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THE COVER: *The two aerial photographs taken almost a half century apart shows the growth of the campus from a few buildings in the early 20's to today's far-flung campus. Oklahomans paid tribute to 75 years of growth and leadership by the University with a special two-week anniversary observance in October.*

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sooner scene

The special issue of *Sooner Magazine*, A History of the University of Oklahoma, published in September (see the advertisement on the inside back cover), has been well received by alumni and friends of the University. We appreciate the many letters and calls about the issue and are grateful for the words of praise. One letter of particular interest came from Errett R. Newby, whose association with the University has been long and significant. Portions of Mr. Newby's letter follow:

During my last semester at OU as a student, the spring semester of 1908, President Boyd employed me as his part-time private secretary at \$25 per month which helped me finish my college work. His last official signature was when he signed my diploma. My close friend Tom F. Carey was financial clerk. He and the registrar had prepared the diplomas, affixed a gold ribbon under it and brought them to me ready for Dr. Boyd's signature. I noticed that Tom Carey had placed his diploma at the bottom of the stack. I thought: "The sly fox. I'll fix him." I pulled out my diploma and put it under Carey's. Our Class of 1908, as its class memorial, had an oil portrait of President Boyd painted by a New York artist, framed it and hung it in the administration offices. It is still there.

* * *

Evans was noble gentleman, a much better man than most people gave him credit for being. His chief difficulty was that his gentle spirit kept him from standing up against a board which wanted to take over much of the functions of the President they had selected. Probably if he had stood up against them—I could cite instances—his term as President would have been even shorter than it was.

When A. Grant Evans was elected President in 1908 by the new governing board after statehood, he called me in and said: "I would like to have you stay as secretary." I told him I didn't see how I could live on \$25 a month. "Oh," he said, "it would be a full-time job. We would pay you \$100 a month." Most graduates then were taking jobs

at \$60 to \$80 a month. I accepted, and that turned the course of my life. Had I not stayed, I would not have been in the group that organized the Sigma Nu fraternity which has brought me many honors and warm friendships. And I would not have been there in 1913 when Lola North, a lovely girl, came down to Norman for her senior year after the Oklahoma Baptist College at Blackwell, her home town, had closed. At that time I handled transcripts of credits and I got interested in her letters. I found out on what train she would reach Norman. I met the train. She came up to all expectations and later became one of the campus beauty queen's attendants. I carried her suitcase to her rooming house. (There were no dormitories in those days.) I guess she thought I did that for all the girls. It was years later, long after we were married that I told her she was the only one that had such preferred treatment. I never was quite sure that she believed me. Please excuse this personal reminiscing. You see why President Evans meant more to me than to others?

* * *

When the Legislature appropriated funds, \$200,000 I believe, for a new administration building to take the place of University Hall which burned in 1907, an important step forward was taken when the board, on the recommendation of President Evans, voted to employ a well-known firm of architects to prepare plans for the new building. They selected the firm of Shepley, Rutan & Coolidge, architects of the University of Chicago. With their early sketches for this building they brought a large plan of the entire campus showing the present buildings with others to be built around the North Oval and elsewhere on the campus as it existed at that time. They used the collegiate Gothic style of architecture, much like the University of Chicago. That accounts for the many gargoyles and the cut-stone trim of the Administration Building. The board also approved the campus plan as to location of buildings and style of architecture, and they and President Evans expressed the hope

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that future buildings would follow this plan so that there would be a uniform style architecture on the campus. No one knew or dreamed at that time that collegiate Gothic architecture would become so expensive that no one could afford it or that other administrations might have different ideas about what is good and beautiful and feasible.

* * *

The conditions Brooks laid down to Bob Wilson, then chairman of the Board of Education which governed the University, were effective. Among others, this (Page 34): "No member of the Board should recommend . . . any appointee." Brooks soon found there were others in the State who wanted to help run the University. A state senator in southeastern Oklahoma wrote him, asking him to find a student job for a young man who wanted to attend OU. Dr. Brooks called me in and dictated a letter just about as follows:

"Dear Senator:

The young man you recommend seems to be most worthy.

There is only one thing that prevents me from seeking a job for him, and that is the fact that you recommend him.

Sincerely yours,"

Brooks knew that this letter would be widely circulated—and it was. Dr.

Brooks made it quite clear to the board that any time it or any member wanted to take over any part of the administration of the University they would have his resignation.

