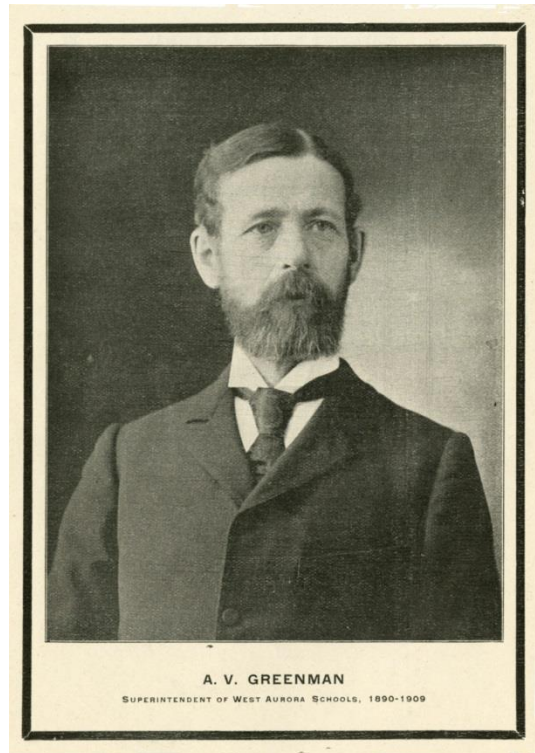


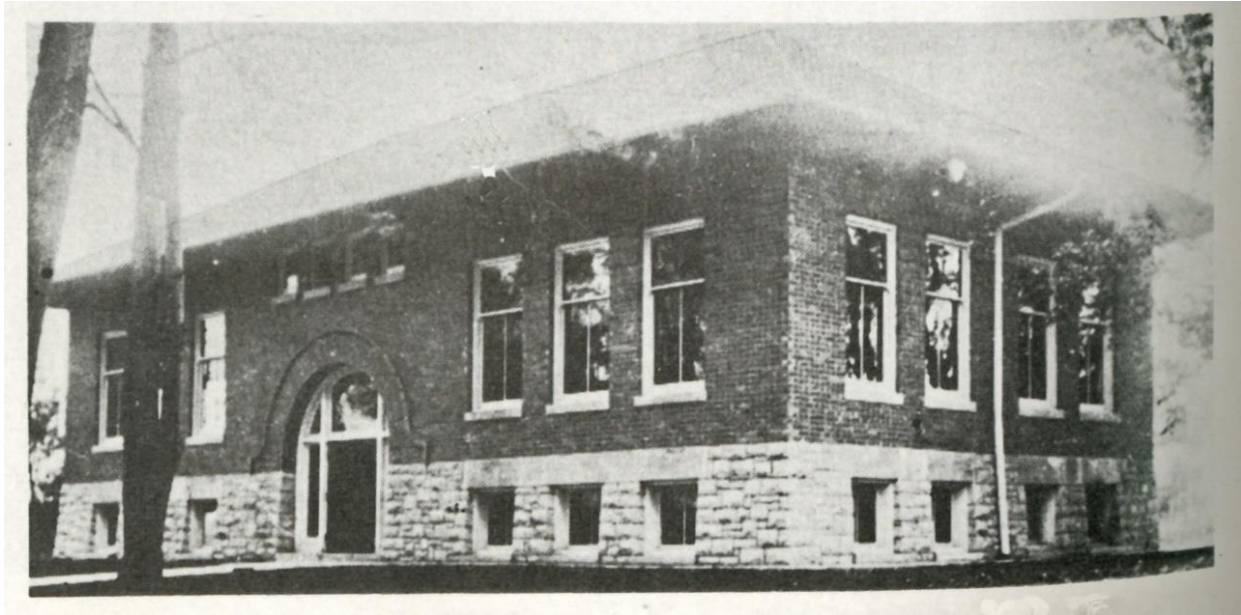
West Aurora Schools

A.V. Greenman

(Superintendent 1890-1909)



