

### ON THIS DAY IN WEST VIRGINIA HISTORY FEBRUARY 22



**On February 22, 1911, the legislature passed an act establishing the West Virginia Colored Orphans' Home near Huntington.**

**CSO: SS.8.24, ELA.8.1**

**Investigate the Document: (*Report of the State Board Control, Vol. II, 1912*)**

1. What word was used to describe the orphans that were housed at the West Virginia Colored Orphans' Home?
2. What adjective(s) would you use to describe the condition of the main building which boarded the orphans?
3. What was the purpose of the West Virginia Colored Orphans' Home? What were the orphans trained for?
4. How many African American orphans were adopted by private homes between March 1911-October 1912? The majority of those admitted during this period were between what ages? Which county had the highest admittance rate to the West Virginia Colored Orphans' Home during this time?
5. What was the recommendation given by the State Board of Control to the Legislature about the location of the institution?

**Think Critically:** In addition to deceased parents, why do you think many children during the early-twentieth century were placed in an orphanage? Is the segregation of orphanages a microcosm of Jim Crow laws that were in place at the time? What do you think life was like in an early twentieth century orphanage?

## West Virginia Colored Orphans' Home.

### HISTORICAL.

This institution had its beginning January 31, 1909, when it was incorporated at Bluefield, West Va. It was not until the 5th of March, 1910, however, that it was opened to receive inmates. The first location of the home was at Central City, W. Va., but five years later it was re-located on the Guyandotte river some distance above the city limits of Huntington, where two hundred and ten acres of land were purchased. Subsequently twenty acres were sold, leaving one hundred and ninety acres when it was purchased by the state.

The number of inmates cared for yearly has increased from eighteen the first year to about eighty at the present time. More than two hundred have been cared for during the existence of the institution.

For some years the home was supported entirely by private contributions raised by the superintendent and other friends, and by the income from the boarding hall and farm. Beginning in 1903 the State Legislature has made yearly appropriations for the home, ranging from \$1,500.00 in 1903 to \$3,000.00 in 1910. Chapter 24, Acts of the Legislature of 1911, provided for the purchase by the State of the real estate and all other property of the institution, appropriating \$10,000.00 for that purpose, and further provided that the State Board of Control should assume entire management thereof.

The State now owns the entire plant, and the affairs of the institution have been managed by this Board since the above act went into effect.

### GROUNDS.

Of the one hundred and ninety acres of which this farm consists, only about fifteen acres are suitable for trucking. The greater part of the remainder is too steep for successful cropping, and is now in grass, except a few small truck patches.

The farm fronts on the Guyandotte River and extends back perhaps half a mile from the river. When the institution was located at this place the land was grown up in brush until it was necessary practically to clear it anew. An immense amount of work was necessary to bring it to its present fairly good condition. To put the land in first class condition will require a great deal of work, the expenditure of considerable money for fertilizer and farm equipment, and the employment of some one as farmer who is more or less an expert in renovating old worn-out land.

At the present time it furnishes pasture for six head of cattle and two mules.

and raises hay sufficient to feed this stock during the winter, and furnishes a considerable amount of garden truck for the institution. One feature of the farm which can be made quite profitable is the apple orchard. There are now about eight hundred bearing trees, which this year produced more than enough apples to supply the needs of the institution. With proper care they can be made to bring in considerable revenue.

### BUILDINGS.

The main building, occupied by officers and inmates, is the only one worthy of note. There are a small cottage, a stable, and several dilapidated sheds on the land, but none in good condition. The main building is situated on a ridge sloping from the rear down to the river, and fronts toward the public road which passes through the farm. It is built of brick, three stories in height with a large attic. The brick was made on the farm by officers and inmates, part of the lumber used came from the farm, and the building was put up by institution labor. The building is very poorly finished, is entirely unpainted and presents a generally unsightly and unfinished appearance. It consists of a central part, with one wing. The foundation is laid for another wing to the building but we have not deemed it advisable to erect this wing, and in fact have had no funds with which to erect it if we had so desired. Altogether the building as to its location, surroundings, construction, arrangement and equipment is far below the standard desirable for a state institution, and we doubt whether it would be possible, and are convinced that it would be inadvisable to attempt to remodel it sufficiently to meet the needs of such an institution.

