

NORMAL UNIVERSITY.

ITS LOCATION AND CONSTRUCTION.

The location of the State Normal University at North Bloomington, May 7, 1857, marks a period of history that is not only important to Normal Township, but also in an equal degree to the city of Bloomington and McLean County. At the time indicated, Normal was North Bloomington, or "The Junction," the six miles square now called Normal, not having been named until after the location of the University, its first existence as a town dating from April 6, 1858. The early history of the Normal Institution, its location, its first years of struggling effort, its vigorous childhood, belong to Bloomington, and this sketch is as well calculated to honor that city as it is fitted to reflect credit upon Normal. As we proceed with our account, we shall reach a period when the newly-built village became in reality Normal, with a definite future and prospects of its own, after which time, its acts and doings shall be credited to the proper source as zealously as its most earnest friends can desire.

We might state, that in 1857, the township was generally occupied by farmers, the village of North Bloomington having been platted and a few houses built, but to all practical intents, the entire township was simply an agricultural district.

The Illinois Central and Chicago & Alton Railroads were finished and in running order several years before the location of the University, an excursion train having been run on the 4th day of July, 1854, from Bloomington to Lexington. The cars of the Illinois Central passed this point without stopping, from May 23, 1853, to the time of the completion of the other line. It was thought, in 1852, that there would be a railroad crossing near this place, and after the definite location of the Chicago & Alton line through the western part of Bloomington, in 1853, the point of the junction was fixed. North Bloomington was projected and platted in the early part of 1854. There was a sale of lots on the 15th of June, 1854, at which about thirty lots sold at prices ranging between \$30 and \$50, and public attention was thus attracted to the new town of North Bloomington. The sale took place under the auspices of W. F. M. Army

& Co., but it was understood that Mr. Jesse W. Fell was the moving spirit in the enterprise.

In 1855, a large addition was made to North Bloomington by a company composed of Jesse W. Fell, R. R. Landon, L. R. Case, C. W. Holder, and L. C. Blakesly. The place had all the prospects common to a railroad "crossing," or "junction," which were never very brilliant, when it is considered that the important town of Bloomington, with two depots, was only two miles away. Here, at the point of greatest natural beauty, Mr. Jesse W. Fell commenced, in 1855, his family residence, and finished it the next year, when he made it his permanent home.

In the enterprise of building a new town at the "Junction," he had taken into partnership, about this time, the several gentlemen whose names we have given; and in the course of a few years thereafter, acquired from them nearly the whole of their interests in the town site.

Mr. Fell, from the first, had plans for bringing to North Bloomington something more than the ordinary business of a common railroad crossing. He intended to spare no effort to build here a town that should have for its characteristics, sobriety, morality, good society, and all the elements for an educational center. Previous to the passage of the act to establish a Normal University, which dates from February 18, 1857, Mr. Fell was laboring, with some prospects of success, to establish at North Bloomington a college or seminary of learning, and was in correspondence with Hon. Horace Mann, and others, in regard to the matter. Had he succeeded, the institution was to have been located upon Seminary Block, shown on the plat of North Bloomington, as the block next east of Mr. Fell's residence. This particular piece of ground, at that time, before the trees and shrubbery had made their appearance, commanded a fine view of all the land in the neighborhood, being a part of that beautifully-rounded, elevated prairie upon which Mr. Fell built his family residence. In fact, the whole tract was one of striking beauty, long before North Bloomington was projected, in the days when, for more than a mile in either direction, not a house or improvement of any kind was visible. As long ago as in 1833, when on his way to what is now the township of Money Creek, in company with Mr. Kimler, one of the early settlers of Blooming Grove, Mr. Fell rode over the beautiful elevation which his residence now occupies. The public highway then passed in that vicinity. It was early in the morning, and as they surveyed the beautiful prairie landscape, Mr. Fell remarked, what a fine location this would be, at some day, for a residence. His companion replied that it was not probable any one would ever be fool enough to build at such a great distance from the timber, echoing thereby the common sentiment of the early settlers. Over twenty years after, Mr. Fell built his family residence at that

point, and commenced to plant trees, which, in a little more than another twenty years, have made at that location the most beautiful grove, or park, that can be found in Central Illinois, and he has lived to see the prairie landscape converted into a beautiful village, shaded by many thousand trees tastefully adorning the whole. We question if the history of our rapidly growing State can furnish a parallel, a town built entirely on the prairie, and, in so short a space of time, to be covered with more large trees than can be shown in most cities of older growth, though they were built on land originally occupied by those grand monarchs of the forest, which the early settlers delighted in destroying as fast as possible.

