

REPORT  
OF THE  
JOINT COMMITTEE  
OF THE  
SEVENTEENTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY  
OF THE  
STATE OF IOWA,  
APPOINTED TO VISIT THE  
Institution for Deaf and Dumb.  
LOCATED AT  
COUNCIL BLUFFS.

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DES MOINES:  
R. P. CLARKSON, STATE PRINTER.  
1873

## REPORT.

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*To the General Assembly of the State of Iowa:*

Your committee, to visit and report upon the condition of the Institution for the Deaf and Dumb at Council Bluffs, respectfully report their action and conclusions as follows:

We have visited the institution and made such examination as we thought to be necessary to determine its condition, character of management, and requirements for support.

As to the property and its condition we report:

The amount of land belonging to the State is ninety acres, consisting mostly of flat land of good quality, lying at the point on the south side of and where the Musquito Creek reaches the Missouri bottom. A considerable portion of this is subject to frequent overflow by the rising of the creek. About one half of it is under cultivation for ordinary purposes. A portion is growing up in willow brush and a part is in meadow. Trees and small fruits have been planted on a portion, and are apparently doing well. The whole tract is well fenced, the cost of which, for reasons stated, has been large. The high ground available for building purposes is limited to the point of a small bluff, and the hollow between it and the main bluff at a little distance away. To provide a site for the building the point of the small bluff has been cut down to the extent of thirty feet at the point where the rear of the main building is placed. The earth has been carried forward and to the right and left of the bluff, forming a flat surface of about sixteen thousand square feet. This is elevated about twenty feet above the level of the bottom land. Upon this plateau, transversely to the line of the bluff and fronting to the north, the principal building has been erected. The main portion, some eighty feet wide, is placed upon the well compacted soil of the bluff. The wings reaching out on either side one hundred feet, are placed upon a soil varying in its degree of compactness, the west end resting upon the plain at the foot of the original bluff, and being supported by a wall nearly thirty feet high.

Former reports by the Trustees and Superintendent, show the erection, condition and destruction of the main building and east wing. The ruins still stand, the walls in many places appearing in good condition,

but on the whole a source of danger to the inmates of the school. For this reason, the manifestly insecure portion of the walls might, and should have been taken down long since.

The west wing constructed, as shown by the reports of the Trustees, during the last season, is about fifty by one hundred feet, and four stories high. We judge it to be very fairly planned and tolerably well built and finished. On this point we are not experts, and cannot speak with confidence. The great defect in the building, is the settling of the west end, arising from the causes stated above. It has now settled about four inches—one and one-fourth inches since August last. The effects upon the security of the building do not, to us, seem serious. It may likely continue to settle somewhat, though the very wide footings which the architect caused to be given to the walls, seem to be sufficient to prevent any extensive movement. The building throughout is provided with gas and water, pipes and fixtures; but we found no provision whatever, for the extinguishment of fires by the use of hose or otherwise. The gas fixtures are now thought to be safe, and the only source of damage from fire is the kitchen, where all seems to be well arranged for safety. This building contains the dormitories for girls, school-rooms, dining-room, and in general all the rooms used by the inmates, except the rooms in the shop building, used as dormitories for boys, and a school-room. In the rear of the main building, and about eight rods distant, is the basement of the boiler house and laundry, as stated in Trustees' report. The boilers are of large size, and are reported to be efficient to heat the building, using one at a time. Things here seem to be in good order and well cared for. Farther away to the left is the gas-house, which we presume is well managed. To the left, and rear of the east wing, in the hollow between the main bluff and the building, is a two story brick building built for shops, and now used as a dormitory for boys in the second story; school-room below in one end, and in the other laundry and some mechanical appliances. Attached to this is a boiler and coal house, containing a large boiler and small engine. This boiler supplies the steam for use of laundry, heat for the school-room and dormitories, and steam for the engine which is used to force water to a reservoir of about one thousand and six hundred barrels capacity, situated at the top of the main bluff, about forty rods distant and higher than the buildings. The pumping apparatus is not of sufficient power for economical work. The laundry department seemed well conducted; the engine and boiler-room rather the contrary.