### VISITS.

March	27, 1911.....	Sheppard and Stephenson.
April	27, 1911.....	Lakin.
July	1, 1911.....	Lakin.
August	14, 1911.....	Sheppard.
December	18, 1911.....	Lakin.
February	18, 1912.....	Lakin.

### PAY ROLL.

Name.	Position.	Annual Salary.	Emoluments.
C. E. McGhee.....	Superintendent.....	\$900.00	Room, Board and Laundry.
Miss L. H. Ware.....	Matron.....	420.00	Room, Board and Laundry.
James Liggins.....	Carpenter and Blacksmith.....	420.00	Room and Board.
Hardin Smith.....	Gardener.....	300.00	Room and Board.
Miss C. L. Stewart.....	Teacher.....	270.00	Room and Board.



### PROFESSIONAL REPORT OF SUPERINTENDENT.

The object of the institution is to provide and maintain a home for colored orphan children, and to instruct and assist them in any way that may seem best to fit and equip them for usefulness in life.

Since it is a fact that the inmates of this home are children who are unfortunate in not having homes, we find the best thing we can do for them is to train them for usefulness about the home and farm. When such children have been trained and placed out we find they give entire satisfaction and at the same time are enabled to maintain themselves.

Every child is given instruction in some useful domestic, mechanical or other branch of industry. This work and the necessary instruction in it begin at the earliest practical age, and are of such a nature and so administered as may seem best adapted to the capacity of the child.

Industrial Department for Girls, includes, viz: general housework, cooking, laundry work and dressmaking.

Industrial Department for Boys, includes, viz: agriculture, carpentry, masonry, shoemaking, blacksmithing, plumbing and painting.

The common school branches taught, both boys and girls, viz: reading, writing, arithmetic, spelling, geography, history, physiology and grammar. This training is finished as rapidly as the talent of the pupil will permit, both in the industrial department and common school work.

*Discipline*.—Only such discipline is administered as is necessary to secure prompt, accurate, conscientious and faithful discharge of duty. A feeling of motherly and fatherly companionship is constantly cultivated between teachers and children. The idea of home life is kept prominent, not only in the circle but even in the furnishings and of the house. Informal receptions and entertainments are given frequently during the year and our doors are open always to callers and friends.

### STATISTICAL TABLES, 1910-1912.

TABLE NO. 1.

Movement of Population.

	From March 1, 1911 to Oct. 1, 1911.			From Oct. 1, 1911 to Oct. 1, 1912		
	Males.	Females	Total	Males.	Females	Total
Total No. in home March 1, 1911 and September 30, 1911...	42	22	64	45	27	72
Total number admitted.....	20	18	38	23	19	42
Total number in home.....	62	40	102	68	46	114
Released on age.....	1	3	4	2	2	4
Returned to relatives.....	4	6	10	5	5	10
Placed in private homes.....	2	2	4	2	6	8
Adopted in private homes.....		1	1	4	5	9
Died in institution.....	2	1	3	2		2
Deserted.....	4		4	3		3
Returned to J. Court.....	4		4			
Total number leaving.....	17	13	30	18	18	36
Total number remaining, Sept. 30.....	45	27	72	50	28	78
	45	27	72	50	28	78

TABLE NO. 2.

Showing Ages of Those Admitted During the Year.

	From March 1, 1911 to Oct. 1, 1911.			From Oct. 1, 1911 to Oct. 1, 1912.		
	Males.	Females.	Total.	Males.	Females.	Total.
Under 6 years of age.....	6	8	14	7	2	9
6 to 12 years.....	12	6	18	14	15	29
12 to 16 years.....	2	4	6	2	2	4
TOTAL.....	20	18	38	23	19	42

TABLE NO. 3.

