

## **Log School House Replica Built 1974**

Fanshawe Pioneer Village's Log School is a replica building, constructed by a "Students Working on Environmental Enhancement Projects" (SWEEP) crew in 1974. The school was originally built beside Lochaber Church, on what is now Concession I of Fanshawe Pioneer Village. The building was later relocated to Orchard Road, and then moved once again in 2006 to its present location on Concession I.

It is important to note that, though this structure does depict the type of space students might have occupied during the early 1820s or 1830s in terms of building scale and material type, the building represents a French Canadian design. Whereas the Log School has round logs and saddle notches, early Middlesex County log buildings were typically built with square logs and dovetail or half lap construction.

The Education Act of 1816 granted any group of property holders the authority to erect a building capable of holding twenty-five students. Under this Act, three appointed elementary school trustees managed the main operations of the school.<sup>1</sup> Often the school served as a church too.

Early one room schools had students aged five through twenty-one. Students were not organized by grade and instead worked through a variety of school books as outlined by the central authority and at a speed dictated by their aptitudes, interests and economic situations. Early schools were sometimes without chalkboards, maps or other illustrated materials.<sup>2</sup> Desks had room to seat two and were placed so that student's backs were to the window, the schoolroom's primary source of light. Today, Village visitors can experience education in the Log School House firsthand by taking a seat in these school desks and, if the school master is in, even participate in an early 19<sup>th</sup> Century school lesson.

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<sup>1</sup> Frank Peters, “*School Systems: Constitutional and Political Context*,” The Canadian Encyclopaedia (Online).

<sup>2</sup> R.D. Gidney, “*Elementary Education in Upper Canada: A Reassessment*” in Education and Social Change: Themes from Ontario’s Past (1975).