Mr. Fell took a remarkable step toward bringing to the new town a desirable class of residents, by providing in all deeds to purchasers of lots in North Bloomington, that intoxicating liquors should never be sold on the premises; and this stringent prohibition was afterward re-enforced by a town charter, which was intended to be entirely prohibitory. This charter needed amendments, however, in 1867, to make it as fully operative as the inhabitants desired, and a petition was circulated, asking the Legislature to make such changes as should perpetually restrain the town or city authorities from ever licensing the sale of intoxicating liquors. It is remarkable that this petition was signed by every man and woman, and every child over seven years old, in a town which then contained 1,800 inhabitants. This incident, though rather out of the proper historical order, is valuable, as we thus discover that the foundations for the gathering-together of a very superior class of citizens, were laid broad and deep, and the subsequent character of Normal can be traced quite plainly to those early efforts. North Bloomington, in 1857, was barely started—scarcely known—called indiscriminately by its proper name, or the "Junction;" a town site without a town, and no special reason for its existence. There was one inhabitant previous to 1855; this was Mr. McCambridge, whose residence was at the crossing of the railroads, where, as agent, he attended to all the interests of the railroad lines crossing at that point. Mr. Fell moved into his residence in 1856, and, during the year, the new town was augmented by the arrival of L. R. Case and family, and a few others, but no great growth took place till after the events of the year 1857.

Normal Schools were new in the West at that time, Illinois being the pioneer in this grand enterprise. Massachusetts, New York, and New Jersey, and a few other States, had inaugurated Normal Schools. None of them were equal to the demands of the times. Still, their success had been such as to warrant the public in expecting that institutions for the education and training of teachers of our common schools would aid the cause of education to a desirable degree. Some of the ablest friends of this new project for the proper education of the teachers of the public schools, lived in McLean County, among

whom we might mention W. F. M. Arny, Jesse W. Fell, Prof. D. Wilkins, and J. H. Wickizer, the latter being member of the Legislature from this district.

The public mind was ripe for the proper appreciation of the needs, designs, and scope of such a school, although even its own advocates differed somewhat as to the course of study and plans for its development.

The act of the Legislature provided for a university, although what was established is, in fact, a Normal School. The intention was to gather around the new institution the different colleges,—classical, agricultural, industrial, law, medical, and the other departments of a university,—until, in the end, the State should have here a grand university, equal to any in the land. The full design has not been carried out, but there are many who still have hopes that the future may yet see its realization.

The law provided a Board of Education of the State of Illinois, with power to carry into effect its purposes. This Board consisted of N. W. Edwards, of Springfield; W. H. Wells, of Chicago; John R. Eden, Moultrie County; A. R. Shannon, White County; Simeon Wright, Lee County; W. Sloan, Pope County; George Bunsen, St. Clair County; George P. Rex, Pike County; Charles E. Hovey, Peoria; Daniel Wilkins, Bloomington; C. B. Denio, Galena; F. Mosely, Chicago; S. W. Moulton, Shelby County; and J. Gillespie, Jasper County. This Board had full power, and it was made their duty, "to fix the permanent location of said Normal University at the place where the most favorable inducements are offered for that purpose, provided that such location shall not be difficult of access, or detrimental to the welfare and prosperity of said Normal University."

This body of gentlemen soon organized, and it appointed a committee to receive proposals for the location of the Normal University, which committee published notices in several newspapers, stating that the Board would, on a certain specified day, open, at Peoria, all bids that might be made.

Several cities and towns entered into competition for what was understood to be a valuable prize. That the value of the new institution was thoroughly appreciated by the inhabitants of Bloomington is shown by the following extract from the Bloomington *Pantagraph* of April 8, 1857, then edited by E. J. Lewis:

The advantages to be conferred by such an institution upon the place of its location are too obvious to need enlarging upon. Richly endowed from a government fund, collecting within its walls every year the flower of the youth of every part of the State, and organized with a full corps of the ablest instructors, the Normal University will doubtless take rank among the noblest institutions of learning in the country, and give to the town which contains it a degree of prominence at home and abroad scarcely second to that enjoyed by the State capital itself.

In the light of subsequent events, how prophetic this statement!

