THE PUBLIC LIFE OF
SILAS M. CLARK
PATRICIA JANE BERRINGER

Preface

"The Public Life of Silas M. Clark" is an attempt to describe one man's role in forming the Indiana State Normal School, his contributions after the school was established, and his public life in Indiana, Pennsylvania. Very few people in Indiana know who Silas Clark was, and they know almost nothing of his accomplishments. It seems interesting that a man who devoted so much of his time to the people of Indiana could be forgotten so easily. It would seem that some recognition should be given to Silas Clark, especially in the year of Indiana University of Pennsylvania's centennial. It is regrettable that none of Clark's personal papers have been saved through the years to reveal the personality of the man.

Silas M. Clark

Silas Moorhead Clark was a very prominent member of Indiana's citizenry in the second half of the nineteenth century. He devoted much of his life to serving the people of Indiana and Pennsylvania as a teacher, newspaperman, lawyer, school-board member, normal-school trustee and president, and associate justice of the Supreme Court of Pennsylvania. Clark was instrumental in organizing the Indiana State Normal School (today Indiana University), and even after its establishment he showed continued interest in the running of the school. He was one of the original members of the board of trustees—first acting as its secretary for five years and then as its president for almost fifteen years.

Silas Clark was born January 18, 1834, at Elderton in Armstrong County. In 1835 his parents, James and Ann Moorhead Clark, moved to Indiana, where his father had a tannery for almost thirty-seven years. Silas had one sister, Sarah, and four brothers: William,

Ms Berringer received both her B.S.Ed. in math and an M.A. in history from Indiana University of Pennsylvania.—Editor

1 Indiana County Gazette, Nov. 25, 1891.
2 Indiana Times, Oct. 7, 1891.
Fergus Scott, James, and Woodward. His maternal grandfather, Fergus Moorhead, was one of the first settlers of Indiana County and was instrumental in building the Moorhead Blockhouse.

He received his early schooling at Indiana Academy, located on what is presently the triangular shaped lot at South Sixth Street and Wayne Avenue. At the age of sixteen he went to Jefferson College in Canonsburg and entered the junior class. He graduated in 1852 and was fifth in a class of sixty students. Clark had his first contact with teaching after his graduation from Jefferson College when he took charge of the winter session of 1853 at his old alma mater, Indiana Academy. He continued teaching at the academy through the summer session of 1855. During the winter session of 1855 he taught under the supervision of Rev. Andrew McElwain, principal. At the close of the winter session in 1856 Silas left the academy to complete his professional studies in law.

In 1854 he had entered the law office of William M. Stewart and began to study with him. After he quit teaching in 1856, he devoted full time to his studies, gaining admission to the bar to practice law in Indiana County in September 1857. Clark then formed a partnership with Stewart which lasted until 1873, when Stewart moved to Philadelphia. During his career as an attorney in Indiana, Clark acted as attorney for the First National Bank of Indiana. In 1879 he was elected president of the bank, a position he held until 1882.

Although the majority of the registered voters in the Indiana County area were Republicans, Clark was a Democrat all his life. In the 1850s he started the Indiana Messenger, a Democratic paper, with Joseph M. Thompson and Colonel John F. Young. In the 1856 presidential election the paper was a staunch supporter of James Buchanan. Clark sold his interest in the paper in 1857 so that he could devote more of his time to his law practice.

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3 J. T. Stewart, *Indiana County Pennsylvania: Her People, Past and Present*, 2 vols. (Chicago, 1913), I: 218. The Indiana Academy was incorporated by an act of the legislature approved Mar. 28, 1814. A stone structure was completed in 1816, and the academy was opened on June 1, 1818. A brick structure replaced the old stone structure in 1846. The academy was closed in 1862 (1857 according to Paul Robert Getts, “A History of Education in Indiana, Pennsylvania” [D.Ed. diss., Pennsylvania State University, 1965], 29).
4 *Indiana County Gazette*, Nov. 25, 1891.
5 Getts, 28, 29. Getts obtained his information from the 1854-56 issues of the *Indiana Messenger*, which I was unable to locate.
6 *Indiana County Gazette*, Nov. 25, 1891.
7 Stewart, 1: 388.
8 *Indiana Progress*, Nov. 25, 1891.
At the Fourth of July Democratic County Convention in 1862, Clark was selected chairman of the county committee and was one of the three Democrats picked to meet with the conferees of Armstrong County.\(^9\) Until 1870 Clark was content to merely serve the party and never ran for public office outside the borough. In 1870 he ran for resident judge of the Tenth Judicial District comprised of Armstrong, Indiana, and Westmoreland counties. He lost to James A. Logan of Greensburg, solicitor of the Pennsylvania Railroad, by only 400 votes.\(^10\)

