

The Pelican



Clerc

April, 1966

Administration

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Edward L. Scouten, Principal
Ben Phillips, Assistant Principal
Mrs. Ruth Cason, Secretary

Col. Jimmie Wax, Business Manager
Mrs. Madeline Pourciau, Administrative Assistant
Mrs. Effie Mae Nichols, Stenographer

Academic Education

Preparatory School

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Mrs. Alma Alexander
Mrs. Carol Crain*
Miss Marie Curtis
Mrs. Barbara Kraft*

Miss Carrie Fowler
Mrs. Jan Harp*
Mrs. Lillian Moreau
Mrs. Kay Sonnier*
Mrs. Cindy Spori*

Mrs. Eleanor Scouten, Consultant, Teacher Education

Lower School

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Mrs. Joanne Brininstool*
Mrs. Eugenia Ford
Mrs. Virginia Junker*

Mrs. Dorothy LeFeaux
Mrs. Folsom Smith
Mrs. Leslie Wheeler
Mrs. Patricia Wilson*

Middle School

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Mrs. Anna Mae Doucette
Mrs. Addie Gill
Mrs. Thelma Myers

Ernesto Ortega
Mrs. Inez Pratt
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Mrs. Violet Tate

Upper School

Jerome Freeman, Supervising Teacher
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John Deville*
Neil Doucette

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Max Ray
Mrs. Wilmah Seal, Librarian
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Harvey J. Gremillion, Coordinator, Student Activities

Vocational Education

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Mrs. Lena Barron, Food
Mrs. Jean Boles, Business Practices
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L. Arlie Gray, Shoe Repairing
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Medford W. Magill, Upholstery
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Douglas Wells, Woodworking*

*Teacher-in-training

Mrs. Mae Wilton, Handicraft and Visual Aids

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Griffin Jones, Assistant Coach

Social Education

Houseparents, Boys

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Mrs. Hettie Atkinson
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Mrs. Hortense Houston
Griffin Jones

Miss Yvonne Henderson
Mrs. Ruth Sikes

Houseparent, Primary

Mrs. Ida Mae Lejeune, Head Houseparent
Mrs. Marie Oglesbee
Mrs. Beatrice Pankey
Mrs. Ollie Sawyer

Houseparents, Girls

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Miss Inez Freeman
Mrs. Merle Collins, Head Houseparent
Mrs. Glenna Gray

Night Houseparents

Mrs. Wilma Mobley
Mrs. Effie Shaw
Mrs. Ruth Gray, Substitute

Vocational Rehabilitation

Albert G. Seal, Counselor
Mrs. Anne Jackson, Stenographer

Services

Medical Staff

Dr. J. A. Thom, III, M.D., School Physician
Dr. Colin A. McHardy, D.D.S., School Dentist
Mrs. Francis Ferris, Head Nurse
Mrs. Mary Jane Edwards, Nurse
Miss Mary Lou Hoffpauir, Nurse
Mrs. Daisy Raley, Nurse

Operation and Maintenance

Mrs. Sarah Goode, Dietician
Mrs. Martha Crain, Assistant
Mrs. Cecile Miller, Assistant
J. Earl Jackson, Stock Clerk
E. J. Wyatt, Maintenance Supervisor
Herman Steibing, Laundry Foreman
Chester Kloss
Winford Lawrence
Gordon McKenzie
George H. Vance
Eddie Ward
John Byrd, Night Watchman

The Pelican



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The purpose of the publication is: 1—To inform the parents of our students what is being done in the school and what the leading educators of this special type of education are thinking. 2—To offer opportunities for teaching printing. 3—To encourage composition and reading among our students.

The Legacy of Laurent Clerc

By EDWARD E. CORBETT, JR., Editor

With the sesquicentennial of the opening of the American School for the Deaf on April 15, 1817, being observed next year, the minds of deaf people will focus their attention on the educators of the deaf—Thomas Hopkins Gallaudet and Laurent Clerc. The distinctive difference between the two educators is that Thomas H. Gallaudet was a hearing man whereas Laurent Clerc was deaf. Through the years we have spoken highly of Gallaudet and his service to the deaf, but little has been said of Clerc. Clerc's legacy is with us, but we have not fully grasped its significance. Such questions as,

Our Cover Picture

The picture on our cover page was copied in charcoal from an old French print in the Gallaudet College Library. The artist was Mr. Jan Afzelius of Stockholm, Sweden, who did the sketch while a student at Gallaudet.