The school rooms and boys' dormitories are rather hard looking places, and it is evident that no very vigorous efforts have been put forth to improve them. This should be otherwise at once. Up the hollow a little is a long wooden two story building, where the boys are employed in cabinet making, shoe making and mending, making brooms, mattresses and mats. They were working with earnestness and exhibited good proficiency. The cabinet shop was in bad condition as to good order; the others very good. Still farther up is the barn and yard for stock. We can not commend the appearance of things here. The cattle are not in good condition; the horses have better care. At the rear of the plateau is a cottage which is used by the teachers. It is not an elegant building, but sufficient for its uses. The water for the reservoirs is taken from Musquito creek, at a point about half a mile away. Just where the pipe reaches the creek, and on the opposite side, a slaughter house has been erected. A sluice has been formed to carry the filth of the establishment into the creek below the pipe. This is said to be effectual in keeping the water pure, but the pipe should be relaid so as to take the water from a point further up the stream, thereby securing also a shorter distance. The State does not now own the creek at the proper point to reach the water. A good well in the rear of the building furnishes the water for culinary purposes. The whole property is very important in its value and adaptation to use. The reports before the assembly and the answers of the superintendent to the questions required to be asked of him, and submitted herewith, give more full information as to the kinds and value of the personal property.

As to the management of the institution we have to report that we see no ground to except to the conclusions reached by the superintendent in relation to the school and the success attained in the school department. Our impressions are that the teachers are faithful to the work assigned them—that they are competent for their duties and sufficiently enthusiastic. The students evince a proficiency we did not expect to see. The instruction in articulation is effective, and its importance warrants all that the report claims.

Upon the other matters of administration involving economy of financial management and the proper care of the pupils and the observance of the proper rules in the expenditure of money and in the use of the property for the use of the pupils and teachers and other employes with due regard to their relative rights, we speak with reluctant frankness after considerable reflection and with considerate regard to all parties interested.

The accounts of the institution are no doubt properly kept and true statements made. We do not suggest that in any management of the affairs of the institution there has been peculation. On the contrary we are pleased to be able to say that we believe the trust has been honestly administered.

But we must say that we cannot commend the general management of the business and the conduct of the affairs of the institution as economical. This judgment is made up from results apparent to us, and from an examination of the various reports made to this and the past General Assemblies. It is not necessary for us to attempt to place responsibility upon any person except so far as a statement of the facts may have that effect. In fact, we think perhaps the present condition of affairs is the result of many mistakes by different persons in the adoption of plans and modes of management.

The State requires the education of its unfortunates of this class, numbering from one hundred and two now in attendance, to one hundred and fifty-eight, the number present at the time of the fire in 1877, for nine months of the year in the ordinary branches of education, in domestic and farm labor, and in industrial pursuits, and it also requires that the pupils have board, washing, and lodging provided during such portion of the year. To do this the State furnishes the use of the land, buildings, and personal property. The pupil is required to bestow the avails of his labor and the State pays the balance in cash. At the present attendance, the State pays just one dollar per day in cash for each pupil, and with an attendance of one hundred and fifty-eight, the payment is reduced to eighty five cents. On page eighteen of his report, the Superintendent claims exceptional good management on account of the abnormal condition of the school after the fire. The fact is that less was done for the pupils, and the character of the expenditures is not in the main changed. He has, perhaps, disbursed the sum of three thousand dollars in the nature of an investment more than for the preceding two years.

During the two years he actually disbursed \$65,783.44; being per month, \$2,741; and per day, \$90.00, during the entire term.

He itemizes these disbursements as follows:

For groceries and provisions.....	\$15,066.13
For furniture.....	3,806.31
For dry goods and clothing.....	1,003.40
For fuel and lights.....	5,595.81
For salaries and wages.....	29,178.69

For materials and tools for shop.....	\$ 1,793.07
For farm, garden and stock.....	2,162.06
For repairs and improvements.....	4,560.16
Miscellaneous items.....	2,617.81

The itemized statement of articles, groceries and provisions, shows that the prices of staples are high, compared with prices in other portions of the state. This is no doubt the fact. The disbursements for material for shops, dry goods, and clothing, have been in a large part reimbursed in various ways. The furniture and repairs and improvements are mostly an investment to replace property burned and washed away, and to prevent further waste. It is safe to say that all repairs about the premises were needed. The miscellaneous items are suggestive of a full treasury, but in the main we have no basis of criticism. The interest and discount, \$285.33, no doubt was occasioned by the want of funds in the treasury, but we suggest whether any person holding the average balances, shown by the reports, ought to pay or would pay interest in excess of that drawn by the warrants.

