.

After reading this article we found out that VCS demolished the Ladd Farm in the spring of 1939.

Apparently the farm was falling into decay and most people were happy that a public building such as a school was going to be there in its place.

Source: Victor Herald, May 5, 1939
Scrapbook from Town Historian's records
(Babette Huber)

Victor High's Last Graduating Class Largest in History

The Class of 1939 of Victor High School is distinctive in several respects. It is the last class to be graduated from District No. 1 and from Victor High School, as with the close of the present school year this district becomes a part of Central School District No. 1 of the towns of Victor, Farmington, East Bloomfield and Perinton. It is perhaps the last class that will complete the work of earning Regents' diplomas beneath the roof of the present school building, but that is uncertain as the time when work can be begun upon the new central school building is as yet unknown. It is the largest class to be graduated from Victor High, the students numbering 37, which exceeds by one pupil the previous high record of 36 graduates made in 1937.

It is the only class to complete four years of high school work under the supervision of a principal who receives promotion to a more important post without leaving town. In the past, the principals of Victor High School have gone away to take better paid positions in larger schools. Principal R. W. Martin, who is now completing his fourth year here, will remain to become principal of the central school at an increased salary under a three-year contract.

Commencement Exercises

On Tuesday evening, June 27th, beginning at 8 o'clock, the following program will be presented in the Town Hall auditorium:

Processional, Graduate March Lawrence
School Orchestra
Invocation
Rev. R. E. Dransfield
Salutatory
Leonard Phillips
Violin Solo, "Romance from Concerto in D Minor" Wieniawski
Clayton F. Shufelt
Accompanist, Dora E. Mend
Address, "The Fragments of Life"
Rev. Gordon W. Mattice
Selection, Intermezzo from L'Arlesienne Suite Bizet
School Orchestra
Director, Clayton F. Shufelt
Award of Prizes
Principal R. W. Martin
Presentation of Diplomas
Mr. Fred C. Sale,
President Board of Education
Valedictory
Jane Colligan
Alma Mater
The history prizes are given by Unity Club of Victor; the Latin prizes by Gah-a-yan-duk Chapter, O.E.S.; the English prizes by Victor Grange, No. 322; the grade prizes, French, freshmen, sophomore, junior and senior prizes are given by the school.

The Victor Class of 1939 beat the record of how many kids had ever graduated in the history of Victor. They went from 36 students in 1937 to 37 students in 1939.

This shows that Victor's enrollment was growing and more students were graduating.

Source: The Victor Herald, June 23, 1939
Taken from a scrapbook from Victor Town
Historian's records (Babette Huber)

The Proposed New School Building

(Central Elementary and High School)

for

Central District No. 1, Towns of Victor,
Farmington and East Bloomfield,
Ontario County and Perinton,
Monroe County



Submitted by Board of Education

A Special Meeting of the Qualified Voters will be held in the
Victor Town Hall, Victor, N. Y., April 23, 1940, at 7:30 P. M.

From these School Board proposal documents from 1940 we learned the reasons for why Victor wanted to build a larger centralized school.

Reason included:

1. Bonds are selling
2. With the lack of building projects at the present time district would be able to get lower building costs.
3. Saving on repairs and operating expenses of present buildings will add materially in upkeep of new buildings.

Reasons for building:

1. With growing enrollment more space is needed
2. Heating inadequate
3. Need a gym & auditorium
4. Need playgrounds
5. Central location is easier for administration
6. Current building is expensive to maintain due to its age

Is This a Favorable Time to Build?

Yes. Because:

