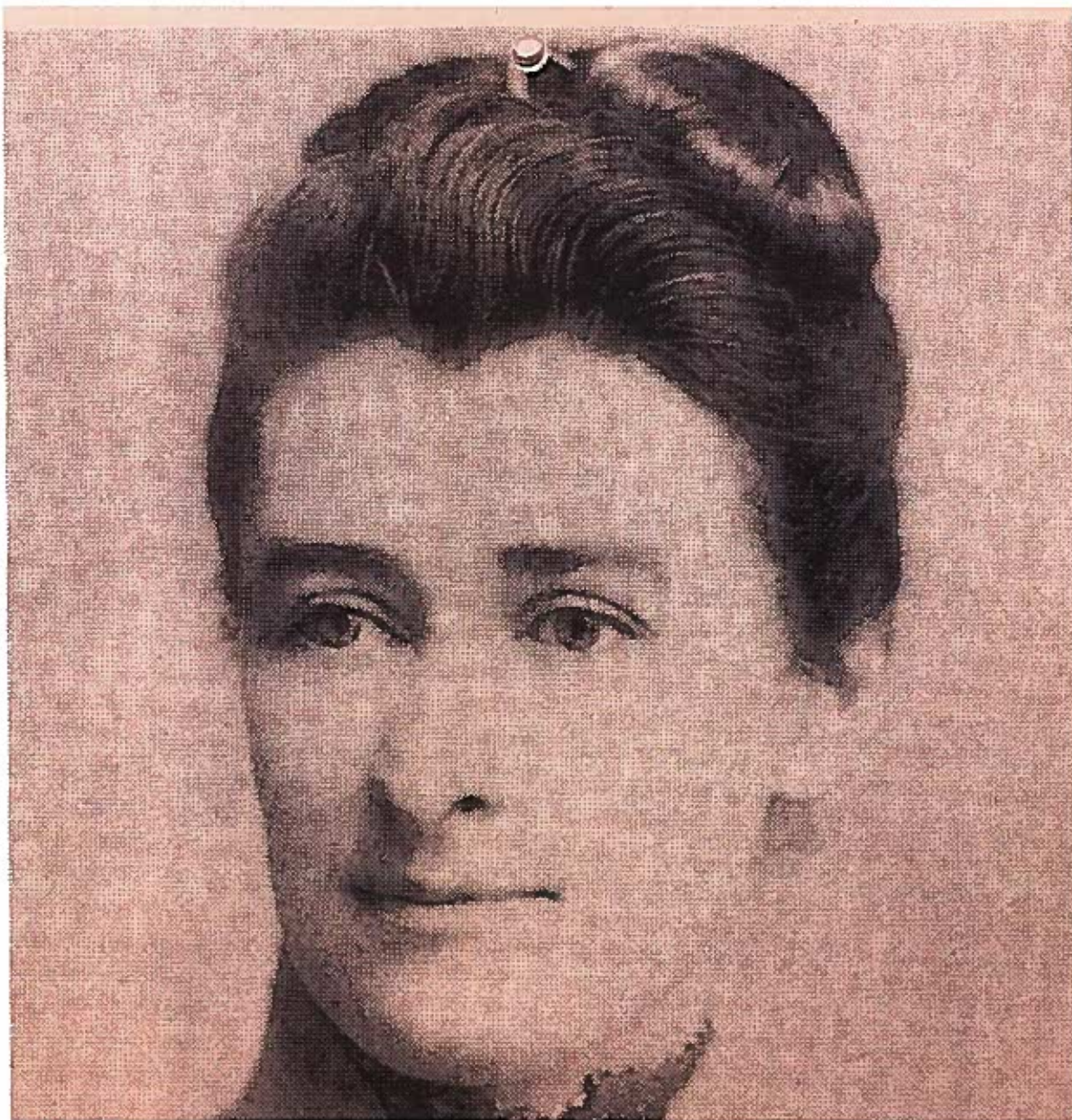


Traveling the Way of Love

Sarah Hunter's Loving Service for St. Agnes' Hospital



SARAH LOTHROP TAYLOR HUNTER

2007 Calendar Photo from FAITHFUL LIVES: Episcopal Women Whose
Contributions Have Shaped the History of St. Augustine's College

