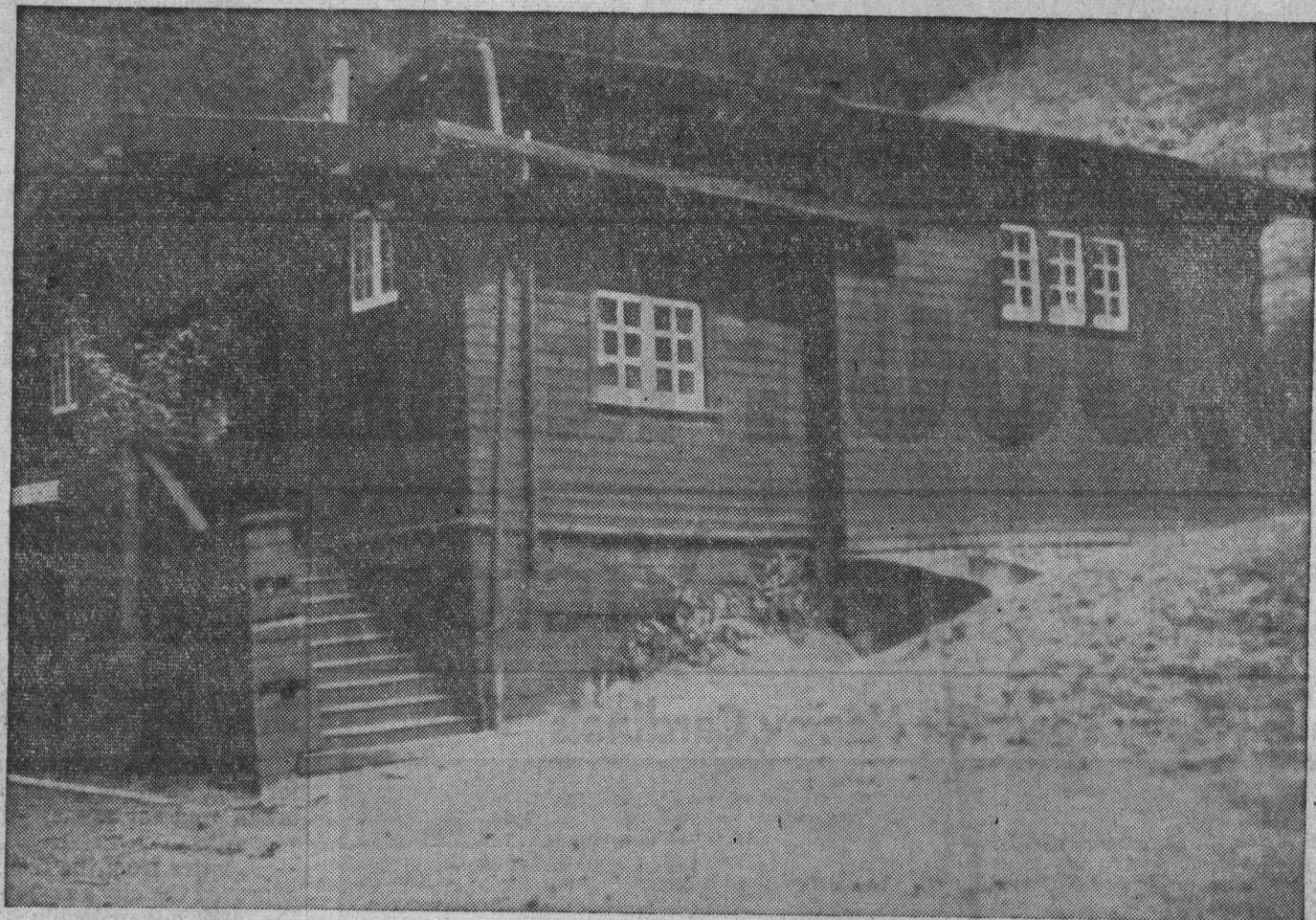


Little Red Schoolhouse To Be Razed



The little red schoolhouse at Glenwood, pictured above, will end almost 35 years of public service after next month's election when it will be torn down. For the last six years, the little schoolhouse has seen its only activity during elections, and after the November balloting even that will cease.

'Little Red Schoolhouse' Is At End Of Public Service

By Margaret Koch

After almost 35 years of public service, the one-room schoolhouse at Glenwood will be sold and torn down after the election next month.

In June, 1950, students hung their sweaters and coats on the hooks in the cloakrooms and put their lunches on the shelves for the last time.

For the last six years the little building has come alive only at election time when the footsteps of the voters echoed through the dusty, empty room. The roof sags badly now, and the front porch has a lop-sided look to it. Termites have been busy for too long under the oiled pine floor.

