

The History of the Female Orphan School (1870-1899)

Following the Civil War a great many orphan girls were left without family or financial support. Delegates from Christian churches across Missouri met in Columbia in 1868 and voiced a unanimous decision to establish a school for orphan girls in Missouri.

1870

- Beginning operation of the Female Orphan School of the Christian Church of Missouri, at Camden Point.

1889

- Fire destroys the Female Orphan School at Camden Point.
- Fulton submits the winning bid of \$56,000 to secure the school in its community. Of that, \$40,000 is used to build the Main Building, which later is renamed Jones Hall.
- Convention of the Christian Church authorizes relocation of the Orphan School to Fulton.

1890

- The Female Orphan School begins operation in Fulton on six acres donated by **Daniel M. Tucker**.
- The school is primarily a school for elementary and high school education.
- **Frank M. Allen** is approved for hire as the principal in March (his title soon changes to president) at a salary of \$100 a month.
- Board of Managers' minutes of April 21-22 indicate that the "first session of the school shall begin September 10, 1890, and shall continue for 38 weeks."
- The school takes students who are willing to pay all or a portion of the expense. The following conditions of admissions are established:
 - First Class – Destitute orphans who have no relatives or friends to aid them.
 - Second Class – Orphans destitute of means, who have relatives, churches or benevolent societies to aid them and willing to sustain them at school.
 - Third Class – Orphans who have some means but not enough to support them.
 - Fourth Class – Young ladies who have parents that desire to assist in benevolent work.
- Students are admitted under criteria that include being at least 14 years of age and having a physician certify the "soundness of her constitution and her freedom from hereditary disease."
- The school opens in September, with seven women instructors, including **Miss Fannie Booth**, who would remain at the institution for 50 years. Teachers received \$35 - \$45 a month, plus room and board.
- Initial enrollment is 52 students.
- Full-pay students pay \$175 for 38 weeks and \$1.25 per week for washing. Orphans are charged \$140 a session with washing included.

1891

- A grade book lists classic courses such as algebra, ancient languages, astronomy, Bible, deportment, elocution, English literature, geography, logic, moral philosophy, physics, rhetoric and zoology. There are also courses in housekeeping, needlework, short-hand, typewriting and bookkeeping.
- Financial problems plague the institution early on in Fulton. A loan of \$15,000 is secured at Callaway County Savings Bank- a loan that later almost cripples the institution.

1892

- **Dr. William Stone Woods** is elected to the Board of Directors.

1894

- The president of the school and teachers are asked "in consideration of hard times to consent to reduce their salaries to \$80 and \$20 respectively."

1896

- **James B. Jones** replaces Frank W. Allen as president

1899

- The school seems to be able to hold its own financially with regard to current expenses; however, the debt issue cannot be resolved.