Mr. Fell and his co-workers did not rely on appeals made through the public press. On the contrary, they were willing that the competing points should labor under the impression that Bloomington was not thoroughly aroused. These gentlemen labored incessantly with individuals; argued, pictured, pleaded, taught, both by precept and example. They set the fashion by giving liberal subscriptions, and so far succeeded that they brought the amount of donations, in land and money, up to \$50,000, from private individuals. They had previously obtained a pledge from the members of the County Commissioners' Court, A. J. Merriman, of Bloomington, Milton Smith, of Pleasant Hill, and H. Buck, of LeRoy, who formed the County Court at that time, that they would appropriate from the proceeds of the swamp-lands funds an amount equal to that subscribed by individuals. This made the total offer \$100,000, and it was thought amply sufficient to secure the location.

In order to be fully aware of what Peoria—the principal competitor—was doing, one of the most active of our party went to that city, quietly, and rather in disguise, dropped into a back seat of a meeting of the County Board, held in aid of the project, mixed with the crowd in the streets, and, in various ways, learned almost exactly what Peoria was preparing to offer. Its liberality alarmed him; he returned to Bloomington, and aroused his friends to still further efforts. Mr. Fell and other gentlemen increased their subscriptions until they reached \$20,000, or \$70,000 in all. The County Court was speedily called together again, the county's part increased by \$20,000, and when the final effort was completed, at about the last day, in the afternoon, the total offer amounted to \$141,000, made up of \$70,000 from the first proceeds of the sales of McLean County's swamp-land, and \$71,000 in money, lands, and town lots from individuals.

But the gross amount was kept a profound secret. Mr. Fell, and a very few others, were aware of the total, as it was highly important that competing points should remain in ignorance until too late for them to make additional subscriptions.

On the 7th of May, 1857, the State Board of Education met at Peoria to open the bids and decide upon the location. The first offer was that of Batavia. This bid embraced \$15,000 in money, and the land and buildings of the Batavia Institute. There were between twenty and twenty-two acres of the land, and a building seventy by fifty feet, three stories high, the whole estimated at \$30,000, making Batavia's bid, in effect, \$45,000. The citizens pledged themselves to raise \$25,000, in order to pay a debt of \$10,000 now resting on the buildings, and to give the sum of \$15,000 for the Normal University direct. There were several propositions from Bloomington, six sites being offered. The tract of 160 acres at the junction was the favorite, and the particulars of that proposition were as follows:

General subscription,	\$ 7,875
Local cash subscription for Junction site,	25,850
Real estate: 160 acres land—60 acres at \$300 per acre, \$18,000; 100 acres at \$200 per acre, \$20,000,	38,000
McLean County subscription,	70,000
Total,	\$141,725

There were offered also, by K. H. Fell, thirty acres west of Sugar Creek; by Judge Davis, ten acres, near his residence; by William Flagg, ten acres, on the north hill above the city; by Thomas, Young & Sears, forty acres northeast of town; by K. H. Fell and John Nicolls, eighty acres, two and a half miles east of the city, each of these on condition the University be located upon them. By the citizens of Washington, Tazewell County, and the Trustees of Washington Academy were offered \$12,000 in cash, and the lot 430 by 120 feet, with brick building 47 by 62 feet, and three stories high, of said Academy, in said town; real estate at \$20,000, making the bid \$21,000. Peoria offered in money:

Individual subscription,	\$25,032
City Corporation,	10,000
County Board of Supervisors,	15,000
Total,	\$50,032

There were several offers of land for sites. Phelps, Conklin & Brady offered 15 acres, of which appraisements were unsettled, the first rating it at \$18,000, the second at \$30,000; the twenty-acre site was valued at \$20,000; 120 acres two miles from the Court House, at \$18,000; 200 acres three and a half miles from the Court House, at \$20,000, and there were two minor offers. Taking the highest valuation of the principal site, the total bid of Peoria was \$80,032.

The bid of McLean County was so far ahead of Peoria, the next competitor, that the Board of Education located the Normal University in accordance with the conditions of the subscription, on the 160 acres of fine rolling land within three-quarters of a mile from the junction of the Illinois Central and Chicago & Alton Railroads.

Great must have been the rejoicing at Bloomington on receipt of the glad news of success, after a contest of such intensity; but we, who look back over twenty years, can scarcely imagine the interest of the occasion.

The Board of Education made the location upon the condition that the full amount of the McLean County subscription of \$70,000 should be legally guaranteed within sixty days, in default of which, the location was to be made at Peoria. They employed Abraham Lincoln to draw up a form of bond or guaranty to be signed by responsible citizens of Bloomington. This guaranty is a matter of such historical interest that we produce it entire, with the list of guarantors, prefacing this with the remark that this bond was thought to be necessary on account of the danger that a future County Court might

reconsider the appropriation, and the further doubt whether the swamp-lands would be sold for cash soon enough to meet contracts for the building about to be erected.

