

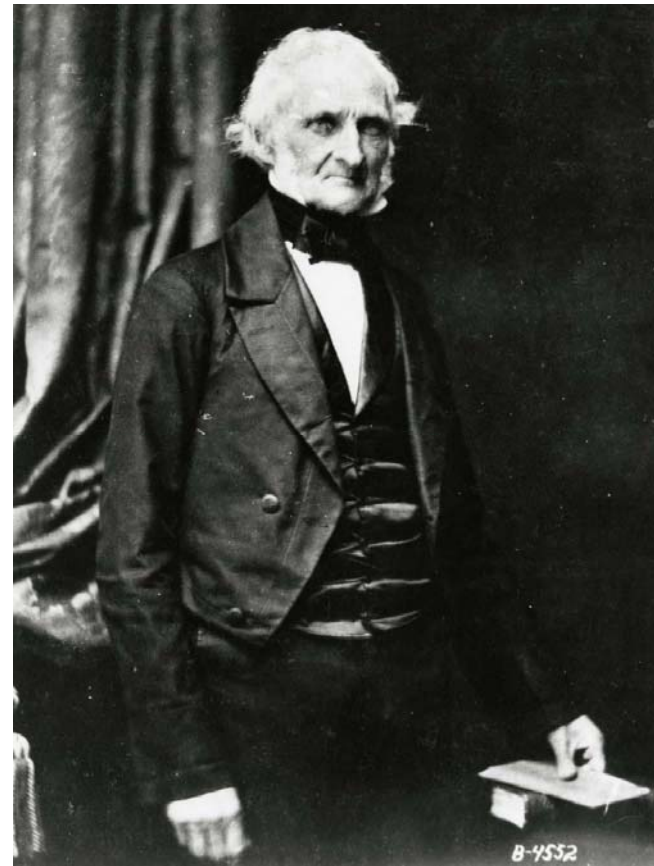
# *AMOS KENDALL*

## Founder of Kendall School

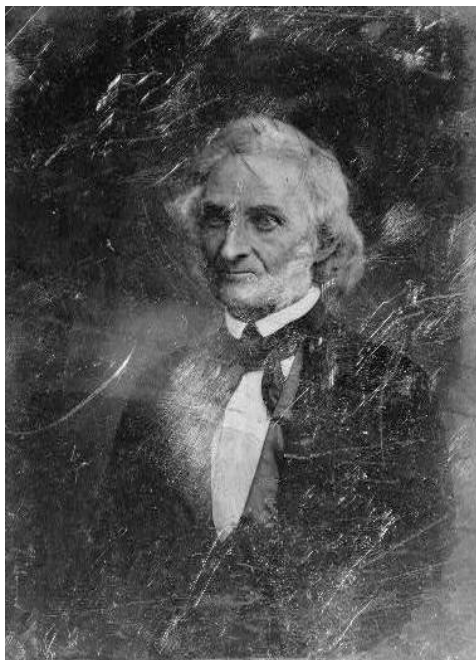
By Lance J. Fischer

Retired Archivist

This presentation was prepared by the author with the intention of remembering and honoring Amos Kendall for his great contributions. It has been edited for the web to show the life of Kendall and his involvement in the establishment of Kendall Demonstration Elementary School.



*Amos Kendall by Matthew Brady (National Archives)*



1844

AMOS KENDALL is among the least studied person in deaf history and deaf studies.



1855



1860

# AMOS KENDALL

## Life Summary

1789 Born in Dunstable,  
Massachusetts

1807 Graduated from Lawrence  
Academy, Groton,  
Massachusetts

1811 Studied law at Dartmouth  
College

Kendall moved to Frankfort, Kentucky,  
worked as a lawyer, became involved in  
politics, and edited the *Argus of Western  
America*.

A republican, he later became a  
Jacksonian democrat.

1828 Came to Washington,  
D.C.

1828 Became the fourth auditor  
in the Treasury Department  
and a member of the  
“Kitchen Cabinet” of  
President Andrew Jackson.  
Jackson’s friend, Kendall  
wrote most of the president’s  
annual addresses and drafted  
Jackson's veto of the bill to  
re-charter the Second Bank  
of the United States.