"What would be the status of American deaf people as a group if Clerc had not come to the United States?" "If Clerc had been a lesser man, what would our social, economic, and educational picture be today?" help us to understand in part the legacy of Laurent Clerc.

Clerc's motive for coming to America was revealed in an article in the *American Annals of the Deaf* by Reverend W. W. Turner.

Gentlemen, you know the motive which has led me to the United States of America. The public papers taught you it; but you do not yet know, I believe, the reason why I have come to Boston with Mr. Gallaudet and Dr. Cogswell, and why we have invited you to honor this meeting with your presence. It is to speak to you more conveniently of the deaf and dumb, of those unfortu-

nate beings who deprived of the sense of hearing and consequently of that of speech, would be condemned all their life to the most sad vegetation if nobody came to their succor; but who intrusted (sic) our regenerative hands will pass from the class of brutes to the class of men. It is to affect your hearts with regard to their unhappy state, to excite the sensibility and solicit the charity of your generous souls in their favor, respectfully to entreat you to occupy yourselves in promoting their future happiness.¹

From Clerc's speech above regarding his motive for establishing an educational process for the deaf people in America, it is understandable that the deaf people should be treated as individuals with minds of their own. Clerc, then exposed himself to the scrutiny of the skeptics on the usefulness of providing an educational system for the deaf. He satisfied the public's curiosity as to his personal concept of education when a questioner asked him the meaning of *education*. In reply he stated, "Before the Abbe Sicard, I had a mind, but it did not think. I had a heart, but it did not feel."²

Education improved the status of deaf people vastly because Clerc supervised the early methodology of teaching. Gallaudet regarded Clerc as the living exponent of the French system of instruction, and the depository of an art in the possession of no other person in the United States.³

Today, the deaf people in America are not regarded as being *non compos*

1 Turner, W. W., A.M., "Laurent Clerc," *American Annals of the Deaf*, Vol. 15, No. 1, pp. 16-17.

2 DeQering, Etto, *Gallaudet, Friend of the Deaf*. pp. 89-90

3 *Op. Cit.* p. 17

mentis by society. The deaf people as all others, have their rights—the right to speak out. This right was instilled in them by Clerc because he, having lived through the years of the French Revolution, had felt the spirit of the revolution. He taught many of his contemporaries the art of teaching the deaf because he believed in the precept of Jesus Christ who said “Freely ye have received, freely give.” With instruction once given to the deaf people, it was remarkable to see what education could do for them. It gave them the voice of independence—the right which we all cherish because it makes us individuals. The other right was the right to self-betterment.

Clerc had advanced himself from an illiterate being to a literate being and continued to gain knowledge throughout life. He set both the pace and the goal. Therefore, as a result, today society regards the deaf people as a dynamic group within the social system. America is the only country in which the deaf enjoy full prestige.

There are hundreds of deaf teachers employed in schools for the deaf throughout the nation. We must consider the important fact that it was Clerc who paved the way. He even inspired deaf people to take on studies leading to higher education. In recognition of his leadership Trinity College in Hartford, Connecticut, conferred upon Clerc the honorary degree of Master of Arts.

Today hundreds of deaf people are employed in the field of graphic arts; a point of interest is that Clerc was a printer—the first deaf printer in America. Clerc strongly advocated the social interreaction of deaf people in the whole of society as well as in the working field. *He strongly opposed the idea that deaf persons should be considered objects of charity.* He made sure that the deaf would function as an integral part of society even though they may form a minority group. To this end he organized the first association of the deaf by the deaf which ultimately led to the founding of the

National Association of the Deaf.

