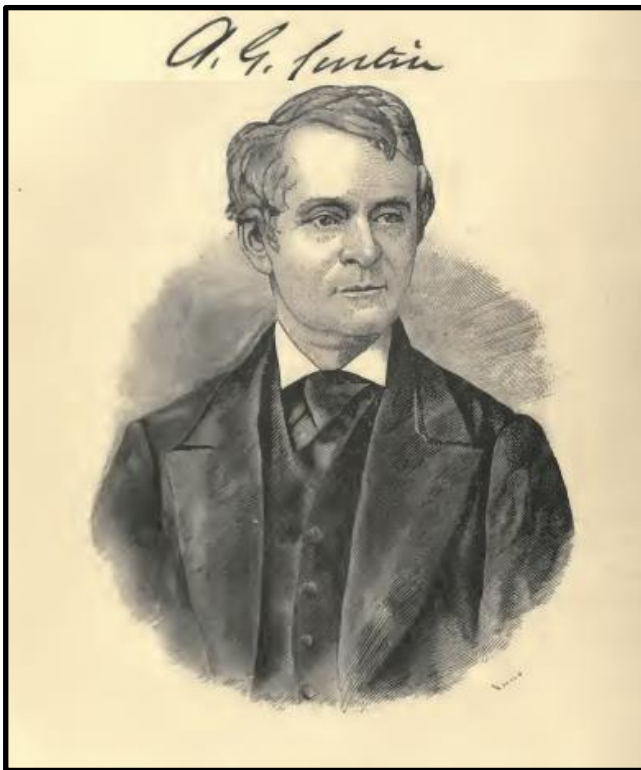


Pennsylvania Soldiers Orphans Schools

1864 – 2009

PENNSYLVANIA'S SOLDIERS' ORPHAN SCHOOLS,

*"If men fall on the battlefield or in the discharge of the duties which they owe to the nation ... a loving and God-fearing people will take their offspring to themselves as their own, and, so far as can be, fit them physically, mentally, and morally for the stern realities of this world and the enjoyments of that which lies ahead."*¹



Governor Andrew Gregg Curtin (1861 – 1867), the "Soldiers' Friend", was the visionary behind the Pennsylvania Soldiers' Orphan Schools.

He "pledged to the brave men, that if they were to go into the field of battle, we would take care of their orphan children"². Then on Thanksgiving

Day 1863, as the legend goes, two orphans showed up to the Governor's house begging for food, and he was moved to help them and their families. Ultimately, this led to a network of 44 privately-owned schools (pg. 3).

Spanning three centuries, from the Civil War to 2009, the great state of Pennsylvania took care of the children of its veterans. Many of these students upon graduation served in the US military, from the Spanish-American War to two World Wars and all conflicts since.

In 1895 the legislature decided to create a single state-run school and Scotland School was built (just north of Chambersburg). By 1912 all of the original schools were closed and the remaining students transferred to Scotland.

All of the children coming to the orphan schools were from broken families or vulnerable circumstances, from all corners of Pennsylvania. Many of them were just dropped off at the school, not realizing they were not going home. Yet their school became their home, and their classmates became their brothers and sisters - forever.

Two primary objectives of the single state-run school were a more home-like setting in cottages and to teach trades. Both of these objectives proved eminently successful at Scotland School, which taught Printing, Woodworking, Machine, Culinary, Tailoring, Dressmaking, Sewing, Shoe making, Barbering, and Cosmetology.

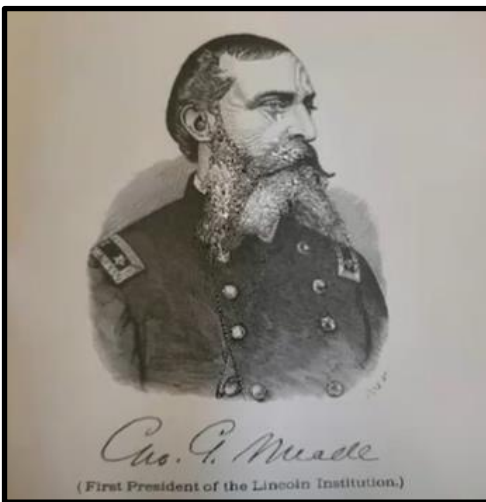
Despite significant issues (and corruption) in the years after the war with the privately-run schools, Governor Curtin's vision was fulfilled in Scotland School which operated for 114 years.

Graduates and former students went on to become productive citizens who in turn passed on the lessons learned to their own children and grandchildren.