The leading items—provisions, fuel and lights—salaries and wages, denote an aggregate, absolutely consumed, of .....	\$49,840.63
Add to this such portion of the other expenditures as is essentially of the same character, say.....	5,000.00
And we have.....	\$54,840.63
Leaving .....	10,942.81

Applied in repairs and added to the property of the institution.

Referring to the answers to the questions made by the Superintendent, and returned as a part of this report, we see that in addition to the amount disbursed in salaries and wages—the Superintendent, his family, teachers and employes have been furnished with board, and that as we learn includes washing, rooms, heat and fuel, to the number of thirty-four; the fair price of this should be added to the salaries and wages. It is probable that the force of employes is reduced somewhat during the summer—but as the salaries are classed as per annum salaries, it is fair to say that on the average twenty-five persons are so maintained at the fair absolute cost of one hundred dollars each per annum, and the sum of five thousand dollars must be added. Going on with the investigation, it will be seen that the Institution keeps a carriage and a spring wagon, and a farm wagon. Referring to the reports of former years, it will be seen that this carriage has been a source of very great expense. Each report shows numerous items of various kind, very evidently made necessary by the maintenance of the teach-

ers and employes, and we must add as the fair value of these perquisites, one thousand dollars.

The administration then has cost an aggregate of.....	\$35,168.69
Out of a total disbursement of.....	65,783.44

This does not include \$470.52, classed as trustees' expenses, nor sundry traveling expenses of the Superintendent. The fact then, is, that seven-thirteenths of the whole sum goes for the expenses of administrative teaching and labor. We leave the figures to speak the story of inflated compensation for inefficient administration.

On the question of fuel and lights, we state that no attention whatever has been paid to economy. Three men are now constantly employed to light and heat the building and pump the water, and this not including the delivery of the coal at the boiler house. We suppose that the gas was not used from the time of the fire to the completion of the new building. If this is so, it costs \$1,700 per annum for light, and if it is not, it is at least \$1,350. Either sum is too large. The prudent, economical manager would close the works and put in use some substitute. The argument of safety is good only when it is shown that a safe system of lights may not be adopted. The state has lost one building by a gas jet, and not one of a hundred of the pupils ever used gas for lights before arriving at the school.

As to fuel, the extraordinary consumption is the result of setting up two sets of boilers, when one is ample. It should be changed at once, so that one boiler should do the work. It is conclusive evidence of inefficiency that this enormous expenditure is permitted to go on.

We do not like the task of pointing out these defects, and in general we will say that the administration outside the house and school-rooms, is not as successful as might be desired. The farming, for various reasons, does not seem to pay. This, we think, the reports show.

The great difficulty is, that the solid money of the State pays the bills, and the very natural dependence upon that stands squarely in the way of a better system of management and the practice of a rigid economy. The appropriations have been too lavish, and the direct effect is to make the offices and employments of the institution sinecures. Hence, instead of a system by which the services of a score of domestics and laborers are substituted by the pupils, the laborers are employed. What these children require is intelligent direction in practical affairs. They have brain and muscle, and should be independent of any large amount of assistance in the household affairs. We do

not lose sight of the fact that they are engaged in various industries. In our opinion, the first and most important labors, are those pertaining to the household and farm.

The truth seems obvious with a change in that respect should come another, and that is the practical recognition that the school is for the deaf and dumb inmates and not chiefly for the teachers, superintendents, stewards and other employes. They should be accorded a more reasonable share of the room provided in the building. They should be, if any one is, surrounded by pleasant sights. They should have as good things as are afforded to any one else at the expense of the state. This they by no means now enjoy. We do not claim neglect or unkindness, but the disparity is obvious in many respects. It ought not to exist. It is possible that between the two classes a measure of equal rights might be found.

Again, the compensation of teachers and employes is too large compared with former years and the present condition of affairs. We have said we think the teachers are faithful, but they are not overworked, and adding their pay to the perquisites they are paid more than they should receive.

