

The First 50 Years

By DEAN ROY GITTINGER

THE early settlers of the Territory of Oklahoma were ambitious and hopeful of great things. The first legislature of the territory, meeting in the fall and early winter of 1890, established three educational institutions in the seven counties of the territory. One of these, the University, was to be located at Norman under certain conditions.

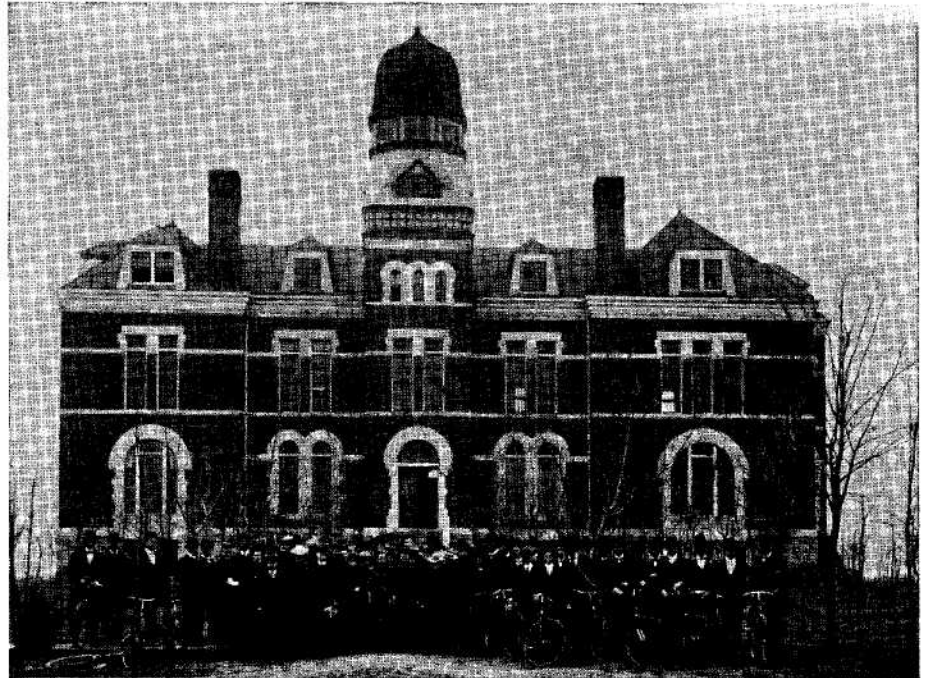
The act specified that Cleveland County must provide \$10,000 in money for the use of the Board of Regents in the construction of a building. In addition, Norman and Cleveland County had to donate a campus of 40 acres. The conditions were met and the university was established to begin classwork in September, 1892.

The first faculty was made up of four members: David R. Boyd, recently from Ohio but more recently from Arkansas City, Kansas, as president and professor of mental and moral science; Edwin DeBarr as professor of chemistry and physics; W. N. Rice as professor of ancient languages; and F. S. E. Amos as instructor in English, history, and civics.

President Boyd used to enjoy telling that the first action of the newly constituted faculty at its first meeting was to cut and to eat a watermelon.

During the school year 1892-93, while the University building was under construction, classes were held in a building on West Main Street in Norman then known and for many years known as the Rock Building. Perhaps 100 persons enrolled. Most of these were of high-school age but many were taking what we should now call junior-high-school work. During the second year, when the new building on the new 40-acre campus was occupied, 142 persons enrolled. One of the 142 ranked as a college student. He was the all-Oklahoma freshman during the school year 1893-94.

The early curriculum was necessarily based on the high-school standards of the time. As soon as students approached college level the faculty adopted, at least on paper, the usual plan of work in effect at the time in standard colleges of liberal arts or arts and sciences, as this college was known from the beginning.