Remember those oiled pine floors? Always black and soft underfoot, but heaven help the pupil who dragged the corner of his jacket over it! Those stains were pretty permanent. Long gone are the big square desk where the teacher sat, and the old fashioned square piano which was never in tune. Even the blackboards are not there now. There are several chairs left, and a few torn books nobody wants. Too old to be useful and not old enough to be antiques. Lettered in pencil on the flyleaf of one of the books are the words, "Seven days of this makes one week." Pupils don't change much over the years.

School buildings change a great deal, however. There was no shining cafeteria here, with well planned lunches and daily milk for all. Instead, the students brought their lunches from home and sat out in the yard to eat during good weather. Those lunches weren't always what they should have been. One year a very poor family moved into the neighborhood and sent two hun-

gry looking children to the little school. That particular year, I remember the teacher took canned soup for her lunch almost every day. She would warm it over the heating stove in the corner and she would get out three cups. (She always seemed to take extra cups that year.)

Then she would remark that she couldn't possibly eat a whole kettle of soup all by herself. It was entirely too much. And she didn't want to waste it. Her eyes would fall casually on the two hungry children. No unkind remarks were ever made. In fact, no one appeared to notice anything out of the ordinary. It was a lesson in tact and tolerance for the whole school. They didn't realize that, but they played the game well. At the end of the year, just before they moved away, the two children presented the teacher with a large bouquet of crepe paper roses. They made them at home to sell, but gave them to the teacher.

Things had to be done differently in those days in the one-room school. Science, for example, was a living, breathing thing for the whole school. In later years there was a small microscope to open the children's eyes in wonder at the mystery in a drop of water or a thin veined leaf. But even before the microscope came, there were walks up along the road and into the surrounding forest.

There were bird walks. There were wild flower walks. There were walks to the creek where the waterbugs skated on the pools and the small trout swam like shadows. When the weather was bad there was a bowl of goldfish in the schoolroom, and sometimes moths hatching from cocoons.

Once an injured wild bird lived on a madrone branch in the corner. Those country children had their eyes opened anew to the wonders about them.

Christmas was the most important even of the school year. Graduation ran a close second, but Christmas had the magic. How brightly that last Christmas program lives in memory. For days ahead of time, the children worked, sewing and glueing their costumes. They made hand-lettered, hand-colored programs, and presents for their parents, too. Things like potholders and pin cushions, bookmarks and calendars.

They made the decorations for the tree, and they practiced their songs and speaking parts until they were perfect, because that program was the most important of all. When the great evening came,

parents climbed the front steps to enter a room fragrant with the spicy smell of redwood, and there was a sort of electricity in the air. Excited whispers could be heard from behind the green cotton curtains strung across the middle of the room on a wire. And an urgent "Shhhhhh!" as some boy trod too heavily on a creaking board. Then the curtains were pulled back by two students, and the whole glittering result of their work was there on a makeshift stage to see.

The shepherds were properly humble in their bathrobes and striped burnouses. The angel moved carefully with stiff cardboard wings glistening at her

back. There was a shed and a manger built by the older students out of lumber scraps. The two who pulled the curtains open stood by with flashlights, one trained on the manger, the other on the gold paper star shining above.

But the brightest stars were in the eyes, shining proudly out at their mothers and fathers.

Then the old piano was heard, softly playing the tunes we all know best, and young voices were raised in song. And for that magic evening, there was peace on earth and good will toward men. Neighborhood feuds were forgotten. Hatchets were buried. People sat side by side on hard benches and smiled at each other. Those ancient, sacred words had real meaning that night.

And so some of us may remember these things and feel a bit of sadness when they tear the old schoolhouse down. It is a proud and humble building. It served us well for many years. But things change. Ideas change. Schools change. And we can't go back.

For those of you who read this, it will take you back to memories you have half-forgotten. To the younger ones who might read it, I hope it will bring a greater understanding of the vanishing phrase, "Little Red Schoolhouse."

CMF Program Is Presented By Santa Cruzans

The Monterey Bay district of Christian Men's Fellowship, meeting in the First Christian church in Pacific Grove Friday night, heard a program arranged by Santa Cruz, Earl Pracht was master of ceremonies. Rev. Ed Muegge Jr. read the Scripture. Roy Isaacson gave a prayer. Loren Scofield sang "How Great Thou Art," accompanied by Richard Ulrey at the piano. George Pettey dressed in appropriate costume offered dramatic humorous presentations. Others representing Santa Cruz were George Solnar, Wilber Bauman, C. E. Camerzell, and Hersel Scofield.

Santa Cruz was selected to be host to the district meeting in January at the Garfield Park Christian church.

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