THE UNIVERSITY
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It has been said that we know too little of the land we live in. We look elsewhere for scenery, for beauty, for rugged mountains and creeping glaciers, for deep canyons and beautiful valleys, when we have them all on a far grander scale, around us.

The same may be said of our histories. The average student knows the story of Massachusetts better, perhaps, than that of Montana. Or he could give the kings of England more easily than the presidents of the United States.

Among the large number who attend the University of Montana, there are probably not half a dozen who know the story, the life history of the school they attend. To give an insight into the strenuous early days as well as the more peaceful and prosperous later ones to those who do not know, is the object of this short sketch.

It has always been the policy of the United States to have the best of educational facilities, regardless of labor or expense. In order to obtain this, Congress, in 1881 passed a law donating seventy-two sections of land in each of the Western territories, to provide funds for the establishment of Universities in these future states. We may truly say that it is at this time that the history of the University of Montana begins, for it is from this that the major portion of our money comes.

Immediately after the passage of this bill in Congress, Mr. R. H. Howey, of Helena, was appointed to select the University land. Owing to the early date, we were able to get the best of all the excellent sections in the Bitter Root, Gallatin, Flathead and other valleys that belonged to the government, and in this way we obtained a great advantage over the other State Institutions. It was not until eighteen-eighty-nine that the Enabling Act was passed and the land selections for them were not made until in eighteen-ninety-one or -two.

For many years before the University was organized, there had been an expectation that when it was, it would be in Missoula. The source of this rumor is doubtful, but that it was prevalent is well known by all who resided here at that time.

The first movement to secure the University was made during the meeting of the first Legislative Assembly in January of eighteen-ninety-one. A committee was appointed to work in conjunction with members of the Legislature. Through the efforts of these, a bill passed the lower House, but it was lost in the Senate by the extremely narrow margin of two or three votes.

At the meeting of the next Legislature in January of eighteen-ninety-three, the matter was taken up by the citizens of Missoula. A University Club was organized. Prof. J. M. Hamilton was elected president, E. E. Hershey, secretary and treasurer. A committee consisting of Prof. Hamilton, Judge F. H. Woody and Mr. M. T. Crouch drafted the bill which went
through without amendment. Many citizens of Missoula went to Helena to work for the passage of the bill. Systematic labor was done. J. L. Sloane had charge of the work in Helena, while H. O. Collins acted as Press Representative. With these active workers and the influence and persevering energy of the late Hon. E. D. Matts, member of the Senate from Missoula County, the bill finally succeeded in getting through. Too much credit cannot be given the men of that committee and Senator Matts, for their work in the Senate, for without them the University would surely have been put off for an indefinite period.

After the passage of the bill, the State Board of Education met in Missoula, May twenty-fourth, eighteen-ninety-three and selected the present 40-

A SECTION OF THE ART DEPARTMENT

acre Campus. The Higgins Estate donated the north twenty and the South Missoula Land Company the south twenty.

Nothing more was done until the meeting of the Legislature in January of eighteen-ninety-five, when a bill was put through as recommended by the State Board of Education, appropriating the funds accumulated from the Land Act of eighteen-eighty-one, to open the Institution in September of that year. At the June meeting of the State Board of Education, Dr. O. J. Craig was selected as President of the young University. Professors Merritt and Reiley were appointed at the same time. Later in the summer, Professors Aber and Scheuch were obtained.

In order to facilitate the opening of the University, the citizens of
Missoula had donated their South Side High School Building and in addition, had raised three thousand and five hundred dollars by means of a special tax to place the building in proper condition for use by the State. To assist the State Board in their work, a local executive committee was appointed. This consisted of Judge Hiram Knowles, J. H. T. Ryman and T. C. Marshall.

On September tenth, eighteen-ninety-five the University was opened with impressive ceremonies. Fifty students enrolled the first day. The number increased as it has continued to do until at the end of the first fiscal year the attendance was a hundred and eighteen, and at the close of the first college year, June tenth, eighteen-ninety-six, one hundred and thirty-five were in attendance.

Arbor Day in eighteen-ninety-six, will be long remembered by those participating, through the fact that then the first improvements on the University grounds were made. On that day a large concourse of citizens, societies and school children assembled at the grounds near the foot of Sentinel for the purpose of planting trees. Amid appropriate exercises, nearly five hundred shade trees were planted.

The next year, eighteen-ninety-seven, the Legislature appropriated sixteen thousand dollars for the maintenance of the University during eighteen-ninety-six and seven, and nineteen thousand dollars for eighteen-ninety-seven and eight. The same generous Legislature also gave the University permission to issue bonds to the amount of one hundred thousand dollars, bearing interest at not more than six per cent, and due in thirty years, but payable in twenty, for the purpose of erecting the buildings necessary to carry out the increased work, for, already, the present building was taxed far beyond its means. The bonds were issued at a premium, a building commission appointed, consisting of J. R. Latimer, Fred Stoddard, A. Cave, George Higgins and J. K. Woods, and the buildings pushed rapidly to completion. Sewerage and water systems were installed, the grounds were graded and filled with many hundred loads of dirt and gravel, additional trees were planted, all preparing for the beautiful grounds to be seen in the near future.

By February eighteenth, eighteen-ninety-nine the buildings had been finished and on that date they were formally turned over to the State Board of Education.

Only two buildings were erected at this time, Science and University Halls, the one containing the Chemical, Physical and Engineering departments, the other the Biological laboratories, together with Offices and the departments of Mathematics, Languages, History, Psychology, Literature and the Classics, the Museum, Library, Assembly Room, Literary Hall and others. Science Hall also furnished heat and power for both.

