

THE HISTORY OF OUR SCHOOL NAME

THE LIFE OF MISS MAY OVERBY

May Overby was born February 5, 1887, at Northville SD, to John and Ellen Overby. May was the eleventh of twelve children. She moved with her family to the Brentford area.

She attended elementary school in Brentford, SD. She first enrolled at Northern State Teachers College in 1905. She received her teaching degree in 1933. She obtained her masters degree at Greeley, CO.

She taught school in Northville and Volga SD, and in Montana before coming to Aberdeen in 1921.

May set a record of 35 years of continuous teaching of first grade in the same room at Garfield School. She retired from teaching in 1956. Garfield School was torn down and a new school was built at south State Street and 14th Avenue which was named after Miss Overby in 1957.

How do you describe the kind of person May was? Many say she was a special kind of teacher...soft spoken, kind and reassuring.

As I read through the "verses" that May chose to call them, I realized how true it was. She truly was a very special person and I am very proud to go to a school named in her honor.

I talked with many people that had taught school with May. I was told the same things over and over. She had a subtle sense of humor, she was a very special person and a delight to know and work with.

She was so dedicated to her teaching and the children. She treated all children as favorites. She would make ginger cookies for the neighbor children and even when she was retired from teaching, the little neighbor children felt her love and would come to visit her often. May would take the booster shots at school each year just to show the children they had nothing to fear even though it was against her religious beliefs. May was very instrumental in starting the reading program for first graders that involves the parents. She would take old reading books apart and make small individual books of just one short story. Then she had each child take home a book to read to their parents.

Some other little bits of information on May are she loved nature and even had a table made from a tree. She like jelly, pie, the color blue, and of course, her flowers and writing verses. To show a bit of humor, a story was told that she went to visit a sick friend in the hospital and said, "I do not believe in sickness," May was a Christian Scientist, "but then I have never been sick." May taught as many as 35 students at once with no help and never once a complaint.

May spent many a summer day with her beautiful flowers. She loved flowers. You see, May loved to care for things, from school children, neighbor children to flowers. Only someone as gentle and loving can nurture and help these things grow and blossom.

May did not belong to a lot of organizations or clubs. She was just one VERY DEDICATED TEACHER.

By: Renae L. Bush
4th grade
May Overby School
March 1987

Resources: Mrs. Leon Schwab
Miss Helen Neubauer
Miss Marie Schrimpf
Mrs. Betty Artz
Ms. Jo Anne Mielke
Mrs. A.C. Madsen