

THE SCHOOL BELL in the ORIGINAL CHERRY VALLEY SCHOOL

The bell was located on top of a tower on the northwest corner of the building. Originally there was an ornate belfry built over it but it had been removed some years before my time. The bell sat on a frame on top of the roof platform with a large pulley wheel on one end of its yoke. A rope leading to the second floor office was attached to this pulley.

Occasionally someone would pull the rope with too much vigor to see how high the weight of the bell would lift him off the floor. The bell would turn completely over, leaving the end of the rope about one foot below the ceiling and completely out of reach.

The principal (Mr. Smith) would then send a couple of us boys up to the third floor attic under the belfry and up a homemade ladder, through a two foot square trap door in the roof to manually turn the bell back over to let the rope back down.

This took the boredom out of several of my school days!

The outside bell was rung five minutes before classes were to start. All the students were expected to be in their seats when the 'tardy bell' was rung five minutes later. The tardy bell was a chrome plated gong about sixteen inches in diameter. It was mounted on the east stairway leading to the third floor auditorium. It was operated by pulling a cord that tripped a hammer to cause the bell to go 'gong'.

One noon I got the mischievous idea to attach a roll of cap gun caps to the hammer. When Mr. Smith pulled the cord that afternoon, it started with a 'blamoong'. For some unknown reason, he never tried to find who attached the caps!

Written by John Larson

