

Omaha High School Classes

Some Facts from Records Pertaining to Graduates

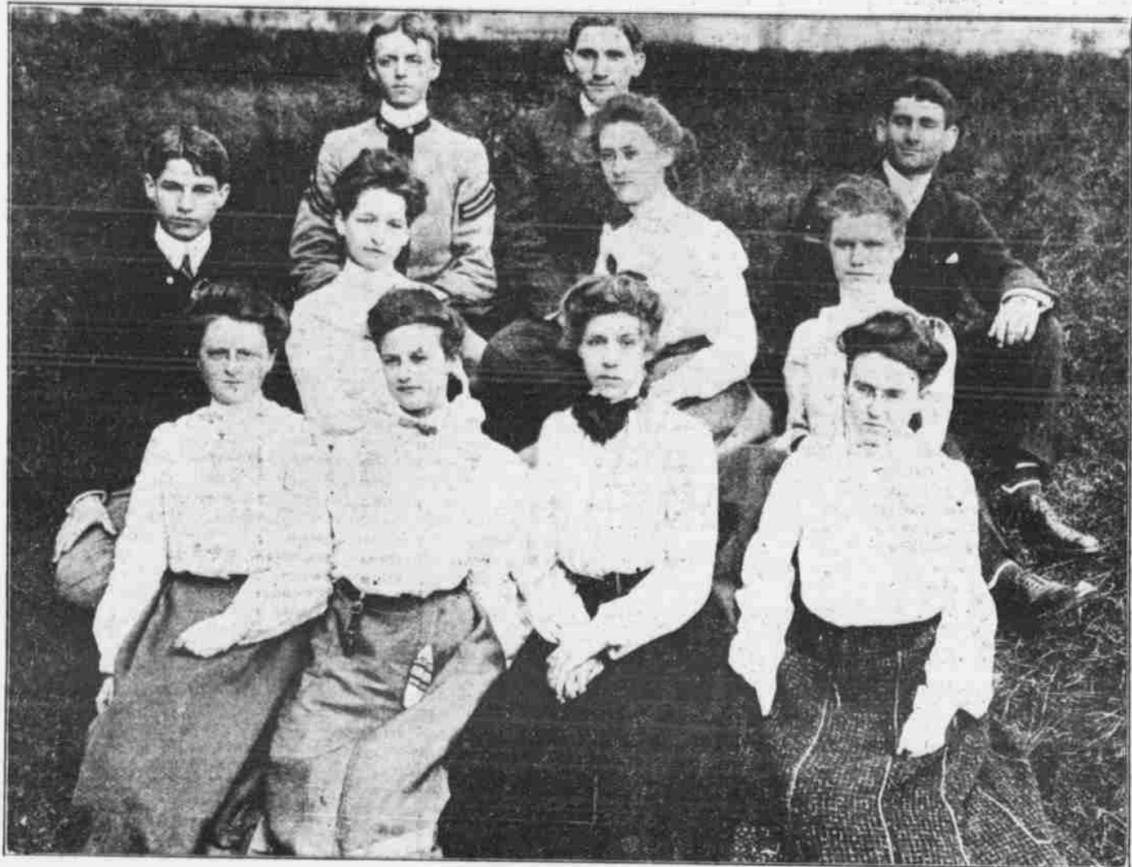
THE graduating exercises of the present year's class of the Omaha High school are done; the members of the largest class in the history of public instruction in Omaha have passed from positions of more or less certain eminence in their small world to places hopelessly undefined in the real outer life of the nation. There remain yet of the closing scenes of the school year, all intimately connected with graduation, the competitive drill of the cadet battalion, the companies of which contend for honors in Vinton Street park Monday evening; Tuesday night the alumni banquet at the Millard hotel and Wednesday evening the class social.

The yearly competitive drill, for which considerable extra work is done, is a contest wherein the companies pass before an inspecting body composed of army officers, who name the best drilled unit and individuals. The winning company has the honor during the next year of carrying the battalion flag. As the commissioned officers of the cadets are all members of the graduating class the contest is of particular interest to their mates, especially the young women of the class. The alumni banquet the following evening at the Millard will draw together members of every class graduated from the schools of the city, but the newcomers will alone enjoy the calcium and will be the happy ones at the reception which comes before the tables are attacked. Howard Kennedy, Jr., will be toastmaster and Rev. N. M. Mann the priest. Mr. Manchester and Miss Lehman are to sing and a business session follows the spread. The class social takes place on the lawn of E. A. Parmelee at 1924 Corby street.

The exercises have not been as elaborate as in the two or three preceding years. The cadets have been absent on their annual encampment and school has been carried on rather perfunctorily during this time, the teachers being busy with the heavy duties of the closing year. The graduating exercises Friday evening at the Creighton theater marked the end of the serious part, and the class banquet at the Millard the following night, began the merry-making. As it had all along been the intention to do away with class day exercises such as were observed in 1901 and 1902 there have been two enjoyable receptions given in the building. The first was a senior class and teachers' reception during December and the second a parents' reception in March. The building was prettily decorated with Turkish rugs and divan pillows and other household furnishings placed about to give the school the air of a place of permanent abode.

