

Historic Campus Cornerstone Discovered In Local Yard

Chapel Bell Dating To 1887 Also Available

A cornerstone in honor of the person who gave an initial grant of house and land for this campus has been discovered in the front yard of a local home. The sandstone block, neglected and green from lying on the wet ground, commemorates the gift of Thomas F. Hargis to the Morehead Normal School, which preceded the establishment of a state institution here.

The engraving on the stone, made legible after much scraping and brushing, reads, "In honor of Thomas F. Hargis, Giver of the first house; also the Grounds." The relic was evidently a cornerstone for one of the earliest buildings on this site.

Another interesting relic of the old Normal School is a chapel bell now in possession of Jesse Mays, head of the industrial arts department. According to Mr. Mays, this bell hung in the school's chapel building as long ago as 1887.

The cornerstone was brought to the attention of the Trail Blazer by Mrs. Ruby Fowler, wife of history professor Nolan Fowler. She noticed the stone, examined it, and later identified Hargis by means of a history book. The book refers to Hargis as the "first man to donate acreage for an educational institution" in Morehead.

Mrs. Fowler suggested that the stone be relocated on the campus as an object of historical interest. Mr. Mays indicated that he would be in favor of having the marker and the bell worked into a monument to be placed in a prominent place on the campus.

The historic cornerstone now lies on the front lawn of the Fifth Avenue residence of J. B. Calvert. Other yards in the neighborhood have similar, unmarked stones, possibly obtained from the foundation of the building when it was razed.

Mr. Calvert said he once wrote to the Alumni Association of the Normal School asking if it wanted the marker, but received no



Trail Blazer reporter Phyllis Ernst scrapes historic cornerstone to reveal inscription which reads, "In honor of Thomas F. Hargis, Giver of the first house; also the Grounds."

reply. "I have no use for it," he said, "and I would be happy to have it returned to the campus." He said he can faintly remember a Normal School building which stood where the Johnson Camden Library is now located.

The only Normal School building which is still extant is a frame dormitory, which was moved to its present location on College Street facing the campus. The house now belongs to the family of Mary Caroline Gevedon, a student here at the present time.

The Morehead Normal School was established in 1887 and supported for 13 years by the Kentucky Christian Missionary Society. In 1900 it passed into the control of the Christian Woman's Board of Missions. By 1922, when the property was deeded to the Commonwealth of Kentucky for the establishment of a state college, the buildings consisted of two dormitories, a school room building, and a chapel.