It must be remembered that T. H. Gallaudet believed that he would not have been able to undertake the education of the deaf as efficiently without the aid of Clerc. Gallaudet obviously felt that what Clerc had achieved, deaf people generally could achieve. He knew that deaf children would see Clerc as an “example of what they themselves might conceivably become. Clerc stood before them as a strict and demanding teacher who could tolerate nothing less than their very best efforts . . . Thus, Clerc stood before all of his deaf children, and his hearing colleagues, as a living precept for the deaf people of the United States.”⁴

The legacy is Clerc’s influence on American education of the deaf in its earliest years, and more important, his influence on the perspective of deaf people and their place in society.

Without Clerc the history of the education of the deaf in America and the socio-economic status of deaf people would be very much different from what it is today. It is true that the deaf in other parts of the world are not so fortunate because they did not have a “Laurent Clerc,” to set for them a high standard of achievement.

Clerc was contracted for three years by Gallaudet to help him establish the first school for the deaf. When the terms of the contract had expired, Clerc was free to return to France, but he did not do so because he recognized that the deaf people could advance socially, economically and educationally in America; and Clerc, being a thinker, realized that he could help their cause by remaining in the United States.

The Honorable H.C. Deming said of Mr. Clerc:

I hope I shall be pardoned if in this connection I allude to one still gracious-

4 Scouten, Edward, “Re: Laurent Clerc Day,” *The Pelican*, April, 1963, p. 6.

(Continued on Page 8)

Editorially Yours

BY EDWARD E. CORBETT, JR.

Graduation Activities May 13-20

Here is the time table announcing the plans for the Seniors from now until the close of school. The Seniors will present Class Night on Friday, May 13 at 7:30 o'clock where dedication of the Senior issue of *The Pelican* will be given. After the Class Night the Seniors will embark for their week-long Senior trip touring the points of interest in St. Augustine and Silver Spring, Florida.

Athletic awards will be given on Thursday, May 19 at 3 o'clock and Commencement exercises will be at 10 o'clock in the morning of the 20th. Parents, relatives and friends are invited to attend these activities.

Candidates for Diplomas

As the day for our commencement exercises approach, the following list of prospective graduates will get their College Preparatory, Academic and/or Vocational diplomas on May 20.

Amons, Gene—Deville
Bobby, Bass—Baton Rouge
Baudoin, Mike—Abbeville
Bobbit, Wayne—Shreveport
Breux, Dale—Lafayette
Broussard, Bill—Gueydan
Brown, Ronald—Baton Rouge
Clement, James—Bastrop
Cormier, Cleve—Lake Charles
Fruge, Jeanette—Crowley
Green, Luther—De Ridder
Hoffpauir, Catherine—Rayne
Holloway, Larry—Shreveport
Kaspar, Douglas—Ruston
Kraemer, Norris—Kraemer
McCon, Wanda—Livingston

The Legacy of . . .

(Continued from Page 3)

ly spared to us—a co-pioneer of Gallaudet in his noble enterprise; his teacher, pupil, friend; a man who left his native France with motives as pure, and for a cause as glorious as drew his illustrious country-man, Lafayette, to our shores in the darkest hour of our Revolutionary struggle. After planting and nurturing here the system of Sicard, and organizing similar institutions elsewhere; after nearly forty years of devotion to you, here he still stands, faithful to his post, true to your cause.⁵

Being deaf himself, Clerc was true to the cause of the deaf. Had he been a "lesser" man; the cause would have been lost forever. He had the faith and zeal to show deaf people how fallacies can be corrected by their own achievements. Through his own personal example he advanced the cause of the deaf for all future generations.

As a reminder to all American deaf people we read:

"Whereas, Laurent Clerc, now being the only surviving associate of Dr. Gallaudet, so generously volunteered to quit France in 1816, and since that time has indefatigably and arduously devoted himself to the services of the deaf and dumb as a distinguished and accomplished Professor, therefore, resolved: That the memory of Professor Clerc is cherished with profound gratitude and affection by all American deaf-mutes."⁶

We have the work of Thomas Hopkins Gallaudet, Alexander Graham Bell and Edward Miner Gallaudet, but equally important, if not more so is the legacy of Laurent Clerc. Let us put Clerc in his rightful place that we all may honor him.

5 *Op. Cit.*, p. 23.

6 *Ibid.*, p. 23.