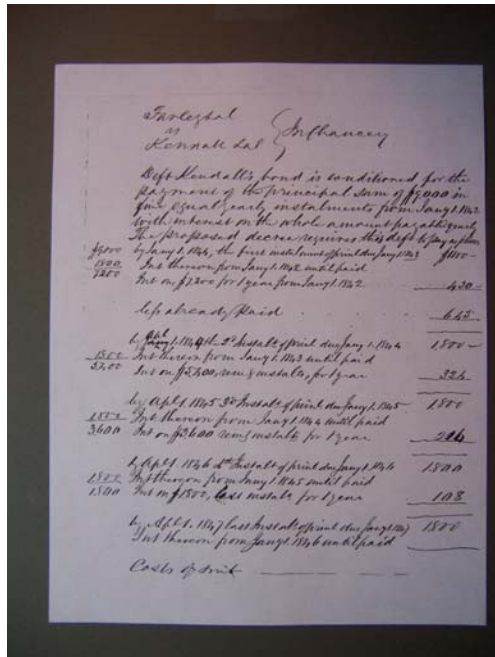
# AMOS KENDALL

## Life Summary (continued)

- |      |   |      |  |
|------|---|------|--|
| 1834 | Appointed U.S. postmaster general by President Andrew Jackson and by President Martin Van Buren. Reorganized the Post Office Department and led the establishment of the "Pony Express" service. Served until 1840. | 1855 | Began to devote his life to philanthropy. He made many contributions to churches and established a school for deaf students.                                   |
| 1845 | Business manager for Samuel F. B. Morse, inventor of the telegraph. During the next 15 years, both men made fortunes.   | 1857 | Founded the Columbia Institution for the Instruction of the Deaf and Dumb and the Blind, and served as president and on the Board of Trustees until his death. |
|      |   | 1864 | Gets a law signed enabling the Columbia Institution to grant collegiate degrees.   |

# Kendall Green

The property that Kendall bought, re-named “Kendall Green,” would eventually become the home of Kendall Demonstration Elementary School, the Model Secondary School for the Deaf, and Gallaudet University.



**1841** Kendall purchased property just outside of Washington, D.C. The property was known as the Brentwood Farm, and he bought it from John and Anna Farley for \$9,000.

**1845** The mortgage was paid and the deed issued. Kendall used the land to build a summer home.

# The Buildings of Kendall Green

(prior to the founding of a school)



*Hilltop Printing Co.* BUILDING FIRST OCCUPIED BY THE COLUMBIA INSTITUTION FOR THE DEAF AND DUMB. 1857. *200 Devonshire St., Boston.*

⇐ **Rose Cottage.** The original summer home of Kendall and his family, this building was demolished in 1877 to make space for the construction of Chapel Hall.

⇒ **Kendall's house.** Built later, this house was constructed on the site where Fowler Hall is today.



⇐ **Kendall Mansion.** When the original house and the Rose Cottage became part of the new school, Kendall moved into a mansion that was later rebuilt as a farm house. The farm house was demolished around 1964-65 to make space for construction of new dormitories, Krug Hall and Cogswell Hall (now called Ballard West and Ballard North).

