

EDUCATION  
in  
Harrodsburg and Neighborhood  
Since 1775

By Miss Martha Stephenson



Press of  
THE HARRODSBURG HERALD  
Harrodsburg, Ky.

This page in the original text is blank.

# Education In Harrodsburg and Neighborhood Since 1775

By

MISS MARTHA STEPHENSON.

Read before the Harrodsburg Historical Society, May, 1910.

## CHAPTER I

Fellow members and friends:

Pardon me for presuming that a preface is necessary, but I fear there are more than a few people in and out of Harrodsburg who regard lightly the work and aims of the Historical Society. Some of these sneer good-naturedly at the foolishness of searching among the records of bygone generations and holding in reverence historical memorials. These are vaunted up-to-date people. Another class talk much about practical work and doing good, as the only worthy objects for organized endeavor. They feel a sort of tolerant contempt for what they consider a mere culture club, and they can see nothing else in the Historical Society. I would make reply to the first, that the very recent meeting in the City of New York of the American Historical Association, including in its membership the most practical and enlightened men of the nation—President Taft and Roosevelt being among them—is significant of the spirit of the present time. Daniel Webster, in a letter to a friend, referring to certain historical spots, said: "I never knew a man yet, nor woman either with sound head and good heart who was not more or less under the power which those local associations exercise. I have a pair of silver sleeve-buttons, the materials of which my father picked up and brought away from Bennington. If I thought either of the boys would not value them fifty years hence (if he should live so long) I believe I should begin to flog him now." To the second class I quote from a prominent literary man and critic, these words: "Whatever makes the past, the distant or the future predominate over the present advances us in the dignity of thinking beings." Furthermore there is other obvious practical value in the study of our memorable past. History has been defined as "philosophy learned from examples." Turning the thought into other words, "we are looking forward to posterity with knowledge gained by looking back to ancestry." In this day of Kentucky's educational awakening, we can find no stronger stimulant to us to press for better schools and to cultivate a keener appreciation of their value than by searching out and reflecting on our past educational history. In the study of Kentucky history nothing has impressed me more than the notable list of educated men who were leaders in the founding and building up of our commonwealth. "Knowledge is power, and ignorance is weakness," found its exemplification in them and its acceptance as a fact by them. This being true of the state as a whole, is first of all true of Harrodsburg and neighborhood. The great leaders who laid the foundations of the institutions that made for permanent government, settled here

first and began the working out of their plans at this place. Then there need be no surprise that there has been a succession of interesting schools in or near Harrodsburg since the founding of the fort. Concurrent with the coming of the women and children to Kentucky in the spring of 1775, was the presence among them of a teacher for children. She was Mrs. Jane Coomes, wife of William Coomes, and she has two large credits to her account in early Kentucky annuals. First, with the aid of some men or boys in the party who could be spared from sterner duties, she manufactured the first salt that was made in Kentucky. This was during a stop for a few weeks of the party journeying to Harrod's Station at Drennon's Springs located near the present site of Frankfort. Second, she was the first teacher who kept school in the State. She and her husband and sons were good Roman Catholics and remained in the fort nine years, during which time Wm. Coomes took an honorable part in the hardships and defense of the station, and one of his sons was in the battle of Blue Licks. The history throws a side light on the influence of the wife and mother and therefore on the teacher. Is it a freak of the imagination to connect the fact of her being the first to make salt—a saving element—with the other fact of her being the first to save the mental life of the children of the fort? Bishop Spalding in his Sketches is authority for the brief history of this family, and he obtained his information from Wm. Coomes, the son, a lad of sixteen when he came to Kentucky and an old man when Bishop Spalding talked with him. No description is given of the Coomes school, but the fact that it was kept despite the hardships and irregularities of pioneer life and Indians skulking about the fort, proves the estimate put on education by the founders of our town.

The second school opened in the State was also a Mercer county institution. It was at McAfee Station, and so far as I have read, historians are unanimous in giving the date 1777; but I can not make this tally with the fact that the McAfees did not bring their families and settle permanently until 1779. Here is a nut to crack! It is a testimony to the superior ambition of the McAfees that John May was the teacher, for he must have had both scholarship and executive ability. He must have been a young man, just testing his powers when he taught the McAfee children; for later, we find him one of the four representatives from Kentucky in the Virginia Legislature, commissioned to name the District Attorney and the Judges of the Supreme Court of the District of Kentucky, which met first at Harrodsburg in March 1783. He was also one of the twenty-five men, "selected for their prominence in the District" in 1783, to be Trustees of Transylvania Seminary. That he was a man of enterprise is established by the fact that he and Simon Kenton founded Maysville in 1787, and from him it derives its name. He was led by the treachery of two white men into an ambush of Indians and killed in 1790, while descending the Ohio River with a cargo of merchandise. A fact of local interest to us is that he was a great uncle on the maternal side of our ex-townsmen, Paul, Rodney and May Jones, of Cincinnati, New York, and Tulsa, Okla., respectively. This last statement is in an obituary of Mrs. Augustus Jones published in the Harrodsburg Enterprise of \_\_\_\_\_ 1883.

