

Early History of the Organization.

A big job and a little man to handle it seems to be the situation at the present speaking. Fate--or the committee on program--has assigned to me the subject, "Early History of the Organization." I have been instructed to begin at the beginning and to come down to the last decade, <sup>as</sup> ~~then~~ Prof. McHenry Rhoads <sup>is to</sup> ~~would~~ put on the finishing touches.

Thus you see that the old man is expected to do the principal part of the work, that is to lay the foundation, build the house and let Rhoads dab on the paint. I undertook the task that had been assigned me with more or less trepidation, fearing that I should hardly be able to make a very satisfactory job of the undertaking.

In what I may say in this connection, I hope as far as possible, to avoid any seeming egotism. As my life for the last thirty seven years has <sup>been</sup> so closely connected and interwoven with the history of the cause of education in Kentucky, it will be necessary to occasionally refer to myself, which shall be done in as modest manner as possible.

I became a member of what was then known as the State Teachers' Association of Kentucky in 1884. Was elected as its President at Mammoth Cave in 1888 and was next year elected as my own successor. When the County superintendents of the state met and formed a separate organization, I was elected as its first President and was made my successor. When the Kentucky Reading Circle was organized, it fell to my lot to be its first president and also I succeeded myself.

On the 16th day of February 1888, at Frankfort, when the teachers of the state celebrated the semi-centennial of an act of the legislature, providing for a public school system, I was selected as historian for the occasion. Now, I am chosen historian for the K.E.A. It is only seventeen years until we shall be ready to celebrate the Centennial of our public school system, on which occasion I hope to be present.

Revised at Louisville before the  
K.E.A. April 20, 1901

What little education I may have, has been picked up, here a little and there a little, just as I could find it. As a result, my training is not according to any system known outside myself. It is simply a hodge-podge of raw material thrown together in a haphazard fashion. I call attention to these facts--not as a boast--not at all, but with an almost consuming desire that the boys and girls of my state shall have opportunities that were never mine.

When I undertake to give a history of <sup>an</sup> ~~our~~ organization that dates back to more than sixty years--fifty of which I am expected to cover--you may rest assured that it shall not be very complete. I have twenty minutes allotted to me for this performance, which means that I am to make or crowd each year into twenty four seconds. This is going some, spreading it on thin. It is like painting the court house with a gallon <sup>of</sup> white lead.

But now to the subject. In a way the Kentucky Educational Association dates back to December 1857, when a few teachers met in Louisville and formed what was known as the "Kentucky Association of Teachers." E.A. Grant was the first President, which office he held for ~~five~~ <sup>four</sup> years, or terms. He was succeeded by H.A.M. Henderson, who was President seven terms.

In 1870 or -71, I am not certain which date, the name was changed to "The State Teachers' Association." At the annual session held in June 1892, another change in name took place, "The Kentucky Educational Association." A constitution, which is rather too lengthy to be incorporated in this paper, was adopted at the Paducah meeting.

So far as known, there is no disposition on the part of any of the members to wish a change in the name the Association now bears.

Following is given a list of dates, names of Presidents and the places of meetings each year in the past, so far as we are able to obtain such information:

*Louisville*

DIRECTORY OF K. E. A. PRESIDENTS.