It is said as to the teachers, that they are specialists and can command large salaries. They are made so by the institution, and by a wise management the ranks may be continually filled. The permanence of the position is an equivalent for a large salary. The State is full of teachers of capacity equal to any position in this school, and a wise foresight will provide for the future, and protect against the continued demand for increase of salaries by long time contracts with competent persons. Again, the teachers want the places just as much as the State needs them, and it is the poorest evidence of good management, that the pay of teachers is materially above the pay of other teachers all over the State. The difficulty as to the pay commences with the Superintendents whose pay is estimated at \$2,150 per annum. This brings us to the question, what are the real wants of the institution at the hands of this General Assembly?

It has become evident that, in our opinion, the force of superintendents and employes might be very largely reduced. We may safely say that in case the number of pupils is not increased, two teachers may be spared. Add to this a proper reduction of salaries, and, in our judgment, \$160.00 per annum for each pupil who is in attendance for nine months is a sufficient amount for all ordinary disbursements. The experience of other State institutions corroborates this view. In re-

gard to the capacity of buildings, it is our opinion that, by a proper management, a large number, and perhaps the whole number of one hundred and fifty-eight pupils may be provided for in a manner reasonably satisfactory.

The absolute necessity for the erection of new buildings just at this time does not, in our opinion exist; but a sufficient appropriation should be made to preserve those already there. More room is desirable, but not indispensable. The shop should be fitted up somewhat at a small expense. The heating and pumping apparatus should be consolidated, and this would require probably the completion of the boiler house as projected. The cost of this we cannot determine, but probably an extra appropriation of \$5,000.00 will be adequate for all purposes, except the special appropriation as to buildings partially destroyed. This reduction of appropriations will require a management of a fully economical character, and one which will rather increase than diminish the benefits of the institution.

As to the special appropriations for losses of contractors and for deficiency asked for by the Trustees in their report, we express no opinion, the facts being fully before the Assembly in the report.

H. C. HEMENWAY,  
*Of the Senate.*

JOHN H. KING,  
ERNST MUELLER.  
*On the part of the House.*

## QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS.

Questions and answers in response to concurrent resolution of Seventeenth General Assembly.

Question No. 1. What were the total receipts of your institution during last biennial period?