A.V. Greenman Elementary School
729 West Galena Boulevard, Aurora
Named Galena Street School until 1916
Photo from 1917 Board of Education Report



**Galena Street School opened 1906
Building expansion 1913
Named for A.V. Greenman 1916**



Preparing for demolition of Greenman School 2004



Demolition of Greenman School 2004



New Greenman School 2004
One block north of original school

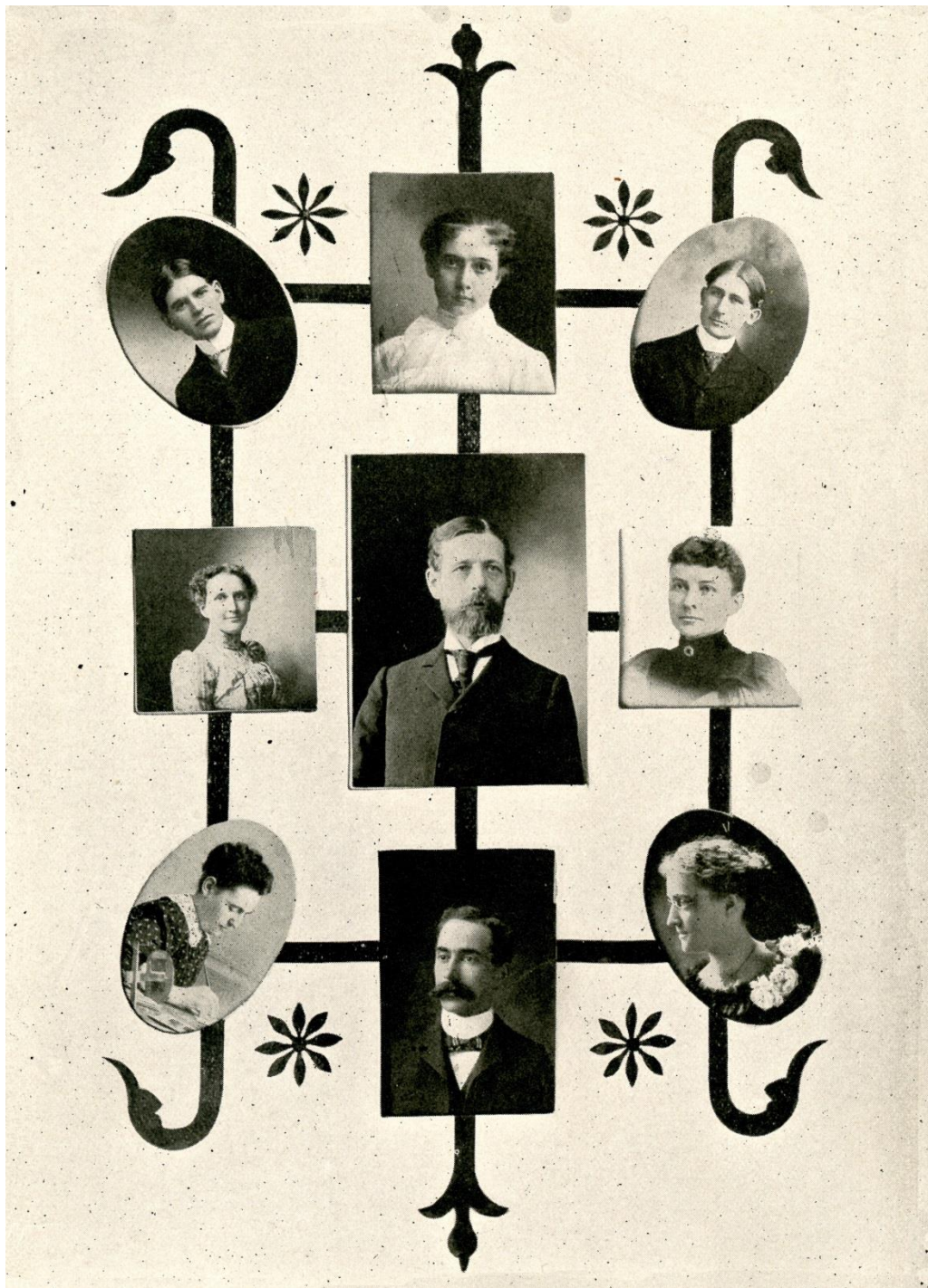


A.V. Greenman 1907



West Aurora Cemetery

Superintendent Greenman and High School Teachers 1900



C.C. Bassett

Jessie Mighell

C.H. Woolbert

Katherine Reynolds

A.V. Greenman

Mary A. Todd

M. Johnson

G.W. Strobel

Emma S. Miller

Profile of A.V. Greenman

Personal Life

Professor Arthur V. Greenman (1852-1909) was born in Leonardsville, New York on July 3, 1852. At the age of three, he moved with his parents (J.V. and Eurette Greenman) to Milton, Wisconsin.

His father died when Greenman was eleven. A.V. was educated in the public schools and the college at Milton. He became a teacher in the district schools in Wisconsin after college.

He taught for four years at Davis Junction, Illinois and four years at Creston, Illinois. He then was connected with the Rochelle public schools for six years.

In 1890, he came to Aurora to serve as superintendent of the West Aurora Schools and remained in that position until his untimely death of typhoid fever on October 6, 1909. He was fifty-seven years old. Greenman was the longest serving superintendent in the history of the West Aurora Schools (nineteen years).

Former superintendents Frank Hall and J.H. Freeman were honorary pallbearers at the funeral service held at New England Congregational Church on Galena Boulevard. The Aurora Beacon-News reported that classes were dismissed at both the West and East Aurora Schools so that the students could be given the opportunity “to look upon the face of their friend for the last time.”

The board of education and teachers of the West Aurora Schools met at the high school just west of the church on Galena Boulevard and marched together to the funeral. Several of Greenman’s poems were read at the service.

Although Greenman had suffered from frail health for many years, he made every effort to overcome those challenges. In 1894, the Aurora Beacon-News reported: “Professor Greenman may now be seen grasping the handle bars of a new pneumatic bicycle. The professor presents quite an imposing figure when mounted on his wheel. But he can ride.”

