
EARLY PRESCOTT SCHOOLS

The following information comes from a catalogue of the Prescott Public Schools and High School in 1911-12. A copy of this catalogue is in the Nevada County Library.

The high school in 1911-12 was called the Tom Allen High School, named for Thomas Allen, a large landowner at that time who gave one block in the town of Prescott as a location for a public school. A two-story building was constructed on the land, but that building burned in 1901, and for the next year, the town was without a public school. A few private schools had classes during that time.

In 1902, the board decided to erect a two-story brick building on the same lot at a cost of \$15,000 and it was ready for the opening of school in 1903. By 1908, the number of pupils had increased so that additional facilities were needed. A modern brick building was constructed for the first four grades. Within the next two years, a modern high school was erected. The primary and grammar schools occupied an entire city block. The high school was located about twelve blocks from the center of town and had plenty of room for outdoor sports and land for use in teaching farming techniques. Nevada County was largely agricultural at that time.

The faculty consisted of fifteen teachers in 1911-12. Prof. O. L. Dunaway had served as superintendent for the last eight years.

The course of study was laid out in the school catalogue and it gave what was expected of students in each grade. A student leaving the first grade should be able to make all the letters of the alphabet, to write his name well, to write his post office address, to write the name of his township, county, and state, to write the names of familiar objects, to write a long list of words from reading lessons, and to write short sentences using period, question mark, capital letters, etc. where needed. They must learn all possible combinations of numbers from 1 to 12, be able to count by 2's, 3's, 4's, and 5's to 100. They must do simple arithmetic problems like addition, subtraction, and division.

Second grade students learned pronunciation, spelling, writing, and grammar. They also did nature studies in each season of the year. During the autumn months, they studied local birds like the blue jay and sparrow and migratory birds. They also studied the dog, cat, horse, pig, and rabbit. In winter, they studied birds that remained in the area with a detailed study of the robin. They studied the sheep, the goat, the rat, and the reindeer. In spring, they studied migratory birds going north. Special attention was made to the goose, duck, and crow. They observed Bird Day and learned about John James Audubon. Children brought fruits to school and they learned about canning and drying fruit and how to prepare foods for storage during the winter months.

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In the third grade, students improved skills previously learned, concentrating on spelling, language, arithmetic, penmanship, nature study, drawing, and geography. They were required to make a map of the school yard.

The catalogue specified which textbooks were to be used in each grade. By the fourth grade, students were introduced to writing with pen and ink. They also studied physiology in grade four.

In the fifth grade, students had to write a composition of not less than 200 words each month. More advanced problems in arithmetic and longer words to spell were introduced.

Sixth and seventh grades included more of the same, but Elementary Agriculture was introduced in the seventh grade.

High school courses taught included agriculture, business methods, Latin, civil government, domestic science, ancient history, zoology, botany, modern history, chemistry, German or French, physics, geometry along with English in each grade.

Training in agriculture was a big part of the high school curriculum. A farm of 30 acres adjacent to the school was used for demonstrating farming techniques. Studies were made of cotton, corn, garden crops, orchards, and animal husbandry.

A manual training course was included in which students learned about the use of tools, woodworking, how to sharpen tools, and basic carpentry.

In the domestic science course, girls learned how to manage the home, preparation of foods, sewing projects, home nursing, home decoration, and artistic dress.

Responsibilities of the Teachers

Teachers must be familiar with the subject and were warned not to infringe on the work of a grade higher than their own or to require students to purchase material not approved by the board. They were asked to make personal visits to the homes of the students. They were warned to not introduce any sectarian, religious, or partisan political views into the classroom. They were to impress upon the students the need for cleanliness of their person and dress and to refrain from using tobacco and slang or impure language. They were responsible for maintaining discipline in their classrooms using kind and persuasive methods, and if those failed, to resort to punishment "sufficient to suppress the evil". Teachers could keep students after school who failed to complete necessary work during the school day. They were to notify parents if their child was absent or tardy. Two cases of tardiness counted as one-half day's absence.

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Rules for Pupils

Grammar school students could attend free of charge, but high school students had to pay \$2.50 per month tuition. Pupils were required to “render perfect and willing obedience to those having authority over them”. Pupils were not to deface buildings, fencing, or furniture and if found guilty of such, would be subject to severe punishment or even suspension or prosecution. Parents were liable for all damage done to school property by their children under 21 years of age. A parent who objected to the use of corporal punishment upon their children must notify the principal in writing at the beginning of the school year. Such pupils were suspended instead and could only be readmitted by the principal.

