



SOON TO GO—At day's end, Teacher Mrs. Margaret Hughes bids goodby to her 6 pupils at Chili District 4 School, one of last of the one-roomers. It'll be abandoned come June.

Two One-Room Schools To Close Doors in Fall

Two more little one-room schools are on their way out of the American education scene.

One, a 128-year-old white clapboard structure is the Gates District School 5, Elmgrove and Buffalo Rds. The other is Chili District School 4, Scottsville and Morgan Rds.—a 104-year-old cobblestone building.

Both will be locked up in June, and next Fall the pupils will attend classes in more modern buildings several miles away.

Although in both cases, voters have specified that closing of the little schools is only "temporary," chances are they'll never be opened up again.

'For Economy's Sake

"We're closing for economy's sake," explained Warren DeWitt, trustee of the Gates school. "This year there are 20 pupils, but next year enrollment will drop to eight or nine. Besides, Mrs. Ruth Leaty, the teacher, is leaving, and these days it's hard to find a teacher for a country school. Most of the teachers want to specialize in one grade now." First to fifth grade pupils will go to Thomas Edison School, Buffalo Rd. Youngsters in sixth to eighth grades have been attending Churchville-Chili Central School for several years, DeWitt said.

District taxpayers agreed to close up the Chili schoolhouse so the children "could have more advantages," a school official explained. The six children now enrolled in first to fifth grades, plus any others of school age in the district next Fall, will be sent to Scottsville Central School.

At Scottsville, the "country" children will have a music room, indoor plumbing, hot lunches and all the education "extras" considered necessary for today's children. At their cobblestone school they have only a radio for music, and two youngsters go every day to a nearby farm for a pail of drinking water.

Inspired by Sentimentality

Voters in neither district are considering selling their little old schools—not yet. They've got reasons—perhaps inspired by sentimentality—for hanging on to the quaint buildings.

"Tuition at Scottsville might go up and then it would be better for our budget to reopen," explained a taxpayer in the Chili district. "On the whole, though, it looks like it's best for the children to close up."

DeWitt indicated that if the population of school-age children in the Gates district increases in the next year, voters might consider reopening the old school.

"To tell the truth, though, I don't think it will ever be reopened," he added.