Until 1781, Harrodstown, because of its strong fort and its brave, energetic, capable leaders, was the center or converging point of men and measures; but about that time the siege that had been almost continuous since 1777, became intermittent and less fierce, the Indians seeming to realize the hopelessness of trying to drive out the settlers. Then there began to be a moving-out of the fort and dispersion into the wide areas inviting home building. Everywhere that a settlement was made, a school was started. The educational spirit of this time was vital. A great educational

system was conceived in the minds of some believers in the benefits of learning, which was intended to reach a higher need than could be met by the temporary, elementary, schools that prevailed in the infant commonwealth.

The third school organized in Mercer county was the infant Transylvania University, whose history is unparalleled in interest in the educational annals of the State. It may seem far fetched for me to claim it as a part of our local educational history; but its beginning was so closely connected with Harrodsburg at several points that I believe I will be justified in doing so. Until 1783 most of the important movements of the State originated at Harrodsburg, then Danville secured the District Court and became the meeting place of the Conventions, hence the center of political discussion and intellectual thought. But Danville was then, and until 1842, in Mercer county. The life of Harrodsburg and of Danville was very closely interwoven. Some of the ablest men who made history for Danville lived in Harrodsburg. The same men in several instances were Trustees for both places. There were intellectual giants then building the future civilization of this western wilderness. As a foundation for it Transylvania University was conceived in the most liberal spirit to meet the needs of a people distant from the established institutions of learning.

Its interesting and checkered career is too familiar and lengthy, to be repeated now, especially as I treated it somewhat in detail in a former paper on "Education in Kentucky." My present purpose is to show that this first institution of higher learning established west of the Appalachian Mountains was cradled in Mercer county. It had its inception in 1780 in the noble mind and patriotic soul of the Rev. John Todd, of Louisa county, Virginia, and that of his nephew, Col. John Todd, who left the fort at Harrodsburg to help found Lexington. Owing to the difficult conditions of living in this far-away western county of Virginia, it did not have its birth until 1785. It was then only a little one, a little school fostered in the house of the Rev. David Rice, who lived on the farm owned then by Hon. John Bowman, and the same owned now by Mr. Wm. T. Robinson. At that time it was all in Mercer county; now it is very near the dividing line between Mercer and Boyle counties. The present house is on the site of the old one—perchance has incorporated it. It may be well to recall to you that in 1780 through the advice and influence of the Rev. John Todd and the efforts and ability of his nephew, Col. John Todd, delegate from Kentucky county to the Virginia Legislature, an act was passed by the Virginia Legislature authorizing the confiscation of eight thousand acres of land in Kentucky belonging to British subjects, "as a free gift for the purpose of a public school or a seminary of learning to be erected in the said county as soon as the circumstances of the county and the state of its funds will admit, and for not other use or purpose whatever." For obvious reasons already noted, no steps were taken to apply the gift until 1783, when the Hon. Cabel Wallace, representative from Lincoln county in the District of Kentucky to the Virginia Legislature, took the initiative, and by great effort and ability and personal influence secured the passage of a second act incorporating the seminary under the name Transylvania with an additional endowment of 12,000 acres of land, and twenty-five instead of thirteen trustees. But the lands remaining unsold and the appeal for supplementary funds from private sources, being but little heeded, it was Feb. 1, 1785, before Transylvania Seminary had its natal day. Its still limited financial resources admitted of only a grammar school conducted in the house of Rev. David Rice and taught by Rev. James Mitchell, his son-in-law. Rev. David Rice, known as "Father Rice," not only because of his character as a spiritual leader, but because he has been until now, generally credited with having preached the first Presbyterian sermon

in Kentucky. An error by one historian is too apt to be picked up by others and handed on. This is a case in point. We have it on the authority of Dr. Whitsett, who refers to the records of the Hanover Presbytery that Rev. James Mitchell, and not his more illustrious father-in-law, was the first Presbyterian minister to preach in Kentucky, and there are circumstances that lend an interest of probability that Cane Run was the place. Mr. Mitchell for teaching the Transylvania grammar school received a salary of £30 a quarter, or \$400 a year. (In early Kentucky the value of the pound was \$3.33 1-3). It may be he was too large a personality for so humble a position; for he seems to have taught less than two years when he went to North Carolina, and here we lose trail of his later history. He had been a tutor in Hampden and Sidney, Virginia, before he came to Kentucky, as far back as 1781. It is most probable that he induced his father-in-law to come to this western country. Whether the school was conducted at all after his departure until 1788, I have no records to tell. It was then moved to Lexington for a more favorable financial environment and in 1798 was merged with its sometime rival, Kentucky Academy, and was reorganized as Transylvania University. How intimately its career again becomes associated with Harrodsburg will appear later when I come to write of Bacon College.

