
ROBERT PATERSON MacGREGOR

—As some of the "Old Timers" of the Maryland School remember him—

The oldest boys and girls in the seventies of the Maryland School will be interested in reading an outline of the activities of their former teacher and friend.

Mr. MacGregor was born in Lockland, a suburb of Cincinnati, Ohio, April 26, 1849. His mother died the day he was born. His father left him with a brother in Dayton, O., and went to Australia in search of gold. He never came back, and his fate is unknown.

Robert, well known as "Mac" lost his hearing at seven years of age from brain fever superinduced by sun-stroke. He was sent to the School for the Deaf in Columbus, O., at twelve years of age and graduated five years later. He worked in a printing office in Dayton, O., a year, and then went to the National College (now Gallaudet College.) He worked his way through College by acting as book agent during vacations; graduating in 1872 with the degree of B. A. In 1892 he received the degree of M. A.

Immediately upon graduating, he was appointed teacher in the Maryland School by the late Mr. C. W. Ely who knew him while he was a pupil in the Ohio School.

In 1875 he went to Cincinnati, O., where he started a Day School for the Deaf, and was appointed its principal which post he occupied six years. Then he was appointed principal of the Colorado School at Colorado Springs in 1882. He remained there only a year and returned to Ohio to take up the position of teacher in the State School at Columbus. Six years later he resigned this position to accept the principalship of the St. Louis day-school, but a year's work there sufficed to convince him that "there is no place like home," so he resigned and returned to Columbus to resume his old position in 1890.

He has always taken an active interest in affairs relating to the welfare of the deaf. He helped to organize the Ohio Deaf Mute Alumni Association, and has

never missed a meeting during the fifty years of its existence. He helped to found a Home for Aged and Infirm Deaf near Columbus, and has been Secretary of the Board of Managers of the Home for many years.

He was the first permanent president of the National Association of the Deaf which he helped to organize in 1880. He has been connected with the deaf-mute press for many years.

For more than fifteen years he was a licensed lay-reader of the Episcopal Church acting as the Assistant of the late Rev. A. W. Mann in Cincinnati, Columbus and St. Louis.

At the unyeiling of the Gallaudet Monument at Gallaudet College in 1889, he was the orator.

In 1912 he attended the World's Congress of the Deaf in Paris as a delegate of the Alumni Association, and toured through Scotland, England, Ireland, Switzerland and Italy visiting the Schools for the Deaf in all those countries.

Miss Hester M. Porter of Cumberland, Md., attended the old Kendall School in Washington, D. C., and at the first opening of the Old Barracks School in 1868, she came to Frederick. Upon graduating, Mr. Ely appointed her teacher in the school. In 1876, Mr. MacGregor married her and took her away. Three daughters were born to them, the oldest one (deaf) graduated from Gallaudet College with the late Rev. E. C. Wyand and George Schaffer of the Maryland School, the second one (hearing) has a nice position in New York State, and the last one (deaf) when about three years old, was run over by a trolley car and killed. Mrs MacGregor died suddenly in 1917.

Mr. MacGregor was always quite popular with the boys of those old days, and on Saturdays we went in the country with him, romping, fishing and gathering bird eggs for his museum.



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An amusing incident occurred shortly after he came to the Maryland School as teacher. One day a prominent citizen of Frederick called on Mr. Ely in his office and said he was sorry to inform him that one

of his teachers was given to drinking too much. Mr. Ely asked him which one, and he said he did not exactly know his name, but it was the new young man, and he described him. Mr. Ely said, "Oh! that is MacGregor. How do you know he drinks?"

The citizen said, "Why every night or two in returning to the school from down town he passes my store staggering." Mr. Ely said, "Oh! that is his natural gait. He is a semi-mute that is one who has lost his hearing by sickness or accident and they all walk more or less crooked especially in the dark."

The citizen said "But Mr. Grow (mentioning an old deaf man he knew,) does not walk that way." Mr. Ely said to the citizen, "The man was born deaf while MacGregor lost his hearing when he was 7 years old" and it took Mr. Ely quite a while to get the citizen to understand why one deaf man wobbled in his gait and another did not.

This coming June Mr. MacGregor will sever his connection with the Ohio School as teacher and retire to quiet life, having rounded up his career of nearly fifty years.

"Well done, thou faithful servant."

A. B. A. J. T.