

THE HISTORY OF ASCENSION SEMINARY

By

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## CHAPTER I

### THE HISTORY OF SULLIVAN COUNTY

The people of a community are one of the important factors in determining the success of any educational institution.

It is with this thought in mind that the writer wishes to present a history of early Sullivan County. The type of people, the establishment of the county and the early life of these pioneers had an important influence upon the educational growth of the county.

Information concerning the early history of Sullivan County is limited. Very few books have been written about its history and the records of its establishment and growth were destroyed in the fire of 1850.

The following history of Sullivan County is taken from the work of John W. Spencer.<sup>1</sup>

#### I. LOCATION

Sullivan County is located in the southwest part of the State of Indiana. It is bounded on the north by Vigo County, on the east by Clay and Greene Counties, south by Knox County, and west by the Wabash River, which is the boundary between the State of Indiana and the State of Illinois. Sullivan County is located partly in the coal fields, and partly in

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<sup>1</sup> John W. Spencer, A History of Greene and Sullivan Counties. pp. 447-491.

the rich agricultural valley of the Wabash River. It also has other natural resources in abundance, such as oil, clay, sand and gravel, and timber. Its location and natural resources have made it one of the progressive counties in the southern half of the state.

## II. THE INDIANS

The Indians that occupied Sullivan County previous to its settlement by the whites, were small groups from various tribes. The tribes represented were the Miamis, Delawares, and Shawnees. The Indians did not live in permanent villages, but used the territory as common hunting ground for the various tribes. The War of 1812 and the early treaties with the Indians took place about the period of the early settlement of this county. It is impossible to obtain definite information regarding dates, events, and incidents of encounters that took place between the early white settlers and the Indians. However, an account of one of these encounters may prove helpful in presenting a picture of the life of this early period of the county's history.

The Dudley Mack Massacre. There was a block-house on Gill's Prairie, located about half-way between New Lebanon and Carlisle. One day in 1814, Dudley Mack and a companion by the name of Collins, were killing wolves about a half mile north of the block-house. The Indians suddenly came upon them, and Dudley Mack was shot and killed. Collins was shot and fell from his horse, badly wounded, but managed to get on again and make his escape. The Indians then proceeded

to attack the block-house and in the encounter several were killed, and two boys by the names of Edwards and Campbell, were captured and never heard of again.

From this brief story and from many others regarding encounters between the whites and the Indians, we may safely conclude that life was hazardous for the early pioneers in Sullivan County.

### III. THE ORGANIZATION OF SULLIVAN COUNTY

Original extent of the county. It was erroneously supposed that Sullivan County originally extended northward to Lake Michigan. As a matter of fact, its northern boundary was the Indian line separating Harrison's Purchase of 1809 from the new purchase of 1818. This line extended from near Brownstown, through Gosport to the boundary between Indiana and Illinois, at a point west of Hillsdale, in Vermillion County. The county comprised all the land southwest of this line and west of the west fork of White River, and north of the present boundary of Knox County. It comprised the greater portions of the present counties of Owen, Clay, Parke, Greene, Putnam, Vermillion and all of the present Vigo and Sullivan Counties.

By an act of the State Legislature on January 21, 1818, the territory now known as Vigo County was taken from the original area of Sullivan County and established as a separate county. However, the three southern tiers of sections of the present Vigo County were left a part of Sullivan County. On



January 1, 1819 the present southern boundary of Vigo County was established.

On December 21, 1818 the county of Owen was created, thus taking away another large tract of land from Sullivan County.

On January 5, 1821 Greene County was created.

On February 12, 1825 Clay County was created.

These acts of the State Legislature all took land from the area of the original Sullivan County and thus reduced it to its present boundaries.

First officers, creation of townships, etc. The Governor appointed Morgan Eaton, then sheriff of Sullivan County, to hold an election for the purpose of selecting the necessary county officers. Mention was made that the first three County Commissioners met at the home of James Sproule, and proceeded to set the county wheels in motion.

So far as can be learned, the county was first divided into five townships, Haddon, Gill, Fairbanks, Turman, and Curry. It may be possible that Jackson was one of the first townships created, but not enough evidence can be found to consider this a true fact.

The first Justices of the Peace, soon after their election, assumed the duties of the County Commissioners Court. They were as follows: John Kreager, George Boone, E. W. Brown, Joseph Dickson, Abe Elliot, William Burnett, David Harbor, Henry Anderson, John F. Johnson, and William Winters. These were the only Justices of the Peace in the county in 1817, but

the following men were commissioned as such in 1818: Joseph Liston, Joseph Ransford, John Waydon, and Anthony Bennett. In the following year of 1819, James C. Black, Robert Freebles, Matthew Spurlock, George Shroyer, John Landers and James Watson were commissioned. In 1820, Joseph Miller, Samuel Whittlesey, Benjamin Stafford, Sr., and William Eldridge, were commissioned Justices of the Peace.

The first county seat. Information regarding the location of the first county seat of Sullivan County, is rather meagre. However, it seems to be a definitely established fact, that the county seat was first located at the town of Carlisle. For some reason which could not be learned, the county seat was moved to Merom. It is probable that the cause of the change was the importance of Merom, because of its location on the Wabash River and also on an important well-traveled state road. Much dissatisfaction was expressed from other parts of the county over the location at Merom, because its remoteness from the center of the county. As a result of this dissatisfaction the county seat was moved to Sullivan. The act which ordered the change of the county seat from Merom to the center of the county cannot be given. It was probably passed at the session of 1841 or 1842. Property owners of the town of Merom were given the right to exchange their lots with others similarly situated in Sullivan, or they were paid the depreciation value of their property, caused by the removal of the county seat. Sullivan has since that time been the county seat.

#### IV. THE HISTORY OF CURRY TOWNSHIP

Location. The exact date of the organization of Curry Township was lost when the records were destroyed in 1850 by the burning of the county court house.

Curry Township is in the north part of Sullivan County. It is bounded on the north by Linton Township, Vigo County; on the east by Jackson Township, south by Hamilton Township, and on the west by Fairbanks Township.

The township was named in honor of William Curry one of the first settlers in the township.

The early settlers. In the year of 1817 William Curry came from Kentucky and settled upon a tract of land where is now located the village of Currysville. Just a little later Paschal Shelburn also a native of Kentucky, came to the county and settled near the same place as that settled by Curry. In 1819 Henry Smock settled in the township bringing with him seven sons and four daughters. They were also from Kentucky.

From the period of 1820 to 1825 there arrived large numbers of settlers in the township whose decendents help to make up the population of Curry Township at the present time. The names of some of these early settlers were: Samuel and Robert Curry, Hardy Hill, William Carrithers, William Julian, Nelson Siner, Abram Smock, Andy Weir, Athel Williams and Joe Liston, Seburn Barbare, Livi Ridgeway, William Watson, Robert G. Cummings, John A. Cummins, John Lloyd, William L. Lloyd, Eliajah Gaskins, Abram Fox, Alexander McDonald, John

and Samuel Anderson, Joseph Smith, William Martin, James Ralston, and Robert McGrew.

Primitive resources. When the Currys, Smocks and Shelburns came to Curry Township they found awaiting them an abundant supply of natural resources. Almost the entire township was covered with a thick forest. Where there were openings in the timber vines grew so thickly as to make travel exceedingly difficult and the building of roads nearly as much labor there as in the timbered regions.

Clearing the timber was no easy task but it had to be done so that the settlers might plant their patches of corn and potatoes to obtain their supply of food. Flax was grown and wool obtained from the sheep. From this wool the housewife had to make the clothing for the entire family. It was a part of every pioneer mother's duty to hackle and spin the flax, card the wool, cart out the cloth and sew it into clothing for themselves, their husbands, and their children.

Nearly all of these early settlers wore linsey-woolsey clothes and it was an exception and a rare occasion if any of these early people could afford the luxury of "store clothes."

Stores were not as accessible in those days as now. The early pioneers made the long trips to the city only three or four times a year to sell their produce and buy what few necessities they could not manufacture themselves.