Clark's second try for public office outside the borough was in 1872, when he was elected to represent the Twenty-fourth Senatorial District, composed of Indiana and Westmoreland counties, at the Pennsylvania State Constitutional Convention.\(^11\) While attending the convention he served on three committees: 1) Declaration of Rights, 2) Revision and Adjustment, and 3) Private Corporations, Foreign and Domestic, other than Railroads, Canals, and Religious and Charitable Corporations and Societies.\(^12\) On behalf of the citizens of Indiana and Westmoreland counties he presented petitions requesting a clause in the constitution recognizing the sovereignty of God and the Christian religion.\(^13\) He also supported an amendment to prohibit the sale of intoxicating liquors as a beverage.\(^14\)

Silas Clark had a great interest in education in Indiana County. On June 11, 1869, he became one of the new members of the board of directors of the public schools in the borough of Indiana, serving on the committee on repairs. In June 1872 he was elected secretary of the school board and held this position until June 5, 1878. (He received $150 in May 1875 at $25 a year for being secretary for six years.) While serving on the school board he was active in recommending people to be considered for teaching positions. In 1871 and 1872 he proposed a tax of fifteen mills on the valuation to be assessed for school purposes. The motion was carried both times.\(^15\) On May 7,

\(^{9}\) *Indiana Democrat*, July 10, 1862.

\(^{10}\) Samuel T. Wiley, *Biographical and Historical Cyclopedia of Indiana and Armstrong Counties* (Phila., 1891), 85.

\(^{11}\) A. D. Harlan, *Pennsylvania Constitutional Convention, 1872 and 1873: Its Members and Officers and the Result of Their Labors* (Phila., 1873), 44.

\(^{12}\) *Indiana Democrat*, Nov. 26, 1891.


\(^{14}\) Ibid., 2: 213.

1872, at a convention of the school directors of Indiana County he was chosen president, and John Hill and Daniel Ramey were chosen as secretaries.\(^\text{16}\)

In August and September of 1870 several meetings of people interested in establishing a normal school at Indiana for the Ninth Normal School District of Pennsylvania were held. Silas Clark's interest in education prompted him to join the normal-school committee which hoped to acquire the funds necessary to build and organize a state normal school for the training of teachers for the common schools. In January 1871, John Sutton, chairman of the normal-school committee, appointed a committee of four men to solicit subscriptions for the school. Silas M. Clark was named chairman over the other three committee members: Peter Sutton, Andrew W. Wilson, and Dr. Thomas St. Clair.\(^\text{17}\) Their job was to solicit the funds necessary to buy land and erect a building. (For a copy of the subscription paper see Appendix A.)

By the January 16 (1871) meeting, Silas Clark reported that $35,200 had been solicited without going outside the two boroughs of Indiana and West Indiana.\(^\text{18}\) Subscriptions ranged from $250 to $5,000. Only John Sutton and Harry White, the state senator, invested $5,000. Silas Clark invested $500.\(^\text{19}\) At this same meeting Clark presented the financial statistics of the normal schools already in operation in Pennsylvania in 1869. His report was to be presented at various communities throughout the county along with a "... full statement of the nature, workings, and advantages of Normal Schools."\(^\text{20}\)

Since Clark's committee had done so well in raising funds, Senator Harry White introduced a bill on January 18, 1871, into the state legislature to incorporate the state normal school for the Ninth District.\(^\text{21}\) (For a copy of the Act to Incorporate the Indiana Normal School of Pennsylvania see Appendix B.) In May 1871 Senator White got an appropriation of $1,500 to aid the normal-school project through the state senate. It still had to pass the state's house of representatives.

For the rest of 1871 no more could be found in the papers concerning the Indiana normal school project. An article in the January

\(^{16}\) *Indiana Democrat*, May 9, 1872.