Showing Degree of Education of Those Admitted During the Year.

	From March 1, 1911 to Oct. 1, 1911.			From Oct. 1, 1911 to Oct. 1, 1912.		
	Males.	Females.	Total.	Males.	Females.	Total.
None.....	9	8	17	7	8	15
Read and write.....	6	6	12	8	6	14
Fourth grade.....	5	4	9	8	5	13
TOTAL.....	20	18	38	23	19	42

TABLE NO. 4.

Showing Nativity of Those Admitted During the Year.

	From March 1, 1911 to Oct. 1, 1911.			From Oct. 1, 1911 to Oct. 1, 1912.		
	Males.	Females.	Total.	Males.	Females.	Total.
West Virginia.....	12	14	26	16	12	28
Virginia.....	5	3	8	7	7	14
Pennsylvania.....	3	0	3			
Michigan.....		1	1			
TOTAL.....	20	18	38	23	19	42

TABLE NO. 5.  
Showing Number Admitted During the Year by Counties.

	From March 1, 1911 to Oct. 1, 1911.			From Oct. 1, 1911 to Oct. 1, 1912.		
	Males.	Females.	Total.	Males.	Females.	Total.
Cabell.....	2	4	6	1	2	3
Fayette.....	1	2	3	2	1	3
Greenbrier.....	1		1		1	1
Harrison.....	1	1	2		1	1
Jackson.....	1		1			
Jefferson.....	1		1			
Kanawha.....	2	1	3	4	1	5
McDowell.....	2	2	4	2	1	3
Marshall.....					2	2
Mercer.....	2	1	3	1	2	3
Mineral.....	1		1	1		1
Mingo.....					1	1
Monongalia.....	1	2	3	2	1	3
Monroe.....	1	1	2		1	1
Ohio.....	1	2	3	2	2	4
Putnam.....				1		1
Pocahontas.....				2		2
Randolph.....				1	1	2
Summers.....	2	1	3	2	1	3
Taylor.....		1	1	1	1	2
Tucker.....	1		1	1		1
TOTAL.....	20	18	38	23	19	42

TABLE NO. 6.  
Showing Previous Residence of Those Admitted During the Year Classified as  
City, Village and Rural.

	From March, 1, 1911 to Oct. 1, 1911.			From Oct. 1, 1911 to Oct. 1, 1912.		
	Males.	Females.	Total.	Males.	Females.	Total.
City.....	4	3	7	5	2	7
Village.....	8	10	18	10	12	22
Rural.....	8	5	13	8	5	13
TOTAL.....	20	18	38	23	19	42

TABLE NO. 7.  
Showing Number Placed in Private Homes.

	From March 1, 1911 to Oct. 1, 1911.			From Oct. 1, 1911 to Oct. 1, 1912.		
	Males.	Females.	Total.	Males.	Females.	Total.



### BUSINESS REPORT OF SUPERINTENDENT.

The main building is a brick structure, three stories high, with an attic suitable for the purpose of a dormitory. The center of the building is 30x60 feet. The east wing is 40x60 feet.

The foundation of the west wing, 40x60 ft., has been laid but the wing has not been built.

The first story of the building is used for kitchen, dining room, storage room, recreation room, laundry and workshop. The second story contains the office, bed rooms, the girls' dormitories and the nurseries.

The third floor contains the chapel, the boys' dormitories and teachers' bed rooms. The attic contains dormitory for boys.

#### BARN.

This is a frame structure, part of it is used for horses and an outside shed for wagons. It is far from being up to date. A cow barn is badly needed.

#### COTTAGE.

It contains four rooms and is at present used by the Superintendent.