Compiled by Lynn Hoke, Diocesan Archivist, for the 2019 Annual Meeting
of the Episcopal Church Women of the Diocese of North Carolina

For more information contact: history@episdionc.org

More information available from 2012 video/panel discussion

“ST. AGNES’ – THE UNTOLD STORY”

<https://vimeo.com/52540618>

TIMELINE FOR ST. AGNES' HOSPITAL WITH TRIBUTES TO SARAH HUNTER

Today we might call them an Episcopal Church *power couple* – Sarah Lothrop Taylor Hunter and the Rev. Aaron Burtis Hunter. Sarah Hunter first organized the St. Augustine's branch of the Woman's Auxiliary in 1891, followed by the Chapel Sunday School on campus. Once she took on the establishment of a hospital on the campus, she raised funds, raised awareness and raised the bar for church and civic leadership at the turn of the twentieth century. This overview provides highlights of her work and legacy.

- 1888 In January Sarah Lothrop Hunter married the Rev. Aaron Burtis Hunter, theology professor, then fourth principal (1891-1916) at St. Augustine's School in Raleigh. By February 1888, these two "white, northern, home missionaries" had moved to the St. Augustine's campus.
[Phoebe Ann Pollitt, *African American Hospitals in North Carolina*, 2017]
- 1891 Mrs. Hunter was first to represent St. Augustine's at Woman's Auxiliary meetings
- 1892 "Mrs. Hunter made a verbal report from St. Augustine's School, Raleigh, where an Auxiliary Branch has lately been organized amongst the pupils."
[*Woman's Auxiliary Annual Report*]
- 1895 "Mrs. A. B. Hunter was elected to represent the North Carolina Auxiliary at the Triennial meeting, in conjunction with Diocesan officers, who represent both Auxiliary and Junior branches." [*Woman's Auxiliary Annual Report*]
- 1895 At General Convention in Minneapolis Sarah Hunter appealed to the Woman's Auxiliary for help to establish a hospital in Raleigh. Reading her speech later in California, Mr. I. L. Collins was moved to donate \$600 as a memorial to his recently deceased wife, Agnes. With an additional anonymous gift of \$500 the hospital came into being.
- 1896 St. Agnes' Hospital opened on campus in the vacant home of a former principal. There was a single cold-water faucet located in the kitchen. When hot water was needed for sterilization, cooking, and other necessities, it was heated on a wood stove and carried in buckets to where it was needed. The hospital laundry consisted of three washtubs and a large iron kettle in the front yard. . . . There were no screens on the windows, and heat was supplied by burning wood, while light was obtained from oil lamps.
[Cecil D. Halliburton, *A History of St. Augustine's College, 1867-1937*]

- 1896 Mrs. A. B. Hunter was Directress of the St. Augustine's Girls' Friendly Guild [11 members] & Director of the St. Augustine's Chapel Sunday School [150 members].
- 1896 "The former Principal's house has been changed into St. Agnes' Hospital and Training School for Nurses. Six women have been under training as nurses. They, with their trained nurse, have made 223 visits to sick people in the neighborhood, thirty-five dispensary patients have been cared for, and seventeen patients treated in the hospital during the last six months. The Raleigh physicians have been most generous in their offers of services." [1897 Diocesan Journal]
- 1898 1st nurses graduated from St. Agnes training school [more than 500 by 1958].
- 1898 "Mrs. Hunter gave a ten-minute talk on the work done at St. Augustine's School, impressing every one present with a sense of the good work by the instructors of the institution." [*Woman's Auxiliary Annual Report*]
- 1899 "Mrs. Hunter gave a five minutes talk in behalf of St. Augustine's and her good fashion condensed much food for thought and suggestion for sympathy and supply for this most useful institution in her short talk. She showed some of the work of the weavers and stated that a school of industry had been endowed at St. Augustine's so the opportunity was offered to any industrious colored boy or girl to get an education in brickmaking, carpenter's work or weaving, absolutely free of cost, except to labor." [*Woman's Auxiliary Annual Report*]
- 1899 60 patients treated; 23 surgeries; 1,670 hospital days; 436 dispensary cases
- 1900 "Mrs. Hunter gave an eight-minute talk about the work in St. Augustine's School. The industrial work of the boys was dwelt upon. The buildings are erected by the boys and their instructors, and a school paper printed by the boys. St. Agnes' Hospital has been equipped and is run by outside help, for the training of colored nurses and for the sick of all denominations. The expenses of this Hospital are only \$5.00 per day. Mrs. Hunter commended it to the people of the Diocese and asked for assistance." [*Woman's Auxiliary Annual Report*]
- 1903 New tile-floored operating room; new kitchen; sterilization room; 2 bathrooms.