Wild game was plentiful in Curry Township in this early period. There were wolves, bears, and panthers to be found

in the less frequented parts of the forest. Deer and wild turkies were found in abundance and they supplied a large portion of the meat supply of these early settlers.

Wild honey could be found by following a bee trail, spotting the tree and cutting it down in the fall. Honey thus obtained along with sorghum mollasses and maple sugar took the place of sugar on the table.

Thus it will be seen that the life of the early settlers in Curry Township was the same as the life of the early pioneers throughout the midwest during the same period. It was the kind of life which developed for these people muscular bodies, clear eyes, and vigorous constitutions and in them the love for honesty and industry.

The settlement of Farmersburg. That the community is an important factor in the growth of educational institutions has already been mentioned. It is evidently true that the community of Farmersburg played an important part in the growth of Ascension Seminary.

This brief account of the growth of Farmersburg was obtained from "The History of Sullivan County," by Thomas L. Wolfe and will give some picture of the community in which Ascension Seminary was founded and developed.

This town was laid out in 1853 by William Hopewell and S. J. Cummins, the latter gentleman building about the first house in the new settlement. The plat was located on forty acres of land and grew rapidly. In 1855 the first practical coal mine in the county was opened up a short distance east

of Farmersburg on the property of Hanchett and Kelly. They built a wooden railroad of a three foot gauge to the town and the cars they used were of twenty-five bushel capacity.

In 1858 William Alfred Brunker established a general store and grain market. Later he began the manufacturing of a healing compound known as Brunker's Balsam. He served as Postmaster during the Buchanan and Lincoln Administrations, and was Justice of the Peace for three terms.

The first mill of the little village was a grist mill just south of the town along the railroad. The mill known as the Lash Mill was built by Mr. Blackburn. It was sold and resold until Mr. William Lash and Silas Deal bought it and remodeled it to the present day method of making flour.

On January 13, 1870, the correspondent from Farmersburg writing to the New Albany Ledger says, "The moral sentiment of the people is of such character that we are without the usual appendages of a western town."

In 1883 the Advent Church was organized and in 1884 the present church house was built.

About 1889 Church Taylor laid out an addition of forty acres west of the original plat.

About 1890 the Church of Christ built their church.

In about 1900 the Methodists moved the church house from the lot back of it to its present location and remodeled it.<sup>2</sup>

And thus Farmersburg continued to grow until at the present time it is a growing town of about 1200 population.

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<sup>2</sup> Thomas L. Wolfe, History of Sullivan County. pp. 207-208

## CHAPTER II

### A HISTORY OF EARLY EDUCATION IN SULLIVAN COUNTY

#### I. THE FIRST SCHOOLS IN SULLIVAN COUNTY

We have no record of the first schools of Sullivan County. The records of these early schools were destroyed in 1850 when the courthouse burned.

The knowledge that we have of these early schools is from stories and written accounts of these schools by the older settlers. They give us a fairly accurate picture of early education in Sullivan County.

The first settlers in Sullivan County were interested in education and in providing some educational opportunities for their children.

The settlers came from Virginia, Pennsylvania and Kentucky where there were schools, and most of them had received some education. The settlers were therefore able to teach their children a few subjects if there were no teachers in the immediate vicinity.<sup>1</sup>

The teachers in the early day were always men. They came to the community, taught a term of school and usually left going to some other place. Many of them had very little

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<sup>1</sup> Mrs. Richard L. Baily. The First Schools and Churches of Sullivan County. A Historical paper read before the Sullivan D. A. R. Chapter and later published in the Sullivan Daily Times of March 15, 1934.

preparation for teaching and could teach only the important "branches", which were reading, writing, and arithmetic. These early teachers believed that "lickin and larnin" went hand in hand and he who taught the best school was the one who whipped the most and kept the best order.<sup>2</sup>

Although these early teachers lacked much when compared in training and professional attitude with the teachers of today, it must be said of them that they taught the pupils how to read and write and brought to the community stories of the "outside world" which proved to be a source of inspiration for the pupils as well as the entire community.

At first there were no school houses and the school was held in the homes or in a "block-house." Later school houses were built by the men of the community. They were made of logs with a stick chimney and a fireplace across one end of the room. The windows were covered with greased paper to admit the light. The seats were logs split in two and legs put in the rounded part of the log. The flat "splintery" side was the seat. This served as a seat for big and little. The writing desk was a split log placed on legs under the window and the children stood along this desk to take their writing lesson.<sup>3</sup>

It was in this type of rude school house that the pioneer children in Sullivan County received their education.

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<sup>2</sup> Ibid., p. 1.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid., p. 1.



Mrs. Richard L. Bailey gives a good account of these early schools, showing their development and growth.

The pioneers did not spend much thought on education for several years--not until about 1816. They thought it not necessary if you were going to live in the wilds. The first school houses were built before 1824 and some later than that were built by the men of the community--and the teachers employed by them for room and board or a small compensation. The term of school was usually three months--December, January, and February, and then all the pupils that could were supposed to work.

The first school house in the county was near where Carlisle now is. It was built in 1816, a hewed log house with a stick chimney and a fire-place across one end of the room. The first teacher was James Gray. The patrons cut the wood for the fire-place and the big boys kept the fires going. There was no boundary to the school district. It extended over three or four miles.

The second school house was built in what is now Gill Township, in 1818 and was taught by Mr. Jarvis. His salary was at the rate of one dollar per month for each scholar. Discipline was the outstanding feature of the school. This was enforced by the free use of switches.

The first school house in this township was built in 1823 on what was called the Gilkison farm, about one and one half miles west of what is now Sullivan, and north of the Merom road. This was a log structure similar to the other schools of that time. Jess Ray was the teacher.

Indiana became a state in 1816, and the legislature passed some school laws, one of which was that each man over twenty-one years of age must give one day's work each week on the building under construction, or its equivalent, which was 37½ cents per day. As the population moved on to the north, schools were established. The settlers kept to the west side of the county, along the river and streams, as this was the richest part of the county. A log school house was built in the north part of Hamilton township several years later known as the Bolinger farm. Willis Benefield gave the wood stove for the new house. It was thought to be the first in the county. He bought it with money he won on a horse race.

We had no free public school system until 1850. The subscription schools continued for many years or until we had six months' public school. That was in 1880. These spring terms were very convenient for the little folk as they did not attend regularly through the winter. One hundred years ago our ancestors walked three or four miles through snow, mud, rain and sleet, and the winters were much colder than now.<sup>4</sup>

## II. THE ESTABLISHMENT OF PUBLIC SCHOOLS

With the passage in 1824 of the bill providing for a system of public schools to be established by the townships, Sullivan County kept pace with the law and there were soon established free public schools in the different townships.

An account of the establishment of these schools in the various townships is taken from John W. Spencer, History of Greene and Sullivan Counties.

Hamilton Township. The first school in Hamilton Township was erected about 1834 and was held in a log house located on the Gilkinson farm, about one and one-half miles west of Sullivan, on the Sullivan and Merom road. Other schools were built soon after this, and in 1882 the township contained sixteen good brick or frame public school houses in which school was held for a term of six months in each year.<sup>5</sup>

Town of Sullivan. Although Sullivan was just a young town in 1850, there was good teaching in both public and private schools. In the first schools of Sullivan, one teacher taught the primary, intermediate and high school

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<sup>4</sup> Mrs. Richard L. Baily, op. cit., Sullivan Daily Times.

<sup>5</sup> John W. Spencer, History of Greene and Sullivan Counties. p. 605.

grades. At times he would have as many as seventy-five students under his direction all at the same time. Considering the high type of moral control and strict discipline exacted by the teacher, this was a very arduous task indeed.

Some of the instructors in the early schools of Sullivan were Professor Penfield, Professor Wilkey, Mr. and Mrs. Sylvester Coffey, Professor Morton, Mrs. Carrie Russell, Clark McIntire, Mrs. Hanchett, Reverend Montgomery, and Professor Cain.<sup>6</sup>

Town of Carlisle. The first school house in Carlisle was built in 1823 and the first school was taught by James Gray. In 1854, 1855, 1856 the school was taught respectively by Misses Ann Colbert, Kate Harber, and Mattie Wolsey.

