

A STUDENT PAPER FOR FIFTY YEARS OTTAWA'S HONOR

A DRAMA OF STUDENT ACTIVITIES SINCE 1884

BUSINESS LIFE ROCKY

Paper First Appeared As Monthly Magazine; In 1908 Assumed Newspaper Makeup

(By Claude Webb)

The oldest student publication in Kansas, "The Ottawa Campus" is in the last half of its fiftieth year. It was started in the school year of 1884-'85 under the direction of Prof. T. F. Hamblin and a group of students, and has continued publication in every year since that time.

Despite the disastrous fire of 1902 records of all the staffs and issues are kept on file. All but the first three volumes are bound and are in the University Library. Copies of the issues of the first three years are in possession of the Kansas State Historical Society; so that the papers for the entire fifty years are in good condition and may be referred to easily. Any alumnus may come to the University and spend several pleasant hours in reading the old volumes of his college days.

Prof Hamblin and associate editors managed the paper for its first three years. While the professor was the editor-in-chief the students were the real editors of the magazine, as it was then. Beginning with the fourth volume in 1887-88 students assumed complete charge of publication and management. Since that time the paper has been distinctively a student enterprise. Sometimes the faculty has suggested, but has seldom censured, leaving the students to do as they saw fit. And in those fifty years the students have been remarkably sane and sagacious as to the type of material which went into the paper. Very little radicalism has found entry into the columns.

The paper first appeared as a monthly in January, 1885, and continued on that basis until 1908 when Leslie Ferris directed its change into a weekly with a newspaper-like make-up. For the first twenty-four years of its life "The Campus" was a literary news magazine. Essays, stories, orations and poetry had a big place in its pages. The amount of news used made a steady increase

until the present time when the paper professes to be a real weekly newspaper, very little literary material being used except in the nature of feature stories and some poetry.

The Campus has been witness to a large number of institutions and student enterprises which rose and fell. As you start fingering through the pages of the first old volumes you begin to see the rise of oratory and debate. For thirty years or more, judging by the old files, the gifted of tongue were the favorite sons of Ottawa University. Every issue gave much space to the fine art of speaking. The old Philal and Olympian Societies rose to be powerful groups with their dual debates attracting such large crowds that they had to be held in the biggest auditoriums in town. But interest in speech and debate, the files tell us, gradually declined until the present day when, although they are respected student activities, they no longer hold the spotlight. The Philals and Olympians still are on the campus but only as social organizations. The hey-day of their glory is passed.

Athletics in the early volumes were only a whisper and sometimes were not even mentioned, but gradually the din of intercollegiate athletics rose until it reached a high pitch in the 1932-33 issues which announced in big headlines that the school was winning a conference championship.

The rise and fall of the chautauqua and lyceum courses is also plainly reflected in the old volumes. The old Rohrbaugh theater once brought to Ottawa all famous stars of such period. Schumann-Heink, Sousa and all the great of the music world were guest artists. The Shakespearean artists of the day brought their plays to its stage. And according to the old Campuses, the students flocked to partake of the treats. But the Rohrbaugh and all that went with it are gone. Things are different, a look at any issue of "The Campus" will tell one that much.

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FOR FIFTY YEARS

Every big event in the history of the school has been well recorded in the columns of "The Campus." When it was first started there was only one building, now there are five. The dedication of each has been

carefully told. There was the fire of 1902 which completely destroyed the brand new Ad building on the eve of the day that it was to have been used for the first time. "The Campus" told the story. It is interesting to note that the first book given to the new library, started immediately after the fire, was volume eighteen of "The Campus." The late Robey Banta presented it and wrote this in a fly leaf: "What could be more fitting than that I, the humble literary representative of Ottawa University, be the beginning of a great library."

Only one person has been twice editor of the paper, That honor goes to Wayne Gilliland who edited it two years ending in 1911. (Wayne is now editor of the Ottawa Daily Herald.) The first fifty years almost went by without a woman being the

editor, but volume 50 is edited by
Clarease Nichols, the first woman
editor of the publication. It was
close but the girls get in at the fin-
ish. However the women have been
closely connected with the paper and
have contributed as much as the
men to its success and continuity.
