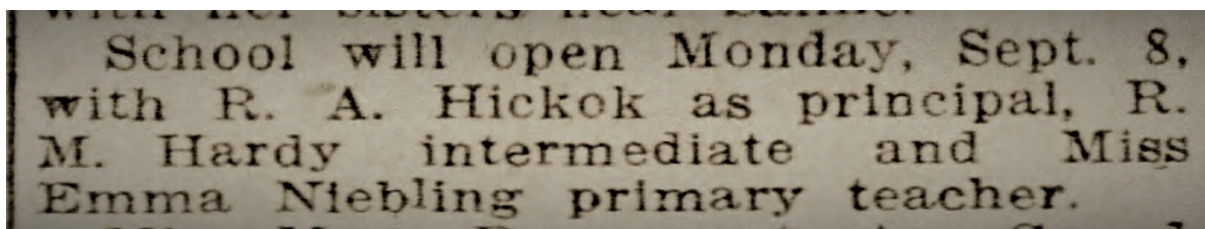


Emma Christina Niebling, daughter of Jacob Michael (1848 Germany - 1936) and Lizzie (Horning; *maiden surname spelling on her death certificate*) (1858-1940) Niebling, was born 20 January 1877, Washtenaw County, Michigan. Emma was a baby when her parents moved to Okemos, Ingham County, Michigan and she received her formal education from the one-room school house system in the Okemos area. The highest-grade level at Okemos in this particular year was 8th grade and was considered graduation. Because of her January 20 birthday, we believe she started 1st grade in 1882. Thus, Emma Niebling graduated at age 14 and is in the Okemos Class of 1891. Emma stayed close with her Okemos classmates. [One such gathering was featured in the *Lansing State Journal*, June 7, 1951. <click this area to read "The Circle of Friends">](#)

Emma then went on to Michigan State Normal School, which first opened its doors in 1853. Michigan had been a state only 12 years when the Michigan State Normal School was formed. It was the 1st in Michigan and 1st normal school created outside the original 13 colonies. It was modeled on the German education system and granted high school diplomas and teaching certificates to qualified students. Emma attended and graduated with a teaching certificate in the 1890's. The Ypsilanti school would morph into Michigan State Normal College (1899), Eastern Michigan College (1956) and finally into Eastern Michigan University (1959).

Emma, who never married, taught in Ingham County in and around Okemos and Williamston for 40 plus years. She was first noted as an Okemos school teacher in 1912.

Lansing State Journal (Lansing, Michigan) Friday 6 September 1912



School will open Monday, Sept. 8, with R. A. Hickok as principal, R. M. Hardy intermediate and **Miss Emma Niebling** primary teacher.

Emma taught in Locke Township, Ingham County, at a one room school house in the tiny forgotten town of Bell Oak. Bell Oak was situated near the Livingston County line.

Lansing State Journal (Lansing, Michigan) Saturday 1 June 1918

Miss **Emma Neibling** (*note misspelling of surname*), who closed her school at Bell Oak Tuesday, will spend the summer with her parents Mr. and Mrs. John Neibling of Okemos.

Lansing State Journal (Lansing, Michigan) Monday 8 May 1939

MAY FESTIVAL GIVEN BY OKEMOS CHILREN

The Okemos school is fast gaining recognition for its program of this type of education and the various displays planned and executed by the children were interesting.

A trip around the world, depicting interesting things about various countries and the furnishing of a pioneer cabin made the exhibit in the sixth grade, teacher, **Emma Niebling**.

After her father took his own life in 1936, Emma and her mother lived together on Hamilton Road in downtown Okemos. Mrs. Niebling died in 1940.

Lansing State Journal, July 5, 1939

ANNOUNCE FACULTY OF OKEMOS SCHOOL

(Special to The State Journal)

OKEMOS, July 5—Faculty for Okemos schools has been announced by the board of education. Only two vacancies had to be filled, that of fifth grade and director of agriculture.

The faculty for next year follows: Kenneth Barnhill, physical education; Edith Bearup, social sciences; Joy Clemmon, commercial; Esther Gowan, science; Anna Kautz, primary principal, third grade; Elsie Keiser, first grade; Ethel Lewis, home economics; Tana Magnotta, languages; Clair McDurman, coach and junior high; N. Musselman, principal secondary grades and shop work; E. Niebling, sixth grade; Violet Nora, fifth grade; Lulu Way, fourth grade; Marie Paulic, mathematics; Irene Smith, second grade; Verna Stark, English.

LeRoy Bell is superintendent, beginning his third year in Okemos.

Permanent Alumni Is Formed at Okemos

(Special to The State Journal)

OKEMOS, Jan. 3—The alumni banquet sponsored by the senior class at Okemos high school was a big success, both in numbers attending and interest shown in forming a permanent alumni organization.

The affair, attended by over 250, was held last Thursday evening in the school gymnasium.

Miss Carlene Andrus, senior, introduced Starr Keesler, director of alumni relations, Michigan State college, and a graduate of Okemos high, as toastmaster. Preceding his introduction, Nicholas Musselman, former principal and band director, led group singing and Mrs. Edith Bearup gave the invocation.

Mr. Keesler introduced the school board members and earlier superintendents: Mrs. Grover White, whose husband was the first superintendent; Luke Kelly, secretary of the State F. F. A., a former superintendent, and Edward Murdock, present superintendent. LeRoy Bell sent regrets, being absent because of the death of his mother.

Among earlier teachers introduced were Edith Bearup, Lyle Lyons, Nila Laidlaw, Esther Gowan Regan, Joy Clemow and Emma Niebling. The latter had been elementary teacher over a long period and those present who had gone to her were asked to stand. Over half of the audience stood in tribute to her work.

