

INDIANA COUNTY

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Anniversary History

by

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Part D: Indiana Normal School

Because of the scope of this history, it is impossible to go into great detail in covering the progress of Indiana Normal School during the period 1891-1916. By 1900 the size of the campus had grown to 25.2 acres and remained about the same until 1910, when it was 25.7 acres. Nearly 6 1/2 acres was purchased in September 1891 from Mrs. Sarah S. Sutton for \$6,500 and shortly afterward, six acres of the old fair grounds was acquired.⁴⁴

Numerous physical improvements were made. In September 1891 an electric arc light on a pole was placed on campus, and in 1892 the old main building of the Indiana County Fairground was purchased and moved to the campus for use as a gymnasium.⁴⁵ In August 1893 an appropriation of \$44,000 from the State enabled the construction of a model school and boys dormitory. In February 1894 the contract was awarded to Kennedy, Hamilton & Co. (reported in the **Gazette** as Fair & Hamilton of Blairsville). The new buildings were accepted in August.

The boys dorm of pressed brick was 150 x 40 feet, three stories, with a slate roof. The model school contained eight large classrooms and play rooms in the basement "for use on stormy days."⁴⁶

In 1895 a contract for electrical wiring of all buildings was given to James Brown & Son, Pittsburgh, for \$1,200. The work was completed in August. Other improvements included a new "electric clock" in the principal's office to control the bells, a horsedrawn mower, a house and lot adjacent to campus, additional telephones, six tennis courts, and a grandstand. The electrical lights supplanted the artificial gas system and consisted of 600 fourteen candlepower bulbs. The chapel contained 60 lights. The grandstand was enlarged and bleachers added during 1896-97 and 1902.⁴⁷

The main stairway in the old main building was rebuilt in 1902, the old stairway said to be sinking and unsafe. The next year all the buildings were given names. The original building was henceforward known as John Sutton Hall; the model school as the A. W. Wilson building; and the boys dormitory was named for Judge Silas M. Clark.⁴⁸

In 1903 another State appropriation of \$75,000 enabled construction of Jane E. Leonard Hall, and Thomas Sutton Hall. The contract was awarded in April 1904 to E. M. Lockard of Indiana, and ground broken May 4. Classes began February 28, 1905 in Leonard Hall. Thomas Sutton Hall was dedicated June 8. Leonard Hall had 24 classrooms and was 130 x 123 feet. Thomas Sutton Hall, three stories, was 123 x 92 feet and contained a laundry in the basement, dining room and kitchens on the first floor, musical conservatory on the second, and girls dormitory rooms on the third. A memorial window in Leonard Hall, presented by the Class of 1893, portrayed a Grecian female figure holding the lamp of knowledge and an open book. It was designed by Rudy Bros., Pittsburgh.⁴⁹

Clark Hall burned December 1, 1905. A full account is in III:324-330. W. J. Shaw, architect, of Pittsburgh drew up plans for a new building in February 1906. The cornerstone, containing a tin box of pictures and other items was laid June 4. Dedication ceremonies on January 12, 1907 featured a remark by Harry White that Silas M. Clark "perhaps more than any other man deserves credit for the present status of the school."⁵⁰

About 1909 a cold storage plant was annexed to Thomas Sutton Hall, with ice-making equipment. In 1910 the Clarence Smith property was rented for use as girls' quarters, located on the other side of the railroad tracks (Pratt Drive) facing or near Locust Street. Known as "Clarence Hall," the three-year lease cost \$1200 per year. Two other building projects that year were an annex to Thomas Sutton Dining Hall, seating

80 to 100 more persons, and an annex to the girls' dormitory accommodating 62 girls in somewhat more luxurious quarters costing from 75 cents to \$1 a week extra.⁵¹

In 1913 a \$104,400 contract for a 40 x 100-foot power plant was awarded to the McGinnis Co., Pittsburgh. The hydraulic elevator in John Sutton Hall was also to be replaced with an electric elevator. The next year a wing ("North Annex") was added to John Sutton Hall to accommodate 64 girls; also "Recreation Hall" was rebuilt and an ambulatory added around three sides. An addition was made to the kitchen at Thomas Sutton Hall, nearly doubling its capacity, and \$3,000 of new kitchen appliances installed. The new Recreation Hall and ambulatory were used for the first time September 26, 1914. Another new feature was an underground fruit cave, 16 x 10 feet, waterproofed for storage of fruits, potatoes, etc.⁵²

