

Days Of Old Sumner County

Newsletter No. 18, April 2017
Sumner County Historical Society

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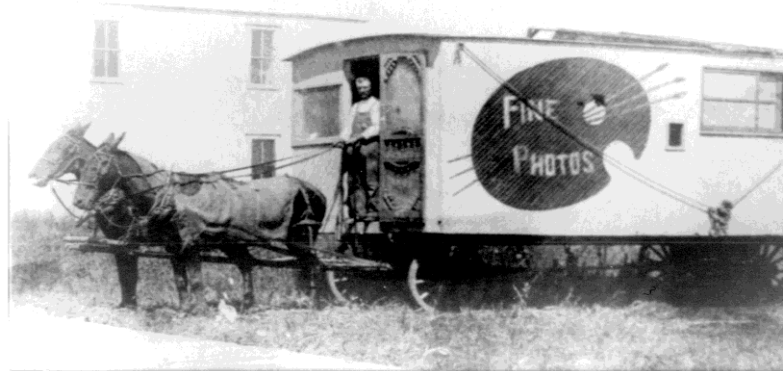
SCHS Annual Dinner, Meet

Sumner County Historical Society President Ken Thomson and Gallatin author Velma Brinkley will speak at this year's annual SCHS membership and dinner meeting Thursday, April 20, at 6:30 p.m. at the Gallatin First Baptist Church, 290 E. Winchester Street, Bldg B.

Dinner will be \$25 per person. Reservations must be made by April 13. Invitations with reservation return information were sent to members, but others are welcome to attend and to join SCHS. Annual membership cost is \$25 per family, \$20 per individual and \$10 per student. Contact Sumner Co. Archives at 615-452-615-452-0037 or e-mail Bonnie Martin at sumnersettlers@yahoo.com for information.

Thomson will present stories about Dr. William Lackey (b. 1875-d.1951), the Gallatin physician, who was the first person in town to ride in a car, the first to travel by car from Gallatin to Nashville and the first to own a motorcycle. Lackey was also a gifted cartoonist.

Brinkley will discuss Dr. Jonathan Rucker (b. 1892-d.1970) of Gallatin, who was principal of Union High School, pastor of the First Baptist Church on Winchester St. and practiced medicine out of Union's school office. He was a WWI doctor and the only African American from Sumner County to serve as an officer in that war.



Stark went from town to town in his mule drawn photography cart

Archives Receives Glass Negatives

By Bonnie Martin, Archivist

Sumner County Archives recently received County Historian John Garrott's collection of glass negatives by the renowned photographer E.M. Stark.

Garrott donated the collection to the Archives for historical preservation. He is not sure how many glass negatives are in the Stark collection, but he estimates that the glass weighs approximately 1,000 pounds and possibly contains 7,000 negatives.

Photographer Ernest Stark began his career in the early 1900's traveling a 300 mile circuit through Nebraska and Kansas. Stark moved from town to town by mule drawn wagon, setting up his studio for several weeks before moving to the next town. Families were eager to capture their loved ones in photographs, and Stark's business flourished.

There was at least one occasion, however, when business did not cover expenses. Sumner County Historical Society President Ken Thomson recalled the tale he heard. "Once when Stark was traveling, he stayed in a boarding house in Murfreesboro. As the story goes, Stark ran out of money for his rent, and his landlady told him she was going to confiscate his photo equipment if he didn't pay up. Unknown to her, Stark had already lowered his equipment by rope out his bedroom window. He quickly gathered it up and left town in a hurry."

While visiting in Tennessee, Stark heard of a studio for sale in Gallatin, and by 1906 Stark's Photographic Studio was open for

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Did Dresser's Spirit Linger? The Haunted Piano

By Judith Morgan

This is part one of the story of Prudence Dresser and haunted piano.

Several years ago, a vintage Steinway piano was sold to a Kentucky family named Rogers by the Miller Piano Specialist Co. of Cool Springs near Franklin, Tenn. From the night the piano was delivered, when footsteps were heard but no one was in the house, strange events began to occur. More than once the family heard someone running up the stairs, yet their son—the only one it could have been—was sound asleep.

The family's 23-year-old daughter was awakened one night when someone entered her room: a woman appeared to be standing by the window looking out into the night. Another time, the new owner of the piano was playing it when she heard her husband arrive home. He came into the room to stand behind her as she played. She finished the piece and turned to greet her husband. No one was there. Her husband was not yet home.

What was going on? The Rogers family came to believe their piano was haunted. A call to the Miller Piano Co. led to Gallatin and local pianist Johnny Maddox, who remembered the piano. It had belonged to his piano teacher, a woman who was an institution in Gallatin and Nashville for 40 years: Prudence Simpson Dresser. Who was she, and why would her piano be haunted?

