

# OREGON TRADITION OF HOMECOMING IS YOUNG BUT STURDY

Event Inaugurated Six Years Ago; Success Gives It Permanence.

**BIG GAME CUSTOM STARTED IN 1915**

Increasing Popularity Noted Yearly Among Graduates and Ex-Students.

Homecoming—the biggest get-together joyfest of the year, the time of the most important football game of the season—is a comparatively new Oregon tradition. To those who imagine that Homecoming is as old as the Condon oaks or Deady hall, let it be known that the first Homecoming plans were made in 1914.

Just where the idea came from nobody knows; probably as Dean Straub says, it was just a spontaneous effort to keep the Oregon grads interested in their Alma Mater. Anyhow on October 10, 1914, many of the alumni returned to see the game with Whitman, and find out what changes had been made on the campus since their day. The Underclass mix had been postponed until October 10 for the benefit of the alumni, and on Saturday evening a combined party and reception was given for the guests. The score of the game was 29 to 3 in favor of Oregon, and Alumni day proved itself such a success that there was immediate agitation to make it a permanent custom.

**Victory Marks Opening.**  
At the first Student Body meeting in the fall of 1915 the custom of making the date of the biggest football game of the Oregon season the time for Homecoming week-end was inaugurated. For the first time in eight years O. A. C. was to play Oregon on Eugene grounds. There was a new grandstand on Kincaid field all ready and waiting for enthusiastic crowds of Oregon rooters, and the first Homecoming letters were sent out to the alumni.

This was the year that O. A. C. had played the Michigan Agricultural College with a score of 21 to 0 in favor of the western college. O. A. C. had been heralded all over the United States by the press as the "terror of the Michigan Aggies." The whole country was watching the agricultural college team. Forecasts for the game on the 20th were all against Oregon. Even Coach Bezdek said, "they've got the dope over us." The two teams played identical systems of football and were both at their best on defensive.

**Beckett's Work Beats Visitors.**  
On the morning of the big game the headlines of the Emerald read, "Oregon out-doped, out-experienced, out-weighted, is ready for O. A. C." But the score was 9 to 0 in favor of Oregon. The lightning plays of Johnny Beckett dazzled the defenders of the orange and black. The Aggies came the nearest to scoring in the last few minutes of play when they gained the ball through a misplay on the part of an Oregon man. The "Oregon spirit," and not the long

feared "Oregon jinx" had been the victor.

Over 300 alumni had come back to see the game, and to spend the week-end, and when they found what their University could really do they went wild. The pajama rally Friday night, the Saturday noon luncheon in the men's gym and the dance at the Armory on Saturday evening, all new features of the Homecoming week-end, met with their heartiest approval. Homecoming as an Oregon custom was really established, and graduates and students alike were full of ideas and plans for Homecoming for the next year.

**New Buildings Begun.**  
New buildings were going up on the campus. Johnson hall had been dedicated Saturday morning, and the old grads wanted to see what Oregon would be like the year after.

So, because it was such an unqualified

success, the arrangements for 1916 Homecoming were started early in the fall term of that year. The time set was November 4, the date of the Oregon-Washington game. General publicity work was under the direction of a committee headed by Martin Nelson, and letters were written to graduates, stickers and pennants were used, and in fact every means was employed to get across the Homecoming week-end idea to the people of Oregon.

Arrangements were made to welcome the visitors when they arrived, and to register them. Willamette street was decorated in Oregon and Washington colors, and every effort was made to make the guests feel at home. Ernest Watkins was chairman of the reception committee. The fraternities and sororities entertained 620 guests. Sigma Chi leading in the number of invitations sent out. Jeannette Wheatley had charge of the

luncheon Saturday noon. This was served in cafeteria style from eight booths by women from the four classes.

**Rain Spoils Game.**  
In spite of bad weather conditions, five hundred alumni registered as guests. The rain made the field so bad that Oregon chances were not very good, as was later proved by the score of the game which was 0-0. It was the sentiment of fandom in general that had the game been played on a dry field Oregon would have won by at least two touchdowns.

One new feature of the Homecoming program that year was the Vesper ser-

vice on Sunday at 4 p. m., in Villard hall. Major W. S. Gilbert of Astoria was the speaker.

Then came November 17, 1917 and the game with California. "Anyone who feels that there is a lack of pep and jazz on the campus will wake up," said yell leader Slim Crandall. "We are going to tame that old bear so all the 'Varsity will have to do is put salt on its tail."

When the first Homecoming letters began to go out to old grads the appeal was — "Come and help us skin the golden bear." Because it was a war-time Homecoming it was decided to make the

expenditures as small as possible. The Homecoming dance was to be informal, and no elaborate decorations were used. The price of admission to the dance was also lowered to fifty cents a couple.

**Hoover Luncheon Served.**  
The campus luncheon was Hooverized and nobody violated any of their food conservation pledges when they partook of it.

Special emphasis was made of the fact that this Homecoming was planned not only for the old grads but also for the 500 Oregon men who were in the (Continued on Page 6.)

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