Thus far I have been following the path already made by historians, with just a glint of new light flashed at a few points, but now I enter a field scarcely penetrated by the historian, and the trail of history must be pursued through musty records in the county archives, through research in old books, long out of print, and through interviews with men and women whose memories reach back into the misty past. This field has remained too long neglected. Much that would be of interest and value, if it had been preserved for us out of the life that is gone, has been forever lost. Much more is slipping now into oblivion, records being lost and worn out, old writings growing scarcer, and our old people, too, are wearing out and slipping into the beyond. This pricks me to my task, and ennobles it.

For the interval between 1788 and 1798, there is nothing on printed page or of clear tradition that I have found concerning the organization of any school in Harrodsburg or neighborhood. That there were schools I do not doubt. Mrs. Coomes remained in the fort until 1784, and probably kept school during all the nine years, and the high character of the leaders of the pioneer settlement leaves no doubt that provision was still made for the education of their children. At all events we see the educational trend exhibited in that same year, Dec. 1798, when a (Mercer county) seminary was organized under the act of the Virginia Legislature to "Establish and endow certain academies," and a notable list of men were vested trustees of the public lands donated under the general act of February of the same year, as follows: "Samuel Taylor, John Adair, Gabriel Slaughter, George Thompson, John Thomas, Phil Bush, Mathias Bush, George Bohannon, Peter Casey, Samuel P. Duval, Peter Bonta and Augustine Passmore, shall be and are hereby constituted a body politic and incorporate and shall be known by the name of the trustees of the Harrodsburg Academy." \* \* \* "The permanent site of the academy shall be established on the public square in the town of Harrodsburg, containing fifteen acres, which is hereby vested in the trustees thereof and their successors, who are empowered to sell any part thereof not exceeding thirteen acres, and appropriate the money arising therefrom towards erecting buildings for said academy on the remaining part." This fifteen acres consisted of four blocks or squares. The "Old Fort Hill" is one of them. Miss Irene Moore's home embraces two of them, and the fourth one is between "Old Fort Hill" and Warwick street. We pursue this

trail and find that on March 9, 1905, at a meeting of the trustees of Harrodsburg it was resolved that the trustees of Harrodsburg Seminary be permitted to fence in the Public Square. Again at a meeting of the trustees, October 24, 1914, it was provided that whereas information had been received that several persons were proceeding to erect works of different descriptions upon the public square belonging to the academy without the permission of the trustees and were otherwise trespassing on said property that a committee be appointed to inquire into the facts. Later the result of the investigation disclosed that a Presbyterian church was being erected and had proceeded from the foundation up to the first window sills. Some brick kilns were the other works, but we pass them. The trustees or agents of the Presbyterian church are named as Garrett Darland, L. Reese, Samuel McDowell, Cornelius Demaree, William Nourse. Some at least of them we know to have been men of dominant influence. No other minutes of what was done about the matter being extant, we satisfy our speculation completely by putting two and two together and we reach the other end of the equation. We have had description by several people, viz.: Mr. Mullins, Mr. James Moberly, Mr. Hieronymous, of Mercer county; Mr. William Askew, of Georgetown, etc., of a two-roomed old brick building with a belfry that stood on "Old Seminary Hill," and was used for a school house until in the sixties, I think. The point of interest about it, is that every one of them says that it had the tradition of being a very old building when he went to school in it, but not one of them could make a guess at the time of its building. Mr. Askew replied to the query concerning its age, "I am some old, but I am not old enough to date that building. When I was a boy at school there, we thought it had been used as a defense against the Indians, and were rather sorry that it was not then used for that purpose." Our conclusion is that a compromise was struck between the town trustees, the guardians of the Public Square belonging to the seminary, and the trustees of the Presbyterian church, whose building had progressed from foundation up to the first window sills, and that the building was used for a church and a seminary. This was not an infrequent partnership in those days, as we shall note further on. This accounts for a belfry on a school house. This answers the question when Harrodsburg Seminary, which had been endowed and furnished with trustees in 1798, began to have a visible place of operation. It is referred to in later records as an existing institution.

