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VALERIE COLVIN: PIONEER PHYSICAL
EDUCATOR IN OKLAHOMA

By

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EDUCATOR IN OKLAHOMA

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PREFACE

The American Alliance for Health, Physical Education and Recreation will celebrate its one hundredth birthday within the next ten years. As a result of this approaching centennial and due to the fact that many members of the second generation of leaders in the field have recently retired, the profession has become increasingly aware of the importance and relevance of historical research. The author engaged in this historical-biographical study in order to contribute to an increased knowledge of professional leaders and their influences on the field of health, physical education and recreation.

The majority of the studies to date have focused on persons of national prominence. Equally important are those individuals who have made meaningful contributions to the profession on the local, state and regional levels.

As a valued member of the Southern District Association, Valerie Colvin developed a teacher preparation program in health, physical education and recreation at Oklahoma State University which was recognized as one of the best in the region. As a respected leader in Oklahoma physical education, her efforts helped to provide the foundation for the successful development of the profession within the state.

During her forty year tenure at Oklahoma State University, Valerie Colvin contributed to the growth of physical education on all levels, maintaining that her primary purpose was to assist the nation-wide development of the profession through the establishment of quality

programs on the local and state levels. As a result of her influential leadership and responsiveness toward that end, it was felt that a record of her career and professional contributions was warranted.

The methodology employed throughout the study was compatible with accepted criteria for historical research. The data were collected by means of personal interviews with professional associates of the subject and a questionnaire survey was sent to former students, former faculty members and other professional colleagues of Valerie Colvin. Primary and secondary sources were identified and categorized. Substantial amounts of verifying materials were located in the files of the School of Health, Physical Education and Leisure Services at Oklahoma State University; in the files of the College of Arts and Sciences at Oklahoma State University; in the archives of the Oklahoma Association for Health, Physical Education and Recreation and in the personal files of Valerie Colvin. Additional information was obtained through numerous personal interviews with the subject of the study.

It is my wish to acknowledge a multitude of individuals for their enthusiastic support and assistance in the completion of this study. In that the subject of the study is Miss Valerie Colvin, at the outset I must express my appreciation to her for granting me permission to pursue the study. The many hours of enjoyable dialogue with Miss Colvin will long be remembered and treasured.

I would like to thank the director of my study, Dr. Betty Webber Abercrombie, for her sustained interest and guidance throughout the study. I also wish to acknowledge the chairman of my committee, Dr. A. B. Harrison, and the other members of my committee, Dr. George Oberle and Dr. John Creswell, for their encouragement and wise counsel.

I wish to recognize the many former students, former faculty members and professional colleagues of Valerie Colvin for their overwhelming response to the questionnaire survey.

In addition, I appreciate the trail-blazing of Dr. Virginia Peters of Central State University, who introduced the concept of biographical studies of pioneer Oklahoma physical educators.

I acknowledge, gratefully, the efficiency and accuracy of Caroline Champlin and Paula Keller who typed the manuscript. I also value the many artisans and craftsmen who assisted in the reproduction of the photographs and in the preparation of the final product.

I extend a special appreciation to Mr. and Mrs. Carl Peters of Drumright, Oklahoma, for the generous sharing of their library and writing materials.

For their continued role as interested parents and for their unwavering confidence and support, I thank, especially, Mr. and Mrs. E. N. Holmberg of Edmond, Oklahoma.

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CHAPTER I

EDUCATION AND THE EARLY YEARS OF SERVICE

Agnes Valerie Colvin was born to Samuel Harvey Colvin and Vivian Gusman Colvin on January 14, 1904, in Mobile, Alabama. Named so that her initials would be similar to those of her maternal grandfather, Alfred Valery Gusman, she later chose to be called Valerie.¹ For a brief period in college, Miss Colvin became intrigued with the name Gordon, and during that time her signature was Valerie Gordon Colvin.²

Her formal education began in the fall of 1909 when she entered the first grade at Baker's Graded School, a private school in Mobile which emphasized small classes and individual attention. Following the closing of this school in the spring of 1917, Valerie enrolled at the public school, Barton Academy, which had larger, more impersonal classes.³

Reared in a home described by Sharman as one of education, refinement and culture,⁴ Valerie learned at an early age that service to

¹Interview with Valerie Colvin, February 8, 1978.

²Bells and Pomegranates, 1924 Yearbook of The Woman's College of Alabama (Montgomery, Alabama, 1924), p. 133.

³Colvin, February 8, 1978.

⁴Letter of recommendation from J. R. Sharman, then part-time instructor of physical education, Teachers College, Columbia University, to Bureau of Educational Service, Teachers College, Columbia University, December 24, 1928 (in the files of the College of Arts and Sciences, Oklahoma State University, Stillwater, Oklahoma).

others was a worthwhile endeavor. Both her parents were active in the Methodist Church and her father, in particular, would go out of his way to assist with causes that in those days were considered unpopular. Mrs. Colvin was interested primarily in sewing, the Ladies Aid Society, bridge and book clubs and Mr. Colvin, a druggist, was involved with the Rotary Club as well as many other civic organizations. Mrs. Colvin, described as a very gracious lady, was credited with any graces her daughter may have acquired.⁵ Two incidents recalled by Valerie give insight into the character of her father.

"We were often late to church on Sunday because Dad was down at the jail bailing out those porters, janitors and draymen who had been arrested for public drunkenness the night before."⁶

Described by his daughter as a man who always had time to listen, she asked him once: "Why didn't you tell me that people would lie and cheat and steal and spike you in the back?" His response was: "I thought you would find out soon enough for yourself."⁷

In addition to her youth activities in the church, Valerie was exposed to both ballet and piano lessons for a few years of her childhood. She considered both experiences unpleasant and a waste of good money.⁸ Her major interests at that time were tennis and swimming. Her grandfather lived next door to the Colvin family and between the two houses was a tennis court. Valerie played tennis from the time

⁵Interview with Valerie Colvin, February 15, 1978.

⁶Ibid.

⁷Ibid.

⁸Ibid.

she was big enough to grip a racket. A neighborhood family had a swimming pool so Valerie and a childhood friend spent many hours in the water.⁹ Each summer, as soon as school was out, the Colvin family packed up and moved across Mobile Bay. Every day for three months Valerie crabbed, fished, swam, met the boat from Mobile, ate ice cream, went to the post office and joined the other vacationers on the wharf for the nightly sing. Her love of the water, ice cream and seafood has been attributed to these early experiences.¹⁰

In high school at Barton Academy, Valerie was on the girls' basketball varsity for four years, was a member of the Aline Bright Literary Society and served as secretary-treasurer of her senior class. She utilized her swimming expertise for two summers during high school by teaching the activity to children at Lyons Park, a neighborhood recreation area.¹¹ Following graduation from high school in 1921, Valerie enrolled in a teacher's training course offered by the Mobile Public Schools. The successful completion of this six-week methods course resulted in a lifetime teaching certificate in the state of Alabama.¹² For the first month of the 1921-22 school year, Valerie was employed by the Mobile Public Schools as a substitute teacher. In this position she traveled throughout the city by streetcar and

⁹Ibid.

¹⁰Ibid.

¹¹Ibid.

¹²Ibid.

taught a variety of subjects in several different schools.¹³ She took her first permanent teaching job when a vacancy occurred in Whistler, Alabama, an industrial suburb of Mobile. Valerie continued to live at home and, in order to get to and from work each day, she rode the streetcar for almost forty-five minutes each way. Her responsibilities consisted of teaching thirty third-grade children the rudiments of reading, writing, arithmetic, music, art and physical education.¹⁴

Following her decision to attend college the next fall, Valerie Colvin became a freshman student at The Woman's College of Alabama, a Methodist liberal arts college located in Montgomery.¹⁵ Emphasizing Bachelor of Arts degrees in Music, Art, Expression, Home Economics and Library Science, the college also advertised its swimming, tennis, basketball and other athletic programs.¹⁶ Valerie majored in home economics because it was "the respectable thing to do."¹⁷ A career in physical education was not available.¹⁸ Miss Colvin stated: "Physical education was still relatively new as a profession and even if I had been aware of the opportunities for study in the North, I didn't have the money to go that far from home."¹⁹

¹³Ibid.

¹⁴Ibid.

¹⁵Ibid.

¹⁶Advertisement in Bells and Pomegranates, 1924, p. 182.

¹⁷Colvin, February 8, 1978.

¹⁸Ibid.

¹⁹Ibid.

As one of one hundred and eight freshman women²⁰ at "Wo-Co-Ala," Valerie quickly became engrossed in school activities. Amassing thirty-five credit hours in such courses as rhetoric and composition, algebra, Old and New Testament, French, cookery, sewing and physical education, she achieved a nearly perfect grade average.²¹

As a member of the varsity basketball team, Valerie was depicted in the school yearbook as a player with fine potential. "Valerie has played on varsity only one year, but we know her ability. QUICK is her home address; her cleverness in shifting and accurate shooting make her a promising forward."²² With much emphasis placed on intramural sports, the competition was organized among the four classes.²³ Valerie represented the freshman class on the field ball team, the tennis team and the swimming team. In addition to classes, varsity basketball and intramurals, she was also a member of the Pi Epsilon Phi sorority and the Currer Bell Literary Society.²⁴ During her sophomore year at Woman's College, Valerie was enrolled in English literature, intermediate French, general and child psychology, inorganic chemistry, intermediate clothing, art, costume designing and physical training.²⁵ With thirty-six more hours completed, her college

²⁰Bells and Pomegranates, 1923 Yearbook of The Woman's College of Alabama (Montgomery, Alabama, 1923), pp. 69-75.

²¹Transcript of Valerie Colvin from The Woman's College of Alabama, February 21, 1938 (in the files of the College of Arts and Sciences, Oklahoma State University).

²²Bells and Pomegranates, 1923, p. 103.

²³Colvin, February 8, 1978.

²⁴Bells and Pomegranates, 1923, p. 70.

²⁵Transcript, February 21, 1938.

transcript recorded four first term "B" grades in literature and the home economics classes.²⁶ To this day Miss Colvin states: "My mother was a beautiful seamstress; I have a major in home economics and I always send everything out to be hem-stitched."²⁷

Physical training at that time consisted of gymnastics, wands, dumbbells and Indian Clubs.²⁸ Each spring, as a culminating activity, those enrolled in the physical training classes presented a "gym night" at which time they performed these skills for the student body, the faculty and the townspeople of Montgomery.²⁹ Valerie's freshman activities carried over into the sophomore year and several new ones were added. She continued as a starting player on the basketball varsity and once again represented her class in tennis and swimming intramurals.³⁰

Thomas Hall, in an account of the 1924 basketball season, reported: "Val Colvin and Elsie Jones carried off the scoring honors for the team this season and were excellent floor workers. Although small in height, they made trouble for opposing guards in every game." In his explanation of The Woman's College loss to the University of Alabama Co-eds 25-21, Hall stated: "Colvin and Jones in this game, although playing good ball, missed numerous 'close up' chances."³¹ In an upset over top-ranked Peabody College, the reporter made this comment:

²⁶Ibid.

²⁷Colvin, February 15, 1978.

²⁸Ibid.

²⁹Ibid.

³⁰Bells and Pomegranates, 1924, pp. 112, 114.

³¹Ibid.

After a loss to Alabama College at Montevallo, the squad reached the peak of its form in defeating the scintillating Peabody College team on the Woman's College court. The loss was the first chalked up against the Nashville team in sixty contests.³²

Fifty-four years later, Emma Plunkett, Chairman of Women's Physical Education at Central State College from 1928-1966, alluded to that contest:

In 1924 I was attending Peabody College in Nashville, Tennessee. We had a girl's basketball team that played Woman's College in Alabama. I was the cheerleader for Peabody--we lost to Woman's College. A number of years later, I learned that Valerie Colvin played on that Alabama team.³³

Additional activities during the sophomore year included three positions with leadership responsibilities. Valerie served on the cabinet of the Young Woman's Christian Association as Mission Chairman, represented the Pi Epsilon Phi sorority on the Pan-Hellenic Council and was athletic manager for the entire sophomore class. She also joined a group of water safety enthusiasts which became the first Life Savers Club at Woman's College.³⁴

The fall of 1924-25 brought junior status to Valerie Colvin. Her course work that year encompassed advanced work in cooking, chemistry and French and also included classes in hygiene, Spanish, education, biology and religious education. She again maintained her record of academic excellence, with a lone grade of "B" in religious education.³⁵

³²Ibid.

³³Interview with Emma W. Plunkett, Professor Emeritus in Health and Physical Education, Central State University, Edmond, Oklahoma, February 22, 1978.

³⁴Bells and Pomegranates, 1924, p. 116.

³⁵Transcript, February 21, 1938.

The varsity basketball team, of which Valerie was a third-year member and captain, posted six wins and one defeat.³⁶ In his annual review of the season in Bells and Pomegranates, the school yearbook, Hall applauded the new coach and the captain:

Coach Mary Robison celebrated her first year at Woman's College by winning the state championship. What more need be said? Captain Valerie Colvin was a tower of strength to the team throughout the season. This little sharpshooter led the team in scoring and flashed brilliantly in practically every contest. She learned her early basketball at Barton Academy, Mobile, startling her home town fans with her basket throwing at an early age.³⁷

Assuming positions of leadership with increased responsibility, Miss Colvin was elected president of the junior class, vice-president of the YWCA Cabinet and vice-president of the Religious Activity Council. She was initiated into Tri-Sigma, an honorary scholastic organization that year, and served on the Grand Council of the College. Her course work and major classes influenced her to join the French Club and the Home Economics Club. In addition to these activities, her sorority and her involvement with the intramural swimming and tennis teams, Valerie continued in the Life Savers and the Currer Bell Literary Society.³⁸

As a means of making some money to support her many campus activities, she worked as a laboratory assistant in the biology department her junior and senior years.³⁹ This job, she recalled, was never dull:

³⁶Bells and Pomegranates, 1925 Yearbook of The Woman's College of Alabama (Montgomery, Alabama, 1925), p. 116.

³⁷Ibid.

³⁸Ibid

³⁹Colvin, February 15, 1978.

