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Etc

100 YEARS on MOUNT OREAD

The hilltop site of the University of Kansas, enhanced by its commanding view of two distant valleys, always had the basic ingredients for a beautiful campus.

But Mount Oread's impressive landscaping "was made," not "born."

Ninety years ago K.U.'s two lonely buildings stood like sore thumbs on a barren hill. Money was scarce even for faculty salaries.

But in 1877 the Douglas County Horticultural Society planted hundreds of trees on the campus. The grounds were graded, a stone wall was built along the north side of Fraser Hall, and gates were added.

The gates were utilitarian as well as useful. They kept out the cows that had worried Chancellor James Marvin. Tending the gates by day and closing them at night was a job that helped several boys through school. Among them were two who later made important contributions to the University, Dean Olin Templin and Prof. Miles W. Sterling.

Trees require many years to add their beauty -- man can neutralize their work in a few days.

And so it was with Fraser Hall, which for several years after 1872 had only wooden steps at its main entrance. Again, shortage of funds.

The state architect had a cheap solution. A portico, designed for the State Insane Asylum at Osawatomie wouldn't fit because of a mistake by the stonecutters.

Although the portico was in no way similar in design to Fraser Hall, he had it shipped to Lawrence and "stuck" on the front of the building. There it remained, incongruous and ugly, until about 20 years ago when Chancellor Deane W. Malott ordered it removed.

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