

# Messages and Memories for Homecoming

BY C. ROSS HUME, '98

IN going over the papers of my mother last summer, I found a number of letters which had come home during my school days at Norman from 1894 to 1900. Items were mentioned that had long been forgotten, and dates given which fix certain events. These form the messages which will be quoted, and the memories they arouse, which will be given.

The best description of the University at that time is found in the Annual of 1905, written by V. L. Parrington (of the English faculty and later Pulitzer prize winner). It follows:

"As I came on to the campus I stopped—this was the University! The word had always meant—well, something very different to me. A single small red brick building—ugly in its lines and with a wart atop—a short misshapen cross between a cupola and a dome—stood in a grove of tiny elms. Across the front and especially about the door, some ivy had made fine growth and was one restful thing that met my eyes."

In the third year of the University, and the second of this building, my college days were started, in 1894. In giving the recollections, the reader must pardon apparently too much ego, which I shall avoid as far as it is possible.

Catalogues issued during those early years show the following to be the size of the faculty and the student body. The table which follows is compiled from them.

Group	1894-5	1895-6	1896-7	1897-8	1898-9	1899-1900
Number in Faculty	5	6	7	9	14	20
Librarian	1	1	1	1	1	1
College Dep't Freshman	9	5	4	20	18	27
Sophomore		5	2	2	7	7
Junior			3	2	2	5
Senior				2	2	1
Graduate					2	2
Special and Unclassified	74	12	3			5
Pharmacy Department	7	5	11	15	22	44
First and Second Year Preparatory D. (3 years)	96	121	140	309	189	172
Music Department					25	59
Summer School					98	
Total	186	148	161	359	374	275

The above table is taken from the catalogues, and shows that during the nineteenth century the great per cent of the enrollment made the University

almost the equivalent of a high school. It was necessary that the school be started and the foundation laid for later classes. Another thing to be taken into consideration is that there were few high schools through the territory that could prepare a student for college.

The letters which follow were the inducement that caused me to go to O. U. The first is a letter from Mrs. D. R. Boyd, dated August 16, 1894: "Two Profs. were elected this week. Prof. Griffin of the Garfield College in Wichita and Prof. Anderson from S. C., who will have charge of Latin and Greek.

"The prospect for a full school is quite flattering. If only wheat were some price worth while Mr. B. thinks we could not take care of the number of students. But the hard times will reduce the No. considerably."

A second letter, from President Boyd, dated August 28, 1894, states that "Even though your son should not finish the Freshman Class next year, would he not do better here where he will have such men as instructors? Here we have five college professors teaching the Prep classes. You could not get better opportunities short of the best New England academies. For instance, Prof. Anderson is a graduate of the Univ. of Va., a Fellow from Johns Hopkins and he has had two years in Leipsic, Germany. The only fee will be \$3.00 incidental per semester, instead of \$5.00, and you would be recorded from Oklahoma."

From these letters and figures you can imagine the school of my day. There were no traditions to respect; no past to revere; no alumnus to spur us on by

tales of prowess; no homecoming, because there was no one to come; but an eager, earnest group of young men and women who came into daily contact with the faculty, just one large family.

The earliest message is dated September 9, 1894. "I have decided to study German and my other studies are Vergil, Philosophy and Chemistry. I like the school very well. Next year I think I can finish up even, and after that the course is elective. I have to pay \$3.00 per week board. One of the students is about thirty years old and married. School begins at 8:00 in the morning and lasts to 12:30, and we have all afternoon and evening to study."

With four studies I had four of the five teachers my first term. My first Incidental Receipt is written and signed by the President, who also taught Philosophy.

"I am getting along all right," I wrote September 22, 1894, "and think I will begin College Algebra in a few days, and make up Physics in the next few weeks. Boyd delivered the annual address Thursday evening, and it was very good. We formed a new Literary Society yesterday and the name of it is the Philomathian, and I was elected Prosecuting Attorney and got thirty out of forty-two votes.

"I am going to study hard this year and next and then go to Ann Arbor if I can, as I do not care for the glory of graduating in the first class of this institution anyhow."

The oldest Literary Society was the Pierian, and this second one was in existence several years. On September 30, 1894, I wrote: "I spoke in a debate Friday night, and it was the first time I ever did such a deed."

Our social life in the school that winter was limited, and memory does not bring back many society events that we enjoyed.

"The basement at the Uni is being completed and will be ready by fall," was the message for May 5, 1895. The Chemistry Lab. was in the west end of the basement, and later Biology in the east end.

"Today is annual commencement, sermon by Rev. Smith of the M. E. at Guthrie, and Tuesday finishes our exams and Wednesday we go home," I wrote May 21, 1895.

No one finished school, and of course no commencement. A trio of women singers came down from Oklahoma City and furnished music for us, and so ended my Freshman year.

September 12, 1895

"We arrived night before last and enrolled yesterday morning. We are boarding at D—at \$2.25 per week, making our expenses about \$12.00 per month.

"The Victoria hotel, the big brick, has fixed up several rooms on the 3rd floor and Ca—and several other boys have gone there. A new man makes rate of \$3.00 per week.