- 1903 Formation of the Colored Convocation by the diocese also led to division into the Woman's Auxiliary of the Colored Convocation. When Sarah Hunter chose to stay with the "colored" St. Augustine's branch, a special committee of the Woman's Auxiliary drew up resolutions "that with deep regret at her absence from our annual meeting, we wish to express our appreciation of the inspiration which in former meetings we have received from Mrs. Hunter's presence, and that we recognize in her an earnest missionary who gives her life as devotedly and with as great self-sacrifice as anyone in the field." [*Woman's Auxiliary Annual Report*]
- 1903 "For several weeks last winter a graduate of St. Agnes Training School was under my supervision day and night. Her training was as good as that given in the best hospitals North, and her conduct and gentleness were so excellent that we were glad to know such a representative of the colored people. The nurses are sent out into the neighborhood of St. Agnes School to do nursing among the poor negro families. . . The nurses also teach those around the suffering ones how to care for them. May I commend this noble work to our Woman's Auxiliary?"
[Mattie H. Bailey, Secretary of the Raleigh Convocation, in 1903 Annual Report]
- 1904 New hospital site approved & Sarah Hunter began raising the estimated \$15,000.
- 1905 By year end Sarah Hunter's efforts had raise about half the funds needed.
- 1905 Serving as Secretary of the Woman's Auxiliary, Kate Cheshire, expressed the organization's sentiments to the Diocese (and to her brother, Bishop Cheshire): "You have thought it best that the colored work be a separate organization, with its own officers. By this change we have lost not only in members, but by the help given heretofore, by Mrs. Hunter, of St. Augustine's, one of our Diocesan officers. We have *not* lost our interest in the work, however, and trust that this change may greatly increase the strength and usefulness of the Colored Branch in our Diocese."
- 1909 As Superintendent of St. Agnes' Hospital, Sarah Hunter reported to Diocesan Convention: "The work at St. Agnes' Hospital has gone on steadily during the year with a larger number of patients. During the summer Dr. Hayden was obliged to give up her dining-room and use her office for that purpose in order to accommodate the patients whom she could not turn away. Through several months of fall and winter the building has been taxed to its

utmost capacity. The new hospital will provide more convenient quarters. The mason work of the new building has been done by the students of St. Augustine's School. It is expected that the new St. Agnes' Hospital will be dedicated on May 25th. During the year there have been 328 patients in the Hospital, with 7,684 Hospital Days. There have also been 687 dispensary patients." *[Journal of Convention]*

- 1910 Sarah Hunter was elected United Offering Treasurer for the Woman's Auxiliary of the Colored Convocation.
- 1912 "The hospital is supported from a fund entirely distinct from that of St. Augustine's School, and Mrs. Hunter has made herself responsible for this fund from the beginning of the hospital in 1896. Offerings are always acceptable. Mrs. Hunter is now endeavoring to raise an endowment fund for the hospital and is making an effort to endow each day of the year with \$250.00. The Woman's Auxiliary of the Diocese of North Carolina has agreed to raise the endowment for one day." *[Carolina Churchman, February 1912]*
- 1913 The Woman's Auxiliary St. Agnes' Hospital Fund was named in honor of the late Jane Renwick Wilkes, following her death in January. Mrs. Wilkes was the founding Secretary of the Woman's Auxiliary of the Diocese of North Carolina from its inception in 1882 until her death in January 1913.
- 1913 The Rev. Aaron Burtis Hunter retired as Principal of St. Augustine's School.
- 1920 "St. Agnes' Hospital has been built up by the enthusiastic and unwearied labors of Mrs. Hunter, wife of the Rev. A. B. Hunter, D. D., for so many years principal of St. Augustine's School. Mrs. Hunter was able to enlist the sympathy and generous co-operation of the Woman's Auxiliary throughout the country, besides many individual friends and benefactors, and St. Agnes Hospital is a noble monument of their labors and gifts." *[Bishop Joseph B. Cheshire, Carolina Churchman, March 1920]*
- 1925 Shaw University closed Leonard Hospital, leaving St. Agnes as the only hospital serving African Americans in Raleigh and the surrounding area.
- 1925 Although it turned out to be unsuitable for the purpose, Dr. and Mrs. Hunter offered their house on the St. Augustine's campus for the new Bishop Tuttle School for training colored women in church work & social work, which was in operation from 1925 to 1941.

