

The Confederate Orphans' Home of Mississippi.

By Miss Mary J. Welsh

The Confederate Orphans' Home of Mississippi was established, as its name indicates, expressly to take care of the destitute orphans of Confederate soldiers. At the end of the War Between the States the number of helpless and destitute children in the South was appalling. It was felt that something must be promptly done for their relief, but how to help them most effectively was perhaps the hardest and most serious problem that confronted the Southern people in the impoverished condition of the country. Different sections attempted to solve it in different ways. This paper will contain a history of the most noteworthy effort of the people of Mississippi to meet the situation. It will be borne in mind that owing to the existing condition of the South this institution differed in many ways from every other home of the kind in Mississippi either before or since the war. It therefore stands alone in the history of orphanages in the State in respect both to its constitution and to its methods of operation.

The Mississippi Baptist State Convention during its first session after the war, in the fall of 1865, directed its attention to the needs of the orphans of the State. After earnest, prayerful deliberation it decided upon founding an institution where these unfortunate children could be gathered, cared for comfortably and educated properly, in order that they might become useful, honorable, self-reliant citizens.

For some facts and dates mentioned in this sketch the writer is pleased to acknowledge her indebtedness to Dr. W. J. Dupree, now of Jackson, Tenn., the Treasurer of the Board of Trustees of The Home; and to Prof. J. A. Cranberry, of Oklahoma, a son of the first Superintendent. Prof. Cranberry was a boy at the home, and like any wide awake boy became cognizant of many things that would not be noticed by an employee with whose work they were not especially connected.

BOARD OF TRUSTEES

To forward this work the first step was to select a board of trustees. These were gentlemen of known ability and high moral character, drawn from different sections of the State. This board was to contain a certain number of Baptists; the remainder was to be of different denominations or no denomination. In their long and intimate association with the inmates of the home they proved themselves to be true, manly men, considerately courteous, strictly, but kindly just and keenly alive to the best interests of their helpless charges. "Our children," as they called them, were objects of their warmest solicitude, and all employees, by virtue of their relation to the children, received a corresponding share of this sympathetic interest.

The board met at the Home regularly about every six months to discuss matters pertaining to the interest of the institution. They spent the day examining affairs, taking account of all needs and deliberating upon the best methods of supplying them. They met the inmates at table, three times, and at family worship once during each of their sessions. On these occasions one or more of them

would give an encouraging, sympathetic talk. Of course the employees as well as the children kept at their usual work and were naturally "on their best behavior" for the day. I presume they felt something like a company of soldiers passing under review of their commanding general. Yet these trustees were so genial that their visit was a pleasant memory and soon became a pleasant anticipation. They reported annually to the Convention through their secretary, Rev. W. S. Webb, who always followed his report with a speech that thrilled the hearts of the audience and aroused an active, substantial interest in the cause for which he plead. Their only compensation was that which arose from a consciousness of having obeyed the Master's injunction to "do good to the poor" according to "opportunity."

The first duty that presented itself to this board was to find and secure a locality for the projected institution. A veritable one was in sight and available. The Rev. T. C. Teasdale, of Columbus, Miss., was appointed an agent to raise the necessary funds for carrying out the plans of the Convention. He soon collected, principally in the Northern and Western States, sufficient funds to purchase Lauderdale Springs, a noted watering place in antebellum days. He also secured donations of supplies, furniture, etc., sufficient to fit it up for a beginning.

It required much deliberation for the trustees to decide upon an appropriate name for the proposed institution. "Asylum" was too cold, too formal; "Refuge" was suggestive of crime; "Retreat" was pleasing, very, but it savored too much of leisure, if not of idleness, and this was intended to be a busy place. But "Home," that dear word that thrills every human heart, fully met their conception of what this place should be to its inmates. Hence the institution was named "The Confederate Orphans' Home of Mississippi," and its affairs were always administered in accordance with this idea.