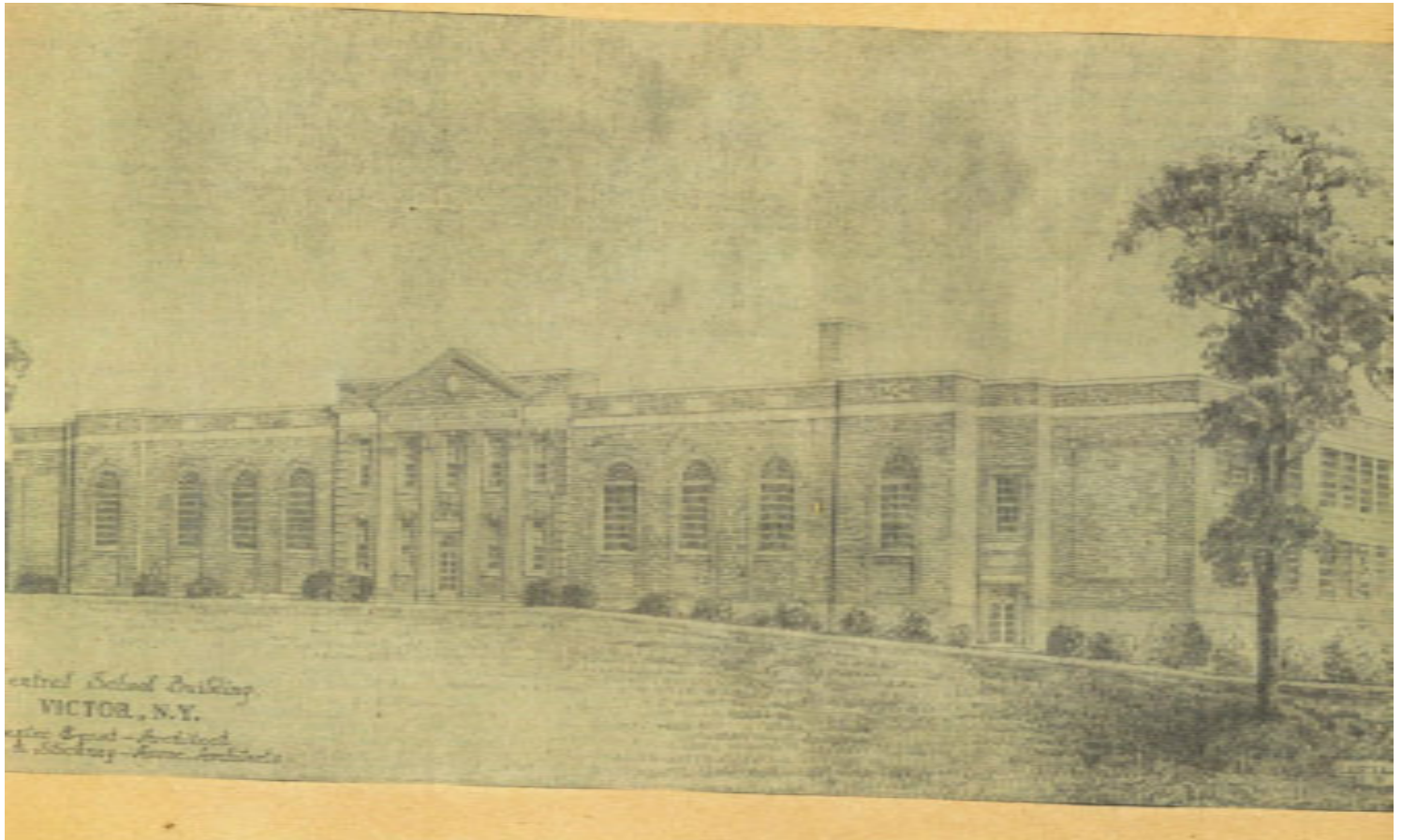
1. Bonds are selling at a very low interest rate at the present time.
2. Lack of building projects at the present time will make keen competition in contract bidding, resulting in contracts offered at the lowest possible figure.
3. Saving on repairs and operating expenses of present buildings will aid materially in upkeep of new building.

Reasons for Building

1. The present school, built in 1883, in no way adequately meets the needs of the district. The building is inadequate as to size, necessitating the use of temporary building facilities to house the pre-primer and first three grades.
2. The old school does not in any way conform to the State laws as to heating and ventilation, light, and size of rooms.
3. The present building was built fifty-seven years ago and was never intended for the purposes for which it is now used. It has reached the condition where it is becoming more and more expensive to maintain. It is much in need of repair and money put into the old building would be wasted because of its inadequacy.
4. Under present conditions there are no facilities for health and physical education, agriculture or shop work. The Home-making, Science and Commercial departments are housed in the basement under very unsatisfactory conditions. There is neither gymnasium nor auditorium for carrying out dramatics, music, public speaking, athletics and other activities which are very important and worthwhile. Lack of these accommodations has deprived our pupils of many advantages which are taken for granted in other schools.
5. The location of the present buildings makes playground activities either very limited or unavailable.
6. The housing of 700 pupils in fourteen separate buildings makes efficient administration very difficult. It is also very uneconomical to heat, light and maintain these scattered buildings which at best are very inferior to those in most communities.
7. Now is a favorable time to build because of the low interest rates of bonds and the keen competition among contractors for building projects.
8. If we do not have building facilities for agriculture and shop, we will be expected to provide transportation and tuition to Canandaigua Academy for students who wish to take these courses. During the current year transportation to Canandaigua has cost the district \$1,600.