Year	Place	President
1857	<del>Parisville</del>	E. A. Grant
1858	(July) Lexington	E. A. Grant
1858	(Decemb.) Louisville	E. A. Grant
1859	Harrodsburg	E. A. Grant
1870	Russellville	
1872	Frankfort	H. A. M. Henderson
1873	Winchester	H. A. M. Henderson
1874	Owensboro	H. A. M. Henderson
1875	Glasgow	H. A. M. Henderson
1876	Bowling Green	H. A. M. Henderson
1877		H. A. M. Henderson
1878	Somerset	H. A. M. Henderson
1879	Danville	J. W. Dodd
1880		W. J. McConathy
1881	Hopkinsville	W. H. Bartholomew
1882	Elizabethtown	J. T. Gaines
1883	Louisville	S. A. Chambers
1884	Louisville	R. D. Allen
1885	Lexington	R. D. Allen
1886	Louisville	R. D. Allen
1887	Louisville	R. N. Roark
1888	Mammoth Cave	R. N. Roark
1889	Winchester	J. J. Glenn
1890	Frankfort	J. J. Glenn
1891	Henderson	C. H. Deitrich
1892	Paducah	C. H. Deitrich
1893	No meeting	
1894	Danville	W. H. Bartholomew
1895	Lexington	McHenry Rhoads
1896	Newport	E. A. Gullion
1897	Bowling Green	E. A. Cassidy
1898	Louisville	E. H. Mark
1899	Louisville	J. G. Crabbe
1900	Louisville	J. M. N. Downs
1901	Louisville	Miss Kate McDaniel
1902	Lexington	H. H. Cherry
1903	Lexington	John Morris
1904	Maysville	M. H. Bourne
1905	Mammoth Cave	M. O. Winfrey
1906	Bowling Green	McHenry Rhoads
1907	Winchester	Barksdale Hamlett
1908	Frankfort	C. C. Adams
1909	Estill Springs	H. C. McKee
1910	Henderson	T. C. Cherry
1911	Owensboro	T. J. Coats
1912	Louisville	Mrs. Cora Stewart
1913	Louisville	R. L. McFarland
1914	Louisville	N. C. Hammack
1915	Louisville	W. P. King
1916	Louisville	T. W. Vinson
1917	Louisville	J. H. Bentley
1918	Louisville	J. A. Carnagey
1919	Louisville	Orville Stivers
1920	Louisville	R. P. Green
1921	Louisville	J. H. Risley

*H.W.H.*

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Statistics at best are always dry reading and are used principally for reference. The proceedings of most of the associations have been published and have been more or less read and studied by the members thereof. To attempt in this paper to enter into detail of the many incidents connected with the history of the organization would become very dull and monotonous.

I shall therefore become somewhat reminiscent in what I may have further to say. In looking over the names of those who have been President of the associations of the past, I find that E. A. Grant was the first President and that he served four terms. H. A. M. Henderson presided seven times, R. D. Allen three terms.

Bartholomew, Roark, Glenn, Deitrich, and Rhoads each served two terms, the others one term each. Since 1894, it has been the custom and a good one too--that no one shall be his own immediate successor. Since the organization in 1857, thirty-seven different persons have been the presiding officer--two of whom have been women. Death has made its inroads here, as elsewhere.

My dear old young friend, Prof. Bartholomew, a man whom I have loved almost as a brother, is not only the oldest ex-President living, but is the oldest member of the association. I happen to be the next oldest officer still alive. He is two years my senior, taught his first school two years before I went into the profession and was ~~11~~ President before I joined the association thirty seven years ago.

I had claimed until<sup>d</sup> recently that I had been a member of the association longer than any one, except Bartholomew, but Deitrich bobbed up in my office a few weeks ago and claimed that he had been a member forty-one years. I had not known until that time that he was so aged. He has always posed in my presence as a boy. As to the exact date of his coming into this world, I know nothing.

What a change has taken place during the last sixty-four years! What a change since I was admitted as a member! Well do I recall the time in 1894 when I sought membership with the teachers

of the state. I was a plain, common, ordinary, every-day country teacher, the superintendent of schools of a rural county, somewhat green from my contact with the woods and fields of my native heath. I had not met with Bartholomew, Allen, Caruthers, Gaines, Deitrich, McConathy, Mark and others prior to that time. They greeted me with a smile and hearty hand-shake. I was however soon admitted to the inner circle and have ever since felt at home with the educators of my state.

The association I have had with the teachers of this and other states--outside my church and family--is the most sacred and hallowed of my life. During these years, I have formed acquaintances and attachments that make me feel that I am a better man today than I would have been otherwise.

Our Association has grown from its small beginnings to great proportions. It may be in time that we shall have to meet in some larger city than Louisville. In that event, I invite you to come to Madisonville--my home town--"the best town on earth." When you come, bring with you a big tent for our meetings, fetch a box of lunch, pitch your tents, breathe the fresh air, see our beautiful women--the loveliest of which--I am the worsser half.

There have been times in the history of our associations when the heart was sick and faint, when it seemed that it was the few fighting against the many. Like Elijah we believed we were alone. When he had slain the prophets of Baal, he rejoiced that he had destroyed the enemies of his God. But Jezebel sent the prophet word that his life should pay the forfeit. Then Elijah got cold feet and fled without telling any one where he was going or when he would return.

