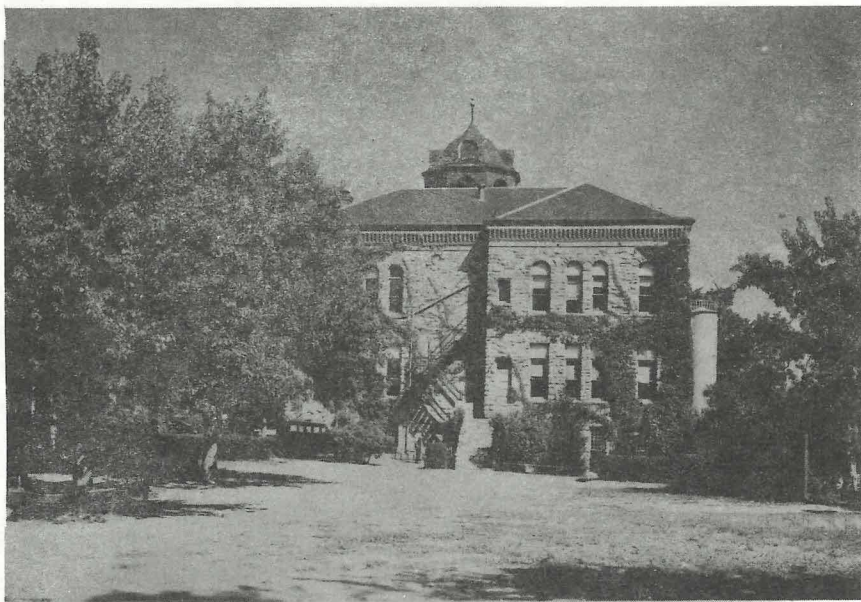


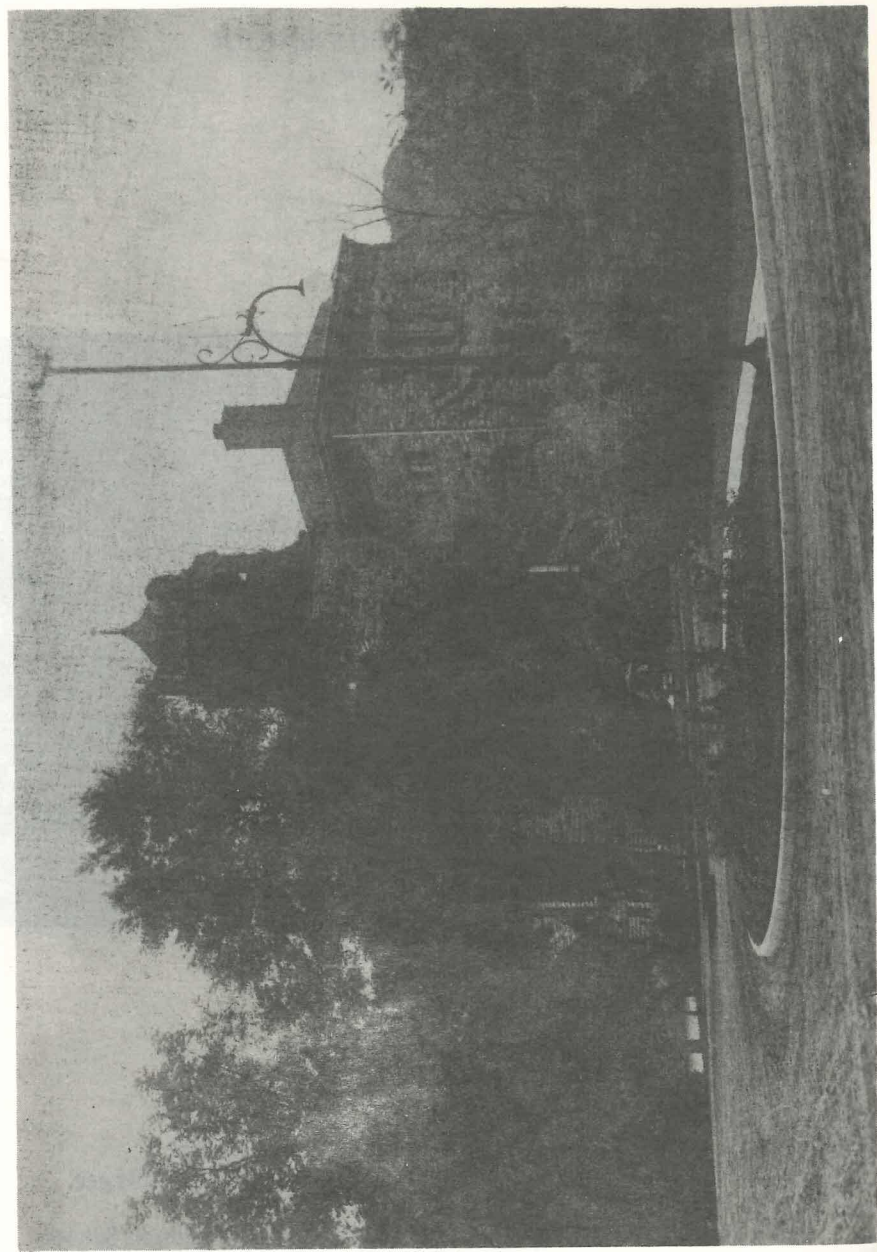
# History of Mapleton School

*HISTORY OF MAPLETON SCHOOL*  
*Boulder, Colorado*



text by Phyllis Smith  
cover drawing by Karmen Effenberger

published for the benefit of Mapleton School  
Vocational Technical Center 1975





## History of Mapleton School

Before 1888, Mapleton Hill was windswept with few homes and no sidewalks. Mapleton Avenue, known as Hill Street, was unpaved and had no trees; Ninth was not a through street. The school's site was known as Squires' pasture; there was a small fenced stone house on the property, and to the west was a small wooden house. Legally, this was Lot No. 152, the Tourtelotte and Squires addition, Mr. Squires and Mr. Tourtelotte surely being Boulder's first developers. Those who established the University of Colorado briefly considered this land as a site for the new university but rejected it as being too far out of the way.

The Hill was a favorite spot for bobsleds and "jumpers," which were made from a whiskey barrel stave with a crosspiece nailed on as a seat for the sledder. Boys enjoyed themselves by cutting willow branches from along Farmers' Ditch, molding the clay soil into clods at the ends of the branches, and firing away at passersby. Boulder children ran barefoot in summer despite mule, horse and chicken droppings everywhere.

Boulder was settled in 1859. In the summer of the next year, Abner Brown came through town on his way to a quartz mine at Gold Hill. Brown was a teacher from Illinois and noted the number of children of school age as he went toward the canyon. He returned in two weeks' time, rented