My job in the biology lab was to prepare all of the specimens for the classes the next day. This involved, in some cases, taking shipments of live frogs and dividing them up into individual containers. One time the lid came off the large canister of live frogs and the lab was literally hopping for a while. It was a good thing it happened in the afternoon when no one else was around or I might have been in trouble.⁴⁰

For two summers during college, Valerie worked for the Recreation Department in Mobile. Her major responsibilities were on the municipal playgrounds, teaching swimming and assisting and directing play activities for the city children who attended.⁴¹ Jackson Sharman, the Superintendent of Recreation in Mobile at that time, was pleased with her work: "During these summers she rendered a superior type of service. She seems to have unlimited energy and enthusiasm for her work and never showed any tendency to avoid responsibility."⁴²

At the end of her junior year at Woman's College, Miss Colvin was elected president of the Young Woman's Christian Association.⁴³ In June of that year she and fifteen members of her cabinet traveled to Blue Ridge, North Carolina, to attend the Southern YWCA conference.⁴⁴ It was a time, she recalled

. . . to have cross conferences with the rest of humanity. The fellowship with the other people was wonderful. We were there ten days in this mountain setting and it was long enough to really get to know people and to make friends.⁴⁵

⁴⁰Ibid.

⁴¹Ibid.

⁴²Sharman, December 24, 1928.

⁴³Interview with Valerie Colvin, March 1, 1978.

⁴⁴Ibid.

⁴⁵Ibid.

Her major responsibility in terms of leadership her senior year was the presidency of this organization. It was a college policy that a student could be president of only one organization and the YWCA was one of the most esteemed on campus.⁴⁶ Remembered by Mary Robison, her basketball coach, as "an excellent leader who also knows how to follow and as an excellent Christian character,"⁴⁷ Valerie was the subject of a poem in the school annual:

In the game she makes 'em ring
 In the revival she makes 'em sing
 In the church or on the court
 'Val', old girl, you are a sport.⁴⁸

Rounding out her degree work that year were courses in history, home economics methods, physiology, nutrition, cooking and two methods classes in physical education.⁴⁹ Added to the curriculum when Mary Robison was hired as Physical Director, the two methods courses were practice teaching in physical education and methods in physical education.⁵⁰ By completing two semester hours in human physiology and ten hours in physical education, Miss Colvin qualified for her teaching certificate in physical education.⁵¹

⁴⁶Ibid.

⁴⁷Letter of recommendation from Mary Robison, then Physical Director, Hamilton College, Lexington, Kentucky, to Bureau of Educational Service, Teachers College, Columbia University, March 4, 1929 (in the files of the College of Arts and Sciences, Oklahoma State University, Stillwater, Oklahoma).

⁴⁸Bells and Pomegranates, 1925, p. 54.

⁴⁹Transcript, February 21, 1938.

⁵⁰Ibid.

⁵¹Ibid.

Elected to Who's Who at Woman's College of Alabama her senior year, Valerie remained active in Pi Epsilon Phi, the athletic council, was an officer of the Pan-Hellenic Council, captained the basketball team, participated in track, tennis and swimming, was voted best athlete and served on the grand council and the religious activity council.⁵² While serving on this last board, Miss Colvin and several other members decided to put into practice what they preached--service to others.

When the Negroes who worked in the school dining room became ill with the flu, we went to the administration and volunteered to work in the dining room in their place--and we did; we put on their uniforms for one whole week and served with no pay. We did this to prevent other workers from being brought in to take their jobs.⁵³

Hall, in his overview of the 1925-26 basketball season, paid a final tribute to the leadership ability of Valerie Colvin:

Captain Colvin will be missing next year, having played four years on the varsity. Her loss will be a great one and keenly felt. To this flashy forward belongs the lion's share of the glory for the wonderful success of the state champions the past season.⁵⁴

Because of her involvement in campus religious activities and her effective leadership of the Young Woman's Christian Association, Woman's College officials and faculty members recommended Valerie for a scholarship to Northwestern University to major in Religious Education.⁵⁵ Sometime before the close of her senior year, Valerie made two

⁵²Bells and Pomegranates, 1926 Yearbook of The Woman's College of Alabama (Montgomery, Alabama, 1926), p. 20.

⁵³Colvin, March 1, 1978.

⁵⁴Bells and Pomegranates, 1926, pp. 123-124.

⁵⁵Colvin, February 8, 1978.

important decisions which determined the direction her life would take. She refused to consider a teaching position in home economics and she decided not to accept the scholarship to Northwestern. When her home economics professor urged her to work in her major field, Valerie responded: "Miss Meek, I can't teach home economics; I don't want to."⁵⁶ Explaining her feelings about a career in religious education, she commented,

Woman's College was a Methodist school and you had to take Bible all the time you were there. I just couldn't see myself doing that sort of thing. I knew ever since I was a youngster that I wanted to be in movement-related activities and teaching religion per se just wasn't me.⁵⁷

Valerie Colvin graduated from Woman's College of Alabama, now Huntingdon College, in May of 1926, with a Bachelor of Arts degree in home economics and a certificate in physical education.⁵⁸ Of Miss Colvin, Robison wrote:

She has mastered her subject matter--has a great deal of initiative and push. She is neat and cooperative--can work successfully under different circumstances, doesn't create friction. She is as dependable as the days are long--in my estimation the most desired trait.⁵⁹

Described by the president of Woman's College as a "young woman of sterling character and earnest purpose,"⁶⁰ Miss Colvin took to heart the motto inscribed on the entrance to the campus:

⁵⁶Ibid.

⁵⁷Ibid.

⁵⁸Transcript, February 21, 1938.

⁵⁹Robison, March 4, 1929.

⁶⁰Letter of recommendation from Walter Agnew, President of Woman's College of Alabama, to Bureau of Educational Service, Teachers College, Columbia University, January 31, 1929 (in the files of the College of Arts and Sciences, Oklahoma State University, Stillwater, Oklahoma).

Enter Thou To Grow In Wisdom
Go Forth To Apply Wisdom In Service⁶¹

She left Montgomery and Woman's College and returned to the family home in Mobile. Since she had refused the scholarship to Northwestern and thus had no definite plans, she went to the Park and Recreation Department in Mobile and said, "I am available and I would like to work for you."⁶² Due to her previous experience with that department, she was hired immediately for that summer and for the following year. Valerie spent the summer of 1926 working as a playground supervisor and in the fall became athletic director for the newly organized year-round recreation program. Her duties in this position included scheduling all of the inter-playground competition for the eight parks in Mobile. The sports for which she was responsible for scheduling were field ball, soccer, girls' hockey, basketball, softball, swimming and tennis. In addition to providing in-service training to the eight playground supervisors every morning, Valerie also worked with the three specialists in dance, music and arts and crafts and assisted them in their rotation among the various park and recreation areas. The year-round program was possible because the Mobile Board of Education had agreed to let the Park and Recreation Department use the public school buildings after regular school hours. Each of the playgrounds, then, had a nearby school to use for a headquarters.⁶³

⁶¹Colvin, February 8, 1978.

⁶²Ibid.

⁶³Ibid.

Miss Colvin recalled that it was not always easy to maintain good relations with the school personnel:

Some of those principals became very possessive of their buildings. They wouldn't understand what we were doing or what we were trying to do and some days it was really and truly exasperating. Dr. Hoy Rogers, the new Director of Recreation, was very nice to me and very understanding. He would save all of the cracked phonograph records for me and when I would come into his office following a visit with a principal, he would say, "I see you, now go ahead and break these; you'll feel better." I did and I did.⁶⁴

As a playground supervisor, Valerie learned a great deal about program development and about working for the public. In the fall of 1926 she was sent to an area at the end of George Avenue, the street on which she lived, to develop a playground out of an enormous pecan field. She accomplished this task and because the Negro section was closeby, she set aside one corner of the playground so the black children could play. Mobile in the 1920's was a typical southern town and segregation was accepted as a normal way of life. Despite this attitude, the Park and Recreation Department provided activities for the black population. Twice a month the recreation leaders would organize exercise and sports skills classes for the Negro women at centers in their part of town. The staff was not aware of any concern or criticism of these activities by the white population because nothing was ever said.⁶⁵

Miss Colvin felt that much more than sports was taught on the playgrounds and that there was no way a person could fail to get an education working for the public:

⁶⁴Ibid.

⁶⁵Ibid.

One day two daughters of one of the wealthiest families in town came to Crawford Playground wearing beads and bracelets that were stolen. They were bragging that they hadn't been caught, but they were caught--I caught 'em. I marched them to their grandmother who said she was sure they didn't mean to do anything wrong. About that time their daddy came in and we saw eye to eye. He took them right back down to the store, made them apologize, pay for the articles and then leave them there. They learned that it was not smart to steal and I didn't have any more trouble with them.⁶⁶

The staff of the Mobile Park and Recreation Department was cohesive and enjoyed each other. They enjoyed their jobs and although they worked ten to twelve hours a day, Miss Colvin recalled few complaints about extra duties. Valerie attributed her ability to work with men to her experiences in this position. She cited one example:

Dr. Rogers sent Bob Mims and me down to the bayfront to make a waterfront playground out of nothing and it was rugged. We worked side-by-side and both of us did the best we could. Anybody and everybody came. There were no facilities at all and it was truly a primitive area. People don't know what rugged is today, but it was rugged.⁶⁷

Working with the three specialists increased Valerie's appreciation for the arts:

Eileen Coles, the dance person, was a native Mobilian who taught ballet and who knew everyone in Mobile. She traveled to New York each year and was the dance person in Mobile. When word got out that Miss Eileen was doing something in dance for the Recreation Department, not only the lower and middle class children would come, but the children of the hoi polloi of Mobile society also came. The arts and crafts person came from Newcombe College, the sister college of Tulane, and she was excellent. Mrs. Klinge, the music director, was just superb. She could do anything from directing the orchestra on down, including the harmonica and ukelele.⁶⁸

⁶⁶Ibid.

⁶⁷Ibid.

⁶⁸Ibid.

Mrs. Klinge also appreciated Miss Colvin's efforts:

Valerie Colvin is one of the highest type girls it has been my pleasure to know. She is an intelligent teacher, first class representative supervisor and a good administrator. She is a splendid Camp leader. In fact she is the ideal young woman, an honor to any organization.⁶⁹

Among the many special events that Valerie coordinated was a waterfront festival:

There were three pageants held during the year directed by Miss Cowles with a "biggie" under Miss Colvin's direction. "Narcissus" was produced on the banks of the Chickasaboque and drew some 5,000 spectators.⁷⁰

Toward the end of her two year tenure with the Mobile Park and Recreation Department, Valerie was encouraged to further her education. Jackson Sharman was the person responsible for her decision to leave Mobile:

Mr. Sharman had been in charge of the summer recreation programs when I worked there before and he was also a friend of the family. He told me, "There's no future here for you. If you are going to stay in this business you need to get your master's degree in physical education. Come on and go to Columbia."⁷¹

Valerie took his suggestion seriously and in the fall of 1928 while he began work on his doctorate at Columbia University, she registered at Teachers College there to pursue her degree.

Enrolled in eighteen hours of graduate work that fall, Valerie was influenced by some of the best known professors in education.

⁶⁹Letter of recommendation from Mrs. Carl A. Klinge, Superintendent, Mobile Recreation Department, to Bureau of Educational Service, Teachers College, Columbia University, January 4, 1929 (in the files of the College of Arts and Sciences, Oklahoma State University, Stillwater, Oklahoma).

⁷⁰Mobile Register, July 7, 1927.

⁷¹Colvin, February 8, 1928.

Notable among these were William Kilpatrick from whom she learned that "nothing is so constant as change" and Jesse Feiring Williams whom she described as dynamic and positive.⁷²

She went to Columbia to learn skills and also to learn the finer points of teaching sound techniques. She had three swimming courses under the tutelage of Nita Sheffield and proved to be an able student.

Sheffield wrote:

At the close of this academic year Miss Colvin will have had seven points of special work in methods, practice teaching of swimming and lifesaving. So far she has proved herself to be an excellent student and very capable in all branches of this subject. Miss Colvin has a most pleasing personality, is an unusual teacher, especially fitted for younger students as well as college students. Her ability is such that I would ask her to be one of my assistants. I believe Miss Colvin to be a teacher of exceptional ability, enthusiastic and a most willing worker. She has had a good background in swimming before coming to Teachers College.⁷³

In order to improve her personal and teaching skills in sports and rhythms, Valerie also took a course from Marjorie Hillis, one of the most respected sports technicians in the field of physical education.

Miss Colvin commented on the experience:

My love of field hockey came from Miss Hillis. One of the first times I remember her was one day when I was playing forward line with her as center. It had started to snow and I had never seen snow before. She shouted, "Colvin, what are you doing?" I shouted back, "I'm look-in' at the snow and you needn't yell at me."⁷⁴

⁷²Ibid.

⁷³Letter of recommendation from Nita C. Sheffield, Instructor of Physical Education, Columbia University, to Bureau of Educational Service, Teachers College, Columbia University, February 10, 1929 (in the files of the College of Arts and Sciences, Oklahoma State University, Stillwater, Oklahoma).

⁷⁴Colvin, February 8, 1978.

Valerie soon changed her attitude concerning dance because Miss Hillis, an athlete and sports person, taught it and made it fun. Miss Colvin admitted: "Before I met Miss Hillis I had always thought that dance was for somebody else, not me. But because someone I admired liked it, it was alright. That's how stupid you can be."⁷⁵ From this she concluded that teachers need to be aware of how their students see them and really how much influence they have.

Miss Colvin was also impressed with Delbert Oberteuffer whose main area was health and anthropometric measurement. She viewed him as young, intelligent and philosophically oriented.⁷⁶ During her nine months at Columbia, Valerie met many people from all regions of the United States. She recalled:

I lived in the dormitory and they didn't serve an evening meal on Sundays. Twelve of us from all over the country met each week for this meal and learned a great deal from each other. We delighted in one particular word game we played. One person would spell a word and then each of us in turn would pronounce it. We discovered that the same word could sound very different depending on what part of the country you were from.⁷⁷

It was clear to anyone who listened to her speak that Valerie was from the South. A fellow student came up to her one day and said, "You're from the South, aren't you?" Valerie answered, "Yes." The student continued by stating, "I'm from the South too!" Valerie asked, "Where?" The young woman said, "South Baltimore." Valerie said, "Lord, I thought that was North."⁷⁸

⁷⁵Ibid.