The Tale of Prudence Dresser

Born in Springfield, Prudence Simpson was the daughter of Confederate Captain Samuel Robert Simpson and his wife Catherine Cressman of Philadelphia. Before the Civil War, Simpson had come South to build railroads, but he soon went into private business as an architect and builder of commercial and residential buildings. Among his greatest achievements was the construction of the old Tennessee State Prison in Nashville. When Prudence was four years old, the family moved to Gallatin, where her father had purchased the old Williamson Carriage Factory and a nearby residence on East Main Street. There Captain Simpson went into business.

Prudence graduated from the Howard Female College, just a short walk down East Main Street from her home. Prudence's musical abilities were obvious from the beginning, and she pursued her education at the New England Conservatory of Music, where she graduated with honors in 1892. Soon after graduation, Prudence was in New York about to depart for Europe and further study. As the story goes, her sister Nellie stopped her before the ship sailed, telling her that her father needed her, a tale that proved untrue, or at least exaggerated. Was Nellie jealous of

Prudence's success? Perhaps. Whatever the case, Prudence missed her chance for further study, and the sisters reportedly never spoke to each other again.

For a time, Prudence remained at home, teaching at Howard Female College and in Nashville. Then she returned to New England and taught for several years at her alma mater. There she met and married Boston banker Harry Dresser. They had one daughter, Catherine, born December 22, 1897. Soon after, Harry Dresser developed tuberculosis, or "consumption," as it was known at the time. The young family moved to Asheville, North Carolina, for the mountain air, believed at the time to be helpful for consumptives. Harry died there in 1900.



Prudence Dresser (Ken Thomson photo collection)

Bereft, Prudence Simpson Dresser brought her daughter back home to Gallatin where she purchased the house on West Main Street that had been built by Dr. Elmore Douglas for his bride, Eliza Allen Houston (former wife of Sam Houston) and had later served as headquarters for Gen. E.A. Payne during the Union occupation of Gallatin in Civil War times. In the fall of 1900, the Prudence Simpson Dresser Pianoforte School (sometimes referred to as the Dresser Music School or the Dresser Piano School) opened for business.

When Prudence's daughter also died of

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tuberculosis in March 1904 at the age of six, only five months after the death of her mother, Prudence was inconsolable. It was her music that saved her. In December that same year, reports of a concert at Howard College revealed that Prudence Dresser was carrying on. The concert "was in every way an artistic and financial success." It would later be said of Prudence Dresser that, "For one with an artist's soul music is as truly a necessity as food, raiment and shelter...Such was music to Mrs. Dresser." Thus, Prudence continued to perform whenever she had the chance, both for personal pleasure and financial gain, as she healed from the double loss of her mother and daughter.

Music Saved Her Again

Prudence's beloved father, whose architectural talents she revered, died two years later, and she was left totally on her own. Once again, the indomitable Prudence Simpson Dresser carried on. She continued to teach and perform, and she often accompanied visiting singers or musicians when they performed in Nashville. In the summer of 1908, as was her custom, she visited friends in New England and gave a series of recitals in Boston, New York City and Buffalo.

At some time during this period, she did post-graduate work under well known musicians in New York City. Her own skills continued to grow, and her business prospered. By 1909, the Pianoforte School had expanded to Nashville, where Prudence rented a studio on Fifth Avenue and, with the help of two assistants, included instruction in both ensemble work and stringed instruments, as well as piano.

It would be said of Prudence Dresser that her music was "more than a profession; it was an art loved and followed with devotion. It was a vocation to which she gave herself ardently for her own mastery of music, and with diligence and high aim as a teacher." Prudence kept up with new methods. In 1916, for example, she traveled to St. Louis to study and pass the strenuous exam required to be allowed to teach the Progressive Series of Piano Lessons. Prudence held both herself and her students to the highest standards. While she was fondly known by all as "Miss Prudie Dresser," no nonsense was ever allowed. Many a knuckle was rapped as Miss Prudie stood beside an erring pupil or one she deemed to be trying not quite hard enough. At times, she was forced to tell disappointed parents their child was "not suited for a musical education." Those students who did meet her high standards in violin or piano instruction were issued coveted diplomas.

Prudence Dresser's pupils were always praised for their "accuracy, artistic phrasing and shading, good playing..." Among Prudence Dresser's pupils were Francis Craig who went on to become a well-known orchestra leader and composer of numerous "hit" songs, among them the still-popular "Near You." Another early pupil, Elizabeth Blue (later Mrs. Rufus Boddie) taught music and directed the Gallatin High School chorus for decades. Pianist Johnny Maddox, whose roster of hit songs numbered more than 200, was one of her last pupils.