THE FIRST BUILDING

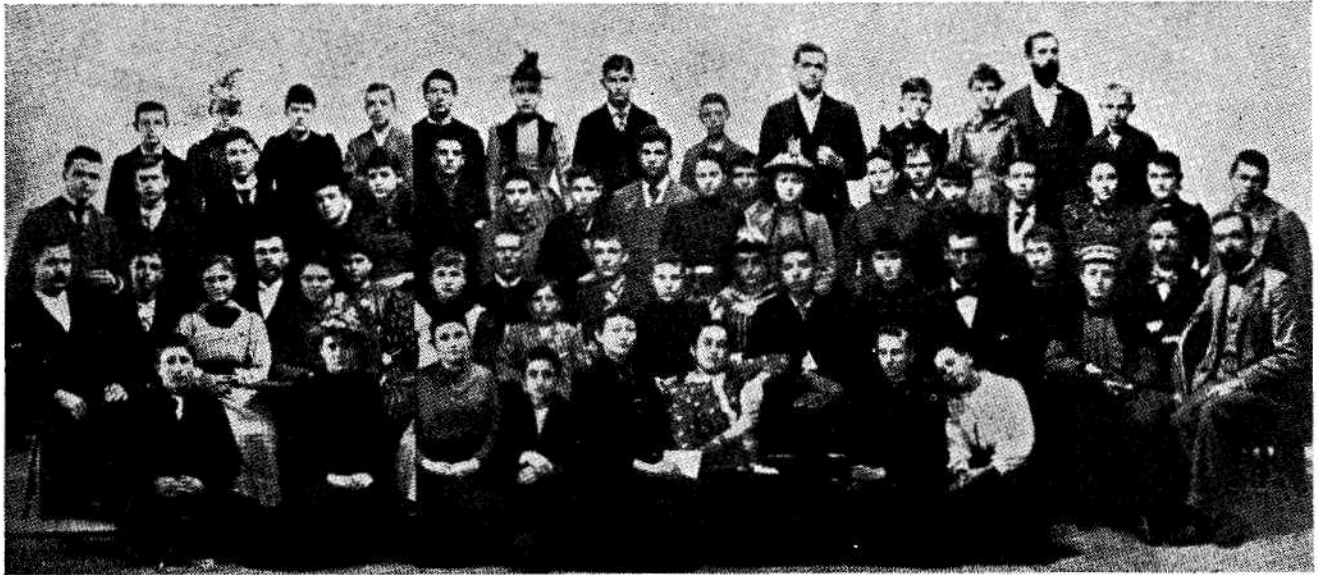
First occupied in 1893, this building was destroyed by fire in 1903. It was located a little west of the present Science Hall.

There was a demand for pharmacists and seven students were listed in the second catalog as studying pharmacy. Two years of high-school work were required for admission to pharmacy and two years required in the School of Pharmacy to secure the degree of Pharmaceutical Chemist. The third catalog showed that 21 of the 186 students were studying pharmacy. If a catalog was published in the spring of 1896, there is no copy now extant and no complete list of students available but in the spring of 1896 two degrees of Pharmaceutical Chemist were conferred, the first diplomas of any kind granted by the University of Oklahoma. Two more degrees in pharmacy were conferred in 1897.

In 1898 the first standard collegiate degrees were conferred: Two students received the degree of Bachelor of Arts and at this commencement seven students received the degree of Pharmaceutical Chemist. The list of students enrolled in

1898-99 includes about 300 names, 38 of college rank, two of whom were listed as graduate students. In 1900 the first degree of Master of Arts was conferred. At that commencement two received the degree of Bachelor of Arts and ten received the degree in pharmacy. By 1903 this order was changed. The College of Arts and Sciences conferred 12 degrees and the School of Pharmacy two.

The first University building, as already indicated, was completed and occupied in 1893 and for several years it was the only building on the campus. In the spring of 1901 the territorial legislature appropriated money for a second building. This building was located on the site of the present Administration Hall. The new building was not completed, however, until the first building was destroyed by fire in January, 1903. The University went back to the Rock Building for a few months but in the early spring classes were moved to the new



FIRST STUDENT BODY

This old photograph presumably was taken while classes were being held in the old rock building down town in Norman.

administration building, which in turn was the only building on the campus for a time.