"There are three new teachers, Prof. Buchanan will take Griffin's place, Miss Overstreet who takes Amos' place, and Prof. Elder the new Mathematics teacher.

"Boyd has a private secretary who is a shorthand and typewriter. They haven't secured a new music teacher yet, but intend to start the department as soon as they can find a suitable man."

Accommodations for students were scarce. The Victoria Hotel, later the Christian Church Building (and now the Public Market), was where we stayed that Fall. Harts and the football players stayed there too and we kept in touch with athletics. This lasted until about Thanksgiving when we were forced to move.

Friday, September 20

"The boys have organized a glee club, orchestra and brass band, and are going to organize a football team next week."

October 2, 1895

"The boys are going to start a football team and are to have their tuition free, also all their expenses paid.

"The band is to be of 18 pieces and I am going to play second cornet. Ray may play tenor or alto. Boyd has secured the instruments and they will be here Friday I expect."

This is as near as the beginning of football can be fixed. As the only tuition was a \$3.00 incidental fee per term that was not much of an item, and whether players were hired I cannot say further. At least the band and football team started that fall.

October 13, 1895

"The Uni played a country nine and the score at the end of six innings stood 20 to 7 in favor of the Uni boys."

I recall acting as scorekeeper at the game, and should have retained the score sheet. Harts and Jim Brown were the battery, and Kirkpatrick and Dixon among the players. The field was about one-half mile west of the campus in a meadow. This is the first game of baseball the Uni ever played.

The next message is April 19, 1896. "I have to sing at a concert given at the Uni chapel and I hope we will have a holiday. Last night the band gave a cantata, but was not much attended and not very good."

There is quite a lapse between this and the next letter. During the Spring there were two graduates in Pharmacy, and Miss Grace King came to start the Music department. No letters the following Fall were found, and the first is dated March 7, 1897.

"As soon as they decide definitely on the cantata will let you know. I have a

lot of studying to do next summer. I can arrange it now so I will graduate next year.

"Mr. Shartel of Guthrie will speak the evening of April 22.

"They have a good many trees set out on the Uni grounds during the past two weeks, so I think that in 10 or 15 years the students will be able to study beneath the shade of these experiments.

April 18, 1897

"Have been out five nights the last week with the cantata, and will be out every night this week until Thursday. I can't do justice to my studies so will be glad when this thing is over."

This cantata was "Queen Esther," and a cut of the cast was in a last winter's Sunday Oklahoman. The play was started in the Winter, and many students were in the chorus. It was the most elaborate undertaking of the Music Department, and practice and worry over costumes took much of our time. A solo which I undertook was possibly the beginning of my gray locks.

May 2, 1897

"We expect to go to Purcell Friday night and repeat the cantata, give it here Saturday night again, so I don't expect I will feel very lively.—Friday night Boyd addressed our literary, and we had a fine meeting."

May 9

"We played our Queen Esther at Purcell Friday night and repeated it here last night, and made our expenses which were about \$75 or \$80. Our receipts for the three nights were a little over \$200."

This was the first performance of the Musical Department away from Norman, and we considered it a great success. This is the last note during the Junior year that will be given.

October 2, 1897

"Our board will run from \$2.00 to \$2.25 per week. I am carrying about 16 hours of study a week with my music.

"Last night I turned over my office of Pres. of Literary and am quite relieved. I am going to join a dancing club, strictly University and see if I can learn that art.

"They are going to seat the chapel with Opera Chairs so we will be all right."

Mrs. S. R. Hadsell was secretary and I was President for almost a year. Some few years ago we saw the old minute record which showed the nature of the programs presented. The chapel had been seated with common chairs, and we attended chapel each morning from about 9:45 to 10:15 and faculty members and visitors conducted the service. Often we were told of the advantages we had over the speaker of the occasion.

November 7, 1897

"We are going to have a big football

game Thanksgiving day here. I have to sing and they may arrange for a concert tour Holidays."

Professor Parrington coached the football team that fall, and it was really the first team of college standing. We later beat Oklahoma City 16 to 0 and evened up the defeat of 1895 of 34 to 0.

November 29

"I was elected Manager of the second football team today. Our first team beat Oklahoma City Thanksgiving by a score of 16 to 0. We have about decided not to have the glee club go to El Reno on Christmas. They want a picture of our quartette in the Holiday number of the *Umpire*. I am V. Pres. of the Modoc Glee Club—Our Oratorical contest comes off next week Wednesday night."

December 17

"I expect to go to Oklahoma City tomorrow with the football team—They are going to charge an admission at Xmas concert to divide the proceeds among the members of the Glee Club so we will get \$3 or \$4 at least."

January 2, 1898

"The glee club made a great hit at El Reno Thursday night and at Guthrie Friday night. We won the football game 16 to 8, and the contest at Guthrie, also the declamation contest at El Reno."

The Modoc glee club sang at the Teacher's Convention at El Reno and the next night at the Oratorical Contest at Guthrie with Edmond, Stillwater and Kingfisher participating. This was its first trip from Norman.