GUARANTY.

WHEREAS, On the 15th day of May, 1857, the Executive Committee of the Board of Education of the State of Illinois passed a resolution in the words and figures following, to-wit:

"Resolved, That we require of the citizens of Bloomington a guaranty that the sum of \$14,000 be paid on the 1st day of August next, and the further sum of \$14,000 on the 1st day of November next, and the further sum of \$14,000 on the 1st day of February next, and the further sum of \$14,000 on the 1st day of May next, and the remaining sum of \$14,000 on the 1st day of August, 1858, if called for by the Board, to enable them to erect the building of the Normal University, on the McLean County subscription."

Now, therefore, we, the undersigned, in consideration that the said McLean County subscription be accepted by said Board of Education, and the said Normal University be located at the place and in accordance with the conditions indicated in and by said McLean County subscription, do hereby guarantee, each, to the extent of the sum set opposite his name, and no further, the payment to said Board of Education the several sums specified in said resolution, and to be made at the times therein required. And in case of any actual default, we are to share with each other, *pro rata*, according to the several sums set opposite our names.

May 15, 1857.

K. H. Fell,	\$5,000	James Bronson,	\$ 500
Jesse W. Fell,	5,000	Edward D. Benjamin,	1,000
J. E. McClun,	5,000	E. W. Bakewell,	5,000
A. B. Shaffer,	5,000	Dr. H. Schrøder,	1,000
A. Gridley,	5,000	H. H. Painter,	3,000
George Bruener,	1,000	H. J. Eager,	5,000
R. R. Landon,	5,000	Z. Lawrence,	2,000
R. Leach,	500	John Magoun,	5,000
W. McCullough,	3,000	Leonard Swett,	3,000
H. Rounds,	5,000	James Grover,	3,000
George Park,	5,000	A. W. Moore,	3,000
J. H. Moore,	3,000	O. Ellsworth,	1,000
A. J. Merriman,	1,000	L. Bunn,	1,000
John Dawson,	1,000	Z. S. Hoover,	3,000
William R. Chew,	500	S. E. Kenyon & Son,	1,000
A. W. Rogers,	2,000	David Brier,	5,000
E. R. Roe,	500	A. Johnstone,	500
R. T. Stockton,	500	R. Thompson & Co.,	1,000
J. C. Walker,	2,000	S. G. Fleming,	1,000
J. H. Robinson,	1,000	C. W. Lander,	500
William F. Flagg,	5,000	John Rouse,	2,000
Overman & Mann,	1,000	S. S. Adolph,	1,000
William E. Foote,	1,000	J. C. Slening,	1,000
D. D. Haggard,	500	E. H. Rood,	1,000
Denton Young,	3,000	John J. Price,	5,000
W. W. Lusk,	3,000	Joseph Ludington,	1,000
C. Baker,	3,000	O. Rugg,	1,000
Joseph Payne,	5,000	N. B. Heafer,	2,000
M. Pike,	1,000	Keays & Brother,	500
S. B. Hance,	5,000	S. Galagher,	1,000
C. W. Holder,	2,000	Birch & Brothers,	1,000
S. P. Morehouse,	1,000	Elihu Rogers,	2,000
N. Dixon,	1,000	E. M. Philips,	1,000
Charles Roadnight,	5,000	J. F. Humphreys,	1,000
Franklin Price,	3,000	C. Wakefield,	1,000

William W. Orme,	5,000	W. Wyatt,	5,000
W. W. Lusk & Company,	5,000	A. J. Warner,	5,000
William T. Major,	5,000	J. N. Ward,	5,000
D. L. Crist,	2,000	E. Hartry,	5,000
Theron Pardee,	5,000	James L. Rice,	1,000
George W. Stipp,	5,000	W. P. Withers,	1,000
W. H. Temple,	3,000	Jesse Adams,	1,000
James Niccolls,	3,000		

Their guaranty was never enforced, as it was found that some of the lands were sold for cash, others on credit, and the proceeds used in the building, and it also happened there was no trouble about the county appropriation, as it was confirmed by the new court in the spring of 1858. This new court consisted of a Board of Supervisors, the county having adopted township organization at the fall election in 1857. This guaranty, however, was made in good faith, was of great value at the time, and is one of the important steps taken to secure the Normal University.

