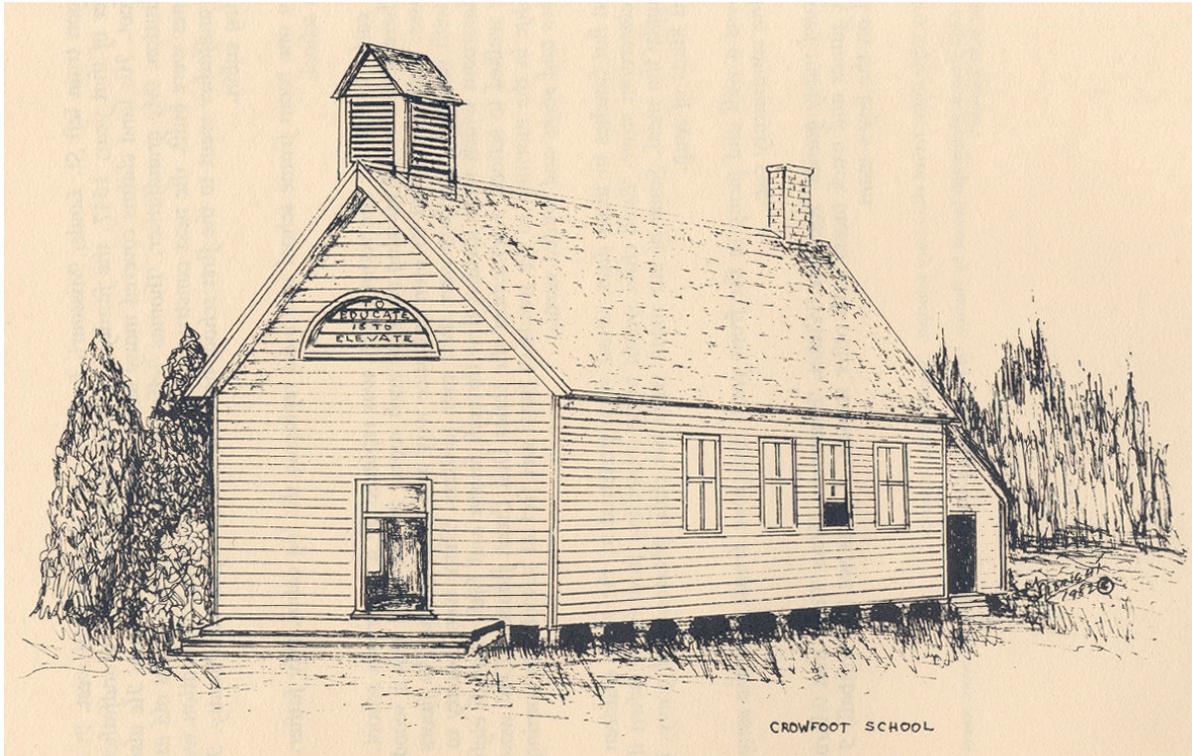


Crowfoot School



Crowfoot School: Drawn in 1982 from a photograph loaned by Audrey. Of all the schools drawn, Crowfoot's one room school had on its front, "To Educate is to Elevate."



Crowfoot School shortly before it was closed in June 2002. The Crowfoot School District was begun around 1850. It merged with Waterloo in 1952.

To Educate is to Elevate
From “When the Bells Rang”

A wagon train left St. Louis, Missouri, to follow the Oregon Trail west. It left in April and in October of that year, 1847, the family of Ruben Coyle (my great-grandfather) settled near Crowfoot. His land claims covered many acres southeast of Lebanon. He also signed the Oregon Constitution. My grandfather, Thomas Jefferson Coyle, was two years old at this time. As soon as homes were built, the next construction was a school house. Education was very important. My grandfather went to the first school house in the Crowfoot community. It was a small one room log cabin.

Later a one room frame school was built replacing the log cabin. My father, Jerry Coyle, went to this school.

In the early 1900's the one room school was replaced by a two room school. I went to this one. There was a wood burning stove in each room. In the back was a woodshed and the outhouses. Each room had its own entrance way and cloak room. The floors were oiled fir and swept with sawdust. Teachers were their own janitors. There were twenty to thirty children in each classroom which were divided first through fourth and fifth through eighth. Children usually walked to school. I remember the times Oak Creek flooded. Dad would carry us across the bridge in the morning so we wouldn't

have wet feet at school On coming home we took off our shoes and socks and waded across.