# Map of Kendall Green, 1857

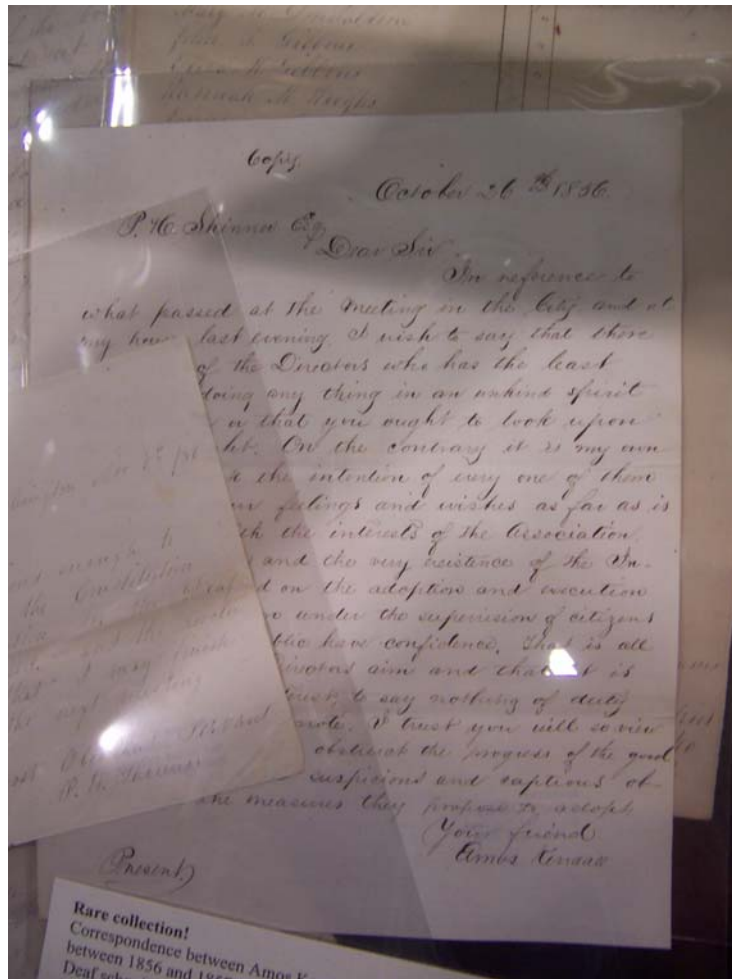


# Map of Kendall Green, 1885



# 1856

## Establishing a School for Deaf Children

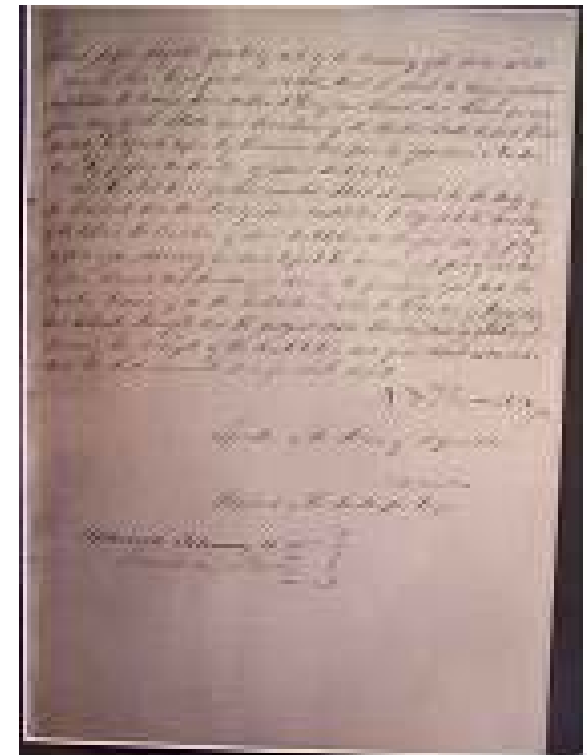
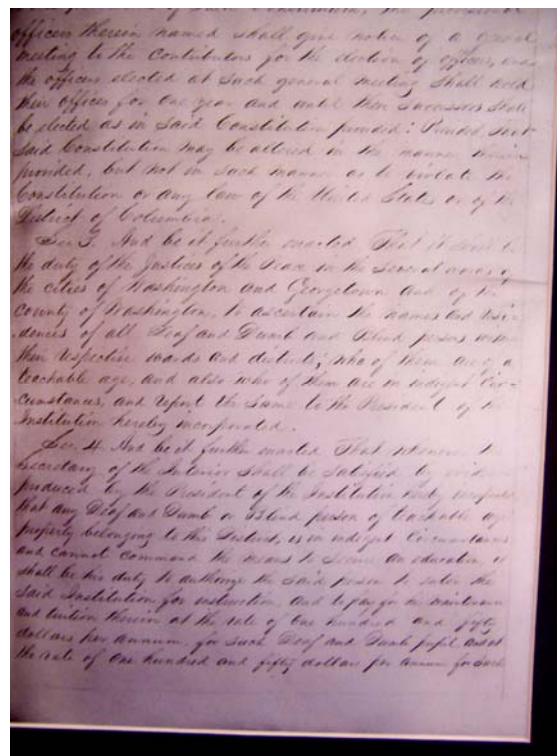
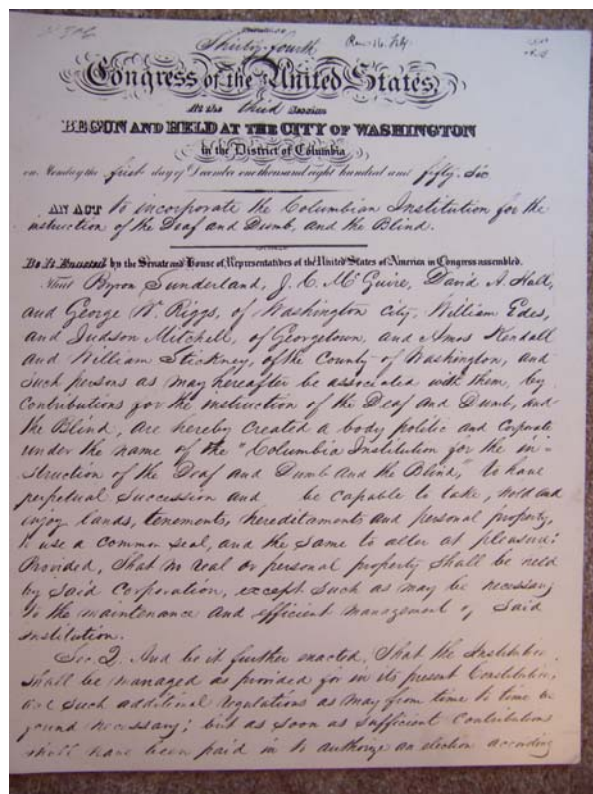