Source: Town Historical
Records/Babette Huber

Architect's Drawing of the Central School Building



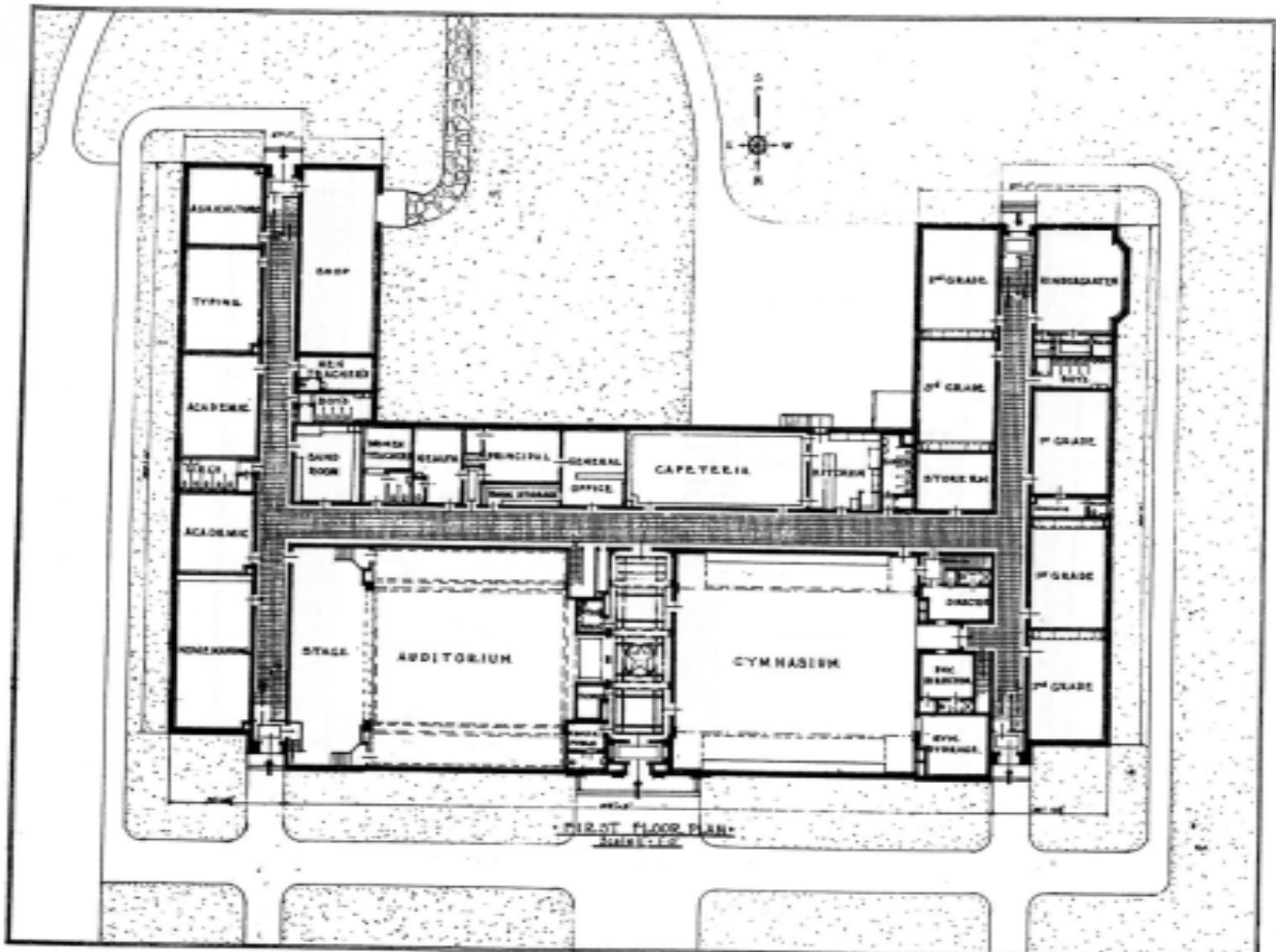
This is the original drawing for the new VCS building by the architect in 1939.

