

# CORVALLIS DAILY GAZETTE

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## THE OREGON AGRICULTURAL COLLEGE, REMINISCENT AND HISTORICAL

### REMARKABLE GROWTH OF THIS GREAT INSTITUTION

Since the Establishment of the College in 1865 its Progress has Been Steady, the Faculty of Two Increasing to Seventy and the Registered Students From a Score to Over Thirteen Hundred, Making it Leading Industrial School in Northwest—Noted Educators Who Guarded Interests.

By the courtesy of the management of the '10 Orange, and with the consent of President Kerr, the Gazette is enabled to present to its readers the following exceedingly interesting reminiscence and historical article which Professor John B. Horner prepared on OAC for the Junior Annual:

When Corvallis was but a village, the frame building later called Corvallis College was projected as a private undertaking. For several years the edifice—noble for that early time—served as a public school building and meeting house. All grades from the primary to the Academic Department were accommodated. It was the public school of

be seen by the following paragraph taken from an act passed by the Legislature, October 27, 1868:

"Whereas, it appears that unless an Agricultural College is provided by law at this session of the Legislature, the grant by Congress will be lost; therefore, this act shall take effect from the date of its passage."

Willamette University and Corvallis College had both been prominently mentioned in connection with the land grant patronage for an agricultural college; and it was generally believed by Father Waller and other friends of the university that the Agricultural College would be located at Salem. But C. B. Belling, who represented Benton County

unless they had near relatives who could receive them and were willing to assume the entire responsibility of their government.

Young men might rent rooms and board themselves, but there was no such provision for the young ladies.

The public duties of each school day were opened with appropriate religious exercises. Attendance upon these exercises and also services at some place of worship on the Sabbath, was required of all pupils. All pupils over fourteen years of age were required to sign six college laws, two of which will be interesting. Law III prohibited students from playing at cards or billiards. Law V, which drew a very clear civil engineer's line between co-education and co-education, is given verbatim: "Young ladies boarding in the village or vicinity who are under the care of the faculty will not be permitted to receive the visits of young gentlemen, without the written consent of their parents, under such restrictions as the faculty may require."

The Agricultural course of two years was one of the best in the nation at that time; yet it reminds one of a course in pharmacy with no pharmacy in it, or a course in medicine which is thoroughly innocent of materia medica. It was a good, strong course in science and mathematics, and it made good, useful, scholarly men and women competent to stand before kings. It served its purpose well in its day; and the mathematics and science like so many letters of the alphabet, have since spell-

leg. He formulated a very practical course and undertook experimentation. One of the permanent evidences of his work is the present conduit which drains the campus. This is one of the first bits of experimentation in drainage done in a scientific way in Oregon.

During President Arnold's incumbency the growth of Oregon brought on certain changes which led many to believe that the Agricultural College should be a state school. Senator Thos. Cauthorn introduced a bill in the Legislature to this effect, and the bill became law within twenty-four hours after its introduction. So great was the influence of Senator Cauthorn who



Ex-Senator Thomas Cauthorn

was also Secretary of Regents, that at a subsequent session of the Legislature he was granted the extraordinary privilege as a private citizen of speaking on the Senate floor upon the appropriation which made Cauthorn Hall possible. Suddenly stricken, he was taken from the Senate chamber at Salem by a special train to his death chamber near Corvallis. Of this event M. L. Pipes has written:

"That a fitting close to his public career, when he stood upon the Senate floor by invitation, a Senator no more, only a private citizen. He stood with the shadow of death upon his face and spoke on the very scenes of his past struggles one more word in behalf of the college. And then, wounded unto death, he took his armor off."

In the bill establishing the Oregon Agricultural College as a state school, the location of the college was left to the community that would donate a suitable administration building for that purpose. Corvallis rose grandly to the occasion. Subscription lists headed by Judge John Burnett, Bushrod Wilson, Punderson Avery, M. S. Woodcock, Colonel Hoag, Thos. Cauthorn and others contributing \$500 and like amounts, swelled the fund to \$20,000, with which the Administration Building was erected—the best school building in Oregon until that time for the money. The sacrifice required for the Administration Building was so heavy at the time that it came like heart's blood from the makers of the college. This condition, with subsequent associations, sentiment and history connected, with the old edifice, has been such that were

the building threatened, the donors and their descendants would rise up with one voice of prayer, as did one in olden days when he came to the woodsman imploring him to spare the old oak.