Platt H. Skinner brought several deaf children to Washington, D.C. He used the children to solicit funds, and he promised to put the money toward a school for the children.

← Correspondence between Skinner and Kendall, dated October 25, 1865.

Realizing that Washington, D.C., needed a school for deaf children, Kendall supported Skinner's plan. Thanks to Kendall, a law to incorporate the school was passed in three months and signed by President Franklin Pierce on February 16, 1857. The new school was called the Columbia Institution for the Instruction of the Deaf and Dumb and the Blind.

The act establishing the Columbia Institution for the Instruction of the Deaf and Dumb and the Blind that would later become Kendall School



# FRAUD! Unfortunately, Skinner was a fraud. Articles appeared accusing him of cruelty and inhumanity to the children in his care.

**THE HERALD.**



NIAGARA CITY, N. Y.  
SATURDAY, OCTOBER 2, 1858.

**Dr. Skinner—More Evidence.**

Although we had once determined to occupy no more space in our paper with notices of Dr. Skinner or his affairs, we cannot refuse a compliance with the request contained in the letter we insert below, signed by the entire Eldership of the Presbyterian Church in this village; and we accordingly publish to-day, to the exclusion of other matter, a letter from Rev. BROWN SUNDERLAND, D. D., of Washington city, and commend its careful perusal to our readers.

We deem it necessary to make no further comment editorially than to say that, so far as we have been able to judge from personal observation, the conclusions arrived at by Messrs. Adams, Day, Royce, and Culver, are, in accordance with the views generally entertained by our citizens. The reader will notice that Dr. Sunderland refers to certain extended reports of the legal investigation in Washington, as published in the Daily Star. These reports have since been furnished us by another party and may be examined at pleasure in our office. They present evidence

other persons who become actively engaged with Dr. Skinner in his effort, was Hon. Amos Kendall, who had made a subscription to the object of Four Hundred dollars, payable one hundred dollars per annum, for four years. Mr. Kendall had also placed at the disposal of Dr. Skinner a house and premises for his use free of charge, until some more suitable accommodations could be provided. It was, I think, towards the close of the year 1856, that Dr. Skinner availed himself of this generosity and took possession of the house for the winter. Before this, however, rumors unfavorable to Dr. Skinner, from N. York city and other sources, began to be privately circulated, but as they were known to comparatively but a few, and as there was no disposition to inquire into them or to embarrass Dr. Skinner in his new field, he was permitted to go on with his effort without a public exposure.

