

L. R. Blanton

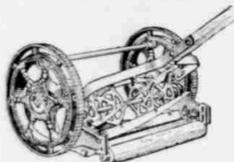
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Board of Regents Respond to Inspector Goodpaster's Criticisms.

Richmond, Ky., June 13, 1913.
Gov. James B. McCreary,
Frankfort, Ky.

Dear Gov. McCreary: On the 28th day of March last, there appeared an article in the Courier-Journal which stated that there was a meeting of the Sinking Fund Commission in your office and that there were present yourself, Attorney General Garnett, Auditor H. M. Bosworth and Secretary of State Creelius, at which meeting of the Board of Sinking Fund Commissioners you were prevailed upon to send your State Inspector, Hon. Sherman Goodpaster, to examine into the financial affairs of the Eastern Kentucky State Normal. The undersigned members of the Board desire to state that they have no criticism to offer toward you for ordering the Inspector to investigate the financial condition and accounts of the said institution and want it understood that the Board of Regents of the Eastern Kentucky State Normal School owes no duty to the Sinking Fund Commission to make any reports to them, nor is there any law, written or unwritten, by which the Sinking Fund Commission has any authority to criticize or demand an investigation of the affairs of this institution. The Inspector and his accountants came to Richmond to inspect the books and financial condition of said institution and the officers of the same rendered them every assistance possible for a fair investigation of the condition of the same.

There recently appeared in the public press what purported to be the substance of the Inspector's report on the Eastern Kentucky State Normal School, at Richmond. We were not favored with a copy of this report prior to its publication, and obtained it only by arranging to have it copied for us.

We deem it our duty to you and the public to make a statement relative to certain unwarranted criticisms contained in that remarkable report, because the Regents of the school are public officials, though serving without pay, and the public is entitled to know facts relative to the management of their State Institutions. His report was, to say the least, greatly misleading, incorrect in many important details and more particularly a mere expression of opinion that the management of the institution has been extra-ragant, reckless and inefficient. Singularly, he had not a word of commendation; nothing but adverse criticism. In a few hours spent in the community and about the school he was able to conclude that the years of application of the Board of Regents to building and developing a new State Normal School had resulted only in blunders and reprehensible error, and had been productive of nothing that he could approve. Few men are so gifted as to unerringly know at a glance more about how a public institution or a large business concern should be managed than those who have continuously and patiently worked out every step and detail of its organization. That is precisely what the Inspector has assumed. In this assumption he has fallen into errors which we venture to point out. He devotes about one-fourth of his report

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to quoting and construing the statute relative to State Normal Schools. We were somewhat edified by the construction he put upon said acts, especially in view of the fact the same were written largely by two of the members of the Board, namely: Sullivan and Cammack. With due respect to the Inspector, we prefer to adhere to the construction put upon said acts by those who wrote them, for we believe that they were in better position to understand them than your Inspector.

About three-fifths of the report consists of tables and financial statements furnished to the Board of Regents, by the President and Treasurer of the school, as is done every month. These statements were not taken from our books by the Inspector or his accountants, but were our own regular monthly and quarterly statements. They were accepted by him, apparently, and he did not even suggest a doubt as to their accuracy. The remaining portion of his report, less than one-fifth of the whole, seems to be original, and consists of the Inspector's views as to how the school should be managed, wherein he thinks the Regents should have acted differently. It is in this portion of the report that we desire to give attention.

1st. The Inspector says that the Regents bought a farm for \$18,800, a house for the President for \$12,500 and built an addition to Sullivan Hall for \$29,400, without warrant of law; to quote him: "The Legislature never intended to give the Board of Regents such latitude, and they have certainly exceeded their authority and have paid out money and contracted obligations for which there is no warrant of law."

