

The Class of 1909 sits on the porch of the second Flint Creek one-room schoolhouse located at Miller and Kelsey Roads. The first Flint Creek School was likely a log cabin. The students are pictured on May 7, 1909. (Photos courtesy of Lela Glynn and Lauren Dejesu)



School Section 16

AMERICA'S FOUNDERS MADE EDUCATION A NATIONAL PRIORITY AND IN DOING SO, HELPED THE EARLIEST SETTLERS BUILD SOLID COMMUNITIES

EDUCATION WAS A TOP PRIORITY OF AMERICA'S FOUNDERS WHO RECOGNIZED THE IMPORTANCE OF EDUCATION IN MAINTAINING A STRONG, CIVIL GOVERNMENT AND TO DEVELOP GOOD CITIZENS AND LEADERS FOR THE EXPANDING COUNTRY. THE COLONIES WERE RESPONSIBLE FOR EDUCATION, BUT IT BECAME DIFFICULT TO MAINTAIN AND CENTRALIZE DUE TO THE VARIETY OF LIFESTYLES AND RELIGIONS. THE MIDDLE COLONIES EDUCATION POLICIES FAVORED PAROCHIAL EDUCATION FOR CHILDREN WITH POWERFUL MINDS TO BECOME MINISTERS, PRIESTS, OR HOLD IMPORTANT OFFICES. IN THE RURAL SOUTHERN COLONIES, EDUCATION FOCUSED ON APPRENTICESHIPS. YET DURING THE TIME FROM THE UNITED STATES DECLARATION OF INDEPENDENCE IN 1776 UNTIL THE NEW STATES RATIFIED THE U.S. CONSTITUTION IN 1788, CONGRESS DIDN'T HAVE THE POWER TO SET TAXES FOR ITS CITIZENS TO HAVE THE MONEY TO PAY FOR ITSELF, AND A PROPOSED ORGANIZED EDUCATION SYSTEM.

THE CONTINENTAL CONGRESS enacted the Land Ordinance of 1785 to allow the Federal government to raise money through the sale of land west of the Appalachians, east of the Mississippi, and north of the Ohio River. The Land Ordinance established the basis for the Public Land Survey System in which the country's unexplored territory was surveyed and divided into townships of six square miles each.

Townships, the first form of local government, were then subdivided into 36 one-square-mile sections, or 640 acres. To provide a means for es-

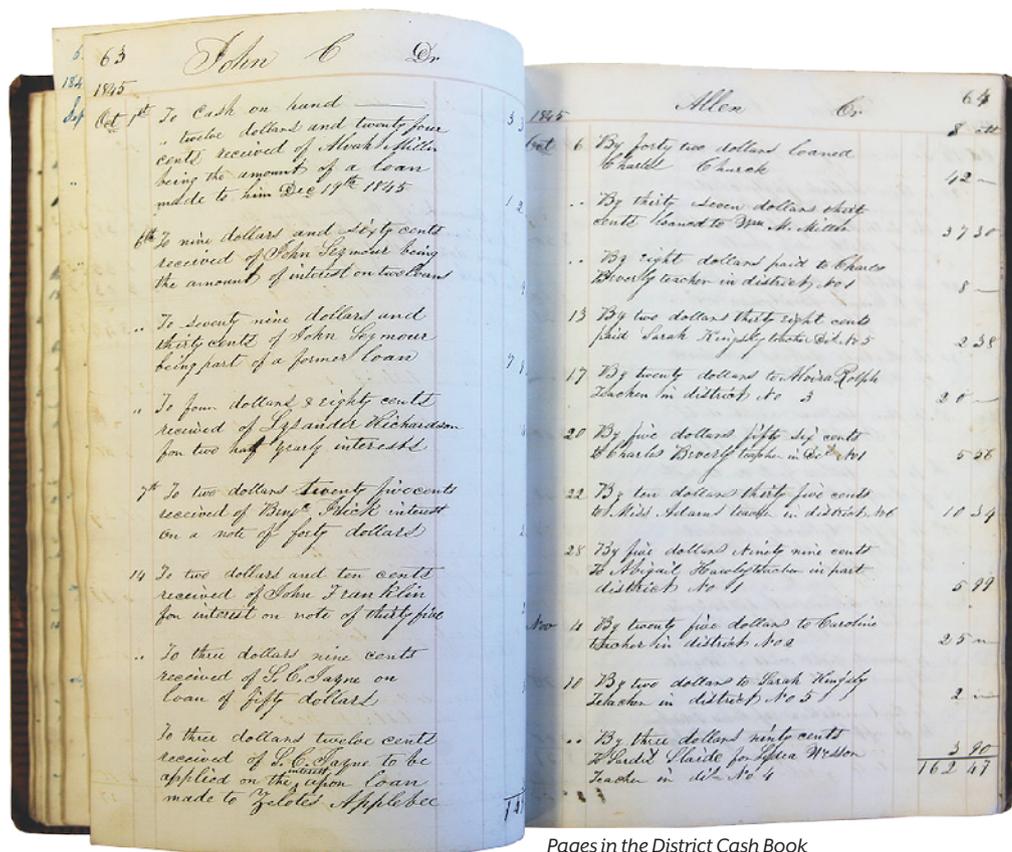
tablishing public education, the Ordinance designated that the centrally located Section 16 in each township grid was to be reserved for the funding of public schools when its land was sold. The responsibility for setting up and maintaining public education passed from the Federal government to individual states. Townships were authorized by the states to collect funds through these land sales, and later by taxation.