one half of a cabin downtown for \$10 a month (the other half being occupied by a family), and started a private school for forty youngsters, calling it Pioneer School. Students paid \$1.50 a month in fees. The room measured 12 by 20 feet and, after three months, Mr. Brown closed the school because the space was too small.

Seeing a growing school population, the townspeople of Boulder built the first school building in the Territory in October, 1860, on the site of former Central School (now a parking lot across from the U.S. Post Office on Walnut Street). Marinus Smith donated the land and most materials were also donated, including picture frame glass for the windows. The building was 24 by 36 feet and was built of logs cut in the mountains at a recently established sawmill. These logs achieved a certain fame when Captain David Nichols engaged in a fist fight to keep the logs for the school. He had cut the lumber and gone back to Boulder to get a rig to carry the logs back to town. Downed lumber belonged to those who found it, and a man was about to carry it off when Captain Nichols returned to the mountains. They fought and the Captain won.

The school building cost \$1200 to build and Mr. Brown was again the teacher. The ladies of Boulder gave a "gold dust" party and raised \$42 to buy a suit of clothes for Brown to wear while teaching. It was not unusual for Arapahoe Indians to wander into the school from time to time and listen to the instruction. This private school operated until 1872. Again, overcrowding caused change and the building was sold to Mr. Arnett, who moved it to 11th and Walnut where it burned down in later years.