The locality was a very desirable one. The large enclosed campus was covered with a thick carpet of grass and surrounded on three sides by hills with a heavy growth of trees, many of them evergreen. The swampy ground on the south and southwest abounded in mineral springs, red and white sulphur and Chalybeate. It had been a popular summer resort, but in time it proved to be unhealthful for constant residence. The buildings were sufficient in number and were conveniently arranged around three sides of the campus, with two large ones in the center. But, as was the case generally throughout the South at that period, they were somewhat out of repair; and having been intended only for summer use they were not ceiled. It is well to add they never were ceiled.

SUPERINTENDENTS

Pending the election of a permanent superintendent, Rev. W. C. Buck was given the temporary charge of the property and of the small advance guard of children who arrived soon after the purchase of the property. He was pastor of a country church (Sharon) in Noxubee County and on each visit carried supplies contributed by his warm hearted congregation. He was an able divine and a guileless Christian.

In the meantime Professor Simeon Sebastian Cranberry, formerly of Mississippi College, Clinton, Miss., was elected first Superintendent to organize and carry on the work of the Home. He was an experienced educator, a man of sound, practical wisdom, of fine administrative ability, a

refined Christian gentleman, admirably fitted for the work of caring for and directing the efforts of women and helpless children. Dr. T. J. Dupree, now of Jackson, Tenn., who as Treasurer of the Board of Trustees was closely associated with him for five years, thus writes of him: "He was one of the noblest, purest, best man I ever knew."

Professor Cranberry also possessed that which is requisite for a man's highest success in any vocation — a wife in full sympathy with his work. She was a safe counselor when perplexities arose, a mother to the children and a sympathetic friend to all employees. These statements may be considered irrelevant, but justice demands that I pay this small tribute to the memory of the two persons with whose lives I was closely associated for six years, sharing their work, their cares and responsibilities.

ASSISTANT SUPERINTENDENTS

Early in the first year, a young man, Mr. Sam Goodwins, of Hinds County, directed and assisted the little boys in their outdoor work. He remained only a few months, however. Late in the next year Professor Williams, of Hinds County, was elected to this position. As he was in delicate health he lived only a few months. Perhaps a year after his death, Mr. Judson Thigpen was chosen to succeed him, and remained nearly throughout the existence of the Home. These were all well educated gentlemen, and efficient in their positions.

PHYSICIAN

A physician was employed by the year. This position was held by Dr. Sidney Kennedy, of Lauderdale Station. He was skilled in his profession, sympathetic in his ministrations, and responded promptly to all calls. A part of his duty was to examine all applicants on arrival at the station to ascertain if they had any contagious disease. In spite of this precaution we had, at different periods, epidemics of whooping cough and sore eyes.

OPENING OF THE ORPHANAGE

On the arrival of the Superintendent, Prof. S. S. Granbury, late in the summer of 1866, Dr. Buck retired. Though the movement had been on foot only a short time the country was in a state of expectancy and it was not necessary to announce that the Home was ready for the reception of children. They came and continued to come in such large numbers and, in a majority of cases, in such a forlorn plight as to prove beyond question the crying need of such an institution. None were turned away. The institution was established, fostered and controlled by the Mississippi Baptist State Convention, but applicants were received irrespective of religious creed, or no creed, of the parents.

They came without warning. Their application was made at the gate or at Lauderdale station at the farthest. Before Christmas there were at least fifty on the roll; and in less than two years two hundred. The number of children in the Home varied from time to time, as mothers or relatives

became able to provide for their children. Once it was sadly depleted by sickness. The vacancies were soon filled, however, by new arrivals.

The age limit was from six years to about sixteen, subject to the discretion of the management. Children under six were debarred because the home was not able to meet the requirements of infancy. Girls and boys of sixteen, or thereabouts, were not only destitute but helpless, since in the impoverished condition of the country they could get no employment. In truth they had received but little education or training and were not therefore qualified for employment. But they were a great help to the home. With a little direction and help in each department they did all the work, thus obviating the necessity of employing servants.

