

Presentation for Vollmer School Children
April 2, 1997

Presented by Helen Vollmer Elam,
Henrietta Town Historian

MARY K. VOLLMER
THE WOMAN FOR WHOM THIS SCHOOL IS NAMED

This school was named for a very special woman who taught school in both Pennsylvania and New York State for over twenty years. She was famous for her teaching abilities and her love of people, especially children.

Mary Koehler Vollmer was married to my second cousin, Clement (Jack) Vollmer and they lived on Brighton-Henrietta Town Line Road in the Vollmer Family Homestead which was built in 1850. My name is Helen Vollmer Elam and I happen to be the Henrietta Town Historian.

Let me tell you about my cousin Mary Koehler Vollmer. She was born on March 24, 1903. When she was a little girl she liked to sing for her mother and father and took an interest in music. Later on when she was a young woman, she played the piano and had a lovely singing voice as well.

After attending college and teaching school in Pennsylvania, she moved to this area when she married my cousin. Mary and Jack had two children, Ann and Lois. They went to school in Brighton where they lived.

Her first teaching job in the Rush-Henrietta District began in 1952 where she was a music teacher at the Roth School which had recently opened after the centralization of the district. She taught there six years and then joined the Gillette School faculty. She also taught kindergarten at the Crittenden School ... She liked teaching kindergarten as she really enjoyed children.

People remember her as being very kind and patient with the children in her classes when they didn't know or understand the work. She would take time to listen to them and would help them. She played the piano for them and taught them new songs.

Mrs. Vollmer loved teaching at all her schools and gained much respect from others in the District. She was a very beautiful woman with a lilting singing voice. Everyone felt bad when she became sick and died on April 21, 1966. That is why they wanted to name a school for her. They wanted to remember her!

You were too young to be at the school dedication when it was named for Mary K. Vollmer but I was there and I have the program booklet to show you. The dedication took place on Sunday, April 12, 1970. It was a big event with Mary's husband and children attending plus other important people, such as the Superintendent of the School District, Representative Frank J. Horton and many other people from state and local governments.