Where the log school had originally stood, Central School was built in 1872 at a cost of \$15,000. Constructed of stone and brick, it lasted for 100 years. It was enlarged in 1876 to seven rooms and housed 720 students. The building was razed in the early 1970's. The incident was a

stimulus toward the creation of Historic Boulder, as it distressed history-minded citizens.

As growth continued, Pine Street School (now Whittier) was built in 1882 with Mr. William V. Casey as one of its earlier principals. Mr. Casey (after whom the Junior High School was named) somehow got involved in the bond issues of the day and criticized Superintendent N.B. Webb, who, in turn, reported a "falling off in the standard of Mr. Casey's class." Superintendent Webb, a Civil War veteran, taught history with a handy spittoon in his classes. In 1884, Mr. Casey's brother Robert graded the classrooms of Pine Street School, that is, separated children by grade level in individual classrooms, a radical innovation.

William Casey was principal of Pine Street School from 1885 to 1888, and was then elected as County Superintendent, serving two terms until 1894. He became Boulder Superintendent of Schools that year and served in that post for over forty years.

Boulder's earliest school district was formed in 1863 with Marinus Smith as president, C.W. Smith as treasurer and A.J. Macky as its secretary. The collection of school taxes was extremely difficult, as the men in the community went off to Leadville and other mines to make a living, leaving their wives and children in Boulder. Many children were here to go to school but their fathers were seldom here to pay their taxes.

By 1876 the University of Colorado had established its Preparatory School and Boulder residents were using it to such an extent that citizens around the state were critical. There were hard feelings expressed: Boulder was using the University for its high school. Thus, in 1888 when Mapleton School was built, Boulder established a high school of its own and it was housed there along with the elementary students and the Superintendent's office.

Mapleton School was long in developing. In 1887, a \$20,000 bond issue was proposed and passed with 56 in favor and 2 against. Half of this money went to Pine Street School and the other half was designated for construction of a new school. An architect was hired to draw up plans for the school; he refused to do so for such a low budget of \$10,000. With the decision to use stone construction, higher costs were anticipated and, in 1888, another bond was proposed for \$25,000; 191 said yes and 113 said no.

Frank Lent of Colorado Springs was hired as architect and his first problem was that the lowest bidder would not sign a contract. The next lowest, Roerig Brothers, signed at \$14,750, started the school's construction, and then stopped. A newspaper article of the day refers to shoddy building of the foundation. Mr. Lent was called back to solve the construction problems, and work started again in December of 1888. Building continued until May when it stopped again. The School Board stopped payment to both the architect and the contractor and both quit. In July of 1889, Mr. Lent changed his mind and the contractor started to build again. In August, the contractor quit again, charging low pay as the reason. This time sub-contractors were hired for painting, carpentry and finishing touches.

On September 12, 1889, Mapleton School, not really finished, opened its doors to 250 students and immediately became overcrowded.





*An elementary class, probably early 1900's.*

Grades 1, 3, 5 and 6 plus a combined 9th and 10th grade high school were housed in the school. Thus, high school students in 1889 could choose CU's Preparatory School on campus or elect to go to Mapleton "where a sort of a high school was run." (Replier, F.O.: *As A Town Grows*. 1959) The ninth and tenth grades were separated in 1890. Superintendent E.L. Byington had his offices in the building; he was also principal of the high school and taught one of the high school levels. As he led parties of citizens through the new school, they noted the poor condition of Hill Street; consequently, the Board of Education found \$300 to grade the street.

The school was finally completed in March of 1890 at a cost of \$16,111.93. There were additional expenditures of \$1000 for furniture and \$2,844 for privies located on the 8th Street side of the property. At that time Mapleton School stood in lonely splendor facing Old Main of the University of Colorado across Boulder Creek.

Since there were too many students for the space, a store on 13th Street was rented for an additional first grade. Later, in 1892, the basement of First Congregational Church was used for a first grade.

Before 1889, teachers were paid on an A, B, or C basis. A was "excellent" at \$70 monthly, B was "needs improvement" at \$65, and C was "quality unknown" at \$50. One year's experience was required. The principal was paid \$100 a month. Students paid \$1 in monthly fees in 1st, 2nd and 3rd grades, and \$1.50 in the later grades. Corporal punishment was the rule; special discipline cases were referred to the Board of Education. There were segregated playgrounds, one for the boys and one for the girls.