In presenting to the last General Assembly the needs of the institution, we placed in the hands of every Representative and Senator a copy of the Eastern Kentucky Review for January, 1912, (the month in which the General Assembly met), in which we presented, on page 8 the following as recommended by the then State Inspector and Examiner in his report to the Governor on this school:

(a) "The present girls' dormitory is very inadequate and another is urgently and badly needed. The present one cost \$50,000 and this same amount is needed for a new one. About 100 girls are now compelled to seek room and board in private homes."

(b) "About 100 acres of adjoining farm land is a very great need indeed, as it would enable them to raise all that is required for dormitory purposes and table use. In addition to this, it is needed for the purpose of teaching agricultural pursuits, which is becoming very generally taught and is destined to prove of the greatest good to the whole State. The necessary buildings, such as a farmer's house, dairy, stable, etc., would follow, and it is estimated that the 100 acres and buildings could be secured for about \$30,000."

(c) "Old Burnam Property. — This consists of a two-story building of about eight or ten rooms and occupying 200x400 feet of ground, and is located in a corner of the school campus and to any one passing by it would be supposed that it was a part of the school property, and it should be, because it would square off the campus. The Board of Regents desire to purchase this property and convert it into a residence for the President of the school, and it should be done by all means. I am advised that the owners are willing to dispose of it and are asking about \$12,000, and I do not think this price is at all unreasonable, but on the contrary, reasonable."

Besides placing this publication in the hands of members of the General Assembly, the same urgent needs were presented to the Committees of both houses and to members individually.

That Legislature, with these and other items of desired appropriation before them, did make an appropriation "for the benefit of the three State educational institutions, namely, State University, Lexington, Ky.; Eastern Kentucky State Normal School, and Western Kentucky State Normal School; appropriating money for necessary equipment and for expansion of work, etc."

In this appropriation bill, this language is used: "That the additional sum of thirty-five thousand dollars is hereby appropriated for the current official year, and for each succeeding year for the benefit of the Eastern Kentucky State Normal School, a necessary part of which appropriation shall be used to meet as far as possible, the pressing demands, (for) agricultural instruction, for instruction in household economies and for manual training in the respective departments of said institution, and the same is directed to be paid by the Treasurer of the State to the Treasurer of the said State Normal School, upon warrant or warrants issued by the Auditor of Public Accounts, who is hereby directed to draw and issue said warrants, for the purpose aforesaid."

In the light of the foregoing and with former State Inspector's report on file in his office, for Mr. Goodpaster to say that the Legislature did not mean to give this Board authority to do what we have done for the "benefit" of this institution, is a pitiable commentary on his ignorance of facts known to all well-informed Kentuckians who have watched, cherished and assisted in the building of this and other educational institutions of the State.

As to the purchase of a house for the residence of the President: Your Excellency knows the location of the President's house and the value of the same and that it was originally a part of the campus and plant now occupied by the institution. You know that on account of the proximity of this residence that even if it were not needed as President's Residence, it would be good policy to purchase it in order to keep it from going into the hands of persons who might not be in sympathy with the institution. But for a further and better reason the Board deemed it wise to acquire it. The presence of the President is needed on the campus for the control, assistance, and direction of the large number of students and for the care and protection of the properties of the State valued at \$400,000.00, which is entrusted to his care.

The Act of 1912 provides that agriculture shall be taught. The Board, in the utmost good faith and at the very lowest figures, purchased the farm of 112 acres, and is now and has been ever since the purchase of said land doing its utmost to carry into effect the requirements of the law. Mr. Goodpaster's opinion that it would have been better to rent land or use the campus for experimental agriculture is so ridiculous that we do not care to more than allude to it. Mr. Goodpaster says: "As far as the farm is concerned, it can never be anything but (Continued on Page 4, Sec. 2.)"

To the Public,

Through courtesy I signed a petition for R. B. Terrill, not thinking that any capital would be made of it, or that any undue influence would be taken by him or his friends, as has been done. I did not understand that I obligated myself by signing same, and I wish him and his friends to know that I and all my kin so far as I can learn, will willingly support L. C. House for the nomination for clerk of Madison county. COLBY GREEN. 73-11

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