About the time of his removing to the house proffered him by Mr. Kendall, he seemed anxious to have a Board of Directors or Trustees, composed of persons well known in the community, and among others, earnestly solicited me to become a member of that Board. By his invitation, I did attend a sort of preliminary meeting, where I met Mr. Kendall and several prominent gentlemen of the city, who were disposed to act as Directors, and proceeded to take the proper measures for the establishment of the proposed Institution. Among other matters discussed, it was determined to constitute a committee to inquire into various subjects connected with the establishment of such an Institution, and report for our better information, at a subsequent meeting. At this Dr. Skinner, with a good deal of excitement of manner, seemed to object, as he was not made a member of the committee, being already made the Secretary of the meeting, having the records of our proceedings committed

shadow of foundation for such a suspicion being the fact that Mr. Kendall, being the President of the Board, did in his own individual capacity, permit the District Attorney to use his name, as the "best friend" of the children, in the prosecution commenced by that officer. But I give the articles as follows:

**CIRCUIT COURT.**  
Wednesday, April 8.

Yesterday the Court was engaged with the consideration of the case of Dr. Platt H. Skinner, recently referred to this Court by Judge Marshall, after trial of the habeas corpus sounding said Skinner to bring forward the bodies of certain mutes and blind children in his keeping. Several witnesses were examined.

The defense, by Messrs. Bradley and Davidge, read a declaration, the leading point of which seemed to be to charge that the initiation of these proceedings was due to Mr. Amos Kendall, who is understood, with other gentlemen, to have set on foot an institution of a character similar to that of Dr. Skinner.

Mr. Key, in reply, explained. He said that at least a month before the publication of Mr. Kendall's article in the "Union," characterizing Dr. Skinner as an imposter, he (Mr. Key) had himself been informed by several ladies of the highest respectability, and who resided in the neighborhood of Skinner's school, of the wretched condition in which the children were kept and provided for; that on seeing Mr. Kendall's letter in the Union he addressed that gentleman a letter, soliciting information, and requesting the names of parties who could give testimony in the matter. In short, Mr. Key assumed for himself the whole weight of responsibility of bringing the case before a judicial tribunal, deeming it one demanding the humane interference of the law.

The witnesses who testified were, first, Mrs. Raymond. This lady had lived with Skinner on Alg street, and at G street, First wards the children, to the insufficiency and poor quality of the food, and their general bad treatment by their keeper.

Mrs. E. D. E. N. Southworth had dined three times at the institution. Saw the children at dinner. All they were allowed was one or two small potatoes at a meal. Their food was neither sufficient nor proper. The children sometimes visited dependent's residence, and

the Criminal Court to answer a jury, in respect to the complaint, he held in the Marshal's custody a warrant of removal, and allowing it, that he had discharged. On next day, last, that steps be taken for the arrest of Mrs. B. return to the jurisdiction of the Court the charge of obstructing the due in carrying off the five cents Wednesday.

The Court then entered up a writ of habeas corpus.

**The Mute Children Recovered.**  
Compliance with the order of the Deputy Marshal Phillips placed more on Thursday afternoon at the abiding place of Mrs. B. mute children, who left the Westbury. The search for them tedious, but was rewarded by its at a boarding house about 3 o'clock morning. The whole weight of on Mr. Phillips, for the Baltimore to have done nothing towards the P. brought back Mrs. B. and the 2 the railroad yesterday morning, as are now in the Marshal's keeping the disposal of the Court which we again until Monday next. The committed their custody to the Court, Mr. G. A. Clark, and 3 is at large on her own recognition in Court on Monday. Mr. Skinner in jail, having been unable to get bail required.