⁷⁶Ibid.

⁷⁷Ibid.

⁷⁸Ibid.

One of Miss Colvin's best friends turned out to be the Negro elevator operator in the dormitory. He had just recently moved to New York from the South and related to Valerie that she was the only person there whom he could understand.⁷⁹

While working in one of Sheffield's swimming classes second semester, Valerie became acquainted with Janet Woodruff, a former faculty member at Oklahoma A & M College. She was assisting Woodruff with her swimming strokes when the subject of jobs arose. Valerie was asked if she had a job for the next year and if she would be interested in going to Oklahoma A & M to teach. They were looking for someone in physical education. Valerie indicated that she would indeed be interested because jobs were hard to find, and although her parents thought that anything west of the Mississippi River was out of this world, she applied for the position and was hired as an assistant professor of Health and Physical Education at Oklahoma A & M College effective the fall of 1929.

Valerie finished her last semester at Columbia, worked as a counselor at Camp Mesa Cosa that summer, took a trip to Canada with three other counselors, returned to Columbia and made her plans to move to Oklahoma.⁸⁰

⁷⁹Ibid.

⁸⁰Ibid.

CHAPTER II

FORTY YEARS AT OKLAHOMA STATE UNIVERSITY

Valerie was reminded of her parents' concern regarding her "leaving the world to go to Oklahoma" when she went to Grand Central Station in New York City:

I tried to get a ticket to Stillwater. They told me they could get me to St. Louis and in St. Louis I could ask them to get me to Stillwater. Well, they couldn't, of course, they got me to Perry. I didn't know to ask for Perry; nobody told me this when they wrote to me. But, I got here, minus my trunk. So for the first week when I was supposed to be making an impression, I wore the same dress every day.¹

Miss Colvin arrived at Oklahoma Agricultural and Mechanical College in Stillwater, Oklahoma, a few days prior to the opening of classes for the fall, 1929 semester.

In order to understand the environment into which the young teacher entered, a brief study of the background of the college and the physical education program became necessary.

The Oklahoma Agricultural and Mechanical College at Stillwater, Oklahoma, came into existence on December 14, 1891, as a result of the 1890 Federal Land Grant Act and by order of the First Oklahoma Territorial Legislature.² The University at Norman and the Territorial Normal School at Edmond were also located and established by

¹Interview with Valerie Colvin, March 15, 1978.

²Chronicle of Oklahoma, Vol. XXVIII (Oklahoma City: The Oklahoma Historical Society, 1950), p. 152.

the same piece of legislation, House Bill Number 82. The Honorable J. L. Mathews of Payne County introduced the bill and influenced the legislators to vote to award the Oklahoma Agricultural and Mechanical College to Payne County.³ Stillwater and Perkins both were under consideration as possible locations for the new college, and on July 1, 1891, a commission appointed by Governor Steele selected Stillwater as the site.⁴ In order to bring the college to Stillwater, the members of the community raised ten thousand dollars.⁵

Classes began in the Congregational Church and the 76 students were taught by President Robert J. Barker and seven other full-time faculty members.⁶ The first statement pertaining to physical education classes appeared in 1905. At that time every student in the college was required to take a "reasonable" amount of "systematic physical culture, either in gymnasium or in outdoor exercise of suitable character."⁷

The philosophy of the physical training division was included in a college publication in 1909:

The Department of P.T. aims to create and maintain a vigorous state of health in every student in the College and its work is so diversified that it meets the individual needs.

³Chronicle of Oklahoma, Vol. VIII (Oklahoma City: The Oklahoma Historical Society, 1930), p. 120.

⁴Chronicle of Oklahoma, Vol. XXV (Oklahoma City: The Oklahoma Historical Society, 1947), p. 89.

⁵Ibid.

⁶Chronicle of Oklahoma, Vol. XI (Oklahoma City: The Oklahoma Historical Society, 1933), p. 1127.

⁷Oklahoma A & M Annual Catalogue, 1905-06 (Stillwater, 1905), p. 14.

It strives to keep the student body in the best physical condition, for and during their college course, and to lay the foundation for proper living after graduation. It aims to teach the principles of hygienic living and care of the body. Every student in the College is expected to do some work to keep himself in the best possible physical condition.⁸

Although physical training had been a college division since 1898, it was fifteen years later when physical training first appeared in the Outline of Courses as a separate department listed in the Teachers' Normal Division of the 1913 College Catalogue.⁹

By 1914, courses were denoted by numbers which indicated both the credit hours and the contact hours. In addition to the gymnastics, calisthenics and sports classes, a course in personal hygiene was first offered in 1914-15.

In the absence of an indoor facility, the beginning program in physical culture was conducted out-of-doors. The outdoor facilities in those days were plentiful in number and more than adequate for the activity classes.¹⁰

The first gymnasium, constructed in 1905, was "a well-lighted room, 45 x 65 feet and equipped with all of the apparatus necessary for indoor work."¹¹ The Oklahoma State Legislature appropriated sixty-two thousand dollars in 1908 for the construction of the Women's Building which later became Gardiner Hall. This building provided

⁸Oklahoma A & M Bulletin, Vol. VII, 1909-10 (Stillwater, 1909), p. 38.

⁹Oklahoma A & M Bulletin, Vol. IX, 1913-14 (Stillwater, 1913), p. 149.

¹⁰Betty Nan McCurry, "The Development of Physical Education for Women at Oklahoma State University" (unpublished Master's thesis, Oklahoma State University, 1969), p. 11.

¹¹Oklahoma A & M Annual Catalogue, 1905-06, p. 14.

dormitory facilities for eighty girls, a room for the sick and a large gymnasium.¹² The gymnasium in this structure was "an unobstructed room 32 x 63 feet and equipped with all the modern gymnastics apparatus." A multi-purpose facility, the Women's Building housed the Women's Physical Culture Department, the Department of Domestic Science, eighty women students and the Dean of Women.¹³

The first instructor of physical culture for women came in 1898. Miss May Overstreet, an assistant in the Preparatory School, conducted classes three days a week. Mr. F. A. McCoy became the first physical director in 1905 and was responsible for both the men's and women's programs.¹⁴ From 1907 to 1911 three women took charge of providing direction and instruction for the program. Mrs. Boyd Hill in 1907 was the first woman director and following her in 1908 were Emma Ross and her assistant, Bertha Combs. Greater continuity was possible for the nine years from 1911-1920 when Anna Miller directed the women's department. During this time, the Girls' Athletic Association became firmly established and provided activities for any interested woman on campus.¹⁵

In the early 1920's, the fields of physical culture and physical training became known as physical education. The national trend was toward education of the whole individual and included the social and

¹²McCurry, p. 11.

¹³Ibid.

¹⁴Ibid.

¹⁵McCurry, p. 15.

mental aspects in addition to the physical.¹⁶ Throughout the next decade, Oklahoma A & M, in line with this trend, established a more definite physical education requirement for the students and instigated an undergraduate program and a graduate degree program in physical education.¹⁷ When construction of a new gymnasium was completed in 1919, program advancements were made possible. This structure provided space for swimming classes, various sports activities classes, an indoor track and offices for men's athletics coaches, men's physical education instructors and military personnel. The Women's Building continued as the headquarters for the women staff.¹⁸ The outdoor activities were conducted mainly in the area between the gymnasium and the Women's Building.

In 1921 the men's and women's divisions merged to form the Physical Education Department within the School of Science and Literature. Although they were united structurally, the two divisions were maintained for ease of operation. Under the direction of Ruth DuBois, a two-year requirement for women was initiated.¹⁹ The first year emphasized the regular, progressive work in gymnastics and swimming in order to improve posture, general health and physical conditions. Lectures on hygiene were also included in the requirement. Advanced German and Swedish gymnastics, swimming, marching,

¹⁶Ibid.

¹⁷Ibid.

¹⁸Oklahoma A & M Annual Bulletin, Vol. XVIII, 1920-21 (Stillwater, 1920), pp. 179-180.

¹⁹Oklahoma A & M General Catalogue, Vol. XX, 1922-23 (Stillwater, 1921), p. 225.

games and folk dance comprised the second year of activities.²⁰

Course work leading to a Bachelor of Science degree with a major in physical education was approved in 1922. Under the quarter-term plan, a physical education major student was required to complete 204 quarter credit hours. This science-oriented program called for 52 quarter credits in zoology, chemistry and physiology and 37 credits in education. The remainder of the program consisted of nine hours of coaching courses with the balance divided among physical education activity classes, physical education methods classes and electives.²¹

In 1922 Flora May Ellis was hired as the director of the Women's Division to begin her thirty-one year term of service at Oklahoma A & M. Janet Woodruff who, seven years later, was in Valerie Colvin's swimming class at Columbia, was employed as Miss Ellis' assistant.²²

Miss Ellis introduced the sport of golf to OAMC students in 1928. Due to her interest and expertise in all forms of dance, several dance courses had also been added to the physical education curriculum. Another change which occurred in 1928 was the renaming of the Women's Building to Gardiner Hall. This was done to honor Maude Gardiner Obrecht, the first instructor of Home Economics on the Oklahoma A & M campus.²³

In 1929, then, when Valerie Colvin joined the physical education faculty at Oklahoma A & M, the United States was 153 years old, the

²⁰Oklahoma A & M Annual Bulletin, Vol. XX, 1922-23 (Stillwater, 1922), p. 226.

²¹Oklahoma A & M Annual Bulletin, p. 187

²²McCurry, p. 69.

²³McCurry, p. 24.

state of Oklahoma was 22, OAMC was 38 years old and the new teacher was 25.

Valerie's first residence in Stillwater was a small upstairs apartment shared with Mary Margaret Kirkendall, the third member of the women's physical education staff. They remained there for one year until the depression affected the campus and several faculty members were released for economic reasons.²⁴ Miss Colvin, at the lower end of the salary scale, was retained, and with her roommate gone, she moved in with Loretta Graves who worked in the college mail room. For the next three years Loretta, Valerie and Mrs. Graves, Loretta's mother, shared the household expenses and weathered the stormy days of the depression together.²⁵ On the subject of money Miss Colvin commented:

I don't remember how much I made. It was enough to let me do the things I wanted to do. I never thought money was that important. I never had any and I don't have any now. I was reared with the idea that if I wanted something, I worked for it. When I was a junior in college, I qualified for the honor society and in order to join, I needed ten dollars. I asked my dad for it and he said, "We don't have it; you made the honor society, that's what matters." It was, but I wanted to join, so I made trays out of cat-tails, dried flowers and dried butterflies and sold 'em. I earned my ten dollars and joined, but he was right; making the society was the important thing.²⁶

Valerie was glad that she had come to OAMC when the college was small. In 1929-30, there were fifty women majoring in physical education and their course of study consisted of over twenty physical

²⁴Philip Reed Rulon, Oklahoma State University--Since 1890 (Stillwater, Oklahoma: Oklahoma State University Press, 1975), p. 231.

²⁵Colvin, February 8, 1978.

²⁶Ibid.

education classes ranging from clog dancing to anatomy.²⁷ She recalled the advantages of a small campus:

You got to know people. Our majors took physiology in another department so we in physical education got to know Dr. Orr, who taught physiology. They took a number of other required major courses across campus because we didn't have the staff to handle it. We became acquainted with each other because we shared our students. We didn't have introductions at every committee meeting either.²⁸

Valerie also grew to know the other professors on a more informal basis. In 1934 she moved into one of six apartments over the College Shop. All of the other residents, primarily college people, ate at the tea room downstairs. This was a popular gathering place for everyone on campus in those days; consequently, the atmosphere was conducive to positive interaction among the various departments.²⁹ From the very beginning, Valerie was involved in campus-wide committees and although she was teaching in the Department of Physical Education, she respected and considered the needs of all students and appreciated the contributions of almost all departments. A campus colleague of thirty-seven years described Valerie:

She was a voice on campus with something to say. She was recognized and respected by any audience. Her ability to express her opinions and to defend them effectively had weight in decision making for the growth of the university.³⁰

²⁷McCurry, p. 18.

²⁸Colvin, February 15, 1978.

²⁹Ibid.

³⁰Mary Beth Carter, Former Professor of Food, Nutrition and Restaurant Administration, Oklahoma State University, Stillwater, Oklahoma; Personal Communication, March, 1978.

Miss Colvin considered herself fortunate to have worked with Deans such as Scroggs, Kamm and Gries and with Presidents Bennett, Willham and Kamm.

The Henry Garland Bennett regime began in 1928 and continued until his death in 1951. This 23 year period was termed by Rulon as the "Build with Bennett" era.³¹ Coming to A & M from the presidency of Southeastern State Normal School in Durant, Oklahoma, Bennett brought two men with him who ultimately became deans at the college in Stillwater. Schiller Scroggs and Napoleon Conger were supportive friends and professional allies of President Bennett.³² With them, he drafted the 25 year plan for A & M which projected a student enrollment of 8,000 and a new library as the center of the campus with fifty buildings of uniform architecture surrounding it.³³

Characterized by Rulon as a "benevolent dictator," Dr. Bennett added a School of Graduate Study at A & M in 1928 and influenced the Thirteenth Legislature of Oklahoma to initiate the concept of building bonds for higher education in 1930.³⁴ By developing a close working relationship with the state governors and federal government officials, he was the first A & M president to procure federal funding

³¹B. B. Chapman, "Dr. Henry Bennett As I Knew Him," Chronicle of Oklahoma, Vol. XXXVIII (Oklahoma City: The Oklahoma Historical Society, 1955), pp. 159-168.

³²Rulon, pp. 227-229.

³³Rulon, pp. 229-231.