We had hot lunches in those days. These were prepared by the older children and cooked on top of the classroom stove. Each child would bring something from home when their time came to help supply the meal. Some of our meals were hot chili, potatoes and gravy, hot cocoa, and different kinds of soup.

There was a well and pump in the front yard. Everyone drank from the same cup; it was called the community cup.

We played many games: Kick the Wicket, Blackman, Dare Base, and Marbles. We also had baseball games and track meets with other schools. I guess we had softball; I always played baseball on the boy's team. *Ref: Audrey Coyle Cutts, retired elementary principal. Corvallis School District.*

Crowfoot School:

Warning: Merging Schools

by Jennie Lindquist



Pouring rain. Blazing blizzards. Thundering storms. Students at Waterloo School before 1952 had to think about the weather before going outdoors to use an outhouse.

Modern facilities were only one of the luxuries students were able to enjoy when Crowfoot and Waterloo Schools merged. The consolidation of the Waterloo and Crowfoot School Districts in 1952 was the beginning of a chain of events that enabled the new single district to take positive steps to improve their educational system. A larger school system allowed the schools to become financially healthy. However, the individual communities lost their sense of identity.

While the consolidation was proceeding, the state was placing a significant amount of pressure on small school districts to enhance their programs. Even though the state was influential, this had nothing to do with the consolidation. Though proposed consolidation had been defeated at the ballot box twice before, the schools had grown so much that the people finally voted to consolidate the two districts. The people of the Waterloo district had shown that they were genuinely open to the Crowfoot agenda.

The consolidation enabled new buildings to be built since there was more money between the two school districts. This was especially welcomed since the old two-story Waterloo School had lost the use of the upper floor when it was condemned. Waterloo School had two classrooms upstairs and two classrooms downstairs. It also lacked indoor plumbing; hence, a new school was needed. The new school was only one story, had indoor plumbing, and included a library to enhance learning.

The new Crowfoot district had expanded because of the consolidation, and since the population continued to expand, Seven Oak School was built to house the increase in seventh and eighth graders. Before building Seven Oak School, Crowfoot made two additions. However, the additions weren't enough to educate all of the students at Crowfoot. During the last year at Crowfoot School, the eighth grade had 44 students in it. At one time after the consolidation, there were 110 eighth graders (to) accommodate

the increase in enrollment.

Crowfoot purchased a lot, which had a log house on it, next to the school. However, the "Cheedle" house was unsuitable for a school, and Seven Oak was built. The original building enclosed six classrooms and a multi-purpose room, which enabled students to begin a band program. Seven Oak School was named for an oak tree between Crowfoot and Seven Oak schools whose base had branched out into seven new trees. In 1962, during the Columbus Day Storm, the oak tree was injured. To prevent any further damage to the tree, a tree surgeon repaired it.

Better finances also allowed the schools to indulge in privileges which they hadn't been able to before. They were allowed a superintendent who coordinated the activities between the two schools. Also, with more employees there was more organization. More organization was achieved by assigning specific jobs to specific people.

Crowfoot Flash, the school newspaper grew rapidly with consolidation. The Crowfoot Flash was distributed to the families within the district once a month, and the students who prepared the Crowfoot Flash were dedicated toward helping eliminate the causes of tuberculosis and other respiratory diseases. The students informed people about the diseases, traveled to Salem once a year to send envelopes of information to communities, held banquets to collect money for tuberculosis funds, and included articles about health in the newspaper.

Another advantage of the merger was that the school districts began bussing services for the students. This enabled students a better opportunity to learn because they now had a way to travel to and from school. Most students before this had difficulty getting to and from school, not only because of distance, but because of the weather, also.

The consolidation created a great advantage financially; however, the people of the two rural communities were concerned about losing their identities when the schools combined. This included older citizens, whose children were no longer in school. They wanted the young students to have the same experience their children had. The parents whose children were still students felt they, too, had lost their identity. However, they also knew the change would benefit their children's education. When the districts were tiny, most individuals would have had an opportunity to voice their opinions, but with the increase in size, there were more people to include their opinions, so nearly everyone lost the opportunity to have such a direct influence.

The consolidation of Crowfoot and Waterloo School Districts benefited two unique, rural communities, but many of the successes took time. Though the consolidation was mostly advantageous to the schools, there were still a few drawbacks.

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