Pupils were required to keep their desks neat and clean. If a student failed to obey the rules and it appeared hopeless that they would change, the student’s parents were asked to withdraw him from school and if the parents failed to do so, the student was suspended. Students were subject to be suspended if they missed two consecutive days, three days in one week, or six days in one month unless they had a satisfactory excuse. Pupils were not allowed to bring to school any papers, periodicals, novels, or books other than their textbooks. Pupils were not allowed to bring to school any firearms, fireworks, or bows and arrows.

In cases of infectious or contagious diseases, the patient and all pupils coming from that house or houses adjacent to it were not allowed in school until a certificate was brought from the Board of Health that all danger was past.

The pupil ranking highest in attendance, deportment, and scholarship in the graduating class was declared valedictorian and the next in rank was salutatorian. Pupils were required to make an average of not less than 75% in order to pass to the next grade.

The school had two literary societies—the Garlands and the Zeniths, and students were encouraged to participate.

ALUMNI FROM 1905 TO 1911 (1908 was not listed)

1905

Charles Tompkins
Wayne Dinwiddie
Dee Davenport
Wren Scott
Lois McKay
Abbie Hale

1906

Berta Pittman
Respass Wilson
Irvin Blakely

Arthur Sykes
Sidney Duke

1907

Culen Wylie
Walter Hirst
Winnie Haynie
Adam Guthrie
Jean Hatley
Clyde Sykes
Berta Britt

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1909

Claude Newth
Mabel Hale
Mary Milburn
Bessie Vaughan

1910

Ellis Butcher
Dexter Bush
Ruth Hilliard
Oscar Munn
Hudson Steele
Winnie Young
Lovilla White

1911

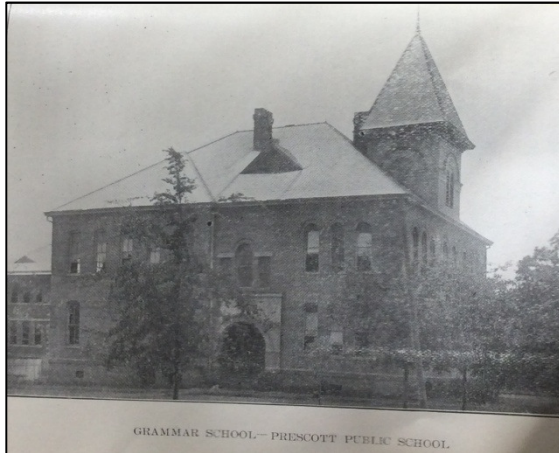
Ida Dillon
Lizzie Hale
Ethel Bailey
Martin Guthrie
Emmond Logan
Frank Brock
Ola Munn
Linnie Wylie
Chester Munn
Vernon Stephens
Leonard Hamby
Saxon Regan

BUSINESSES THAT ADVERTISED IN THE SCHOOL CATALOGUE IN 1911-12

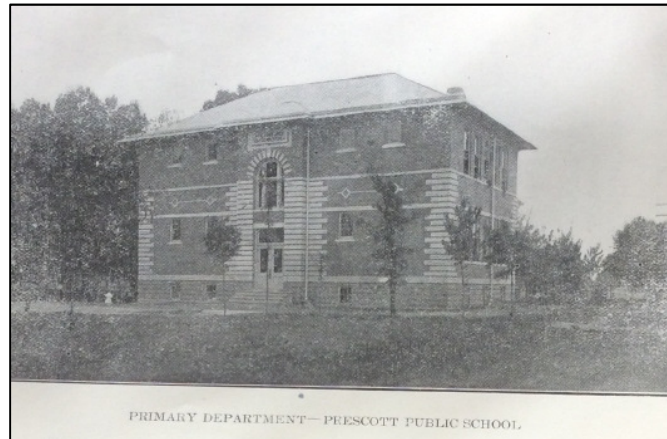
Bank of Prescott
W. B. Waller General Merchandise (the oldest mercantile business in Prescott)
Moore & Martin (real estate)
McDaniel Hardware
Hesterly Drug Store
Green & Milwee (real estate and immigration agents)
Ozan Mercantile
Prescott Hardware Co.
New Supply Co. (dry goods, hats, notions, boots, shoes)
R. P. Arnold (restaurant and confectionery)
Ed. F. Gee & Sons (market)—“our sausage is clean and first class”
The Citizen’s Bank
The News Printing Co.
Douglas Brooks (restaurant and confectionery)—ice cream and lunching parlor
Duke Brothers (dry goods shoes, hats, caps, groceries, feed)
W. J. White & Son (livery, feed, stable)
East and West Side Barber Shops –hot and cold baths
Nevada County Picayune—oldest and biggest paper in the county
Hart’s
The Newth Studio (photography)
Blakely Mercantile (general merchandise)
Fred Murrah (box ball alley, cold drinks, fruits, candy, magazines)
Mrs. M. M. Teal (milliner)
New York Store (clothing, Stetson hats, Florsheim shoes)
H. J. Wilson & Co. (general merchandise)
J. K. Hamilton & Co. (dry goods, groceries, country produce bought and sold)
J. M. Duke (staple and fancy groceries)

