

# Colorful Campus, Student And Lincoln Scenes Illustrate Early Period In University History



**POPULAR CAMPUS ACTIVITY** . . . Replacing Ivy Day for "All-University Dandelion Day," these busy coeds industriously attack dandelions which infested the lawns of the campus around University Hall in 1911.



**EARLY DAYS IN LINCOLN** . . . This is the way Lincoln looked when the University opened its doors to 20 collegians and 110 Latin School students. University Hall (upper left) was located in raw prairie grounds.



**1885 STUDENT SCENE** . . . University Hall provides the background for the class of student attending the Medical College in 1885. Two colleges were already in existence at this time: The College of Literature and the Industrial College.

# NU - 84 YEARS OLD

## School Added In 1869

The year 1869 was a memorable one in the history of Nebraska, then a vigorous, expanding new state.

Only fifteen years previously Nebraska had been admitted to the territorial government of the United States.

Just two years previously Nebraska had been granted statehood.

And four years previously the Civil war had ended, with a shocked nation learning of the death of Abraham Lincoln.

The population of the state was no more than 100,000; that of Lincoln a mere 1,000.

Thousands of Sioux, Winnebago, Omaha and Otoe Indians roamed the plains of Nebraska. The pony express which had been routed through Kearney had been discontinued but 8 years previously.

Lincoln then had been designated as the capital site two years before, after a bitter political controversy which saw the removal of the capital from Omaha.

Yet in the year 1869, the Nebraska legislature passed a bill stating "that there shall be established in this state an institution under the name and style of 'The University of Nebraska.' The object of such an institution shall be to afford to the inhabitants of the state the means of acquiring a thorough knowledge of the various branches of literature, science, and the arts."

Lincoln, with no sidewalks and only well water, was designated the site of the University. The campus was raw prairie.

As Louise Pounce later put it, "From the first, the pioneer plainmen of Nebraska were not content to be a sorbed only in the activities of the present. They were not only adventurers and workers; they were dreamers. We picture them . . . the pioneers . . . engaged in useful labors but

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## NU Grads Prominent In Careers

In 1873 the first graduating class of the University of Nebraska walked down the auditorium aisle of U Hall to receive their diplomas from Chancellor Allen R. Benton.

It was an historical day for James Stuart Dales and William U. Snell, for they were the first graduates of the University.

Dales later became the secretary of the Board of Regents of the University while Snell entered law in Tacoma, Washington.

Since that initial graduation exercise, many University men and women have gone forth to become prominent not only in their fields of study but also in international importance.

The class of 1868 produced Roscoe Pound, now Dean Emeritus of the Harvard Law school. In 1892 his sister, Louise Pound, graduated to become one of the nation's foremost authorities on English literature.

John J. Pershing graduated from the University in 1893 and in World War I was the General of the United States Army.

The class of 1895 claims among its graduates Willa Cather, well-known authoress and Edward C. Elliott, president of Purdue University.

Edith Abbott, class of 1901, is now Dean of the School of Social Work at Chicago University. In 1904 the military again claimed a University graduate for the Rear Admiralty in the U. S. Navy, Emory D. Stanley.

Fredrich M. Hunter, Chancellor of the Oregon State System for Higher Education, is a 1905 graduate of the University. Ruth Bryan Rohde, a former student at the University, was later U. S. Minister to Denmark.

In 1906 Charles Purcell graduated to become the designer of the world's longest extension bridge, the Oakland Bay Bridge in San Francisco, California.

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## First Ag Classes Met With Only 15 Students

Fifteen students registered for classes at the College of Agriculture for the fall semester of 1874. The first student to enter the college was Charles Baird.

The college was established by an act of the state legislature in 1872 but for the first two years no students were enrolled. The primary reason for this as Robert Crawford, journalism professor, said in his book "These Fifty Years," was that the place to learn farming is on the farm according to the prophets in 1870's.

The early years of the Agricultural College were very dark from the enrollment standpoint. Only one full time instructor was hired to tutor the students. Professor S. R. Thompson was the first instructor and later became the first dean of the college. He was assisted in teaching by Professor Samuel Anghey who was also a teacher on the down town campus.

In 1877 the Ag College was joined with other colleges of the University into the Industrial College.

The college remained the Industrial College until 1909 when it was again opened as a separate college at its present location two and one-half miles east of the University.

The course of study for the early students included the basic Ag subjects along with the requirements of mathematics, book-keeping, physiology, French and Latin, logic, astronomy and believe it or not, the Constitution of the United States. Only three major fields of study were open to the first fifteen students. Now the College offers 15 major fields of study.

