Views of Millersville State Normal School, 1855-1929
An explanation of the founding of the Lancaster County Normal Institute in 1855, later known as the Millersville State Normal School from the 1855 catalog.
Student Life

- Athletics played important part in the student life of Millersville. The two literary societies as well as the YMCA, YWCA and YWTCA played important roles in the lives of the students. May Day festivities were a highlight of student activities.
Baseball Team, 1891
Football Team, 1899

LYTE, TAILOR, ROHRER, GLICK, KEHLER, DBENEM, PIRGETEL, THOMAS, HERR, KAUFMAN, WARNER.
Men’s Basketball Team, 1900

Emmet Gherst
Thomas McGurl

J. V. R. Evans, Capt.
Fred. Hawes

Herbert Grebinge
William Hershey
Women’s Field Hockey Team, 1924
YMCA Cabinet, 1910

From the Amanda Landes Photograph Album
YWCA Pageant, 1916

From the Amanda Landes Photograph Album
May Day, 1928
Dorm Room, 1899
James P. Wickersham was one of the founders of the Normal School. He was born in Chester County in 1825 and died in Lancaster in 1891. He was a teacher, Superintendent of Public School, Lancaster County Superintendent and Principal of the Normal School before becoming the State Superintendent in 1866.
Faculty, 1863
Faculty, 1899
Old Main was built soon after the school was founded and housed the dorms, classrooms, cafeteria and chapel. It stood at the corner of Frederick and George until its demolition in 1970.
Pictured above is the Gymnasium in 1891. This building was built in 1890 and has had many uses. Today this building is known as Dutcher Hall.
The library was built in 1895. Here is an early photograph of the building. Today it is known as the Biemesderfer Executive Center.
The lake has been an important part of the history of our school. Here it is in 1900 with some women enjoying a row on the lake. [From the Amanda Landes Photograph Album]
Science Hall sat on the edge of the lake. It was built in 1897 and went through a number of changes before it was torn down in 1962. Here it is pictured in 1898.
Shenk’s Lane played an important role in student life at Millersville. Here is reminiscence from the 1900 yearbook.

**D**EAR old walk! How many memories of happy students with smiling faces and merry laughter haunt every step of the pathway from the School to the “Con.”! What a place it is on an afternoon in late spring or early summer, to while away a pleasant hour and commune with nature, which is everywhere about one. Fall, too, has its beauties down the long lane, for the lover of nature.

Pleasant recollections cluster about every rod of the lane, which each new student hears of on the day he enters the school. These pleasant associations will touch chords in the memories of most of us, when, long years hence, we shall return to the scenes of our youthful triumphs and joys. Then Shenk’s Lane will hold no small place in the happy reunion of hearts and hands within the walls of our alma mater. And may all our recollections connected with the dear old Normal be as pleasant as the hours spent strolling in the shady walk called Shenk’s Lane.
HISTORY AND DESCRIPTION

MILLERSVILLE STATE NORMAL SCHOOL, the oldest normal school in Pennsylvania, was recognized as a State Normal School, December 2, 1859. This recognition was in accordance with the Normal School Law of 1857. However, five years before this, Millersville Normal as an institution of learning and professional training had its origin when the “citizens of Millersville and its vicinity . . . erected a building for the purpose of establishing a school, which they proposed to denominate the Millersville Academy.” The years between this beginning and the recognition of the school as a State Normal were years of success and progress. In many respects this “First State Normal School in Pennsylvania” became the model of all the others in the State as well as many Normal Schools in states lying west of Pennsylvania. From 1857 to 1917 the business affairs of the School were managed by a Board of Trustees elected by the stockholders and appointed by the State Superintendent of Public Instruction. Since February 24, 1917, the Millersville State Normal School has been owned by the State and managed by a Board of nine Trustees appointed by the State Superintendent of Public Instruction.

Millersville

The Millersville Normal is peculiarly fortunate in its environment. The village is situated four miles from the city of Lancaster, thus combining the advantages of city and country. It is a community of homes and churches, and easily reached by three branches of the Pa. R. R. as well as by the Reading system. Half-hour trolley service connects Millersville and Lancaster, while those traveling by auto will find a state highway between the two places. There is trolley connection also between Millersville and Pequea, a popular summer resort on the Columbia branch of the Pa. R. R.

Millersville Normal has a reputation far beyond the borders of the state, and to be enrolled among its alumni is a coveted honor. Several of its Principals have enjoyed a national reputation and its thousands of alumni and former students occupy positions of trust and honor both in this country and abroad.

Grounds, Buildings, Equipment, Etc.

Millersville Normal occupies a many-acred campus with grand old trees, flowering shrubs, well-placed terraces, inviting walks, etc. The buildings comprise the ladies’ and the gentlemen’s dormitories (separated by the administration building), science hall, library, gymnasium, training school, domestic buildings, etc. The dormitories are comfortable and commodious, many rooms being en suite. Electricity and steam furnish light and heat. A deep artesian well on the grounds provides an abundance of pure water. Classrooms and laboratories are thoroughly equipped and the library offers thousands of well-selected volumes for reading, study, and research.

Many marked improvements in grounds and buildings have been made during the past few years, all tending toward the comfort and convenience of faculty and student body. The dining-room service is worthy of special mention: along with other good things, milk for drinking is served both morning and evening. All rooms have single beds.

Millersville issues a very beautiful book of views. A copy may be had on request.

Recreation

Millersville offers abundant opportunity for recreation and relaxation. A large athletic field, tennis courts, hockey, skating, etc., are provided for the student body. Botanical, zoological, and geological tramps and hikes also afford a pleasant and profitable stimulus.

Literary and Religious Life of the School

Millersville offers splendid opportunities along literary and religious lines for all those that are interested in such activities. For many years the Page and the Normal Literary Societies have afforded excellent facilities to students to gain experience in public debating, speaking, reading and music.

Chapel services are conducted daily, with Bible classes each Sunday morning and vespers services each Sunday evening. The Y. M. C. A., Y. W. C. A., and other associations are very vital factors in the normal and religious life of the school.

Students who do not find their church connection in Millersville have the privilege of going to Lancaster.