Source: Town of Victor historical records/
Babette Huber

1st Floor detailed plans of Central School Building

Selection of Architect

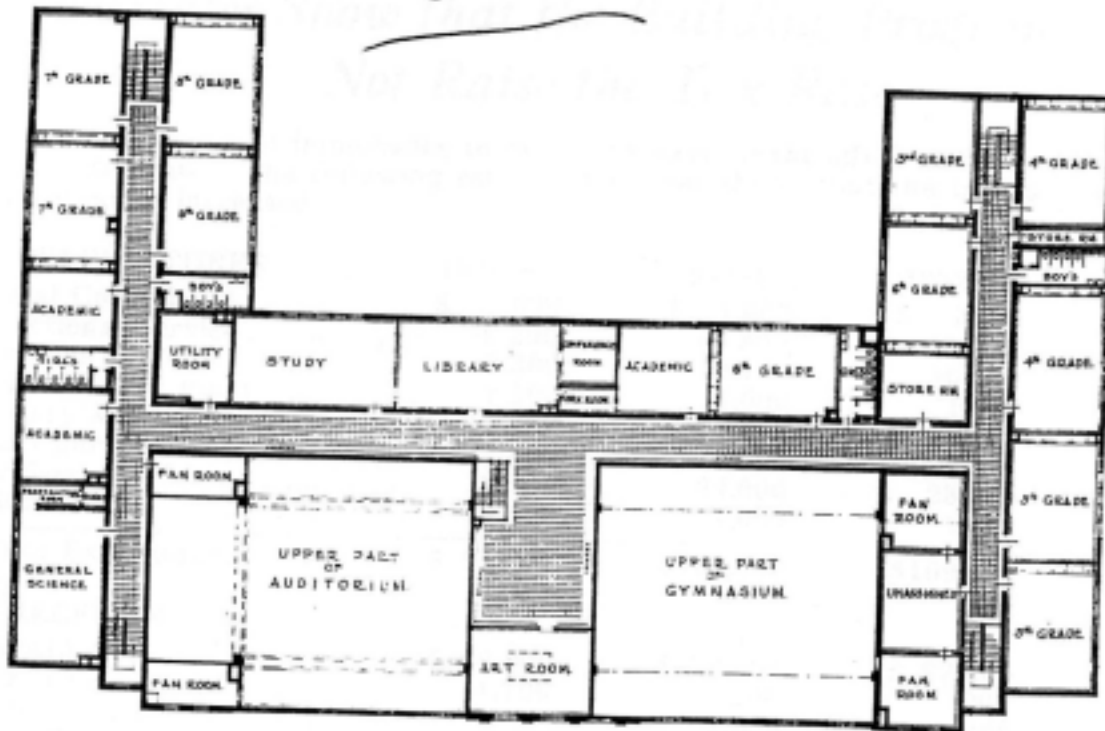
After carefully considering the records and plans of several firms, the Board of Education has engaged Lester Ernst, architect, and Smith & Stickney, associate architects, of Victor and Rochester, to prepare plans for the School District's needs.



Source: Document of Proposed Building Plans
Victor Town Historian's Office (Babette Huber)

From this plan we have learned that there was to be an auditorium with a stage, gymnasium, gym storage room, 2 first grade classes, 2 second grade classes, 1 3rd grade class, a store room, a cafeteria, a general office, a principal's office, a health office, a women teachers' room, a band room, a men teachers' room, 1 bathroom, a shop, an agricultural room, a typing room, 2 academic rooms, a home-making room, 1 girls' bathroom, a kindergarten, and a directory room.

3-8



• SECOND FLOOR PLAN •
Scale 1/4" = 1'-0"

2nd Floor detailed plans of Central School Building

From this detailed plan of the second floor we learned...

