

SELECTION OF JOHNSON CITY FOR NORMAL SITE

In East Tennessee

BOARD OF EDUCATION REACHES DECISION AFTER THREE DAYS
DELIBERATION

The Awards are Conditional on Each City Complying with All Promises
Made in its Normal Application

*Board Makes Statement and Gives Reasons for Selection of the Normal Sites in
Johnson City, Murfreesboro, Memphis*

Johnson City Comet, December 9, 1909

State Normal Awards:

East Tennessee – **Johnson City** gives \$150,000 in bonds, free lights,
water, and site.

Middle Tennessee – **Murfreesboro** gives \$180,000 in bonds and free site.

West Tennessee – **Memphis** gives \$100,000 in money, \$200,000 in
bonds, a free site worth \$50,000, observation and practice school worth
\$50,000 to be maintained for ten years at \$10,000 per year.

The State Board of Education yesterday selected Johnson City, Murfreesboro, and Memphis as locations for the state Normal Schools for the three grand divisions of the state. The decision was reached after three days' careful deliberation on the part of the Board. Believing them to be the logical and proper sites for the schools, a final session was held last night in which a lengthy statement, signed, by each and every member, was issued giving reasons for the action.

Twenty-two towns submitted bids for the schools. Later Trenton and Milan withdrew their bids, leaving only twenty towns from which to select the three sites. Realizing that seventeen of the twenty must by necessity be eliminated, the Board accepted the bids of the three towns making the best offers, which in its opinion were Johnson City, Murfreesboro, and Memphis.

Since the passage of the last general education bill by the General Assembly a great deal of interest has been manifested in the location of

these schools. A high spirit of generous rivalry was shown the various towns, which grew more intense as the day of selection drew near. In some instances the rivalry even approached bitterness. But now since the decision of the Board has been made public the delegations from the various losing towns have little or nothing to say. Of course, the delegations from Johnson City, Murfreesboro, and Memphis are gratified at their victory, while the delegations from the other places, while disappointed do not express any ill feeling toward the Board.

Reasons for Choice

Individually, the members of the Board express various reasons for their choice. In addition to making the most liberal offers, Johnson City, Murfreesboro, and Memphis are considered the best geographically for Normal School purposes. An examination of the map of Tennessee will reveal this fact. If a rule is placed on the drawing with one end on Memphis and the other on Johnson City, it will fall directly over Murfreesboro. Besides this feature, the Board took into consideration the accessibility of all the towns and concluded that the three chosen could be the easiest reached from all points and sections.

In Memphis, the Board considers they have a most excellent location. Decidedly the most accessible town of any of the western division submitting a bid, it offers an inducement more than double that of any other town in that division, aggregating nearly \$300,000. Besides providing most modern buildings, and excellent grounds, the Board concluded that this amount would warrant the construction of dormitories for the accommodation of the students.

The school will not be located in the corporate limits of Memphis. This provision is set forth in the contract. Suitable grounds adjacent to the city will be chosen to which a car line, walks, and electric power can be conveniently run.

Johnson City's Offer

According to the opinion of the Board, Johnson City made by far the most liberal offer of any other East Tennessee town. They considered the thriving Washington County city the most accessible and best for the state institution.

The location of the middle division was the bone of contention. It was the general opinion that Clarksville would be selected. It's offer was \$185,000, a free site and free water. Murfreesboro offered \$180,000 and a free site. But when the Board selected Johnson City for the eastern and Memphis for the western division, they considered Murfreesboro the

proper place for the middle division from the standpoint of accessibility and geographic location.

In each case the Board reserves the right to reconsider its action if the provisions of the bids are not fully carried out.

Many telegrams were received yesterday by the Board expressing appreciation of the selection. "God Bless the State Board of Education" was wired from Murfreesboro. **"Our stock is above normal" came from Johnson City.**

Statement of the Board

The Board of Education issued the following statement concerning the normal schools and their location:

Under the Act of 1909, the State Board of Education was charged with the duty of selecting sites for three state normal schools, one to be established in each grand division of the state, and pursuant to House Bill No. 212, Chapter 264, of the Acts of Tennessee authorizing counties and municipalities to make donations of money for the purpose of establishing and equipping the normal schools, the Board advertised for bids and received propositions from twenty-two counties and municipalities in the state. The Board visited each place submitting a proposition with the exception of two, which withdrew their bid, and heard the arguments of speakers advanced in favor of each locality, and in addition examined the written briefs which were filed.