Two years later, the Northwest Ordinance of 1787 that governed the Great Lakes and Ohio Valley regions for settlement states in Article 3 that,

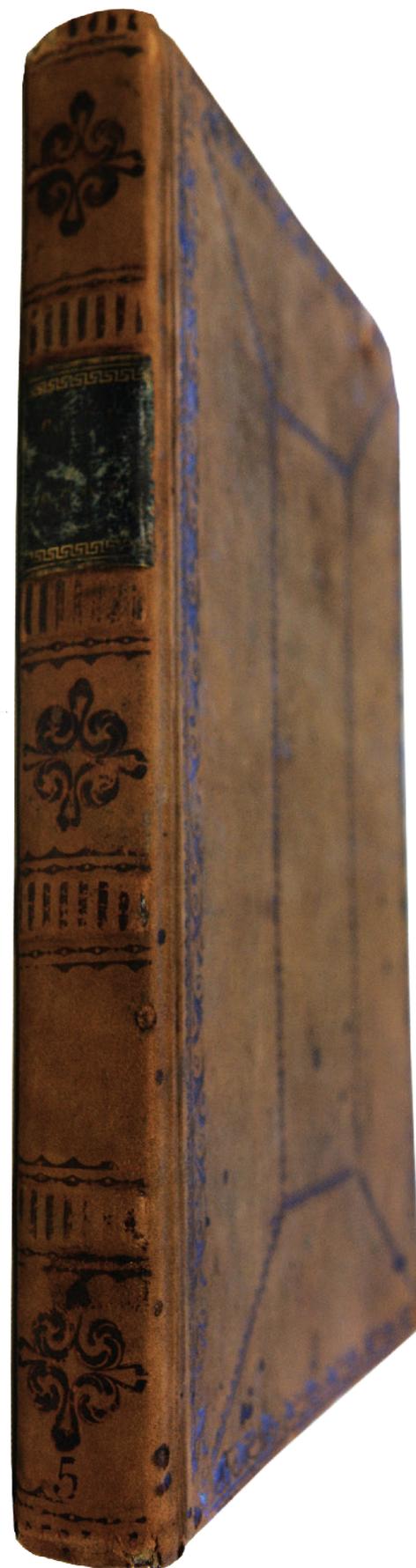
36	30	24	18	12	6
35	29	23	17	11	5
34	28	22	16	10	4
33	27	21	15	9	3
32	26	20	14	8	2
31	25	19	13	7	1

Did you know that Barrington 220 is 72 square miles—the same area as two complete townships? Section 16 of each township was land reserved to fund public schools. Section 29 was reserved to support religious purposes.

“Religion, morality, and knowledge being necessary to good government and the happiness of mankind, schools and the means of education shall be forever encouraged.” The Ordinance also established a government for the Northwest Territory, outlined the process for admitting a new state to the Union, and guaranteed that newly created states would be equal to the original 13 states. It also protected civil liberties and outlawed slavery in the new territories.



Pages in the District Cash Book



COMMON SCHOOL LANDS

Section 16 of the surveyed township grids were the dedicated to fund schools. Illinois' statute said, "Section 16 in every township granted to the State, by the United States, for the use of the inhabitants of the township for the use of schools shall be held and considered as common school lands" and were "under the general care and superintendence of the county commissioners. This statute charged the state with making recommendations at all levels in Illinois, supplying the framework necessary to guide education policy, and integrating education from pre-kindergarten through college. Local government was assigned the responsibility for building schools, guiding educational policy, hiring and paying teachers, and even establishing the first local banking systems that allowed settlers to borrow money from the school treasury to finance their farms.

GOVERNMENT FROM A ONE-ROOM SCHOOLHOUSE

Barrington schools started in October 1835 with the Humphrey one-room schoolhouse in Miller's Grove—the first settlement that would become Barrington Center, and then Barrington Station once the village moved near the newly expanded train tracks in 1854. On November 23, 1840, four

settlers posted a notice announcing an election to incorporate the township and elect school trustees. The election took place at the home of William Otis.