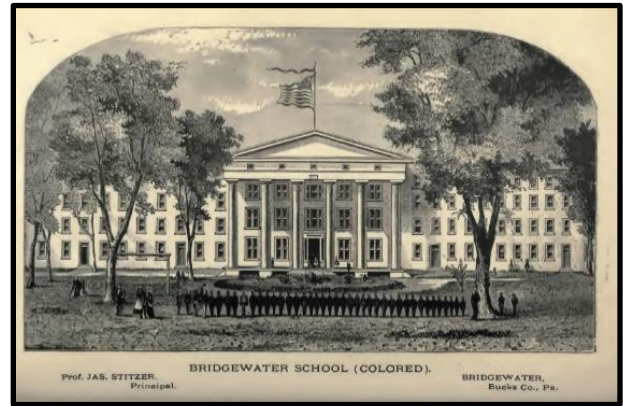
Budget issues plagued the program from the very beginning, and in 1991 the state sought to close Scotland School. The budget battle lasted almost 20 years, but in 2009, the school was dropped from the budget, with little warning.

Historical Snapshots of the Early Schools

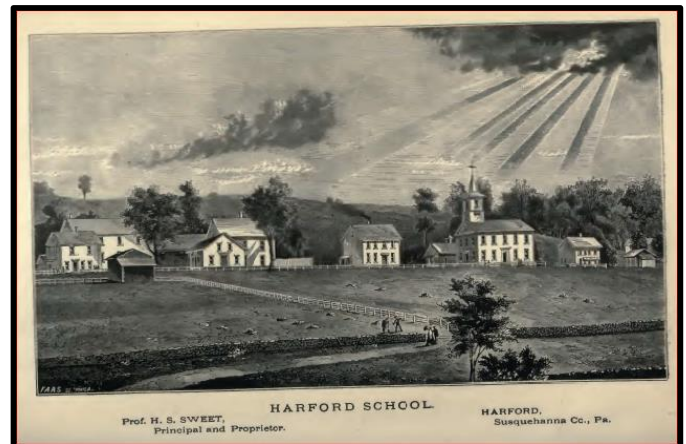
General George Meade was the first President of Lincoln Institution in 1866 (308 S. Eleventh St., Philadelphia), with President Ulysses Grant attending the dedication. General Meade was instrumental in securing funding for the school and in its construction while providing counsel and advice for its operation.³



There was one school for the children of the Colored troops, Bridgewater (Bucks County). In 1866, the Philadelphia branch of the Freedman's Aid Society called public attention to the neglect of a school for the orphans of these soldiers, and the school was formed in Bucks County in a building known as Bristol College, located on the banks of the Delaware and "commanding a fine view of the river and the surrounding country"²



Harford School in Susquehanna County started as Harford Academy in 1831. It produced many successful graduates, to include 2 governors (Walker Charton, Va 1869-1874; Cyrus Clay Carpenter, Iowa 1872 – 1876) as well as Galusha Grow⁴, speaker of the House under President Lincoln. In 1865 the Academy closed then it was converted to a Soldiers' Orphan School⁵, operating until 1902.