³⁴Rulon, pp. 225, 232.

for the development of agricultural and industrial programs.³⁵ Under his leadership, the financial worth of buildings and grounds at A & M grew from three million dollars in 1928 to over fifty million dollars in 1951.³⁶

President Bennett, in addition to raising the status of Oklahoma A & M from a "local cow college" image to an esteemed regional and national agricultural and industrial institution, improved the educational standards and working conditions for the faculty. He, as no other A & M president had done before, took a position on academic freedom by accepting the principle that an instructor had the freedom to teach and write in his specialty without recrimination. He cautioned, however, that "a teacher should not tear down in a student's mind what he could not replace."³⁷

Following Bennett's death in a plane crash in 1951, Dr. Oliver S. Willham officially assumed the presidency of OAMC in 1952.³⁸ He vowed to continue the Bennett plans for the growth and development of the college and during his fifteen year tenure, the campus increased the number and quality of facilities to an even greater degree than Bennett had envisioned. His was a more open administration in that he issued an invitation for any graduates of the college to come any time to inspect the records and activities of the school.³⁹ He had provided leadership at OAMC for just over five years when Oklahoma

³⁵Rulon, pp. 239-249.

³⁶Chapman, pp. 159-168.

³⁷Rulon, p. 233.

³⁸Rulon, p. 281.

³⁹Ibid.

A & M College became Oklahoma State University in 1957.⁴⁰

Although the majority of the growth of the university was realized under the Bennett and Willham administrations, the construction of the new physical education center was completed during the presidency of Robert B. Kamm.⁴¹ Kamm became the president of Oklahoma State University following Willham's retirement in 1966. His major interests lay in the areas of improvement of student services campus-wide. He also emphasized a sound university relationship with national and international educational leaders and politicians.⁴²

Valerie Colvin felt that these men were honest, sincere educators. Dean George Gries, who had "looked over her shoulder" only one year before her retirement, appreciated her for the same reasons. He stated:

V. C. puts the needs of the students and program above personal (or departmental) glorification. I wish I had more like her in this regard. She was a strong advocate for liberal education.⁴³

Agnew concurred:

As a fellow member of the Arts and Sciences faculty, I found Valerie consistent and I found her strong in support of liberal education at O.S.U.; also an upholder of standards in every department of life. She believed

⁴⁰Rulon, pp. 283, 300.

⁴¹Department of Health, Physical Education and Recreation, Oklahoma State University; Physical Education Center (Departmental Brochure), Stillwater, Oklahoma, 1968.

⁴²Rulon, "Introduction," by Robert B. Kamm.

⁴³George Gries, Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences, 1969 to present, Oklahoma State University, Stillwater, Oklahoma; Personal Communication, March, 1978.

that no subject is merely technical or mean; all subjects can be made liberal or liberating. Her dedicated services are just a part of her harmonious, holistic view of education.⁴⁴

Early in her career at OAMC, Valerie had positive influences on her students and fellow faculty members. When she arrived on campus in 1929, no credit was awarded for team and individual sports classes and as many as seven separate sports were included in a one-semester course. Working through Miss Ellis, Valerie succeeded in securing credit for the students enrolled in the activity classes and the number of semester courses was increased to allow for a more thorough mastery and analysis of the subject.⁴⁵

The Women's Athletic Association, formerly the Girls' Athletic Association, was primarily responsible for the organization and administration of women's intramurals.⁴⁶ Miss Colvin, as the sponsor of this group, worked long hours with the officers and representatives of WAA in order to upgrade both the intramural and extramural sports programs for women.

The foundation for the Oklahoma Athletic Federation for College Women was laid in 1929 with the first All College Play Day being hosted by the University of Oklahoma.⁴⁷ At this event, each Oklahoma college

⁴⁴Theodore Agnew, Professor of History, 1947 to present, Oklahoma State University, Stillwater, Oklahoma; Personal Communication, March, 1978.

⁴⁵Colvin, February 15, 1978.

⁴⁶Rulon, pp. 201-203.

⁴⁷Marjorie Rugh Foster, "A History of the Oklahoma Association of Health, Physical Education and Recreation" (unpublished Master's thesis, University of Oklahoma, 1964), p. 41.

brought nine women who were assigned to different teams. The emphasis was more on social interaction than on the competition, hence the "color" teams rather than "school" teams. Before and after the sports events, there were teas, banquets and get-acquainted parties scheduled for the participants and sponsors.

During a Play Day at Falls Creek, Davis, Oklahoma, on March 21, 1941, the Federation was organized. Patterned after the National Athletic Federation of College Women, its purpose was to promote the highest and soundest standards of sports and recreation for girls and women, through the sponsorship of play days and sports days.⁴⁸ The sports day concept supplanted the play day outings between 1947 and 1952. These events provided opportunities for the college representatives to participate as a school team, yet the competition, theoretically, continued to be secondary to the fellowship. The OAF CW became the OARFCW in the 1950's with the addition of the letter "R" for Recreation.⁴⁹ The emergence of women's intercollegiate athletics in the early 1970's and the passage of the Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, spawned the National and Oklahoma Associations of Intercollegiate Athletics for Women. Thus, in 1974, as the Oklahoma AIAW was founded, the Oklahoma Athletic and Recreation Federation for College Women became history.

Miss Colvin, from 1929 until her retirement in 1969, operated within the structure and philosophy of the play day and sports day concept. She "coached" at one time or another, all of the many teams

⁴⁸Foster, p. 42.

⁴⁹Foster, p. 43.

and individual play day and sports day teams. These were: basketball, volleyball, tennis, badminton, table tennis, swimming, bowling, field hockey and archery.⁵⁰

In March of 1929, the Women's Division of the Oklahoma Amateur Athletic Federation was established with Flora May Ellis as chairman. This organization was most concerned about the effects of interscholastic competition on high school girls. They were particularly concerned about interscholastic basketball, since that was the sport played by high school girls in Oklahoma. Valerie, because of her background and interest in basketball, was asked to serve on the Advisory Board of the State League. Other members of the Advisory Board were Dr. Francis Newlin, Shawnee; Miss Ima James, Oklahoma State University; and Miss Emma Plunkett, Central State Teachers College.⁵¹ Opposing the well-established girls' basketball program proved to be an unpopular cause and the League experienced difficulty in obtaining members. It stopped functioning in 1933.⁵²

A more successful project of this organization was an officials' rating committee for basketball. Foster reported:

Miss Valerie Colvin, who held a national officials' rating in basketball, was appointed to be chairman of the committee. Her appointment as committee chairman was approved by the National Committee in March of 1930. This committee did not go out of existence as did the State League. Instead, it continued to function and grow.⁵³

⁵⁰Interview with Valerie Colvin, April 25, 1978.

⁵¹Foster, p. 38

⁵²Ibid.

⁵³Foster, p. 39.

The present day Affiliated Board of Officials under the Oklahoma Association for Girls and Women in Sports is an outgrowth of this committee.

Valerie's acceptance of this leadership position launched her on a path which led to thirty years of service in the area of officiating girls' and women's sports in Oklahoma. Many of the state colleges and universities trained women officials in those days and when the students were ready to be examined, Miss Colvin was called.

Although most of her work days began in the small office in Gardiner Hall, Valerie was rarely in one building for more than an hour at a time. Physical education classes in the 1930's were conducted in or near the gymnasium-armory, on the playfields between Thatcher and Hanner Halls and in the two gymnasiums in Gardiner Hall.⁵⁴ This arrangement continued until 1936 when the Extension Department moved into the west gymnasium and set up a mailing room.⁵⁵ The women physical educators adapted, however, and utilized the remaining east gymnasium to its fullest potential. In 1938, a new women's dormitory, North Murray Hall, was constructed. The basement of this building provided space for women's physical education classes in golf, dance and correctives until 1969. The large area outside North Murray was utilized mainly for the team sports classes. During bad weather those classes met inside in the dressing room.⁵⁶

⁵⁴Colvin, February 15, 1978.

⁵⁵Selections from the Record Book of the Oklahoma A & M College: 1891-1941, Vol. I, p. 24.

⁵⁶McCurry, p. 27.

The 4-H Club and Student Activity Building was completed at OAMC in 1939. Later named Gallagher Hall in honor of Ed Gallagher, former wrestling coach at A & M, it soon became known to the students as "The Field House." This structure housed all the offices for men's athletics, men's physical education and men's intramurals. Primarily controlled by men's athletics, the gymnasium area provided space for men's physical education activity classes during the morning hours. Gallagher Hall was utilized by the women's department for sports days and intramurals while all of the physical education theory classes were held in the classrooms upstairs. As the men moved into Gallagher Hall, space became available in the "Old Gym" for some of the women's staff. Miss Ellis and Miss Colvin, however, remained in Gardiner Hall, thus the locus of the women's program remained there also.⁵⁷

Valerie learned a great deal about administration from Miss Ellis. She discovered that if something needed to be accomplished, there probably would be the problems of administrative red tape and professional adversaries to work through in order to reach the desired objective. Also, she learned that these situations were challenging and that challenges were necessary for progress to be made. Miss Ellis believed that if one sincerely wanted to get the job done, one could not be concerned by irrelevant asides. Time and energy should not be wasted in arguing, although a saturation point could be reached when one had to protect and fight for one's principles.⁵⁸ This philosophy was especially valuable to Valerie in later years when she assumed the leadership of the women's division.

⁵⁷McCurry, pp. 27-28.

⁵⁸Colvin, February 15, 1978.

At the end of seven years at Oklahoma A & M, Valerie was granted a sabbatical leave to attend the University of Wisconsin in Madison. While she was there for the 1936-37 school term, she studied under such renowned professors as Ruth Glassow and Blanche Trilling. Miss Colvin commented on her reasons for the leave:

I wanted to go to a large university with a nationally known and respected department in order to see how they handled the organization and administration of the program. A & M was growing rapidly and I knew it wouldn't be too long before we would be experiencing the pains of that growth. Miss Glassow asked me if I was there to work on the Doctorate. I told her: "No, I'm here to snoop!"⁵⁹

In a letter to Dean Scroggs in September, 1936, Valerie related:

This is certainly an excellent school and I know that I am going to gain much from my study here. I've never seen such seriousness of purpose on the part of both students and faculty.

She indicated to her dean that she was enrolled in four graduate courses and was auditing three others. She continued: "All this with the addition of playing hockey with the Madison Hockey Club keeps me busy, but I am very happy over my schedule."⁶⁰

Valerie returned to Stillwater with twenty-five more graduate hours and with great enthusiasm for the future of physical education at Oklahoma A & M. As a result of her experiences in Wisconsin, she soon initiated two programs which, later she labeled, "my two biggest blunders."⁶¹ The first was a lacrosse club for women. She stated:

⁵⁹Ibid.

⁶⁰Letter from Valerie Colvin to Schiller Scroggs, Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences, Oklahoma A & M College, Stillwater, Oklahoma, September 30, 1936 (in the files of "the College of Arts and Sciences, Oklahoma State University, Stillwater, Oklahoma).

⁶¹Colvin, February 8, 1978.

This group met on the playing field at seven o'clock in the mornin'. I had enjoyed it so much up there that I just knew everyone else would love it too. I didn't stop to think that no one else in the state knew how to play lacrosse, nor did I really consider the students' time, the time of day, my time or the cost of equipment when I started it. I thought it would be a good experience for the students. I was wrong; it didn't last very long.⁶²

Valerie's second project lasted much longer than the first-- several years longer, until the mid 1970's. McCurry described the program:

In order that the correct type of activity and exercise might be prescribed to women students enrolled in the service program, posture pictures of every women student were taken, developed and graded by the physical education staff. In 1938 the first two weeks of the fall semester were used only for taking, developing and grading these pictures. One of the reasons for the lengthy grading period was due to the usage of the Wellesley Method of grading posture pictures. This method entailed the taking of pictures of the subject standing with eleven aluminum pointers attached to the end of the sternum, on the prominence of the first piece of the sacrum, and on the spinous processes of every other vertebra starting with the seventh cervical. A numerical scale for grading posture was set from one to twenty-five or the letter grades A+ to E-. Usage of the method was questionable because of the time spent in preparation for photographing, scaling and rating the pictures.⁶³

Miss Colvin had brought back the Wellesley Method from Wisconsin. She said: "It was a worthwhile project if you had nothin' else to do. It just took me a long time to realize that the time we spent doing this wasn't worth it."⁶⁴

While some people in Oklahoma in the 1930's were experiencing the

⁶²Colvin, February 15, 1978.

⁶³McCurry, p. 20.

⁶⁴Colvin, February 8, 1978.

depressing situations depicted in The Grapes of Wrath,⁶⁵ Valerie Colvin was learning and growing and advancing the cause of physical education. In her first decade at Oklahoma A & M, she, along with the Dean of Women, Mrs. Julia Stout, and Miss Elsie Hand, established Achafoa, the forerunner of Mortar Board.⁶⁶ Achafoa is a Choctaw word meaning "a few rare and precious ones," and was retained as part of the chapter name when the national affiliation occurred in 1940.⁶⁷ Miss Colvin participated in the honorary organization for women in physical education, Sigma Sigma Psi. Other campus activities included membership on the Hospitality, Advisory and Teacher Evaluation Committees of the College of Arts and Sciences and the sponsorship of the Physical Education Majors and Minors Club⁶⁸ (Appendix E). These "necessary" campus involvements were above and beyond the "contracted" teaching and advisement responsibilities and the "expected" coaching and professional duties.

Gardiner Hall, as the center of all women's activities on the campus of Oklahoma A & M, was never dull. The university paper reported:

Since its completion in 1910, this building has provided space for speech, agricultural extension, drafting,

⁶⁵ John Steinbeck, The Grapes of Wrath (New York, 1939).

⁶⁶ Selections from the Record Book of the Oklahoma A & M College: 1891-1941, Vol. I, p. 138.

⁶⁷ The Daily O'Collegian, Stillwater, Oklahoma, March, 20, 1969.

⁶⁸ Banquet Program from the Valerie Colvin Retirement Dinner, April 5, 1969.

extension, a mailing room, a library for physical education, karate, cadet drills, and musical activities, and 4-H even used it to post results of contests.⁶⁹

Miss Colvin recalled coming back to campus one fall, just after World War II began. She said everything--personal and professional possessions and equipment--had been moved out into the street to make room for drafting activities. So the women's physical education department moved across the street into Swim's Hall, a privately owned building. "One year," she said, "about seven tap dancing classes were taught directly below the Dean of Women's office. There was music, and from 40 to 50 students tapping most of the day." Miss Colvin recalled that Julia Stout, then the Dean of Women, said her theme song that year was "I Found a Million Dollar Baby at the Five and Ten Cent Store," the tune which set all those feet tapping.⁷⁰

"Gardiner Hall was not all academic rigor," she continued. Once when a person who was to bring cut flowers to a dance recital failed to show up, Miss Colvin and crew pulled all the geraniums from carefully planted window boxes, used them for the recital, and replanted them about 3 a.m. "Not only that," she said, "they lived."⁷¹

As busy as she was with campus activities, Valerie made the time for professional service to the state, regional and national Associations for Health, Physical Education and Recreation. Before her sabbatical leave in 1936, she had served each of these levels of the profession in positions of leadership and had authored two nationally recognized publications. Upon her return in 1937, Valerie increased her visibility and professional involvement by writing more articles, delivering more speeches and accepting more offices⁷² (Appendix E).