In 1915-16 the capacity of "North Annex" was doubled, providing rooms for 60 more girls, and the entire 101-foot length of the first floor addition was occupied by the library. A square tower capped the western end of the new wing. Cost: \$50,000.⁵³

It is, of course, impossible here to attempt any discussion of the faculty, except merely to observe that the number of faculty grew from 22 in 1889 to 30 in 1906, to 54 in 1915. In 1906 only one of the faculty had the Ph.D. degree and four had no degrees at all. The 1906 faculty comprised 12 males, 18 females.⁵⁴ As to the principals Z. X. Snyder resigned about June 1891. Rev. W. S. Owens, a trustee, served as acting principal until the arrival of Charles W. Deane in September. Deane resigned June 8, 1893 and was succeeded by David J. Waller, who served until August 24, 1906. James E. Ament then took over September 4, 1906. Brief biographical sketches of these men are found in Volume IV. Ament left at the close of the 1916 term.⁵⁵

An interesting episode which merits consideration is the 1891 contest for Superintendent of Public Instruction involving Z. X. Snyder, serving as principal of INS, and D. J. Waller who would later be principal. Waller had been appointed Superintendent February 14, 1890 replacing E. E. Higbee, deceased. On January 6, 1891 Waller was nominated for a full term by Governor Beaver (R). The nomination was confirmed January 20 in the afternoon by the Pennsylvania Senate; however Gov. Beaver's term had expired earlier that day at noon and he was succeeded by Governor Pattison (D) who refused to issue a commission and instead nominated Snyder on May 27. The Senate rejected Snyder by a 16-31 vote. The Governor then appointed Snyder to serve on an interim basis until the next regular session of the Senate, and on June 3 Snyder, accompanied by the Attorney General, went to Waller's

office to make a formal demand for the office. Waller refused. On June 30 the Attorney General under a Writ of QuoWarranto brought the case to the Dauphin County Court, which filed a Judgment of Ouster July 16 stating essentially that Waller should vacate the office since he held no commission, but that Snyder could not serve because the Senate had not confirmed him. Waller's attorneys filed twelve exceptions on August 5 which were overruled September 29. Waller then appealed to the Pennsylvania Supreme Court which reversed the lower courts in favor of Waller on October 26, 1891, all Justices being present except Silas M. Clark.⁵⁶

During this period the course offerings were considerably strengthened. A military drill company had been organized in 1890 equipped with rifles supplied by the State and in 1892 an armory was established in the basement of John Sutton Hall. In June 1892 vocal music was made a separate department and J. Lisle Apple elected instructor. The foreign language department was instituted in 1896, a two-year course in French and German. In 1900 the regular Normal course was extended to three years for a teaching certificate. The first three-year class graduated in June 1903. In 1910 the Normal course was again extended to four years. In July 1906 Hamlin E. Cogswell arrived to take charge of the music department, and under his guidance the music department became one of the best in the State. A new music conservatory had been built the year before as part of Thomas Sutton Hall. With him came his wife, Dorothy, who taught voice culture and history of music; and his daughter Edna Allan, teaching piano and organ. Mrs. Cogswell wrote the "Alma Mater" song for the Normal School. In August 1906 a pipe organ was being installed in the chapel, a tracker action instrument of two manuals and thirty stops, measuring 22 x 22 feet. It had been purchased from a United Presbyterian church in Pittsburgh and was played for the first time November 23 with Miss Cogswell at the console. A symphony orchestra was organized and gave its first concert in the chapel in 1913. Cogswell organized and directed a military band in 1907 and directed the Indiana Choral Society which gave a number of concerts in Library Hall, accompanied by the Pittsburgh Festival Orchestra. His composition, "The Spirit of Indiana," went on sale in 1913. Cogswell resigned at the close of the 1915 term to accept a position as director of music in Washington D. C. The School of Business was also outstanding and Dr. Ament declared in 1907 "So thorough and excellent is the business course that many graduate from it not to teach, but to take up business careers." The excellence of the music, business, fine arts and foreign language courses, he felt, made "the normal school a desirable institution in which to obtain a general education for any purpose in

life."⁵⁷

In these days the trustees exercised considerably more direct control than is the case now. Silas M. Clark, who was president of the board of trustees, died November 20, 1891. John Sutton Hall was draped in black and all school activities the afternoon of the funeral, November 23, were cancelled so that the faculty and student body might attend as a group, completely filling one of the downstairs rooms of the Presbyterian Church. The bell at John Sutton tolled during the services, and at the conclusion the trip to the cemetery was delayed so that the Normal School faculty and students could file by his casket.⁵⁸ Clark was succeeded as president by A. W. Wilson until 1897, and then by Thomas Sutton who served 39 years until 1936.

