

Penn State in Review

The Dark Years, 1864-1882

(Second of a Series)
By W. L. WERNER

AFTER its first five years of existence the Agricultural College of Pennsylvania found itself more than \$50,000 in debt, with its brilliant president dead at 36, and without a graduating class in 1864 because of the Civil War.

In the next 17 years the college had five presidents and two interim acting presidents. Under them the college, like a gallant ship, outdrew a long depression, hostile currents of public opinion, and challenging shots of state officials and legislators. It veered and shifted and seemed to be sinking, but it never went completely under, and by 1882 it was off the rocks and started on a true course.

The first of the presidents in this period was William H. Allen. He defended the college's land-grant fund from the demands of rival colleges, and he exchanged the college's debts for a 7% mortgage. But after two years he grew discouraged and resigned, later achieving success as president of Girard College.

Served Two Years

Professor John Fraser succeeded Allen and also served two years. In the Civil War he had risen to the rank of brigadier general, and, believing in the military virtues, he substituted daily military drill in the college for the three hours of previously required farm labor. He enlarged and improved the faculty, but when he raised student fees to \$200 a year, the enrollment dropped from 114 to 30. A man of intelligence and high ambitions, he saw his plans for expansion wrecked by lack of students and funds, and in 1868 he resigned.

The College's trustees then seriously considered admitting defeat and turning the institution over to the state. In despair, they asked advice of Dr. Thomas H. Burrows, a well-known figure in educational and political circles, who had twice been head of the state's public school system. He advised more practical agricultural courses and lower fees, though when the trustees elected him to the presidency, he asked \$1000 more salary plus feed for two horses and two cows. Believing in practical education, he restored the plan of compulsory farm labor by all students for at least their first two years. Well-known throughout the state, he helped rebuild public confidence in the college. Unfortunately he died in 1874 after exposure on a hiking trip with students in the snow-covered mountains.

New President

The collegiate ship veered again when the Rev. Dr. James Calder succeeded in the presidency, for Dr. Calder had little use for practical agriculture. He shifted the curriculum to Greek, Latin and philosophy in competition with private sectarian colleges of the state. Only one agriculture professor survived his plan, and student farm labor was gradually reduced to zero.

In January 1874 he succeeded in having the Agricultural College of Pennsylvania change its name to

the Pennsylvania State College. The following year the college's board of trustees, which had formerly consisted of state officials and representatives of agricultural societies, was enlarged to include alumni and representatives of manufacturing and mining associations.

A more sensational change was the arrival of the first co-eds—two of them—in the fall of 1871. New courses were hastily added for them: French, German, music, sewing, interior decorating, etc. Two women teachers were employed, and the number of co-eds grew rapidly from two in 1871 to 49 in 1879.

All these shifts from farm labor to Greek, from science to music, and from an all-male student body to one with 25% girls, brought increasing grumbling against President Calder. The Pennsylvania Agricultural Society which had fathered the original school, attacked this change in its offspring. The Grange and other farm organizations complained. The city newspapers took up the cry. The legislature sent a committee to investigate in 1879, and after its adverse report, President Calder resigned in 1880.

His successor, Joseph Shortlidge, lasted only nine months. Formerly a successful principal of an academy, he tried school-boy disciplines in the college, and roused resentment on all sides. In 1881 the reign

It was 85 years ago — on April 1, 1863—that the Pennsylvania Legislature designated Penn State the beneficiary of the Morrill Act, and therefore the Land Grant College of the State. W. L. Werner, professor of American Literature, herein charts the highlights of those years in a condensation of Dr. Wayland F. Dunaway's illuminating book, "History of The Pennsylvania State College," which was published a year ago. This is the second in a series of six articles.

of the five short-lived presidents was over; the college had barely survived its adolescence of shifting and uncertainty. Prof. James W. McKee, popular Greek teacher, was called on for the fourth time to serve as acting president.

New Philosophy

Then in 1882 President George W. Atherton appeared like a hero in a drama, bringing order out of chaos and building up both student enrollment and finances in his 24 years of service. Part of his magic formula was stressed in his inaugural address. In effect, he said, "Continue agriculture and Latin but develop engineering, too. We live in a machine age. The time demands engineers. Train farmers but train engineers also, and give both the culture they need for true success."

(To be continued)

GRIN AND BEAR IT

By Lobby



"Of course, I'm boycotting Russian products now—this is pre-cold war caviar!"

Law Fraternity Elects Holland, Kagan

Pi Lambda Sigma, professional pre-legal fraternity, recently elected Samuel Holland president and Robert Kagan vice-president. Frances Welker was elected secretary-treasurer.

Eight members were initiated into the honorary. They are Jane Weigle, Charles Peet, Norman Landsburg, Joan Hester, William Betler, Gerald Marmorstein, Rosemary Maloney and Patricia Gibson. Professor of Economics David

McKinley was made an honorary member. Pi Lambda Sigma will honor its new initiates at a banquet at the Anchorage tomorrow. The faculty of the political science department will be guests of the honorary. Dean of Men Arthur Warnock will be the guest speaker.

For the first time in years, pitchers and catchers are plentiful on the Penn State baseball roster.



EARLY COEDS AT PENN STATE

Education Honoraries Hear IER Speaker

Mrs. Margaretta S. Austin, staff associate for International Education Reconstruction, Washington, D.C., addressed a joint meeting of Phi Delta Kappa and Pi Lambda Theta, men's and women's educational honorary societies, in the banquet room of the Nittany Lion Inn Tuesday night.

In conjunction with her topic, "Educational Reconstruction: Challenge, Tool and Weapon," Mrs. Austin also presented a film titled "Hungry Minds."

Mrs. Austin, a graduate of Stanford University in California, has lived in Russia and in England and has done writing and lecturing in both these countries.

During the war she served as a consultant on the training and utilization of women for the War Department. Later she was national executive director of Federal Union, Inc., a world government organization.

Marion R. Trabue, dean of the School of Education, presided at

the banquet. Co-chairmen for the occasion were Miss Margaret Raabe, assistant professor of speech education, and Charles W. Stoddart, Jr., director of extension in the School of Physical Education and Athletics.

Preceding the banquet the following undergraduates were initiated into Pi Lambda Theta: Helen Baker, Doris Brenner, Clare Coleman, Sarah Ann Curry, Helen Dickerson, Jane Fouracre, Dorothy Fowler, Marjorie Gorham, Ruth Graber, Joan Green, Ruth E. Groninger, Lois Heyd, Mary Hodgson, Mary Ann Kemper.

Barbara Knabb, Lois Metzler, Alice Miller, Marjorie Musser, Helen Noble, Sara Pepper, Jean

Posey, Norma Prutzman, Lois Resler, Mary Rice, Josephine Rotili, Sylvia Schenfeld, Irene Segmiller, Joanne Snyder, Margaret Stridinger, Louise Way.

Graduate students initiated were Arlene Adams, Suzanne M. Adams, Jean Foulkrod, Jeannette Gall, Helen Guiser, Mary Miller, Mrs. Helen Pierce, Fanetta Wareham and Margaret Weymer.

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