

Storer College Architectural Drawings, Diplomas, and Other Material A&M 1471

Storer College Architectural Drawings, Diplomas, and Other Material
circa 1900-1953



Title Statement

Storer College Architectural Drawings, Diplomas, and Other Material A&M 1471

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Descriptive Summary

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Unit Date

circa 1900-1953

Language

English .

Creator

Storer College

Extent

0.90 Linear Feet (3 large flat storage boxes, 3 in. each; 1 reel of microfilm, 1.75 in.)

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Repository

West Virginia and Regional History Center

Administrative Information

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Biographical / Historical

Storer College of Harpers Ferry, West Virginia, emerged from the aftermath of the Civil War with the purpose of educating former slaves who were now facing the world with few skills and no education. It began in 1865 as a school in the Lockwood House, a private residence, with the support of the Freewill Baptist Home Mission Society of New England under Reverend Nathan Cook Brackett; in 1867 it officially became Storer Normal School, with the mission of training teachers; and in 1938 Storer became a College. The College closed in 1955 due to declining enrollment, financial problems, and the advent of desegregation.

Although there were dedicated teachers in the beginning, by 1867 there were still only 16 instructors to educate 2,500 students. Reverend Brackett realized the only way to reach all of the students was to train African American teachers, thus necessitating the expansion of the school into a teacher college.

The philanthropist John Storer from Maine came forward and offered a \$10,000 grant to the Freewill Baptists to create a teacher college under three conditions: first, the school must eventually become a degree-granting college; second, the school had to be open to all applicants, regardless of race or gender; and finally, the most difficult of the prerequisites, the Freewill Baptist Church had to match his \$10,000 donation within a year. After a year-long effort the money was raised, and Storer Normal School opened its doors; and by March 1868 it received its state charter.

In the beginning local residents were resistant to a "colored school" and tried to shut it down through slander, vandalism, and local politics. One teacher wrote, "it is unusual for me to go to the Post Office without being hooted at, and twice I have been stoned on the streets at noonday." The attitudes of local residents eventually changed, however, so that later in his life Reverend Brackett became a respected citizen of Harpers Ferry.

Though Storer remained primarily a teacher college, in time it began adding courses in higher education to its curriculum so that students could graduate with a normal degree for teaching, or an academic degree for going on to college. In 1938, under the leadership of school president Henry T. McDonald, Storer became a college. Its enrollment peaked at around 400, and then dipped lower during World War II. The College survived until 1955 when declining enrollment, financial stress, and court-ordered desegregation combined to close it.

In addition to its progressive role in educating African Americans, the College became associated with other advocates of civil rights, such as Frederick Douglass, who visited Storer Normal School in 1881 to deliver a speech on John Brown, and the Niagra Movement led by William Du Bois, who held a conference at Storer in 1906. The NAACP was later to adopt many of the goals of the Niagra Movement.

[This historical note was sourced from the West Virginia Encyclopedia and Wikipedia.]

Scope and Contents

Architectural drawings (blueprints, campus plans, topographic maps, etc.), diplomas, and other material regarding Storer College, West Virginia's first African American institution of higher learning, located in Harpers Ferry.

Box 1 contains 26 architectural drawings.

Box 2 contains 19 architectural drawings.

Box 3 contains 12 diplomas; one oversize folder of architectural drawings; one legal size folder of correspondence regarding an addition to the college library; and other material.

Of the 45 architectural drawings in boxes 1 and 2, 32 have been microfilmed. The contents of the reel of microfilm are as follows:

Flash No. 1 - Campus Plot Plan - 1 Sheet

Flash No. 2 - Industrial Building - 5 Sheets

Flash No. 3 - Dormitory - 1 Sheet

Flash No. 4 - Frame Dwelling - 1 Sheet

Flash No. 5 - Washington Street Plan - 1 Sheet

Flash No. 6 - Auditorium - 1 Sheet

Flash No. 7 - Proposed Building - 5 Sheets

Flash No. 8 - Roger Williams Library First Floor Plan - 1 Sheet

Flash No. 9 - Alterations and Additions - 1 Sheet

Flash No. 10 - Gymnasium Plans - 2 Sheets

Flash No. 11 - Science Hall Building - 7 Sheets

Flash No. 12 - Topography at Gymnasium Site - 1 Sheet

Flash No. 13 - Gymnasium Plans - 4 Sheets

Flash No. 14 - Unidentified Building - 1 Sheet

Flash No. 15 - Unidentified Building - 2 Sheets

Flash No. 16 - Gymnasium - 13 Sheets, 1 Photograph

Flash No. 17 - Alteration to Library - 3 Sheets

Flash No. 18 - Frame Dwelling - 2 Sheets

Flash No. 19 - Industrial Arts and Domestic Science Building - 1 Sheet

Flash No. 20 - Dormitory - 4 Sheets

Flash No. 21 - Property of Storer College - 1 Sheet

Flash No. 22 - Chapel Seating - 1 Sheet

Flash No. 23 - Chemistry Lab - 2 Sheets

Flash No. 24 - Unidentified Building - 2 Sheets

Flash No. 25 - Chapel Building - 3 Sheets

Flash No. 26 - Growth Plan for Storer College - 1 Sheet

Flash No. 27 - Unidentified Building - 3 Sheets

Flash No. 28 - Addition to Library - 4 Sheets

Flash No. 29 - John Brown Tablet - 1 Sheet

Flash No. 30 - Grant Hall - 4 Sheets

Flash No. 31 - Foundations and Heating - 2 Sheets

Flash No. 32 - Alterations and Additions - 2 Sheets

Related A&M Collections

1131, 1168, 1322, 1471, 2621

Keywords

Harpers Ferry (W. Va.)

Jefferson County.

African Americans -- Education (Higher)

African Americans - Schools for Freedmen.

Architects and architecture

Blueprints

Education

Jefferson County - Schools.

Maps.

Schools - Jefferson County.

Schools. SEE ALSO Academies

Universities and colleges

Storer College