The public schools handbook for 1889 expressed the view that "teachers are expected to be so thoroughly prepared in their work as to be able to conduct recitations without a text-book in hand; especially should this be the case in Grammar, Arithmetic, Geography, Algebra, History, Civil Government, General Lessons, Physiology, Physics, Geology, Geometry and Chemistry. No teacher can teach well who is a slave to the text-book."

1892 found Boulder expanding quickly. People were coming for gold and other minerals and also for their health. Many of the older homes on the Hill have a northeast-oriented "sanitarium," a cold room where the sickly slept to regain their vigor. The 200 silver maples planted in 1890 along Hill Street were now four feet high. By 1895 there was a building boom on Mapleton Hill, and the few small houses there were torn down to make way for the grand homes of the period. The school now had all elementary grades except grade 7. With the expansion of the University of Colorado, more Boulderites wished to prepare for university work. Room for high school students became a greater problem and, in 1893, the high school was moved to the top floor of Highland School, built two years before for \$8,000. The Superintendent's offices remained at Mapleton until 1907; Mr. Casey's office hours were 8 to 9 a.m. and 4 to 4:30 p.m. daily.

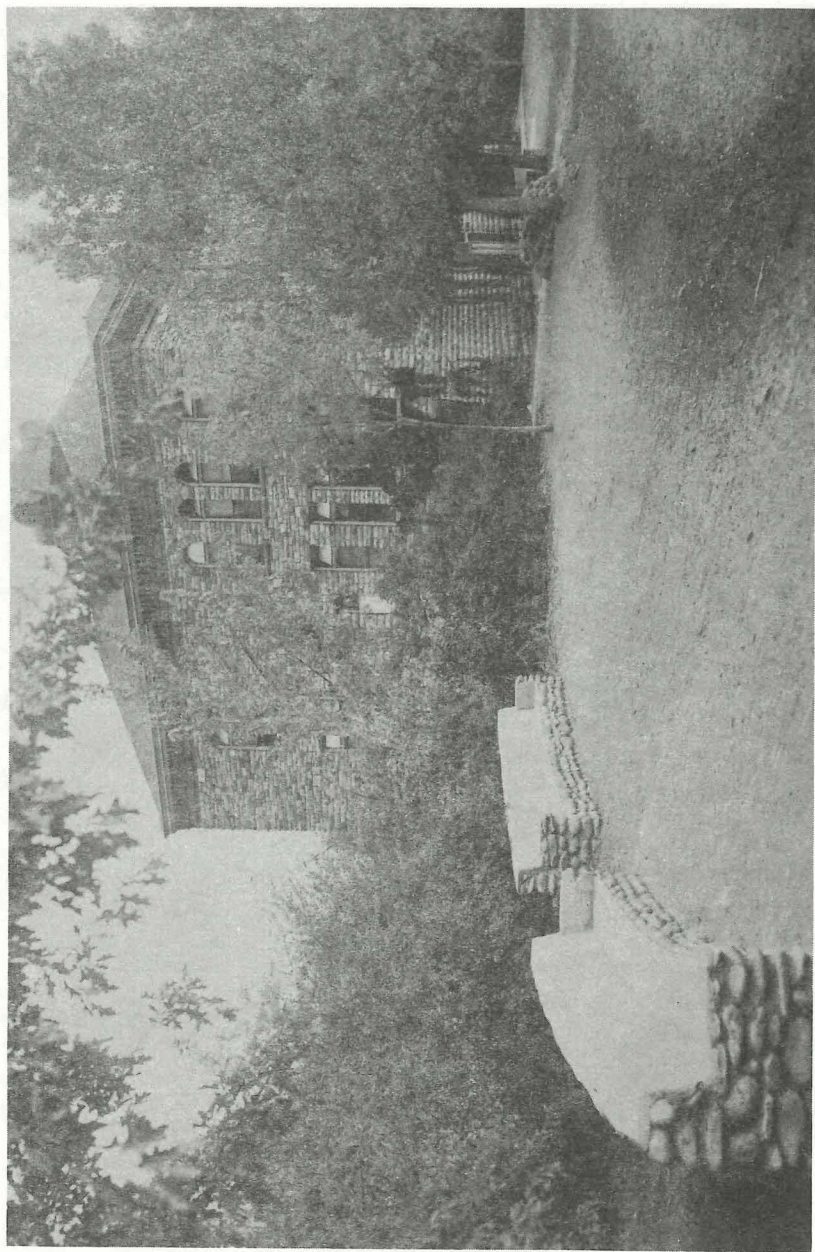
Salaries improved after 1889 and teachers received \$60 per month for the first four months' probation, with \$65 monthly for the rest of the year.