Since 1909 the college has grown from 320 acres to nearly 4,000 acres. At the present time a total of 29 buildings are located on the original 320 acres. The latest of these are the Agronomy building, the Meats Laboratory and the Entomology Insectory. The Agricultural College is directly responsible for four substations over the state. They are located at North Platte, Valentine, Scottsbluff and Crawford. Besides these various substations the college operates experimental farms at Union, Havelock and in Cass County.

## Grad Of '06 Tells Of Life In His Era

"When I went to school, the girls walked and they liked it." This statement was made by Mr. R. E. Dale of Lincoln, in a personal interview, Saturday Feb. 14. Mr. Dale attended college as a freshman and sophomore in 1898-99. Dale added, "No one had a car in those days so everyone walked or hired a hack, but most people who hired a hack were considered snobbish."

Dale went on to add the only other means of transportation was the street car. He said these were very nice to use, but they were only good when going a long distance, since they did not stop at many points on the campus.

When asked about the type of social function that was in vogue during that era, Dale replied that dances sponsored by the University or local businessmen were the big social occasions. He noted that the University dances were held in the top story of the old Library up until about 1905.

He said that the attendance at all dances was very good, and that all students who were able to go made every effort to be there. Dale added that only bad things were done at that time, and that all the girls had to be in by 11 p.m. with no excuses for "late minutes."

He pointed out that seeing that girls were returned to their homes at the appointed hours was a very great problem because of the distances involved. He noted that there were no established residence halls on the campus at that time, and many girls stayed at the Grand Hotel or in private homes. "This was a good distance to walk, and I had to hurry at a fast walk more than once," he added.

Dale said that Ellen Smith, registrar, also served as a "Sort of Dean of Women and she was really tough. Her office was sacred ground and only the bravest of the students dared to enter, even on business." Dale added

## Nu-Meds Schedules Wednesday Meeting

The medical society will hold its monthly meeting Wednesday in Love Library auditorium at 7:30 p.m.

Dr. S. J. Fuening, director of the University Student Health Service, will speak on hebeiatrics, which is a specialty dealing with the health of young people.

The functions of the physician, nurse and lab technician will be discussed and pictures related to the subject will be shown.

## It didn't happen at nu

Originally the University was not located in Lincoln.

A charter was granted by the Territorial Legislature in 1855 for a University at Fontenelle.

Three years later, the University opened under the sponsorship of the Congressional Association. It was the first school in the state to offer training past the high school level.

However, in 1865 the building was destroyed by fire and was never rebuilt.

The present University was created by the state Legislature in its first session, granting Lincoln as the new location.

## NU Traditions Founded With Former U Hall

Intimately associated with the traditions and history of the University is a building no longer standing. A building, in fact, which for 16 years constituted the only evidence of the University of Nebraska.

Old University Hall.

She succumbed in 1948 to the rigors of 79 years of faithful service to the citizens of Nebraska. Her obituary was written; the bulldozers leveled the proud, but worn walls.

University Hall crumbled and went down.

But in the annals of Nebraska history she remains prominent, outstanding.

Six months after the Legislature authorized the charter of the University, the contract was let for the construction of U Hall for \$128,480, which was \$28,480 above the authorized appropriation. Eventually the entire cost was brought to \$152,000 because of some changes and amendments in the original specifications.

Lumber had to be shipped to Lincoln in wagons over wretched roads a distance of 65 miles. A large brick plant was established to manufacture the 1,500,000 bricks that were to compose the imposing three story building. The building, surmounted with a tower was to be a Franco-Italian type of architecture.

Amidst some editorial criticism, the cornerstone was laid a month later at a festive ceremony presided over by the Masons. A brass band was imported from Omaha and the Governor and Attorney General made speeches. In the evening a grand banquet was given with virtually all of the citizens of Lincoln attending. Dancing lasted from 10 p.m. to 4 a.m.

In spite of the optimism of that

## Charter Day Named For Legislative Act

Someone thumbing through the records of Nebraska's legislature has brought to light that on February 15, 1869 the University of Nebraska was born—as a piece of paper. This "instrument in writing" was named a charter, from the Latin "chartula," and the day thus became Charter Day.

Since that time the University has had 84 chances to celebrate her birth, including the present Feb. 15. Has the University made use of all those chances? Has the day called forth similar celebrations each year or has it had its ups and downs?

These trends or cycles of Charter Day may be summarized for those who do not care to read farther: First the students had control of the day, lost that control to the faculty, got it back, lost it again.

The day rose to great heights as a holiday about 1898, with track meets, military drills, and mid-winter commencement exercises. Thereafter it tobogganed down the curve until the Fiftieth Charter Day of the school was not even celebrated. Then the alumni brought it back to a place on the 1923 calendar.

