

Mss. Pirtle, Alfred, 1837-1926.

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Writings :

History and memory. (Recollections of the Kentucky School for the Blind). February 24, 1923. Typewritten. 3 pp.

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Writings :

Recollections (of the Kentucky Institute for the Blind). Typewritten. 2 pp.

John Lloyd
John Tidd, Jr. Stephen Trigg
George Slaughter, John Lloyd
William Pope, an Marshall
Brashears. Trustees named in
the act of incorporation held a
meeting at the Fork on Lake, near the
fork of Treple St. It was the
last meeting of the Trustees, that John
Tidd Jr. John Lloyd, and Stephen
Trigg attended. This was on
July 7, 1781.

Michael Humble made a gift
to John Lloyd - no date given

April 12, 1783, John Lloyd while
going from Spring Station to his own
Station, was ambushed by Indians and
wounded. Charles, a brother, accompanied
him on horse back on John's and kept
him from falling off while he galloped to
Lloyd's Station. Lloyd died.

Mr. Lim killed
Mar. 1781. had
charged into canoe
of gunpowder, from
N. C. to Wheeling in
Fall of 1776.

The Filson Historical Society

History and Memory,
by

Alfred Pirtle.

The Kentucky School for the Blind, dates from 1843, but it was in 1845, before I remember any thing about it, and I first saw it, when I wandered, the long distance from my home on Walnut street, between 6th & 8th streets, on a summer day, attracted by a sham funeral, that the Democrats of Louisville, were

giving; General Andrew Jackson, of Tennessee, whom they were burying in reality, at his home at "The Hermitage", which was the name of his home.

The School, was started in 1843, or 44, and under a large appropriation ample buildings, had been built and installed, exactly, where now, the Catholic St. Xavier's stands on Broadway. A scholar, by the name of Bryce M. Patton, of Massachusetts, and a corps of teachers, men and women, had already, had the organization in good working order. I was hardly old enough, to give any opinion of Mr. Patton but I recall, his red head- it was only a plain, straight haired one. His foremost music teacher was Joseph B. Smith, who taught the piano and organ, as well as classes in singing. In time I got well acquainted with Prof. Smith, as he was the organist, manager of the choir of the Unitarian, church, then right on the sidewalk of the South east corner of 5th & Walnut streets. The soprano, was an elegant lady, Miss Helen Cochran, born and educated in Scotland, and of a cultivated voice. An alto tenor and bass, completed, the choir. For some years I was, the organ blower, in which job, I had my first salary, which was the large stipend of fifty cents a time I, blew.

I started out to tell you, of Prof. Smith's wonderful memory! **FOR HE WAS BLIND.** It was usual for Miss Cochran, to read him, slowly and distinctly, the vocal score, a staff at a time, then the words, stanza at a time then the organ score. and then Prof Smith, would catch each mistake as it was made, either, in reading or singing.

It was his fortune, to alwasys, learn ~~turn~~ , this selection, before any one else.

If a piece was mentioned to him if ha could not recall it , at once, only two or three measures would bring it all up, including the fine print which had been read to him , He was an accomplished pianist .

and The School, took fire, during school term, I think it was in October, was practically destroyed. The large building, now the Colored High School, at Ninth and Chestnut streets, had been built for the Law Department of the University of Louisville, but never used, was loaned to the School for the Blind, and also, two buildings on the N.E. corner of 7th & Chestnut streets, at one time occupied for a church, were made into shops for the manual class.

It seems to me there were other buildings, but I don't recollect.

A long time was consumed, in getting the Legislature, to appropriate Money to buy a suitable, ~~Body~~ of land and build a new home ~~for~~ the school, but in 1851, things were started, and the site was a part of a great beech forest, belonging to William H. Pope, extending, from the bridge at Bear Grass Creek, along side of the Louisville and Shelbyville turnpike, on the East side, some little farther than the grounds of the School. Mr. Patton and his faculty moved into the incomplete building , in 1855, and the building has been continuously, a school, except at the date of the Battle of Perryville, On October the 8th , 1862, between the Union & Confederate forces, it was used for months as a hospital, by the United States Government. The classes were resumed in the Fall of 1863.