*An elementary class, probably 1906.*





*The cobblestone benches look the same today. What is missing is the greenery.*

They earned \$70 a month for the second year and, upon reaching the third year, could receive a merit raise to \$75. Substitute teachers were paid \$3 daily. Rules were published with express lines of conduct for students, teachers, the janitor, the principal and the superintendent. We can look back on Rule No. 28 with some interest. "No teacher shall read or allow to be read any advertisement, or allow any advertisement to be distributed in school or on the school premises, except such as may refer to entertainments for the schools. No agent or messenger shall be allowed to announce any public entertainment nor shall anyone take up the time of the school by lectures of any kind without the consent of the Superintendent." (*Manual of the Public Schools*, 1895 — 96)

Included in this early handbook were the "Seven Laws of Teaching," probably written by Mr. Casey:

1. Know thoroughly and familiarly whatever you would teach.
2. Gain and keep the attention of your pupils, and excite their interest in the subject.
3. Use language which your pupils fully understand, and clearly explain every new word required.
4. Begin with what is already known, and proceed to the unknown by easy and natural steps.
5. Excite the self-activities of the pupils, and lead them to discover the truth for themselves.
6. Require the pupils to restate fully and correctly in their own language, and with their own proofs and illustrations, the truth taught them.
7. Review, review, REVIEW carefully, thoroughly, repeatedly with fresh consideration and thought.

First graders learned to print and to write script at the same time they were learning to read. Punctuation and capital letters were introduced at that level. "Allow no writing with the left hand unless physical deformity makes it impossible for the pupils to write with the right hand." Roman numerals were introduced early and each pupil worked with a slate. In third grade, youngsters were introduced to the adjective and adverb and learned geography and hygiene.

Grade eight included the study of Hygenic Physiology and U.S. History; "Rip Van Winkle" was required reading. In high school, the first year of the classical curriculum covered Latin, algebra, civil government, rhetoric, English literature. During the second year, Latin and Greek, geometry, history and literature were studied. At the third year level, the subjects were geography and history of Greece and Rome, a review of grammar and arithmetic, English history and literature. Fourth year's curriculum rounded out to Latin, Greek, trigonometry, botany and geology. A scientific curriculum included physics, French and German. Many students undertook both the classical and the scientific curricula.



Teachers were required to keep attendance rosters; upon reading through these rosters one finds familiar last names — Paddock, Fonda, Potter, Faurot, Firstbrook, Tanner, McInnes, MacKenzie, Bergheim, Sternberg, Coulehan, Arnett, Ardourel — families who have remained in this area and some, indeed, in this neighborhood.

The janitor was instructed to raise the flag for the following holidays; Lincoln's birthday, Washington's birthday, Longfellow's birthday (February 27), Arbor Day (3rd Friday in April), School Board election (first Monday in May), Decoration Day, last day of school, July 4, opening day, Discovery of America (October 12), Bryant's birthday (November 3), and Whittier's birthday (December 17). In 1901, Dewey Day, May 1, was added to the list and in 1907 Flag Day, June 14, was added.

In 1897, in the style and spirit of Boulder civic controversy, the Seventh Day Adventists, after a solid fight, caused the Board of Education to order removal of the word "God" from the flag salute. They held that the word "God" tended toward a union between church and state. Superintendent Casey sent out a memo to the teachers instructing them to lead the children in a salute to the flag by saying, "We give our heads and our hearts to our country, one language, one country, one flag."