It will also be interesting to read the list of subscribers, which we give. The following is a list of subscriptions that were nearly all given with the single condition that the institution should be located at some point within one mile of the corporate limits of Bloomington:

Jesse W. Fell, \$500, payable in six and twelve months after location is made; also, ten acres for site, to be selected anywhere, valued at \$2,000.

C. W. Holder, \$200, payable in six and twelve months.

S. D. Rounds, \$300, payable in six and twelve months.

William W. Orme, \$100, payable in six and twelve months.

R. O. Warriner, \$100, payable in six and twelve months after the building commences.

A. B. Shafter, \$600, payable in six and twelve months.

Park & Brother, \$100, payable in six and twelve months.

Robert Leach, \$100, payable in six and twelve months.

R. R. Landon, \$100, payable in six and twelve months.

George Dietrich, \$50, payable in six and twelve months.

Leonard Swett, \$100, payable in six and twelve months.

W. Thomas, \$100, payable in six and twelve months.

A. and O. Barnard, \$100, payable in six and twelve months.

J. E. McClun, \$500, in real estate at cash prices.

Isaac Mitchell, \$50, payable in six and twelve months.

William E. Foote, \$100, payable in six and twelve months.

James P. Keen, \$100, payable in six and twelve months.

S. B. Hance, \$100, payable in six and twelve months.

Hance & Taylor, \$100, payable in six and twelve months.

Corydon Weed, \$100, payable in six and twelve months.

John R. Smith, \$50, payable in six and twelve months.

R. Y. Stockton, \$50, payable in six and twelve months.

O. Ellsworth, \$100, payable in six and twelve months.

Lewis Bunn, \$100, payable in eight and twelve months.

E. Thorp, Smith & Co., \$100, payable in six and twelve months.

John Magoun, \$100, payable in six and twelve months.

C. P. Merriman, \$50, payable in six and twelve months.

F. K. Phoenix, \$100, payable in one and two years.

F. Price, \$100, payable in one and two years.

E. Thomas, \$200, payable in one and two years.

Denton Young, \$100, payable in one and two years.

W. W. Taylor, \$200, payable in one and two years.

K. P. Taylor, \$150, payable in one and two years.

K. H. Fell, \$100, payable in good notes, to be made payable in one and two years from the 1st of June next, provided the said institution is located within two miles of the corporate limits of the city of Bloomington.

Jesse W. Fell, \$500, payable by the conveyance of 100 acres of land, of average value, in Range 4 west, of Jackson County, Ill., on completion of building.

The list which follows is made up principally of those who limited their subscription to a location within three-fourths of a mile of the junction of the Illinois Central and Chicago & Alton Railroads. These individuals owned land in North Bloomington, or adjoining, or near by, and hence had, most of them, a direct interest in the location. Several of these made smaller unconditional subscriptions. C. W. Holder, for instance, would give \$200, wherever the institution might be located, and \$800 more provided North Bloomington were the fortunate point. The most of this, with that in the preceding list, was limited, practically, to the site which was chosen, it being within one mile of the corporate limits of Bloomington, and also within three-fourths of a mile of the crossing of the two railroads:

Jesse W. Fell, \$2,000 (including a subscription of \$500 already made), payable in one, two, three, four, and five years: *Provided*, not less than \$10,000 more can be added to this subscription, and not less than eighty acres of land; the first \$500 to be expended in making a good side or foot walk to the Junction from University.

Swett & Orme, \$1,500 (including a subscription of \$200 already made), payable in one and two years: *Provided*, not less than \$10,000 more can be had to this subscription, and not less than eighty acres of land.

C. W. Holder, \$1,000 (including a subscription of \$200 already made), payable in one and two years: *Provided*, not less than \$10,000 more can be had to this subscription, and not less than eighty acres of land.

F. K. Phoenix, \$1,500 (including a subscription of \$100 already made), payable one-half in nursery stock or ornamental planting on said site, and the balance in one and two years.

R. R. Landon, \$1,000 (including a subscription of \$100 already made), payable in one and two years.

F. Price, \$300 (including a subscription of \$100 already made), payable in one and two years.

Robert Ulrich, \$300, payable in one and two years.

William Dooley, \$500, payable in one and two years.

A. Gridley & Co., \$1,150, dischargeable by a conveyance of eleven and one-half acres of land situated in North Bloomington, and in tracts adjoining on the north.

John Magoun, \$700 (including a subscription of \$100 already made), payable in one and two years.

William Hill, \$400, payable in one and two years.

O. M. Colman, \$1,000, payable in one or two years, or dischargeable by the conveyance, within one year, of ten acres of land in North Bloomington.