The year, Mr. Patton, opened his school at the new place, a young man , just graduated from an Eastern University, came to Louisville to fill a place as an assistant, to Prof Holyoke, who opened a school for boys on Sixth Street, near York, This young man, was , ever after, a teacher, for when MR. Patton died in 1873, B.B. Huntoon, was selected by the Trustees of the School for the Blind, to take the place of Mr. Patton.

and house and

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I am under the impression, he had married, when this great event in his life happened, for he began, in deep earnest what was to be his life-work. for was in every way, admirably aided by his wife, who devoted herself, to the education of the girls.

Admirable as has been the Institution, under Miss Merwin, the whole establishment, speaks of Mr. Huntton, in every hall, on every floor, in all corners because the original build, was changed some what, under his management and following suggestions that made, all so beautifully adapted to it's purpose. The American Printing House for the Blind, is also his creation. The relief maps, were invented by him and alone should immortalize him. And the very trees, at his hands are offering always evidences of his fore thought, for he had cultivated one or more specimens of all trees native to Kentucky.

February, 24th 1923,

Recollections.

By

Alfred Firtle.

I should say it was about the year 1845, that I first heard about the "Blind Asylum", as it was spoken of, but I think the correct name was the "Kentucky Institute for the Blind". There were then only a few people living South of Broadway, but the Institute for the Blind, was a large, yellow colored, three story brick building, right where St. Xaviers, Catholic College is, near Second and Broadway. ^{is now. Bryce M. Patton} The Superintendent, was a red-headed man, of fifty years old, with the look of a teacher. I had made one or two visits to the Institute, but I did not get much from them. I ^{remember} ~~remember~~ that it burned down one night, but no one was lost.

The large building, now the Colored High School, on the South East corner of Ninth & Chestnut, that was built soon after 1846, for the Law Department of the University of Louisville, was and had been, ^{at the time of the fire,} unoccupied, which the City loaned for one of the buildings ^{that} ~~which~~ was to house the Institute for the Blind. There were two buildings, intended for a church and Sunday school, at the North East corner of 7th and Chestnut streets, which were altered into shops for the manual classes.

At this date, ¹⁸⁴⁷ there was a heavy beech forest, the property of William H. Pope, covering almost all the space, ~~at this time~~, lying on the East side of Frankfort Avenue from the ^{bridge at Bear Grass Creek} ~~Bridge at Bear Grass Creek~~ to the Louisville and Shelbyville turnpike, where it crosses the Louisville & Nashville R.R. Mr. Pope's name is preserved in the streets on the

East side of Frankfort Ave, just below the hook, Ladder house in, William, Pope, and H, streets

It was seen directly, that the Institute, was totally lost on the Broadway site, and it would have to be rebuilt as soon as possible. One of the results of the work of the friends of the school,

Was the purchase of all the property, now contained in the grounds of the two schools, for the white and Colored, and the American Printing House for the Blind. In the course of two years the main building was advanced so far that part of the Institute was housed on this site, but not completely.

I did not have any acquaintance with Mr. Patton, the Superintendent, consequently, it will be beyond me to give you any history at that date. In 1856 a young man came to Louisville, having just graduated from Massachusetts University, and became a teacher for Mr. Holyoke, on 6th street, two doors South of York street, where he remained, doing his duty so efficiently, that he was appointed Mr. Patton's successor on his death in 1871.

I am under the impression that he had married when he lived on 6th street, but he at once began what became his lifework, for he was during his administration, the School for the Blind. And he was in every way, admirably aided by his wife, who devoted her strength to the care and development of the girls.

The institution as you go about it, speaks of Mr. Huntton, in every hall, or on each floor, because, the original building, was not a large part of what is now so beautifully adapted to the great purposes to which it is devoted.

The American Printing House for the Blind is of his creation, and the Maps were invented and improved by him. This, alone enough to make his name immortal.

But he left his impress on the grounds, in the trees, as he had raised once, or more specimens of all the trees native to Kentucky.