

McLean County Museum of History

Dement School (Danvers Township) Collection

Processed by
Cala Laible
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Collection Information

VOLUME OF COLLECTION:	1 Box
COLLECTION DATES:	
RESTRICTIONS:	None
PROVENANCE:	Materials donated after George Mehl's death in 1988. Donated by Mrs. John Henry Mehl. George was clerk of Dement School Board in the 1940's. Donation courtesy of Danvers Historical Society.
REPRODUCTION RIGHTS:	Permission to reproduce or publish material in this collection must be obtained in writing from the McLean County Museum of History
ALTERNATIVE FORMATS:	None
OTHER FINDING AIDS:	None
LOCATION:	Archives
NOTES:	

Brief History

Dement School dates to 1856 and the erection of a wood-framed school at the site—the east side of Section 28 in Danvers Township. The original building was replaced in 1871. Around the same time, another schoolhouse, only twelve by fourteen feet, was located on the same lot. The separate and decidedly unequal school was built for four Black children then living in the district. This arrangement of racially segregated schools led to the 1897 Illinois Supreme Court case *Chase et al. v. David Stephenson et al.* The Court ruled against the district and its segregated schools based on the misuse of public funds. The erection of a schoolhouse “solely to instruct three or four colored children of the district,” concluded Justice Alfred M. Craig for the majority, “can only be regarded as a fraud upon the taxpayers of the district.” The larger questions involving racial equality and equality under the law, though, were left undecided.

Interestingly, the origin of the school name Dement remains a mystery, “Remodeled in 1930, Dement became one of the most convenient rural schools,” noted William Brigham in his 1951 *The Story of McLean County and Its Schools*. “For some time they enjoyed an excellent community club.” The one-room rural district was incorporated into the Danvers Unit in 1948.

Scope

The collection includes school schedule (monthly records of children attending, teacher, and attendance), annual reports, a school survey communication report, taxes, state treasurer retirement system report, and general district information from the District.

Box and Folder Inventory

Folder 1: School Schedules

- 1.1 Monthly school schedules from September 1941 through February 1950. Schedules reflect monthly teacher's salary, children's names and ages, and attendance.

Folder 2: Annual Reports 1939-1944

- 2.1 Illinois School District Blanks for use by the district clerks and contained Calendar for School Officers, District Election Notices, Annual Report to Voters, District Poll Book and Tally Lists, Clerk's Report of Organization, Directors' Report of Teachers Employed, Envelope for Election Ballot, Envelope for Poll Books, Teachers' Contracts, District Clerk's Census Report to Teachers.

Folder 3: Annual Reports 1945-1948

- 3.1 Illinois School District Blanks for use by the district clerks and contained Calendar for School Officers, District Election Notices, Annual Report to Voters, District Poll Book and Tally Lists, Clerk's Report of Organization, Directors' Report of Teachers Employed, Envelope for Election Ballot, Envelope for Poll Books, Teachers' Contracts, District Clerk's Census Report to Teachers.

Folder 4: School Survey Communication Report

- 4.1 Correspondence from Ralph Arends, McLean County Superintendent of Schools to Mr. George Mehl, October 3, 1945, concerning "The School Survey Law which required a meeting of the board of Allin, Danvers and Mt. Hope Townships to meet on October 17, 1945, to vote "for or against" the formation of a county school survey committee. Included was a copy of House Bill #406.
- 4.2 "Tentative Report of McLean County School Survey Committee," 1947, 19 pp. plus map of proposed high school district boundaries.
- 4.3 "Final Report of McLean County School Survey Committee," 1948, 15 pp. plus map of redistricting boundaries.

Folder 5: State Teachers' Retirement System

- 5.1 Deduction booklets 1939-1948 reflecting name, date, and amount deducted from a teacher's salary for the Teachers' Retirement System.
- 5.2 Bulletin from State of Illinois Teachers' Retirement System for 1941-1942, 1943-1944.
- 5.3 Short form and long form notices specific to individual teachers regarding deductions to be withheld from teachers' pay pursuant to the retirement system.

Folder 6: Checkbook Register/Stubs 1939-1948

- 6.1 Check registers of payments made for salaries, repairs, supplies, utilities, insurance, etc.

Folder 7: Tax Information

- 7.1 Employer copy of Quarterly Return of Income Tax Withheld on Wages (Form W-1). Various years 1944-1948.
- 7.2 Form C-210 "Department of Commerce – Government Employment: Quarterly Report – Elementary and Secondary Schools" for years 1946-1947.
- 7.3 School District Report of Claims for State Aid (For Districts Maintaining Grades One Through Eight), 1940-1947.
- 7.4 Government information brochures on withholding income taxes from wages, Schedule D form, Form 1040, and withholding receipts.
- 7.5 Employee's Withholding Exemption Certificates (1943-1947).
- 7.6 Form V-1 (Return of Victory Tax Withheld), 1943. Hand printed calculation worksheet.
- 7.7 "Budgets and Tax Levies of School Districts," Illinois Tax Commission, April 1940.

Folder 8: General Information - District

- 8.1 Communication from the McLean County Office of Superintendent of Schools to McLean County Schools regarding data on assessed valuations, tax levies, enrollments, salaries, etc. for the 1943-1944 school year, May 24, 1944, 8 pp.
- 8.2 "General Information for School Officers.....New School Laws," issued January 1, 1940.
- 8.3 "General Information for School Officers.....New School Laws," undated.
- 8.4 "General Information for School Officers.....New School Laws," 1945-1946.
- 8.5 "General Information for School Officers.....New School Laws," issued March 1947.
- 8.6 Communication from Office of McLean County Superintendent of Schools regarding Transfer of Funds, July 7, 1948, 2 pp.
- 8.7 Correspondence to the School Board of Directors regarding use of building funds for educational purposes, May 29, 1947. 1 pp.

Folder 9: Miscellaneous

- 9.1 Fire insurance policy dated October 30, 1946, from The American Insurance Company.
- 9.2 State of Illinois Rural School Annual Report and Application for Recognition. School year 1944-1945.
- 9.3 Membership certificate from Corn Belt Electric Cooperative, December 1939.
- 9.4 Handwritten accounting of Education Fund and Building Fund on First National Bank of Danvers letterhead, 1940-1941.
- 9.5 Wiring Inspection Report from Corn Belt Electric, September 5, 1947.
- 9.6 Sales correspondence from Anti-Smut Chemical Co. to grain raisers.
- 9.7 School Directory, 1943-1944, McLean County.
- 9.8 Receipts and invoices for Dement School.
- 9.9 Treasurer's semi-annual statement, 1942-1943, 1946.
- 9.10 Building Fund Annual Report, 1945.
- 9.11 "Budget and Annual Appropriation Ordinance," Form #31, Completed for School District #125 (Dement) in McLean County, 1941.

Loose:

Dement School Standard Columnar Book (1936-1949). Ledger of Education Fund and Building Fund. Copy of Township Treasurer's Semi-Annual Statements. (See School Records Collection)