

Ohio School for the Deaf Columbus

Opened: 1829

Founders: Rev. James Hoge and State Legislature

The Rev. James Hoge was a member of the state commission responsible for the school system of Ohio. He was aware that other states had schools for the deaf, and he was determined that Ohio would provide the same educational opportunities for her children. He was able to persuade the governor and State Legislature of the need and a bill establishing the school was passed in January of 1827. The school was opened in a small frame house in Columbus, with one student, on October 16, 1829. By year's end there were ten pupils. Danford E. Ball, a graduate of the American School for the Deaf, joined the faculty the second year. He was the school's first deaf teacher.

In 1854 Ohio passed a law extending free education to all deaf children in the state.

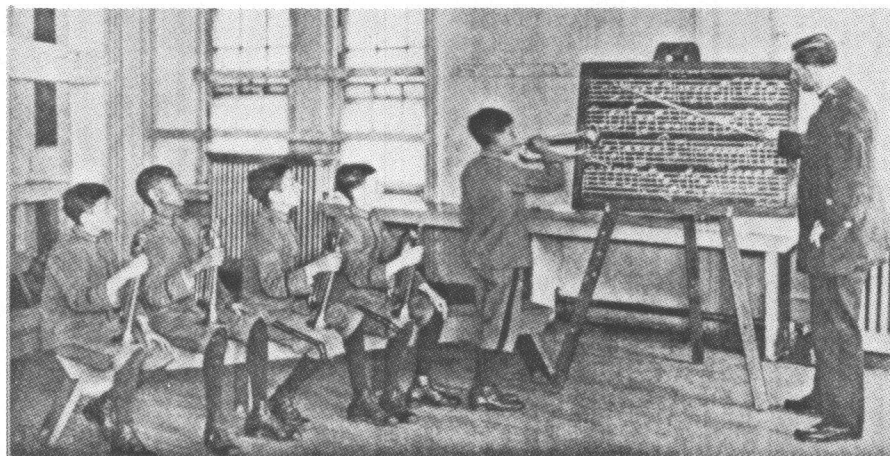
Governor Rutherford B. Hayes was very interested in the education of the deaf. He presented the diplomas to the graduates at the first graduation ceremony held in 1869.

Robert P. McGregor and Robert Patterson were Ohio School students although neither stayed to receive his diploma. Patterson returned to the school to teach after his graduation from Gallaudet College. He was at the school a total of 51 years, 20 as teacher and 31 as principal. He served under four superintendents. His "Course of Instruction" went through five successive editions. During its heyday the Ohio School was one of the largest and most prominent schools for the deaf in the country.

McGregor founded the Cincinnati Day School for the Deaf and the Ohio Home for the Aged and Infirm Deaf. He was the first president of the National Association of the Deaf. He taught at the school from 1890 to 1921.

The Ohio School for the Deaf Alumni Association was organized in 1870 "to promote the general welfare of the mute community." In 1892 the members began a fund for a Home for the Aged and Infirm Deaf.

In the late 1940s, deaf people and their friends banded together to form the Ohio Federation of Organizations of the Deaf to persuade state officials



A class in rhythm at the New York School in the 1930s.

New York School for the Deaf

of the need for a new school. Under the leadership of Hilbert C. Duning, a deaf architect and alumnus of the school, the group fought an uphill battle to persuade a governor and legislature which were determined to eliminate all "non-essential" expenditures from the budget of the need for a new school. They were successful in getting a limited construction budget and in the winter of 1951 construction began on a new school plant in the Columbus suburbs.

In 1949 Ralph E. LinWeber, an alumnus, compiled and published "The Graduation Classes of the Ohio School for the Deaf," which covered a span of 80 years and listed the names of 860 graduates of the school.

Virginia School for the Deaf and the Blind Staunton, Virginia

Opened: 1839

Founder: State Legislature

The first effort to educate deaf children in Virginia began in 1812 when Colonel William Bolling started a school for his deaf children on his plantation. This school was short-lived and in 1839 the state opened a school for deaf and blind children in Staunton, Virginia. This was the first effort to educate deaf and blind children on the same campus at a state school.

The Rev. Joseph D. Tyler, an experienced teacher at the Hartford (American) School for the Deaf was retained as superintendent for an annual salary of \$1,200 and board. Tyler had earned

a Bachelor of Divinity degree at the Virginia Theological Seminary in Alexandria, Va., and bachelor and masters degrees at Yale University. In 1833, at the age of 29, he was stricken with a severe fever which left him deaf. His appointment to head the Virginia School was the first instance of a deaf man being hired to head a state school for the deaf as superintendent.

The first teacher Tyler hired was Job Turner who had been educated at the American School for the Deaf. Turner served the school for close to 40 years before leaving to become a missionary to the deaf.

In 1952 the school dedicated its new gymnasium to Thomas C. Lewellyn, a product, coach and teacher and an outstanding athlete at the school. Lewellyn was the "Father of the Mason-Dixon Basketball Tournament." Bass Hall, a dormitory on the campus is named for R. Aumon Bass and his wife, Mary, long-time teachers at the school. In 1949 Bass wrote a "History of Education of the Deaf in Virginia."

The School's main building is a national landmark. The school has fielded three undefeated football teams, 1938 (8-0), 1954 (9-0), 1969 (10-0).

William C. Ritter who founded the Virginia State School for the Deaf in Hampton, Edward C. Carney, director of Public Information at the National Association of the Deaf, and Thomas McCreery, who published the *Backhannon Banner* of Backhannon, West Virginia are alumni of the school. John Michaels, the first ordained deaf Baptist minister in the country, was another.

Race F. Drake has been principal of the Deaf Department since 1978.