The great event of former commencement has been the class day plays, which have been given in the Creighton theater. This was not attempted this year because of the expense principally, but also because of the long preparation necessary and the considerable work involved. Perhaps the best thing done in this way was by the class of 1901, which built its dramatics on the cauldron scene in "Macbeth." With special and appropriate scenery and the conventional witches of the moor was worked out a prophecy for all the class, with tableaux and most pleasing accessories. Last year the school manufactured its own play without the aid or consent of any known dramatist, and the affair was very pleasing. But the play involved a large amount of attention and continual work. The really prohibitive feature was the expense which had been growing yearly and made too great a burden on the individual purses of the scholars. The theater was last year raised in rent by 100 per cent, so that the class of this year decided rather than by less expenditure to give a play inferior to some which had gone before, to give up altogether the attempt.

The class of 1892 held its graduating exercises in Boyd's theater on the afternoon of June 23, the program consisting of music by the orchestra and piano duets, recitations and epoch-making orations by the



August Swenson, Roy Sunderland, Byron Eaton, Ella Carol, Sidney Singer, Madeline Hills, Alice Wright, Jessie Waugh, Claire McDermott, Ellen True, Josie Frazier. HONOR MEMBERS OF THE OMAHA HIGH SCHOOL CLASS OF 1903.—Photo by a Staff Artist.

members of the class. The class had sixty-eight members, fifty-seven of these being girls. The following year the populace assembled in the theater to see forty-two girls and twenty boys finish their local school work. The exercises were of the usual character and Clinton N. Powell, president of the Board of Education, presented the diplomas. The class motto was, "Semper Agite." The class of 1894 filled Boyd's on the evening of June 21, the school year being continued unusually late into the summer. This class numbered the same in girls, but had two more young men on its role. The 1895 class went out with a flourish, having the motto, "Ne Tentent aut Perfice," which possibly few of its members can now translate; the class colors green and white, and the perhaps inharmonious class yell, "Rip! Rip! Rip! Rip! Rah! Rive! O. H. S. '95!" The class numbered fifty-two girls and thirty-one boys. The graduation exercises were held on May 29 and Anna Anderson, Alvin A. Steel, Eva Hamilton, Othelia Karbach, Helen Mackin, Ella Phelps, Katie Swartzlander, Hal T. Beane, Nellie Gamble, May Ballou, Anna Nordwell, Edwin Chapin and Edith Kuhne had parts in the program. Colonel Aikin presented the diplomas. It was during this year that military drill was introduced in the school and some of the young men of the class were the first cadet officers. The class day exercises took place at the Woman's club. The 1896 class was the first one to graduate where the members were classed by different courses and had, all told, fifty-nine members, forty-six of these being young women. In the graduating exercises, which were of the conventional sort, the following names appeared on the program: Bessie Dumont, Maude Bryant, Myrtle De Graff, W. P. Godso, Minnie Crane, Olga Andreen, Belle Goldsmith, Josephine Blart, Josephine Bell, Chester Franklin and

Eugene Mackin. The class day was not observed this year.

The 1897 class showed graduates in seven courses and totaled eighty-six, with thirty-five boys an unusually large number. There were more young men in the classical and elective courses this year than there were young women, an infrequent thing except in the manual training department. This class gave a play in the Boyd theater during the afternoon of class day. At the graduating exercises Zorah Shields, Harry Crandall, Lulu Tuttle, Ella Crawford, Isabella Will, Gertrude Waterman, Henry Plummer, Edith Higgins, C. W. Engle, Louis E. Reed and Marian Hart took part.

The class of 1900 numbered 134, the largest to that date, and held its commencement exercises on June 8, and gave a class day show at the theater. Fifty-four members of this class signified their intention of going into some institution of higher education. The following year the school work was finished on June 21 with elaborate ceremonies and a class of 112 left the institution. The 1902 class numbered 148, thirteen taking the classical course, thirty-eight the Latin-English, twelve the German-English, two the French-English, sixty-two the elective, five the commercial, four the manual training and twelve the English course. The exercises were held on June 13 and a class banquet was enjoyed the following evening.

The present class, which is the largest in the history of the school, numbers 160 pupils, 101 being girls and fifty-nine boys. Twenty-eight of the young men of the class have signified an intention of going to college and thirty-three young women have done the same. Three more will attend the state normal and five of the class are at present undecided as to whether they will continue study or begin other occupations. Among the boys who graduated the courses were distributed as follows:

Elective, 34; manual training, 11; Latin-English, 6; German-English, 3; commercial, 3; classical, 1. The girls were classed: Latin-English, 39; elective, 37; German-English, 12; French, 4; English, 4; commercial, 13; classical, 3.

The class of 1903 entered the high school proper, or the ninth grade, 600 strong. Various reasons led to the rapid reduction of classes in the ninth and tenth grades. The boys largely leave the school to begin earning money for their own support. The girls also in lesser number are called upon to enter upon the household cares, relieving overworked mothers or going into the stores and offices. Then there are a certain number who are withdrawn to attend schools, private and preparatory, in other parts of the country. A few are unable to keep up with the class work and in this instance there have been three deaths to lessen the ranks. The classes have seemed to average for a number of years about one-third boys to their total number.

It has been roughly estimated that from 25 to 40 per cent of the graduates enter higher institutions of learning, but there is no way of knowing exactly. Of course, the largest number go to the State university at Lincoln, which naturally continues the work of the high schools in the state. About one-fifth of last year's class went to the university. Some years ago the state institution was passed by when possible for eastern colleges which were better known. But the hard times succeeding 1894 made necessary the selection of cheaper school and after students had been at the university for a year or two the excellence of the school was recognized. In addition to this the university has been rapidly improving and the attendance from this city has kept pace. The

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GRADUATING CLASS OF THE PLATTSMOUTH HIGH SCHOOL, 1902.—Photo by Sopesa