⁶⁹The Daily O'Collegian, Stillwater, Oklahoma, April 7, 1969.

⁷⁰Ibid.

⁷¹Ibid.

⁷²Banquet Program, April 5, 1969.

From 1929 until 1969 she attended most of the AAHPER conventions on the state and regional level and, when economically and geographically feasible, also traveled to the national meetings.⁷³

The community of Stillwater benefited from her talents as well. The local troops of the Girl Scouts received most of her attentions to the community, but there were many efforts on her part with respect to combined campus/community activities.

Best known for her logical and practical approach to physical education on the state level, Valerie served as president of the Oklahoma Association for Health, Physical Education and Recreation twice--the first time in 1939-40 and then again in 1955-56. She was asked to run for a third time at a later date, but in deference to a colleague who had not yet had the title, she declined.⁷⁴ As she became known to the regional and national levels, she was selected time and time again to serve as a member, representative or hostess of various organizational meetings. One such meeting was held on the Stillwater campus in 1964. Valerie and Emma Plunkett from Central State were instrumental in reactivating the South Central Regional Association of the ARFCW with a conference at Oklahoma State University in 1964. Hennis, in a letter to Plunkett following the conference, stated, "You and Valerie are to be congratulated for engineering an outstanding 'first' in the South Central Region. I hope you feel that it was worth all the time

⁷³Colvin, March 1, 1978.

⁷⁴Plunkett, February 22, 1978.

and effort you put into it."⁷⁵

Valerie and Emma were kindred spirits in many respects and they had, by that time, shared many professional experiences. Both of them were from the South. Emma had come to Central State by way of George Peabody College in Nashville, Tennessee, from her home town of Augusta, Georgia in 1928. Valerie had grown up in Mobile, Alabama, and had received her first degree from Woman's College of Alabama in Montgomery. Both had attended Teachers College, Columbia University in New York and both of them "jumped off the world" in the late 1920's to come to Oklahoma. Plunkett related:

When I graduated from Peabody, I was employed at Central State College, Edmond, Oklahoma. This was the "jumping off place of the world," I thought, with no one close by from the South. When Valerie Colvin came to O.S.U. in 1929, I knew that this lady from Alabama was a colleague I could enjoy and be proud of in the many years to come.⁷⁶

Subsequent to the addition of the graduate degree program in physical education in A & M in 1932, and in compliance with an edict from Governor "Alfalfa Bill" Murray mandating that all "foreigners" have an advanced degree from an Oklahoma College, Emma Plunkett began working on her Master of Science degree in Stillwater. She completed her thesis on "Homemade Equipment to Be Used in a Physical

⁷⁵Letter from Gail Hennis, Department of Physical Education University of North Carolina, Greensboro, North Carolina, to Emma Plunkett, Chairman of Women's Physical Education, Central State College, Edmond, Oklahoma, April 12, 1964 (in the files of Emma Plunkett).

⁷⁶Plunkett, February 22, 1978.

Education Program" in 1934 and was awarded her degree that same year.⁷⁷

Having come from a similar background in the same region of the country, they had similar philosophies, speech and ideas about physical education. Each of them went about reaching the objectives somewhat differently, but there was never a question of their agreement in terms of the importance of physical education.

In 1947, a bill, engrossed Senate Bill 37, by Ritzhaupt and Waller, was introduced in the state legislature. The bill provided for the appointment of a state supervisor of health and physical education; required school systems to include courses of health and physical education instruction for all pupils; and required the State Board of Regents for Higher Education to include in the curriculum of state institutions, courses of instruction in the teaching of public health and physical education.⁷⁸

The bill became law and Mr. Orion Jennings was appointed as the first director. He was followed in 1954 by Henry Vaughan, and when he retired in 1972, Harvey Tedford assumed the office.⁷⁹

Instrumental in the passage of this bill was a group of OAHPER members. According to Foster:

⁷⁷Virginia Lee Peters, "Emma W. Plunkett: Her Life, Career and Professional Contributions" (unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, Florida State University, 1968), pp. 94-96.

⁷⁸Foster, p. 33.

⁷⁹Ibid.

Miss Katherine Culbert, Oklahoma College for Women, Miss Emma Plunkett, Central State College, Miss Valerie Colvin, Oklahoma A & M College, Mrs. Helen Corrubia, Tulsa, and Miss Flora May Ellis, Oklahoma A & M College, made several trips to the state Capitol to talk to senators and representatives.⁸⁰

The activities in the 1940's and early 1950's at Oklahoma A & M, as on other campuses, were greatly influenced by World War II. As a result of a money conscious economy, travel for sports events was somewhat curtailed and on-campus activities were emphasized. The Social Dance Club, sponsored by Miss Ellis, drew as many as 500 participants in the Student Union. Miss Colvin organized and directed Saturday night recreation for hundreds of students and faculty. The Aquatic Club originated in this same time period and under Miss Colvin's tutelage, promoted water safety, competitive and synchronized swimming. The club members presented a water pageant each year as a culminating event.⁸¹

The physical education classes during this era stressed marching drills and the more formal military types of calisthenics.⁸² Due to the increased enrollment on the Oklahoma A & M campus in the late 1940's and early 1950's, the curriculum was expanded, the number of faculty was increased and the facilities were overflowing. The Physical Education Department added major courses in elementary physiology, camp leadership and observation and practice teaching

⁸⁰Foster, p. 32.

⁸¹McCurry, p. 38.

⁸²Colvin, February 15, 1978.

classes.⁸³ Under the leadership of James Kevin, the Physical Education Department thrived and the Women's Division, because of the two-year physical education requirement for all women, increased its personnel at a phenomenal rate. In order to accommodate the special interest areas of the veterans and other new students, several activity courses, formerly combined, were offered as separate courses. Among the new course offerings were stunts and tumbling, archery, badminton and bowling. Commercial facilities were utilized for the bowling and roller skating classes and as many as five different buildings on campus provided space for the other physical education classes. In the 1950's and 1960's numerous advances were made in the area of physical education curriculum. Fencing, body mechanics and synchronized swimming were added in 1957 and in 1959, physiology of exercise became a required course for major students. Corrective physical education and choreography were further additions at this time. The number of required science courses decreased, but other courses in creative rhythms, teaching methods and tests and measurements in health, physical education and recreation were inserted.⁸⁴

Upon the retirement of Miss Ellis in 1954, Miss Colvin became a full professor and chairman of the Women's Division of Health, Physical Education and Recreation at Oklahoma A & M.⁸⁵ Kevin wrote:

⁸³McCurry, p. 40.

⁸⁴McCurry, p. 41.

⁸⁵McCurry, p. 42.

In my estimation, Miss Colvin is probably the strongest member of our teaching staff. For several years she has executed the responsibility of advising students concentrating in the field of Health, Physical Education and Recreation. This work, for the most part, was carried on in addition to her regular teaching schedule which has always been heavy.

In addition, Miss Colvin has been responsible for a most successful program of intramural sports competition among the women students on the campus. Her success, in this program, rests in her ability to develop student cooperation and leadership.

In the field of leadership through camping activities, Miss Colvin holds a position of great respect not only in Oklahoma, but in the Southwest. She takes advantage of every opportunity to improve her knowledge and training in this area, by attendance at and service in short courses, seminars, and the like.

I have come to rely heavily on Miss Colvin's advice on problems relating to the professional development within the department. Her experiences, readings and discussions in the field of higher education have been a valuable asset.

Professor Colvin's classes have always been taught on the very highest plane--be they courses in the service program or professional courses on the graduate level.

Miss Colvin is most active in the professional development of our field in Oklahoma. She has held most of the offices in our Oklahoma Association for Health, Physical Education and Recreation. Her leadership abilities have left their marks on her colleagues throughout the state.⁸⁶

Valerie, as chairman, with the aid of two assistant professors, Clara Gamble and Glenna Rae Williams, and the graduate assistants in 1954-55, carried on the tradition of quality which had begun with

⁸⁶Letter from James J. Kevin, Head of the Department of Health, Physical Education and Recreation, Oklahoma A&M College, Stillwater, Oklahoma, to Schiller Scroggs, Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences, Oklahoma A&M College, Stillwater, Oklahoma, December 31, 1952 (in the files of the College of Arts and Sciences, Oklahoma State University, Stillwater, Oklahoma).

Miss Ellis in 1923.⁸⁷ As more and more students were added to the class rolls, sufficient staff and adequate space continued as the major problem areas for Miss Colvin and Mr. Kevin. The name change from Oklahoma A&M College to Oklahoma State University in 1957 did not provide for any vast improvements in these two areas, yet, despite the less than ideal teaching facilities, the program remained sound and the department flourished.

Throughout her career at A&M, Valerie had taught and coached all of the team sports and most of the individual sports. The exceptions were fencing, golf and modern dance.⁸⁸ Primarily through her efforts, staff was recruited with expertise in these activities and in the areas of anatomy, correctives and physiology of exercise.

With the added administrative responsibilities and as a result of a recurring health problem, Miss Colvin relinquished many of her activity classes to other staff members.⁸⁹ She did, however, retain her favorite class, activities for the elementary school physical education program and continued to teach the introduction to physical education course. Of these classes Miss Colvin said:

I really and truly enjoyed these classes, but for different reasons. In the introduction class for majors, the students came in from high school with their pre-conceived ideas of what physical education was all about. Some thought it was just coaching competitive sports while others thought it dealt mainly with recess activities. They needed to find out about physical education and what teaching in this field involved before they went any further as a major. The elementary activities class, called

⁸⁷McCurry, p. 71.

⁸⁸Colvin, April 25, 1978.

⁸⁹Ibid.

"fun 'n' games" by the students, had prospective teachers in it from many fields, not just physical education, so you got a good cross section of people and their interests.⁹⁰

She recalled a conversation with the mother of one of these former students:

This woman told me that her daughter had called her from Florida, where she had taken a teaching position and said, "Mother, for the love of Heaven, go up in the attic and get that P.E. notebook, send it to me and save my life."⁹¹

While the decade of the 50's was characterized as one of "making do and catching up," the 1960's were filled with plans for a new building. Following Mr. Kevin's death in 1962, Dr. Albin P. Warner became head of the department. Although much thought had been given to the need for a physical education center prior to his arrival, Dr. Warner provided the necessary impetus to bring the planning to fruition.⁹² The center began as a merger of a student-proposed intramural-recreation building and a university-proposed swimming pool.⁹³ The result of this merger was a 3.3 million dollar structure which was designed to serve three functions: the instruction of physical education; the provision of facilities for both men's and women's intramurals; and the provision of recreation facilities for both students and staff members. Areas of the center included:⁹⁴

⁹⁰Ibid.

⁹¹Ibid.

⁹²Ibid.

⁹³The Daily O'Collegian, Stillwater, Oklahoma, October 20, 1965.

⁹⁴McCurry, p. 46.

Audio-Visual Room	Physical Development Room
Seminar and Study Room	Twelve Handball/Racketball Courts
Study and Recreation Area	Two-Square Courts
Administrative Complex	25-yard, 6 lane Indoor Pool
Ten Staff Offices	Olympic Pool
Modern Dance Studio	Gymnastics Room
Seven Basketball Courts	Body Mechanics Room
Golf and Fencing Room	Six-Thousand Lockers
Wrestling and Judo Room	Staff Locker Rooms

The offices of both the men's and women's divisions of physical education were transferred from Gallagher and Gardiner Halls to the new center in December, 1968. Academic classes and intramural/recreation activities began in the new building in January, 1969.⁹⁵ Miss Colvin considered it a privilege to have officed and taught in the new facility from January until her retirement in May of 1969. Her lone regret was that she was in it for such a short time.⁹⁶ It might appear ironic that as a new age for physical education at O.S.U. began, the Colvin era drew to a close.

Following her 65th birthday in January of 1969, Miss Colvin announced her decision to retire to President Kamm. He responded: "I write this letter with both pleasure and regret. It is a pleasure for me to have the opportunity to wish you well, but it is a regret that you will be leaving the faculty at O.S.U."⁹⁷ This statement was indicative of the feelings of those former students, professional colleagues and fellow faculty members whose lives she had influenced. Many people expressed congratulations on a job well done, their

⁹⁵McCurry, p. 47.

⁹⁶Colvin, March 1, 1978.

⁹⁷Letter from Robert B. Kamm, President of Oklahoma State University, Stillwater, Oklahoma to Valerie Colvin, January 28, 1969 (in the files of Valerie Colvin).

pleasure in that she would be able to engage in her own recreational activities and their concern over the tremendous void that would be felt by O.S.U. and the profession. Many felt, also, that she would never really retire, but that she would merely begin a new and different term of service.

On April 5, 1969, more than four hundred alumni, friends, students and professional colleagues from twelve states gathered on campus to attend a retirement dinner for Valerie Colvin and to celebrate the dedication of the new building. The program, which followed a Hawaiian Luau theme, included skits, songs and dances by alumni and students. At the dinner, Miss Colvin was presented with a color television set from her fellow staff members, a Willard Stone wood carving and a check for one thousand dollars from her alumni. She also received a hand-made quilt with the embroidered signatures of every person who had worked with her in the department along with the signatures of Dr. Henry Bennett, Dr. Oliver Willham and Dr. Robert Kamm, the three presidents under whom she had served.⁹⁸

Miss Colvin's original plans for her retirement activities included the building of a cottage on Mobile Bay, gardening and fishing. Consequently, many of the gifts which she received were to assist her in those projects. These plans came to an abrupt halt that summer as a hurricane all but devastated the Gulf Coast. Following several trips to the South to visit with family and friends and a long-awaited tour of Europe, Miss Colvin returned to Stillwater where she presently resides at 134 Orchard Lane.