Due to his experiences with health issues, he stressed that children should have strong bodies as well as strong minds. For this reason he was always enthusiastic over football, basketball and other high school sports. He even insisted on a well-equipped gymnasium at the new high school on Blackhawk Street.

He was greatly loved by the children, teachers, media and members of the community. He also enjoyed the complete confidence of the board of education.

Mr. Greenman was survived by his wife Katharine (Catherine in some sources) Calkins Greenman, who was a native of New York, and by their daughter Ella. The Greenmans lived on Galena Street (now Galena Boulevard) and were members of New England Congregational Church in Aurora. Greenman is buried in the West Aurora Cemetery.

Professional Life

Greenman has been identified as one of the most effective leaders for the district. During his tenure, enrollment in the schools increased dramatically from more than 800 to nearly 1,500 students.

He was a progressive educator who gave much attention to the study of child development. And, he introduced the elements of natural science into the grades below high school.

Seven months after he was hired, the 1864 Branch School was destroyed by fire. This school was located on South Lake Street between Prairie and Gale Streets. Under Greenman's guidance, the school was replaced by a new building on Lake Street – several blocks south of the original. This building was dedicated in 1891 and named the South Lake Street School. It later was renamed the Abraham Lincoln Elementary School. The school was closed in 2008.

In 1902, the district name was changed from West Division District No. 4 to West Aurora School District 129 to conform to a new state law that reassigned district numbers to the public schools to assist tax collectors. The new name continues to this day.

In spite of the numerous additions to the district's schools, the need for a separate high school was apparent. In 1906, the new West Aurora High School was dedicated. It was located at the corner of Blackhawk Street and Galena Street (now Boulevard). The three-story building was considered one of the outstanding structures in Illinois.

