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## **Washington Grove and Segregation: Notes and Chronology**

### **The Fence and its Gates**

### **Fears, Real or Imagined**

#### ***Philip K. Edwards, Washington Grove, 1873-1937 (1988: 133-137)***

*“What a consensus of white people were concluding by the mid-[1890s] was that black people, while certainly possessing the same right of freedom as other races, probably were incapable as a race of becoming their absolute equals. What this view endorsed was the separation of the races into their separate endeavors and the legalization of what was de facto true by this time anyway—the racial segregation of society... the twin communities of Washington Grove and Emory Grove had existed for 23 years before Plessy v. Ferguson was heard by the Supreme Court of the land and segregation became U.S. policy. The effect on the Grove was small but it was significant... In 1897, in response to whatever real or imagined fears may have driven them, the trustees voted to close the gates of the Association during the Emory Grove Camp Meeting.”*

### **The Washington Grove Fence and its Gates**

#### **Washington Grove Camp Meeting Association (WGCMA) President’s Report, May 30, 1891**

“... from Grove Avenue to the fence in course of erection is demonstrated the manner in which the welfare of the Grove has been looked after...”

[see also *Edwards 1988: 75-76*, quote from *The Sentinel*, Aug. 1875. “Meeting began August 4<sup>th</sup> to bad weather. A drawback is the inaccessibility of the camp grounds to carriages...a post-and-rail fence erected around the grounds makes it difficult for those visiting just a day or two who expect to use their carriages for rendezvous... makes the grounds excellent for promenading by persons from the city.”]

#### **WGCMA President’s Report, May 20, 1892**

“A good substantial fence, which was commenced last year, has been completed, thereby adding to the beauty and privacy of this former haven of rest.”

#### **WGCMA Board of Trustees Minutes, June 12, 1893**

Committee on Grounds was directed to put up the necessary notices at the various exits and entrances to the grounds notifying the public that the Association property is private property.

### **WGCMA Board of Trustees Minutes, Nov. 15, 1893**

Resolved that the order of the Board of Trustees relative to the closing of the gates, made at the last meeting be modified so that the gate west of the hotel be opened and a new one made at the Stile. The last to be closed and latched but not locked. After Dec. 1<sup>st</sup> or as soon as the residents of the Grove have left, and it is deemed expedient, then said gates shall be locked, so that the right-of-way and the protection of property be preserved and protected.

### **WGCMA President's Report, May 30, 1894**

“For a long time, the passage of the public through our grounds has been freely permitted, until it came to the attention of some of the members of the Board of Trustees that certain persons claimed as a right, the use of our grounds as a thoroughfare. That no right by prescription might attach, notices were placed July 3, 1893 at the entrances to our grounds that the same were not public ways. Some of these notices were torn down by persons not connected with the association, and threats were made that if the Trustees should attempt to close the gates against the public “there would be trouble.” In November the Board of Trustees ordered certain gates to be closed and locked, and, in consequence, the Board of County Commissioners were petitioned by certain residents of the County to condemn a strip of land through the center of our grounds and lay out a public highway thereon, the route thus selected approaching the Tabernacle within about 100 feet.

“The petition has been denied, after a formal examination. As a result of the action of the Trustees, the acquiring of an easement by prescription over any wagon roads within our enclosures has been prevented and if such action by the Trustees had not been taken this year might have seen the inability of the Association to close its gates to the public. It has been claimed by some who opposed the action of the Trustees that the danger of a prescription easement becoming attached was only fancied in view of the fact that at certain times, previously, the gates had been closed and locked, and, therefore the association had thus protected themselves. Upon consulting authorities, I was not assured that the association was fully protected by their former action, for that it was claimed that at the time the gates had heretofore been closed, it was not for the avowed purpose of asserting the rights of the association, but rather for their convenience, and so claimed to be only temporary in its application. The more serious question was as to the walk entrance at the head of Broadway. This walk does not appear to ever have been closed to the public, prior to the past year and the entrance there is from the highway is duly shown upon a published plat of the association grounds. The right to use this entrance and walk may possibly have become attached to the public, which if true was certainly embarrassing to the Association. To solve the question, the entrance at the head of Broadway was completely closed and a new entrance opened and provided with a gate at some distance removed. The new entrance not being at the point of intersection of the highway and any platted path disclaims the idea of permanency.

“The gateway to the new entrance was closed at times other gates were closed and locked, and this action caused much opposition from outsiders and also from some of the stockholders for the association to protect themselves by the closing of the old entrance at the head of Broadway it became necessary to close also the one that appeared to be a substitute therefor, so that those who claim the right of way over the walk connected to the

old entrance must enforce their right at the identical place where the right attached because of their being no other means of reaching it. Fortunately for the association, the expressed dissent to the action of the Trustees was confined to the place where the new entrance had temporarily been provided, and twice was this barricade destroyed, and in each instance by people who were not stockholders nor were they persons who from usage had acquired a quasi-right to the old entrance, but they were persons who were interlopers upon the grounds of the association and not entitled to any rights or privileges connected therewith.”