On July 29, 1856, the board of trustees of Carlisle received bids for the building of a school house, which was finished in 1857 and is still being used as a school in Carlisle. It is now known as the Carlisle graded school.<sup>7</sup>

Jackson Township. In the early days of civil affairs the schools of the Jackson Township were managed by a board of three trustees. In 1856, the three trustees were Nathan Hinkle, Samuel Patton and Hosea Payne. In 1863 a single trustee took the place of the three. The first man to serve

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<sup>1</sup> Mrs. Richard L. Baily, op. cit., The Sullivan Daily Times.

<sup>2</sup> John W. Spencer, op. cit., p. 605.

as the single trustee was Nathan Hinkle. The first school to be built in the Jackson Township was built at Pittsburgh, or Hymera, as the town is now called. In 1884 there were eleven school houses and 525 pupils in the township.<sup>8</sup>

Curry Township. The first school of Curry Township was located at Currysville. At the time it was built it was considered a very great asset to the township, and pupils attending this school came from a distance of five or six miles. Characteristics of all the early schools were present in the school at Currysville.<sup>9</sup>

### III. THE ACADEMIES AND SEMINARIES

The successful growth of education in Sullivan County can be traced in a large degree to the academies and Seminaries that flourished from 1850 to 1870.

The influence of these academies and seminaries upon education can be summed up as follows: (1) They provided opportunities for higher education; (2) They provided well trained teachers for the school system of the county; (3) They gave to the communities in which they existed an educational background which has been shown by the favorable attitude of these communities toward education.

The academies and seminaries which played an important part in Sullivan County education are given below with the

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<sup>8</sup> John W. Spencer, op. cit., p. 605.

<sup>9</sup> Loc. cit.

date of their founding, taken from Spencer's History of Sullivan and Greene Counties:<sup>10</sup>

The County Seminary, 1845

The New Lebanon Academy, 1853

The Sullivan Female Academy, 1856

*Merion* The Meron Academy, 1857

Ascension Seminary, 1858.

The influence of the above named educational institutions were important even though they flourished but a few years. The writer recognizes the importance and value of all of the institutions mentioned but wishes in this study to confine his work to the founding, growth, and influence of Ascension Seminary upon Indiana education.

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<sup>10</sup> Loc. cit., p. 596-507.

### CHAPTER III

#### BIOGRAPHY OF WILLIAM T. CRAWFORD

The success of Ascension Seminary was due to the ability and untiring efforts of one man, William T. Crawford. He came to Farmersburg and seeing the great need of the community for education devoted his energy and ability to supplying those needs. It was his ability to inspire those about him which accounts in a large measure for his success in this work. His kindness, sympathy and sincere earnestness in his work made him loved and respected by all he met. John W. Spencer gives the following biography of William T. Crawford.

William T. Crawford was born in Jay County, Indiana, January 25, 1838, son of Samuel and Gracy (George) Crawford, natives of Columbiana County, Ohio, who moved to Indiana in 1836, remained two years and then returned to Ohio, where they remained. They reared nine children, William T. being the sixth. William worked on the farm until he was twenty-two years of age, when he entered the New Lisbon High School, remaining three years, and then taught school until 1860, when he removed to Farmersburg and there erected Ascension Seminary, which he conducted as a Normal school until 1872, when, the new school building at Sullivan being erected, he transferred Ascension Seminary to that place, and conducted it four years. In 1878, he retired from teaching and went into the real estate business, at the same time buying timber for a firm at Hoopston, Illinois. In August, 1862, he organized Company H, Eighty-Fifth Regiment Indiana Volunteer Infantry, and was elected captain, with which company he served three years, although he was offered the Colonelcy of another regiment. He had promised to stay with the boys of his company, and he would not leave them. He was in the battles of Resaca, Burnt Hickory, Dallas Woods, Siege of

Atlanta, Savannah, Goldsboro, Averysboro, and others. He was discharged in 1865, holding at the time the commission of Major. September 25, 1860 he was united in marriage to Miss Lizzie Conkle of Columbiana County, Ohio, daughter of Daniel and Barbara (Paur) Conkle, natives of Ohio, who moved to Sullivan in 1872, and where the latter died February 21, 1879, at the age of seventy-two. To their marriage, seven children were born--Ida E., Myrtle, Bertha, William, Webster, Harry and Rush.<sup>1</sup>

Mr. Crawford was a man of striking personality, stood five feet eleven inches in his stockings. His limbs were slender but well shaped and muscular. His eyes were gray, his hair a tawny-black, and he had a clear complexion. An aquiline nose and a fine face completes his physical description. He wore a mustache and shaved his whiskers, dressed in Prince Albert coat and plug hat and looked the cultured gentleman.

It is noted above that his hair was black. However, he came of an ancestry which grew grey early in life; this inheritance, together with a spell of typhoid fever in the army, made his hair white, while his mustache remained black, at the time he founded Ascension Seminary. His picture (in the Indiana Magazine of History) represents him at 70 years of age, taken several years after he had retired from school work.<sup>2</sup>

Captain William T. Crawford reared a family of six children, four girls and two boys. He lived out his days at Sullivan, Indiana, in comfort, if not in plenty, and died in 1912. Throughout his career, he was a true patriot, a good citizen and a great "Normal Educator."

Captain Crawford for many years was prominent in Grand Army circles--attended and addressed Grand Army reunions and campfires in Indiana, Illinois, and Ohio. For several years his comrades depended upon him to "get their pensions."

He belonged to the Presbyterian church, was Sunday School Superintendent, and a deacon in the church. He was a republican in politics, yet he never held public office. He belong to the Masonic fraternity.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> John W. Spencer, op. cit., p. 722.

<sup>2</sup> John C. Chaney, Indiana Magazine of History. Vol. XVIII. No. 3. Sept., 1922. p. 221.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid., p. 223.

An interesting picture of Captain Crawford is given by Richard Parks, County Superintendent of Sullivan County, in his writings "Memories of Captain Crawford" by request of the writer.

Like all great movements one man inspired it. Captain William T. Crawford was the giant who conceived Ascension Seminary. He was a splendid man physically. Nature had given him an imposing personality. He was gentle but inspirational. He had the great power of interesting young people in problems pertaining to high ideals and life essentials. He conceived the idea of implanting an educational institution and working out in real life all its many problems. To him and on his shoulders rested the Ascension Seminary. Its physical remains have all gone the way of time and disolution but the ideals set in that early day by him and his associations have been a lasting blessing to Sullivan County.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>4</sup> Richard Park, From a paper, Memories of Captain Crawford.  
Written by Mr. Park at the request of the writer.



## CHAPTER IV

### ASCENSION SEMINARY

#### I. HISTORY

In 1858 William T. Crawford came to Farmersburg to visit relatives who had but recently moved just east of town in Jackson Township, Sullivan County.<sup>1</sup> While visiting her he noticed the lack of education among the people and the crude methods used by the teachers in the schools of the community. He decided to open a select subscription school in a private residence in Farmersburg. The attempt was very successful as there were about twenty-seven pupils attending this first term of school. They came from Farmersburg and the surrounding country. This term continued for eleven weeks and then adjourned for the summer. The following September at the opening of the second term there were thirty-two pupils enrolled.

By this time news of the success of the school had spread and its work was being noticed by educators of the county. This is brought out by Mr. Chaney in the following quotation:

The school awakened the people to education; and the fame of the teacher spread for many miles. There was at the time a newspaper published at Sullivan, the county seat of Sullivan County, whose editor interested himself in the educational demands of western Indiana. The editor visited the Farmersburg school, which visit resulted in an editorial in the newspaper, recommending all teachers of Sullivan county, 'before beginning their work for the school year, or if any of them

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<sup>1</sup> John C. Chaney, Indiana Magazine of History. Vol. XVIII. No. 3. September, 1922. p. 220.

had already begun, to close their schools for a week, and attend the Crawford school at Farmersburg.'

This the teachers generally did, and then and there was held an "institute week" in connection with daily recitations in this select school.

It was yet early enough in the fall for the most of the institute sessions to be held under a spreading oak tree standing on what afterward became Ascension Seminary grounds. The then acting county "school examiner" attended the institute and lent it his cooperation and support.