THE CHILDREN

The question was sometimes asked then and has been since, "What kind of children were these for whom all this provision was made?" It is a natural question and this is a good place to answer it. Briefly, they were children in every respect. Compared with the same number of children elsewhere, they averaged pretty well. Their educational advantages had been very limited during the preceding four years. In natural endowments they ranged from the fairly bright to the very ordinary, and from a natural refinement of feeling and manner down to rudeness and stolid indifference. They proved to be tractable and in disposition affectionate. Having previously known no will but their own, they were pretty fair specimens of "Young Americans."

All of them needed training in every respect. The first year was an especially trying time on the faculty. The children came in so rapidly that before one consignment had been reduced to order another was on hand; then another and another following in such quick succession that it required wise judgment and a firm hand to hold the situation, but our Superintendent was equal to the demand. He was a man of versatile talents, an excellent disciplinarian for children and grown persons as well. His kindly nature inspired a corresponding kindness in others; while his reasonable methods and firm will quelled all thoughts of rebellion.

In time, earliest arrivals, having been partly trained, served somewhat as a police force, and materially assisted the management. After the children had learned the first lesson, obedience to authority (of which many of them had no conception at first) the other lessons became easier for them. Gradually things began to run smoothly, but just as it is in the outer world, the vigilance of the "law and order party" could never be relaxed. They had all of a child's instinct for mischief, and delighted in successfully perpetrating it. This was usually harmless and passed over, but sometimes a case demanded an investigation. Then the combined vigilance of the faculty and other employees would be requisite to detect the culprit; for every child examined was as innocent as a dove and as ignorant as the average citizen before the grand jury. When at last detected the offender was so submissively penitent and so profuse in promises never to "do so again" that no one had the heart for any severer punishment than a reprimand and a private lecture. If the culprit was a girl, this last duty usually fell to me, and in justice let me say that in every instance the girl thanked me for the interest taken in her welfare and promised to heed the advice given. This was pay in good coin; and it is still paying a large dividend in genuine satisfaction.

EDUCATIONAL ADVANTAGES

School was conducted five days in the week the year round; vacations of only a day or two were granted in extreme weather and once for several weeks in a time of severe sickness. Occasionally there were three, but generally only two, teachers in the school. All of these were ladies with the exception of Mr. A. T. Farrar, who taught a short time. To equalize the labor and the school advantages the beneficiaries who were eight years old and over were separated into divisions, each of which worked and went to school on alternate days. All children under eight went to school every day.

The large ballroom of the springs was converted into the principal schoolroom and called "The Chapel," because all religious services were conducted in it. The textbooks used were such as were presented, both new and second hand. Other necessary equipments, such as desks, paper, pens and ink were also liberally given. By having only half the children in school each day the demand for equipments lessened.

WORK

The work was done almost entirely by the beneficiaries arranged in details. In case of the girls, at first four afterwards six, of different ages were detailed from each division for the different departments of housework, under the direction and with the assistance of an employee. These employees were in almost every instance mothers of children who gladly worked for a support and the privilege of being with their children. All children of working age in a division, who were not in a work section for the day, went to the sewing room for that day, the divisions alternating day after day. Eight girls were drawn from the school room each day to wait on the tables. After these details had been arranged and put into regular working order there was very little trouble. Each girl soon learned her place and went to it every morning without admonition.

Sometimes a vacancy would occur. If it was in a work detail, one from the sewing room would be substituted; if in the table service, one from the school room. These details were always arranged and managed by the same teacher, thus preventing confusion. As the boys worked in garden and field, the only detail necessary for them was by the week or month to furnish wood for the various departments, and in winter for the fireplaces. This was managed by the Assistant Superintendent if there was one in office, if not, by the Superintendent. Each employee also had his or her own work and was responsible for it, but that did not give him or her the privilege of refusing any other work that needed to be done. No one interfered with another, but if one was sick or absent, one or two others assumed extra duty, "closed ranks" and moved on harmoniously, uncomplainingly though a little wearily.