⁹⁸The Stillwater [Oklahoma] News-Press, April 7, 1969.

Those who predicted that Valerie would never retire were correct. She is a volunteer at the Stillwater Hospital, fires all the ceramics for the Continuing Education Center at the Methodist Church, plays bridge, attends numerous cultural and professional events, gives book reviews and continues to amaze people with her china painting, gardening, flower making and needlepoint and crochet work. She recently commented to Betty Abercrombie, "I don't know how I ever had time to teach"⁹⁹ Art Bieri extended his prediction of Valerie Colvin's future a bit further: "Valerie will never retire; when she goes to Heaven, she'll be organizing and teaching there also."¹⁰⁰

⁹⁹Interview with Betty W. Abercrombie, former student of Valerie Colvin and currently Assistant Director of the School of Health, Physical Education and Leisure Services, Oklahoma State University, Stillwater, Oklahoma, February 17, 1978.

¹⁰⁰Art Bieri, former student and fellow faculty member of Valerie Colvin, currently principal of Highland Park Elementary School, Stillwater, Oklahoma; Personal Communication, March, 1978.

CHAPTER III

PERSONALITY AND PHILOSOPHY

Valerie Colvin has been described as a master teacher, an artist, a performer, a critical analyst, an administrative genius, a worthy opponent, task master, slave driver, professional extortionist, surrogate mother, a missionary and a pioneer. The statement which was used most often, however, was that she was an excellent teacher.

Dr. Albin Warner estimated that in her forty years at Oklahoma State University, Valerie had, in some way, influenced the lives of well over 200,000 students.¹ Regardless of the accuracy of this figure, the subsequent accomplishments and retrospective appreciation of many of her former students attest to her success as a teacher and a guide.

One of the main reasons that Valerie was successful as a professional leader was that she had a deep-seated philosophy of life and education and the personality with which to assist students in the development and affirmation of their own beliefs. A former student and faculty member at O.S.U. expressed the attitude of many alumni

¹Letter from Dr. Albin P. Warner, Head of the Department of Health, Physical Education and Recreation, Oklahoma State University, 1962-1972, to Professor G. P. Collins, Chairman, O. E. A. Teacher of the Year Committee, Oklahoma State University, Stillwater, Oklahoma, June 13, 1968.

when she said, "There will never be another 'Miss Colvin'."² Another alumnus stated "she is to O.S.U. and physical education as Bob Hope is to comedy and television--well-known, well-liked and well-respected."³

According to written descriptions of Valerie Colvin by her former students, professional colleagues and personal associates, terms such as effusive, dynamic, vibrant, energetic, and uninhibited most definitely applied to her. Enthusiasm was a quality which she thought all teachers should possess and many of her students "caught" this contagious condition from her.

Her honest and straightforward personality was that of an extrovert and her vivacity was reflected by both the frequency and velocity with which she moved. A former student and faculty member recalled Miss Colvin's vitality: "She was full of vim and vigor. As a major I called her the Great White Mother and as one of her faculty members, I often referred to her as the 'Roadrunner' for she never slowed down."⁴ Jones added: "She was an inspiration to students and faculty alike. Here was this older energetic lady doing all of these activities and those of us who were one-half or one-third her age looked like twice

²Meg Lester, former student of Valerie Colvin and former faculty member of the Department of Health, Physical Education and Recreation, Oklahoma State University, Stillwater, Oklahoma; Personal Communication, March, 1978.

³Catherine Dunn Godfrey, former student of Valerie Colvin, Wheaton, Illinois; Personal Communication, March, 1978.

⁴Andy Ritchie Rheinberger, former student of Valerie Colvin and former faculty member of the Department of Health, Physical Education and Recreation, Stillwater, Oklahoma; Personal Communication, March, 1978.

her age."⁵ Herbrand related the rigors of attending conventions with Miss Colvin and Miss Plunkett, Professor Emeritus of Women's Physical Education at Central State University:

Mary Ann "Andy" Ritchie, a faculty member at A&M, and I traveled to Houston with these two fifty-year-old human dynamos to attend an AAHPER convention. We also stayed in the same hotel room with them. They were up at the crack of dawn, went to meetings all day and visited with friends and colleagues well into the night. Next day it was the same routine all over again. Andy and I, in our twenties, were dead on our feet and they were still going strong.⁶

Although her first impression on the younger students was not always favorable, the second and ensuing meetings were much improved, and as they grew to know her, the respect and admiration soon followed.⁷

Lewis related her first impression of Miss Colvin:

The first time I ever saw Miss Colvin was on a spring day out behind North Murray Hall. She was officiating a field hockey game. What an impression she made! I thought, "What is that older woman doing out there?" Three of her could have fit in those faded brown shorts--her legs were so skinny. She had her socks rolled down. But there she was, gray hair flying, whistle in mouth and running up and down that field as if she were a youngster. When I decided to major in physical education at the end of my freshman year, I was assigned to a Miss Valerie Colvin. The second time I saw her was in her office in Gardiner Hall. During the next three years I became acquainted with a "beautiful" woman who will always be "young."⁸

⁵Interview with Billie Jo Jones, former faculty member of the Department of Health, Physical Education and Recreation, Oklahoma State University, Stillwater, Oklahoma, February 24, 1978.

⁶Interview with Muriel Herbrand, faculty member of the Department of Health, Physical Education and Recreation, Central State University, Edmond, Oklahoma, February 11, 1978.

⁷Jones, February 24, 1978.

⁸Betty Binyon Lewis, former student of Valerie Colvin; Personal Communication, March, 1978.

Most people who knew Valerie viewed her as considerate, caring, pleasant, kind and generous in most instances, but when a value or principle was involved, she could be biased, dogmatic and domineering. She was well known for her point blank honesty and when she had an opinion, there was little doubt as to what that opinion was. She dealt with problems and procedures in a direct, forthright manner. Wesley commented: "Miss Colvin saw no need in routinely stamping the Dean's signature on the students' drop and add cards and she let us know it. We succeeded in getting the policy changed."⁹

Throughout her teaching career at Oklahoma State, Miss Colvin was the academic advisor for most of the majors in health, physical education and recreation. She advised them on their classes, on their attitudes toward teaching and many times on their behavior and appearance. She expected their best and was not often disappointed. Duckwall recalled:

She always challenged the strengths within me to come forth rather than coddling my weaknesses. She called the plays as she saw them whether I like it or not and I respected her for it.¹⁰

Many other former students remembered Miss Colvin for her frankness. Cairns commented on this quality:

She really knew how to put you in your place. Three of us seniors who were very active in departmental activities kiddingly told Miss Colvin that she was going to miss us when we left. She replied, "There will be others." Another example was when I was running for my second term

⁹Dan Wesley, Director of Student Services, College of Arts and Sciences, Oklahoma State University, Stillwater, Oklahoma; Personal Communication, March, 1978.

¹⁰Carol Duckwall, former student of Valerie Colvin; Personal Communication, March, 1978.

as president of WRA and also was nominated for president of the Independent Women Students Association. She was concerned that I might win the other office and felt that I was needed in the WRA more. I assured her that I really didn't have a chance to win the other office, and after she met my opponent, she agreed with me. You knew that Miss Colvin was interested in you and would help you in any way she could. She had very high standards ethically and morally, and she wouldn't hesitate to tell you if you weren't working up to your capabilities. She was very outspoken, and you always knew where you stood with her. If she criticized you, you knew that you really deserved it.¹¹

Valerie did not believe in using sarcasm, but in order to make a point, she was not above injecting an occasional four letter word.

Hamilton related one incident:

She could correct me on the tennis court with words which, if spoken by another person, would make me angry. When she said them I considered them to be constructive criticism. She and I were playing a game of singles. I guess I was somewhat lazy on the court because at one point in the game she yelled, very loudly, "Move, damn it, move!" Needless to say, I moved! I felt no resentment whatsoever because as my mother said, "In our household we had Miss Colvin for breakfast, lunch and dinner." She was my idol and I adored her.¹²

Although Valerie frequently "talked turkey"¹³ to her students, she was equally adept at soothing hurt feelings or offering words of encouragement. As Bieri said:

She never pulled any punches with students. She always told 'em what was what, but if she felt that they had potential, she would go all out for them. She had no time for laziness or a ho-hum attitude, but when she recognized that someone was becoming professional, she began to treat them as professionals.¹⁴

¹¹Sharon Cairns, former student of Valerie Colvin; Personal Communication, March, 1978.

¹²Mary L. Hamilton, former student of Valerie Colvin; Personal Communication, March, 1978.

¹³Frequently-used expression of Valerie Colvin.

¹⁴Bieri, April 2, 1978.

Vaughan added:

She had extraordinarily strong convictions. She could disagree without being disagreeable. People who knew her best respected her the most. She was aggressive for causes in which she believed. She was not always diplomatic because she could not understand people being unable to grasp the need for a program in which she could see everything good and nothing bad.¹⁵

Miss Colvin was totally committed to the concepts of communication and organization and according to Cooper, "she ran a tight ship with students and faculty members alike."¹⁶ The weekly staff meetings of the Women's Division, as recalled by Rollins, were always interesting:

Our staff meetings, which were at 7 o'clock in the morning, were always lively. They covered the spectrum of a serious peppering of reprimands to ridiculous [sic] pinches of frivolity. There was no beating around the bush, she believed in stating facts to the point.¹⁷

Ruth Lindsey, chairman of the retirement dinner for Valerie, compiled a collection of favorite sayings which she termed "Colvinisms." These were included in the banquet program and gave further insight into the personality, speech and mannerisms of Miss Colvin:

She talks in outline form, regardless of the subject or the listener--a sure sign of the teacher. Example: "I think we'll get this thing started; number one," When she has finished covering the topic at hand, she concludes with, "That's that," and goes on to the next topic; or "So that's taken care of."

¹⁵Henry Vaughan, former State Director of Health, Physical Education and Recreation for the Oklahoma State Department of Education; Personal Communication, March, 1978.

¹⁶Donald Cooper, Director of The Student Health Center, Oklahoma State University, Stillwater, Oklahoma; Personal Communication, March, 1978.

¹⁷Myr Lou Rollins, faculty member of the School of Health, Physical Education and Leisure Services, Oklahoma State University, Stillwater, Oklahoma; Personal Communication, March, 1978.

When talking to more than one person, instead of addressing them as "girls" or "friends" or "ladies," especially if she feels strongly about the subject, she says, "People." Example: "People, you can't do that!" or "People, I think we need to"

To emphasize her point or perhaps to soften the blow after exploding on a subject--"I mean this honestly." In a similar vein, after making a strong or shocking statement--"Well, this is true; I'm not teasing."

The one that always made those of us who knew her smile, because we knew she was lying, was: "I'm not going to get involved; I'm just going to stay out of it" or similarly: "I'm going to keep my mouth closed; for once I'm not going to say anything; now, I'm just going to keep calm and not say anything." Then, following her acceptance of yet another responsibility: "Well, somebody has to do it."

She is modest and unselfish or perhaps ungrateful when someone tries to honor her or give her credit and she expresses it in some of her favorite words: "I just haven't got time for this foolishness" or "That's a bunch of 'claptrap' or 'popycock' or 'folderol'". Other expressions used frequently in a variety of circumstances included: "That brings up a point," "That's for the boids," "Do it in that fashion," or "That's neither here nor there."

She's more modern and up-to-date than most of her students and younger colleagues, but she can't break herself of the habit of saying, "That Victrola--uh, er, I mean record player won't 'woik' right." Also, when using the telephone, she asked for "Central" instead of operator. I'll never know the source for a favorite of hers--"He can't tell siccum from come here!"

Someone giving a stupid answer or doing something ludicrous elicited this response: "Let us kneel in prayer!" or perhaps, "Hallelujah." An example of telephone courtesy instead of, "Who is speaking?" was "Who the devil is this?"

A quote that brought tears to the eyes of many of her admirers was uttered when she was presented the plague for the "outstanding teacher award" and the photographer asked her to look at the camera: "I only wish you had a more photogenic subject." After that same occasion, I choked as she said to me in private: "The thing that pleases me most is that they engraved 'physical education' under my name."

Excerpts from our staff meetings indicated her concern for progress and her particular brand of democratic leadership: "Do you want to just stay in a rut or do you want to investigate this?", "Gosh, you all are as bad as our freshman orientation class; react, what do you think?", "O.K., these are ideas; chew on them!", and finally, "People, I think we need to read--we need to be challenged."¹⁸

As Valerie accepted the challenges of her profession on all levels, she also offered these same types of challenges to her students. Using the Colvin methodology which consisted of logic, practicality, humor, drama and the Socratic method of inquiry, she produced what Hibbert termed "the best physical educators in the state of Oklahoma."¹⁹ Many of her former students described her teaching techniques as startling, informative, subject-matter based, people oriented, and enjoyable. Lester related her impression of the Colvin grand entrance:

As a student in an elementary school activities class, I will always remember her racing in and jumping up on a rickety old table so all 90 students could see and hear her. I never understood how she could get up that high that quickly.²⁰

Looper also described Miss Colvin as a teacher:

It is impossible to describe her teaching techniques because that would involve writing a minute-by-minute biography of her life. Teaching is her life. It would be like using mere words to define or delimit that which has no limit. To make a point; to elicit understanding and insight; to prod us to become what we should become, she would stoop to anything. At any time those scrawny

¹⁸Ruth Lindsey, former student and former faculty member of Valerie Colvin, presently Associate Professor of Physical Education, California State University, Long Beach, California; Personal Communication, March, 1978.

¹⁹Mildred Hibbert, Physical Education Instructor, Ponca City Public Schools, Ponca City, Oklahoma; Personal Communication, March, 1978.