In the summer of 1903 a wooden gymnasium was constructed and occupied in the fall of that year. This building is still in use and is now known as the Liberal Arts Annex. During the school year 1904-05 two new buildings were occupied. A new science building, now known officially as Science Hall, was built from funds derived from the insurance on the

first building. Classes were first held in it in September, 1904.

About the same time President Boyd secured funds for a library from Andrew Carnegie. The new Carnegie Library was first occupied in January, 1905. It is now in use as the Education Building. These three classroom buildings, together with the wooden gymnasium, made up the four buildings on the campus at the end of territorial days.

Oklahoma had been a state only a

month when the University suffered a second disastrous fire. The administration building was burned on December 20, 1907, and the University was left with only the Science Building, the Carnegie Library, and the gymnasium. It is no wonder that many people in Norman feared at the time that the University would not be rebuilt but the first state legislature appropriated money for a new administration hall, which, however, was not completed for several years and was not occupied until May, 1912.

When Oklahoma Territory and Indian Territory were united in the new state of Oklahoma, an entirely new regime took charge of affairs. In July, 1908, David R. Boyd who had been president for 16 years was replaced by A. Grant Evans, president of Henry Kendall College (now the University of Tulsa but then located at Muskogee). President Evans served three years and made every effort to build the University. The only building he was able to complete was the Engineering Building, now known as the Engineering Laboratory, first occupied in 1910.

In 1909 he brought about a formal organization of the University with the Graduate School, the College of Arts and Sciences, the College of Engineering, the School of Fine Arts, the School of Law, and the School of Pharmacy now raised to collegiate rank.

The first two years in medicine had been offered for some time but in 1910 the School of Medicine became a standard four-year school with the work of the last two years given at Oklahoma City. The School of Nursing was established the following year.

President Evans was unable to cope with the difficulties of the time and, accordingly, he was succeeded in the spring of 1911 by Dean J. C. Monnet, who had

Book by Gittinger Tells O.U. History



THE first official history of the University, written by Dean Roy Gittinger, '02ba, member of the O. U. faculty since 1902, will be released by the University Press on September 15, the semi-centennial date of the University's founding.

Dean Gittinger records in this anniversary book, *The University of Oklahoma*, the unique history in which he himself played a vital part.

In readable style, Dean Gittinger tells the story of the University whose career parallels the rise of the state from territorial days to the second World War. The book itself, designed by Will Ransom of the University Press staff, is well illustrated and in-

cludes reproductions of many old photographs.

Since he joined the University faculty 40 years ago, Dean Gittinger has served as principal of the preparatory school, as registrar two different times, as dean of undergraduates and at the present time as dean of admission. During the whole period, however, Dean Gittinger has taught history and his primary interest has been in that field. Since 1905 he has been a professor of English history.

Copies of Dean Gittinger's University history may be secured through *Sooner Magazine* and will be shipped postpaid anywhere in the western hemisphere.

come to the University in 1909 to establish the School of Law. Dean Monnet, who was made acting president for the year 1911-12, undertook to steer the University through troubled waters until a permanent president could be chosen.

Until 1911 the University had had a separate Board of Regents but at that time the separate board was abolished and the University placed under the jurisdiction of the State Board of Education which also had control of the normal schools and, in fact, of all state schools except the agricultural group. The State Board of Education elected Stratton D. Brooks who had had successful public-school experience.

President Brooks proved to be the man the University needed. He understood politicians and knew how to get along with them. During the 11 years of his administration the University of Oklahoma really became an educational institution of recognized standing throughout the United States. In 1913 the law building, Monnet Hall, was first occupied. In 1916 the chemistry building, DeBarr Hall, was completed and occupied. Between 1918 and 1921 five other buildings were completed: The fine arts building, now Holmberg Hall; the Armory; the Geology Building; a new library, since converted into the Art Building; and the Women's Building. The College of Business Administration and the College of Education were organized separately in 1920 and 1923, respectively.