It all resulted in a popular demand for a select school which would not only impart instruction, but "train teachers how to teach."<sup>2</sup>

Mr. Crawford was encouraged by the success of the school and decided to build a new building.

In 1860 with his own money he purchased a small field lying at the western edge of Farmersburg where he planned to erect the new school building.

He then returned to his home in Ohio when he married Elizabeth Conkle, a school mate of his in Mount Union College. While there he taught a three-months school and gathered together what money he could for the purpose of erecting the new building.

He then returned to Farmersburg and with the encouragement of friends proceeded to erect a two-story frame building forty feet wide and sixty feet long.

Before the building was completed the Civil War had begun and the call sent out for volunteers. Young Crawford answered by raising Company H of the 85th Indiana Infantry

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<sup>2</sup> John C. Chaney, Indiana Magazine of History, pp. 219-223.

which company he served as captain for the three remaining years of the war.

At the close of the war the company was discharged and the young captain returned to Farmersburg to complete the building and open school in the fall of 1865.

The name Ascension was given to the school because the post office in Farmersburg at that time was called Ascension.

Ascension Seminary continued at Farmersburg until 1872. In that year Professor Crawford was hired by the Sullivan School Board to become head of the Sullivan schools. An arrangement was made by which the Seminary was to occupy the third floor of the new Central School Building and Mr. Crawford was to act as head of the Sullivan Schools and to conduct the Seminary.

This arrangement continued until 1878 when Professor Crawford retired and the Seminary was merged with the High School at Sullivan.

Ascension Seminary in the brief time that it existed rendered valuable educational service to the community by giving training to teachers, lawyers, physicians, ministers and statesmen.

There were seven graduating classes which passed from Ascension Seminary. There were two thousand three hundred and seventy-eight teachers who sprang from this institution, and there were many who entered the various professions and vocations who did not complete the courses of study and therefore did not graduate from the school. Judges, statesmen, and diplomats were of this school and good citizenship abounded among them. It may well be said to be and to have been an inspirational school of the normal type; and, in its day, served the state and nation.

The training received at Ascension Seminary was practical and useful in every calling. Physicians, ministers, lawyers, as well as those who followed gainful avocations who received their training in this worthy institution attest its merit. It was, however, essentially a teachers' school; and its teachers were everywhere and by everybody desired.<sup>3</sup>

## II. THE BUILDINGS AND GROUNDS<sup>4</sup>

Ascension Seminary, during its existence, occupied three separate buildings. Two of the buildings were in Farmersburg, and the third building was the Central school building at Sullivan.

The first building. The first school was held in a room about fifteen by twenty-four feet in size in the house of Mrs. Davis, wife of a blacksmith in the village. The room had very little equipment as we think of a modern school room. The equipment consisted of a few chairs and desks and a few books mostly the property of W. T. Crawford.

The benches were the long slab ones with no backs. The legs consisted of pegs driven into the slab at each end.

The blackboard was a long board painted black and hung on the wall on one side of the room.

An old wood stove was used to warm the room during cold weather.

There was a well on the north side of the grounds which supplied the drinking water. It was walled with rock and

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<sup>3</sup> John C. Chaney, op. cit., p. 223.

<sup>4</sup> From an interview with Mrs. Issie McClain.

the water was drawn by the means of ropes and a bucket. Tin cups and gourds were the drinking vessels.

As the school grew it was necessary to make room to accommodate more students, so Mr. Crawford planned and built a new building.

The second building at Farmersburg. Mr. Crawford purchased a tract of land of between three and four acres at the western edge of the village. Here he erected a two-story frame structure of about forty feet in width by sixty feet in length, having two rooms below and one room above with an outside stairway to a front porch to reach the upper room.

The interior of the rooms were equipped typical of the schoolrooms of that day.

The desks were of wood made to accommodate two pupils and ranged in size to accommodate both large and small children.

At the front of the room was a rostrum on which were two recitation benches, the professor's desk, and the organ. The pupils were called to the front and sat on the benches where their recitations were "heard" by the professor.

The school motto, which was "Higher Still Higher," was hung on the wall.

Other equipment included maps, a blackboard, stoves, and a school bell.

The playground was on the south side of the building and most of the children played under a spreading oak tree.

East of the building was a small branch which was crossed by means of a foot log.

After the Ascension Seminary was moved to Sullivan in 1872 this building served as the Farmersburg school until it was replaced by a new brick building. The old building was then moved to the center of the town where it was remodeled by Mr. Tom Brunker into an opera house above and the lower rooms rented for business.

The old building is still standing and in use. The upper story is used by a church and the lower rooms are occupied by a restaurant and barber shop.

The building at Sullivan. In 1872 the Seminary was moved to Sullivan and occupied the third story of the then new Central School building.

The best history and description of this building is taken from the article which appeared in the Sullivan Daily Times.

History tells us that the building was erected in the spring and summer of 1872, at a cost of \$25,000. It was a three-story structure, and was said to be one of the finest in the state in architecture and furnishing. It contained nine recitation rooms with a capacity for seating about 600 pupils, and a literary hall. The building was enclosed by an iron fence.

With the opening of the new building came the consolidation of the Sullivan grade schools with the Ascension Seminary of Farmersburg. A report shows that in October of that year, 1872, the total attendance of the Sullivan schools was 501 pupils. One hundred and seventy-four of these were in the normal department, the sessions of which were held on the third floor; one hundred five were

in grammar school, and two hundred twenty in the primary department. Professor W. T. Crawford, who had been founder and head of the Ascension Seminary, was superintendent of the Sullivan schools, and associated with him as assistant teachers were Professor John T. Hays, W. H. Cain, A. P. Allen, J. C. Adams, and the Misses Amanda DeBaun, Sarah Cain and Alice Hawkins.<sup>5</sup>

### III. CURRICULUM AND TYPES OF INSTRUCTION

At Farmersburg. In the earliest years of the seminary's existence (1859-1865) the curriculum was adapted to meet the needs of Farmersburg and surrounding community only. Professor Crawford began a school term of three months, about the 15th day of October, 1859, and opened his experimental enterprises with twenty-three pupils. He established a curriculum embracing mathematics, grammar, history, reading, and writing, with a vocal song each morning at eight o'clock.

He sang geography along with a text book on that subject which aroused a far-reaching community interest, and popularized his venture.<sup>6</sup>

At the end of the term there was an exhibit of the work showing the progress of the school, and the crowd viewing it was so large that it overflowed into the yard and street. The assembled crowd including surrounding teachers, and vocational leaders orally presented to the young professor their felicitations on the standard of education which his work had proved, and begged him to repeat his efforts.

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<sup>5</sup> Sullivan Daily Times, August 4, 1931.

<sup>6</sup> From an interview with John C. Chaney.

Accordingly he opened a second term of three months to begin on the following Monday morning. Thirty-one students enrolled for the new term, and they made such advancements in learning, and Mr. Crawford was so much encouraged with his work that he advertised a school year in 1860-61 in more commodious quarters. The reputation of the school had broadened into a thing demanded at every hand.<sup>7</sup>

Professor Crawford used the text books of the day-- McGuffey's Spellers and Readers, Ray's Arithmetic to Integral Calculus, and his algebras, geometry and trigonometry-- political and physical geography, philosophy, astronomy, botany, physiology and hygiene, ancient and modern history, Latin, Greek, and German in two year courses. English and English Vocabulary were the mainsprings of the cultural life of Ascension Seminary. Penmanship of a legible kind was made much of.<sup>8</sup>

At the opening of the Seminary of 1865, assistant teachers were engaged, who partook of the enthusiasm of the founder of the school.

Music--instrumental and vocal--was installed and the best of talent in these lines served the school.

A school paper was edited by the school and published through chosen pupils on Friday afternoons.

On Friday nights a Literary Society devoted to declamation, composition and debate, open to the public, constituted a feature of the school.

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<sup>7</sup> Interview with Mrs. Issie McClain of Farmersburg.

<sup>8</sup> Interview with John C. Chaney.



