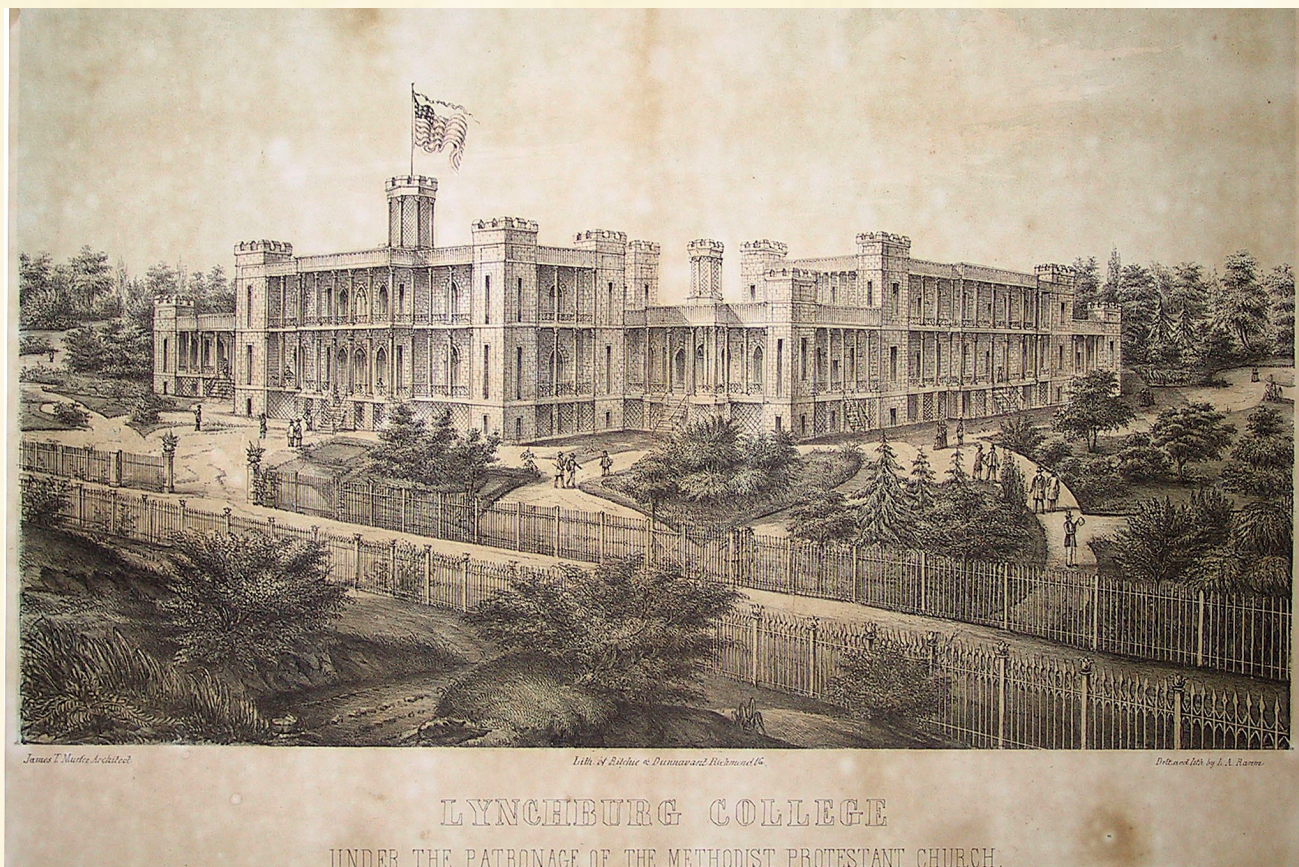


# Lynchburg College or College Hospital

Lynchburg College founded in 1855 by the Methodist Protestant Church and was the first college in Lynchburg. In April 1861 the trustees of the college, due to most of the students leaving for army service, voted to suspend operations and offer the building for use by the Confederate army. It was soon employed as a hospital and was designated "General Hospital #3 but commonly called "College Hospital." Its nursing corps was comprised primarily of Catholic nuns.