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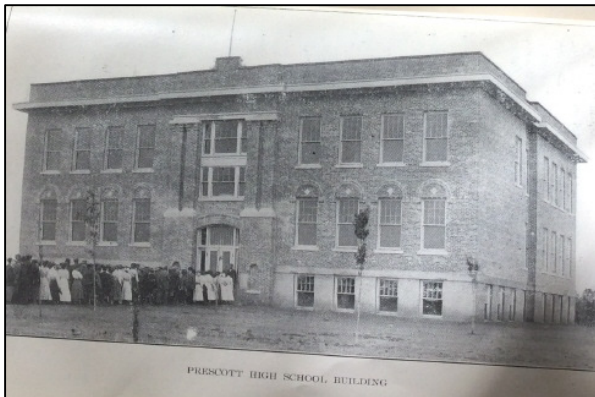
Ozan Lumber Co.
J. B. Jordan (general supplies)
City Market and Bakery
Nevada County Bank (time tried and panic tested)



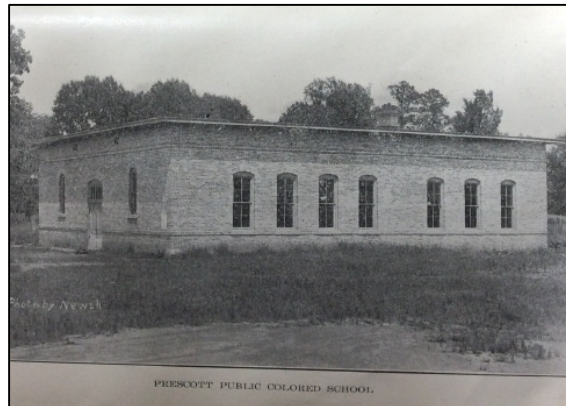
Prescott Grammar School (1911)



Prescott Primary School (1911)



Prescott High School (1911)
Originally called Tom Allen High School



Prescott Public Colored School (1911)

RAINFALL RECORD

January – 4.7 inches February – 6.5 inches March – 12.7 inches

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MY DAD LIKED TO WORK

My dad always liked to work and he chose a job that had plenty of it--cutting and hauling pulpwood or what we called billets. These were short sticks of a tree usually about five to six feet in length. The trees selected were usually the least desirable trees that would never make a good tree for lumber. It is necessary to thin a stand of young pine trees so the good trees will have plenty of room to grow. The diameter of pulpwood sticks could be anywhere from three inches at the small end to a maximum of about 24 inches at the large end. It took a lot of them to make a load on a pulpwood truck. The pulpwood we hauled ended up at the Camden paper mill.

I spent a lot of time helping my dad haul billets when I was a teenager. He was about middle-age when he came up with this idea. He did all the cutting with his big Homelite chain saw. I guess he didn't trust me with such a dangerous tool. My job was to use an ax to cut the small limbs off the sticks that he missed with the saw. When we hauled pulpwood to the wood yard at Gurdon, the sticks had to be a certain length due to being shipped by rail. My job then was to place a measuring stick on the tree so my dad would know exactly where to make each cut.

He knew how many tanks of gas it took in the chain saw to make enough wood for a load. Once he felt we had enough cut, the next job was to cut a road for the truck to get as close to the wood as possible to make loading easier. Our cable on the loader would reach out about 50 or 60 feet. We piled the smaller sticks into bundles and loaded several of them together. Larger sticks had to be loaded separately.

When we first started hauling pulpwood, we didn't have a loader on the truck. We had a hand-operated winch. It was slow, but better than nothing. I remember one time we even used our small Cub tractor to pull some very large sticks up on the truck. It was so much easier when we finally got a loader which operated off the truck engine.

During the loading process, one person had to operate the loader. The controls were on the side of the truck just behind the door. This was a very dangerous job because the sticks could swing around and hit the operator and sometimes they were suspended in the air over the operator's head. The operator had to learn just when to pull and when to not pull to avoid an accident. An amateur loader operator could be a disaster.