**WGCMA President’s Report, May 30, 1896**

“The R.R. Co. has already signified its purpose to beautify their grounds adjacent to their track, at the point from which the old switch was removed in front of our gateway...”

**WGCMA Board of Trustees Minutes, Aug. 14, 1897**

“All gates except the West Gate, were ordered to be closed during the continuance of the Emory Grove Camp.”

**WGCMA Board of Trustees Minutes, Sept. 15, 1897**

“Signs were ordered to be placed at the various entrances to the grounds notifying the travelling public of the privacy of the grounds and that no heavy wagons shall be driven through them.”

**WGCMA Board of Trustees Minutes, Sept. 20, 1897**

“Chairman of Committee on Grounds was directed to execute the rule in regard to closing the various gates to prevent heavy hauling through grounds. This rule closes the grounds Dec. 1<sup>st</sup>.”

**WGCMA President’s Report, May 30, 1903**

“The paling [i.e. picket] fence in front of our grounds at best will not last many years and must be rebuilt in the near future or substituted with and I would recommend that authority be given the trustees to set out a California Hedge the length of the paling. This in the three years probably be high enough that the paling could be removed...”

**WGCMA President’s Report, May 30, 1907**

“It is very essential that the entire fence around the enclosure receive immediate attention and it is hoped that we may have funds promptly for this purpose.”

**WGCMA President’s Report, May 30, 1910**

“The claim of the County Commissioners to a twenty-foot reservation for one-half mile along the County Road was resisted and the fences put up on the line intend these fences as ordered by the Trustees until our entire property is properly enclosed and free from depredation and trespass.”

### **WGCMA President's Report, May 30, 1914**

"The Board has had the boundary fence and other parts of the Grove surveyed and have now established the line and put up the boundary fence...You have before you a proposal to allow a gate to be placed in the northern boundary in the line of Sixth Avenue."

### **Fears, Real or Imagined**

Washington Grove Camp Meeting Association May 14, 1895, *"Report to Board of Trustees Washington Grove Camp Meeting Association regarding the partial clearing of about ten acres, more or less, of the Grounds of the Association, Northwest of the Laytonsville Road and back of the store kept by T.F. Carlisle."*

"What had been accomplished? The grounds have been cleared of a great tangle of underbrush and scrub trees and of dead and dying pine trees....also ready access has been given to the groves of fine old oaks and other trees where children can now go without the convenient lurking places for tramps and vicious persons which has heretofore been such a constant menace to the persons and safety of our women and children who should pass through that part of our grounds; we have also destroyed the pestilent nests and hiding places for the bottle and jug business which infests our camp during our popular meetings."

### **WGCMA President's Report, May 30, 1893**

"In December last twenty cottages were broken into and some articles of little value to the owners were stolen. The Trustees held a meeting at the Grove December 5, 1892 and took measures to secure the arrest and conviction of the thief, Jesse Lancaster, who finally gave himself up to the Sheriff and was sentenced to fourteen years in the Penitentiary."

*[see also Edwards 1988: 136-137. "...one Jesse Lancaster, an Emory Grove resident broke into and ransacked twelve Grove cottages...Jesse Lancaster served six years for his crime, but the trustees joined with leaders of Emory Grove in 1899 to petition for his release and pardon."]*

### **WGCMA President's Report, May 30, 1896**

"...our beautiful grove should be known as a summer home for rest and sweet content."

### **WGCMA President's Report, May 30, 1910**

"... about the 19<sup>th</sup> of March of this year, two vicious boys, one living on the grounds and the other outside the grounds amused themselves on a Sunday evening by throwing stones at all exposed windows of cottages on the east side of the grounds. Some glass doors and windows of 42 of our cottages were more or less damaged in this way, and some will require considerable expense to put in repair. The keeper of the grounds promptly reported the matter to the Trustees and the boys were arrested at once, and taken to Rockville; but they secured bail for their appearance at court... [T]he President of the Association...and other witnesses appeared before the Grand Jury and asked that the boys be indicted for the offence so that they might be properly punished. Two days after this time, the father of one of the boys called upon the President of the Association, and in great agony and distress pleaded that his boy might be released, promising that he and the father of the other boy would repair all damages and that they would punish their boys, and see to

it that they behave themselves. As these boys were under twelve years of age...this seemed like the wise and proper course to pursue..."

**WGCMA President's Report, May 30, 1910**

"The claim of the County Commissioners to a twenty-foot reservation for one-half mile along the County Road was resisted and the fences put up on the line intend these fences as ordered by the Trustees until our entire property is properly enclosed and free from depredation and trespass."