The school was made into three grand divisions, each of which had the program of the evening in turn in succession, every three weeks. The subject of the debate was last on the program, and after the school class had debated the subject of the evening, then the audience outside of the school was authorized to discuss the question in debate. This brought the general audience into sympathy and concord with the school work, and debaters came from everywhere to the Literary Education of the school.<sup>9</sup>

Evening entertainments in those days were few, yet entertainment then was as desirable as are such engagements now. Herein was abundant recreation.

The school was graded in accordance with the subjects taught, and the "studies" were directed without regard to the excelsior methods later in use. Students were not expected to "get their lessons" in school hours, but the bulk of lesson getting was after school hours in the homes of the students. It was not necessary then to put on so-called "stunts" and prearranged processes of school attractions to instill a love for education.<sup>10</sup>

The "courses of study" were fitted and suited to the vocations, and application thereof was made to suit the demands of industrial life. The professions were encouraged, and specifically the teaching profession had attention.

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<sup>9</sup> From interview with George R. Dutton of Sullivan.

<sup>10</sup> From an interview with John C. Chaney.

At Sullivan. As the institution grew, more teachers were hired and subjects added, so that by 1875 a standard course of study had been adopted.

Following is the course of study offered for teachers by Ascension Seminary in the year 1875 as published in the "Ascension School Journal"<sup>16</sup> of that year.

#### FIRST YEAR:

##### Fall Term:

Reading, (Harper's Fifth Reader)

Primary Grammar, (Pineo's)

Intermediate Geography, (Cornell's)

Mental Arithmetic, (Ray's Second Part)

##### Winter Term:

Reading, (Harper's Sixth Reader)

U. S. History, (Anderson)

English Grammar

Geography, (Harvey's)

Mental Arithmetic

##### Spring Term:

Arithmetic, (Ray's Third Part)

Com. Elocution, (Selected)

Analysis of Sentences, (Harvey's)

History of U. S. Completed.

#### SECOND YEAR:

##### Fall Term:

Arithmetic, (Ray's Higher)

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<sup>11</sup> Ascension Seminary, Ascension School Journal.  
Published March 20, 1875.

Physical Geography, (Cornell's)  
Constitution of U. S. (Class Drill)  
English Grammar Completed.

Winter Term:

Algebra, (Ray's First Part)  
Higher Arithmetic, (From Ratio to Exchange)  
Physiology, (Dalton's)  
Penmanship, (Special Lessons)

Spring Term:

First Algebra Completed  
Physiology--Completed  
Higher Arithmetic--Completed  
Natural Philosophy, (Parker's)

THIRD YEAR:

Fall Term:

Geometry, (Davies')  
Algebra, (Ray's Second Part)  
Rhetoric, (Haven's)  
Astronomy, (Steels), 14 weeks

Winter Term:

Geometry--Completed  
Intellectual Philosophy, (Upham's)  
Algebra. (Part Second, from VII to IX)  
Logic, (Whately's)

Spring Term:

Ancient History, (Parley's)  
Algebra--Completed

Botany, (Wood's)

Zoology, (Tenney's)

Trigonometry, (Davies')

The following bulletin of Ascension Seminary was taken from the Sullivan Democrat advertising the school in the year 1869. It shows the types of instruction (in general), which the pupils would expect to receive from the school, as well as the general conduct and regulations governing the pupils while attending the school.

ASCENSION SEMINARY at FARMERSBURG, INDIANA, fifteen miles south of Terre Haute, on the Evansville and Crawfordsville Railroad.

Calendar. Spring Term will begin, Monday, March 29, 1869. Close June 17, 1869. Length of term, 12 weeks.

Fall Term will begin, Monday, August 16, 1869. Close the 4th and 5th of November.

Winter Term will begin, Monday, November 16, 1869. Close March 5 and 6, 1870. 1870 ✓ ?

Spring Term will begin, Monday, March 16, 1870. Close, June 4 and 5.

Circular: Special attention of Parents and Guardians is called to this SEMINARY of LEARNING.

The success of those who have been educated in this Institution, will speak more for it than any circular we can distribute among you. Over

eighty students have been thoroughly qualified for teaching in this Institution during the past three years. Many having commenced here with a limited education, have received FIRST CLASS CERTIFICATES, after attending two consecutive terms.

The DEMAND for teachers from this Institution, exceeds the supply, and at the highest wages per month.

Parents desiring their SONS and DAUGHTERS to receive a THOROUGH practical education will do well to visit this Institution before sending elsewhere.

Morals of the place. No DRINKING SALOONS or places of allurements, to entice the student from his books, are to be found here.

Lectures will be given each term, by the Principal, William T. Crawford, on the Theory and Practice of Teaching.

Music. One lesson in VOCAL MUSIC will be given each week, by Professor D. M. Shoemaker.

Lectures on Physiology will be given each term, by Professor C. W. Finney.

Penmanship. One night lesson on Penmanship will be given each week, by Professor William T. Crawford.

Accommodations. Boarding with private families-- room and lights for studying, can be had at from \$3.00

to \$3.50 per week. Rooms for self-boarding at from \$2.50 to \$3.00 per month.

Tuition. SIXTY DAYS TERM, \$6.00, EIGHTY DAYS TERM, \$8.00. One-half payable in advance and the remainder at the close of the term. No deductions will be made, only in cases of protracted sickness. Twenty-two lessons will be given on the Piano, Melodeon, or Organ, for \$10.00, to all wishing to receive instructions in this department.

Regulations. Young ladies or gentlemen expel themselves from this Institution, by keeping company with the opposite sex, or becoming intoxicated.

Hours of recreation are from 7½ A. M. till 8½ A. M. From 12 A. M. till 1 P. M. From 5½ P. M. till 7 P. M.

Students who cannot comply with these regulations, are requested not to come. Those wishing to attend, please make their arrangements in due time, as these schools are always crowded.

Text books in the Teacher's Department, are those adopted by the Board of Education, for this State.

For further information, inquire of

WM. T. CRAWFORD, Principal.

Music seems to have been emphasized as an important phase of the work. Quoting from Mr. Chaney, "Music instrumental and vocal was installed and the best of talent in these lines served the school."

The following article from the Sullivan Daily Times, written by Mabel Brewer of New Lebanon, gives the best account of the importance of music teaching in the school:

"REMINISCENT OF A NOTABLE MUSICAL ORGANIZATION--  
ASCENSION SEMINARY QUARTET<sup>12</sup>

The author of this sketch has with interest and pleasure read numerous accounts of the activities and the personnel of that eminently known educational institution--Ascension Seminary--the notable educational center founded and made preeminent in academic history by that peerless, distinguished and colorful personality--Captain William T. Crawford. Captain Crawford understood the art of teaching and was ever making the educational contact of the human mind in free lance manner and method. Due to Captain Crawford's alert, constructive teaching skill, phases of student activities were encouraged and emphasized that gave worthy and lasting impression. Homage to the Goddess Etude was correlated in the Ascension Seminary activities and notably outstanding in that phase of cultural expression was the Ascension Seminary Quartette. This musical group was comprised of the following individuals--Mr. and Mrs. Beasel, Directors of the Department of Music at Ascension Seminary, Mary McKinley, John Emory Brewer, Theodore F. Brewer and George Crawford.

Mrs. Beasel was director of the Quartette and soprano; Theodore F. Brewer and George Crawford, tenor; Mary McKinley, alto, and John Emory Brewer, basso.

Students of Ascension Seminary yet living will remember the wonderful music furnished by the Ascension Seminary Quartette. This quartette rendered secular, sacred, classic and popular music. The quartette was a great attraction of Ascension Seminary and many came to listen and carry away in their hearts abiding melody, for as some one has said--"though they may forget the singer, they will not forget the song." And it is to be realized that the touch of melody makes the whole world kin. So, who can measure the magnitude, the priceless contribution to society made by a beautiful singing human voice. It brings always the touch of the infinite.

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<sup>12</sup> Mabel Brewer, Reminiscent of a Notable Musical Organization, Ascension Seminary Quartette. Sullivan Daily Times. May 16, 1936.