- 1925 A major fire rendered St. Agnes unusable, but a fundraising campaign, including a donation of \$100 from the Raleigh Ku Klux Klan, soon led to the restoration of the hospital. “Of the \$43, 072 dollars raised, \$25,371 came from African Americans and \$17,751 came from white supporters.”
[Pollitt, *African American Hospitals in North Carolina*, 2017]
- 1926 An Electric elevator was installed in St. Agnes’ Hospital.
- 1926 “And the mention of St. Agnes’ Hospital reminds me that his excellent wife had no small share in putting St. Augustine’s where it now stands in the eyes of our church people throughout the country at large. The Woman’s Auxiliary is the most important auxiliary agency in our general church work. By Mrs. Hunter’s efforts chiefly the Woman’s Auxiliary all over the country became interested in St. Augustine’s. Under Mrs. Hunter’s leadership the Woman’s Auxiliary built St. Agnes’ Hospital, and their generous interest continues to be of great value in the maintenance of the whole work.”
[Bishop Joseph B. Cheshire, *Convention Journal*]
- 1929 The stock market crash and Great Depression led to financial hardships for St. Agnes’ Hospital and other humanitarian organizations, as donors stopped or cut back on their contributions. Among the donors that helped St. Agnes continue providing care and educating nursing students and medical interns were: City of Raleigh; Duke Endowment; Episcopal Church; American Church Institute for Negroes; Julius Rosenwald Fund.
[Pollitt, *African American Hospitals in North Carolina*, 2017]
- 1932 In cooperation with *The Spirit of Missions* monthly journal, the Rev. Charles Breck Ackley, Rector of St. Mary’s Church, Manhattanville, New York, spent a “motoring-with-a-purpose” month to visit some of the Church’s domestic missions. In Raleigh, his first visit was to St. Agnes’ Hospital and he reported the following observations: “The main building is old but the wards are adequate and the hospital well supplied. It is a wonderful thing to have such hospitals in the South. We who live in the North are so used to seeing colored patients in all our public hospitals, that we hardly realize that it is only into such hospitals as this that Negroes are admitted.”
[*Spirit of Missions*, May 1932]
- 1936 St. Agnes was now a 100-bed hospital in a stone building with a dozen doctors on staff.

- 1937 St. Agnes Training School was accredited by the American Medical Association.
- 1933 Sarah Hunter's husband, Dr. Aaron Burtis Hunter, died at the age of 79.
- 1940 Sarah Hunter died in Raleigh on June 13, 1940. The funeral was at Christ Church. The Hunters share a tombstone in Raleigh's Oakwood Cemetery, with the shared inscription: "AND THEIR WORKS DO FOLLOW THEM."
- 1941 In the year following her death, the Sarah L. Hunter Woman's Auxiliary Branch in Wilson was named in her honor. [Woman's Auxiliary Annual Report]
- 1942 The Seminar Room in Benson Library was dedicated to the memory of Mrs. Sarah Hunter. "New furnishings for the room were made possible by a bequest of Mrs. Hunter, who died in Raleigh, N.C., June 13, 1940, in her 94th year. . . . The room is furnished with seminar tables and chairs, and accommodates around 75 persons. Bound volumes of outstanding periodicals line the walls, which are decorated with paintings brought from Europe by the Hunters. The room also contains fine specimens of cabinet work and furniture brought by the Hunters from their travels. A portrait of Mrs. Hunter occupies a prominent place." [North Carolina Churchman, Dec. 15, 1942]
- 1950s St. Agnes' Hospital needed increased funding levels to come in line with stricter hospital accreditation standards. In 1955 Wake County voters approved a \$5 million bond issue to build a new public hospital. [Pollitt, *African American Hospitals in North Carolina*, 2017]
- 1956 Diocesan Woman's Auxiliary donated patient gowns, pajamas, etc.
- 1958 The City of Raleigh announced plans for new 380-bed hospital facility.
- 1959 The last nursing class graduated from St. Agnes' Hospital training program and during the next year most services were closed down.
- 1961 St. Agnes' Hospital officially closed shortly after Wake Memorial Hospital opened.
- 1968 "They were rare people, totally dedicated. She, five feet tall, kept open house for trustees and visitors, kept books, kept store, served as his secretary, ran the Sunday School, organized the mothers, taught sewing, and became the founder, manager and fund-raiser for St. Agnes' Hospital." [Arthur Ben Chitty, *St. Augustine's College, Raleigh, North Carolina*, 1968]