She Becomes a Crusader

Prudence Dresser had too much talent and drive, though, to limit herself to music. The deaths of both husband and daughter to the dread "white plague" now known as tuberculosis forged a determination to defeat that disease. At the time, Tennessee was second only to California in the rate of infection and death. In her role as district chair of the health committee of the Tennessee Federation of Women's Clubs, she gave of her own resources in 1909 to provide the Anti-Tuberculosis exhibit at the Sumner County Fair. Along with Gallatin's Dr. W.N. Lackey, Prudence was instrumental in 1910 in forming the Tennessee Anti-Tuberculosis Association, and she actively supported the sale of the newly-invented Red Cross Christmas Seals to provide funds for the fight. That same year she served as national chairman for the fight against tuberculosis for the General Federation of Women's Clubs, an alliance of various women's organizations across the United States.

There was more. As an independent woman managing her own business in what was still very much a man's world, perhaps it was inevitable that she would be drawn to the fight for equal suffrage for women. She was one of the founders of the Sumner County Equal Suffrage League, serving on its board of directors and at various times as secretary and president of the group. At a rally held at the Central High School in Gallatin in October 1916, Prudence Dresser was one of the main speakers.

By 1916, Prudence Dresser was celebrating the fifteenth anniversary of her successful business, serving on the board of directors of the Tennessee Tuberculosis Association, serving as president of the Tennessee Federation of Music Clubs and campaigning actively for equal suffrage for women.

Then came the Great War, and everything else had to wait...

The story of Prudence Dresser and her haunted piano will continue in the next newsletter in July.

A Recipe Book from Louisa Trousdale Allen

By Jan Shuxteau

The following recipes are from a recipe book left by Louisa Trousdale Allen (b. Feb. 10, 1828-d. July 31, 1906) of Gallatin, the daughter of Gov. William Trousdale. These recipes were part of a booklet, printed some years ago to raise money for Sumner County Museum. It belongs to former museum director Juanita Frazor of Gallatin, who is currently a member of the board of directors of the Sumner County Historical Association.

Included in the booklet is a brief biography of Louisa. It says, "She was held in high esteem by members of her household. She was a woman possessed of the highest Christian virtues and her life was a blessing to all who came under her influence. She was a member of the Presbyterian Church for many years.

"She was married on May 1, 1850, to Benjamin Franklin Allen who became Editor of the Gallatin newspaper, Tenth Legion. He later devoted his life to the practice of law and became a judge."



Louisa Trousdale Allen and Benjamin F. Allen from the photo collection of Ken Thomson

Bread Recipes: (Note that one pint equals two cups.)

Soda Biscuits

Take one quart of flour (4 cups), half a pint of thick buttermilk, one tablespoon of lard, half a teaspoonful of soda, half a teaspoon of salt. Mix together and bake.

Tall Rising Yeast

Take a pint of new milk, warm from the cow if possible. Put in a teaspoonful of salt and thicken it with flour to the consistency of batter cakes. Set this in a warm place to rise and make your biscuits or bread up with it and some new milk or milk and water warmed together. To make a loaf of good bread (combine) one large spoonful of hop yeast or a yeast cake; put this in a pint of warm water, mash in two Irish potatoes and stir all together. Sift in flour until you have a stiff batter and set it to rise. When it is very light, stir in a spoonful of lard and enough flour to enable you to mold it into a loaf. When molded, grease the top and set it to rise again. If really light you can bake it, but if not, work it down again and mold it over and let it rise again.

Corn Muffins

One pint of meal, half pint of buttermilk, with one-half teaspoon of soda in it, the yellow of two eggs, one even tablespoonful of lard and half a teaspoonful of salt. Add the white of eggs last. Beat well.

Quick Muffins

Two teaspoonfuls of buttermilk, one teaspoonful of thick cream or three even teaspoonfuls of melted butter, four eggs, one-half teaspoonful of soda. Thicken to the consistence of waffle batter.

Egg Bread

One pint of meal, two tablespoonfuls of flour, one tablespoon of melted lard, two eggs, half a teaspoonful of salt, half a teaspoonful of soda dissolved in one pint of buttermilk mixed well and baked in muffin molds.

Flannel Cakes

Four eggs, one pint of sour cream, one pint of water, one and one-half pints of flour, one teaspoonful of baking powder, then stir in cream. To one pint of flour, add one half pint of corn meal, four eggs, one tablespoonful of yeast, with milk enough to make a stiff batter. Set to rise over night. Thin with warm milk and water before baking next morning.

Rice Batter Cakes

One egg beaten light, one cup of sour milk with enough soda sifted into it to make it foam. Then mash thoroughly two cups of cold boiled rice, put in enough flour to make the cake turn well. Have the griddle hot and well greased.

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Cornmeal Batter Cakes

One pint of corn meal, three-quarters of a pint of sour milk, one small teaspoonful of soda. Stir all of it until it foams. Add one egg or two would be better; salt to taste. Have the griddle hot and well greased. About one teaspoonful of flour added to the meal is an improvement.