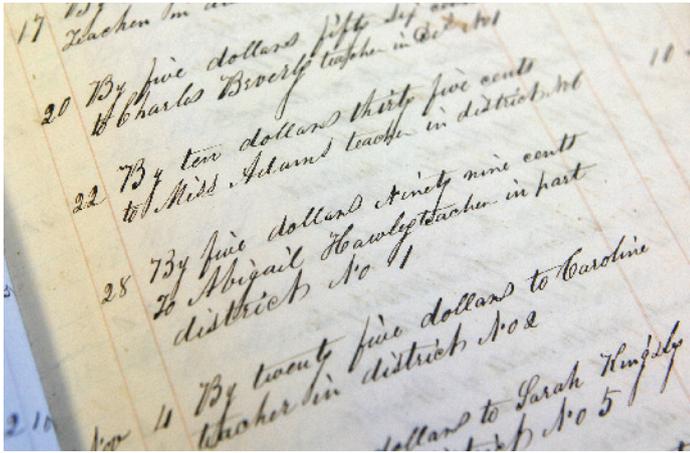
Eighteen people arrived at the Otis home on December 14 to cast their votes in the election to establish a local school system. Jesse P. Miller and William Van Orsdall served as judges, and Homer Willmarth sat as clerk at the election. The vote established Barrington's first school board which consisted of five trustees: Phillip Hawley Sr., Homer Willmarth (chairman), Thomas Perkins, John C. Allen, and William Graves. Miller was chosen as secretary.

BARRINGTON'S FIRST SCHOOL DISTRICTS

On January 9, 1841, that same group of trustees met in the same one-room schoolhouse in Miller's Grove to divide the township into school districts that served as Barrington's first form of government:

- District 1: Eastern half of the township
- District 2: Northwest corner
- District 3: West central section
- District 4: Southwest corner
- District 5: Established in 1845

District 9 was added with the incorporation of the Village of Barrington in 1865. District 10 was added in 1868 after the Cuba and Barrington



The language written for paying teachers in mid-1800s Barrington implies that men and women teachers were paid at the same rate.

Townships were each consolidated. One hundred and five years later, Barrington Community Unit School District 220 was formed in 1973 as a consolidated unit, combining two elementary districts and a high school district into one unit that educates students from pre-kindergarten through high school.

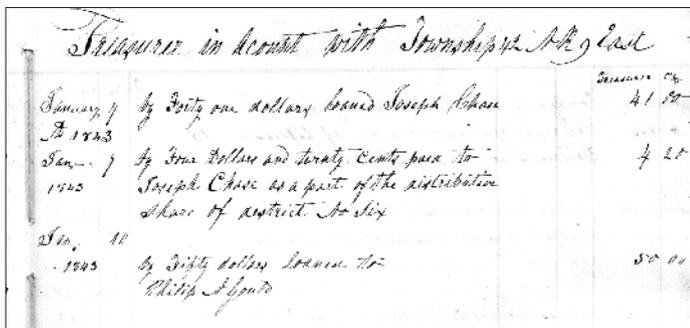
These first Barrington school trustees laid the groundwork for these smaller districts across the rural township land, with each district section having a one-room schoolhouse. School commissioners had the authority to sell the common school lands when so petitioned on an affidavit of two-thirds of the “reputable citizens of a township as to the number of white male inhabitants over twenty-one years of age,” according to the Statutes of 1841.

With money raised from the sale of part of the land dedicated to schools, the trustees established a school treasury.

BARRINGTON’S FIRST BANKS

The school treasury served as more than a source of funds for education; it was the only pool of money in the early settlements. The “Cash Book of School District 4” is a 177-year-old treasure of Barrington 220 and the Barrington area’s history. This oversized book was the original accounting ledger and was used to keep track of the district’s finances. Entries were carefully handwritten in beautiful penmanship. Each page was entitled “Treasurer in Account with Township 42, North, 9 East” at the top.

Funds in the school treasury could be loaned at a 12 percent fixed rate of interest “payable semi-annually in advance”. Teachers were paid out of



The school cash supply from the sale of Section 16 was the first bank for early settlers. Loans, repayments, and interest charges were recorded in the Cash Book.

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of their LIFE
looking for lost items?



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this interest-bearing fund, and every teacher was “entitled to an equal portion of the district funds according to the time and scholars taught; provided that no teacher shall be paid more than the amount agreed to be allowed by the employer.

S.W. Kingsley, the first treasurer, kept meticulous records of each entry beginning on November 25, 1841. The first entry included money received for the sale of school lands in the amount of \$147.35. On November 27, he recorded that Silas Jayne paid \$1.80 on a loan of \$30 at a rate of 6 percent. The final entry in the Cash Book was recorded on October 1, 1883. Thirteen United States presidents served during the cash book’s records—William Henry Harrison to Chester Alan Arthur, including two from Illinois, Abraham Lincoln and Ulysses S. Grant.

The 42-year period during which this singular cash book record was kept had ushered in a new era for schools in Barrington and beyond. The early government leaders of the United States not only envisioned schooling as a standard for all students, but it also offered a source of funds for farmers, tradesmen, and suppliers—giving them help they needed to start their businesses and feed their families.

As with the first settlers across the nation, today’s thriving Barrington community was formed and financed from within the first Barrington schools.

Editor’s Note: If you enjoyed this historical information on Barrington, consider purchasing Quintessential Barrington’s Special Edition published for the Village’s Sesquicentennial in 2015. Copies are available at the Barrington Village Hall.