Once, in a great strait, the most scholarly teacher in the institution, Mrs. Mollie Williams, worked in the kitchen for several weeks, at another time under a similar strait another teacher worked in the sewing room; and once, when a vacancy occurred in the school room, the Superintendent taught until it could be filled. All the work of the place was done by hand. Very few labor saving machines ever reached the Home. A washing machine or two were tried but they

were of such a crude kind they failed to serve the purpose. Washing and ironing went on from Monday morning until Saturday noon. A few sewing machines were also presented but the girls were taught hand sewing almost entirely. Some of them became very neat seamstresses.

Besides the regular daily work, the buildings needed repairing, and the long dining room of the springs had to be widened to accommodate our large and increasing family. For this job a citizen of the neighborhood was employed in the earliest years of the institution. The lack of freestone water was in time provided for by conveying it from a spring outside the campus by means of underground wooden pipes. In these jobs the boys of the Home rendered all the needed assistance. The sawmills along the line of the Mobile and Ohio railroad presented the lumber. The only Negro employed did the work that was too rough and heavy for the little boys. He was a "Radical" in politics and thought it incumbent upon him to "vote 'long wi' de party wha' turned we all loose." So he did, no one objecting. Nevertheless, he knew his place and kept it, giving no trouble. He was submissive to authority, doing his work quite satisfactorily. He remained with us several years.

FINANCIAL SUPPORT

The institution was largely supported by contributions procured by traveling agents. The citizens of the neighborhood and of different parts of the State not visited by agents also kindly sent generous and often very timely contributions. Several agents were appointed at different times in the life of the Home. All of them were successful, but none traveled so extensively as did Dr. T. C. Teasdale, previously mentioned, and Mrs. Laura Reed, of Kentucky. Mrs. Reed visited us oftener than any other of the agents, mingled with us in our daily life and always had some pleasant incident to relate to the children. She thus acquainted herself with the needs of the place; and her appeal stirred the hearts of the people to their very depths as was shown by the donations she procured. Some beautiful incidents of Mrs. Reed's agency deserve to be recorded both for the spirit manifested by them and the results to the institution. Just previous to the War Between the States, "Memory Strings" composed of buttons, each the gift of a friend and each different from all the others was a popular fad with young girls. Miss Jennie Moxley, of Louisville, Ky., had one of these strings, very precious to her; for each button had its own history connected with the giver. Her heart was so stirred by one of Mrs. Reed's appeals that she voluntarily offered her precious string for the pleasure of the orphans. But He who understood the sacrifice decreed better results. The incident so excited the sympathy of the audience that quite a liberal sum was immediately raised. Nor did it stop there. Wherever Mrs. Reed addressed an audience, she exhibited the string and repeated the story followed by the same substantial result. Thus the self-denying act of one little girl became a source of considerable revenue. Again, in one audience an old lady anxious to give something, brought to Mrs. Reed a water gourd, raised and prepared by her, modestly saying, "It is but a poor gift but it will hold a drink of water for the little ones." But He who sat over against the treasury noted the deed, knew the motive and blessed the gift many fold. Whenever the agent passed it through an audience accompanied by a few remarks it came back to her full of offerings to the cause for which she so earnestly plead. One more donation deserves special mention. A baker in New Orleans, Mrs. Margaret Haughery, familiarly called "Margaret," noted for her charitable deeds, sent without solicitation, from time to time during the life of the institution, generous donations of fresh crackers, very acceptable at all times, especially so during seasons of sickness.