Those who carry remembrance of the music rendered by the Ascension Seminary Quartette will recall the marvelously sweet toned soprano voice of Mrs. Beasel vibrating in the harmony of that dainty melody, "Silvery Waves," the sweet cadence of the rare voice of Theodore Brewer singing "When the Mists Have Rolled in Splendor," and the rich, mellow power in the voice of John Emory Brewer singing the always difficult bass solo, "Asleep in the Deep." And blending in harmony in the full quartette selections is remembered the fine melody of the voices of Mary McKinley and George Crawford.

#### IV. TEACHERS

The teachers of Ascension Seminary were well-trained in view of the standards of that time. They were earnest and sincere, being devoted to their chosen profession. Much of their success came not alone in their methods of instruction, but in their ability to inspire the students whom they taught. It was their personality and the inspiration of the teachers that left the most lasting impressions upon the pupils and in the community which they taught.

Teachers at Farmersburg.<sup>13</sup> The teachers who taught in Ascension Seminary while located at Farmersburg were: W. T. Crawford, John T. Hays, W. T. Allen, Dave Shoemaker, Mrs. Alice Hawkins, and Mrs. Beasel.

Teachers at Sullivan.<sup>14</sup> The teachers who taught in Ascension Seminary while it was located at Sullivan were: Principal--Professor William T. Crawford, and W. H. Cain.

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<sup>13</sup> Interview of Mrs. Issie McClain, of Farmersburg, a former student and later a teacher in the school.

<sup>14</sup> Ascension School Journal. Published by Ascension Seminary, March 20, 1875.



Assistant--Miss S. McKinney. Preparatory--Miss A. J. DeBaun, Miss S. M. Cain, and Miss A. Stewart. Vocal and instrumental Mr. A. S. Beasel and Mrs. A. S. Beasel. Trustees--T. K. Sherman, Murray Briggs, and Alex Snow.

Training of Teachers.<sup>15</sup> Professor Wm. T. Crawford was a graduate of Mount Union College, State of Ohio. He had had about twenty years of successful teaching experience by 1875.

Professor Cain had completed twenty-five years of successful teaching experience by 1875.

John T. Hays was a graduate of Mount Union College, Ohio.

A. P. Allen was a graduate of DePauw University.

Mr. and Mrs. A. S. Beasel received their training in a music academy at Albany, New York.

The other teachers mentioned were well qualified for the position which they held as judged by the success of their students. The writer has been unable to find definite data of the amount of training or experience that they had.

## V. STUDENTS

Ascension Seminary became known throughout the State and to it came students from western Indiana and eastern Illinois.

It answered the needs of a community which at that time offered little educational opportunity higher than the lower grades of school.

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<sup>15</sup> Loc. cit.

The following from an interview with George R. Dutton of Sullivan, a former student of the institution, gives a good picture of the type of students who attended the school.

The students of the Seminary came from adjacent counties in Illinois and from points north as far as Fort Wayne, Indiana, as far south as Evansville, as far east as the eastern line of Greene County.

The students were mostly farm boys and girls, but many came from the towns and cities. It was with great sacrifice to themselves and parents that they were able to attend the school.

The students came imbued with the necessity of obtaining a practical education. All were workers and none were drones, realizing the purpose for which they came.<sup>16</sup>

The following quotation will give some idea as to the size of the school and the number of students that it served:

There were seven graduating classes which passed from Ascension Seminary. There were two thousand three hundred seventy eight teachers who sprang from this institution and there were many who entered the various professions and avocations who did not complete the courses of study and therefore did not graduate from the school.<sup>17</sup>

The list of students from the graduating classes of 1873 and 1874 will be found in the Appendix. A list of the graduates of the Seminary in other years is not available. The writer regrets that he is not able to print these names.

## VI. THE SCHOOL PAPER

Mr. George R. Dutton edited the school paper, The Ascension School Journal, while a student. The paper was

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<sup>16</sup> From an interview with George R. Dutton of Sullivan, former student of the school and editor of the school paper Ascension School Journal.

<sup>17</sup> John C. Chaney, Indiana Magazine of History. p. 223.

published twice a month. From his work publishing and editing the paper Mr. Dutton was able to pay his tuition and clothing at the age of sixteen.

It is interesting to find that at this early period the question of how to study was recognized as important. The author of the article first points out how improper and unsatisfactory methods of study may result in poorly prepared lessons. He then proceeds to point out how the pupil with the aid of the teacher may acquire the proper methods of study.

The following, taken from the two original copies of the school paper that were available, will give the best picture of the school and school life that can be obtained. The following articles taken from the paper of March 20, 1875 will give a bit of the educational philosophy of the school.

#### HOW TO STUDY

Comparatively few pupils know how to study. They are taught how to walk, how to sit, how to stand, how to talk, and in fact, an attempt is made to teach them how to do almost everything about school except how to study. They are commanded to study, told that they must study, etc., but very seldom even an attempt is made to teach them how to study. They seem to have concluded that the way to study is to look at the book, work their lips vehemently, and "say over" what is on the page open before them. Perhaps, while they are doing this, their minds are basking in the Utopian climes far away, yet they think they are studying the lesson, and would say they were if questioned.

Teachers generally let them enjoy the illusion. There are great many teachers, however, who do not allow "lip study." They tell their students that it is unnecessary to move the lips to study, but generally say no more about the modus operandi in studying. What is the consequence of this prevalent

practice? Much time is wasted, especially in study that requires the action of the memory more than any other faculty of the mind. Pupils often have the lesson by rote or else not at all. They are apt to memorize the words of a lesson, and are unable to give the leading ideas. They are apt to have the lesson to recite, and when it is recited seem to think that they are done with it. These results are not to follow such a method of preparing lessons. It is as void of sense to tell a pupil to study without seeing that he knows how to study, as it is to ask a man, ignorant of watch-making, to make a first class watch. Great stress has been put upon teaching pupils how to talk and how to see or observe. Will not some of our thinkers tell us how to study and how we may impart such an acquirement to our pupils? It seems to us that if teachers could succeed in teaching their pupils how to study, how to think, how to learn from books and objects about them, they could do something that would be of vastly more value to the pupils than all the rules of arithmetic and grammar and the dates of historical events, and locations of towns, etc., than could be crammed into them. We remember very well trying to see entirely through a problem in arithmetic at one glance, and wondering whether it would take multiplication or division "to get the answer." We had no idea where to begin or what should be done first, and always depended on the teacher to solve one of each kind, then we could generally solve all like that which he solved; but when we came to miscellaneous examples; he generally had them to solve. We were not taught how to study. The results in the other branches were no more satisfactory than in this. We think that it is somewhat the same in schools today.

To teach a pupil how to study the teacher must notice the operation of his own mind while studying, and then describe it to the pupils. Every one knows how easy it is to pretend to study and allow the mind to wander away. Let the teacher make a point here. Let the pupil understand that he must put forth an effort to keep his mind on the subject under consideration. When this is done, he is ready to begin the study. Take, for example, to show how you would study some problem in arithmetic, something simple at first, as "James paid 5 cents for one apple--at that rate what will 20 apples cost?" The first thought is that 20 apples will cost 20 times as much as one apple; second, one cost five cents; third, 20 would cost 20 times 5 cents; fourth, that to find 20 times five we must multiply.

It is evident that we must have an action of of the mind, as above described, to solve such problems and, in doing anything the mind must act, and it will act in some way. It does seem, then, that teachers could give more study to the inward pupil than has ever yet been given; see to it that the mind knows how to act and take time to show your pupils how to study.

Take other branches, such as geography and history; suggest to the pupil to stop after he reads a paragraph and see if he can think of anything he has learned in it; if not give it another reading for the purpose of gaining some knowledge, getting some ideas that he may tell. If such methods of preparing lessons were adopted, in our opinion it would very much lessen such prosey, rattling, wordy recitations, and pupils, instead of being crammed with a number of words meaning nothing to them, would have ideas that could be recalled by very little effort of the mind, and along with the ideas could come the appropriate words to express them.

The author of the article "The Cost of Smoking" gives an interesting as well as an effective discussion of smoking as an expensive habit. He gives an example of the amount of money that could be saved if it were not spent upon tobacco. He then figures the amount which would accumulate if it were to draw interest. The smoking problem in this way is presented so as to make a strong appeal to the pupils.