A. Building and improvements.....	\$ 40,371.45
Administration.....	62,820.99
Total.....	\$103,192.44

Q. 2. From what sources were they obtained?

A. State, Territory of Dakota, pupils, board, sales from farm and shops, and sales of sundries.

Q. 3. What amount of appropriations by the State?

A. Building, &c.....	\$40,371.45
Administration.....	59,117.98
Total.....	\$99,489.43

Q. 4. What amount from any and all other sources?

A. \$3,703.01.

Q. 5. What number of acres belong to the institution?

A. Ninety acres, cut by road and creek.

Q. 6. How many acres of same are under cultivation?

A. Thirty-five, and forty in pasture.

Q. 7. What kind of produce was raised? What its quantity? What its value?

A. Corn, hay, potatoes and garden vegetables. Quantity and value unknown.

Q. 8. What kinds of stock are kept on the premises? How many of each and every kind?

A. Horses, cattle and swine. See below 9, 10 and 12.

Q. 9. State the number of horses, and their value.

A. Four horses; value, \$350.00.

Q. 10. State number of cattle, and their kind; also, the value of each; number of milch cows, and their product.

A. One bull, twelve cows, three heifers; \$450.00.

Q. 11. Number of vehicles; their kind, and value of each.

- A. Carriage, \$400.00; spring wagon, \$125.00; farm wagon, \$80.00.
- Q. 12. Number of hogs, and their value.
- A. Sixteen, large and small; \$125 00.
- Q. 13. What farm machinery, and its value?
- A. One mower, \$80.00; one cultivator, \$20.00; two plows, \$30.00; harrow, \$10.00—\$140.00.
- Q. 14. State all other articles or items not herein mentioned from which the institution does or should derive a revenue or benefit?
- A. None.
- Q. 15. What amount of stock has been slaughtered and consumed by the institution, and what its value?
- A. Six or eight calves; \$50.00 or \$60.00.
- Q. 16. What the kind of stock sold? What is the value of same?
- A. Three horses, \$165.00; five calves, \$32.50; swine and pork, \$316.58.
- Q. 17. What produce; the amount and value of same raised on farm and consumed by the institution?
- A. Unknown as to quantity and value.
- Q. 18. What produce, what amount, and what the value thereof sold by the institution?
- A. Eighty quarts of milk; \$4.00.
- Q. 19. What amount of labor is let by contract, and what are the proceeds therefor?
- A. None.
- Q. 20. What amount of labor is employed by the institution; for what purpose and what its value?
- A. See below, forty.
- Q. 21. Have you any surplus labor; if so, in what way could it be utilized?
- A. None.
- Q. 22. What amount has been derived from labor performed by the inmates outside of the institution, and not otherwise accounted for?
- A. None.
- Q. 23. What amount of waste from table and kitchen; how is it disposed of, and what its value?
- A. Quantity and value unknown. Fed to swine.
- Q. 24. Is such waste sold, and how much is derived therefrom?
- A. No; none.
- Q. 25. How are boxes, barrels, sacks and old garments disposed of?
- A. Boxes burned or used in house; barrels sold; sacks used in house. Old garments, none.

- Q. 26. If sold, for what amount?
- A. \$52.99, including old metal.
- Q. 27. How is the clothing of inmates obtained; is it made in the institution?
- A. Supplied by parents, mostly; some shoes made here, and some dresses and underclothing.
- Q. 28. If not made in the institution, is it practicable to do so?
- A. No further than at present.
- Q. 29. What school facilities and what moral and religious training is afforded?
- A. Four and one-half hours daily, and study hour in evening. Chapel service every morning. Religious lectures twice each Sabbath.
- Q. 30. What was the number of inmates at the close of the last biennial period?
- A. 151 before the fire; 68 at the end of the term; September 30, 1877, none, building not being ready.
- Q. 31. What is the capacity of the institution?
- A. If crowded full, about 120.
- Q. 35. What amount of tuition is paid by students?
- A. None.
- Q. 36, 37, 38. State number and names of officers of the institution; the salary of each per month; the services rendered and time employed by each?
- A. B. Talbot, Superintendent, \$125.00 and board. General superintendence and keeping of the accounts.
- E. Southwick, teacher, \$62.50 and board. Average six hours a day. Teaching and supervision.
- C. S. Zorbaugh, teacher, \$79.20 and house rent. Average six hours a day. Teaching and supervision.
- Miss E. J. Israel, teacher, \$45.83 and board. Average six hours a day. Teaching and supervision.
- Miss E. A. Brown, teacher, \$41.66 and board. Average six hours a day. Teaching and supervision.
- J. A. Gillespie, teacher, \$72.50 and board. Average seven hours a day. Teaching and supervision.
- J. A. Kennedy, teacher, \$79.20. Average six hours a day. Teaching and supervision.
- Mr. H. R. Gillespie, teacher, \$37.50 and board. Average six hours a day. Teaching and supervision.
- H. W. Hart, Physician, \$29.20. Attendance on sick and surgery.
- N. A. Taylor, Steward, \$58.33 and board. Makes all purchases, care of farm and supervision of boys.

Miss. S. E. Wright, Matron, 41.66 and board. Domestic department, kitchen and laundry.

Mrs. E. Willard, \$33.33 and board. Care of girls, linen room and chamber work.

Miss M. S. Coe, dressmaker, \$25.00 and board. Teaches girls, and Superintendent sewing.

W. W. Douglass, cabinet-maker, \$55.00. Superintendent of shop and works at trade. Nine hours.

A. Heinze, shoe-maker, \$40.00 and board. Superintendent of shop and works at trade. Nine hours.

C. H. W. Brown, upholsterer and broom-maker, \$55.00. Superintendent of shop and works at trade. Nine hours.

Q. 39. Give the number and names of guards, their salaries, and length of time employed?

A. None.

Q. 40. Give number and names of employes of all kinds not before enumerated; describe their service and length of time employed, and what amount paid to each person?

