

# Plans Made for Post-War Expansion of

## Physical Plant and Enrollment at K. U.

Physical Plant 7-31-44

What is in store for Kansas University after the war?

This question is asked frequently these days not only by administrators and teachers at the school, but also by thousands of friends and alumni who are wondering if the impact of the war will have resulting deflationary effects on higher education, or if in the immediate post-war years the University will grow in size and influence to a position far beyond anything envisioned before.

Effects of the war upon enrollment, although severe, have not been as serious as expected by many at the time the United States began selecting and training a huge armed force. Army, Navy and Marine training programs have sent several thousand men to Mount Oread and for nearly two years, between one and two thousand men have been stationed at the school.

Civilian enrollment has dropped steadily and today the figure is only slightly over one thousand. Next fall after the military training program has been largely discontinued, total enrollment may be less than half of what it was a year ago, and perhaps less than a third of what it was prior to the war.

But, what about after the war—perhaps 1945, 1946 or 1947?

Some observers anticipate new high enrollment peaks at state schools with the University of Kansas likely to have as many as 6,000 students enrolled for the regular winter school months. The Government has made plans to assist all veterans, whose formal education was interrupted, by paying tuition and a monthly subsistence grant. It is believed many veterans of the war will wish to resume University work and, in so doing they will be met by the normal "crop" of younger students who have just completed high school courses.

If 1,500 extra veterans should enroll at K. U. during a year of normal enrollment, the school would have approximately 6,000 students.

And, perhaps after the war even more high school graduates will desire to continue their formal education. If so, the size of the student body on Mount Oread would be even greater.

Such thoughts are in the mind of the school administration and it was because of this that Ulysses Floyd Rible, architect, was brought to K. U. a year ago to make preliminary plans for improvement and expansion of the physical plant on the Hill. Prior to his return to California last week to resume his private architectural practice, Rible spent many months in making a study of the campus and in preparing actual drawings for improvements.

Specific projects for Rible included a new aeronautics building, a large addition to Watson library, a new women's dormitory, a recreational area for students, and an addition to the Student Union building.

Preliminary plans for the aeronautics building were made by the architect. His studies and sketches for the addition to Watson library are now in the hands of the state architect in Topeka, who is proceeding on working drawings and specifications which will be available when the legislature sees fit to appropriate necessary funds for the work.

The library addition proposes to include stack space to accommodate present stored volumes which, by necessity, are "out of circulation," and to provide for a 15-year expansion based upon anticipated normal growth of the library. It would provide new rooms, and redecorating, rearranging and acoustical treatment of present rooms. Under the plan it is proposed to recoup more than 3,000 square feet of floor space in the central portion by reorganization of "badly placed partitions and outmoded light shafts."

The new women's dormitory, in the post-war plan, would be located at the north end of "North College Hill," where the ground level is better suited for such construction

as the first unit in a "court" of dormitories at the southeast corner of the original campus between Tenth and Eleventh streets, bounded by Indiana and Ohio streets.

The proposed recreational area for students would be on the hillside west of Potter lake, with barbecue ovens, dining spaces, and a large roofed pavilion suitable for dancing.

Plans for an addition to the Student Union building, to the north of the present structure, call for a large ballroom, bowling alleys, a cafeteria, and an expansive soda-fountain and grill room arrangement. The project stands as one of the first on the schedule, when proper financing can be arranged.

Under campus rearrangement, the William Allen White School of Journalism would be moved into Fowler Shops, and shop work, which was in the building prior to its present use by the navy, would be at the west end of the campus to hold engineering work in a more closely knit unit.

A storage hangar for the University at Municipal airport was included in the planning, but nothing was done relative to actual improvement of the airport which is on University land. Attention to a new aeronautical building on the campus, and to a storage hangar, would indicate the administration realizes the necessity for substantial improvement in an airfield.

The University is in an advantageous position in that it owns a large amount of land ideally suited to modern airport development.

When Professor Rible completed his assignment for the University he presented a "Master Campus Survey" which, in the form of a map, shows in accurate detail topography, buildings, roads, walks, utility, tunnels and trees. He recommended that the map be maintained in up-to-date order so that at all times state and school authorities, and other friends of the school, might have an accurate picture of the existing campus.

During his residence here, Rible talked before various groups and visited with many school officials, stressing the importance of a long-range program of development for the University, rather than the present hit-and-miss program whereby decisions on location of improvements are not a part of a well defined blue-print for orderly and efficient expansion.

Back in 1904 a "Master Plan" for campus development was made, but apparently it was soon forgotten and the maps began gathering added layers of dust. Rible believes that although the 40 year old plan has been outmoded in many ways, more careful attention to its suggestions would have provided a more beautiful and utilitarian school.

The architect suggested such a plan cannot be the result of one architect's drawings, but it should come after the school has been aroused to think of a master plan, and after students, faculty and all others interested have had the opportunity to participate in a study of improvements and changes needed in the years ahead.

He recommends that the master survey begin with the deans at the University, with each asked to analyze and evaluate their departments and then submit an outline of possible trends on a 10, 20 and 40 year basis. Various other individuals and groups should be asked to participate, thru discussion and presentation of ideas.

Findings should be correlated by the administration, with the help of a permanent director of the Master Campus Survey, and a committee or board composed of the chancellor, and others such as the state architect, and professionals who are particularly interested in the future of the school.

A good campus plan years ago probably would have avoided the teaching of the inter-related subjects of physics and engineering at opposite ends of the campus. More careful planning of the library would have avoided shutting off the beautiful view of the Wakarusa valley except to those who would wand their way thru the stack rooms. In fact, with one of the most

glimpse between buildings.

The existence of a well determined campus plan also undoubtedly would have avoided having a main traffic thoroughfare down the middle of the campus. A circle roadway around the outside of the buildings would provide a better view as well as freeing the campus from a large amount of commercial traffic.

Rible suggests that the fixing of paths and the planting of trees should be a part of a long-range plan, and not so much of a "putting in" and a "taking out" as at present.

It is generally realized such a plan cannot be inflexible, and that it must be changed frequently in order to meet new conditions. For example, additional parking space is needed today, but planners of 30 years ago would not have provided sufficiently for spaces to park motor cars. Planners today might not devote sufficient space to helicopters or autogyros.

Most ambitious of Rible's planning is in proposing to connect old North College Hill with the present campus, thru acquisition of private property between Louisiana and Mississippi from Thirteenth to Twelfth, and between Louisiana and Indiana from Twelfth to Eleventh. Such acquisition would afford additional building sites, and would make the Student Union building a physical center as well as a social center of student activities.

Most pleasing to many old-timers is his recommendation that "native stone" be featured in the architecture of future buildings. One of the most frequent criticisms of the University has been relative to the "helter-skelter piles of brick and stone."

Building began with native limestone and then switched away to terra cotta, Indiana limestone, and pententary brick. Rible proposes a return to a "recapture of the spirit of the architecture which is so manifestly characteristic of this state."

The planning architect wants the University and its friends to do more thinking about the future. More thinking and more discussion now is likely to result in a more beautiful and more practical institution of learning in the years ahead.

1944