

Middlesex Pine Corners District #1 Round Jug Schoolhouse
HISTORY SHEET

Name of Structure: Pine Corners District #1 Round Schoolhouse

Address: "At the foot of Sand Hill, near the Pine Corners on the road between Middlesex and Rushville" — (Rt 245); cannot definitively pinpoint the exact location
Most likely: 266 NY-245 (opposite Loomis Rd)

Atlas: 1852, 1854, 1855: "SH"
1865: "S.H. N^o1"; 1876: emoji-image of SH

When Built: Late 1830s (identical with Potter Dist #5, assumed to be a contemporary)

When Razed: Unknown, sometime >1877 and before 1920 Potter Round SH fire

Why: Cracks formed in the walls causing stability concerns

Original Owner: School District #1 on land donated by John Blair ¹

Original Use: Schoolhouse

Pictures: None

Description:

Design: Round, 1-story, 1-room, fireplace in center

Masonry: Lake-washed cobbles (from Lake Ontario) on exterior

Note:

A frame schoolhouse was built to replace this one. The replacement, now a private home and greatly changed in appearance, exists on NY-245 opposite Loomis Rd in Pine Corners. It is unknown if this is the same footprint of the round schoolhouse or not. If not it was very near this location. The existing structure was built in 1886, which may be our best clue as to when the cobblestone was razed. It was still standing in 1877 when Mrs Franc Adams was teaching in the old schoolhouse. There have been road position alignments over the years rendering historic maps less useful than usual.

Detailed Description and History of the SH (newspaper accounts)

¹ Penn Yan NY Chronicle Express 1944 00501.pdf (10/12/1944)

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Rushville Chronicle and New Age, 2/1/1924 Round Stone School House - Mrs Franc Adams Tells of School at Pine Corners Between Rushville and Middlesex²

"It was the Round Stone school house at the foot of Sand Hill, near Pine Corners, on the road between Middlesex and Rushville. ... Sometime during the latter part of the 1830's it was voted to replace the school house at that point with a new building, and it is said that men with teams were sent to the shores of Lake Ontario to procure cobble stones to use in the construction of it. ... Many can remember this perfectly round building, which gave it its name, its interior conforming to the shape of the outside. The teacher's desk stood on a segment of the circle raised some inches above the rest of the floor, with the hats and bonnets of the pupils hung on the wall nearby. A huge stove utterly devoid of blacking, occupied the middle of the room. There were three rows of desks with seats holding two pupils each, the other benches made to fit the shape of the wall, making seats of various sizes. There were three small blackboards, and in one side was a small cupboard where was kept a small globe ... The room could comfortably seat about forty pupils, but in the winter from sixty to sixty-five scholars ranging in age from five to twenty years, were crowded into it. There were windows in one-half the room, and the embrasures in the thick wall were so deep that the room was only well lighted when the sun was at the right height to shine directly through them."

Rushville Chronicle and New Age, 2/27/1925

"MRS ADAMS REVIEWS EARLY EVENTS³ — ... The picture of the Round Stone school house in Potter, which burned in 1920, recalls to mind its twin which stood at the foot of Sand Hill at Pine Corners in Middlesex. Those two unique school houses were the only ones of their kind in Yates county. While I was teaching at the one at Pine Corners in 1877, Bradford Wixom ... organized a society known as 'The Legion of Honor,' ... Its purpose was three fold—to advance the temperance movement then beginning, to raise the standard of scholarship in the rural schools, and promote sociability..."

Note: "teaching at the one at Pine Corners in 1877"

Chronicle Express, 3/5/1955

Rushville History Related In Old July 4th Address ⁴

"A revealing account and description of early Rushville is given in an address made by Dr Franklin B Seelye in that village for the Centennial celebration on July 4, 1876 almost four-score years ago. ... Wm. Bassett who passed away but a few years ago in this village at the good old age of ninety, taught the first school in 1796 on the spot where the 'Round School House' now stands. It was in a log building known far and near as the "Poplar School House."

Note: "now stands" in 1876

² Rushville NY Chronicle and Gorham New Age 1922-1924 00754_1.pdf (2/1/1924)

³ Rushville NY Chronicle and Gorham New Age 1924-1925 00390_1.pdf (2/25/1925)

⁴ Penn Yan NY Chronicle Express 1955 00384.pdf (3/5/1955)

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Gorham New Age Rushville Chronicle, 9/17/1953

Bassett Street Honors Early Rushville Settler—Local Historian Tells Origin of Street Names ⁵

"The first school in the vicinity of Rushville was established by William Bassett in a log cabin on the Middlesex farm of 504 acres which John Blair had bought in 1795. The location for years afterward was called the Poplar school house; later because of the round stone building, the Round school house, and at the time of centralization in 1938 it had been for years Pine Corners..."

Chronicle Express, 10/12/1944

"The Pine Corners school house that has been unused since centralization has been purchased The title to the property dated back to 1790 when the land was given by John Blair, one of the early settlers, for use as a school grounds as long as it was in use for that purpose. When the school was no longer used the property reverted to the Blair family, of which Mrs Elizabeth Blair is the oldest living member, and who made the transfer."

⁵ Penn Yan NY Chronicle Express 1953 00779.pdf (9/17/1953)

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NOTE:

Our only source of information for this schoolhouse comes from Mrs Franc L Adams.

So who was Frances Litelia Sturtevant Adams?

"On Saturday, July 5th in Mason MI occurred the death of Mrs Franc L Adams, who lived for some time in Middlesex and who was the widow of W.J. Adams of Italy, Yates County. For the past several years Mrs Adams has enlivened the pages of the Chronicle-Express with interesting articles recalling the scenes of her childhood in this county. She was the correspondent for several Michigan newspapers and very active in historical and patriotic societies of her community."

Chronicle Express, 7/24/1930.

She wrote bi-monthly newspaper correspondences, beginning in December 1922 reflecting back on life in Middlesex and the surrounding area during her childhood days and teaching years in the Pine Corners locale. She wrote of pioneers and how they established themselves, shenanigans as school children, social happenings, picnics, fun stories about various families, important people during those times. She continued writing articles into September of 1928, albeit somewhat less frequently.

Yates County Always Dear to Mrs Franc L Adams

(The readers of this paper have frequently enjoyed during past years the interesting letters of the late Mrs Franc L Adams, who enjoyed writing of the scenes and incidents of her years spent as a child and later as a teacher in the Middlesex sections of Yates county. Something of the feeling Mrs Adams always had for "Little Yates" is revealed in these sentences from a letter written to the Chronicle-Express by her daughter, Ethel C Adams of Mason, Mich — Editor.)

"She always loved Yates county so dearly, and her love for it and the people and the hills grew stronger each year, instead of diminishing, as she became older and lived more in the past. She had a large map of the county, which she would hang on the wall, and then stand and study it for hours, locating spots which held some memory for her. We used to laugh and call it her map of Heaven.

"It was a source of great happiness to her to be able to write the letters which she sent to your paper, and in the past two or three years, she has mourned because she could not write as much as she used to, and also because her fund of reminiscences was becoming exhausted. Several people wrote her in regard to happenings mentioned in these letters, and some very enjoyable correspondence resulted. She held in special regard anyone who could 'swap yarns' with her about the people and events of past days in Yates county."

Chronicle Express, 9/11/1930