College Hospital admitted more than 20,000 Confederate casualties and witnessed at least 288 deaths. Immediately after the war the college served as a barracks for Federal soldiers stationed in Lynchburg. When these soldiers left in summer of 1865 locals looted the college and for two years it was occupied by squatters. The property was restored to the trustees of the college in summer of 1867 however its debts were too great to ever resume operations as a college. In 1869 a court ordered auction took place; the property was divided up and sold in lots. Some of the buildings were torn down and the remainder turned into private residences.



*Lynchburg College operated from 1855-1869. Its architect was James T. Murfree, a 1853 graduate of the Virginia Military Institute. The architecture is clearly reminiscent of VMI. This Lynchburg College is not related to a later Lynchburg College founded in 1903, which was renamed the University of Lynchburg in 2018.*

*It will be recalled the college building was L shaped, the foot of the L fronting on Floyd Street, probably covering half the space between 11th and 10th Streets, while the body of the L occupied nearly all the space on 11th between Floyd and Wise Streets. The building then had a tower, probably 80 or 90 feet high, from which much of the surrounding country could be seen, a really magnificent view. The Floyd Street front was then three stories, the 11th Street part was but two. It was the neatest and best hospital in town, indeed the best I ever saw. – Julien J. Chisholm, A Manual of Military Surgery (Columbia: Evans and Cogswell 1864), p. 66.*



*I have been at the College Hospital at Lynchburg 7 to 8 days and I am very well satisfied with the fare & attention we have given us here, I have walked over the Town and I think Lynchburg is a little larger than the City of Montgomery. We have very kind physicians here as much so as any that I ever knew which adds much to a fellow's feelings whether it improves his health or not. – G. W. Ross, 6th Alabama Infantry, CSA. , Dec. 20th 1861. Ross Family Letters, RG 149, AUBURN UNIVERSITY SPECIAL COLLECTIONS & ARCHIVES DEPARTMENT*



*Alfred Brown Peticolos drew himself drawing Lynchburg College on August 23, 1857. This view depicts the long side of the building. The academic building is to the left and boasts a three story cupola - Courtesy the Virginia Museum of History and Culture.*



*A portion of the old Lynchburg College remained in 1903 as shown in this photograph. This portion was converted into a private residence in 1869. All traces of the college buildings were razed in the 1960s.*

Jones Memorial Library



June 20, 1863

Dear Niece,

You will perceive from the above that I am in a hospital, but is not nearly so bad as one would think, after all. I had a horror of a hospital until I came here. The College Hospital is a large, ancient looking edifice, built in gothic style, and was formerly used as a college.



It is superintended by six sisters of charity who devote their whole time and energies to the sick. The rooms are kept as neat as a parlor; the beds are a perfect model of neatness, and the cooking is done in an excellent manner. The patients are furnished with soups, meats, vegetables, eggs, milk, butter, preserves, puddings, pies, rice, etc. The sister portions out to each one his share of whatever diet she thinks he ought to have. She always gives me enough of nice food, but I crave vegetables which she will not allow me to eat. I wish that you could see these sisters. They dress in black – very old style, and wear a large, broad brimmed, white linen bonnet that extends out over the shoulders, and sticks away out in front. They also wear a broad white cape, or scarf around the neck

and a large apron, usually snow white. They never marry, and I am told never shake hands with a man.

They with the priest stay in a building detached from the hospital. After taking their meals with a great deal of ceremony, the immense bell is rung; they emerge from the dining room, and come up to distribute the food. A large dining table is set for the convalescents but a great many take their meals in their rooms. Each sister has a certain ward, or division of the hospital to attend to. Sister Mary Vincent attends to the ward that I stay in. She comes in quietly two or three times during the day, inquires about our health, and sometimes stops to talk a few minutes. She seems to be about twenty-five years old, very fair skin, and a modest saint like expression, and I believe she would be good looking if dressed like a modern lady.— Joab Goodson, 44th Alabama Infantry. The Letters of Captain Joab Goodson, 1862-1864. *The Alabama Review, A Quarterly Journal of Alabama History*, Volume X, Number 3, July, 1957.



Another view of a portion of the  
Old Lynchburg College