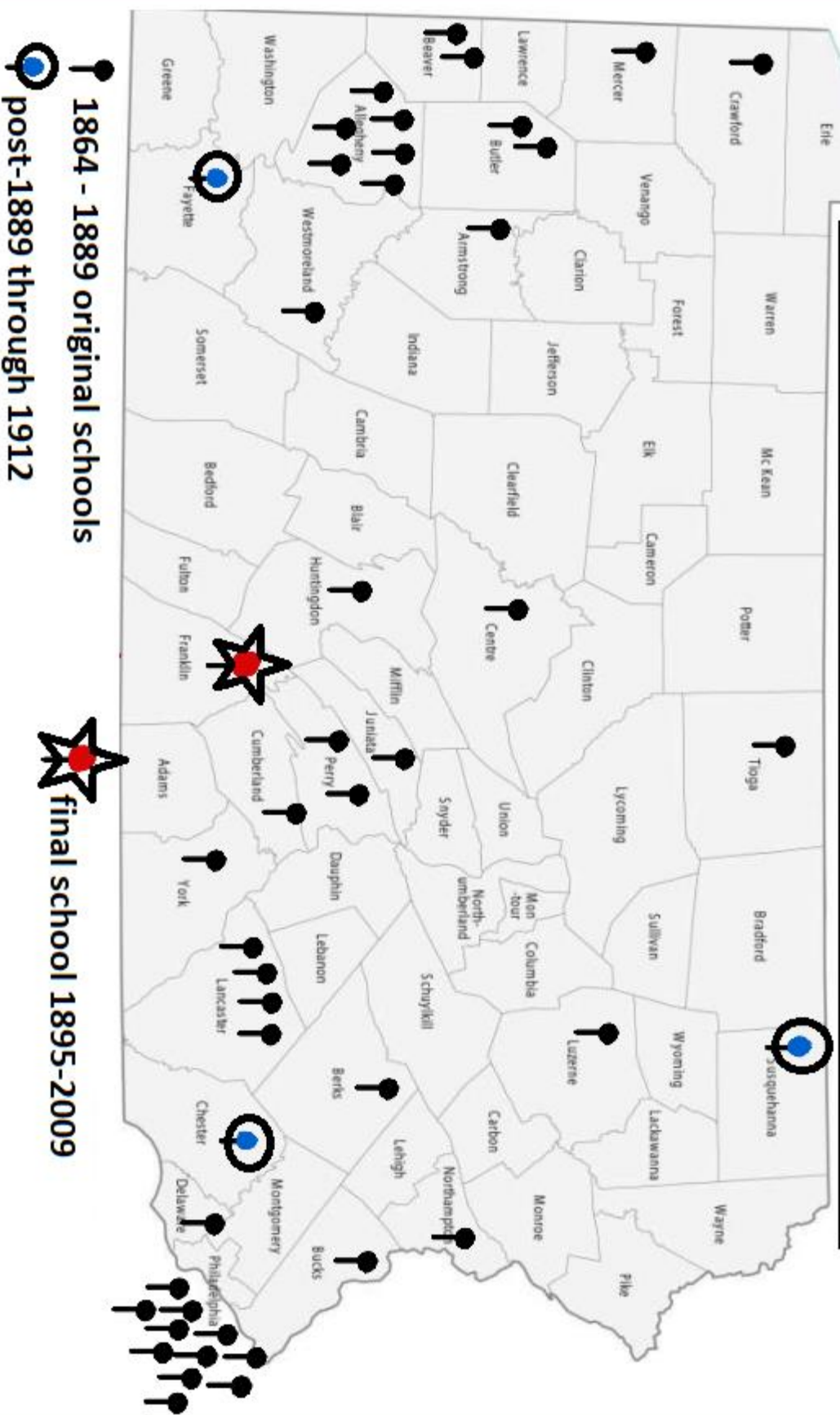


Governor Curtin's legacy lives on

Throughout the 145 years of the Pennsylvania Soldiers' Orphan Schools, there were many graduates who served in the US military, and there are still former Scotland School graduates serving on active duty, with many others having recently retired.

The Scotland Alumni represent the "living legacy" of this program, and there are many, many stories of generational success.

Pennsylvania Soldiers Orphans Schools 1864 - 2009



1864 - 1889 original schools
 post-1889 through 1912

final school 1895-2009

Pennsylvania
Soldiers Orphan Schools 1864 - 2009

Allegheny

Episcopal Church Home
Home for the Friendless
Pittsburgh Orphan Asylum
Soldiers Orphan Home
St. Paul's Orphan Asylum
Western House of Refuge

Armstrong – Dayton

Beaver

Phillipsburg
Rochester Orphan Home

Berks – Womelsdorf Orphans Home (still operating as Bethany Children's Home)

Bucks – Bridgewater (for children of Colored Soldiers)

Butler

St. Paul's Orphan Home
Zelienople Farm School

Centre – Jacksonville

Chester – Chester Springs (closed 1912)

Crawford – Titusville

Cumberland – White Hall (Camp Hill)

Dauphin – Emaus

Delaware – Media Training School

Fayette – Uniontown (Jumonville) (closed 1908)

Franklin – Scotland School (1895 – 2009)

Huntingdon – Cassville

Juniata – McAllisterville

Lancaster

Children's Home
Lancaster County Hospital
Mt. Joy
St. James' Orphanage

Luzerne – Home for the Friendless

Mercer – Mercer School

Northampton – Nazareth Hall

Perry

Andersonburg
Loysville Orphans Home

Philadelphia

Catholic Home
Northern Home
Orphans Home
Church Home
Industrial School
Lincoln Institution
Northern Home
Orphans Home
St. John's Orphanage
St. Vincent's Asylum
St. Vincent's Home

Susquehanna – Harford (closed 1902)

Tioga – Mansfield

York – York Children's Home (still operating)

Westmoreland – St. Vincent's College

¹Honorary Colonel James Laughery Paul, Pennsylvania's Soldiers' Orphan Schools", 1876: pg. vii

²Gold, Dr. O. David, "The Civil War Soldiers' Orphan Schools of Pennsylvania 1864 – 1889", 2016: 187

³Honorary Colonel James Laughery Paul, Pennsylvania's Soldiers' Orphan Schools", 1876:439

⁴Rhamanthus M. Stocker, "Centennial History of Susquehanna County Pa", 1974

⁵Honorary Colonel James Laughery Paul, Pennsylvania's Soldiers' Orphan Schools", 1876:265