**The Circuit Court.**—On Monday Messrs. Herz, Harrison and Robb were admitted as attorneys and so this Court.

The Court then discharged from and custody of Platt H. Skinner children, John Quinn, Ann B. Isaac Wynn, William Blood, and 2 and the Marshal was ordered to before the Judge of the Orphan's bound out as apprentices, or otherwise according to law. They had charge of Mr. G. A. Clark until the of by the Orphan's Court.

The Court yesterday reduced to bail in the case of said Skinner, a perjury and now in jail, from \$250. Jury trials have again commenced. Case of Ed. M. Litchburn vs. Wm. was tried, and an indictment returned.

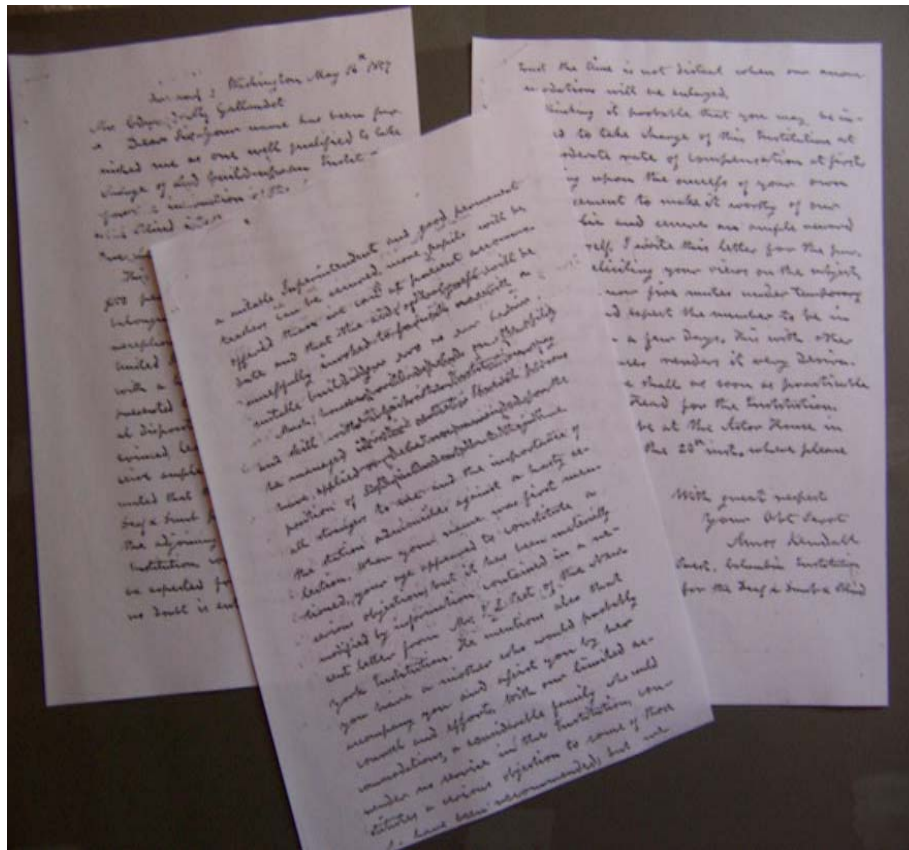
Kendall filed a complaint with the district attorney. Skinner was then brought before the court on a writ of Habeas Corpus on February 28, 1857. Kendall adopted the deaf children.