THE ORPHANS' HOME BANNER

A semi-monthly paper, consisting of a single sheet, 16x22, and containing 24 columns, was established in 1868. It was published at the Home, the work being done entirely by the employees and beneficiaries. It was a source of considerable revenue throughout the existence of the institution, not only through subscriptions and advertisements but by keeping up a communication with the outside world. The office also did a good deal of job work. The first few issues of The Banner were printed at Scooba, on the Mobile and Ohio railroad, where two of the largest boys were sent to learn the art of printing. A hand press was soon procured and an office was opened at the Home with one of those boys as foreman. The work being done entirely by the employees and beneficiaries there was no outlay except for paper and ink. Several of the boys became expert compositors, by which, in after years, they earned a comfortable livelihood.

About 1870 a concert band was formed of the best singers, girls and boys, of intermediate ages. It was trained and sent out under charge of Rev. A. D. Trimble, of Tennessee, and a matron—Miss Mattie Wharton, of Noxubee county, Miss., at first and afterwards Mrs. Mollie Williams, of the Home. This band traveled principally in Tennessee and Kentucky. It was kindly received everywhere and through its efforts the circulation of The Banner was increased and supplies were sent to the Home. The children sang hymns principally and without an instrument, but large audiences always greeted them. Besides these sources of support, the boys cultivated a part of the land, made a garden, and raised some corn, hogs and cattle. In all these ways we lived comfortably by strict economy. All supplies ran alarmingly low at times, but thanks to Him—who “cares for the sparrows” “the barrel of meal wasted not,” neither did the “meat fail.”

RELIGIOUS PRIVILEGES

We had no regular preaching services. Occasionally a preacher made an appointment, but that was a very rare occurrence. Sunday school was held every Sunday morning, Prof. Granberry officiating as superintendent and the employees teaching. The literature was plentifully given. Several copies of Kind Words came regularly. A large supply of Bibles and Testaments with catechisms, question books, song books, both new and second hand were contributed, and these we used as best we could. I was astounded to meet here a literary acquaintance of pioneer days which I thought had been crowded out of existence by the modern works. Among the contributions was a number of the same unlearnable question books that had been “Greek” to me in childhood. They were given to a class of the most advanced girls and boys, and the class most suavely assigned to me. I had not been connected with a Sunday school since those pioneer days, and,—shame on me,—my knowledge of Scripture had not kept pace with the passing of the years. I was, therefore, conscious of the fact that I was not nearly so well qualified for the position as was supposed or as the position itself coupled with that particular question book demanded; but to decline was out of the question. Embarrassing situation! However, the class knew less; so by diligent study I managed to keep in the lead through my time of service, in the meantime cracking many hard theological nuts.

Family worship, conducted by the Superintendent, was held every night in the chapel at which all were required to be present.

The part of this service and of the Sunday school which delighted the children most was the singing. All sang, from the largest boy down to the smallest. I do not think a single one was "tone deaf;" certainly not one was dumb. They did not always have the words exactly right, but they "carried the tune," and with a will. A chorus song especially delighted them; when they reached that part, the campus rang with the joyous refrain, which was echoed from the surrounding hills, and often reached Lauderdale station over a mile away.

At every meal each employee present and each child, even the little "tots," who could not read the Bible were required to repeat a text of Scripture before eating. The Superintendent, if present, if not a teacher, would ask a blessing, repeat a text, and then every one around the two long tables would follow with a text. The trustees when present conformed to this custom, so did visitors when not taken by surprise. I learned more Scripture texts during my connection with the Home than I had learned during all my previous life.

RECREATION, HOLIDAYS, etc.

Children and grown people, too, must have periods of rest and recreation. The school, of course, had regular hours of recess. Then after supper (which was always eaten before sunset as "lamp oil" was never abundant) the work division was free, and until the bell rang for family worship all joined in noisy, jolly play. On Sunday after Sunday school, in order that brothers and sisters or other relatives might meet occasionally in untrammelled social intercourse, they were permitted to assemble on the campus in summer, in the chapel in winter. This plan carried out in full soon included all the children; for the very few who had no relatives were by special favor granted the same indulgence. They were always under the care of one or more person in authority who was not near enough to restrain their reasonable enjoyment. They were free to enjoy themselves in any way they pleased, if within proper bounds. Gamboling on the grass or sitting about in groups they showed by their merry peals of laughter how much this relaxation was to them; and it is only just to them to say that they never abused this privilege.

