

*Minturn area*

*Return To  
Eagle Historical  
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7-M-14*

In the early spring of 1922, I was informed that a school was to be established about five miles from Minturn on Gore Creek.

After applying for the position as a teacher and interviewed by the Board of Directors of School District Number eleven of Eagle County, namely Mr. W. McGuire, Mr. L. G. Graham and Mr. A. Kavanaugh, I was hired. The term of teaching to be from June first to December fifteenth. Upon signing a contract and taking the Oath of Allegiance, I was ready to start my career of being a teacher.

The school building was being constructed, but not ready for occupancy for the allotted term. The Elliot family home was a short distance from the site of the new school. Mr. Elliot arranged with the school Directors to use the upstairs of his home for a temporary school.

Two benches, two tables and a small desk became a room for six little bright eyed first grade students, and one sixth grader. We became well organized and adapted to this situation very soon, using that which was offered so graciously by the Elliots. We remained in this room for three weeks.

At last, our little log school house was finished, I shall never forget the thrill of having my own little school, the smell of the logs, the twelve new desks, a black board, and most of all the joy of the children with their new surroundings.

The little school was on a hill a short distance from the wagon road. It was surrounded by pine and cedar trees, and a little brook flowed on the right side. The brook was the source of water for drinking. It was just one large room, with a very nice new desk for the teacher. A new American Flag on a staff, a globe of the world, and an excellent supply of articles needed for a well staffed school room. I was completely over awed and pleased. A little room was partitioned off on the left side where the supplies and the wood for the stove was stored. The windows on each side were curtained with white scrim, which I made. It was truly a homey and charming little school room.

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Feb. 28, 1980  
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*Mrs R.E. Carroll*

In my teaching the pupils, I used the "Baldwin Primer", the "First Reader" and other books of my choice for the First Grade, and the books recommended by the Colorado Education Department for the sixth graders. The log walls were used for the pin ups for fine work of each pupil.

Herbert and Ralph were the two boys of the class and it was their duty to supply and to take care of the stove when the colder months arrived. They were also monitors of the drinking water, the pail and dipper was their most important duty, catching the water from the little brook, straining and keeping the water and the pail clean. The little girls and I kept the sweeping and dusting as our duty.

We started school at nine o'clock and allowed a half hour for lunch. We all carried lunches, trading sometimes for a tidbit of each other's in our lunch pails. Mrs. Elliott sent a pint of fresh milk, which was mostly cream, with her children for me to have with my lunch. The memory of that thoughtful gift to me is unforgettable. Our day ended at three o'clock.

Our playground was the great out doors. We gathered wild flowers and a bouquet of lovely flowers was on my desk every day while they were in bloom. Our rock collections and pieces of pretty wood, funguses were kept neatly on our "Show and Tell" shelf. We followed trails up the mountain, and watched the antics of chipmunks and ground squirrels.

My uppermost thoughts were on the passing of the County Examinations for each child, which was to be given at the end of the school term - orally for the first graders and by written examination for the sixth grader. The County Superintendent, a Mrs. Grimes, notified me that she would visit the school the first part of December.

My first graders were so alert and eager to learn and were such a joy to me, I felt that I really had reached all the requirements for them. The sixth grader was my biggest challenge.

Mrs. Grimes came the first week in December and gave her approval for all. I was certainly pleased. They were all passed to the next higher grade. Herbert passed all of his subjects, and my little first graders, read very well, knew all the phonics, numbers, and were very well adjusted to discipline and in general enjoyed being in school. I really felt fulfilled.

I decided that my transportation from Minturn where I was to live with my sister's family, the Ritchies, to the school would be by horse back. I rented a horse which was to be a nice gentle one and used to a woman rider, which proved to be true the first day of school going up the gore - but coming home, I am sure he decided that I certainly was not a horsewoman, and just as we came to the railroad yards on the back road going into Minturn, he ran away with me. I was frantic but finally stopped him, jumped off and left him standing there. That ended my experience as a horse rider. After that I walked the five miles to school every day.

I so vividly remember my journey each morning. I truly saw the loveliness of God's creation. The early morning presence of deer, lively little chipmunks and one day a bushy tailed fox crossed my path, the sound of birds, watching rabbits hopping along, the babble of the creek at my side with its crystal clear water, and the flash of trout swimming by. The early light snow fall added much to the beauty of the country.

There was a saw mill located above the Gore and each day around three o'clock a lumber wagon loaded with fresh lumber came down the road. The driver would stop and let the children going home down the Gore and myself to jump on top of the lumber, stopping to let the little children off at their homes and allowing me to ride to the junction where the lumber unloaded. My walk home was shortened many days by his kindness. That was always the fun time of the day for myself and my pupils.

I often think, though it is many years ago, of the children who were all so immaculately clean, with their shining faces - the little girls in their simple cotton dress, the boys in clean shirts and pants, their simple way of life and eagerness of knowledge, each task seemed to them to be an adventure. I am sure that my desire to follow my vocation of teaching was inspired by the following pupils of that little Gore Creek school, who are now middle aged and over - Alice, Marie and Vivian Ruder; Maxine, Eula and Herbert Elliott and Ralph Ruder. It saddens me to relate that Ralph Ruder was killed in an auto accident. The others are responsible citizens.

The first school of every teacher that follows her profession, is an experience never forgotten. It leaves one with beautiful memories and enhances the desire to continue in her effort in education. The little school of Gore Creek will always have a very special place in my heart.