Student enrollments increased rather steadily. In 1893 there were 659 students but by 1915 over 1500. The number of graduates varied from only 29 in 1903 to 336 in 1913. One thing which attracted students was that, beginning in 1901, the State paid the full tuition of those preparing to teach. A Normal School advertisement in 1916 said "\$200 covers all expenses for one year - excepting books - for those preparing to teach. Others pay \$260."⁵⁹ Discipline and control tended to be rather strict, especially as regards mixing of the sexes. In 1897 the two literary societies, originally open to both, were segregated by having male members meet on alternate Monday evenings and females on alternate Saturday evenings. A 1913 news item announced that Miss Leonard had prohibited "modern dances" at school functions, including the "Boston," "bunny hug," "turkey trot," "jelly fish wobble," "chicken glide," "grapevine twist," and "other seductive steps." Agnes Sligh Turnbull was a student in 1909-10. Her reminiscences appear in III:330-333. She especially enjoyed the Saturday night dances. Charles J. Margiotti, later Attorney General of Pennsylvania, took the negative side in a debating team question "Resolved - That the maintaining of the State Police Should Be Abolished" in December 1909. Emma Gordon Blair (1905-07) recalled that Miss Leonard had a black book in which she wrote names of girls who misbehaved. "It was easy to get your name in the black book. . ." She remembered the reception given to the graduates in 1907 by Thomas Sutton. The elegant house was decorated in yellow and white, the class colors. There were "concave and convex mirrors and a swimming pool and a fish pond where everybody fished for a memento. . ." It was "like a fairyland to me - the perfect ending to my two years at Indiana."⁶⁰

In 1894 there were 2,726 volumes in the Normal libraries, and attendance in 1893-94 was 576. Annual acquisitions varied from 300 to 800 titles. The 1915-16 **Catalogue** did not state the total number of volumes but did list a large selection of 98 journals, six daily newspapers,

and 88 complimentary weekly and daily papers including seven of Indiana County.⁶¹

In addition to the annual catalogues, a number of other publications appeared. **The Normal Herald**, a quarterly, began publication in February 1895. The yearbooks at first appeared on an irregular basis. **The Instano** began in 1912 and annually thereafter until 1927. E. Gertrude London's unpublished thesis, **History of Our Normal School**, was dated 1904 and Will Grant Chambers' **Organization of the Public Schools of Indiana, Pa. as a System of Practice and Training Schools for the State Normal School** the same year. He later was Dean of Education at the University of Pittsburgh.⁶²

Relationships with the community, for the most part, seem to have been cordial, although in 1895 West Indiana Borough assessed the Normal School at \$112,000 and attempted to impose a five-mill tax. The County Commissioners, however, removed the school from the list of taxables in April. A small advertisement in 1916 read "Mr. Farmer: The Indiana Normal School will need 4,000 bushels of potatoes this coming fall. Why not raise your share of these potatoes?"⁶³

Beginning about 1897, and continuing for many years, a growing sentiment in many quarters supported the idea that the State should take over ownership of the Normal Schools. These feelings were the result of almost continuous financial shortages. Whenever money was needed for a new building or other major improvement, the Normal School principals had to go begging to the General Assembly for an appropriation. At Indiana the matter was discussed first in January 1912 when Dr. Ament told the trustees it would be best if needed school improvements could be completed "before some combination of circumstances might force us to place the school under the full control of the State." In May the trustees decided they "did not at the present time wish to enter into negotiations for its sale to the State." By 1913 West Chester had been purchased by the State and the constitutionality of State ownership was being tried in the Dauphin County Court. Dr. Ament, however, opposed State ownership. In an address to the Allegheny County Alumni Association in Pittsburgh April 4, 1913 he felt the politicians would follow their "usual practice" and "consider this as a valuable political asset." He declared "It may be that we will be forced into absolute State ownership but Indiana, for one, would rather stay just the way we are." By 1916 he was still opposed despite the fact that ten of the thirteen State Normal schools by that time had been taken over by the State.⁶⁴