\(^{17}\) Ibid., Jan. 12, 1871.

\(^{18}\) Ibid., Jan. 19, 1871.

\(^{19}\) Ibid., Feb. 1, 1872.

\(^{20}\) Ibid., Jan. 19, 1871.

\(^{21}\) *Indiana Progress*, Feb. 23, 1871.
County-owned Memorial Hall, Indiana, Pa., erected in 1870 as the home of Silas M. Clark; now headquarters of the Historical Society. Society's Pioneer Log House in background.
18, 1872, edition of the *Indiana Progress* leaves one to believe the project had lapsed — "The Normal School Project is being worked up again with a much better prospect for success than ever before."  

By January 25 the normal school had the necessary subscriptions to become a reality. The *Indiana Democrat* gave much of the credit for this reality to "... the manifest and energetic labors of Silas M. Clark, Esq., John Sutton, Dr. Thomas St. Clair and others ..." The amount which had been raised by Clark's committee was $53,850. Since each stock was to cost $25 according to the Act to Incorporate the Indiana Normal School of Pennsylvania (see Appendix B), the number of votes which could be cast was 2,154.

A meeting of the Normal School Association was set for April 15, 1872, for the purpose of "effecting an organization and electing a Board of Trustees." At that meeting, on a motion by Senator White, John Sutton was selected president and Silas M. Clark was chosen secretary. Nominations were also taken for trustees to be voted on at the May 7 meeting.

At the May 7 meeting of the association 1,974 shares of the total stock subscribed were voting. (This represented a capital of $49,350.) Silas Clark received the most votes (1,958), eight more than John Sutton and over two hundred more than the next highest nominee. On May 13 the newly elected trustees met at the law offices of Stewart and Clark to elect officers of the corporation. Those elected were: John Sutton, president; Samuel M'Cartney, vice-president; Silas M. Clark, secretary; and Adam Row, treasurer.

During the week of May 23 Senator White, Silas Clark, Peter Sutton, and Samuel M'Cartney traveled to the various normal schools in operation to examine their buildings. At the June 11 meeting of the board of trustees the decision was made to purchase the ground offered by John Sutton in West Indiana for the price of $7,000. The twelve acres of land fronted the railroad on the east and the Saltsburg road (presently Route 286) on the west. J. W. Drum was appointed

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22 Ibid., May 11, 1871.
23 Ibid., Jan. 25, 1872.
24 "Minutes of the Board of Trustees," Apr. 3, 1872, p. 2 (hereafter cited as "Trustees Minutes").
25 *Indiana Progress*, Apr. 11, 1872.
26 *Indiana Democrat*, Apr. 18, 1872.
27 Ibid., May 9, 1872.
28 "Trustees Minutes," 5.
29 *Indiana Progress*, May 16, 1872.
30 Ibid., May 23, 1872.
31 *Indiana Democrat*, June 13, 1872.
the architect and superintendent in charge of constructing the building, since he submitted the lowest bid.\textsuperscript{12} The building was finished the last week of January 1875 and accepted from the architects.\textsuperscript{33} In May 1875 the board of trustees applied to J. P. Wickersham, the superintendent of the common schools, to have the building inspected and approved. The committee of inspection filed its report on May 21 and on June 1 the Indiana State Normal School was officially recognized.\textsuperscript{34} (For the complete report of the above see Appendix C.)

Silas Clark served as the secretary of the board of trustees until May 12, 1877, when he declined to serve in that capacity any longer. His successor was William B. Hildebrand. Clark was then elected president of the board due to John Sutton's continued illness.\textsuperscript{35} John Sutton died less than a month later on June 9.\textsuperscript{36} While Clark was secretary of the board in 1875 and 1876, he served on the Instruction and Discipline Committee and on the Finance Committee.\textsuperscript{37} After becoming president of the board in 1877, Clark only served on the Instruction and Discipline Committee.