In the 1906 Annual Report of the Board of Education, the board expressed regret that a much needed grammar school (Galena Street School) had yet to be built for the residents of the Downer Place Addition due to the obligations incurred in the building of the high school. The report indicated that a new grade school would be constructed by the end of 1906.

However, two other independent sources date the construction of the building to 1895, which may have been the date the school received permission from the State of Illinois to erect a school on the site. Regardless of the conflicting dates, the Galena Street School was indeed constructed to serve the western portion of the district.

In 1906, Greenman coped with a fire that partially destroyed the Oak Street School. During the renovation, some of the elementary students temporarily used an empty classroom at the new high school and some found space in neighboring churches. By mid-1907, reconstruction of the school was completed. The Oak Street School was renamed the Mary A. Todd School in the 1922-23 school year.

During Greenman's tenure, three new schools were constructed: South Lake Street School (later renamed the Abraham Lincoln Elementary School), Galena Street School (later named for A.V. Greenman) and West Aurora High School. In addition, Greenman oversaw the renovation of two existing schools: Pennsylvania Avenue School (later named for Nancy L. Hill) and Oak Street School (later named for Mary A. Todd).

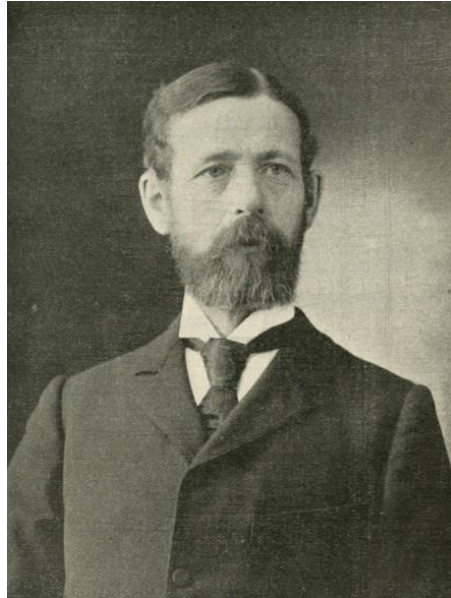
Also during his term as superintendent, the educational requirements for teachers were upgraded to ensure the development of the most professional staff possible. And, the curriculum was revamped at both the elementary and high school level. Excellence in education became the hallmark of Greenman's term of service.

To demonstrate Greenman's penchant for excellence, the final eleven weeks of school in 1897 were devoted to the study of Virgil, Cicero, Nepos, Shakespeare, Edmund Burke, Joseph Addison and George Eliot. And, that was merely a prelude for the high school students' summer readings!

In 1905, West Aurora High School became a member of the North Central Association of Colleges and Secondary Schools – a significant honor for the district.

According to the Educational History of Illinois, "Greenman was a progressive, earnest educator who gave much attention to his community and to every organization with which he was connected. He introduced the study of nature into the elementary grades. He was interested in the youngest and oldest."

Sources for this profile: West Aurora Schools, Aurora Beacon-News, Frances Jean O'Brien's "A Study of Aurora Schools (1835-1935)" and the Educational History of Illinois. The Annual Report of the Board of Education for 1917 indicated that the Galena Street School was renamed for A.V. Greenman in November of 1916. This profile, completed in 2016, is courtesy of the A+ Foundation for West Aurora Schools and the Community Foundation of the Fox River Valley.



A.V. Greenman

In 2016, the A+ Foundation for West Aurora Schools and the Community Foundation of the Fox River Valley collaborated in the development of biographical profiles of those for whom District 129 schools are named. Financial support for the project was provided by the following Special Friends of West Aurora School District 129: Sherry Eagle, Gary and Mary Jewel, Neal and Mary Clark Ormond, Char and Frank Voris, and Brent and Jean Wadsworth. The research, writing and editing of these profiles were courtesy of the Community Foundation and its President Emeritus Sharon Stredde, Research Associate Judith Iverson and Past Chairman of the Board Neal Ormond III.



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