A faculty roster of Mapleton's first year listed Miss Grace Taylor in high school, Miss L.E. Lamb in 6th grade, Miss M.B. Johnson in 5th grade, Miss E. Carpenter in 3rd grade and Miss A.B. Chamberlain in first grade. Mr. Byington was listed as high school principal and W.W. Remington as elementary school principal in 1891. With the exception of widows, no married women were allowed to teach school. Probably there was an economic reason (no married woman should take the job of someone who had to earn a living), but also there was the widely held view that married women had no business outside the home.

The 1895 faculty included Miss Susan M. Lovelace as principal and teacher of grade 8; Miss Josephine Lee, grade 6; Miss Florence Wilder and Miss Lizzie Milnamow, grade 5; Miss Ida Fonda, grade 4; Miss Katharine Armstrong, grade 3 (future principal); Miss Georgina Rowland, grade 2 (also a future principal); and Miss Anna Scovill, grade 1. There was one substitute teacher and directors of art and music.

Susie Lovelace came from Canada in 1890 and started her teaching career by teaching fifth grade at Mapleton. For the next two years she taught 5th and 7th grades at Highland School as principal and teacher, returning to become Mapleton's principal in 1893. In 1899 she ran for County Superintendent and finished a close second. With the exception of one year, she remained Mapleton's principal until 1924, at which time she applied to become the first principal of North Side Intermediate School (now Casey Junior High School). It was contended that North Side's first principal should hold advanced academic degrees, but Boulder citizens and friends of Miss Lovelace prevailed, and she was given the appointment. She remained there until her retirement in 1936; she died in Boulder at the age of 88.

It would seem that Miss Lovelace was universally respected, not only as a teacher and principal, but also as an interesting person. Miss Jessie Fitzpatrick, retired principal of Whittier School, who attended Mapleton



*Miss Susan M. Lovelace,  
Principal, 1893—1924  
courtesy  
Boulder Daily Camera*

School as a little girl, remembers Miss Lovelace with great respect. Miss Fitzpatrick recalls that, during recess, if Miss Lovelace would lean out of the second story window and clap her hands three times, all activity would cease and quiet prevail. Miss Lovelace walked each morning to Mapleton School from her residence on Broadway, always wearing an immense hat on her red hair, with something green for decoration and several feet of veiling or tulle flowing behind her. She always walked and stood in regal fashion.

Leverett Chapin, reminiscing in the *Denver Post*, December 11, 1960, says of Miss Lovelace: "Susie was a large woman with a



tremendous shock of red hair and a bellow like a drill sergeant. But she was a good teacher, all business and completely devoted to the idea of developing any glimmering of intelligence she might find in any youngster who chanced her way."



*Miss Georgina Rowland, 1st grade teacher, principal 1932*

*courtesy*

*Boulder Daily Camera*



*Miss Rowland and friends on a mountain outing.*

Miss Lovelace and her students are responsible for the building of the stone fountain on the 9th and Mapleton corner of the school, probably in 1906. During summers she would act as hostess for the newly established Chautauqua. The president of Oklahoma A. and M. College at Stillwater visited Boulder and was so impressed with Miss Lovelace that he hired her as Dean of Women of that college during the year 1920 - 21. (Mrs. Florence Dodge became Mapleton's principal in that interim.) However, Miss Lovelace missed Boulder and the following year returned to her Mapleton post.

Miss Lovelace was described in a Chautauqua bulletin as follows: "A loyal and patriotic citizen, typifying all that is best in citizenship and womanhood, Miss Lovelace is universally loved and honored by the citizens of Boulder, as well as by a host of friends and admirers through the county and state with whom she has come in contact in her educational work." She was a leader in every movement to beautify school grounds through landscaping. "Schools taught by Miss Lovelace were always ahead of the procession and their standards of excellence have never been excelled." The Bulletin also described Miss Lovelace as "the indomitable leader and worker, ever raising the standards of service a little higher."