Meat and Poultry

Meat, whether fresh or salted, smoked or dried, should always be put on the fire in cold water. Dried meats should be soaked before boiling. The delicacy of the meat of poultry is preserved by carefully skimming while it is boiling.

Frying a Beef Steak

It sometimes happens that when the fire is low, the coals go out, and you are called on to cook a steak. Then get up a quick blaze in the stove with some kindling. Put in a pan over the blaze a little butter. When it is hot, lay in your steak. Let it fry quickly, and while frying cover the pan. Work some butter, salt and pepper together in a tin pan, and when the steak is done to taste, let it lie in this mixture a few minutes and then serve. Do not salt a steak until it is cooked, as salt will toughen it and draw out its juices.

Boiled Chicken

After the chickens are trussed, fold them in a nice white cloth, put them in a large stew pan, and cover them with boiling water. Boil them gently and skim carefully, as long as any scum arises; let them simmer slowly as that will make them plump and white. When done lay them on a hot dish and pour celery, oyster or egg sauce over them. Boiled tongue or ham should be served with boiled chicken.

Fried Chicken

Take a young chicken, cut it up, pepper and salt it, dredge it over with flour and set it by while you mix a cup of lard and some slices of fat bacon in a frying pan. Let the lard get very hot, then drop in a few pieces of chicken, always allowing room in the pan for each piece to be turned without crowding. As fast as you fry the pieces put them

on a dish over hot water to keep the heat in them while you make the gravy. Pour off some of the grease, then dredge some flour in the frying pan. Let this brown nicely and then pour into it a cup of sweet milk, a little at a time. Let it forth up and then place your chicken back in the gravy for three minutes.

Welsh Rarebit

Cut a pound of cheese in slices a quarter of an inch thick. Fry them together for five minutes in butter, then add two well beaten eggs, a little mustard and pepper. Stir and send to the table hot on slices of buttered bread.

Desserts

Brides Cake

Take three-fourths of a pound of butter, wash and cream it. Add one pound of white sugar, beat them well together, then add the beaten whites of 17 eggs, alternate with a pound of sifted flour. Flavor with lemon or rose extract.

Delicious Pound Cake

Cream three quarters of a pound of butter, sift a pound of flour gradually into it and cream them together. Beat the yolks of nine eggs, light. In another pan, stir into the eggs, a pound of sifted sugar, mix well; beat the whites of 12 eggs to a froth, add them to the yolks and sugar, then pour this into the pan containing the butter and flour. Beat all well together, add a little brandy or wine and nutmeg. Bake carefully in a large pan. Do not have the oven hotter on the top than at the bottom, for the cake must be allowed to rise. Then bake from the bottom.

Trifle

Take one layer of sponge cake about an inch thick softened with sherry. Spread on a thin layer of strawberry jam. Sprinkle with a thick layer of blanched chopped almonds. Pour over this boiled custard. Then more cake covered in the same way until your bowl is filled (usually three layers is quite enough). After the last layer of cake, jam, almonds and custard, cover top with whipped cream. It is pretty in serving to have a bowl of whipped cream on the table and add a spoonful to each saucer. If trifle gets dry, add more custard.

Fires Destroys the Only Hospital in the County

By Albert Dittes

Fountain Head Sanitarium and Hospital, which burned in 1935, was described by brochures of the day as a “little retreat for the sick...In a place of great natural beauty.”

Outwardly the building looked picturesque in its rural setting two miles from the Fountain Head Station on the L&N Railroad and 40 miles north of Nashville, at the highest altitude of any point between Nashville and Louisville.

In the early 1930s, three passenger trains stopped at Fountain Head each day at a station located on what is now the Church of Christ parking lot. The staff met anyone who needed a ride to the sanitarium.

This sanitarium was so carefully designed, so meticulously maintained, that designers thought a fire could never start in it. Indeed, heading off fire was foremost in designers’ minds, since this hospital replaced one destroyed by fire in 1928.

Rebuilding after the First Fire

The fact that the town chose to help sanitarium founders, Braden Mulford and Forrest West, rebuild after the 1928 fire showed the confidence they inspired after their 20 years in the community. They were Lay Seventh-day Adventists who came to Fountain Head as self-supporting missionaries connected with the Nashville Agricultural and Normal Institute in Madison, Tenn. They started an elementary and secondary school in 1907 and later added the small sanitarium/hospital—all on a farm where they also taught agriculture.

Gallatin Chamber of Commerce met and voted unanimously to help rebuild the burnt-out sanitarium, which had been the only hospital in the county of 27,000. Voicing his support, George Venters, president of the Farmers Bank in Portland, recalled walking across the farm grounds in 1908. He recalled the poor quality of the soil and that he felt “deep sympathy” for the owners. “But these men showed us the way to do something without rich soils,” said Venters. “They held meetings on their farm, bringing together hundreds of men to study soil conditions. They had field demonstrations to let us see. They showed us what lime will do when we knew nothing about it. They planted an orchard of 500 peach trees. The rest of us sat

back and smiled, but later men came many miles to buy peaches from the knob—peaches that fairly melted in your mouth. None of us believed it could be done, but these men did it. Now we have a peach growers association and Mr. West is its president.”