Others who had been connected with the school in various capacities over a comparatively long time were presented or named. They included Will McKane, bus driver for many years, and Ruben Everett, bus driver and custodian.

Others contributing to the program were Mrs. Ruben Everett, mother of one of the seniors, who herself was one of the two members of the first graduating class in 1923. The other member, Mrs. Carrie Hammond Griffith, was also present. Mrs. Everett gave a historical resume of the school. Mrs. Ada Black Huyck sang two solos, accompanied by Miss Phyllis MacAllan, both alumnae.

Mr. Murdock told about the forward looking plans for the school and conducted a tour in the new building for some of those attending the banquet.

Maynard Eberly presided over the organization of an alumni group. Officers elected: Dick Fuller, president; Loren Everett, vice president, and Rex Wilkins, secretary-treasurer.

Emma retired from teaching about 1945 but stayed busy in school and community activities.

*Lansing State Journal (Lansing, Michigan) Thursday
18 August 1949*

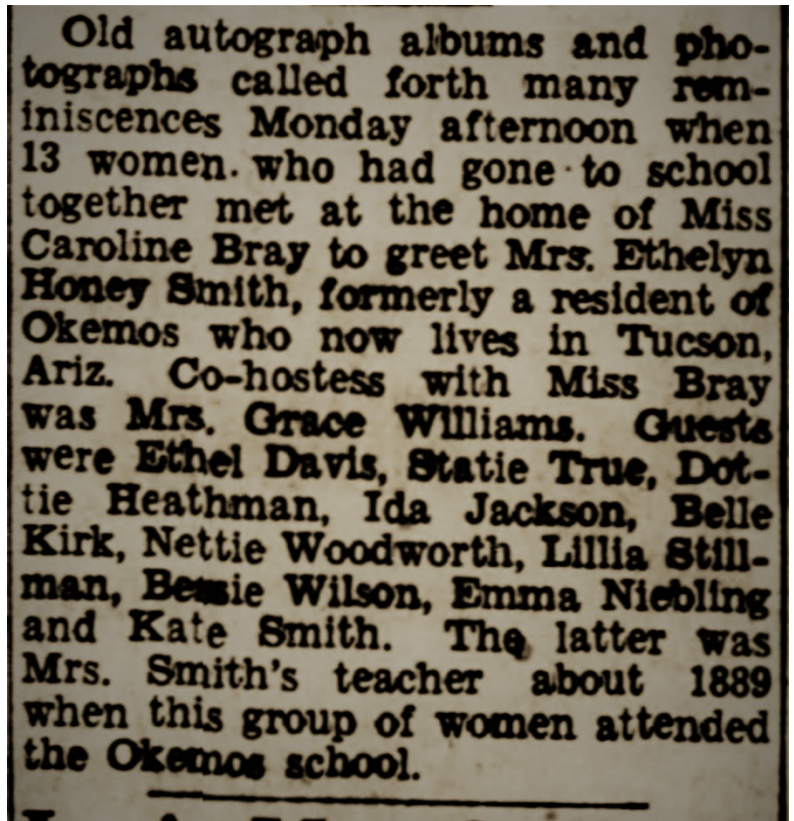
OKEMOS

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OKEMOS

Old autograph albums and photographs called forth many reminiscences Monday afternoon when 13 women who had gone to school together met at the home of Miss Caroline Bray to greet Mrs. Ethelyn Honey Smith, formerly a resident of Okemos who now lives in Tucson, Ariz. Co-hostess with Miss Bray was Mrs. Grace Williams. Guests were Ethel Davis, Statie True, Dottie Heathman, Ida Jackson, Belle Kirk, Nettie Woodworth, Lillia Stillman, Bessie Wilson, **Emma Niebling** and Kate Smith. the latter was Mrs. Smith's teacher about 1889 when this group of women attended the Okemos school.



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EX-TEACHER DIES AT 83

LONGTIME OKEMOS AREA RESIDENT BELIEVED STROKE VICTIM

Ex-Teacher Dies at 83

Longtime Okemos Area Resident Believed Stroke Victim

Miss Emma Niebling, 83, the longest resident of the Okemos-Haslett area, died Friday at her Okemos home.

Miss Niebling, who was an Ingham county school teacher for more than 40 years, lived all but six weeks of her life in Ingham county. She was born in Washtenaw county.

She was found dead in her bed when neighbors noticed her home was without lights Friday night. Coroner Dorwin E. Hoffmeyer said she had been dead about 10 hours. He attributed death to a stroke.

The Okemos-Haslett Kiwanis club honored Miss Niebling during the Okemos Centennial last summer as the resident who had lived the greatest number of years in the area.

Miss Niebling was a graduate of the old Ypsilanti State Normal college. Her teaching assignments included Williamston and Okemos, where she retired 15 years ago.

She was a member of the Okemos Pioneer club and at the time of her death was financial secretary of Okemos Edwina Rebekah Lodge 20.

Rebekah services will be conducted at 1 p. m. Monday at the Gorsline-Runciman funeral home.

She is survived by a brother, William of Okemos, and a niece, Mrs. Lucile Edwards of Lexington, Ky.

Burial will be in Glendale cemetery.

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Lansing State Journal, April 10, 1960

NIEBLING, MISS EMMA

2198 Hamilton, Okemos

Funeral services for Miss Niebling will be held from the Gorsline-Runciman funeral home at 1 p. m. Monday, Rev. Warren Brown of Mt. Hope Methodist church officiating. Edwina Rebekah Lodge No. 207 will take part in the service. Interment will be in Glendale cemetery, Okemos. Pallbearers are Maynard Eberly, Daniel Eames, Byron Taylor, Chas. Oswald, Emerson Sweet, L. M. DeLind.