Christmas was a week of freedom except for necessary work, and, as all freely helped with that, it was little more than play. Santa Claus never failed to come with his sleigh filled to overflowing with all kinds of Christmas presents. Besides all manner of toys to please and help make a noise, the children had a substantial feast and a dainty dessert. Once we had a Christmas tree, but the affair was too stupendous to be repeated.

An annual picnic on the grounds appointed by the trustees became a settled feature. It was left to the option of the Superintendent to select and announce the time of this event each year. It was generally in the fall. On the appointed day companies of men, women and children came from all parts of the State, bringing boxes and baskets, filled with everything necessary to a feast. It was the orphans' picnic, given by their friends, who contributed so bountifully that the "left overs" amply supplied the needs of the next day. On this occasion all work not absolutely necessary was suspended. This day of free social intercourse with friends was always pleasantly remembered. If

the schedule of the trains detained the company until in the night, the Home would get up a school exhibition for their entertainment. Next day some members of the party were tired, very tired in body, but refreshed in spirit.

The citizens of Lauderdale station, ever mindful of their helpless neighbors, provided for their entertainment whenever an opportunity presented itself. Knowing that whatever is called "a show" has especial attractions for children and grown persons as well, they prevailed upon the proprietors of sleight of hand performances, etc., to give the Home a benefit whenever it was possible to do so. If it was an outdoor performance, the Home was invited and accorded the best position for observing it. If the young people of the town got up a home entertainment, they were sure to give the children one evening's performance in their own Home. Doubtless they were repaid by witnessing the children's hearty demonstrations of pleasure. So we were treated to many "shows," but never to a "circus."

As to employees, each one was permitted a vacation of a month each year (one at a time). We could take it all at once or in two divisions at our option. Some of us usually found time the first division of two weeks; others took a vacation every two or three years.

EPIDEMICS

Besides whooping cough and sore eyes, already mentioned, the Home suffered from an epidemic of malarial fever in the summer and fall of 1869.

Comparatively few of the beneficiaries escaped an attack; a score or more were sick at the same time and many of them died, mostly girls. But to dwell upon this period would unnecessarily harrow the feelings. The reader can imagine all the anxiety, weariness, care and suffering incident to such a time. I should not mention it, but for the fact that it was a true, though very sad, episode in the life of the Home.

FINANCIAL TROUBLE

In the fall or early winter of 1869 the managers were notified that the property of "The Springs" had reverted to the heirs of the former owner by virtue of the sale's having been effected during their minority. So the orphans were again homeless.

The hearts of their guardians and friends trembled with anxiety, but not for a long time, - Jehovah-jirch! During the last years of the war, the Federal Government had established a military post, a mile or more from Lauderdale station, on the west side of the railroad. After the surrender, many superannuated Negroes and colored children were carried there and given a temporary asylum, much to the relief of their former masters. When the soldiers were withdrawn, the Quakers took possession of the post, with the intention of supporting and training the Negro children still on hand. The managers of this school were in full sympathy with the work of the Confederate Orphans' Home, and the Superintendent of that institution sometimes visited us. But just as this

seeming disaster fell upon our Home, the Quakers for reasons satisfactory to themselves, decided to abandon the work, and the place was for sale. Our officers bought it and a small adjoining farm.

Forthwith the Home was moved by installments. There were over two hundred of us with our personal and family belongings to be moved a distance of three miles, more or less. We had at our disposal for this purpose, two yoke of oxen, one pair of mules and two wagons, a horse and buggy, and one pony, owned conjointly by the Home and the Superintendent. This was a month of rollicking fun to the little ones. To the employees and the older children the fatigue was mitigated by the satisfaction of knowing it would never have to be repeated.