It had a upper gymnasium, an upper auditorium, four fan rooms, two 5th grade rooms, two 4th grade rooms, one 3rd grade room, two 6th grade rooms, two 7th grade rooms, two 8th grade rooms, three academic rooms, two boys bathrooms, two girls bathrooms, one unassigned room, one art room, one utility room, two storage room, a work room, one conference room, a library, a study, and a general science room.

Source: Document of Proposed Building Plans, Victor
Town Historian's Office (Babette Huber)



This picture was taken on September 11, 1941 when it opened. Vera Brown called this school “School Heaven.” This was her favorite school. There were approximately 700 kids enrolled at VCS at the time.

Source: Photo-Town of Victor Historical Records/Babette Huber

V. Brown quote-A History of Victor, New York by Fagan, Guiffre, & Snyder, 1976.

New VCS Building To Be Dedicated Tuesday, December 30

Victor's fine new central school building is to be dedicated on Tuesday, December 30, 1941, with appropriate programs which all of the people of the district and all interested friends are cordially urged to attend.

Opportunity to inspect the building will be given during the "open house" hours, 2 to 5 and 7:30 to 10 p. m. There will be a flag raising ceremony at 3 p. m.

At 8 o'clock in the evening, in the auditorium, the following program will be presented:

Invocation—Rev. Nelson L. Lobdell.

Music — "Russian Choral and Overture" and "Pinafore" selections V. C. S. Orchestra; Clayton F. Shufelt, director.

Greetings and introduction of guests—William H. McMahon, president of the Board of Education.

Remarks — Arthur J. Stickney architect; Maurice A. Rowley, general contractor; J. Raymond Tobin attorney; H. S. G. Loveless, district superintendent; Ralph W. Martin principal.

Music—"Crusaders Overture" and "Star Spangled Banner," V. C. S. Band, Clayton F. Shufelt.

From this article we learned that kids played music and the architect spoke at the building dedication December 30, 1941.

Source: Victor Town Historical records/ Historian Babette Huber.



**This photo shows the addition of
the Primary Building in 1955.**

Source: Town of Victor Historical Records/Babette Huber



This photo was taken in the early 1970's. It shows the Primary, Intermediate, and new High School buildings.

Source: Town of Victor Historical
Records/Babette Huber

How VCS has grown:

Buildings	YEAR	Enrollment
ECEC	1941	647
Elementary primary	1955	1,022
Primary building addition	1957	1,169
Senior High school	1964	1,730
Intermediate	1971	2,345
Senior high school addition And pool	1973	2,699
Junior high school addition	1991	3035
Today: plans for more expansion	2010	4,254
Projected growth	By 2019	4,912

Sources: A History of Victor, NY by Fagan, Guiffre, & Snyder, 1976.

May 2010 VCS District News Magazine; 2010-2011 School Budget Article

Annotated bibliography for The History of VCS and its Buildings

Books:

History of Victor, New York, by Fagan, Rose Marie; Griffe, Anne; Snyder, Mary Joan. Printed by the Victor Herald, 1976, pages used pages 57-65. This book had many photos of early Victor schools which we used in our report. We were able to find pictures for almost all of the early one-room school houses in Victor. There was also some enrollment information that helped us compare the growth of Victor schools over the years.

Victor the History of a town Fisher, Lewis F. Maverick publishing, San Antonio, Texas, 1996. Pages 22,24-25. This book had some useful information about how the town of Victor was divided into 13 districts which included the construction of one-room school houses.

Places:

Victor Town hall, (Town Historian's office.) Victor, New York. Town historian Babette Huber was able to locate various school documents, articles from the Victor Herald and school house photographs that we used in our project. These photographs were not from books but stored in binders and were mainly donated from community members. She also had a map from 1874 that showed all the locations of the early school houses in Victor. Another interesting source was the typed interview of Vera Brown which gave us more insight as to what it was like to be a teacher in the early 1900's. The town hall documents overall really helped us to piece together the history of building development of Victor Schools.

Websites:

<http://www.victorschools.org/> This is the Victor Central Schools Website which we used to find a current campus map which we printed off the website. This was the final piece of our project which shows how big our campus is today.