



Abandoned District School Near Saratoga, Randolph Co., Ind.

This building was sold for \$915 just where it stood. A noted American authority has said in this connection: "No district school building is so good to abandon."

Development of Consolidated School Idea

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noticeable feature being that the roads are kept graded and dragged so as to preserve a uniform properly rounded surface, and so prevent the lodging of water. The statement was made that the movement for consolidation of schools had resulted, in several cases, in substantial road improvement, much to the profit of the communities.

When the present Superintendent of Schools came into office, some seven years ago the agitation for better rural schools was just in its infancy, there being at that time only one or two consolidated schools and 138 district schools in the county. Now there are 20 consolidated school, and two others in course of erection, and when these are completed every township will have at least one high school. In these high schools there were last spring 573 students, of whom 104 were completing the fourth year's course. A noteworthy fact in this connection is that of 161 who entered four years ago, 104 were com-

a total cost of \$93,772.15, or an average of \$15.83 per pupil. Here the curtained wagon has been abandoned and there has been substituted a wagon with permanent sides, the upper part of which consists of moveable windows. In this way, light and ventilation, which are essential to proper conduct and comfort, are secured. At first, some difficulty in the matter of discipline was experienced, but with the introduction of the improved wagons and the exercise of greater care in the selection of competent and trustworthy persons as drivers, that has disappeared.

It was the writer's privilege to see these vans in all the different stages of their rounds and to talk with drivers, pupils and parents. But one opinion was expressed as to their success and efficiency. The children, when seen on the road, arriving at school or leaving at night, either in sunshine or rain, had every appearance of happy contentment, and simply scoffed at the suggestion that

perhaps they would prefer to return to the old plan of walking to school. The average time on the road of children conveyed was 46 minutes. These children are never tardy, instances being quoted in which not a single van had been late during the whole school year, and at one school visited where the enrollment was over 200, and practically all the children used the vans, the average attendance for the school year was 98 per cent. of the enrollment. Here the vans belong to the schools and the drivers furnish the horses, the average cost per day, according to the latest report, was \$2.09 for Randolph county and \$2.94 for the whole state.

Expense

Unfortunately, in all our discussions of educational matters, the question of cost rather than efficiency is the one in the foreground. Could people generally be brought to realize that a poor school is dear at any price and that a thoroughly efficient school, could such be secured, would be cheap at almost any price, it might be possible to eliminate largely this element of cost and plan our schemes for education chiefly on the basis of efficiency.

In any effort to compare the cost of the consolidated school with that of the one-room school, difficulties are encountered that make a comparison almost impossible. For instance, nearly all the consolidated schools of Indiana have a high school department, in which the cost of instruction

is much higher, perhaps in most cases double what it is in the public school departments. Besides, provision is made for the teaching of agriculture, domestic science, and manual training, for which special equipment is required, as well as special teachers in many cases, and this adds greatly to the cost. On the other hand, these subjects are either not taught at all or to a very slight extent in the ungraded schools. Notwithstanding this, the average cost per pupil for tuition alone in all the consolidated schools, including high school teachers and teachers of special subjects, was \$18.45, while in all the other rural schools it was \$18.00. The total cost in the two classes was \$25.64 and \$22.71 respectively. From this it will be apparent that if the extra work were dropped and only the same class of work undertaken, the advantage in

cost would be very greatly in favor of the consolidated schools.

White River Township

Located centrally in Randolph county is the township of White River, the largest township in the county. Seven years ago there were in this township 23 district schools. In 1908, owing to the need for a new building in the western part of the township, a decision was made to erect a building capable of accommodating several district schools, and accordingly a four-room building costing \$14,000 was erected out in the open country. This building, known as the Lincoln school, was opened in 1908 with an attendance of about 40, and the wise heads who were given to prophecy, predicted that it would never serve any other purpose than to stand as a monument to commemorate the folly

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AUCTION SALE OF PURE-BRED STOCK

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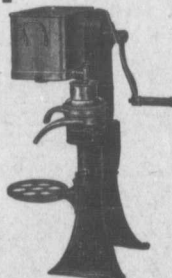
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Wagon Report, No. 4 *Monroe* (See Standard)

1 Time of starting with first child *7:10*
 2 Time of arrival at school *8:20*
 3 Time lost on the road and cause

4 Identification *23*
 5 Attendance *23*
 6 Condition of roads *good*
 7 Department *good*

Date *March 26, John Van Pelt*

Attention is the number of children belonging to the wagon.
 Attention is the number of children present in the wagon.
 (The driver should report any violations and the name of the child causing it under "Department.")

A Specimen Driver's Report.

plotting the full course of four years. Of these 53 boys and 51 girls, 91 or 92 were from farm homes. Inquiry as to what they would probably do after being graduated brought out the fact that a number of them, chiefly the girls, would probably qualify as teachers, while the majority would remain on the farms. The average age of these graduates was 18 years.

Transportation
 Special attention was given to the problem of transportation, for the reason that all advocates of consolidation recognize that here is the greatest difficulty to be overcome in connection with the consolidated school movement, and at the same time it is the point where the opponents of the plan claim that it breaks down.

In Randolph county, transportation is largely accomplished by school wagons at public expense, though a few children ride to school on electric cars where that is possible, two of the schools being located on a railway line. During last year, 1,502 pupils out of a total of 3,130 attending the schools, were transported at