The enrolment, which had reached 800 by the end of President Boyd's administration and had remained stationary until the coming of President Brooks, rose rapidly. By the school year 1922-23 the number enrolled had reached 3,500 for the regular session or, counting students in the summer session, 5,000. President Brooks must share the credit of making the University with Robert L. Williams, governor of Oklahoma from 1915 to 1919—the first governor either of the territory or of the state who really understood the purpose of University education and sympathized with university aspirations.

During the administration of Governor Williams the World War was fought and won. University students had their part in this struggle. The visitor to the campus is invited to read on the walls of the Union the names of students who left the University to take part in the Great War.

Unfortunately, as everyone knows, the high idealism of the war period was succeeded by a period of cynicism and contempt for the things for which men really live. The position of President Brooks was endangered. He left the University of Oklahoma to take the presidency of the University of Missouri. James Shannon Buchanan, one of the early members of the faculty who had been dean of the College of Arts and Sciences since 1909,



THE UNIVERSITY'S CHARTER

became acting president in 1923 and president a year later.

In 1925 he was succeeded by William Bennett Bizzell who gave up the presidency of the Agricultural and Mechanical College of Texas to become president of the University of Oklahoma. He served 16 years, equaling the record of President Boyd.

Under President Bizzell the University policy of combining cultural and practical education was continued and made more effective. Possibly the same individual did not receive both kinds of education but at least there was an opportunity for the student to acquire both cultural and practical training. The develop-

ment alike of the University laboratories and of the University library received careful attention. The University Extension Division whose purpose it is to bring the University to all citizens of the state has not been neglected.

During the administration of President Bizzell the Engineering Building, the Pharmacy Building, the Liberal Arts Building (now known as Buchanan Hall), and the Memorial Stadium, all begun before his administration, were completed. The Oklahoma Memorial Union, the Infirmary, the Physical Education Building, the University Library, the Business Administration Building, and the Biological Sciences Building, as well as the Women's

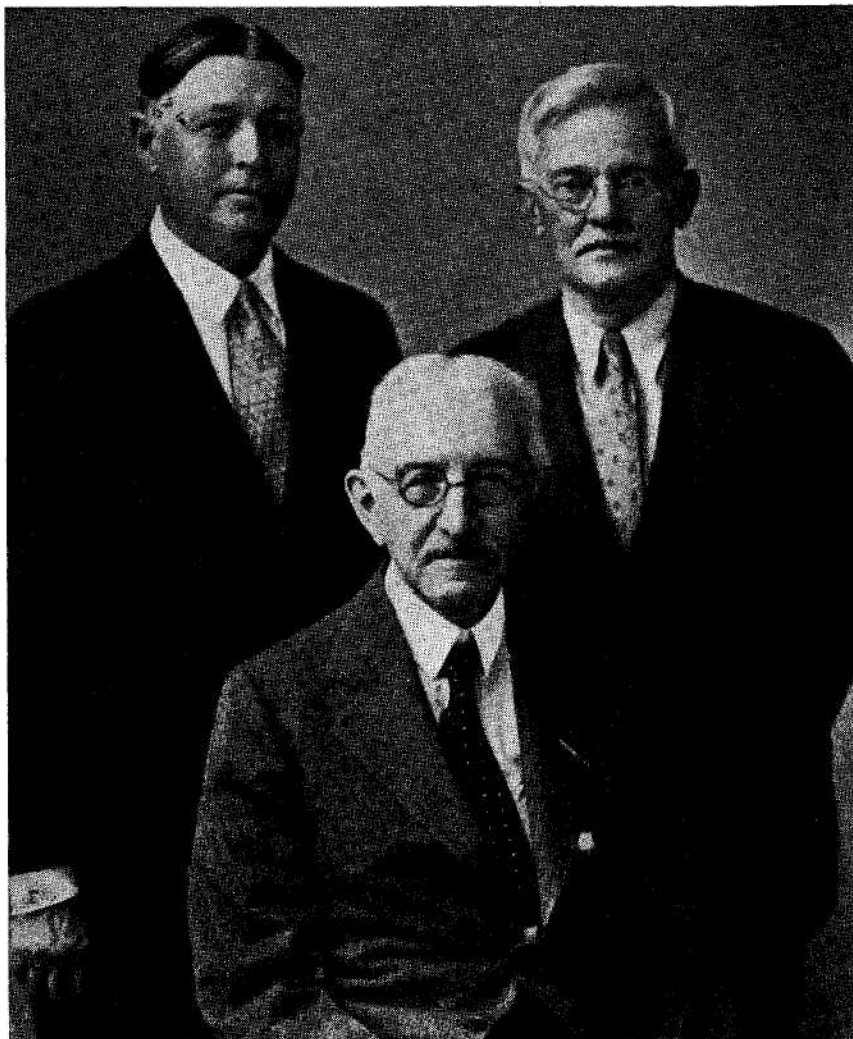
Residence Halls and numerous smaller structures, were completed.