A. Jacob Norin, heating engineer, eleven hours a day. \$45.00 a month.

F. L. Norin, gas-maker, ten hours a day. \$30.00 and board.

J. A. Norin, teamster, nine hours a day. \$20.00 and board.

P. West, watchman, thirteen hours a day. \$25.00 and board.

R. H. Fox, pumping engineer, sixteen hours a day. \$55.00 a month.

D. F. Morgan, care of stock, ten hours a day. \$15.00 and board.

Christine Christenson, chamber-maid, nine hours a day. \$3.00 a week and board.

Betsy Eckerson, chamber-maid, nine hours a day. \$3.00 a week and board.

Fanny Grate, washer-woman, nine hours a day. \$4.00 a week and board.

Laura Holst, washer-woman, nine hours a day. \$4.00 a week and board.

Lelma Akens, washer-woman, nine hours a day. \$4.00 a week and board.

Amelia Stephan, ironer, nine hours a day. \$4.00 a week and board.

Millie Joyce, dining-room, nine hours a day. \$3.50 a week and board.

Rebecca Martin, dining-room, nine hours a day. \$3.50 a week and board.

Ruth Springston, dining-room, nine hours a day. \$3.50 a week and board.

Nellie Callahan, cook, thirteen hours a day. \$5.00 a week and board.

Kate Harrington, cook, twelve hours a day. \$4.00 a week and board.

Johanna Devine, kitchen girl, thirteen hours a day. \$3.00 a week and board.

Julian Hank, scullion, ten hours a day. \$10.00 a month and board.

Mrs. Julia Taylor, nurse and seamstress, ten hours a day. \$20.00 a month and board.

Q. 41. What amount has been expended for furniture, beds and bedding during the past two years, and what is the quality of the same?

A. \$3,806.31. Fair to good.

Q. 42. What officers, employes or members of either families or other persons, not inmates of the institution, board or dwell therein, and for what length of time has each person done so?

A. B. Talbot, wife and four children, continuously; E. Southwick, (wife pays board, temporarily absent); N. A. Taylor, (child pays board.)

Q. 43. Have you vouchers for all your disbursements?

A. Have vouchers since October 1, 1877. All previous to that time returned to Governor, as required by law.

Q. 44. What amount of funds are now on hand?

A. About \$1,100.00

Q. 45. How and where are your supplies purchased?

A. Groceries, &c., in Council Bluffs; coal at Des Moines.

Q. 46. What kind and what amount of fuel has been used?

A. In 1875-6, two hundred and forty-two and one-fourth tons hard coal, \$3,251.65; in two years, seven hundred and sixty eight and two-fifth tons soft coal, \$3,451.44.

Q. 47. How are your buildings lighted, and what has been expended for that purpose?

A. Mostly by gas. Expense for light, \$1,704.87 in two years.

Q. 48. What are the real necessities of this institution for this biennial period?

A. See report of Trustees.

Q. 49. What is the wholesale purchase price paid per sheet for writing paper, pencils and other stationery?

A. Four and sixteen one hundredth mills per sheet for note paper; three cents each for pencils; envelopes, \$3.50 per thousand.

Q. 50. What is the price at which each of said articles are sold for at retail to the students, and how are the proceeds of such sales disposed of?

A. Not retailed; furnished free.

Q. 51. State the total amount paid for stationery during the two years now past, and the total amount derived from the sales thereof?

A. \$87.95 paid; none sold.

BENJ. TALBOT, *Superintendent.*



STATE OF IOWA, }  
Pottawattamie County. }

I, Benjamin Talbot, Superintendent Institution for the Deaf and Dumb, at Council Bluffs, being duly sworn, do depose and say that the foregoing answers are true and correct, and made with a personal knowledge of the facts elicited. All of which is true, in substance and in fact, so help me God.

BENJ. TALBOT, *Supt.*

Subscribed and sworn to before me, and in my presence, by Benjamin Talbot, Superintendent Institution for the Deaf and Dumb, at Council Bluffs.

Witness my hand:

JOHN H. KING,

*Member Committee, House Representatives.*

# THIRTEENTH BIENNIAL REPORT

OF THE

## Iowa College for the Blind,

LOCATED AT VINTON, BENTON COUNTY,

TO THE

### SEVENTEENTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY,

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NOVEMBER, 1877.

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DES MOINES:  
R. P. CLARKSON, STATE PRINTER,  
1877.