Some ten years went by after 1869 before the University did any serious Charter Day celebrating. Of course, when its birth certificate was passed there were no

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## Alumni Dinner Planned

Charter Day, the eighty-fourth since the establishment of the University, will be celebrated by the Lincoln Alumni Club at its annual Charter Day Dinner Feb. 27 at 8:30 p.m. in the NU.

Paul Harvey, nationally known news commentator and author will be the featured speaker at the Charter Day Dinner. Harvey, now 35, has been in radio since he was 15 years old.

His recent rapid rise in radio broadcasting followed his now famous obituary of Franklin D. Roosevelt on April 13, 1945. The American Broadcasting System received over 10,000 requests for reprints of that broadcast.

Last year, at the annual American Legion convention, Harvey was awarded the first Legion award for "militant Americanism."

Sponsored by a local department store, Harvey may be heard daily at 12:00 p.m. on radio station KFOR. He also has a Sunday evening broadcast.

The annual Builders Award will be presented at the dinner by the Board of Regents. This award is given to the person, not necessarily an alumnus, who has conspicuously contributed to the growth and spirit of the University.

Junior and Senior class officers have been invited by the Lincoln Alumni Club to attend the dinner as special guests.

Walter E. Miltzer, dean of the college of arts and science, will present a review of University accomplishments for 1952, and projected plans for 1953.

Deadline for making reservations with the Alumni Office is Feb. 25.

## UN Catalogue Stresses Low Cost For 1889 Education

It cost \$5 to matriculate in the University in 1889. The University catalogue announced that year some students could get through school on less than \$175 a year although the extravagant youths might spend three times as much.

Rooms could be rented for 50 cents to \$1.50 with no trouble and the student clubs offered board for as little as \$2 weekly.

The 1889 senior class included 18 men and six women. The Hesperian, semi-monthly student paper, spoke politely of the feminine "graduation dresses."

An inquiring reporter for the Hesperian asked the senior men their ambitions (coeds of '89 were not expected to have ambitions). One of the seniors, T. S. Allen, said, "I intend to study law. I am a democrat. I believe in free trade and prohibition."

The class of 1889 wouldn't recognize their university in the modern world of 1953.

University Hall was large enough for the chancellor's office,

## UN Catalogue Stresses Low Cost For 1889 Education

library, steward's office, society halls and 20 lecture and recitation rooms in 1889. Nebraska Hall was not completed until after the class of '89 had become alumni. Memorial Hall for gym and the Chemistry laboratory (now Pharmacy hall) comprised the remainder of the University facilities. The library contained 12,000 volumes.

Two of five authorized departments had been established in 1889. They were the college of literature, science and arts; the second was an industrial college which included agriculture, practical science, civil engineering and mechanical arts.

Scripture reading, singing and prayer was held in the University chapel each morning but attendance was voluntary.

Modern events have changed the financial, academic and social aspects of the University but the words on the University of Nebraska seal still contain the same meaning—"Litteris Deo Causa Et Omnibus Artibus"—"dedicated to literature and all the arts."

## Ivied Pillars Presented NU In 1898

In 1898, a new Burlington depot was built in Omaha with 23 state-by Doric columns. Twenty-four of those columns now stand on Vine St. between the University Stadium and the Coliseum.

The story of how they got from the depot to the campus started in 1930, when Burlington officials decided that another new station was needed. No provision for the Grecian pillars was included.

It was suggested that perhaps the University could use them. E. A. Burnett, then a chancellor, agreed and the columns be given to the school.

Arrangements were made with the State Railway Commission for free transportation of the pillars to Lincoln. All was ready—but the columns could not be found.

Railroad officials immediately began to search for the 16,000 pound (each) columns, which were 24 feet tall and 28 inches in diameter.

Finally they were discovered in an old Omaha stone yard.

Before re-erection, they lay at the edge of the campus for several years. Four of them had been damaged between the depot and the campus.

Now, they are covered with ivy and serve as a rendezvous for moonstruck couples. Nevertheless, they are considered trophies of culture, and are attractive assets to our campus.

## Records Note 'Quiet' Days Not Always So

Typical pranks of students didn't originate with the new generation.

This is proved by an excerpt from a report given by Allen R. Benton (chancellor of the University from 1871-1876) to the Board of Regents.

The report said, "Hauling a cannon from the state capital to the campus, filling the wall, painting the roof of U Hall, rattling the skeletons in the museum, enticing donkeys to the third floor and the common practice of sliding down the banisters" were among the pranks pulled in the "quiet" days of the University.



**THEN AND NOW** . . . The University has grown from one building to 39 buildings on city campus and 26 on Ag campus and another 10 on the College of Medicine in Omaha with a total enrollment today of 7,000. During the 81 years of operation, about 295,000 students have studied at the University

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