President Bizzell during his 16-year administration conferred 18,206 degrees, in comparison with 5,259 degrees conferred in the 33 years of the administrations of Presidents Boyd, Evans, Monnet, Brooks, and Buchanan. When he became president in 1925, the University library housed 65,000 volumes. In 1941 at the close of his administration the number had increased to more than 225,000, besides 120,000 pamphlets and 8,000 volumes of uncataloged government documents. The enrolment in residence increased, over the 16-year period, from 5,561 to 8,528.

One of the first matters to secure the interest and attention of President Bizzell when he reached the campus was the work of the University Press. This division of the University was organized separately in 1928 with Joseph A. Brandt, O. U. alumnus and then a Tulsa newspaperman, as its director. Under the interested sponsorship of President Bizzell, the press became one of the outstanding university presses of the country. Many books have been published that attracted nation-wide attention. The quarterly publication, *Books Abroad*, and other publications have made the University Press known and recognized wherever men read.

In the summer of 1941 Joseph A. Brandt left his position as director of the Princeton University Press to become seventh president of the University of Oklahoma. Feeling that the University's fiftieth year was the time to look to the future and to

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BIZZELL, BOYD, BROOKS

Of the seven men who served as the University president during the first half century, the three above served by far the longest periods. W. B. Bizzell (left), was president from 1925 to 1941; David Ross Boyd (seated) from 1892 to 1908; Stratton D. Brooks (right), 1912 to 1923. The three served a total of 43 years.



ORIGINAL FACULTY

The four men who formed the first faculty in 1892 were, left to right, W. N. Rice, David R. Boyd, F. S. E. Amos, Edwin DeBarr. Mr. Amos and Mr. DeBarr are still living.

production of plumbing equipment, stoves, refrigerators, radios, and many other peace-time goods. Of course, many of the present small war factories that formerly produced oil-field equipment will be converted back to the production of the goods they produced before they became war factories.

The major job in industrializing Oklahoma during the post-war period is that of building new manufacturing plants that will utilize some of the vast quantities of raw materials which may be produced in the state. The development of small manufacturing plants will be made much easier if the federal government will continue the present war policy of lending financial aid to small factories that have accepted war orders. When peace comes, the federal government should furnish conservative financial help to small or local new manufacturing plants that are founded on a solid basis. Such federal aid should include engineering technical advice, as well as protection against cut-throat competition on the part of the monopolistic enterprises that have long been established in the various manufacturing fields.

There are two general plans that might be followed in the development of new manufacturing industries in the state. First, we might induce large steel companies, tanning, shoe manufacturing, cotton manufacturing companies, etc. to locate new factories in this state. And we might also induce automobile companies and tire companies to locate branch factories.

Second, we might induce local citizens in various communities to organize companies to build small local manufacturing plants that would utilize our raw materials. This latter plan seems to be the one favored by the majority of the people of the state. The state would be benefited if either of the plans of industrialization was followed, and it is likely that we should find it to our advantage to follow both plans.

The development of new manufacturing industries in Oklahoma, with or without the aid of the federal government, will require those who establish them to obtain a great deal of technical information as to manufacturing processes, national and local needs, the kind of plants to construct, the amount and kinds of labor required, etc. Some of the new plants doubtless will be based upon entirely new technical processes discovered either by Oklahomans or by others. The new Research Institute established by the University of Oklahoma may prove invaluable in aiding our industrialists to acquire the technical and scientific information upon which some of our new industries are based.