Joshua E. Fell, \$500, payable in one or two years, or dischargeable by the conveyance, within one year, of five acres of land off the south end of my home farm, east of the railroad, at my option.

O. T. Reeves, Jr., \$500, payable in one and two years.

Elihu Rogers, \$500, payable in one and two years.

William E. Foote, \$200 (including \$100 already subscribed), payable in one and two years.

Robert A. Dalzell, \$250, payable in one and two years.

Thomas Junk, \$500, payable in one and two years, or dischargeable by the conveyance, within one year, of five acres of land in the northwest corner of my farm, at my option.

Norvel Dixon, \$200, payable in one and two years: *Provided*, I succeed in getting a good title to the northeast quarter of Section 22, Township 24 north, Range 2 east.
W. W. Taylor, \$600, payable in one and two years, including a subscription already made of \$200.

K. P. Taylor, \$500, payable in one and two years, including a subscription already made of \$150.

J. S. Walker, \$200, payable in one and two years, if located on the Army property.

Overman & Mann, \$1,200, payable in one, two, and three years, one-half in nursery stock, hedging and ornamental planting, first and second years; and balance cash, second and third years.

L. R. Case, \$200, payable in one and two years in cash, or dischargeable within one year by the conveyance of two acres of ground in North Bloomington, and adjoining on the north, at my option.

K. H. Fell, \$500, payable in notes to be due in three years from the 1st of June next.

John Rouse, \$200, payable in one and two years from the 1st of June next.

W. H. Allin, \$1,100, payable on the completion of the building, by the conveyance of the following lots: Lot 7, Block 1; Lot 5, Block 2; Lot 13, Block 13; Lots 14 and 15, Block 23; and Lot 9, Block 24—all of Western Addition to Bloomington.

William T. Major, \$600, payable on the completion of the building, by a conveyance of Lot No. One (1), Section 16, Township 25, R. 2 east, containing 40 acres.

George P. Howell, \$150, payable in one, two, and three years, equal installments.

Jesse W. Fell, \$7,000, payable, on the completion of the University Building, by the conveyance of 1,450 acres of my Jackson County lands, situated in Towns 8 and 9 south, Ranges 4 and 5 west of the Third Principal Meridian, and to be of average value with my other lands in said townships, to be selected by disinterested persons.

The next list is mostly made of those who subscribed on condition that the institution should be located at some point within three miles of the corporate limits of Bloomington.

Dietrich & Bradner, \$200, one-half payable in nine months and balance in eighteen.

Poston & Didlake, \$100, one-half payable in nine months and balance in eighteen.

S. P. Morehouse, \$100, one-half payable in six months and balance in twelve.

D. L. Crist, \$100, within one mile of Bloomington, one-half in six months, balance in twelve months, and \$100 more if located within one mile of Junction.

A. C. Washburn, \$50.

Harwood & Rugg, \$200, one-half payable in nine months and balance in fifteen, if located one-half mile from Junction.

John Denman, \$100, on condition that said school is located within one and one-half miles of Bloomington.

E. K. Crothers, \$50, one-half in nine months and balance in one year.

R. E. Woodson, \$50, one-half in six months and balance in one year.

Thomas Carlile, \$200, one-half in six months and balance in twelve months, if located within one mile of the corporate limits.

C. Weed, \$500.

Samuel Watson, \$200, in one and two years.

O'Donald & Warner, \$300, in one and two years.

C. W. Lander, \$50.

E. Barber & Co., \$50.

R. B. Harris, \$25.

A. Steel, \$25.

E. Martin, \$100, in one and two years.

T. J. Karr, \$25.

C. Wakefield, \$50, in one and two years.

Giles A. Smith & Graham, \$50, in one and two years.

Samuel Colvin, \$25.

John McMillan, \$25, in one and two years.

- A. J. Nason, \$25, in one and two years.
 J. Bronson, \$25, in one and two years.
 A. Sutton, \$25, in one and two years.
 J. W. Lichenthaler, \$25, in one and two years.
 J. B. Crouch, \$25, in one and two years.
 K. Thompson, \$25, in one and two years.
 J. W. Moore, \$50, in one and two years.
 Orin Small, \$100, in one and two years.
 James Grover, \$100, in four yearly payments.
 E. M. Philips, \$100, in four yearly payments.

The subscriptions in this last list, as well as those in the first and second classes, were, by the terms of their subscription, included among the donations to the Normal University.