## CHAPTER II

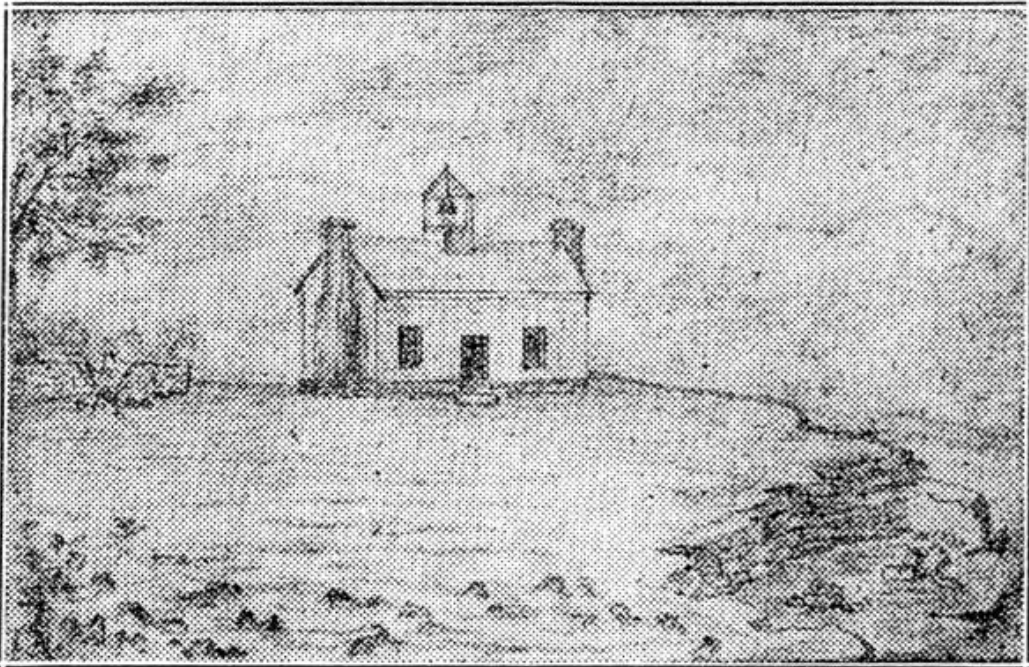
Four years later, January, 1818, the County Court of Mercer county was directed to appoint three Commissioners to sell half of the Public Square in the town and to apply \$2,000 of the proceeds of the sale towards building the Court House in the town, and pay over the balance to the trustees of the Harrodsburg Seminary, to be applied by them to the use of the Seminary. By act of November 26, 1822, it was provided that "the trustees of the Harrodsburg Seminary are authorized to sell not exceeding five hundred acres of the lands belonging to the said Seminary." The trustees were given discretionary power as to the manner and terms of the sale, and were authorized "to apply the whole of the proceeds of sale to the payment of their debts in the first place, and the balance (if any) in repairs to the house or in the purchase of books or philosophical apparatus." The individual character of this Seminary was lost in 1828. By an act approved February 9, 1828, "Thomas Cleland, Thomas P. Moore, John B. Thompson, William Robinson, Sr., Beriah Magoffin, Benj. Pleasants, Christopher Graham, William Hord, Joel P. Williams, Madison S. Worthington, John L. Smedley and their

successors shall be and are constituted a body corporate under the name 'The trustees of the Harrodsburg Female Academy.' Sec. 3. 'It shall be lawful for the trustees of the Mercer County Seminary, two-thirds agreeing thereto, to transfer to the corporation hereby created all the estate and property belonging to said Seminary, to be used, held, possessed for the use and purpose herein provided, etc.'" Page 118, Acts of 1828. In the history of the Presbyterian Church, written by Robert H. Bishop, in 1828, there is incidental allusion to a Seminary. He received his information from Rev. Thomas Cleland. About 1818 the Presbyterian Church at Cane Run, which, since 1813, as also the New Providence Church, had been under the pastoral care of Rev. Thomas Cleland, was moved to Harrodsburg and the name of the congregation changed. The first house which they occupied in Harrodsburg was built by them in conjunction with others on the republican plan (joint privilege of two or more denominations to use the same house for worship) and was also to serve the double purpose of a meeting house and a seminary. The arrangement did not prove very satisfactory, but an embarrassment was removed when in less than two years a hurricane leveled the building with the ground. It is interesting to note that the Republican Church and Seminary was on the site of the old Baptist Church, now used as the "Harrodsburg Republican" printing office.

A side light thrown on the status of education in Harrodsburg during the period we have been considering is an act of Dec 29, 1823. It recites that "Priestly H. McBride, William Pauling, James H. Humphries, Joseph Haskins, Jacob H. Sutfield, John Hanna, Grant Allin, Ellis Corn, George L. Waugh, Archibald Woods, David Sutton and Samuel Hart, and the rest of the subscribers who have subscribed or who may hereafter subscribe to the Harrodsburg Library Company shall be body politic and incorporate by the name of 'The Harrodsburg Library Company, etc.' "The shareholders of the Harrodsburg Library shall meet at the Library room in the town of Harrodsburg on the first Saturday in April next and every succeeding Saturday in April at such place or places as they may appoint, for the purpose of electing nine directors, all of whom shall be shareholders and continue in office one year, who shall take an oath faithfully and impartially to do their duties, etc." Page 368, Acts 1824.