#### LIVE STOCK.

We have one pair of draft mules, three milk cows, one bull and two heifers. We used our male yearlings for beef, except one which was kept for stock.

#### HEATING.

Our heating apparatus is not good. We are now using gas, coal and wood stoves. We need a steam heating system.

#### WATER SUPPLY.

Our water supply is not good. We need a tank and the building fitted up with a water system. We are now using water pumped up from the river by a gasoline pump into a cistern for cooking and laundry work. The well needs to be overhauled for drinking purposes.

#### GRADING.

We have done a great deal of grading in front of our building, which adds greatly to the appearance of our institution. There is still more grading that should be done, also sewerage that should be laid.

#### FENCING.

We have built seventeen hundred feet of fencing since 1911.

### REPORT OF THE MATRON FOR 1911 AND 1912.

Item.	Quantity.
Bread (Loaves) .....	8,202
Bread—Corn (Pones) .....	8,133
Cakes .....	78
Jelly (Gallons) .....	5
Puddings .....	16
Pies .....	144

1912]

WEST VIRGINIA COLORED ORPHANS' HOME.

333

Cookies (Doz.) .....	17
Biscuits and Rolls (Doz.) .....	289
Butter (Lbs.) .....	379
Chickens Killed .....	20
Tomatoes Canned (Gallons) .....	10
Blackberries Canned (Gallons) .....	50

### REPORT OF FARMER FOR 1911.

Item.	Quantity.
Fodder (Shocks) .....	75
Hay (Tons) .....	5
Green Apples (Bushels) .....	200
Hogs (Lbs.) .....	380
Beef (Lbs.) .....	1,000
Beef Hide .....	1
Corn (Bushels) .....	150
Millet (Tons) .....	2
Pea Hay (Tons) .....	2
Irish Potatoes (Bu.) .....	25
Sweet Potatoes (Bu.) .....	55
Kale (Bu.) .....	300
Green Onions (Doz.) .....	500
Beans (Bu.) .....	280
Tomatoes (Bu.) .....	50
Water Melons .....	500
Cantaloupes .....	200
Ears of Corn (Doz.) .....	200
Blackberries (Gal.) .....	50

### REPORT OF FARMER FOR 1912.

Item.	Quantity.
Dry Onions (Bu.) .....	72
Green Onions (Doz.) .....	360
Green Beans (Bu.) .....	49
Irish Potatoes (Bu.) .....	26
Radishes (Doz.) .....	41
Squash (Doz.) .....	12
Lettuce (Gal.) .....	63
Cucumbers (Doz.) .....	20
Beets (Doz.) .....	15
Tomatoes (Doz.) .....	12
Green Corn-Ears (Doz.) .....	24
Timothy Hay (Tons) .....	15

### REPORT OF SEWING ROOM FOR 1911 AND 1912.

Item.	Quantity.
Aprons .....	59
Bread Cloths .....	2
Bonnets .....	1
Dresses .....	42
Mending .....	1,670
Pillow Cases .....	38
Sheets .....	75
Towels .....	28
Shirts .....	122
Rompers .....	27
Bed Ticks .....	32
Quilts .....	30



**SUPERINTENDENT'S STATEMENT OF NEEDS FOR BIENNIAL PERIOD 1912-1914.**

One of the greatest needs of our institution is the completion of our building.

We need separate buildings for our boys and girls, as it is very difficult for us to manage them under the present conditions.

We have the west foundation laid and a good amount of material on hand for the new building, and the larger part of the work can be done by our own boys.

The brick can be made on our own place and laid by the boys, like the buildings we are now in.

Our building needs to be fitted out with a proper heating plant, bath rooms, water tank, steam laundry and the necessary furnishings to render it comfortable and a credit to the state.

We also need two more horses and a conveyance for transporting children to and from the institution.

It is the object of the institution to place the children out as soon as suitable homes can be found, thus causing a constant passing to and from the institution.

