

## SCHOOL DAYS

I attended elementary school, grades one through seven, at Watsessing Elementary School, which was in easy walking distance of where we lived at 44 Morse Avenue. Down the street to the cross street, one block to the park, through the park a distance of about two hundred yards, then a short block to the school. The playground behind the school was a gravel surface which dealt out many a scuffed knee or elbow. We children gathered on the playground and did our thing. The girls in their area, boys in theirs, unsupervised until the siren sounded and we would form lines by class at the edge of the concrete walk at the rear of the school. Again, girls in their lines to the left of the service entrance and boys to the right. To the beat of a drummer located at the center of the first floor hall we marched into the school and on predetermined routes went to our class cloak room, thence to our assigned desk and the beginning of the days education.

The school building was a three story brick building with near ground level basement giving the appearance of four stories. Classrooms filled the first and second floors and the third floor was taken up by an auditorium flanked on either side by two classrooms. In the graduation picture on the opposite page I am in the second row center, fifth from left or right and to my left is the girl of my favor - Louise Kerian - whose father owned and operated a men's clothing store at Bloomfield center.

One day at recess I was playing with others on the monkey bars and was "tackled" by another boy and when I fell hit my head on something and suffered a suspected concussion. I remember mother keeping me awake all afternoon, but I do not recall going to the doctor so I assume she may have consulted him by telephone,

On another occasion a neighbor boy and I ended up playing hooky for the afternoon session. In those days we went home for lunch between twelve and one o'clock. On this particular day it was winter and snow was on the ground but melting, so a stream of water was coarsing down the street at the curb so near the corner we decided to build a dam. We lost all sense of time, but finally took off for school only to find the playground deserted except for a coal truck and two men delivering coal to the schools coal bin. All innocence we asked "where are all the kids?" to which the obvious answer was that they had all gone inside. Rather than enter and be called down for tardiness we took a circuitous route to his house. I don't think his parents were home, so we went to a room that apparently was a play room. Agin time flew by and when I went home it was past my usual schedule and I had to confess my errant way. What punishment was meted out I do not recall.

Another dumb me incident was known only to me until this time. School let out for recess one day and the morning must have been long, for I headed home for lunch until I got halfway through the park I realized I was alone and all the other children were playing on the playground. I sheepishly returned to the playground and melted into the crowd.