

a long journey in the interest of education for him. He seemed to instill confidence in himself right from the beginning, for the Minutes of the Illinois Conference for September 1867 record that "we learn that this Institution under the care of Rev. G.W. Gray AM, has opened more favorably than last year..." The record continued by saying that "the Faculty is composed of ten experienced teachers". In his second year Gray became the President of the school. When he first arrived at the school it was apparently in some financial difficulty, for there was a listed debt of about \$26,000 of which the Trustees said they would assume \$10,000 of it. The Minutes of that year continued with the ominous reminder that if the remaining sum of the debt was not raised by January 1, 1868 the school would "pass out of our hands".

The remaining part of the debt was actually not raised, nor did the school pass out of their hands. The next year the Conference met in Quincy and the Minutes still recorded a debt of \$7,000. But it also included these words of praise for Gray's work. "This Institution under the efficient management of President Gary, assisted by a full & competent Board of Instruction, is rapidly rising in importance & usefulness. We trust & believe that its days of darkness are past, and that a bright future is before it..." Gray seemed to have the knack of having the Conference meet in his home town at the crucial moment. The school now had 175 students. The Minutes of 1869, when they met in Lincoln, was equally enthusiastic about his success at the school. It was now recorded that the debt had been so reduced "so as no longer to be a question of special anxiety". More praise was included in several resolutions, and then the report ended with these words about the school..It is the "only one of our institutions that has adopted the system of mixed education, it affords peculiar attraction to those who prefer that the sexes should be educated together".

It is ironic that this school which Gray helped climb out of a serious debt problem, and who worked for "mixed" education in a day when the mixing of the sexes (outside of matrimonial arrangements) was resisted at all cost, would change its position completely. An 1872 report was made saying that the school should be sold to the Illinois Wesleyan University. At the present time it is known as the "Chaddock Boys School" after Charles Chaddock who gave some money in 1880.

GRAY AS A PASTOR

In 1872 Gray was appointed as the pastor of the church in Lincoln, Illinois. He remained there for three years. The church, at the time, had a membership of 234.

In the year of the country's Centennial, 1876, he was appointed the pastor of the church in Clinton. That church had a membership of 283 members and a probable value of \$30,000. He stayed there three years, when he was appointed to the church in Mattoon. The town was founded in 1854 and named after the railroad official who built the Big Four Railroad from St Louis to Indianapolis. Gray was at this church only one year 1878-9, but at the same time he was a professor at Illinois Wesleyan University. Mrs. Horace Champion of Mattoon wrote in 1975, at the age of 81, that Gray's ministry was "characterized by the greatest spiritual awakening of the period". The earliest yearbook for the church was prepared by Gray. In it, says Mrs. Champion, was a note that the pastor's salary was \$1,200 and the value of the church was \$10,000. The total membership was 463-- an increase of 130 over the previous year.