Venters and Gallatin attorney Thomas Baskerville also spoke highly of the work of the sanitarium, conducted since 1916. Venters said, “I have known personally of many people without means that have gone to this institution and been nursed back to health.” Baskerville added, “I admire the way these men have worked. They have said little about what they were doing. They have been buried back there in the wooded hills, satisfied to do what they could to ease the pain and cure the disease of those who came to them.”

And so the staff went to work clearing away the twisted pipes and other debris of the 1928 fire. Everyone pitched in, including women and young girls. Materials for the new hospital came from many sources. They got gravel from the creeks. One firm donated cement. Another gave a carload of tile. Another gave 50 windows, while another donated all the necessary sheet metal. An individual donated an \$1,800 steam boiler, and a physician gave 13 radiators and \$150 worth of pipe. A hint was dropped that the building needed a roof, and a local woman listened and sent Fountain Head a car load of the best asphalt shingles on the market. A distant firm, when told of the need, sent several checks totaling \$1,500. When this was spent, Elder N.S. Ashton, president of the Southern Union Conference of Seventh-day Adventists, sent a check for \$1,000 from the Rural School Fund.

With construction complete, money was needed to furnish the rooms at \$250 each. Portland Commercial Club, Gallatin Chamber of Commerce, students and teachers at Madison College and the Southern Union conference, each donated enough money to furnish and equip a room. Mulford raised additional sums by going on a speaking/fundraising tour in Nebraska and Iowa.

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And so, the new hospital building took shape—though the cost was higher than expected. It had 35 beds and an operating room. Patients could stay there for \$2.50 a day or \$15 a week. Braden Mulford and his wife Pearl, both trained nurses, moved into the second story so they could give round-the-clock care to patients. Several students lived in the upper story.



Fire destroyed the Fountain Head Sanitarium in 1935. The first sanitarium burned in 1928.

The new hospital might have stood the test of time except for the cataclysmic event of Saturday, Feb. 9, 1935. It started out like any other winter evening. Staffers on duty at 9:30, 10:30 and 11:30 p.m. noticed nothing unusual happening in the building, but Mrs. Esmer Austin, a patient, heard a crackling sound, smelled smoke and called for help.

Braden Mulford wrote an account of the fire. *“At eleven o’clock when Mrs. Mulford, who was on night duty, awakened me, I found the fire under such headway that I could not stop it with two fire extinguishers. Had the smoke not become so intense, I might have succeeded in preventing the fire from getting beyond the tank room until more help came, but I was almost overcome with smoke and had a difficult time to make my way down the 54-foot hall to the west door in the basement.*

“I then ran around to the front of the building, breaking in a window that opens into the place the nearest point to the fire, and continued pumping the solution from that point. During all this time that I was fighting the fire alone, I was yelling loudly for help. And in a few minutes

after I had reached the front of the building, numbers of others were there with extinguishers and also a pail brigade was quickly established. But in spite of our combined effort, the flames gained headway and were soon seen to pass beyond the one room, after which we were forced to let them have their way.

“The Gallatin, Portland and Franklin fire departments rushed to the scene but arrived just as the roof collapsed. They helped cut the losses by preventing the fire from spreading to the nearby cottages, but the main central structure was a total loss.”

Rebuilding Was Very Slow

Complete disaster was avoided: all patients were safely evacuated and Braden Mulford recovered from smoke inhalation. But, the overage of building costs and the onset of the Great Depression, during which staff lived on salaries of \$10 per month, meant the hospital had had no funds to renew its insurance. Mulford said the loss amounted to \$50,000.

The first reaction of the staff, their friends and Madison and the Sumner County community was to rebuild anyway, but the reality was hard. The Mulfords lost everything they owned, and—along with the rest of the staff—moved into tents. Some staff members lived this way for at least three years. Braden Mulford’s health started failing, and two years later he left the institution to other hands and moved to Monteagle, Tenn., dying there in 1953.

The sanitarium was rebuilt in stages: first a center section, then wing sections. Progress was slow. Two years after the fire only one brick cottage for 12 patients was complete. A treatment room was added the next year, and materials were bought for a second unit.

A new building finally occupied the site of the fire by 1940, but it struggled financially. The Kentucky-Tennessee Conference of SDA took over operations in 1945. This medical institution served Upper Sumner County as Highland Hospital. The school became Highland Academy.

