

**Original Plot of Farm Land,
250 Acres, Purchased for
\$5,150 — Z. C. Patten
Gave Building and Site
for Girls' Home.**

The addition of a new building to the campus seems to have given an impetus to plans for enlarging and expanding the work. The board at its meeting on Dec. 21, 1909, adopted resolutions requesting that the county court at the January term "provide for the erection of at least one new building as nearly fireproof as possible, and that such building be constructed two stories in height for the time being—the lower floor for use as schoolrooms and the upper floors for dormitories for the children, and that this one new building be so designed and located as to be the beginning of a general enlargement and improvement of this institution of the county."

Without delay, the court at the January term appropriated \$15,000 for enlarging the equipment and usefulness of the school. Architect Bear-den was engaged to draw plans for the new structure.

The site chosen was on the slope of the hill to the left of the main building and the boys at the home set to work immediately on the excavation according to the outline laid down by the architect. No time was lost in rushing this building to completion for

as usual in such cases, the need for more room was urgent and pressing. At this point, the official record of proceedings as preserved in the minutes of the board of trustees breaks off. Subsequent boards either kept no records or allowed them to be lost. So for the data presented henceforward the writer has been obliged to depend upon the memory of citizens who happened to be connected with the institution or sufficiently interested to mark events as they transpired.

In 1913 H. T. Price, who had held the position of superintendent since the resignation of Mr. Kalleen in 1902, relinquished his post. His successor, one Mr. Cooper, served for one year, when Mr. Price returned again, to remain until 1918, bringing the total number of his years of service up to fifteen—the longest tenure of office held by any one superintendent up to date.

Messrs. O. B. Andrews and W. B. Davis, each served several years upon the board of trustees during this period. By 1913 the girls' department had completely outgrown its quarters which, it will be recalled, originally consisted of a family dwelling not particularly designed for institutional use. The question of a new building for this department having been discussed in some time the matter crystallized in 1913 when an appropriation was made for this purpose. An ample, two-story brick structure was erected on the brow of the girls' hill, a little to the right of the old Trimble residence, which was their first home. With much rejoicing the matron and her family of girls moved into their new quarters.

This building was called the "Z. C. Patten Home for Girls" in honor of the man who had made the original gift of land and first home. Mr. Patten went even further in his usual manner of largeness, and on his usual every-first birthday set aside a fund

which provides an annual gift of money to this department. Usually the money is spent in freshening the building with paint or kalsomine or in supplying some other need such as dishes, bed coverings, etc.

The discarded home of the girls' department was used for a time as a home for the superintendent and later as a store house. It was destroyed by fire in 1923. This was the second, the colored building having been destroyed in the same manner in 1918. This building was replaced in 1919, at an expenditure of \$30,000.

Indefinite it was at this time approximately, that the following citizens began to serve on the board of trustees, L. G. Walker, president; C. M. Willingham, treasurer; Mrs. M. M. Allison and Mercer Reynolds.

Two women, Mrs. T. H. Edwards and Mrs. Adella W. Hayes, served in the capacity of superintendent, each for a year, just preceding the advent of Mr. and Mrs. James Ward in 1921. Following Mr. Ward's sudden death in 1924, Mrs. Ward continued the work alone until 1926. In January, 1926, Dr. and Mrs. W. S. Keese took charge of the institution and are now in their sixth year of service.

In the spring of 1929 three new members were appointed to the board of trustees, Mr. L. G. Walker being retained as member and president. The new appointees were Messrs. Fred Robinson, Ise Moore and Creed F. Bates, Jr. Mr. Bates serves as secretary.

A new day dawned for Bonny Oaks, Monday, May 12, 1930, when the county court provisionally appropriated \$110,000 to the institution and thus gave official approval to a far-reaching program of progress and expansion. Had this action been ratified by the chamber of commerce commit-

tee a sufficient amount of money would have been available practically to rebuild Bonny Oaks. The plan falls for a dormitory for adolescent boys and a separate one for girls of the same age, apart from those provided for pre-adolescent and younger children. This departure is strictly in line with modern thinking along psychological and sociological lines. A central heating plant will solve what is now a great problem in comfort, economy and efficiency. A separate school building apart from the living quarters is a crying need.

A great deal of publicity, some favorable and some adverse, has thrown the spotlight on Bonny Oaks of late and both kinds have been welcomed as indicative of a growing consciousness on the part of the city and county of their opportunity and privilege in ministering to these, their wards. One recent visitor to the institution who described himself as "one of those lukewarm fellows on the subject of Bonny Oaks" prior to his visit, unhesitatingly pronounced it the finest institution in the county once he had been privileged "to see at first hand the wonderful work being carried on out there."

It is hardly an exaggeration to state that this is the universal reaction of visitors to the campus. This opinion, however, is expressed only in regard to the morale, the subjective aims and ideals, the intangible spirit of courage and hope that one senses both in the children and in the staff. Certainly it cannot be said of the buildings and equipment as now provided. It is sad to reflect that in this institution which exists for the training and shaping of young life, of young hope, and of future citizenship the material equipment and mechanical efficiency is so far inferior even to that provided for the county jail and the county workhouse. A susceptible visitor to the home never quite shakes off the subtle appeal

that these little ones make to the heart. Healthy, happy, normal children, deprived by fate of normal family life, they somehow unconsciously and inarticulately, acknowledge their dependence and, with a shy smile of confidence, express their trust in the great heart of humanity.

Bonny Oaks is not a reform school, these children are not transgressors against the law and the policy of the institution from the time of its founding has been protective rather than corrective, educational, rather than punitive. Its friends, and they are many, look forward with confidence to the day when Bonny Oaks shall be a thing of beauty, a model of its kind, and they shall be able to say, "I had a part in creating this haven for the juvenile flowers and jetsam of Hamilton county."