²⁰Lester, Personal Communication, March, 1978.

legs in heels and hose might go through the stages of a high jump to illustrate the technique and necessity of analyzing things. But her stooping always turned into a beautiful reach--to exactly the right place where her magic finger turned nothing into everything. And her "reaching" moved mountains. Any list of good teaching techniques in a methods book would compare to her repertoire like a child's lettered blocks would stack up against a Homeric poem. She is so dedicated to her field and has such a brilliant, creative personality that she not only masterfully transmits a vast amount and range of subject matter to a group of any size, age, area of interest or level of intelligence, but she communicates along with this knowledge; insight and understanding, the power, beauty and structure of life. It was she who taught me that a teacher could be an artist.²¹

When Valerie was nominated for the Oklahoma Teacher of the Year Award in 1968, her peers emphasized the effectiveness of her teaching style:

Valerie Colvin is dedicated to her profession, to O.S.U. and to people--especially young people. She is inspired and inspiring both in and out of the classroom. After almost 40 years at O.S.U. she is still bubbling with vitality and is creative and innovative in her teaching. She takes a personal interest in every individual with whom she comes in contact and knows every student in her class by name. Even with 80-90 students, she knew names, home towns and items of personal history. She becomes friend and counselor to every student, staff member or custodian with a problem. If she feels a student is right, she will go "out on a limb" and fight for his rights. In the classroom she grades fairly because she knows the student well enough to give an individual evaluation. After four decades, she still makes out new examinations each semester, making "old" exams available to all of the students because she thinks it is unfair that some living groups have test files while others do not. In the classroom, she doesn't limit her teaching to the specific subject matter facts, but seizes upon those "teachable moments" when she teaches life itself--ranging from acceptance of responsibility to good manners. On one occasion, when two girls were dozing in class, she quietly sent them

²¹Shirley Looper, Letter of nomination for Valerie Colvin for the Alumni Association and Blue Key Outstanding Teacher Award, Oklahoma State University, Stillwater, Oklahoma, April, 1968 (in the files of Valerie Colvin).

to take naps on cots in another room, and without a trace of sarcasm, explained that they needed their sleep more than they needed the lesson for that day. Valerie Colvin is a superb actress who can hold the attention of her class by every technique known to the dramatist. One day in the Methods of Teaching Elementary Physical Education class, she swept into the room, grabbed a red coat from the arm of an unsuspecting student, threw it over her shoulders and ran around the gymnasium imitating a siren--and asking, "Guess what I am, children--guess what we are going to play today." This type of startle effect and sense of humor is typical of the Colvin technique.

She can still say "do as I do" because she practices what she preaches. Imagine the gasps of the students as she leaps from floor to table top and the embarrassment of students and younger staff members when a 64 year old woman beats them on a physical proficiency test. She brings out the best in her students because they come to feel that they would be "letting her down" if they didn't meet the challenge.²²

Other former students and fellow teachers thought that Miss Colvin taught by osmosis and that she set a superior example for them to follow. She was exacting in her expectations, but never expected any more from anyone than what she, herself, could do. When she "strongly encouraged" students to attend plays, dance concerts and other cultural events, she, along with the other women faculty, would be there to reinforce the values of attending such an event.

Her students knew her as a coach, as an administrator, as a friend and as an advisor, but most of all they knew her as a teacher. As she listened to their problems, encouraged them to do their best and allayed their fears, she became known as "Aunt Val" to them. She was always addressed, however, as Miss Colvin.

²²Letter of nomination for Valerie Colvin for the Oklahoma Teacher of the Year Award, 1968 (in the files of the School of Health, Physical Education and Leisure Services, Oklahoma State University, Stillwater, Oklahoma).

Valerie was known, admired and respected by student-majors and faculty members from other institutions in the state of Oklahoma. They saw her at play days and sports days and remembered her as the lady who came from Stillwater to judge them on their officiating abilities.

Peters wrote:

I remember . . . a freshman major at Central State going to her first hockey sports day at A&M. I remember how she was made to feel welcome, how she felt the unity of the A&M group and that same "one, big family" atmosphere that prevailed at Central, and how she decided right then that she and her "cousins to the North" were all part of the same master plan.

I remember . . . a sophomore major taking her first basketball rating with the "lady from A&M" grading the paper and judging and making suggestions afterwards in a warm and friendly way; and a sophomore major who sat with the big green box of AAHPER publications at "Miss Colvin's convention" in Tulsa.

I remember . . . a junior major taking a leadership role in OARFCW and being impressed by Miss Colvin who fought for what she thought was right--even in the face of Miss Plunkett's opposition, who never hesitated to inform the student delegates of the reasons behind her way of thinking, and who helped them make decisions that they were satisfied with.

I remember . . . a senior major enjoying her last round at sports days, renewing ratings, meeting the frustrating problems of student teaching and profitably discussing them with an understanding "professional aunt" from Stillwater.

I remember . . . a young staff member at Central, eager and enthusiastic about doing great things, being encouraged (and restrained, when necessary) by a good friend from OSU who accepted her as a fellow teacher in spite of her newness to the profession.

I remember . . . a young woman taking her first professional steps in the Southern District as she gave an invitation to the representative assembly to attend a convention in Oklahoma and how her first concern after

it was over was to find out if Valerie Colvin thought it had been done all right.²³

Other students in the state also remembered Valerie for her warmth, her personality and her sense of humor. Beck cited an example:

One Saturday about Halloween time, she showed up at a field hockey tournament at Northeastern. She had an orange pumpkin and was handing out treats and yelling support (as a cheerleader) for O.S.U. To me this demonstrated her humor and her support for O.S.U.'s programs. She was quite a "hit." I recall several people asking, "Who is that?" Those who knew her would simply say, "That's Miss Colvin from O.S.U."²⁴

Generally speaking, Valerie was looked upon by other faculty members in the state as one who knew what physical education was all about. She associated with all physical educators in Oklahoma on a professional basis and also knew many of them as friends.

Many of these professional relationships and personal relationships evolved from meetings of the Oklahoma Association of Physical Education for College Women, an organization which she supported and encouraged others to join. The purpose of this organization was to bring together all of the college women physical educators in order to "professionalize" and socialize in an informal atmosphere.

Valerie could always be counted on to bring any group back to reality and at one fall meeting of the OAPECW, there appeared to be little professional stimulation. Black gave an account:

²³Letter from Virginia Peters, Chairman of the Department of Health, Physical Education and Recreation, Central State University, Edmond, Oklahoma to Valerie Colvin, April 5, 1969 (in the files of Valerie Colvin).

²⁴Peggy Beck, faculty member at Oral Roberts University, Tulsa, Oklahoma; Personal Communication, March, 1978.

I remember one college women's meeting in particular. Miss Colvin was commenting on her opinion of the function of the meeting. She said that in order to adequately prepare and make meaningful contributions to the caucus, she would need an agenda prior to the meeting. She went on to say that she could not afford to spend the time to come purely to socialize even though part of the time should be used for that purpose. Also, she did not mind asking her institution to pay the expenses of the staff if it were, in fact, a professional enrichment session.²⁵

Valerie understood that there was a fine line between acting as a professional leader and acting as a friend. She trod the line with her students, her faculty at O.S.U. and with her colleagues in physical education. Spencer applauded her balance:

She guided me through much of my master's degree at O.S.U. She was helpful and a joy to work with. She was a good example of how to be the professor and yet a friend at the same time. Thus, when I became a college teacher, it was easy to continue to be friends as we became co-workers. She really had style and class.²⁶

In terms of philosophy, Valerie held many beliefs on many issues. She felt that people were individuals and as individuals, they had different backgrounds, interests and needs. Often depicted as a "woman for all seasons," she took the time to discover what made people "tick." She indicated frequently that her highest ideal was sincerity and that her favorite past-time was people.²⁷

²⁵Kathleen Black, faculty member of the Department of Health, Physical Education and Recreation, Central State University, Edmond, Oklahoma; Personal Communication, March, 1978.

²⁶Willia Belle Carter Spencer, former student of Valerie Colvin and former faculty member at Oklahoma Baptist University, Shawnee, Oklahoma; Personal Communication, March, 1978.

²⁷Banquet Program, April 5, 1969.

Jones described her as an eclectic:

She was an idealist in that she believed that truth is truth and beauty is beauty. She was a realist because she knew that not everything would work. She emphasized the fact that that was the way the real world operated, so you had better face it. As a pragmatist, Miss Colvin expounded that if it worked, use it. Faculties made programs, not buildings; the worth of a program was the people, not the facilities.²⁸

On the subject of education and liberal education, Valerie stood to be counted many times when it was not the popular thing to do.

According to Vaughan:

Valerie believed in all aspects of education. She was one of the first in the state of Oklahoma to call attention to "education of the whole child." She believed, as an example, if math were missing in the education of the child, something would be missing for that individual the rest of his life. She held to this same theory for her chosen field. To me she was a living philosophy of physical education at its best.²⁹

Time was of the utmost importance to Valerie. Kumery quoted her as saying: "The time you lose is your very own and you cannot get it back."³⁰

Valerie used her time in worthy endeavors and service to others was the guidepost by which she functioned. She was not the least bit concerned about mundane problems such as food, clothing or cars. She ate when she had time, dressed appropriately and when she needed a new car, she would call a local dealer and say, "I need a new car--one like the one I have now would do, only new."³¹

²⁸Jones, February 24, 1978.

²⁹Vaughan, Personal Communication, March, 1978

³⁰Toni Miller Kumery, former student and former faculty member of Valerie Colvin, Tulsa, Oklahoma; Personal Communication, March, 1978.

³¹Jones, February 24, 1978.

Valerie epitomized the role of the absent-minded professor in two on-going instances: not only could she never find her car keys, but she also had difficulty in locating her car in the university parking lots. In order to make the car more easily identifiable, she bent the radio antenna. This alleviated the problem until a student tried to help. Hawk related the incident: "One day a young man came into her office and said in a very pleased voice, 'Oh, Miss Colvin, I saw your car and noticed the aerial was bent so I straightened it for you.'"³²

Lewis recalled Miss Colvin's position on enthusiasm:

She was strong on the importance of vigor and enthusiasm. Her philosophy came across loud and clear--if you can't be enthusiastic about what you are teaching, you can't do a good job of it. And my goodness, how she practiced what she preached!³³

Maples reported that Valerie could state her beliefs very succinctly: "I heard her tell more than one undergraduate major--'You may have your own philosophy, but mine is that you have to want to teach. If you don't want to teach, then get the hell out of here!'"³⁴

Valerie did indeed exemplify her philosophy of education and teaching. As Lewis said:

She was a dedicated "giver" of herself, her time and her money. She earned our respect and from her teaching and advising, we learned how important it is for teachers to

³²Margaret Hawk, former student of Valerie Colvin, Wichita, Kansas; Personal Communication, March, 1978.

³³Lewis, Personal Communication, March, 1978.

³⁴Val Maples, former student of Valerie Colvin and faculty member at Cameron University, Lawton, Oklahoma; Personal Communication, March, 1978.

have this. I'm sure she never used the word, "phony," but somehow, somewhere in those college years, I learned from her that you have to be honest with children, that they recognized sincerity, that they are quick to spot a "phony," and that you can't fake caring about people.

It seems to me that some of our new teachers look at teaching as just a job. Miss Colvin taught us and showed us that it is not just a job, but a serious responsibility when you are dealing with the mind of a child.³⁵

Valerie believed strongly in going that extra mile not only to get the job done, but to do it well. She was a stickler for details and was an accomplished organizer. She felt that in order to get the most out of living, one had to think, plot, plan and organize the time available. Her philosophy of life was that it should be lived to the fullest and that one should "learn from the past, live for the present and build for the future."³⁶ Miss Colvin looked to the past for guidance, but she was very much a participant in the present. Vaughan praised her for her innovativeness in teaching methodology.

Valerie taught from the top of her head and utilized so many different and here-to-fore unseen techniques, that it would be difficult to describe them. Some of her approaches were traditional in nature and some appeared to be phenomenological.³⁷

Described by Hartshorn as completely uninhibited,³⁸ Miss Colvin was never known to be embarrassed. She taught many of the practical aspects of her methods classes while wearing a dress, high-heeled shoes and nylon stockings, but this attire did not restrict her

³⁵Lewis, Personal Communication, March, 1978.

³⁶Kumery, Personal Communication, March, 1978.

³⁷Vaughan, Personal Communication, March, 1978

³⁸Charles Hartshorn, Director of Safety Services, American Red Cross, Oklahoma City, Oklahoma; Personal Communication, March, 1978.

movements at all. Nor did potentially uncomfortable situations deter her from the task at hand. Bieri gave an account of one incident:

I remember when her stockings fell down while she was teaching an activity class; she didn't miss a beat-- just reached down and pulled them back up and fastened them. Where someone else might have felt awkward or embarrassed, Miss Colvin smoothed her dress and went right on talking. She didn't take time to be embarrassed.³⁹

Valerie's attitude toward life, education and people was one of optimism, positivism and hope. She consistently saw the lighter and brighter sides of issues which were viewed by others with a doomsday pessimism. She was determined to do whatever was necessary in order to meet her goals and objectives. Her staff, at times, thought that she was too adaptable to conditions and felt that the administration of the university should be more responsive to the needs of the department.

Miss Colvin had been reared to "make do with what you had" and some felt that, had she been less adaptable, new facilities would have been built earlier. Jones remarked on Valerie's ability to "make do:"

One of Miss Colvin's favorite stories was how she taught a swimming class one entire semester without the aid of a swimming pool. I don't think anyone else could have carried it off, but she did. She put so much of herself into the planning of this class that if she had put the students in the water they probably would have felt that they had to swim.⁴⁰

Emma Plunkett described Valerie's talents in working with students as inspirational. "She didn't teach them so much as she inspired them to learn."⁴¹ She respected the worth and potential of all individuals

³⁹Bieri, April 2, 1978.

⁴⁰Jones, February 24, 1978.

⁴¹Plunkett, February 22, 1978.

and many times when their own faith and self-concepts failed them, her belief in them would give them the courage to carry on.

Valerie was committed and devoted to O.S.U. As several former students and colleagues commented, "It was her home and her life."