Once the truck began to fill up with sticks of pulpwood, a person was needed on top of the load to help swing the load around and place it just right on the truck. That was my job since I was young and could climb easier and my dad operated the loader. When I gave him a signal, he would know to release the cable. There was still some work to do to get the sticks placed correctly on the truck. This was done with a hand-held tool called a billet hook. We wore gloves, but there was still the possibility of a mashed finger or worse doing this job.

If a load of wood had already been cut, a two-person crew could usually load the truck in three or four hours. We tried to get loaded and be out of the woods as early as possible on the hot summer days. Summer brought all kinds of hazards to the job like getting overheated, snakes, ticks, and chiggers.

We were usually still in the woods at noon, and my mother would bring lunch out to us. She

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always made a jug of iced tea which really hit the spot on hot summer days. She kept it cool by putting the jug in a ten pound Goddchaux sugar sack and wrapping a towel around it. Lunch really tasted good after hard work and we usually had some homemade dessert like fried apple pies or a piece of cake.

When the truck was loaded, the next worry was getting out of the woods without getting stuck. Several times we had to unload the wood we had just loaded to get the truck unstuck. That was no fun at all. Many times I crossed my fingers hoping we would make it out with no problems.

Some pulpwood haulers tried to stack every stick they could get on their truck because the more sticks you had, the more money you made. My dad was more conservative about his loads and that suited me just fine. Some haulers had their loads stacked perfectly on the truck with all the ends matching. My dad didn't worry about that. He just wanted it stacked so it would make it to the mill without falling off. A chain or cable was used to bind down the load as it was being transported.

When the load got to the wood yard or mill, it had to be measured to see how many cords of wood were on the truck. A numbered stick was used for this. The driver held the stick at certain places on the side of the load while the wood yard foreman recorded the measurements. Using these measurements, he determined the number of cords on the load and that was used to determine how much money the pulpwood dealer paid the producer. A payment was usually made each week when the tickets were presented for payment.

Sometimes I rode with my dad when he took a load of pulpwood to Gurdon. At that time the bridge over the Little Missouri River was very narrow. You had to drive slow across the bridge and then climb a steep hill. Our old truck had to strain awfully hard to make it up that hill when loaded. Just before reaching Gurdon, there was a little gravel road off the highway that crossed the railroad track. About a half mile from the wood yard, my dad would let me out and I waited in the woods until he got unloaded because passengers under the age of 18 were not allowed on the wood yard property.

My dad spent about fifteen years of his life doing this type work along with farming and raising cattle. I've seen him with his clothes drenched with sweat. One big advantage he enjoyed was being his own boss. The whole family worked together to get the job done, whatever it was. I didn't particularly enjoy all this hard work as a teenager, but looking back I realize it taught me some good lessons. Every time I go into the woods where we once hauled pulpwood, the memories come back of things that happened at a particular spot so many years ago. I remember the spot where the truck got stuck, the spot where we got stung by yellow jackets, and the steep hill the truck was barely able to climb.

My dad hauled his last load of pulpwood when he was seventy years old. The old pulpwood truck was kept around the farm for a while after his death in 1986 and used for any type job that required lifting or pulling something. Sometime later we moved the old truck over in the field behind the house where it remains to this day.

These type trucks were once very common in our part of Arkansas, but the timber industry was changing. Loggers began to haul tree-length pulpwood and the short wood producers gradually

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faded from the scene. The closing of the paper mill in Camden was the final blow for short wood pulpwood producers. Hauling pulpwood was hard work, but provided employment for many small wood producers in south Arkansas while it lasted. Here's a picture of our last pulpwood truck which we bought from Rufus Formby. The truck had a tank on it and was used to deliver Esso gasoline to country stores before we converted it into a pulpwood truck. You can still see the faint sign on the door from the days when it was used to deliver gasoline.



CHOICES

By Jerry McKelvy

As we travel along life's pathway
We are faced with many choices
Some will make their own decisions
And some will listen to other voices

When it comes to Eternity
Our choices are but two
Will we travel with the worldly crowd
Or with the faithful few?

Which road will we travel?
That we must decide
It all depends on where
We wish to eternally reside.

Most decide to follow the crowd
Along the road that's wide
That road leads to destruction
Where the devil and demons abide

Some will make the other choice
And follow the narrow road
Jesus will guide them along
To their heavenly abode.

There are only two roads for us to choose
As we travel along
Be sure to choose the right one
And not the wrong.

Matthew Chapter 7 (KJV)

13--Enter ye in at the strait gate: for wide *is* the gate, and broad *is* the way, that leadeth to destruction, and many there be which go in thereat:

14--Because strait *is* the gate, and narrow *is* the way, which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it.