When Dr. Brooks came, he asked me to stay as secretary. I gladly accepted. I took his personal dictation for years. He was a fine man to work for and with. Soon after he came to Norman he asked me if I had a dress suit. I didn't. He said: "Get one. Mrs. Brooks and I will hold a reception each semester in the administration offices for faculty and students and I want you to stand at the door and present every one who comes." So I got my first white tie and tails.

He knew how to turn over authority—and responsibility—for certain things to someone else and then let them handle it. One day he called me in and said: "What do you know about printing?" I admitted I had carried a paper route and had worked as a printer's devil in a small job printing shop one summer. He said: "I am going to appoint you chairman of the Committee on Publications and I will name two faculty members to assist you." He named Professors Hadsell and Brewer. We outlined plans and then I had to assemble the material for the general catalog, for departmental bulletins, for the weekly news sheet which went to thousands of

prospective students, and many other things. I don't think I ever heard anything further from Dr. Brooks about publications.


Another time he talked about the large number of students entering OU whose high school work was of a poor quality. He said he had authority from the State Board of Education to examine the Oklahoma high schools and get them to raise their standards. He said: "I am appointing you chairman of a Committee on Accrediting Secondary Schools. I will name two other faculty members to assist." I said: "I don't know anything about that." He said: "You don't need to. I will appoint A. C. Parsons, who is an experienced school man, to make examinations in the field. He will report to your committee. You will approve or disapprove as you see fit. Your committee will set the standards. You will have to nurse them along, even the larger cities. They can't do everything at once that needs doing." This was probably the first accrediting of high schools in the state. We refused to accredit some courses in even the largest cities in the state until they bought more science laboratory equipment or spent a certain amount for more library reference books or obtained teachers who were better qualified to teach their subjects. We found towns trying to teach four years of high



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school work that we cut back to one or two years, refusing to accredit the other subjects until they made certain improvements. We found towns trying to give two, three or four years work that we refused to accredit until they had made certain improvements. It always thrilled me to see how people everywhere wanted the best education for their children and how they would sacrifice to meet our requirements. We kept raising the hurdles ahead of them before we would accredit additional subjects. Our requirements sent

many of their teachers to the Normal Schools or to the University for additional training till they got their degrees.

On page 18 Mr. Long says: "The Latin motto, "Civi et Reipublicae" was furnished by Professor Paxton. The statement is doubtless true, but I have always felt that Paxton, under whom I studied Greek, wrote: "Civi et Rei Publicae" meaning "For the Citizens and for the Affairs of the State, (or) for the Affairs of the Public." I have hunted through Latin dic-

tionaries but could never find the word reipublicae. However, "Reipublicae" is the way it appears in the seal on my diploma and it is still so used.

* * *

Years later there was another fire. This one is not mentioned in this history. The old Boiler House stood northwest of University Hall. Here were the boilers used for heating the buildings, and also other equipment. We had managed to scrounge an old battered linotype which was the beginning of the University print shop and perhaps, of the University Press. The only place we could find for it was in the Boiler House where it was securely bolted to the concrete floor. About half of the forthcoming General Catalog had been "set up" on this machine and was in slugs in long galleys on the shelves. Many of the proof sheets had been read twice. One day the alarm was raised that the Boiler House was on fire. The thought of the catalog copy and this material being destroyed horrified me. We got all the help we could find and had them carry these galleys outside a safe distance.

Continued on next page

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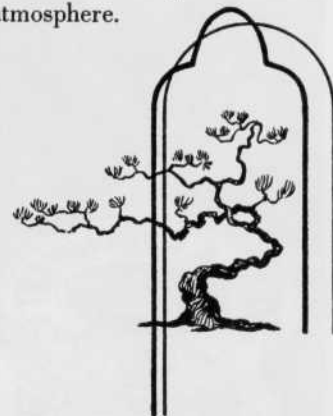
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When all were rescued, we turned attention to the linotype. Students tried, frantically to get it loose from the cement floor. Sam Crawford, the University Printer, came over to me, nudged me in the ribs, and said: "Let it burn. We will get a new one." And we did let it burn because we were unable, as the flames drew near, to get it loose from the floor. We did get a new one, and thereafter the catalogs looked much better.

* * *

Rest assured that I know much of this material is unimportant. Also there is much too much "I" in it. Since it is mostly personal reminiscences I do not know how to avoid that fault. But it does have something to do with the development of the University. Some day I may be too old or too tired (the Lord forbid) to put such incidents in writing. This beautiful History of the University by Charles Long has given me the incentive to write down a few of the things I have experienced or knew about. There are many others.

Sincerely, Errett Newby.

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