Thanks to a versatile and accomplished woman, Mrs. Maria T. Daviess, who wrote "Desultory Chapters about Harrodsburg," for the Harrodsburg Enterprise, we get from the issue, January 5, 1882, an interesting glimpse of several early schools; which, but for her interest in preserving history, would be now among the things forgotten. Mrs. Daviess was peculiarly competent for the work, both by reason of her culture and her nearness to the times when the history was in the making. She throws a light on the period "so far back as the beginning of the last century," when a superior boarding school for girls was kept by Dr. Essex, an Englishman, assisted by his wife, in the house on the southeast corner of Lexington and Chiles streets, known still as the Harris-McMordie Place. A very illuminating comment is the following: "Upon the basis of a substantial education there was raised a superstructure of accomplishments. I have a specimen of embroidery of which cloth and floss are home-made, snow-white and a work of a variety of stitches." It was a part of the social standard of that era to regard the ornamental accomplishment as very essential to a girl's education. It is remarkable that such a school as Mrs. Daviess gives us warrant to picture, should have been here so early; for Dr. Alvin Lewis in his monograph on "Higher Education in Kentucky," says: "There were for a long time few schools at all for girls in the State, and those usually of the





The Old Seminary on Old Fort Hill

poorest and most primitive kind. Girls were excluded entirely from the early academies and the only schools to which they had access, with few exceptions, were the 'old field type.' For a considerable period the only schools in the State claiming to give an ordinary grammar school education were those of Rev. John Lyle, of Paris, and Mrs. Keats, at Washington, Mason county." These opened in the years 1806-7, respectively.

Mrs. Daviess mentions, without date or comment, a school taught in Harrodsburg by Mrs. Holcomb.

It is an observed fact that a large majority of the early teachers were foreigners. "The first teachers for boys that I recall," says Mrs. Daviess, "were foreign. Mr. Gorin, French, taught the men of the late James Taylor's day." Having knowledge that Maj. Taylor was born in 1798 and would be about sixteen in 1814, may we not think it probable that Mr. Gorin taught in the Seminary on "Old Fort Hill."

The next school described by Mrs. Daviess must have been somewhere about 1830, counting back to the years of Mrs. Daviess' childhood. She narrated her own experience in the following manner: "My first experience was in a low dingy room where long rows of girls and boys on backless benches, sat kicking their bare feet on dusty floors, and murmuring every one of them more than audibly, their elementary lessons. From almost early dawn till dewy eve, the good man heard lessons, beginning at his desk and going around and around again. We little ones would give him our hand and spring lightly into his lap, read on in our primers until our time was out. A good lesson was often rewarded with a bit of candy or ginger cake, and when we wanted to get a holiday we barred doors and windows, and he capitulated."

Praise to the memory of and peace to the ashes of good Nathan Harris!

This pictures a typical "old field" school, and I hope with further effort to be able yet to find its precise location. Resuming Mrs. Daviess' narrative: "The next teacher shall be nameless, so poor, so ignorant, so humbly asking pardon for it in his very demeanor, I cannot hold him up to ridicule. The next teacher added a good many things to our list of studies, but employed himself chiefly in talking infidelity to a great strapping boy he called Socrates. Under this administration I committed a hard grammar to memory, parsed even in Milton's Paradise Lost, and never had an idea that what I was learning had the slightest application to my own tongue or pen.

"In old times there was a favorite method of utilizing all professional failures by making teachers out of them.

"Another experience I had was under an aborted lawyer. I lived in such dread of this knight of the birch, lest he should cut off my ink-stained fingers, across which he was wont to draw his jack-knife, that I have no recollection of his educational procedure, save that every evening the whole school stood up in a semi-circle and spelled and that a gallant fellow ended head nearly every evening and gave me his place; which I took as triumphantly as if won by my own merits. That schoolman believed in substitution. There was a nearly simple child, the daughter of a hard mother who herself kept a school close by. The pedagogue stood that trembling child before him for the third time that day, for chastisement, and throwing up his hand exclaimed, 'I'm tired of whipping this girl, will no one be whipped for her?' Up rose a strong boy of fourteen, red-headed and freckled but with dauntless eyes; stepping before the girl he drew off his coat and received the thrashing. Oh! great hearted Vance Noel, where are you now? If you live, the world is better for your presence. The girl bounded out of the window with a scream, and with a heroism, unaccounta-

ble to myself, I threw her bonnet after her." The foregoing picture confirms what Dr. Alvin Lewis says about the early schools for girls.

Capt. Philip B. Thompson, brother of Mrs. Daviess, told of having attended school in 1828 in the one remaining block house of the fort. Later, Dr. Trapnall imported Mr. Daly, under whom his own sons, the Thompsons, the Daviess, Tom Marshall and some of his brothers received their education. Then followed Dr. Pollin, an Irish graduate of Dublin University, and some other well educated men who afforded educational advantages for the boys of Harrodsburg and neighborhood until Bacon College was located here in 1839.