- 2009 A collaboration between the Allied Health Program at St. Augustine’s College, Coldwell Banker Commercial Trademark Properties and J Davis Architects, applied for federal funding to restore the former hospital site as St. Agnes Health Disparities Institute. This institute was envisioned to assist in the ongoing battle against health-care disparities while providing students with the academic resources necessary to pursue careers in medical-related disciplines. [*Triangle Tribune*, March 17, 2009]
- 2017 “The stone shell of the building still sits on the St. Augustine’s University campus as a visual reminder of the care and education provided to thousands of African Americans during the Jim Crow era.”
[Pollitt, *African American Hospitals in North Carolina*, 2017]
- 2019 Dr. Gaddis Faulcon took over the leadership of Saint Augustine’s University following the departure of Dr. Everett Ward. During his five years at the helm, Dr. Ward was a strong proponent of the envisioned transformation of St. Agnes from a “stone shell” into a multi-faceted center combining academic programs and community health services. The future of this transformation is currently on hold, while the university deals with ongoing financial and accreditation issues.

“Envision Saint Agnes Hospital” is a public art project utilizing visual and performing arts to honor and revitalize this historic Raleigh landmark.
[<https://vaeraleigh.org/envision-saint-agnes-hospital>]



In 1909 Dr. Hunter praised Sarah for accomplishments both professional and personal: “The care of her household, which includes three of the teachers and often other visitors, would be enough for an ordinary woman; but in addition to that, she has the superintendency and entire financial responsibility of Saint Agnes’ Hospital and Training School for Nurses and she is my bookkeeper for the school, keeping at least 200 accounts of mine, and many more of her own. She has charge of all the missionary boxes and missionary store and the correspondence connected with them. She is in charge of the Sunday School, of the mothers’ meeting, gives occasional counsel in working and sewing departments, and is resorted to generally by everybody who has any questions to be answered or difficulty to be solved.” [In W. Montague Cobb, M.D., “Saint Agnes’ Hospital, Raleigh North Carolina, 1896-1961,” *Journal of the National Medical Association* 53 (September 1961), 441; 446]

The last word, however, goes to Sarah herself – with edits she made to her own copy of Dr. Mary V. Glenton’s “The Story of a Hospital.” The following few pages show “Mrs. Hunter” to be a stickler for the facts. This booklet is in the Aaron Burtis Hunter Collection at the State Archives in Raleigh: <http://digital.ncdcr.gov/cdm/ref/collection/p16062coll15/id/552>

Mrs. Hunter

A ROUND ROBIN

THE STORY OF A HOSPITAL

MARY V. GLENTON, M. D., *Supt.*
ST. AGNES HOSPITAL
RALEIGH, N. C.