#### THE COST OF SMOKING

To preach to a smoker about the hurtfulness of using tobacco is like trying to dip water with a sieve; but I have always noticed that, when all other arguments have failed, there is one which will tell on the most obdurate. Begin to talk money, and if the hearer's purse is likely to be affected you will see his mouth open and his eyes begin to sparkle with excitement, and for this reason I will show the cost of smoking for five years from which the cost for a lifetime may be easily reckoned. We will say a young man begins to smoke when he is sixteen, and on an average smokes two cigars per day (which is a very low estimate) and continues until he is twenty-one.

Now let us reckon the cost. For the first year he smokes two per day, at a cost of ten cents each, making for the year a sum of \$73.00. Now if instead of spending this money he had at the end of the first year put it at interest during the next year at six per cent, it would have gained \$4.38, which together with the \$73.00 which he would have smoked up, would give him at the end of the second year \$150.38, which again put at interest, together with the \$73.00 for this year, would amount to the neat sum of \$232.40 at the end of the third year. Again getting the amount and adding \$73.00 for another year, the whole amount is swelled to \$319.34, which he puts at interest at the beginning of the fifth year, by reckoning up his bank account at the expiration of the five years he is astonished to find that his cigars have cost him the round sum of \$411.50 extended over a period of an ordinary smoking lifetime and the sum is a fortune.

The money would be invested in a better way, by a young man, in getting an education.

The author of the article, "The Road to Success" points out the difference between gaining distinction and attaining honor. He makes clear that distinction is not always to be desired while honor is a worthy goal. The author then points out some rules and principles which should be followed in order that honor and worthwhile distinction may be gained. In order to do this he places great emphasis upon education as a means of obtaining the desired ends.

The article advocates high ideals and noble principles which reflects the high educational standards of the school.

#### THE ROAD TO SUCCESS

Every young man is constantly haunted with the idea, "How can I make a fortune?" The road to wealth, honor and distinction is open to every one, and he who chooses, can walk therein. I almost imagine reader, I hear you ask, "how can I gain distinction?" Very easily, my young man, and that

distinction may be to your shame and dishonor for life. Ninias gained distinction for his brutality toward his mother; Alexander for love of conquest; Delilah for her treachery and deception toward Sampson, but we trust this Christian age in which you live has awakened in your mind a love for such distinction, as enshrines the memory of Washington, Jefferson, Adams, Clay, and a long line of those patriots, whose names will ever honor the pages of American History. Never stoop to any little act, if you expect the world to call you honorable.

Honor comes only to those whose lives are constantly made with deeds of kindness, purity of thought, and noble and God-like action. If you would expect the influence and support from man, show by your actions toward him that you justly merit, if you never have a good word to say about those who are constantly doing your favors, is it reasonable that you should receive their support long? No, sir, you have no right to it. Your selfish and cramped up little soul, will be classed among that number to which you properly belong; those who are weighed in the balance and found wanting.

Cultivate noble principles; high, God-like action. Seek for the highest intellectual culture and refinement, always choosing for your associates those who will never stoop to a mean act, and scorn to do an unjust deed. Live within your income, and lay up some of your weekly earnings, if your salary be ever so small. Any boy who has ambition and personal pride, or who desires to go in first class society, should resolve to educate himself, should it take all his time and means until he is twenty-five years old. He who is not educated is getting more than the general average wages when he receives three hundred dollars per year, while he who is educated is receiving below the average, if he does not get over eight hundred dollars a year. Suppose it takes \$280, per year to keep each of them; in forty years, the man who gets \$300 per year, should he loan his \$20 at ten per cent per annum, and increase his loans promptly at the end of each year, in forty years, he is worth \$9,050, while he who receives \$800 per year, and loans his money at the same rate and lends the same amount of the first name, is, in forty years, worth \$235,200.

Reader, which course will you choose? You have your choice. Life is too short for you to make mistakes; reflect, then act.

The following taken from the paper advertising the journal itself will give the best explanation of its purpose and the appeal that it made to the students.

THE  
ASCENSION SCHOOL JOURNAL

Published

S E M I - M O N T H L Y

The Price of the

JOURNAL IS ONLY 50 CENTS

Every farmer, schoolboy and educator can afford to support the Journal by subscribing immediately, and receiving the

VERY BEST PAPER

The Journal has no politics except education. For the purpose of receiving a large circulation, we offer the following inducements to persons getting up clubs:

Single copy one year.....\$ .50

12 copies, one year..... 5.00

25 copies, one year.....10.00

Persons securing us 12 subscribers will receive a copy one year gratis--the money must accompany all orders.



## Address

GEORGE R. DUTTON,

Sullivan, Sullivan County, Indiana

The following news items from the journal may prove interesting as well as give a picture of school life.

Professor W. T. Crawford has gone to Vermillion County to attend to some professional duties

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The school has never prospered so well since it has been located here as now.

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JEALOUSY, is as cruel as the grave; the coals thereof are coals of fire, which hath a most vehement flame.

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The name of Wm. Sinclair, of New Lebanon, has been added to the list of graduates for this year, making six seniors.

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The slim man who used to chalk his head and attend masquerades as a billiard cue, or braid his legs and attend as a riding whip, now slips a rubber tip over his cranium and goes as a lead-pencil.

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The lecture given by Mr. N. G. Buff on last Wednesday evening upon his "Trip to California" was

enjoyed by all who heard it and pronounced by good judges to be excellent.

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Mr. I. H. Kalley, a graduate of the class of '73 of our school, will finish his course at Asbury University this year. Miss Estella Hinkle, a graduate of '73 with Mr. Kalley, is attending Asbury, also Miss Mattie Evans of Sullivan.

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The names of 141 students have been enrolled as students in the Normal Department of this school; 65 in the Grammar Department; taught by Miss A. J. DeBaun; and 82 in the Primary room, taught by Miss S. Cain. Total 288. A dozen more are expected soon.

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Mr. T. F. Donham, one of the graduates of Ascension Seminary of last year is studying law under Voohees & Carlton, Terre Haute, Indiana. Success to you, Mr. Donham.

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The spelling match between the citizens and the school terminated in favor of the latter. The prizes which were a Gold pen, Dictionary and a Dollar bill were presented to Miss Julia Davis, Mr. W. M. Sinclair and W. H. Elson, respectively, all of the school. The "spell" lasted three hours and a half. It is reported that there will be another one after the citizens brighten up their memories.

The number of pupils studying the different branches are as follows:

Elocution, 80; Mental Arithmetic, 61; third part, 61; Algebra, 80; Higher Arithmetic, 70; Latin, 9; Trigonometry, 8; German, 10; Logic, 6; Composition, 57; Botany, 15; Penmanship, 95; Natural Philosophy, 27; Grammar, 157; Astronomy, 6; History, U. S. 65; Physiology, 47.

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#### COST OF ATTENDING ASCENSION SEMINARY

Frequently inquiry is made by parents or others desiring to patronize this institution of learning, especially the cost of attending the same. The cost for one year is as follows:

Tuition.....	\$ 28
Boarding, \$3.00 per week.....	108
Extra Clothing.....	40
Books, Stationary, etc.....	12
Total	\$ 187

This may be reduced by the students furnishing a room and boarding themselves.

## CHAPTER V

### INFLUENCE OF THE SCHOOL

#### I. ON THE COMMUNITY

It is impossible to measure accurately the influence which Ascension Seminary had upon Farmersburg and the surrounding community. The writer thinks it is safe to say that it provided an educational background for the community which has made it a progressive community in education.

Farmersburg has long maintained a modern progressive school system. The people are interested in their school and in giving their children good educational opportunities. This love for education and the desire to provide educational opportunities can, without doubt, be traced to the influence of Ascension Seminary, where educational values were deeply rooted in the lives of the people.

The Seminary provided a more educated citizenry. This may in part explain their progressive attitude in establishing churches, conducting their business, and providing better homes. In general, Farmersburg has always been an enlightened community taking the lead in establishing good moral and social conditions. It seems that this can be explained in part by the educational influence of Ascension Seminary upon the people of Farmersburg and the surrounding community.