The name Bacon College called to an old Harrodsburgan brings instantly a dart in the eyes and a little quiver of the tell-tale muscles about the mouth, because it evokes disquieting memories. Its coming brought aspiration and uplift to the town and its removal left a vacuum and bitterness with a tank of resentment. It had its genesis in religious partizanship in 1835 at Georgetown, Kentucky. Georgetown College was the fifth in order among the Baptist Colleges established in the United States, and the first west of the Alleghenies. Bacon College, an off-shoot from it, is the earliest collegiate institute of the Christian Church. Religious differences drove Prof. Thornton F. Johnson, S. G. Mullins and another teacher in Georgetown College, to resign from its faculty in 1836, and to organize a rival school in the town, to be under the auspices of the new faith, known by its opponents as the Campbellite, and by its membership, as the Christian Church. This school was chartered in 1837 under the name of Bacon College; so called for Sir Francis Bacon, the father of modern science. Georgetown being a stronghold of the new church under the leadership of Alexander Campbell, Bacon College had two hundred and three matriculates its first year. Among the early names enrolled, some are familiar to us all, because they won honor and reputation in their several ways. They are John B. Bowman, John Aug. Williams, Henry H. White, A. J. Alexander, Andrew Steele, John R. Viley, etc. The department of civil engineering attracted much the largest number of students. Railroad building had reached high-tide and there was ready employment with good pay for civil engineers. Henry H. White, a boy of sixteen, employed in New Jersey, chanced to see on a piece of wrapping paper the advertisement, "A school for engineers at Georgetown, Kentucky." It seemed to offer an answer to a desire he had been cherishing and his name was enrolled in the matriculation register of 1838.

Even with a large patronage a college can hardly flourish on \$20, \$30 and \$50 for primary, preparatory and collegiate pupils respectively, without buildings and endowment. Therefore, it became necessary to raise funds for Bacon College. The plan adopted was to raise \$50,000 in scholarships of \$500 each. Georgetown not being able to meet this demand, the permanent location of the college was offered to the place that would do so. Through the efforts and influence mainly of Maj. Taylor—not a member of the Christian Church, but animated by civic pride and interest in education—Mercer county subscribed one hundred scholarships at \$500 each, and \$10,000 for buildings. Therefore the trustees voted on May 2, 1839, to remove Bacon College to Harrodsburg. On July 29, Maj. Taylor and three other gentlemen bought for a thousand dollars (\$1,000) a tract of ten acres which they deeded in 1846 for the same price to the Board of Trustees, of which they were themselves members. This campus was situated in the angle made by College street and the Cornishville pike opposite "Diamond Point," now the home of James L. Neal. A building was begun at once on the campus for the preparatory department, but it was several years before

the handsome "College Building adequate to the accommodation of several hundred students," was completed. Meanwhile the College found a temporary home in the house that formerly belonged to the late James Curry, and which occupied the present site of Mr. John Lafon's house. Bacon College opened in Harrodsburg in 1839, with Dr. Sampel Hatch, president, and Henry H. White, who had proved his worth as a tutor while studying civil engineering, Professor of Mathematics; S. G. Mullins, Professor of Ancient Languages, and George W. Matthews, Principal of the Preparatory. In 1841 S. G. Mullins resigned, and Mr. Hatch, who had been only provisional president, took the chair of Chemistry and Natural Philosophy, and James H. Shannon became President; George W. Matthews, Professor of Ancient Languages, and Mr. E. Askew, Principal of the Preparatory. This was the permanent and able faculty and the standards of the institution were high. It had two fraternities, known as "The Franklin," and "The Newton Literary and Philosophical Societies." It had growing libraries and published a monthly called "The Pierian." But its poor financial resources are disclosed in the following quotation from Prof. Alexander Milligan's able "Historical Review of Kentucky University: "A professor first earn his salary and then riding a hired horse, would spend a few weeks in collecting it from subscribers to the College in different counties." It ostensibly had an endowment of \$50,000 or \$75,000, which in that day seemed adequate, but in reality most of this was in buildings and scholarships which yielded no income. The rise of Bethany College in Virginia under the immediate auspices of Alexander Campbell diminished its patronage. Its financial difficulties came to a crisis about 1847 when its friends again rallied to its support and raised \$11,000, and gave it a new lease on life and prosperity for a brief period; but not without heroic sacrifices on the part of its devoted faculty; and "when the compensation for the session that ended on the 14th of June, 1850, was less than the trustees could ask the professors to accept for another year, the faculty was dissolved and this was the sad end of Bacon College." Dr. Hatch kept a high school five years longer under the fiction of Bacon College, in order to redeem some still outstanding scholarships of 1829. Several ineffectual efforts were made to raise an adequate endowment to re-open the College, and Albert G. Talbot, of Boyle county, seemed on the way to success, having secured conditional pledges for \$50,000 when the great financial crisis of 1854 ended his canvass and crushed his hopes. But in 1855 a Moses for the fallen institution appeared in the person of John B. Bowman, an alumnus and a trustee of it. He dreamed of something grander than Bacon College had ever been. He saw the need and proceeded to make it possible to erect a University on the ruins of his Alma Mater. He found Maj. Taylor again an able coadjutor. Beginning the work in the autumn of 1855, Maj. Taylor reported the following January, subscriptions raised in Mercer county to the amount of \$30,500 to the board "which tendered him unfeigned thanks for the energy and success with which he had prosecuted the endowment subscription." Mr. Bowman took up the work and made a house to house canvass through the counties of Central Kentucky, where his own church was particularly strong. But he did not confine his soliciting to that denomination, but enlisted in the cause all who were interested in education. His plan was to take notes with payments made easy, and to issue scholarship coupons in proportion to the amounts subscribed. His success was marvelous; for in one hundred and fifty days he secured subscriptions for \$150,000. But it took some time to call meetings, confer with representatives of the donors in the different counties, secure an amended charter, and to reorganize under it. It was unanimously agreed that the