Fowler: From Howard Educator to U.S. Senate

By Ken Thomson and Jan Shuxteau

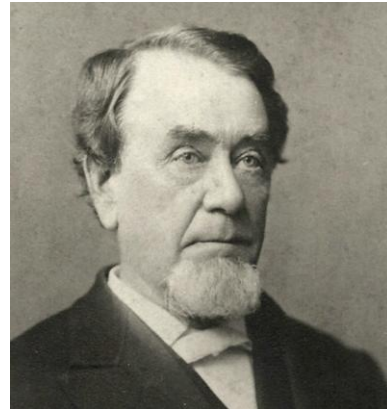
Joseph Smith Fowler first appeared on Tennessee's historical stage as a 19th century educator and went on to become one of its most dramatic actors as the U.S. Senator who cast the deciding vote against prosecuting President Andrew Johnson during his impeachment trial.

Fowler's connection with Sumner County started in 1856 at age 36 when he was hired as president of Howard Female Institute (formerly Academy) in Gallatin. He came with a pedigree that included being professor of mathematics, chemistry, mechanical arts and horticulture from 1844-1848 at the then newly opened Franklin College in Nashville. (Note that Franklin College was founded by the Rev. Tolbert Fanning, whose teaching and publication of the *Gospel Advocate* led to the formation of the Churches of Christ. It was financed and built by Fowler's father-in-law the Hon. Bowling Embry. David Lipscomb was a Franklin student and modeled his Bible college, now David Lipscomb University, after it.)

Sometime between 1848 and '50, Fowler left Franklin College to help develop a Nashville men's college, Washington Institute. He also studied law during this time and received a law degree in October 1853. He left the institute and opened a law office in Nashville, where he worked for the next two years.

The Howard Academy Years

He was hired away from his law practice to be president of Howard Institute by its Board of Visitors—a sort of board of directors. Any happy expectations he may have had about returning to academia were quickly crushed by the sour grapes of a rival for the job, W.A. Harrison, pastor of the Shiloh and Gallatin Presbyterian churches. He came to Fowler's home, lambasting him with questions, then he publicized spurious accusations. Historian Walter Durham in the 1983 Spring Tennessee Quarterly, said, "Harrison had seized upon a report circulated in Wilson and Rutherford counties that questioned Fowler's religious views. After interviewing Fowler at length, Harrison concluded that he [Fowler] was an infidel ...relaying his conclusion to Thomas Boyers, chairman of the Institute's Board of Visitors, Harrison insisted that Fowler—the infidel—was not fit to head the school. Boyers arranged for a meeting of the board, and Harrison restated his accusation against the new president. He said that in his interview he had found that Fowler regarded religion as superstition and the Bible 'not inspired.' He professed to be 'shocked at the thought of having a confirmed and inveterate infidel at the head of a female school."



Joseph Smith Fowler
(Ken Thomson photo collection)

The board wrote to Fowler about the accusations, and he denied them in a return letter. Both letters were published. The board was satisfied, but Harrison was not. "He continued throughout the year," said Durham, "to attack Fowler's character and philosophy in letters to the newspaper, a printed circular and finally in a 31-page pamphlet which purported to offer 'Conclusive Proof that Mr. Jo Smith Fowler, Principal of Gallatin Female Institute, is an infidel.'"

After this last insult, Fowler struck back with a lengthy and more credible pamphlet of his own, disputing Harrison's allegations and pointing out that Harrison had wanted Fowler's job. This pamphlet apparently silenced the pastor because history records no more comments.

Fowler was an able administrator, and Howard's enrollment grew and so did student achievements. Among other things, students produced a newsletter in 1860 called *The Bud of Thought*. Its political views were pro-Union and anti-secession--sentiments held by Fowler and by most Sumner Countians at that time.

However, public opinion was changing. As early as December 1860, Fowler wrote to Andrew Johnson, then a senator, urging him to work harder to keep Tennessee in the Union. After the attack at Fort Sumter, Fowler concluded that he and his family needed to go north. He resigned as president of Howard in April 1861 and moved to Illinois. Privately and despite their political differences, individual members of the pro-Confederate Board of Visitors told him of their high regard for him and offered best wishes.

After Nashville fell to the Union Army in February 1862, Johnson was appointed military governor of Tennessee. On May 6, 1862, he named

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Fowler—then eager to come home—state comptroller with offices in the Capitol. Durham reported that “The Union press at Nashville was ‘exceedingly gratified’ by Fowler’s appointment and declared it ‘a truly happy one.’”

After a visit to Gallatin in late July 1862, Fowler told Johnson and Gen. William Campbell that the Union garrison there needed reinforcements. Nothing was done, and in August Col. John Hunt Morgan and his Confederate Cavalry captured the Gallatin garrison.