1900 found changes in the neighborhood of Mapleton School. Fine homes lined the streets. The privies were gone because someone complained of the conditions of the "closets," and indoor plumbing was installed. There were eight grades with eight teachers. A truant officer was hired. And, of course, there was the everpresent overcrowding; 6th and 7th grades were jammed with 60 to 70 pupils in each class. Some students



sat on soap boxes for their lessons. In 1903, Washington and Lincoln schools were constructed, taking some burden off the earlier schools.

In 1901 the teachers' attendance books show large absences due to a diphtheria outbreak; also there is evidence of a smallpox outbreak and a massive vaccination program. Telephone service was installed in 1902 with a direct line to the Superintendent's office. Hill Street became Mapleton Avenue in 1902. In a 1903 Board of Education report to the people, 387 seats were listed for Mapleton School with 443 students in attendance. The cost of education per pupil was listed at \$17.46. In 1908 assistant principals were hired by the Board and one was assigned to Mapleton.

About this time parents made requests of the Board for \$682.50 to improve the school grounds. The Board gave them \$300. The grounds of the school property gradually sloped down toward the Ditch. Miss Lovelace was most interested in competitive athletics and saw the sloping ground as detrimental to ball games, so the \$300 was used to level the land and build a retaining wall just north of Farmers' Ditch.

The course of study gives us a glimpse of school life of that day. In first grade, selections to be memorized included Eugene Field's "Little Boy Blue," Tennyson's "What Does Little Birdie Say?" and Phillip Brooks' "God Bless Our Native Land." Bible stories were studied and memorized at each level.

The second grade learned by heart Longfellow's "The Children's Hour" and "September" by Helen Hunt Jackson. The third graders learned "Hark, Hark the Lark" (Shakespeare), the Twenty-third Psalm and Longfellow's "Village Blacksmith." The Sermon on the Mount was memorized by the fourth graders together with Whittier's "Barefoot Boy," and by the time a student reached the fifth grade he was expected to



*Miss Katharine Armstrong,  
3rd grade teacher from 1895,  
principal in 1925*

*courtesy  
Boulder Daily Camera*



*Miss Edna Harkins, teacher,  
open air school and 2nd grade  
1912—1936.*

learn Tennyson's "Charge of the Light Brigade," "Barbara Frietchie" by Whittier, and "Columbia, the Gem of the Ocean." A seventh grade devoted itself to "Polonius' Advice to Laertes," Longfellow's "Ladder of St. Augustine," Holmes' "Chambered Nautilus," and Bryant's "Death of the Flowers."