## II. ON EDUCATION IN SULLIVAN COUNTY

Ascension Seminary had great influence upon education in Sullivan County and the surrounding counties.

The Seminary provided well-trained teachers for the elementary schools and high schools of Sullivan and the adjacent counties. Since Ascension Seminary was among the first teacher training institutions of the state it gave to the area surrounding more trained teachers than other communities in Indiana.

An estimate of the influence of Ascension Seminary on education in Sullivan County by Mr. Richard Park, County Superintendent of Sullivan County. Mr. Parks has served as County Superintendent of Sullivan County for forty-two years and is best qualified, both by his length of experience and his position, to estimate the influence of Ascension Seminary upon the education of Sullivan County.

In the year 1895 when I first came in direct contact with the scholar of Farmersburg, it was easy to see and feel that some great influence had preceeded the system then well established. The community had a bearing and morale not found in other parts of the county. The people were already armed to the great necessity and importance of education. Pupils were all kept in school. Parents readily and freely furnished the books and other equipment necessary for the conducting of well regulated and organized schools. They felt that the school should have every day of the children's time. They knew that education was a systematic growth. No compulsory officers were needed to have a full school. Teachers, pupils, and patrons working hand in hand could not fail to leave a lasting impression for good in the community. The ideals in regard to teachers were high. Only men and women of good character and lofty bearing were employed. The school was regarded as one of the

great centers of the community. The teachers were the leaders and added much to the dignity and solidarity of the growing town.

This caused other sections of the county to become interested and thus the cause of education was greatly advanced and helped by this progressive school. Many teachers got their ideals and early inspiration in this academy. Its influence not only touched many parts of Sullivan County but reached to other sections of the state as well. It was a glowing torch standing out in that early day for all the high ideals and good characteristics of our early forefathers.<sup>1</sup>

### III. ON EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS IN THE STATE

From A History of Sullivan County, by Thomas J. Wolfe, the following statement is made about the influence of the Seminary upon the State Normal at Terre Haute, Indiana.

"Ascension Seminary is claimed to be the pioneer normal school of Indiana. It is said that the inspiration for the erection of the State Normal School at Terre Haute came from the work done in the Ascension Seminary of Sullivan and Farmersburg."<sup>2</sup>

The writer finds the above claim to be based upon the following facts.

The school recognized by State officials. The writer found an interesting account of the visit of Governor Hendricks to Ascension Seminary at Sullivan. He praised the school and commended its work very highly.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> From a paper The Influence of Ascension Seminary on Education in Sullivan County, written by Mr. Park at the request of the writer.

<sup>2</sup> Thomas L. Wolfe, History of Sullivan County Indiana. p. 104.

<sup>3</sup> DeWitt C. Goodrich and Charles Little, An Illustrated History of the State of Indiana. p. 265.

From interviews with former teachers and students of the school, the writer finds that other state officials visited the school and were greatly interested in its progress and the type of work it carried on.

Work of Murray Briggs. From John C. Chaney, "History of Ascension Seminary," Indiana Magazine of History, the following is quoted:

Murray Briggs editor of the Sullivan Democrat and Superintendent of instruction in Sullivan County, was attracted by the type of instruction of Professor Crawford. He was so pleased that he recommended that all of the other teachers of Sullivan County close their schools for a day and visit Professor Crawford's school at Farmersburg.<sup>4</sup>

The above shows Murray Briggs interest in the Ascension Seminary.

When the state decided to build a State Normal School and was looking for the best location, Mr. Briggs worked hard and faithfully to have the school located in this part of the state.

When the school was located, he served as a member of the board of trustees of the Indiana State Normal School.

It is undoubtedly true that Mr. Briggs was influenced to work in locating a state Teacher's training institution in this part of the state after watching the success of Ascension Seminary and seeing the need for such an institution. He must have also been influenced by observing the gratifying results on education that a teacher training institution has on the community.

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<sup>4</sup> John C. Chaney, Indiana Magazine of History. p. 220.

The doners of the fund to locate the Indiana State Normal School at Terre Haute. When the State decided to build a teacher training institution, it said that the school would be located in the city which could contribute the largest fund to it.

Among other things the original act provided that the school should be located "at such a place as shall obligate itself for the largest donation, specifying \$50,000 as the minimum amount acceptable."<sup>5</sup>

The people whom the writer interviewed agreed on the following statement: Many of the people who contributed the largest sums of money and worked hardest to raise the contribution were former students of Ascension Seminary who had become the prominent citizens of Terre Haute. This was because they knew the value of an education and wished to give larger educational opportunities to more people, therefore, these men worked to help locate Indiana State Normal at Terre Haute. These high educational ideals had been formed under the guidance of William T. Crawford at Ascension Seminary.

#### IV. PROMINENT MEN WHO ATTENDED THE SEMINARY

The influence of a school may be shown by a study of the prominent and influential positions held by its graduates and students. The following were selected as a sampling of the student body. They show that the graduates of the school

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<sup>5</sup> Acts of Indiana General Assembly, Special Session,  
1865. Sec. 6. pp. 140-142.



entered all of the various life professions and vocations and through their work in their various fields exerted a great influence in the communities in which they lived.

John C. Chaney, Deputy U. S. Attorney General, lawyer, and Congressman.

Amanda DeBaum Sherman, teacher

Sylvester Stark, lawyer in Texas

D. W. Henry, prominent lawyer, judge in Terre Haute, at one time collector of internal Revenue for Indiana

Riley Halstead, eminent M. E. minister and author

I. H. Kalley, distinguished Probate Lawyer

George R. Weatherwax, teacher

A. D. Buskirk, teacher in Greene County

Issie DeBaun McClain, teacher and writer

Martin R. Crawford, editor and publisher

Samuel B. Marts, editor and lawyer in St. Louis, Mo.

Florence Stancil Parks, teacher

Stella Hinkle Langworthy, famous teacher in California

Anna Hinkle, celebrated teacher in Vermillion County, Ind.

Fanny Thompson Crawford, distinguished in church work

George R. Dutton, prominent banker of Sullivan

William A. Cullop, lawyer and Congressman

W. H. Elston, Superintendent of Schools and writer

J. K. Smock, financier and banker

Judge Sawyer, lawyer and judge of Terre Haute

J. C. Adams, teacher and editor of Vincennes Commercial

David Terhune, teacher and coal operator

William M. Moss, editor and publisher at Linton who served in State Legislature

Thomas Donham, lawyer at Terre Haute

Zack Donham, teacher of Vigo County

Harvey Curry, teacher and once County Superintendent of Vigo County

George F. Plew, physician and surgeon at Hymera

John H. Strain, M. E. minister at Fairbanks

Robert H. VanCleave, physician and surgeon at Farmersburg.

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## APPENDIX

Graduates of 1873, with post office addresses,  
were:

M. Cowen, Fairbanks, Indiana  
D. W. Henry, Jasonville, Indiana  
Anna Hinkle, Ascension, Indiana  
Sallie Harrison, Fairbanks, Indiana  
Stella Hinkle, Sullivan, Indiana  
H. M. Letsinger, Jasonville, Indiana  
Mr. R. Neal, Jasonville, Indiana  
D. A. Sherwood, Bloomfield, Indiana  
Silvester Stark, Ascension, Indiana  
R. H. VanCleave, Ascension, Indiana  
G. R. VanCleave, Ascension, Indiana  
G. R. Weatherwax, Worthington, Indiana  
Hass Hinkle, Ascension, Indiana

Hass Hinkle, Ascension, and I. H. Kalley, Rockville,  
were appointed by the faculty to commencement honors.

Graduates of 1874, with post office addresses, were:

J. C. Chaney, Ft. Wayne, Indiana  
M. B. Crawford, Ft. Wayne, Indiana  
Miss Mamie Cain, Sullivan, Indiana  
W. M. Moss, Linton, Indiana  
H. B. Stanley, Sullivan, Indiana

M. H. Stark, Ascension, Indiana

Mr. John C. Chaney of Ft. Wayne and Miss Annie Coulson  
were appointed by the faculty to commencement honors.

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