In addition to the above, we find that Joseph Payne and Meshack Pike donated the site where the institution was located, consisting of about sixty acres, with enough more on the west to make their gift about eighty acres, the whole valued at about \$22,000. Mr. E. W. Bakewell and Judge David Davis, each gave forty acres, valued, together, at \$16,000. The whole of the last-mentioned eighty acres, and some of the other, is west of Main street, and is the land designed to be used by the agricultural department of the institution.

The list we have given speaks for itself. It is a record of liberality, which, at the time it was made, was unparalleled, and caused great comment all over the country. We should not forget that the most valuable part of the subscription—that which really was of the most solid importance—was the county subscription. This was voted by the County Commissioners—Judge A. J. Merriman, of Bloomington, and his Associates, Hon. Milton Smith, of Pleasant Hill, and Hon. H. Buck, of LeRoy, in a quiet, almost private session, with no opportunity to consult their constituents.

In the fall of 1857, these gentlemen were all re-elected to the same positions; and when the Board of Supervisors, in the following year, ratified their proceedings, appointing A. J. Merriman Swamp-Land Commissioner, it was seen that McLean County fully sustained the County Court in its disposition of so large a portion of the swamp-land funds.

The Board of Education appointed an architect—George P. Randall, of Chicago—who prepared plans and specifications, upon which bids were called for in the papers of Alton, Galena, Springfield, Peoria, Chicago, and Bloomington. Fifteen bids were made, ranging in price from \$80,000 to \$115,000. The contract was awarded to Mortimer & Loburg, and T. H. Soper, of Chicago, for the sum of \$83,000, the work to be completed September 1, 1858. The corner-stone was laid September 29, 1857. On this occasion there was quite an impressive ceremony. Rev. H. J. Eddy, of the Baptist Church, of Bloomington, offered a prayer. Prof. D. Wilkins read a letter from Gov. Matteson, appropriate to the occasion. W. H. Powell, State School Superintendent, deposited in the corner-stone

a copy of the school laws and of the different educational journals of the day.

Mr. Jesse W. Fell deposited a list of all the contributors to the location of the Normal, and hoped to see the institution develop into a complete State University, with a model farm and Agricultural College.

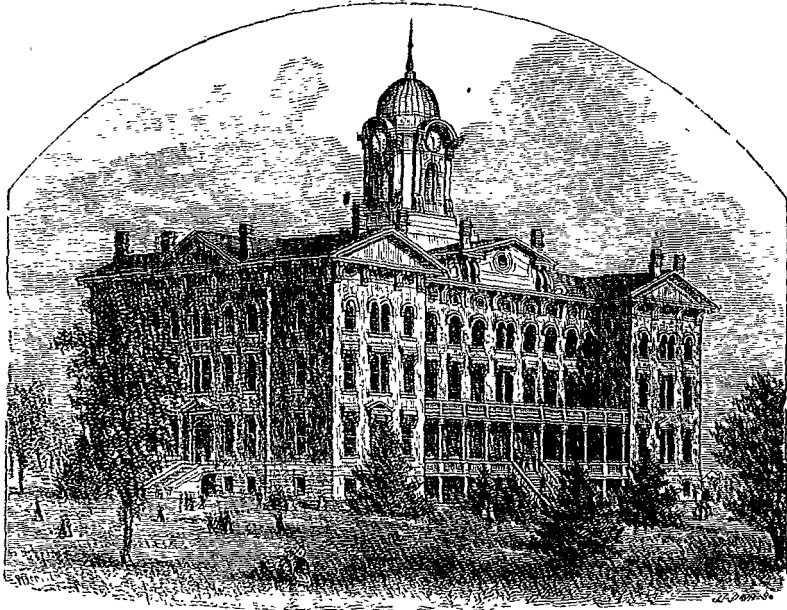
Dr. E. R. Roe, the editor of the *Illinois Baptist*, deposited all the Bloomington papers of the time, and made a very appropriate speech. Judge A. J. Merriman, of the County Court, placed the upper stone in position when the ceremony was completed.

Before winter, quite a large amount of work had been done upon the stone foundation of the lower story, and about \$30,000 was expended before the work was suspended for the winter season.

The financial crisis of 1857, which commenced in the month of September, was the means of causing a discontinuance of the work on the building. The county lands could not be sold for cash; many of the subscribers were crippled, and it was thought best by the State Board to wait a few years, till money matters might become easier, and hence the buildings were not fully completed until the early part of 1861. During 1859 and 1860, the work was pushed with sufficient vigor to see the building inclosed in the winter of 1859, and far enough advanced so that the graduating exercises of the first class were held at the new building in June, 1860.