The faculty and thirteen Regents had also installed three industrial courses—Agriculture, Mechanical Engineering and Household Economy, eliminating the old literary courses as rapidly as possible. A farm was purchased for the purpose of experimentation. The first Mechanical Building, Cauthorn Hall, Alpha Hall, Chemistry Building the octagon barn were erected. The college had about half as many students as the State Normal at Monmouth, or the State University at Eugene. Starting the college anew was like reorganizing America under the second constitution. Everything had to be done over again by the slow process of evolution. At this critical moment the clock struck low twelve, Jan. 30, 1892, and a messenger came from a home where there was crepe on the door and announced to Oregon that after an incumbency of twenty years as president, Doctor Arnold was no more.

Doctor John M. Bloss, former State School Superintendent of Indiana, became president. During his administration the attendance reached 397 students, representing twenty-eight of the thirty-two counties of Oregon. The students were classified as follows: "Post-graduate, 14; fourth year (mechanical), 9; third year, 54; second year, 63; first year, 175; preparatory, 80; special students, 2." These were taught



John M. Bloss, A. M., M. D., President 1892-1896

by twenty-two professors and instructors. The graduating class of fifty this year was without precedent for numbers.

President Bloss divided the college students into two literary societies, called the Ciceroians and Websterians. Each society was subdivided into three chapters. The six chapters were placed under the supervision of as many professors who joined the students in the culture of a fine literary spirit. Miss Mildred Linville (Patterson) won the interstate collegiate medal for oratory at Seattle, and Austin T. Buxton, now Master of the State Grange, was a close contestant for first place in the first

intercollegiate oratorical contest held in Oregon, the medal being won by the representative of the State University. The preparatory students were allotted to the Athenian and Madisonian Literary Societies.

About this time college yells and games came floating on the wings of student life. Yell meetings were announced in chapel, and soon "Zip Boom Bee" filled the air. I always enjoyed that simple yell of six words for its frightful meaning. But the words must be read out of their order that the yell may be fully appreciated. "OA-OA-OAC" is meaningful; "Bee" stands for business; "Boom," a good deal of noise about it; and "Zip," let it come quick,



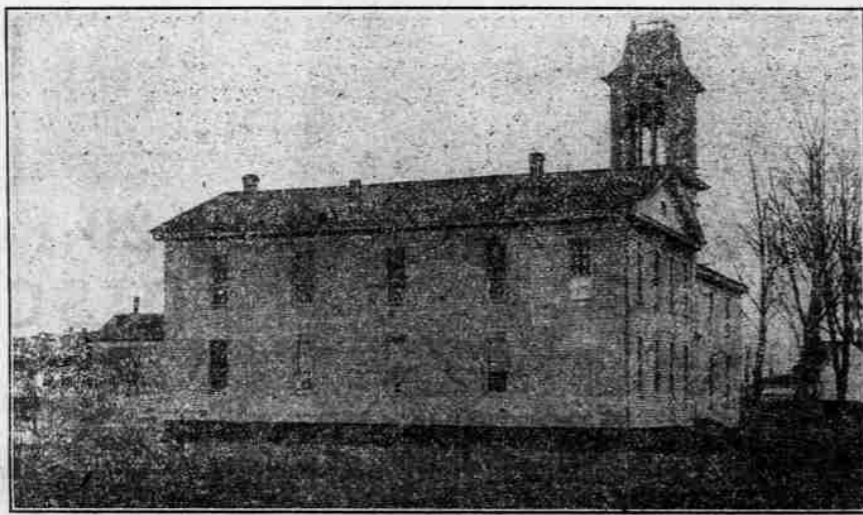
Hon. H. B. Miller, President 1896-1897

like a streak of belated lightning. And that's the way the boys played football. But old farmers who stood about as on-lookers for the first time did not know what to make of a game which consisted of a little counting, a rush, and a tumbling pyramid of human flesh. However, they were surprised and they usually laughed when the living pyramid arose to its feet with no necks nor limbs broken. It was not uncommon for them to remark that the exercise was a little more active and dangerous than the boys were accustomed to while hoeing potatoes at home.

To compromise the situation with the farmers, the boys christened their mascot as "Pap Hayseed," and the conduct of the mascot on the field as well as in class was such that he gave the word "hayseed" a respectability in Oregon which no other state enjoys. This reminds one that at the first game of football a lady with a Madonna face was heard to say: "My son, who starts to college soon, must not join in that desperate foolishness." Her son came the next year and joined the football squad, and his mother also came 300 miles and yelled "Zip Boom Bee" louder than a college band, while her son helped win in his first intercollegiate game. What that mother did in her enthusiasm has since been repeated so often by other mothers that it is history.