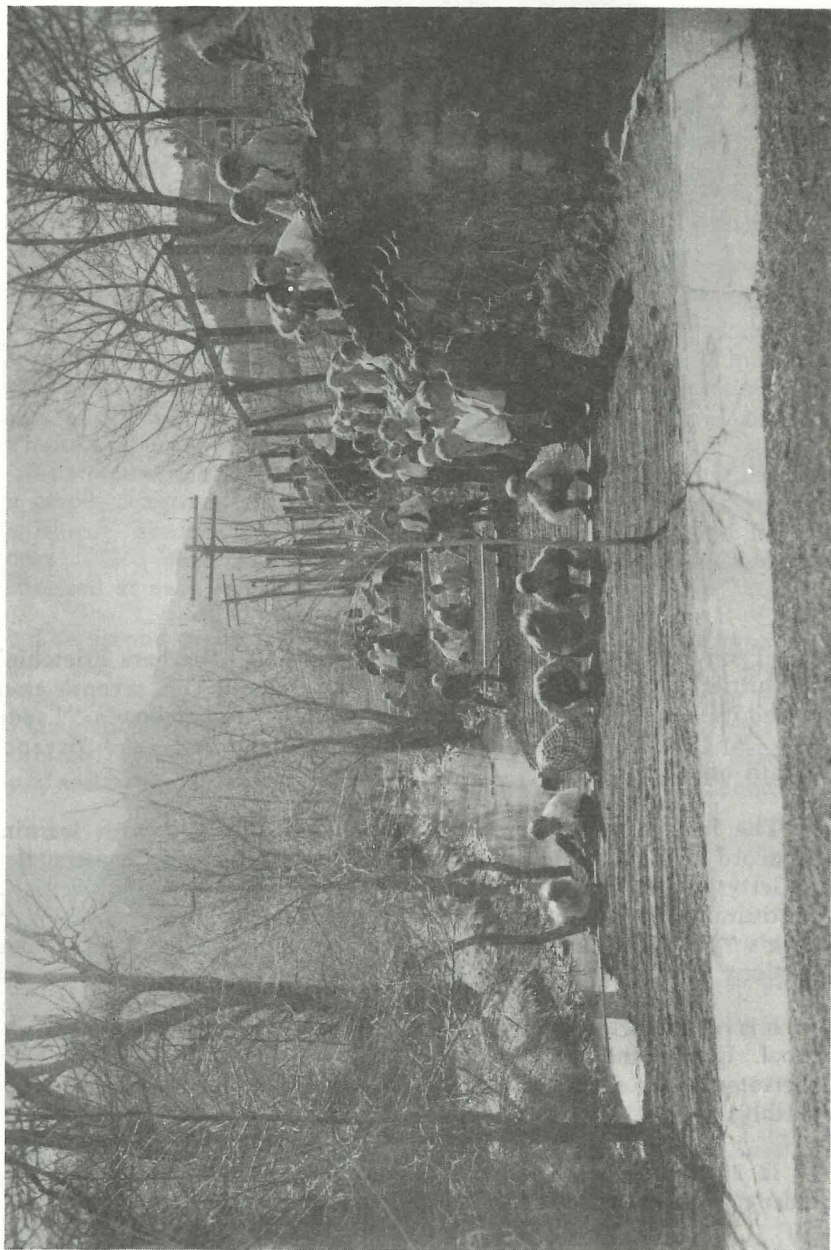
The last year of elementary school was occupied with learning "Concord Hymn" by Ralph Waldo Emerson, Kipling's "Recessional," the Gettysburg Address, Webster's Reply to Hayne, the Preamble to the Constitution, Walt Whitman's "O Captain, My Captain," Julia Ward Howe's "Battle Hymn of the Republic," Bryant's "Thanatopsis," and selections from Walter Scott's "Lady of the Lake."

It is hard to believe that in 1914 there were 734 students in Mapleton School. It was the largest school in the district. In that year the Superintendent's salary was \$2500 yearly; a principal made \$146.66 monthly.

In 1915 there was concern over smoking among the older students. Students asked permission to hold dances; permission was denied.

Controversy over lefthandedness still raged in 1914. Superintendent Casey got very upset when he visited a class and saw a student using his left hand. A few teachers defied this rule but most attempted to force lefthanders to the other hand.





*Mapleton children developing the vegetable garden next to Farmers' Ditch, probably 1914.*



*Dancing around the Maypole.*

Teachers' registrars became very important documents during the early years of the war. Parents would lower the age of their teenage sons in order to escape military service and teachers' records were brought into court to prove the boys were of military age.

Mapleton School made a unique contribution to the World War I effort in the form of a victory garden. Miss Lovelace, Miss Edna Harkins, and others, including the children, grew vegetables along the bank of Farmers' Ditch at the southern end of the property in the flat area adjacent to the retaining wall built by Miss Lovelace. Stone steps led to the garden from either end of the property. At 4 a.m. Miss Harkins and others were there picking, washing, dressing and tying the vegetables for sale to the Mapleton neighborhood.

Miss Edna Harkins, second grade teacher, taught at Mapleton School for 24 years, in a teaching career spanning 56 years. A native of Illinois, Miss Harkins and her fellow teachers were responsible for the planting of many trees, shrubs, and flowers on the property. Notable is a tall tree on the east side of the school, famous for its fall color, planted in honor of Miss Lovelace. Miss Harkins tells the story of how the stone and cement benches were built. Each child brought one cobblestone from home and Miss Harkins, the janitor, and the school children built the benches themselves. An old cylinder-shaped fire escape existed then on the east side of the building, and it was Miss Harkins' job to catch each student as he slid down the fire escape.