name of the college should be changed, but the new name was not inserted in the charter until it became necessary before presenting it to the Legislature for passage. Capt. Phil Thompson, who, as representative from Mercer county, had charge of the bill inserted "Kentucky University." The preparatory department had been named "Taylor Academy" and it, perhaps, was the intention to insert the name, "Bowman University," but Mr. Bowman himself objected.

The preparatory department was open September 21, 1857, with William C. Piper as principal and Joseph B. Myers, assistant. But from various causes, the University proper did not open until September 19, 1859. The following names declare its faculty: President, Robert Mulligan; Prof. Robert Richardson, Prof. Robert Graham, Prof. H. H. White and Prof. J. H. Neville. Its departments were Biblical Literature and Moral Philosophy, Mathematics, Ancient Language, Physical Science, Belle Letters, Modern Languages. It had valuable scientific apparatus and Mr. Bowman held conditional notes aggregating \$50,000 for the purchase of the erstwhile Graham Springs for University grounds and the erection on them of suitable buildings. The University opened brilliantly with 194 students in attendance the first year. But it was soon to pass again into eclipse. The clouds of the civil war overshadowed the States for four years. The cherished hopes of Mr. John B. Bowman to buy the Graham Springs for the University's permanent location, met disappointment when at the sale, they brought the undreamed of price, \$115,000—it is reported, by the manipulation of an enemy who desired to defeat Mr. Bowman's ambition. The Springs were afterwards sold for \$19,000. Finally, as if by some predetermined fate, the College buildings, in 1864, burned to the ground. Harrodsburg was not able to compete with larger centers of trade and wealth in the raising of endowment to rebuild, and the bitter end of her struggles to become a great educational center, ended with the removal of Kentucky University to Lexington, where it enfolded that other "first-born educational child" of large-minded men, Transylvania University, cradled in Mercer county and in its infancy fostered by men identified more or less with early Harrodsburg.

The removal of Kentucky University in 1865 had been made a short while before my father brought his family to live in Mercer county. The gloom left by its removal brooded heavily over society hereabout and the bitterness against Mr. Bowman, the foster genius of Kentucky, was as hard and sharp as a sword. Young minds are easily and lastingly impressed by talk of elder folk, and I have not forgotten. Time has not healed yet Harrodsburg's wound. Touch it and the sore shows its rawness. This is human, but it is human to err. A disinterested, unprejudiced reader of the history acquits Mr. Bowman of disloyalty to Harrodsburg and Mercer county, his native place. He loved Harrodsburg not less, but his ideal of the highest educational needs of the State more. Furthermore, why has Mr. Bowman been held chiefly responsible? At a meeting of the Board when the question of a permanent location was discussed, there were twenty-one of the curators present and the donors of fifteen counties were represented. The vote carried in favor of removal to a place not named, provided the citizens thereof would raise \$100,000 for its endowment. John B. Bowman, President Miligan and H. H. White were appointed a committee "empowered and requested to decide within thirty days on the place of permanent location for the University." They decided unanimously in favor of Lexington. Mr. Bowman, like the founders of Transylvania, had ideals far in advance of his time. He saw the need of a higher standard of scholarship in Kentucky, and the need also of widening the practical scope of education. He advoc-

cated the establishment of a normal department, or chair, and a department of agriculture, that teaching and agriculture might be elevated to the dignity of professions, co-ordinate with the ministry, the law, and medicine. He advocated "the regular systematic study of the Bible as the great textbook of moral science." It is but recently that even advanced education has arrived at where his vision led.