The interest manifested over the state in establishing these schools far exceeded our expectations, and the arguments offered for each place applying were strongly presented: Each had its merits considered, and the responsibility of deciding between rival elements has been very great, as every competing place possessed some merit and all were intensely interested in obtaining the school. There have been differences of opinion among the members of the Board as to where the normal schools should be located and our final decision has been reached after full consultation and consideration, and after each member has expressed himself fully as to the merits of the places applying, it being necessary in order to reach an agreement at all, for the members of the Board to act in a spirit of harmony and compromise. With these difficulties and embarrassments under which we have labored, and appreciating fully our responsibilities to the people and the objects of the normal schools, and bearing in mind so far as we could, all the elements to be considered the following decision has been reached by the majority of the members:

It is the opinion of a majority of the Board that in West Tennessee the proper place to locate the normal school for that grand division of the state is in Shelby County, at some point outside the limits of the City of Memphis. The Board has been offered \$100,000 in money, the proceeds from sale of \$200,000 in bonds, a free site worth \$50,000, an observation and practice school to cost not less than \$50,000 to be maintained for ten years at a cost of \$10,000 a year free to the Board, and in addition the Board has been guaranteed that the car line will be run to the site selected, granitoid pavements laid, and that connection will be made to the city sewers and also that city water and lights will be provided to the school. With this large offer, the Board did not feel that in justice to the demands and objects of the normal school that it should refuse the offer of Shelby County and Memphis, believing that with the amount of money offered that dormitories can be established for the young men and young women so that it will not be necessary to Board in the city of Memphis, or elsewhere. The majority of the Board, therefore, in consideration of these offers, has determined to locate the normal school for West Tennessee at the place indicated, but under the following conditions and none other:

That every guarantee and inducement offered shall be faithfully and fully carried out.

That the amount offered shall be sufficient not only to build and equip the normal school, but to build and equip separate dormitories for the young men and the young women.

That the site offered shall be a suitable one large enough for all the purposes of the school and in a locality which will be unobjectionable, and unless these conditions shall be complied with, the Board reserves the right to reject the offers made and to select some other place if, in the opinion of the Board, it would better serve the interests of the public and the objects of the school.

In Middle Tennessee the majority of the Board has selected Murfreesboro as the proper place to locate the normal. The county and municipality offers the proceeds of \$180,000 of bonds and the Board has been guaranteed a free site to be selected by the Board, and has also had the guarantee that a sewer system would be inaugurated in the City of Murfreesboro before the school is located and ready to begin work. This bid by Murfreesboro and Rutherford County is about equal to that of Clarksville and Montgomery County, and is greater than that of any other county of municipality bidding for the normal in Middle Tennessee; hence a majority of the Board has considered this to be the proper place for the Middle Tennessee state normal. However, this action of the Board is conditioned on the faithful carrying out of all the guarantees made by Rutherford County and the City of Murfreesboro, and it is also conditioned

on their providing a suitable site to be selected by the state board for the establishment of the normal, and unless all these guarantees and inducements are faithfully carried out, the Board reserves the right to reject the offer of Murfreesboro and select some other site for the Middle Tennessee normal school should it be deemed proper to do so.

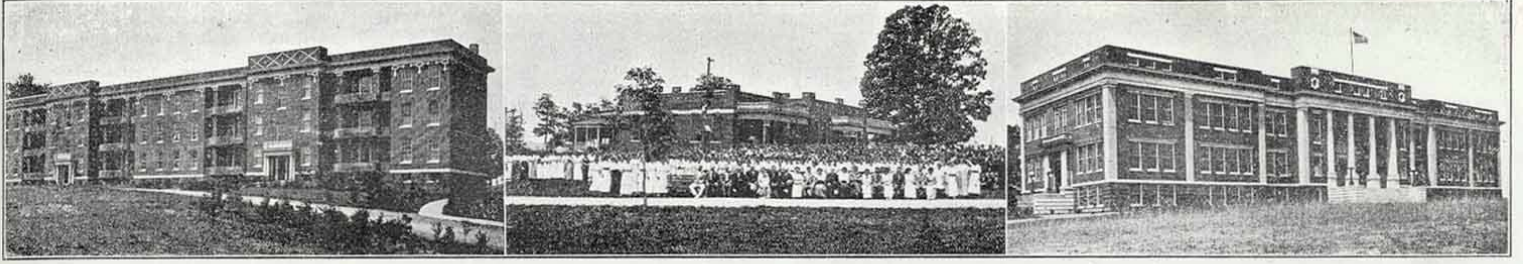
The majority of the Board has decided that Johnson City, in Washington County, is the proper place for the location of the East Tennessee normal. *It offered the proceeds of \$150,000 in bonds, free lights and free water, and in addition a free site to be selected by the Board, and the municipality of Johnson City further obligates itself to build a car line to the site selected, and to lay granitoid sidewalks to the school.*

This bid was larger than the bid from any other place applying from East Tennessee and a majority of the Board has considered that it meet as fully as any other the essential requirements of the Act under which the normal schools are created. However, the selection of Johnson City as a site for East Tennessee is conditioned, like the others, on the faithful performance of all the guarantees and offers made, and the selection of a site which will be suitable for the purposes of the school, and if any of these guarantees or offers is not carried out in full the Board reserves the right to reject the offer of Johnson City and select another site for the normal school if in its discretion it deems necessary.

The Board regrets the disappointment that will come to many applicants of the state normals, but congratulates them and the state upon the educational spirit which has been so manifest everywhere we have visited. Out of the agitation and generous rivalry much good will result to the cause of education.

The personal acknowledgement of the Board is hereby tendered the people of all places visited for their hospitality and kindness.

Malcolm R. Patterson, Governor, Chairman, Ex-officio
R. L. Jones, Secretary
A. L. Todd
T. B. Loggins
J. L. Brooks
R. L. Bynum
James M. Barker
W. N. Billingsley



East Tennessee State Normal School.