Fowler Becomes Political Leader

Fowler was a staunch Unionist, even becoming a delegate leader endorsing the Lincoln-Johnson presidential ticket. “Meeting at Baltimore, June 8, 1864, the National Union Convention of the Republican Party nominated Lincoln and Johnson,” reported Durham. “Fowler had been one of Johnson’s most effective floor leaders...Fowler was one of a small party of Tennessee Union men who accompanied Andrew Johnson to Washington for the inauguration March 4...By the time Fowler returned to Nashville, he had made a firm decision to seek election by the legislature to the United States Senate.”

When news of his political plans spread, Fowler was berated by other candidates’ supporters, including the *Nashville Daily Union*. But political fighting drew to a halt when news came on April 15 of Lincoln’s assassination. Fowler wrote to Johnson that same day in a letter preserved in the Library of Congress. “We feel deeply for you in your present delicate and truly responsible position. We do not doubt that you will meet successfully all the difficulties that may come up.”

While the nation was still in shock, loyalists continued planning how to restore Tennessee to the Union, and on May 4, 1865, the legislature elected two United States senators for six year terms: Joseph Smith Fowler and David T. Patterson of Greene County, Tennessee—President Johnson’s son-in-law. Congressmen were elected two months later.

Before formally rejoining the Union, Tennessee had to ratify the Fourteenth Amendment, which didn’t occur until July 1866. It was then that senators and representatives could take office. Fowler was seated on July 24, becoming the first senator-elect from a Confederate state to be

admitted to the U.S. Senate since the end of the war. Patterson was seated on July 29.

Johnson’s efforts to soften reconstruction plans and return civil government to local control angered radical Unionists, including Fowler. “By the autumn of 1866, the senator, who had supported Johnson unwaveringly during the anxious years of the war, was openly at odds with him,” said Durham. “During 1867, it became apparent that the friendship of Johnson and Fowler had been ruptured to such an extent that healing seemed a dim and uncertain prospect...”

“Early in 1868, the campaign of vilification directed against Andrew Johnson by the radicals in Congress reached its climax when the House of Representatives voted to impeach the president. Senator Fowler, by the decision of the House, became a juror to sit in judgment on a former friend from whom he had become sorely estranged...”

In the rowdy atmosphere of impeachment, Fowler and other jurors were blasted with resolutions, petitions, pleadings, even threats by radicals to convict Johnson. Fowler refused to be pressured. He wrote, “Any effort to bias or influence his [a juror’s] personal prejudices, or party affiliations, or demands, are not less pernicious to the ends of justice than personal violence or bribery...”

A Single Historic Vote

Fowler listened to the presentations about Johnson, and despite criticism he gave no hint of how he would vote. Finally, the trial ended, and on the morning of May 16 the Senate began its roll call vote. Durham said, “As the question of guilt or innocence was proposed to him, Fowler seemed not to notice the lips of the radical senators seated near him forming the word ‘Guilty.’ He, instead, responded in a low voice, ‘Not guilty.’”...Six other Republicans voted with Fowler to acquit the president, and the conviction failed by one single vote. While the vote of May 16 only pertained to one of the 11 articles of impeachment, it set a pattern that the radicals were unable to break when the Senate later took up the remaining charges. Johnson had been acquitted... Those well acquainted with both Fowler and Johnson believed that the senator’s great triumph was putting aside the bitter hostility that had developed between them over political issues so that he could make a judgment on the merits of the impeachment case.”

Editor’s Note: To learn the rest of the story of Joseph Fowler, tune in to the July edition of this publication for part two of this American.



Howard's main drawing room as seen in the 1914-15 yearbook owned by Rebecca Lunsford.

Howard Academy During and After the Civil War

By Jan Shuxteau

This is part two of the story of Howard Female Academy (earlier Howard Female Institute, later Howard College), which opened in the 1820s and continued for a hundred years.

When Tennessee seceded and Civil War broke out in 1861, Howard Female Academy President Joseph Smith Fowler, a Union sympathizer, left the school and moved north. Rather than continue to operate in wartime conditions, the school owners, Howard Lodge No. 13, shut it down. When Federal troops occupied Gallatin, their troops took over the buildings.

"They took possession of our Lodge and school buildings and property and destroyed everything, both our school and Lodge property and fixtures of every kind," reported a lodge memo. "Our Lodge and school were well-furnished with first class furniture and fixtures of every kind, all of which the armies made a perfect wreck and used our Lodge and school buildings during the war for hospital and other purposes, and when the war closed our buildings were a complete wreck."

When the war ended, lodge members set about trying to rectify the "complete wreck" of the school. Threatened by the probability of a sheriff's sale of the facilities, Howard Lodge solicited funds from lodges across the country to help rebuild.

A new academy president stepped up. Professor Hugh Blair Todd of Fredericksburg, Va., described as a "fine teacher and scholar" came to the school and was immediately charged with fundraising. According to the Sept. 29, 1867 *Gallatin Examiner*, "Todd succeeded in obtaining means sufficient to repair and refit the Institute for school purposes again." When he reached \$12,000, Todd reopened the school and restored the campus, planting it with trees and gardens.

