Those who look back fondly on the days when they attended a one-room school would be flooded with nostalgia if they could, invisibly watch Wilmington's West school in operation. The West school is a one-room school and whereas the number of classes taught there is but a small percentage of the number of classes taught in the earlier day one-room schools, still the difficulties attending such an operation are considerable and the procedures followed are probably much the same today as they were then.

Wilmington's one-room school, over which a benign lady by the name of Mrs. Alden N Eames presides as teacher will shortly pass into oblivion because plans are already under way to absorb its pupils into a new modern building which Wilmington will build. Thus the youngsters attending the school today are among the last so to do and, if their memories are bright and sharp, they will probably always remember the experience fondly.

Actually what Mrs. Eames does, in handling the first and second grades at the same time is matched by teachers in many suburban towns; the difference, of course, is in the fact that she is the only teacher in the school. In the old, and possibly better days, the one-room school teacher handles as many as eight grades in a deeply rural one-room school, and six different classes were part for the course.

Mrs. Eames' duties extend considerably beyond those of the average teacher. She is with her charges all through the day for instance. She serves as doctor, father confessor, nurse, policeman, judge for her charges, and being a woman of vast sympathy she invests all her different roles with a kindness which in effect transforms her into a kind of second mother.

A closeup of Mrs. Eames busy day in the West school, and a brief idea on what she does as teacher in a one-room school, was gathered photographically by following her around one recent day. The results you see here.
She Has Her Hands Full Keeping Classes Busy on Separate Projects

SHE gets a lift by asking the pupils to help her. Here, while she writes on blackboard, Arthur Kelley passes out paper.

WHILE one class studies from books or does a written paper the other class will have an oral recitation. Surprisingly, system works out with a minimum of confusion to the pupils.
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At times, she combines the activities of the classes into a single unit. Above the youngsters are combining to exhibit their drawing. This system works out well, too, for singing lessons.
DURING lunch period, she serves as a kind of one-woman cafeteria, distributing to the youngsters hot soup that is part of the Wilmington program. Most of her pupils stay for lunch.
WHEN youngsters go home, she acts as a kind of valet, helping them into their clothes. Youngster above is Margaret Daly.
She Has Her Hands Full, Keeping the Youngsters Out of Mischief

SOMETIMES Mrs. Eames has to discipline the youngsters and, as above with Roy Costa, who whispered, she hates to do it.

IN the school yard during the recess periods, she serves as a kind of warden. She prompts the children into games and sometimes, as above, she acts as referee when a squabble starts.
YOUNG Johnny Steeves, who is one of the better-liked boys in the school, was celebrating a birthday the day the pictures were taken, but he brings his teacher an apple every day.

WHEN bruises, bumps and cuts happen, Mrs. Eames assumes role of doctor. She swathes youngster's knee with peroxide.