January 31, 1898

"Will take 18 hours a week, four more than I need, but Boyd says he will fix it so it will count on my Master's degree. Have begun my oration, and will have a pretty stiff course. I will get extra drill on my oration.—"

"Our Glee Club is going to Oklahoma City, Guthrie and Perry next month."

February 13

"I have to be excused from class in Argumentation to write Oration. I am going to quit work on *The Umpire*. Prof. Dyche of K. U. will lecture next Friday night."

The Seniors were expected to furnish an oration as part of the final work, and until about May this was a nightmare to me. The proposed trip of the Glee Club required much practice. As Exchange Editor of *The Umpire*, first newspaper at the University, the chief implements were scissors and paste—I was correspondent of *The Norman Transcript* under "Criss Cross" and thus my journalistic career ended.

February 20, 1898

"We are going to play baseball Tuesday with another club. Mrs. Boyd wants me to wear a Cap and Gown during Commencement, and I thought I would

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Norman

see what you thought, and then write for prices. She says we might as well show the eastern colleges that we are up to date. Prof. Dyche lectured on Alaska last night. Ray is trying to get in the Glee Club and go on the trip to Guthrie and Perry next month. Our quartette resumes practice next month."

February 27, 1898

"In regard to the cap and gown, there is to be another fellow graduate and Boyd wants us to start the custom so it will be easier in the future to make others comply with it.

"I am working on my oration. We go to Guthrie and Perry the last week in March. I was elected V. P. of the Athletic Ass'n. last week."

The second football team was the fore-runner of the Freshmen, and the Modoc was the name of the Glee Club. It consisted of from 12 to 16 men, and included two quartettes. At a rehearsal about this time the present Sooner yell was given at a rehearsal at Chapel one morning.

March 14, 1898

"We are going to Guthrie and Perry next Friday and Saturday night—we may be in Oklahoma City Thursday night to give a concert. Stoops is the one who was to graduate next year an A. B., but by doing extra work he will make it this year, a B. S."

April 5, 1898

"The faculty have decided to wear caps and gowns but are not going to have orations by us, and this will let me off a lot of work. We took 50 on our trip to Purcell last week—We have our first baseball game next Saturday."

April 11, 1898

"I got out of my oration as they are going to have a regular orator. I am to order caps and gowns for the faculty."

Other members of the Senior class failed to return and for awhile it seemed there would be but one lone Senior, but Roy Stoops made up his credits and there were two of us. The wearing of caps and gowns was a momentous question as was that of student orators, and both are now settled to the satisfaction of both students and listeners.

April 30, 1898

"Three of the Pharmacy Class have gone to war. Thirty students enrolled today for the summer semester. The Commencement sermon will be preached June 5 by Rev. Jas. White of K. C., and a preliminary concert held June 3. Grand Concert June 8 and Commencement June 9. Mr. Green of Guthrie, a regent, delivers the Commencement address."

The Commencement was held and it was my desire to go to war, but I had waited to graduate and after the battle of Santiago I lost all desire for war. There is another gap in the letters until Nov., 1899, and at that time we saw two games of football, one at Arkansas

City and one at Norman when the first bleachers were along the sidelines. In the spring of 1899 the two classes of five organized the Alumni Association, and each one got a job, I was first secretary. In the summer of 1899 I took work and the following winter was one of two graduate students in the school.

In the fall of 1902 I started Law at the University of Kansas, and was present in the fall of 1903, and acted as linesman at the first game between the two. It had been my privilege to serve in this capacity at nearly every game between 1896 and 1900.

A dozen years later the First Homecoming Game was between K. U. and O. U. at Norman, and nearly every game they have played since I have seen. This is the thirty-ninth year of football at O. U., and thirtieth year since K. U. played, and eighteenth year since first Homecoming. In the second game ever played in 1896 as quarterback I called signals in the first game that O. U. ever crossed a goal line.

It is my intention to see the Homecoming game November 4 and to help in any way I can. It occurred to me that some of the facts in these letters might interest others who expect to return.

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### THE LIBERAL COLLEGE

THAT the essential failure of the liberal college is its apparent inability to give a set of social ideals which its graduates may apply when they enter the "external world" is the indictment brought by Albert W. Levi in the October number of *The American Scholar*, the Phi Beta Kappa quarterly published in New York City.

Mr. Levi places the failure to achieve this end in the basic assumptions which underlie the word "liberal." The ideal understood by this word in the academic world is that one should know "the best that has been thought and said in the world." Mr. Levi queries, "But to what end?" and feels that "knowledge for knowledge's sake" is an absurdity and is "the distilled essence of the liberal college."

His indictment is that the liberal college has neglected to explore those fields having to do with the relationship between thought and action, and in consequence has succeeded in divorcing in the minds of youth belief from conduct.

Society pays for this narrowing of scholarship to the imparting of knowledge without the deliberate development at the same time of moral discrimination. And in its over-emphasis against the sin of indoctrination the liberal college has sent out into the world many bewildered and morally uncertain individuals.

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