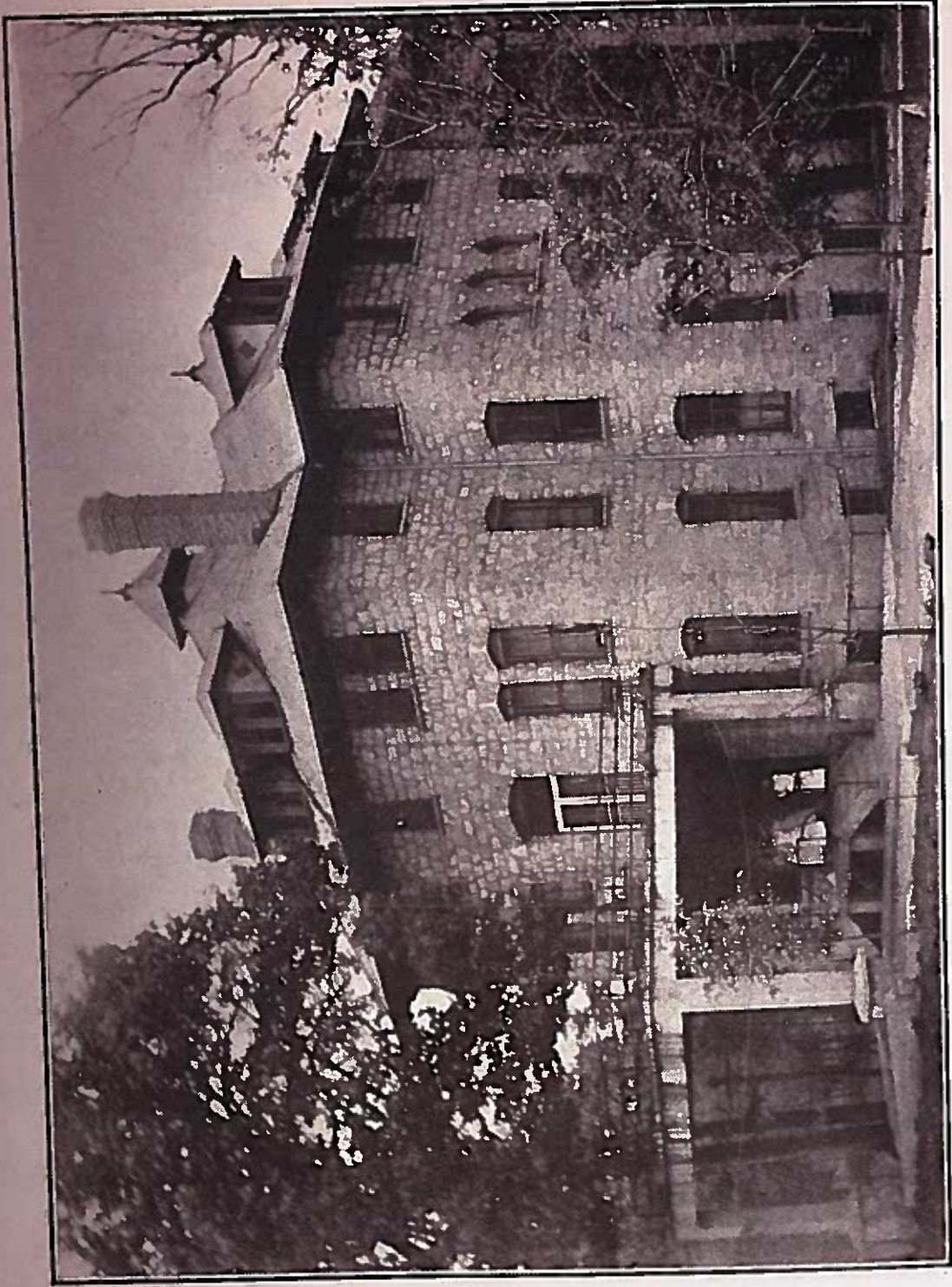


PUBLICATION NO. 130

FEBRUARY, 1923

CHURCH MISSIONS PUBLISHING CO.
45 CHURCH ST., HARTFORD, CONN.

Entered at the Post Office at Hartford, Conn. as Second Class Matter, April 1894



ST. AGNES HOSPITAL AND TRAINING SCHOOL FOR THE COLORED PEOPLE
RALEIGH, N. C.

THE STORY OF A HOSPITAL

By

DR. MARY V. GLENTON

Superintendent, St. Agnes Hospital, Raleigh, N. C.