We find it impossible to do all the necessary work with one team, as we are located five miles from the business center of Huntington, and we do all our own hauling and farming.

We are also in need of a good wagon for hauling.

A larger number of milk cows are needed. We find that the food furnished by them is cheaper and more healthful than any other, and we have a large pasture which will enable us to care for them at a small cost.

We also recommend the employment of a man for dairying and horticulture. The labor of the children can be utilized in this way, in raising small fruit such as strawberries, blackberries and raspberries, since they will be out of school at the season of the year when the work of this nature is to be done.

We also recommend the employment of a good cook to instruct the girls in cooking.

We are very much in need of a hospital where our sick patients can be cared for, as it is very dangerous for them to be cared for in the same building with the number of other children we have in the institution.

Therefore, we ask for the following appropriation during the next biennial period:

	1913.	1914.
For current expenes .....	\$ 5,000.00	\$ 5,000.00
For salaries, teachers and employes .....	3,600.00	3,600.00
For finishing present building .....	4,000.00	4,000.00
For water supply and sewerage.....	500.00	
For steam laundry .....		2,000.00
For furniture and fixtures .....	400.00	
<del>For new building .....</del>		<del>500.00</del>
For conveyance .....	100.00	

1912]

WEST VIRGINIA COLORED ORPHANS' HOME.

335

For team, wagon and milk cows.....	560.00	
For cow barn .....	500.00	
For hospital .....		1,000.00
Total .....	\$14,720.00	\$16,160.00

### COMMENT BY STATE BOARD OF CONTROL.

This institution passed under the management of the State Board of Control by virtue of an act of the legislature in 1911, and the problem of what will be best for its interests has been and is a perplexing one. The purchase of the property was not left to the discretion of this board, but was made mandatory by the above act of the legislature. While its location is only about a mile outside of the city limits of Huntington, yet it is from four to five miles from the markets and railroad stations of Huntington, and nearly three miles from the town of Guyandotte. This necessitates the hauling of all supplies by wagon from these points, over roads that even in summer are far from good, and in winter become almost impassable. The land is not suitable for such farming as should be carried on at an institution of this kind, and is not provided with suitable outbuildings. The water supply will always have to be brought from the Guyandotte river and will eventually necessitate building a filter therefor. Wells in this vicinity do not furnish sufficient water to meet the needs of an institution like this.

Taking everything into consideration, we believe that the institution should be re-located at some more suitable and accessible place, and we recommend that the legislature of 1913 authorize the sale of this property and the relocation of the home. This will make it possible to obtain a suitable farm, and to erect a building which will be a credit to the State and furnish a comfortable home to the children committed to its care.

### FINANCIAL REPORT BY STATE BOARD OF CONTROL.

#### RECEIPTS AND DISBURSEMENTS.

TABLE NO. 1.

From October 1, 1910, to October 1, 1911.

#### LEGISLATIVE APPROPRIATIONS.

FUNDS.	Balance Oct. 1, 1910.	Legislative Appropriation 1911.	Total Amount Available 1911.	Disbursements 1911.	Balance Sept. 30, 1911.
Current Expenses, Salaries, Etc.....		\$ 3,000.00	\$ 3,000.00	\$ 1,065.50	\$ 1,934.50
Maintenance.....		2,000.00	2,000.00	1,865.05	134.95
Purchase Land and Buildings.....		10,000.00	10,000.00	10,000.00	
TOTAL.....		\$15,000.00	\$15,000.00	\$12,930.55	\$2,069.45

BOARD OF CONTROL FUNDS.

FUNDS.	Balance Oct. 1, 1910.	Moneys Col- lected by the State Board of Control 1911.	Total Amount Available 1911.	Disburse- ments 1911.	Balance Sept. 30, 1911.
Miscellaneous.....	-----	\$35.00	\$35.00	-----	\$35.00
TOTAL.....	-----	\$35.00	\$35.00	-----	\$35.00