The other trustees continued to re-elect Clark as president of the board until his death in 1891. In 1881 he also began serving on the Committee on Teachers which was renamed the Committee on the Employment of Teachers, Advertising, and Printing in 1886.\textsuperscript{38}

In 1882 Clark ran for the position of associate justice of the state supreme court on the Democratic ticket. In the election he received a majority of 151 votes over his Republican opponent, while the Republican running for governor received a majority of 2,000 votes over his Democratic opponent, Robert E. Pattison, in the Indiana returns.\textsuperscript{39} Clark was commissioned on December 21, 1882.\textsuperscript{40} In 1902 he would have been chief justice, with his term expiring on January 1, 1904.\textsuperscript{41}

One would think that Clark's absence from the board meetings would be quite high after 1882, because he served the court at Pitts-

\textsuperscript{32} Ibid., July 18, 1872.
\textsuperscript{33} Indiana Progress, Feb. 11, 1875.
\textsuperscript{34} "Indiana State Normal School — Official Documents," Pennsylvania School Journal 24 (July 1875) : 28-29 (hereafter cited as PSJ).
\textsuperscript{35} "Trustees Minutes," 80.
\textsuperscript{36} Catalogue of the State Normal School at Indiana, Indiana County, Pennsylvania, 1877 (Indiana, 1877), 32.
\textsuperscript{37} Ibid., 1876, 4.
\textsuperscript{38} Ibid., 1886, 6.
\textsuperscript{39} Stewart, 1: 678.
\textsuperscript{40} William P. Smull, Smull's Legislative Handbook (Harrisburg, 1885), 377.
\textsuperscript{41} Indiana County Gazette, Nov. 25, 1891.
burgh. However, after going through the minutes of the board of trustees for the years 1882 through 1891, one notices that his greatest period of absence was in January and February. He missed very few meetings during the summer and fall of the year.

Judge Clark's prestige and word of his capacity in distributing justice spread throughout the commonwealth in the years following 1882. In 1886 Lafayette College, located at Easton, Pennsylvania, conferred the honorary degree of doctor of laws (LL.D.) on Silas Clark.42 The death of the Honorable Morrison R. Waite, chief justice of the United States Supreme Court in 1888, found "... leading newspapers of the State, irrespective of party, point[ing] to Judge Clark as a man eminently qualified to fill the exalted position..."

Silas Clark's wife, the former Clara F. Moorhead (whom he married on April 26, 1858), died in 1887.43 They had five children: two boys and three girls. Clark's two sons both held important positions when they grew up. Steel G. held a position with John Wanamaker, one-time postmaster general, in Philadelphia.44 James Wood, a prominent attorney in Indiana, was a member and later secretary of the board of trustees of the Indiana State Normal School which his father helped to organize.45

Silas Moorhead Clark died November 20, 1891. Since 1873 he had been afflicted with diabetes, and for three years before his death he had been plagued with skin disease. Even though he must have suffered in his last few months he did not leave the bench at Pittsburgh to return home until two weeks before his death. The entire school body of the Indiana State Normal School attended Clark's funeral even though many had to stand outside the church, exposed to one of the worst storms to come to Indiana in years. Honorary pallbearers included Governor Robert E. Pattison; chief justice of the Pennsylvania State Supreme Court Edward M. Pavson; Justices James P. Sterrett, Henry W. Williams, James T. Mitchell; attorney general of Pennsylvania William U. Hensell; Judges Harry White, James B. Meale, Lucien W. Doty, Mr. William M. Stewart, and Mr. Andrew W. Wilson.

Part of the eulogy presented at the courthouse in honor of Silas Clark was delivered by Henry Houck, deputy state superintendent of public instruction. He spoke of Clark as "the friend of the common

42 Stewart, 1: 338.
43 Wiley, 85-86.
44 Indiana County Gazette, Nov. 25, 1891.
45 Stewart, 1: 393.
schools" who fought many battles and won many victories for the normal schools of Pennsylvania. The board of trustees of the Indiana State Normal School appointed Harry White, Rev. W. S. Owens, and John P. Elkin to write "a minute of condolence" to be presented to the family and also to be placed permanently in the minutes. (See Appendix D, for the text of this testimony.)

The normal school did not forget Silas M. Clark after his death. In the summer of 1893 a boys' dormitory named Silas M. Clark Hall was built at a cost of $16,000 (exclusive of furniture, fixtures, and heating apparatus). The three-story building, which also housed teachers and the YMCA, was completely destroyed by fire on December 1, 1905. It seems a fitting tribute that this building was rebuilt and later remodeled to serve as the administration building.