In 1895, in the City of Minneapolis, Mrs. A. B. Hunter, wife of the Principal of St. Augustine's School, Raleigh, N. C., made known to the people attending the General Convention, the very urgent need of a Hospital, in which the Colored People of Raleigh might get the proper care and attention. A benevolent man of Orange, California, was moved to donate the sum of six hundred dollars toward the starting of such a Hospital. This with another special gift, made about one thousand dollars in hand, and was the sum that founded St. Agnes.

Dr. Sutton's residence on the school grounds had been empty ever since his death some months before. Already a good sized house, it was enlarged and altered, and in that building the Hospital was started.

On St. Luke's Day, October 18, 1896, the institution was formally opened under the name of St. Anges' Hospital.

On that day a work was begun and dedicated that has developed into one of the most important institutions in the Church today, one that has a wide spread influence, and that is in its way doing much to form and mould the future of the Colored Race.

But while the Hospital was to the neighborhood a thing of wonder, it was, as are most of our Church Institutions, at the start, a makeshift. These are the conditions under which it was begun.

No water in the house, except one faucet in the kitchen.
No hot water, but what could be heated on the ward stoves.

Whole house heated by wood.

Two small steamers for sterilizers (the results untrustworthy), formed the operating room equipment—a probationer stationed outside of the operating room door, to hand in hot water when called for, and to empty buckets of used water.

No screens in windows or doors, and flying things innumerable, with wings small and great.

Laundry equipment—three ordinary wash tubs, flat iron heater, and a big iron kettle in the yard for boiling clothes.

Ice only in extreme emergency, and it had to come from town. Automobiles were not invented, and trolleys were still an oddity, and Mr. Hunter's horse Nellie with a two-wheeled cart had to carry the ice and other things from Raleigh—~~four~~^{one} mile.

Cool water was brought by hand from the spring to bathe Typhoid patients, and the Nurses carried it. And that was for old-fashioned Typhoid treatment before the days of vaccine. There was no sewerage.

The Office was Reception Room, Doctor's Living Room, Dining Room, Surgeons' Dressing Room on operating days, and sometimes the Morgue.

No plumbing anywhere—only earth closets.

No Diet kitchen—the trays kept on a shelf in the kitchen.

No gas for cooking nor for lighting; simply oil lamps.

Not always enough food for patients; nor the proper kind for nurses and staff. *Very plain, but always enough.*

No patients came the first week. The second week a case arrived of Typhoid fever—a man, desperately ill, others followed, thus St. Agnes' (that was founded as a Hospital for women and children) became a general Hospital at the very beginning. In the first six months, fifteen were cared

*A man gave 1st money on certain
Agnes name of his deceased*

for, two crippled children were helped, but not cured.

