

MAJOR PARHAM'S GOLDEN BASKET

By Clara B. Kennan

Professor R.H. Parham, for whom Little Rock's Parham School is named, was a much-loved little man, with smiling blue eyes and mutton-chops whiskers. Some news stories and documents tell his story.

In the Arkansas School Journal for February, 1908, was this:

"Everybody knows Prof. R. H. Parham, of Little Rock, for he is one of the few remaining teachers of the state who took up the work of teaching for a living back in the early days. For thirty years he has been connected with the Little Rock schools, and many of the best men and women in the city today received their training at his hand. He is loved by all who know him.

"February third was his golden wedding anniversary, and the Peabody Alumni Association of Little Rock Schools, took advantage of this occasion to show to Professor Parham how highly they regard him. They presented him with \$125 in gold in five dollar denominations, and also presented him with a beautiful booklet containing the following inscription:

"To Prof. R. H. Parham, Feb. 3, 1908.

"Dear Major -- It is with much pleasure that some of your old pupils and members of the Alumni Association of our High School call to extend to you and your noble wife our congratulations on this, your Golden Wedding Day. It is not permitted many husbands and wives to enjoy the privilege of reaching the half-century milestone of wedded life together.

"If any of God's noblemen should be blessed with long life and the companionship and help of his beloved wife, that one should be so blessed who has been a wise counsellor, a faithful teacher, and a loving friend, inspiring to noble thoughts and good deeds the youth of our land, one who not only instructs in the useful branches of knowledge, developing and training the faculties of the mind for the everyday duties of life, but at the same time by his courteous ways, his gentlemanly bearing, his winning personality, awakens a love and reverence for the man himself, for that transcends all else.

"Such a counsellor, such a teacher, such a friend, has been and is our beloved Major R. H. Parham. Your life of useful devotion to the cause of Education in our city can elicit only the highest praise. Everyone who comes to bring you this message and this token today, speaks these words, not from the lips only but from the heart.

"In the fall of 1878 you became Principal of our High School, after having for several years been connected with St. John's College. Up to this time, nine years after the organization of our Public Schools, there had been eight principals. You held the position for fifteen years, until 1893. Now, after fifteen more years of continued service, a total of thirty years, you are still in the harness, doing faithful and loving service.

"During your long administration, many changes have taken place. You have seen the schools grow from their small beginnings to their present magnificent proportions. The High School has changed from Sherman to Scott, from Scott to Peabody, and finally from Peabody to the New High School Building (at 14th and Scott).

"During your fifteen years as Principal of the High School, 202 young men and women graduated from the School, all of whom were helped and guided by your influence and words of counsel. In addition to the above