Judge Clark's home, which he erected on the site of the old academy building in 1869, still serves the people of Indiana County just as Clark himself did. The Historical and Genealogical Society of Indiana County owns the old house and has its headquarters there. The elevation of the Indiana State Normal School, first to a state teachers college and then to the unique standing of being a state-owned university, stands as a tribute to Clark's efforts in the nineteenth century on behalf of the people of Pennsylvania.

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APPENDIX A

The following is the form of subscription paper which was used in obtaining subscriptions for the Indiana Normal School. The subscribers received four shares of stock for every one-hundred dollars they invested. They were then entitled to one vote for each share of stock they held. The subscriptions were sent to Silas M. Clark, chairman of the committee to solicit subscriptions for the Indiana Normal School Association.

WHEREAS, By an Act of the General Assembly of the State of Pennsylvania, approved 20th May, 1867, [sic] the said State was divided into twelve Normal School Districts, the counties of Cambria, Indiana, Armstrong and Westmoreland constituting the 9th district.

46 Indiana County Gazette, Nov. 25, 1891.  
47 "Trustees Minutes," 380.  
49 Indiana Democrat, Mar. 11, 1869.  
50 Ibid., Feb. 1, 1872.
AND, WHEREAS, It is desired that the State Normal School for the said district should be located at or near Indiana, in Indiana county [sic].

NOW, therefore, in consideration of the premises, we the undersigned, do hereby subscribe the number of shares of stock of [sic] one hundred dollars each, set opposite our names, respectively, to be used and applied under the Act of Assembly for the purposes aforesaid; the said shares of stock to be payable at any time after five hundred shares have been subscribed, and to such person or persons as the subscribers or stockholders shall by vote of a majority of shares designate . . . .

APPENDIX B

The following is Act No. 408 of the Laws of Pennsylvania, 1871 (pp. 454-456). It is the Act to Incorporate the Indiana Normal School of Pennsylvania.51

Section 1. Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania in General Assembly met, and it is hereby enacted by the authority of the same, That John Sutton, Harry White, A. M. Stewart, A. W. Taylor, Wm. M. Stewart, S. M. Clark, A. T. Morehead, Jr., Daniel S. Porter, Dr. Robert Barr, E. H. Wilson, Joseph Adair, John H. Devers, Dr. Thomas St. Clair, A. W. Wilson, David Weamer, R. C. Calhoun, Peter Sutton, W. B. Marshall, A. H. Apple, James Turner, W. R. Black, Noah Lohr, Abraham Moor, A. J. Bolar, John R. Gibson, E. P. Hildebrand, W. K. Allison, Dubrie Thomas, J. L. P. M'Allister, George J. Keller, Robert Young, J. R. Smith, R. M. Brikman, R. M. M'Cherney, A. R. Reeder, T. B. Allison, J. C. Johnson, Samuel Wolf, and such other persons as they may associate with themselves, are hereby created into a body politic and corporate, by the name and style of the Indiana Normal School of Pennsylvania, and by that name and title shall have perpetual succession, be able to sue and be sued, plead and be imploided in all courts of law and equity, and to take, purchase, hold and receive, to them and their successors and assigns, lands, tenements, goods, chattels and sums of money, by gift, devise or otherwise, and the same to mortgage or grant and convey as the said corporation shall deem proper, and to make deeds, conveyances and contracts, to have and use a common seal, under and by which all deeds, contracts and acts of said corporation shall pass and be authenticated, and the same to alter and renew at pleasure, and generally to do all acts, matters and things necessary and proper for the management and well being of the corporation.

Section 2. The object of this corporation shall be the establishment of a Normal school, at or near the borough of Indiana, Pennsylvania, in which shall be taught a course of study consisting of English branches, the natural sciences, the mathematics, ancient and modern languages, civil engineering, metaphysics, music, the science and art of teaching, and such other subjects as shall, with the assent of the board of trustees, be prescribed.

Section 3. The pecuniary affairs of the corporation shall be managed, and the general control, educational and other, exercised by a board of trustees, fifteen in number, who shall be chosen by the stockholders on the first Tuesday in May of each and every year, and continue in office until the next stated meeting after the election of their successors; each stockholder shall be entitled to one vote for every share of stock held by them respectively.