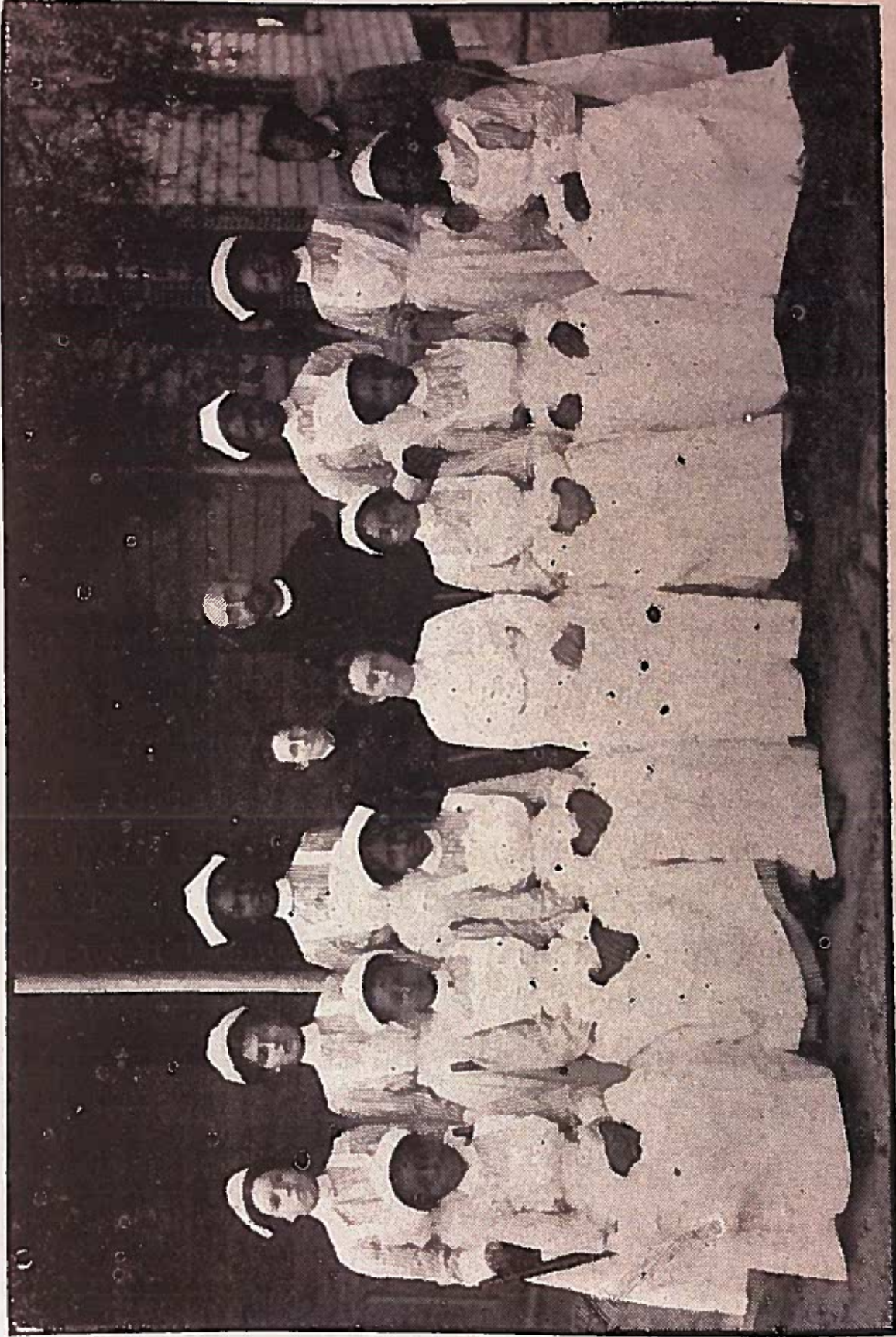
In 1900, on Easter Monday, Dr. Catherine P. Hayden, was installed at St. Agnes' as Resident Physician and Superintendent of Nurses. Miss Ednah H. Wheeler, the Doctor's friend, came a little later, to look after the housekeeping department, the linen and the creature comforts that lend so much to the daily life. Mrs. Hunter was Superintendent and Treasurer, and a staff had been formed some time before with Dr. Hubert A. Royster as Surgeon-in-Chief, with a head for each of the other departments. These men were called on any hour of the day or night. Very frequently at three or four in the morning one or more of them would be summoned, but they would promptly come, walking through *a mile* ~~four miles~~ of sticky, glutinous, clinging red mud up to and above their ankles in bad weather. These men still stand just as ready today to give of themselves for any emergency and to respond in season and out of season. The coming and going are easier, to be sure; but the getting out of bed at the wrong time is as hard, yes harder, because of the years of work on the road behind.

But all through the annals we read, "We have been wonderfully blest so far; but the treasury is empty. "We depend upon the daily mail for our support."

St. Augustine's League pledged ten dollars a month, and *each* a few friends gave five dollars a month.

At the very beginning classes were formed, with lectures and recitations; just as they are being held today. In the summer of 1900 there were four nurses, but two of them were sick all summer.

ugh. A paralyzed woman was found in a cabin at Christmas time, with no food and no fire. A baby was brought in from ten miles in the country. There were, as said above, no automobiles, not even a Ford—just mules for transportation; no ambulances—just carts. An elderly woman was badly burned who needed care but, "No money in the treasury." Little Florine, a baby, badly burned, was put on the "Little Helpers' Cot," and her life saved.



A GROUP OF NURSES—ST. AGNES HOSPITAL.

As published in Saint Augustine's Record, December 1906



“AND THEIR WORKS DO FOLLOW THEM”
The Hunters are buried together in Raleigh’s Oakwood Cemetery
in close proximity to the campus of Saint Augustine’s University