Much work fruitful of results was carried on in the little experiment sta-

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CORVALLIS COLLEGE, Where Scientific Agriculture was first taught in Oregon

the place, yet it was dependent in a large measure upon subscription for support. Therefore, while the school served a public purpose, it was in its inception and maintenance a private institution. Furthermore, it was dominated by promoters who were ambitious that it might aspire to become a parochial institution of high grade. To this end the property was sold as early as 1865 to Rev. O. Fischer, agent of the conference, as a college for the Southern Methodist Church, Fortwith Rev. W. A. Finley, A. M., was chosen president, with Professor Armstrong as assistant. The two composed the faculty. This was the beginning.

The popularity of the new college was at once established, and a widely distri-

ed in the Legislature at that time, inserted "Corvallis" instead of "Salem" in the bill, and the Agricultural College was located at Corvallis. Thus at the last moment the bill became an act, and the act was law. Just how it happened has been a marvel to many a political dreamer since that Legislature. Joaquin Miller, who was writing poetry on the Long Tom in those days, tried to express it in the couplet:

"The teter-board of life goes up;  
The teter-board of life goes down."

An array of thirty-one trustees and fifteen officers of the board dominated the institution in 1869-1870, while there were only two professors and twenty-eight students in the college department. The college students were classified as follows: Four seniors, ten juniors and fourteen freshmen. Existing conditions did not justify the luxury of a sophomore class that year. The Preparatory Department, which consisted of 101 students, was taught by J. D. McFarland and W. E. Privett. Mrs. S. E. Finley was in charge of the primary pupils, forty in number, and Jacob Brenner was the director of music. Bachelor of Science, Bachelor of Arts and Master of Arts were the regular degrees conferred by the college.

Co-education was fully recognized. Young ladies were admitted to all the college classes, and were entitled to the same honors and diplomas as young men. Tuition varied from ten to fifteen dollars per term, and special concessions were made to clergymen.

That the management of the school sustained the relation of pater familias to the students may be inferred from the fact that the parent or each minor in the male department was expected to name some member of the faculty as guardian of his son while attending college, with whom funds might be deposited, and to whom the students should be accountable for their proper use. The funds for the young ladies were deposited with "the keeper of the boarding house." It was stated in the catalogue that "most of our difficulties arise from the improper use of money injudiciously entrusted to pupils." Then followed the injunction, "All persons are forbidden to trust a minor without the consent of his or her guardian.

The pupil was not allowed to board at a place not approved by the faculty, nor to change from one boarding house to another without permission.

Young ladies were required to board at the Young Ladies' Boarding House

ed out in full the courses introduced later in agriculture, agronomy, agronomy, horticulture, forestry, olericulture and what not. Elsewhere is given the fac simile of this course, which is important chiefly because it was the first formal announcement of scientific instruction in agriculture in Oregon.

Pres. Finley continued in office till 1871. Prof. Joseph Emery having declined the office, Benjamin L. Arnold, A. M., Ph. D., was selected President. Dr. Arnold was a philosopher who could easily have gained first rank in any position of school work. His diligence in preparation, his ability to impart, his high conceptions of human possibilities made Pres. Arnold eminent among teachers as an inspiration to his stu-



B. L. Arnold, A. M., Ph. D., President 1871-1892

dents. His marked personality differed from that of every other man. There was something in his countenance that baffled the artist, and the kindly light of his eye was too rich for the painter to commit to canvas. Dr. Arnold's students everywhere speak with pride of the moments he mingled with them.

About this time Prof. B. J. Hawthorn was elected to the chair of language. On the 17th of April, 1871, the Board of Trustees purchased from Geo. Roberts and Elizabeth Jane Roberts 34.85 acres of land for a college farm, which has since been transformed into the campus. Prof. Hawthorne also took charge of the Department of Agriculture, agriculture as a study being added at this time to the department. Hence Professor Hawthorne was the first teacher of Agriculture in the col-



Rev. W. A. Finley, A. M., President 1865-1871

buted patronage was drawn from Oregon, California, Washington and Idaho. In the fall term of 1867, Rev. Joseph Emery, A. M., was elected professor of mathematics to succeed Professor Armstrong. Because of the want of preparatory schools throughout the West, but few students could be admitted to the college department; hence the demand for a preparatory school to serve as an academy in connection with the institution. Accordingly in 1868 W. W. Moreland was elected principal of the preparatory department.

This was six years after Abraham Lincoln had approved the act of Congress providing for agricultural and mechanical schools in the various states, and the time had well-nigh expired in which the states might accept the provision of the law. That the people of Oregon were alive to the situation may

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