Section 4. The officers of the board shall be a president, vice president and secretary, who shall be members of the board, a treasurer who shall not be a member of the board; these officers shall be elected annually by the trustees, at the first stated meeting after the election of such board; and the trustees shall appoint the professors, teachers and all agents necessary and proper to conduct the said normal school, and for that purpose they may adopt such regulations and bylaws for their government as they may consider salutary and advisable, not inconsistent with this charter and the professors and teachers shall have the care, government and instruction of the students, and with the advice and consent of the trustees, give diplomas and confer degrees.

Section 5. That the capital stock may reach any value that can be lawfully secured, and shall consist of shares of twenty-five dollars each; and the corporation shall have the right to hold, free from taxation, state or municipal, such lots, parcels of town and personal property as may be needful and convenient for buildings and business of the school and residence for the professors; and the trustees shall have power to borrow money, not exceeding fifty per cent of the value of the property of the corporation, and to issue bonds therefore, with or without coupons, which shall be exempt from all taxation, except for state purposes.

JAMES H. WEBB,
Speaker of the House of Representatives.

WILLIAM A. WALLACE,
Speaker of the Senate.

APPROVED—The twenty-fifth day of March, Anno Domini one thousand eight hundred and seventy-one.

JNO. W. GEARY.

APPENDIX C

INDIANA STATE NORMAL SCHOOL.—OFFICIAL DOCUMENTS

APPLICATION.

HON. J. P. WICKERSHAM, Supt. Common Schools.

Sir: We, the subscribers, trustees of a school corporation in the borough of Indiana, in the county of Indiana, respectfully represent that we, as trustees aforesaid, in association with a number of citizens of this state exceeding thirteen, have erected and established a school for the professional training of young men and women as teachers, at the borough of Indiana aforesaid, in the Ninth Normal School District, and desire to have the same inspected by a committee appointed under the "Act of Assembly" approved May 20th, 1857, with the design of having the institution recognized as a State Normal School, under the name and title of the Indiana Normal School of Pennsylvania.

JOHN SUTTON, Pres't.

SILAS M. CLARK, Sec'y.


REPORT.  

INDIANA, May 21st, 1875

WHEREAS, The Indiana Normal School having made formal application to the Department of Common Schools for the appointment of a committee to examine its claims to be recognized as the State Normal School of the Ninth District, according to the provisions of an "Act to provide for the due training of teachers for the Common Schools of the State," approved the 20th day of May, 1857.

And whereas, The undersigned being duly appointed and authorized under said Act, and having personally, and at the same time, on the 21st day of May, 1875, visited and carefully inspected said school, and made a careful examination thereof, of its by-laws, rules and regulations, and its general arrangements and facilities for instruction, and having found them to be substantially such as the law requires, and that the indebtedness of the institution is less than one-third of the present valuation of the property, estimated to be two hundred thousand dollars; therefore

Resolved, That the Indiana Normal School is, in our opinion, entitled to recognition as a State Normal School, with all the privileges and immunities enjoyed by other institutions of like character in the Commonwealth.

[Signed,]
J. M. CAMPBELL, Pres't.
S. M. JACKSON,
J. R. McAFFEE, Committee.

We concur in the above.

A. D. GLENN, Co. Sup't. Armstrong Co.
T. J. CHAPMAN, Co. Sup't. Cambria Co.
H. M. JONES, Co. Sup't. Westmoreland Co.
SAMUEL WOLF, Co. Sup't. Indiana Co.

PROCLAMATION.

COMMONWEALTH OF PENNSYLVANIA,
DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC INSTRUCTION,
HARRISBURG, June 1st, 1875.

WHEREAS, In pursuance of the application to this department of the trustees and contributors to the Indiana Normal School, in association with sundry citizens of this state exceeding thirteen, for the appointment of a committee to examine the claims of a school established by them, to recognition as the State Normal School for the Ninth Normal School District, according to the provisions of "An Act to provide for the due training of teachers for the common schools of the state," approved the 20th day of May, 1857, the following gentlemen were appointed, viz: Hon. A. G. Curtin, Gen. Jacob M. Campbell, Hon. S. M. Jackson and Hon. J. R. McAfee, to act as said committee in conjunction with the State Superintendent of Common Schools: A. D. Glenn, County Superintendent of the county of Armstrong; T. J. Chapman, County Superintendent of the county of Cambria; H. M. Jones, County Superintendent of the county of Westmoreland; Samuel Wolf, County Superintendent of the county of Indiana.