While the University was growing in buildings, apparatus and grounds, she was also strengthening herself internally by the addition of new departments and strong men at the head of them. Prominent among these is Professor M. J. Elrod, in February, eighteen-ninety-seven. Professor Elrod was one of the strongest men possible to obtain for his position, and for the advancement of the University in all lines.
Professor F. D. Smith was appointed later in the summer to the chair of Chemistry and Physics, and in May of the following year, Prof. James H. Wells accepted the position of Professor of Mechanical Engineering.

June, 1899, marks the first step taken by the University on other lines than regular class work. A Biological Station was established on Flathead Lake near where the town of Bigfork now is. Prof. M. J. Elrod was made Director and under his skillful guidance it has been made second to none.
Students are in attendance from all over the United States, and the prospects are brighter every year.

The years 1900 and 1901, on the whole were quiet, but yet were marked by several important events. New members were added to the Faculty and losses suffered by the resignation of old ones. In June Prof. J. H. Wells sent in his resignation on account of ill health and in the following August, Professor F. D. Smith tendered his resignation to the Board. Professor A. L. Westcott was appointed to fill the chair of Mechanical Engineering to succeed Prof. Smith, and Mr. W. D. Harkins, to fill that of Chemistry and Physics. Miss Eunice Hubbell also resigned, in order to be married. Miss Francis Corbin succeeded her in the chair of English Literature.

In order to accommodate the increased demand for an extended course in Geology and Mineralogy, the State Board of Education selected J. P. Rowe to fill the newly made department of Geology, which he has ably done since. Miss Louise Hatheway of the class of '99, was made assistant in the Preparatory department. Mr. John F. Davies of Butte, was engaged as expert Librarian. He systematized the cataloging of the Library, and put it in excellent shape for future needs.

Prof. J. M. Hamilton was added to the Faculty about this time also. He immediately took charge of the departments of History and Psychology. At the June, 1901, meeting of the Board of Education, he was elected Vice-President of the University. At this time Miss Ruth E. Kellogg was chosen
to take charge of the department of Elocution and Physical Culture for women. In the December session, Miss Louise Hatheway, assistant in the Preparatory department, was placed in charge of a department of English and Rhetoric. This department was created by separating the work in English and Rhetoric from that of English Literature.

The General Assembly of 1901, authorized the University to issue seventy thousand dollars in bonds to be secured by the revenue from the lands, as before given. Of the seventy thousand dollars, forty thousand dollars was to be issued as soon as the bonds could be sold and the remaining thirty thousand dollars in four years, or thereafter according to the direction of the State Board of Education.

Bonds to the amount of forty thousand dollars were sold early in 1902, a Building Commission appointed and the contracts let for two more buildings, a dormitory to be known as Woman’s Hall and a Gymnasium. The construction was hurried to completion and the buildings were soon ready for occupancy.

A serious misfortune occurred in February, 1902, but one that was unavoidable. Science Hall caught fire and the entire annex was almost gutted. Happily the loss was fully covered by insurance and the University suffered little. In one way it was the better, for out of the low, one-story annex arose the two-story addition we now have, giving two commodious laboratories more than formerly. These were finished in the spring of 1903.

Behind the Gymnasium a quarter mile track was laid off and inside this was placed base ball and football fields. The grounds were graded and leveled, making one of the finest athletic fields in the state. Later on still more improvements were made in the field and track. Clay was hauled, spread over the grounds and rolled, a fence was built around the Gridiron and the tennis courts clayed and rolled also. Through these improvements we have an athletic field to be proud of.

The Northern Pacific Railway Company donated the forty acres lying immediately behind the University and on the slope of Sentinel, for the purposes of an observatory, through the efforts of Dr. Craig. This land did not include the summit, but nearly up to it on the western slope. In order to acquire the crest, a bill was introduced in the session of Congress of that year by Senator Gibson granting the University the south half of the northeast quarter, and the south half of the northwest quarter of section twenty-six, township thirteen north, range nineteen west. The bill was referred to a committee, reported favorably for passage, and passed the senate with but little resistance. The donation of these two parcels of land gives the University a site unexcelled in the United States for an Astronomical Observatory. It is eighteen hundred ninety feet above the plain and easily overtops all other peaks in the near vicinity available for such purposes.

Taking everything into consideration we may safely say that the years eighteen-ninety-eight and nine, and nineteen hundred-one and two, have been the years the University has shown the most progress, both in equipment, building operations and in fact every line.

1903 holds the record for additions to the Faculty—excepting the opening
year, of course—three being added, two taking new work and one filling the place made vacant by the resignation of Prof. A. L. Westcott. Prof. Westcott, the head of the College of Engineering was compelled to resign by reason of his wife's illness and the necessity of taking her to lower altitudes. Robert Sibley was appointed in September, to fill the vacancy. Mr. Sibley is of the class of '03, at the University of California.

Miss Nellie Whitney, the Preceptress of Woman's Hall and Instructor in the Preparatory department is a graduate of Minnesota.

Prof. Hiram B. Conibear was appointed late last vacation as Athletic Instructor for young men. He comes from the University of Chicago and that of Illinois, where he was head trainer.

We can thus see how the University of Montana has built herself up from almost nothing to the present stage of perfection. It has been slow, but year by year she has gained in strength, in numbers and wealth. In comparison with other Universities of equal age the results are far superior to any in the West, and most in the older states.

Let us hope that this vigorous growth may continue until the University of Montana is second to none and superior to all.

A GOOD VAULT