Temporary rooms had been secured by the State Board at Major's Hall, in Bloomington, where, on the 5th day of October, 1857, Charles E. Hovey, Principal, and Ira Moore, Assistant, opened the Normal School with 29 pupils, whose numbers increased during the academic year to a total of 127. Major's Hall continued to be used until the fall term of 1860, when the Normal building was far enough finished to be occupied by the entire institution. Several of the rooms were not completed till late in the winter, at which time the State made an appropriation of \$65,000 to pay debts which had accumulated against the Board of Education. The building cost more than the sum first agreed upon, owing, in part, to advanced cost of materials. Included in the appropriation is a large sum for heating and furnishing the building, and for miscellaneous matters. A portion of this money was lost by the failure of so many banks in 1861, and for other reasons it was found necessary for the next Legislature to appropriate \$35,000 more before the debts were fully paid. The total cost of the building, with all the incidental expenses, and the amount asked for books and furniture up to 1863, was about \$200,000; but had the building been completed near the time it was started, the total cost would probably not have exceeded \$100,000, reckoning simply the cost of the building. It should be stated that McLean County honorably met its subscription according to its terms, and that nearly all the private individuals paid, though, as before

stated, the State Board of Education did not enforce the subscriptions at the time most of them were payable.



The Normal building is located about two miles north of the McLean County Court House, on an elevated plateau, commanding a splendid view of Bloomington and the surrounding country. At the time of its erection, the adjacent lands were principally utilized for agricultural purposes; but since that time, the beautiful suburban village of Normal, with its elegant villas, lovely parks, classic church spires, and wealth of flowers and shade trees, has clustered around it, making as fine a combination of natural and artificial landscapes as can be found in the entire West.

The building is admirably arranged for collegiate use. Its dimensions are 160 feet in length; the end wings are 100 feet in width, and the central portions, 80 feet. The distance from the basement to the extreme height of the tower is 140 feet. The basement is divided into apartments, used, respectively, as a chemical and zoological laboratory, scientific lecture room, and dissecting rooms. These are furnished with the necessaries for thorough, practical tests and demonstrations in the various branches. The remainder of the basement is occupied by the janitor's rooms and the heating apparatus, hot air and steam being both utilized. Here, also, may be found reels of hose, connected with the reservoir, located near the roof,

which furnishes sufficient water-pressure to extinguish any ordinary outbreak of fire.

The first floor is exactly symmetrical in its divisions, the adjacent sides and opposite ends corresponding precisely with each other in the size of the apartments. The north side is divided into four recitation rooms, occupied by the grammar and high schools. The corner rooms on the south side are large, convenient dressing rooms. The primary department serves as a training-school for teachers. Here, the pupils of the Normal Department witness the theoretical, practical, and disciplinary work of teaching, demonstrated by Prof. Metcalf and his assistants. Pupils are required to take charge of primary classes, affording them an excellent opportunity to put into practice the theories imbibed by observation. The reception room, in the central front, is a neat apartment, carpeted with Brussels and furnished with upholstered chairs and sofas, the walls hung with portraits, and, on one side, adorned with an elegant gilt-framed mirror.

Ascending to the second floor, we find the assembly-rooms occupying the entire width of the building, with seats and desks for 270 pupils. The remainder of this floor is divided into eight recitation rooms, the library and reading rooms. The library contains about one thousand four hundred volumes of choice, standard reference-books. The reading room contains files of prominent literary and news journals.

The third floor contains five departments—the museum, Normal Hall, and the two society rooms, the latter occupying the west end; they are 30 by 50 feet each, and seat 250 persons. They are similarly furnished, each with a well-selected library, a piano, and other appropriate articles, all of which are the property of the societies. The Philadelphian and Wrightonians hold their regular literary exercises once a week. The Normal Hall is 80 feet square and 20 feet in width, with a seating capacity of about 800 persons. The museum occupies the east end, and contains a very valuable collection, of great interest to the student as well as interesting to visitors.

When the Normal building was ready for occupancy, in the fall of 1860, the village of Normal comprised only about thirty houses, and a large number of the students resided in Bloomington during the first two years; but by the fall of 1862, there were enough tenements to accommodate all who desired board at Normal. From this time forward, the number of permanent residents in Normal rapidly increased, and probably the year 1863 may be taken as the time when the village had become in reality, distinct and separate from Bloomington, with definite aims of its own. Houses went up on every side, retail stores began to be started, and Normal was a town of 1,000 inhabitants as early as 1865.