And whereas, All of the committee so appointed, except Hon. A. G. Curtin, after having, on the 21st day of May, 1875, visited and carefully inspected said school, and made a careful examination thereof of its by-laws, rules and regulations, and its general arrangements and facilities for study, reported unanimously that said school is entitled to recognition as a State Normal School, with all the
privileges and immunities enjoyed by other institutions of like character in the commonwealth.

Now, therefore, I, Superintendent of Public Instruction, do hereby give notice, as required by law, that I have recognized the school, established as aforesaid, as the State Normal School of the Ninth District, composed of the counties of Armstrong, Cambria, Westmoreland and Indiana. In testimony whereof I have hereunto set my hand and affixed the seal of the Department of Public Instruction, at Harrisburg, the first day of June, 1875.

J. P. WICKERSHAM,

APPENDIX D

The following is a testimony written by Harry White, W. S. Owens, and John P. Elkin upon the death of Silas M. Clark. It was presented to the Clark family and entered in the minutes of the board of trustees for November 30, 1891.53

The Master of the vineyard has called to his long rest our distinguished jurist and fellow-townsmen Justice Silas M. Clark, president of the Board of Trustees of the Indiana State Normal School. Whilst we bow our heads in humble submission to the inscrutable decree of Him who doeth all things well, yet we desire to place on record this expression of the deep sense of deprivation we feel in his death, and our estimate of those splendid qualities of heart and mind that endeared him to all of us and to the institution he served so long and faithfully.

He was, in a marked manner, gentle, kind, considerate and sympathetic. He not only felt the sorrows of others, but he demonstrated the sincerity of his sympathy by a ready and generous assistance to all forms of want. He was deeply interested in every enterprise that had for its object the upbuilding of the community and bettering the condition of its citizens. He was public spirited. This characteristic naturally drew him into close relationship with the Normal School. From the very beginning he took a front rank among the earnest workers who labored so well for the establishing of an educational institution in this place. From its inception in 1871 until its formal opening in 1875, and since down to the time of his death, he remained as true to its interests as a river to its course. Amid the trials of its early life, when financial storm threatened, and increasing difficulties had to be met on every side, his heart never failed, his will always stood firm and his mind ever ready to devise ways and means to stem the current of adverse surroundings. Being a conspicuous member of the Constitutional Convention he was very active in having the educational interests of the Commonwealth well provided for in that fundamental law. The provision that made the minimum appropriation to the common schools $1,000,000 annually and that other provision that only required a majority vote to pass appropriate to Normal Schools, the wisdom of which has been demonstrated many times, were the subjects of his special care in that convention. As president of the board of trustees we always found him broad and dignified, wise and prudent, courteous yet firm, prompt in taking responsibility when circumstances required it, and vigilant in carrying out any policy inaugurated by the board. No labor was too onerous [sic] for him to perform if the welfare of the school demanded it. His was a labor of love. He served without thought of

53 “Trustees Minutes,” 381-83.
recompense, and gave without expectation of reward, save in the consciousness of helping the coming generation of young men and women who shall grow strong under the influences of the school. He set his ideas for the school high, and directed his best thoughts to the realization of his cherished hopes. He fondly desired to make our Normal School the best institution of its kind in the state, and we believe his desires were gratified. His interest in the graduates and undergraduates never abated. He followed their course with kindly and hopeful suggestions, and was ever ready and willing to secure for them positions of honor and standing in their professions. Scattered throughout Western Pennsylvania are hundreds of young men and women who are ready to rise up and call his name blessed. We feel that in his death, the trustees, the faculty, the graduates and the teachers, and the school have lost their best and wisest friend.

Resolved, That we, as a Board of Trustees of the institution he loved so well, believing we can best serve his memory by perpetuating it hereby pledge our earnest efforts to the furtherance of the aims and ideas of the school to which he devoted many years of his active life and that this testimonial be spread upon the minutes and that a committee of five, of which the vice-president shall be chairman, be appointed to present a copy of this testimonial to the family with the sincerest sympathy of the Board.

(Signed) HARRY WHITE.
W. S. OWENS.
JNO. P. ELKIN.