Parallel with Bacon College, which in the decade of the forties, was offering first-class College advantages for the sons, there was running at Harrodsburg a correspondingly high-grade school for the daughters. Whether advanced thought concerning the benefits of higher education for women, or merely the foresight of an opportunity for better financial returns, was the impelling motive for Prof. S. G. Mullins, in 1841, to resign from the chair of ancient languages in Bacon College to organize Greenville Institute, I cannot say. It is probable that both motives influenced him. Be that as it may, he rendered an inestimable service to the womanhood of that generation and those that have followed. But it is a sad illustration of the transitoriness of fame that I found it most difficult to get any information beyond some history of its grounds and the date of its founding and a few names of women who attended there. In Dr. Alvin Lewis' monograph it is nowhere mentioned, not even in the list of extinct institutions that had some noteworthiness in their day. Yet it is a fact that it was one of the very earliest private seminaries for girls of its rank established in Kentucky—Science Hill at Shelbyville being the only Protestant one as far as I know that antedated it. Perseverance happily was rewarded by my getting possession for a day of a copy of "The Ploughman," a weekly newspaper published at Harrodsburg, July 29, 1854, which contains a very elucidating advertisement of the school. This states that its buildings were all new and would accommodate one hundred boarders—giving at the same time seventy-five as the average number. When Prof. Mullins bought the property, in 1841, it was the home and property of Hon. James Harlan, father of Justice John Harlan. The residence must have been commodious, for the Greenville Springs as a watering place had been famous since 1807; as such, are referred to in Timothy Flint's geography, published in 1828. Prof. Mullins must have remodeled the old house or built an entirely new structure, which survives as Beaumont College. The health record of Greenville Institute is indicated in this line of the advertisement: "Cases of mortality within the whole time (since founded) none." The course of instruction embraced the ordinary English course, including the study of the Bible and natural science, with all necessary apparatus for illustrating its various branches, and "for such young ladies as may desire a more vigorous mental discipline"—as the advertisement expresses it—a regular college course, including Latin and Greek and the usual mathematics. It had departments for French, drawing and painting, and instrumental and vocal music. The advertisement names Mr. Eckel as principal teacher of music, justifying the inference that the department employed more than one. Terms for board, washing, lights and stationery and use of the library, were for either English or classical course, one hundred and fifty dollars per year. French, or drawing and painting, twenty dollars, and music, piano or guitar, fifty-six dollars with use of instruments. The session began the first Monday in September and continued forty weeks without intermission. What more is offered now in Kentucky's best seminaries or institutes, taking to themselves the more pretentious name of colleges?

But, here is something which indeed belongs to the long ago: "Uniforms for Sunda occasions only; during winter, scarlet merino dresses, white

aprons, white sunbonnets trimmed with scarlet lute-string ribbon; during summer, pink lawn dresses with apron and bonnet like those used in winter."

Contemporary with all the schools (since the thirties, at least), that I have been writing about, was a teacher of notable renown in Harrodsburg and neighborhood, Prof. Ayre Askew, locally named oftenest, Tobias Askew. One man dates him as a teacher as far back as 1810. He gives it on on testimony received from his mother, who was born in 1819. I am sure of making no mistake if I place his professional career as early as 1830; for the record of his marriage to Miss Trower, of Mercer county, is dated 1829, and teaching was his life-long profession. He was from Charleston, Va., and there is a general tradition that he came to Harrodsburg before the end of the eighteenth century. He was a preparatory teacher for boys; was principal of the preparatory department of Bacon College after 1841, as has been mentioned in the account of that institution. He taught Greek and Latin in addition to English; and, if he was not liberally educated according to college standards, he at least was thorough as far as he advanced. A distinct individuality and a forceful personality distinguished him. He exercised the severity of temper and discipline that McMaster and other historians mention as a general characteristic of the early New England schoolmasters; which gave origin to the appellation, "Knights of the birch." But, according to several testimonies, Prof. Askew's chastisements were penalties for violated law or neglected duty, and not mere outbursts of temper. Apropos of this is the following story, narrated by one who was his pupil in the early fifties: The school was not graded, but a heterogeneous assemblage of boys filled the room. While the waster was busy with a class, some unemployed boys slipped, one by one, out of the room until five had made their exit, and got together behind a low fence to play a game of cards. They had not found out that Mr. Askew could see everything above and below, before and behind, but they suffered an increase of knowledge very soon. Prof. Askew missed the boys, and he too slipped out and arrived unobserved on the opposite side of the fence, just as one of the boys called out "Spades is trumps, and I have the left bower." Leaping over the fence, Teacher Askew shouted, "No, switches are trumps, and I hold the right bough."

This ends by first paper. In my next, I shall give the history of the Presbyterian Academy, of some very interesting private schools, of the rise and progress of the public schools, of Daughters' College, and then finish with some account of the Public Library and the literary clubs as a part of the educational history of Harrodsburg and neighborhood.

Several acknowledgements have been made in my paper to the sources of history; but I desire to specially emphasize my indebtedness to my brother, W. W. Stephenson, for assisting me in collating material from the old trustee-books of Harrodsburg, from old deeds and records in the county clerk's office, and from the Acts of the Legislature; also to Prof. Alexander Milligan, of Transylvania University, for generously giving me the use of his published lecture, "Historical Review of Kentucky University," which contains information concerning Bacon College that I could not obtain from any living witness or other written records.

MARTHA STEPHENSON.

Harrodsburg, Kentucky.