Roll 95 Old Series  
 Kendall Amos  
 Guardian to  
 Quinn John  
 Szymanski Ann S.  
 Winn Isaac ✓  
 Blood William  
 Henry James

Orphans Court April 16, 1857.  
 District of Columbia Washington County, Iowa  
 It is on this 16<sup>th</sup> day of April, Anno Domini  
 1857, ordered, adjudged & decreed by the Court,  
 that the mutes John Quinn Ann S. Szymanski  
 Isaac Winn, William Blood & James Henry,  
 committed to this Court, by the Circuit Court, "to be  
 bound out, or dealt with according to law" & the  
 said Orphans Court having decided to deliver them  
 to the custody of  
 Amos Kendall President of the "Columbia Institution"  
 by his order giving bond, in the penalty of Five  
 hundred pounds current money of the United  
 States for their <sup>due &</sup> comfortable maintenance, <sup>educational</sup> support  
 and the said bond having been approved by this Court,  
 ordered that they

Documents of the Orphans Court granting custody of five deaf children to Amos Kendall on April 16, 1857

# Kendall's Search for a Superintendent



Finding himself with a new school and new children, Kendall began to search for a superintendent. Finally he contacted Edward M. Gallaudet, son of the famous Thomas H. Gallaudet who had helped found deaf education in the United States. Kendall paid Gallaudet and the school's staff and operating expenses himself.

← Letter from Kendall to Gallaudet

# School Buildings

(During the initial years)



*Heliotype Printing Co.*

*229 Devonshire St., Bos.*

BUILDING FIRST OCCUPIED BY THE  
COLUMBIA INSTITUTION FOR THE DEAF AND DUMB.  
1857.

← **Rose Cottage**, the first building of the Institution, 1857-1859.

⇒ **New school building**, 1859. Built for about \$8,000 paid by Kendall, and in use until 1885.



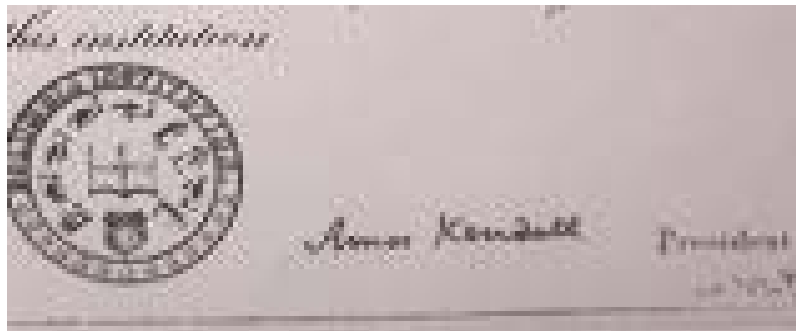
Rose Cottage and the old Fowler Hall consisted of the Primary Department and the new school buildings, ca.1866.



# First Graduation



Kendall lived to see the first graduation of the Columbia Institution for the Instruction of the Deaf and Dumb and the Blind. Three men received their degrees, signed by Kendall. One of the graduates, Isaac Winn, had been adopted by Kendall.



← The first diploma and Kendall's signature

# Kendall's Gravesite

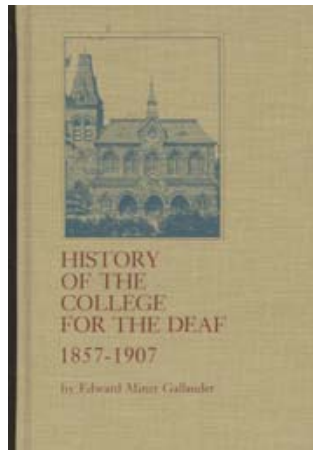


Kendall died on November 12, 1869, five months after the first graduation in the new school, at 80 years old. He is buried along with his second wife, Jane Kendall, at Glenwood Cemetery in Washington, D.C.

# Recommended Readings



Stickney, W. (Editor). (1872). *Autobiography of Amos Kendall*. Boston: Lee and Shepard; New York: Lee, Shepard, and Dillingham.



Fischer, L. J., & de Lorenzo, D. L. (Editors). (1983). *History of the college for the deaf, 1857-1907* (written by E. M. Gallaudet). Washington, DC: Gallaudet College Press.



*Our heritage: Gallaudet College centennial.* (1964). Solicited and compiled by the Centennial Souvenir Book Committee headed by Reuben I. Altizer, chairman, and sponsored by the District of Columbia Chapter, Gallaudet College Alumni Association. Washington, DC: Graphic Arts Press.

*[The documents and photographs used in this presentation are courtesy of the National Archives and Records Administration and the Gallaudet University Archives.]*