Young boys were accepted into the lower grades, but the school remained predominately a girls' school. The young ladies wore uniform dresses—white with blue aprons and white leghorn hats with blue ribbons in summer. When they went out as a group, they marched in ranks and, according to an interview with Todd's daughter in the 1931 *Sumner County News*, "punishment swift and dire befell anyone who missed step or broke ranks." It was often a "vigorous shake which sent hairpins flying and was so salutary that the offense was not often repeated."

Post Civil War years were difficult. Enrollment declined during the next six years, and tuition funds went down. The size of the graduating class dropped from 16 in 1867 to five in 1870. Capable teachers were hard to find. In his book, *A College for this Community*, Walter Durham said, "When Miss Sue Wynne, daughter of Col. A.R. Wynne of Castalian Springs, declined to join the faculty in 1869, Todd explained to her that his offer to pay her \$125 per session of five months was \$25 more than he paid any other woman on the staff. Todd explained the school finances in a letter preserved in the *George W. Wynne Papers*: "At least one third of my pupils are from families unable to pay anything and from whom I never expect one dollar. And those of Gallatin and Sumner Co. who do pay are very slow about it... Since this session began, I have received but 45 dollars from Gallatin and this county and have had to borrow money to pay my teachers..."

By the end of 1871, Todd decided to resign and give up the lease he held on school property. For the next couple of years, a local teacher A.J. Wood, served as Howard's president. Shortly after Wood left, Howard's facilities began being used by the newly opened school, Neophogen Male and Female College. This lasted four years (1874-'78). Howard reopened

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under the able leadership of the Rev. W.H. Haynes in September 1878 with no boys allowed. Haynes was followed in 1882 by A.M. Burney, a former newspaper editor and educator and Lodge Grand Master, who capably administered Howard until his death in the spring of 1895.

During the Burney years, which Durham calls “the most successful period” in Howard’s history, the school advanced its reputation with music programs and other events. Burney was instrumental in building a new wing for the school building, even contributing a \$2,000 loan (approximately) from his own pocket when other funds were exhausted. An 1885 school news sheet, the *Howard College Argus*, edited by the faculty for commencement, noted that the school practiced “equality in matters of faith and conscience” and was “a literary institution standing upon its own merits.” The *Argus* also reported that students were charged \$80 to board at the school for five months, received special instruction in “social culture and refinement of manners,” as well as musical training from an accomplished teacher and studies that were “thoroughly English.” It said, “Those who desire their daughters educated in solid intellectual requirements and in the accomplishments that are both graceful and useful with the polish of manners and morals will find Howard Female College a place peculiarly suited to that purpose.”

Records of Howard College are sparse for several years after Burney’s death, though Lodge records reported lists of board members and school repairs. By 1909, the graduating class numbered only six, and the buildings needed work. Fundraisers for improvements were launched but didn’t amount to much until undertaken by the Commercial Club of Gallatin (forerunner of Gallatin Chamber of Commerce) in April 1913. Their goal was \$5,000, and they raised it in less than two weeks. At about the same time, Mrs. Carolina Polk was hired to be president of the college for the next school term. The only woman president, Mrs. Polk stayed until 1916 when operating revenue became insufficient.

Two more presidents—J.H. Hatton and Dr. George H. Crowell—led Howard until the school’s doors closed for good in 1922. Crowell, formerly president of Logan College in Kentucky, arrived in 1918, hired a new faculty and began a capital funds drive of \$30,000 to repair the school and buy land. Contributors received shares of stock in Howard College Extension Co. By the beginning of the 1919 school year, enrollment was up to 145, construction including a gym and pool were underway, and it appeared that the college was on a winning road. But that was not to last. Despite Crowell’s best efforts, enrollment and funding did not keep going up. Public sentiment was shifting away

from private schools. When he resigned in June of 1922, Howard College ended. The campus and main building was used by public schools until demolished in 1931. Howard Elementary School was built on the property.

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business. Thomson said, “He was able to take over J.P. Jennings’s photography studio in Gallatin after J.P. was run out of town for making nudy photos.”

For more than 65 years, Stark’s photos of high school graduates, families, babies, children and local citizens graced the homes of Sumner County residents. “Starkey” as he was affectionately called, received many awards and accolades for his outstanding photography.



Ernest (E.M) Stark in his studio

John Garrott’s historic collection ranges from 1906 to possibly the 1930’s and provides a photographic record of Sumner County residents.

The Sumner County Archives plans to conserve, index and digitize the collection for public accessibility. In May, the Archives will offer a preservation workshop conducted by Carol Roberts, Tennessee State Library and Archives preservation specialist. Volunteers are wanted to help preserve this valuable collection, if you would like to volunteer and attend the workshop, please call Sumner County Archives, 615-452-0037.

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