THE NEW HOME

The post occupied two adjacent hills, connected by a foot-bridge spanning the intervening hollow. The boys under charge of the Assistant Superintendent, Mr. Jud Thigpen, a teacher and necessary domestic employees were domiciled on one hill, "the boys' hill." The Superintendent, with the remainder of the inmates, occupied the other, "the girls' hill." There was a comfortable settlement on the farm near by, and two trusted employees with their children occupied the dwelling. Although we were somewhat scattered, all met in the chapel on the "girls' hill" for family prayers, Sunday school and Sunday afternoon recreation in social intercourse. The locality had no beauty, but it was high and had a dry, pure atmosphere and plenty of good freestone water.

The buildings, roughly constructed, were sufficient in number, but not so well arranged as those at the springs; none were ceiled except a few rooms in the Federal officers' quarters. But the title was secure and the situation healthful. The farm was also more productive than the one we had left. So that what seemed to be an irreparable loss proved a desirable gain.

The old Federal guardhouse, situated in the one side of the yard on the "girls' hill," was turned into a printing office. How shy, for a time, the little ones were of this building! They had known something of soldiers with guns arresting men and taking them to prison. They learned in some way that this house, with the sentry's box near by, was a prison; to their minds a prison was a jail, and a jail was a horror to be avoided. It was long before they learned there was nothing in it to be dreaded by them.

LAST DAYS OF THE HOME

On January 13, 1871, our Superintendent, Prof. S. S. Cranberry, died. His health had been seriously declining for several years, but he never gave up and when the summons came, he "fell at his post." This was a grievous bereavement; a personal loss to every inmate of the Home. The Board of Trustees missed thereafter the helpful counsel of a practical mind, and the whole community lost the silent influence of a correct life.

Dr. T. J. Dupree, then of Noxubee County, Miss., was chosen to succeed him. As he did not reside in the Home, Dr. Sid Kennedy, of Lauderdale County, was appointed to act in his absence. The former made us frequent and extended visits; the latter came out almost daily and besides

caring for the sick he took charge of contributions, correspondence, etc. During the incumbency of Dr. Dupree a large brick building of three stories was erected at very small cost. The bricks were all made by the boys of the Home, and enough of them were sold to almost, if not entirely, pay the bills of the brick masons. Much of the lumber used was generously contributed by the mills on the Mobile and Ohio railroad, below Lauderdale station.

In January, 1873, Rev. A. D. Trimble, of Tennessee, who had conducted the concerts, was put in charge of the Home. After him came Captain Tower, for a short time. He was succeeded by Rev. R. N. Hall, of Raymond, Miss. The established routine of work, including the publication of the Orphans' Home Banner was kept up during the incumbency of all the Superintendents. Rev. R. N. Hall also built and operated a grist mill, which added materially to the support of the institution, besides training some of the boys in a profitable industry.

In addition to the usual religious services he preached regularly in the chapel, and in the course of time organized a Baptist church there. He was the last Superintendent, his administration continuing to the close of the Home, which resulted from natural causes in the course of a few years. The purpose for which the Home had been projected (that of caring for and training helpless orphans of Confederate soldiers) had been achieved. For several years there had been but few applicants. There were few, if any really helpless Confederate orphans left. In fact, after a few years had passed and the condition of the country had improved mothers and friends of the children became able to provide for them either in their own homes or to procure positions where they could make a comfortable support, preserve a spirit of independence and contribute something to the public weal. A few of the girls, about four or six, by consent of the trustees married and thereby secured comfortable homes.

Thus they left from time to time, till about 1878 the remaining ones were easily provided for in the outside world. As the Home had done its special work and there was no opening then for a change in its purpose, the property was sold to a private party. Several years afterwards the large brick building was burned.

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