Before any community decides on the building of a particular industrial enterprise, it should get full and accurate information on the possibilities of the suc-

cess or failure of that particular industry in this state. In order to decide on the chances of success of a new industrial enterprise, a thorough and detailed study must be made of the various factors which will determine its success or failure. There must be a correct estimate of the cost of production of the commodities to be turned out, as compared with their costs in other states. The local supply and cost of labor must be surveyed. The expenses involved in training local laborers to become efficient employees in the industry must also be determined.

Transportation costs of raw materials and finished products of each industry must be analyzed. What are the advantages in Oklahoma, as compared with other communities, of transporting raw materials to be used in the manufacture of automobile tires? What are the comparative advantages in this state of the shipment of finished automobile tires to various market centers? All railroad rate discriminations against each industry established or to be established in Oklahoma must be eliminated.

The possibilities of marketing particular products to be manufactured in Oklahoma must be studied with great care. How much of a particular product does Oklahoma now consume? What would be the possibility of establishing a home market for a product we contemplate manufacturing? What would be the cost of developing national markets for particular Oklahoma products? Is the market for a particular product an expanding or a contracting one?

Before establishing an enterprise in any community, the cost of the physical plant to be built must be definitely known. The size and cost of any manufacturing plant is an engineering problem which must be determined by competent engineers in that particular industry. Detailed drawings of the buildings must be made, and the kind and cost of all machinery and other necessary physical equipment must be known.

Before beginning the construction of any manufacturing plant, the necessary capital should have been raised or at least assured. In other words, it should already have been subscribed by those interested in establishing the plant. Local chambers of commerce should be able to secure most of the technical information necessary to enable any group of businessmen to decide on the advisability of establishing a particular industrial enterprise anywhere in this state. The local financiers and businessmen, however, must decide whether they want to build a particular manufacturing plant and must raise the capital necessary to do so.

The University of Oklahoma, through the Research Institute, the College of Engineering, the College of Business Administration, and the various departments in the biological and physical science fields, should be able to secure and to supply a

great deal of the groundwork information needed as a basis for the establishment of various new industries in this state.

Our State Geological Survey should be able to furnish information in reference to the supply, quality, and availability of various mineral resource raw materials in this state. With the aid of these state-supported educational and scientific institutions, Oklahoma should be able to develop new industries as rapidly as any other state in the Union, if the business men of the state have the desire and the will to do so.

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First 50 Years

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revitalize the institution's program, he instituted numerous changes designed to give the faculty more participation in University affairs; to give new responsibilities to younger members of the faculty; to emphasize the University as a whole instead of its various divisions—particularly in the freshman and sophomore years; and to concentrate attention on the fundamentals of higher education.

During the University's first 50 years, in spite of difficulties about appropriations and the resulting loss of faculty members to wealthier institutions, certain divisions of the University have been outstanding. It is perhaps not proper to list some departments to the exclusion of others but the work in geology and petroleum engineering, due in part to fortunate circumstances, has been recognized the world over. Work has been given in geology for nearly 40 years and work in engineering has been given almost as long. The School of Petroleum Engineering, organized as such as a part of the College of Engineering, dates only from 1924.

The University of Oklahoma has been unique among middle-western universities in the emphasis that has been placed from the beginning on training in the fine arts. Work in music has been offered during practically the entire half century. Speech arts and drama have received attention for nearly as long a time. Work in art has been given since 1909 and the art collections of the University are now among the best belonging to any state school in the United States.

The participation of the United States in World War II has prevented the fulfillment of elaborate plans for celebration of the University's Semi-Centennial, but alumni can gain satisfaction and pride by reviewing the achievements of the University during the institution's first fifty years.

The World War ended one period in University history, and World War II, 25 years later, has ended another. When the present war ends, there is every reason to look forward to another period of growth and achievement for the University of Oklahoma.