He stopped under a Juniper tree to take a rest. At every snapping of a twig, or whisper of the wind, he imagined Jezebel was after him. The he sought refuge in a cave and prayed that he might die, as he supposed himself to be the only righteous man left on top side of earth. When the Lord told him that there were seven thousand others who had not bowed the knee to Baal, he took new courage.

Many times we need eye openers. When the hordes of the Syrian army went against the Israelites at Dothan, the young man ~~when he~~ arose early in the morning, looked down in the valley and found that during the night the enemy had camped round about with horses and chariots with a great host. He said to Elisha, "Alas, my master; how shall we do?" But Elisha prayed and said fear not, and told the young man to look up, when he discovered that the whole mountain side was full of horses and chariots of fire round about Elisha.

It is too often we fail to see the world as it is. Sometimes we are either blind or our visions are clouded. If we should more often look up and not down, search for the good there is and not the bad, have faith in our fellowman, trust in God and do our best, the world would be bettered by our living.

There is beauty every where if we but open our eyes. An eagle perched on a pine tree on the mountain top, can see more of the glories of this world and enjoy more pleasure in one hour's time, than could an oyster buried in the depths of the mud and slime at the bottom of Chesapeake Bay in a million years.

The prophet Joel said many centuries ago: "Your sons and your daughters shall prophecy, your old men shall dream dreams, your young men shall see visions." I once was a young man, now I may be an old man--old in years--yet thank the Lord, young in my visions. I have dreamed dreams, many of which have come true, many also which were never realized. May be it is nothing now but an idle dream, yet I have visions that cause me to prophecy.

My dreams are being realized in an energized vision of coming years. I hate every thing that has a streak of pessimism in its make up. The life that has nothing in it but gloom and evil foreboding a life that is not worth the living. As a young man I was an optimist

When my youthful sweetheart, whom I thought to be the most wonderful creature the Lord ever made threw me down for a fellow whom I knew was not half so worthy as myself, I had but to turn my eyes in another direction when I found the very girl that had <sup>been</sup> created for my special benefit. She was worth a dozen <sup>like</sup> of the one that had gone back on me.

While it is true that I have long since passed the meridian of life, yet I can exclaim with Rabbi, Ben Ezra:

"Grow old along with me,  
The best ~~of life~~ is yet to be."

~~It is~~ the last of life for which the first was made. Old age should bring with it an orgy of love, a riot of bliss, an elysian of supreme happiness. I may not attain to all this, but as Paul said, "I strive."

As we stand on the ocean's beach, we watch the tide as it ebbs and flows. We have gazed at the low tide when it was as calm as a morning in May. In time we see the waters disturbed as the tide begins its gently moving toward the shore. Then it recedes, but with each return it mounts higher and higher. The rolling billows look like mountains in the distance, each incoming tide coming nearer its goal than its predecessor. In time we have the high tide that engulfs all in its way.

We have been watching the tide come and go and come again. My vision now shows me that it is rising with a roar like the thunders of many mighty battles. How beautiful! The swelling waters are coming in with a mighty rush that shall sweep all opposition before the unseen and irresistible forces hidden in the unfathomable deep.

The old log school house that stood on the bank of a nearby stream--an old tumble down affair--where I taught my first school more than half a century ago, has been torn down, used for kindling wood and in its stead stands a modern building, with up-to-date furniture, a first class teacher and interested boys and girls. My

*Per Month*

salary was \$13.83  $1/3$ , or \$41.50 for three months. My successor now receives six times the salary then paid your speaker in the long ago. And she is worth all she receives.

My vision, undimmed by age, with prophetic sight unfolds to me, my beloved Kentucky--the brightest star in the galaxy of states--a future Commonwealth in which ignorance shall be regarded as a crime against humanity--a condition of things in which every boy and girl, without reference to age, color or sex, shall be fitted and qualified for citizenship and the duties and responsibilities of life.

God grant that this vision shall not be the vision of the visionary, but the vision of every man and woman of old Kentucky. Let there be inscribed on our banners in words of living light, "A school for every child and every child in school in my old Kentucky Home."