Black wrote:

Her love for O.S.U., I don't believe is truly appreciated by all; she suffered with its growth, nursed it through many of its illnesses, bandaged up its wounds and was patient with it through its adolescence. She is like many grandparents I know--who must listen to their children fret over the crises of their children. The problems of the present school days at O.S.U. must seem very trivial to Miss Colvin as she recalls the numerous crises that she had to face in the past with only one or two colleagues to offer support. In my mind, Valerie Colvin is OSU.⁴²

Valerie was described as a lovely lady and a true professional. According to her associates, she was self-effacing and was sincerely humble about the services she performed and the many honors and awards that she received through the years. Rheinberger summarized the opinions of many:

She probably felt that OSU gave her much more than she gave it. I think she was happy and humbly proud of her years there. She would deny that she was a pioneer here in Oklahoma or that she actually left her mark. She frowns on the name of the center--named after her, but is also very proud of it.⁴³

Lindsey added: "She loved physical education and OSU. She was proud to be a physical educator and always said it with pride, never apologetically. She was loyal to the university, the faculty and the students."⁴⁴

⁴²Black, Personal Communication, March, 1978.

⁴³Rheinberger, Personal Communication, March, 1978.

⁴⁴Lindsey, Personal Communication, March 1978.

Noted by some as both practical and futuristic, Valerie's philosophy of physical education was that people should be active and should have opportunities to develop skills in many different activities. She was a staunch supporter of life-time sports and at O.S.U., served on innumerable committees whose purpose was to upgrade the university curricula. Her staff and students were in constant awe of her boundless energy and excellent physical condition, and several commented that she was constantly on the move and that many times she literally ran to class. She chided faculty members all over the campus to get in shape and to take up a sport or sports for their recreational, physical and social values.

As a coach and as an official, Valerie presented a sound exemplary model. She trained and coached her students to win, but if losses were incurred, the players knew that they should feel no disgrace. One of Valerie's former athletes described it this way:

Miss Colvin believed that you could certainly be a lady and an athlete. Her coaching philosophy was--give it your best shot and win or lose, you can stand tall tomorrow. If you lose, the world won't end.⁴⁵

Attendance at sports days was as much for the social enhancement of the students as for the competition itself. It was time to share professional concerns with the other coach-sponsors and a time to introduce the physical education majors and other participants to each other. These events were viewed with enjoyment by both players and coaches and those students who one day would be teaching physical education and coaching learned many valuable lessons in sportsmanship, coaching techniques and officiating responsibilities.

⁴⁵Rheinberger, Personal Communication, March, 1978.

Although Miss Colvin was basically sports oriented, she gave full attention to the other facets of physical education as well. She supported with vigor the dance programs, the aquatic activities and the various presentations of the department. She was extremely involved with the Physical Education Majors and Minors Club and with the Women's Recreation Association. Under her tutelage, the elected leaders of these clubs truly learned how to lead. Lewis recalled her experiences:

Always quick to make decisions, I had to slow down when working with her. She wouldn't tell me when or why I was wrong on something, but would work it around so the problem sure looked different from another angle. And how right she was! When you head an organization, you must take time to consider all sides of a problem. If I had to put in words what she taught me about leadership, it would be something like--"When you lead, take time to consider the action you must take and hope that it is the one that benefits the most."⁴⁶

Cairns related a similar incident:

I became President of WRA when I was a sophomore. I set up the initiation of new members and didn't consult Miss Colvin on the details except to give her the day and time. The day before the initiation, she really griped at me for not having gone over everything with her and told me something to the effect that she hoped it didn't fail completely. (Remember I was a sophomore and this was my first project.) I think she came to that initiation ready to let me have it afterwards, but it turned out to be very successful. She was very quick to tell me what a good job I had done and from then on she just expected me to get the job done.⁴⁷

Miss Colvin felt that her main responsibility was to turn out humanistic, qualified physical education teachers. She thought that in order for them to do a quality job, they had to have a solid background in the philosophy, principles and techniques of analysis and

⁴⁶Lewis, Personal Communication, March, 1978.

⁴⁷Cairns, Personal Communication, March, 1978.

correction of physical education movement patterns. She did produce some of the best physical educators in the state of Oklahoma and in many other states. School principals and superintendents respected Miss Colvin's abilities in teacher preparation and when vacancies occurred in their systems, they called her for her recommendations.

Valerie didn't concern herself with the success of her graduates; she did the best job she knew how and felt confident that they would make a contribution. When any of them returned to campus to visit, she could call them by name without hesitation and make them feel that they had been in her thoughts constantly. She had an excellent memory, but she remembered them because they had been part of O.S.U. and consequently part of her life.

Valerie Colvin's goals, dreams and philosophy can best be summarized by the inclusion of some of her own writing. In 1940 she wrote:

The fields of Health, Physical Education and Recreation have much to contribute to our present generation. Never before have we needed to have skills which we can enjoy in our leisure time, hobbies which afford a means of expression, and social contacts which are wholesome and sound--as much as we do today. To lead and help plan a program is indeed a challenge and one that calls for the wisest of direction. It is my hope that I can make some contribution in this field.⁴⁸

In 1966, Valerie Colvin wrote to the physical education majors and minors:

. . . There are professional obligations beyond the course requirements that help you mature into that "plus teacher" which you hope to be and which we so badly need. "Excellence" is never attained by meeting only the maximum requirements but is reached only by

⁴⁸Banquet Program, April 5, 1969.

those going that extra mile, showing leadership, initiative, being cooperative and dependable.⁴⁹

Throughout the years Valerie Colvin has continued to promote her earliest goals and ambitions. To the students at Oklahoma State University, she wrote in the Preface of the PEMM Club Booklet in 1965:

As the new year begins, each of us stands on a threshold of adventure. In this profession of Physical Education never has the invitation been more exciting, for our profession is coming of age. We are no longer merely sports teachers, but are being recognized as making significant contributions to all facets of education. No longer do we say that "play is the blowing off of steam," but we think in terms of the biological importance of physical exercise during childhood; of the contribution of movement education to the total fitness of the individual.

As evidence continues to accumulate showing the importance of regular exercise in protecting against chronic, degenerative diseases, our medical colleagues will look to Physical Education for ways of motivating people to exercise.

As work hours shorten and leisure time becomes greater, our field will be expected to give leadership in Physical Education suitable to age levels from the cradle to the grave.

As the changing pattern of life due to automation takes the need for activity out of living, so our profession must put the desire for activity into man's pattern of thought.

As the urbanization of our population changes patterns of behavior, so must we join with the sociologists and the psychologists in an attempt to understand and guide people and communities into developing standards of conduct that stem from the principles on which our democracy was founded.

So, Majors, it is no longer skill alone that you are seeking, as important as this may be. Rules and techniques, games and dance are but tools you use in working with the age level you choose to lead.

⁴⁹Ibid.

An attitude toward integration has great meaning, not only as it applies to race and the dignity of man, but also as we view our place in education. To bring to our profession knowledges from the field of science, both physical and social; from the field of arts and humanities; from the field of biological sciences, and to integrate these knowledges in our effort to serve mankind, is our challenge of excellence.

May you not just peep through keyholes, but step proudly through the threshold of the door that leads to a profession with a future.⁵⁰

⁵⁰Ibid.

CHAPTER IV

CONTRIBUTIONS AND RECOGNITION

Although the professional contributions of Valerie Colvin spanned the strata from the local to the national levels of physical education, the impact of her efforts was most keenly felt at Oklahoma State University and in the state of Oklahoma. A staunch supporter of the liberal arts and general education concepts of higher education, she gave unstintingly of her time, energy and knowledge to further the causes of these programs.

Within her own field, Miss Colvin both initiated and perpetuated innovations which served to advance the areas of health, physical education, outdoor recreation, aquatics, dance and women's athletics. In addition to her personal involvement in the various physical education organizations, she inspired and encouraged her students to be not only quality teachers, but also to accept professional offices and responsibilities. Thus, the effects of her leadership were both current and residual.

The results of Miss Colvin's dedication to physical education at Oklahoma State University were cited by her former students and colleagues. Rheinberger stated:

Her teaching and positive philosophy have made a large contribution to the size and development of the department as it is today. There is no doubt that her years at Oklahoma State set the mood and the stage for a dream come true for all of us--the Colvin Center. The

HPE&R Department at O.S.U. gained recognition and respect from the Oklahoma Association for Health, Physical Education and Recreation, the Southern District Association and the National Alliance for Health, Physical Education and Recreation because of her professional service.¹

Albitz added:

She led the school in the right direction with regard to her field. She was up with the times and kept the school up with and ahead of others. She was a strong leader who earned respect for and from O.S.U. She laid the groundwork for a very strong department and she was an excellent representative for physical education and women's athletics.²

Bayless commented on Miss Colvin's service to the department:

She was steadfast in her determination to stress professional stature when working with students and fellow faculty members both on and off campus. Her careful planning and organization during the days when the responsibilities were not hers kept this department and school strong on the campus and in the state.³

Lester concurred that:

Miss Colvin was the "backbone" and instigator of numerous programs. She always kept the department on a high level of respect with students, faculty and other departments at O.S.U. She created an atmosphere of importance and was able to keep the department in high standing. Her continual battles across campus to maintain the program were all that saved us from disaster. Speaking to the faculty of the College of Arts and Sciences in the late 1960's, she used her dynamism

¹Rheinberger, Personal Communication, March, 1978.

²Frances Albitz, former graduate assistant in the Department of Health, Physical Education and Recreation, Oklahoma State University, Stillwater, Oklahoma; Personal Communication, March, 1978.

³John Bayless, former student of Valerie Colvin and currently Chairman of the Physical Education Department, School of Health, Physical Education and Leisure Services, Oklahoma State University, Stillwater, Oklahoma; Personal Communication, April, 1978.

and influence to sway the vote in favor of retaining the physical education requirement for one more year.⁴

Washinka applauded Valerie's stick-to-it attitude by stating that:

She worked with her department through all the depression years and remained there under the poorest teaching conditions because she felt that there was where she belonged. She stayed although I am sure she had many attractive offers to move on.⁵

Valerie believed strongly in the values of a combined department of physical education for both men and women. According to Bayless:

She believed that both students and faculty should conduct themselves as ladies and gentlemen. She felt that women should be women and men, men, but that they should be working together toward common goals and not be two separate programs going two different directions.⁶

Gries said that:

She was a firm believer in one co-educational department for O.S.U., and she worked to eliminate her own separate division and administrative responsibilities in order to make it a reality.⁷

Miss Colvin was an educator who, according to Plunkett, "enjoyed her work more than her vacations."⁸ She rose to the challenges before her and in the process, developed a quality program for teacher

⁴Lester, Personal Communication, March, 1978

⁵Marville Washinka, former neighbor of Valerie Colvin and secretary in the office of the Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences, Oklahoma State University, Stillwater, Oklahoma; Personal Communication, March, 1978.

⁶Bayless, Personal Communication, April, 1978.

⁷Gries, Personal Communication, March, 1978.

⁸Emma Plunkett, Chairman Emeritus of Health, Physical Education and Recreation, Central State University, Edmond, Oklahoma; Personal Communication, February, 1978.

preparation. Wofford remarked:

Way back in 1935, Helen Corrubia, Director of Physical Education for the Tulsa Public Schools, said that in order to become a good physical education teacher, one should go to Oklahoma A&M. They didn't have fancy equipment or great equipment, but they had a teacher. Valerie Colvin was that teacher.⁹

Maples saw Valerie as "the foundation, framework, siding and brickwork of physical education at Oklahoma State who served as the interior decorator of the whole program."¹⁰

From 1929 to 1969, the Department of Health, Physical Education and Recreation grew from a faculty of three to over thirty and the number of majors increased by several hundred percent. Powell related:

She made Oklahoma State University the outstanding school for physical education in Oklahoma and she saw to it that teachers coming out of O.S.U. were well equipped for their jobs. It was more through her efforts than anyone's that the majors grew from a few to a few hundred.¹¹

Marsden felt that Valerie Colvin had been "a sound contributor to all teacher education programs on campus and in her area was a molder and builder of a program respected by her associates in physical education and other university professional fields."¹²

⁹Eva Gere Wofford, former student of Valerie Colvin, Zapata, Texas; Personal Communication, March, 1978.

¹⁰Maples, Personal Communication, March, 1978.

¹¹Cheryl Powell, former student of Valerie Colvin, El Reno, Oklahoma; Personal Communication, March, 1978.

¹²Ware Marsden, Director Emeritus of Teacher Education and Associate Dean Emeritus of the College of Education, Oklahoma State University, Stillwater, Oklahoma; Personal Communication, March, 1978.

Valerie recalled:

One of our biggest points of contention with the College of Education was that they wanted the Physical Education Department to give up the supervision of those student teachers who were in that College rather than in Arts and Sciences. That was one time when I just bowed my neck and said no! We had student teachers all over the state but we went to visit them just the same.¹³

The biggest hurdle to overcome during Miss Colvin's forty years at Oklahoma State was the search for adequate teaching space in which to conduct physical education classes. Prior to the construction of the new building in 1969, the classes were taught in five different indoor facilities and in numerous outdoor locations.

Jones recalled Valerie's constant search:

It seemed like every faculty meeting we had that the subject of facilities came up. Some sites were too small, some too dark, some too hot and others too cold. Some were even under water when it rained. Miss Colvin was constantly on the prowl for added space. Any corner on campus that wasn't being used was subject to her confiscation for physical education activity classes.¹⁴

Miss Colvin believed that it was her duty to "spread the word" about physical education in as many places as she could and to as many people as possible. She approached this task with a missionary zeal and many faculty members in other departments and members of the public at large became devout believers in Miss Colvin and physical education.

Agnew was one:

I was being interviewed for a major administrative appointment at O.S.U. Valerie was one of the screening committee. All asked searching questions.

¹³Colvin, March, 1978.

¹⁴Jones, February 24, 1978.

Valerie's was: "What regular exercise do you take?" I couldn't claim any. "Not even golf?" she asked. "No," said I, shaking my head sadly. I did not get the appointment--doubtless because of other deficiencies on my part.

Several years later I began a formal exercise program--not golf, however, but jogging. (Valerie had suggested that golf gets one into informal contact with faculty and citizen colleagues, as well as with concepts of physical fitness).¹⁵

In addition to the provisions for program visibility in the forms of dance concerts, water pageants and recreational activities, Valerie improved the status of health and physical education at Oklahoma State by serving on numerous committees within the College of Arts and Sciences and throughout the university. Plunkett said that:

Valerie's genius as an administrator at Oklahoma State University was sitting on so many committees and seizing those opportunities to tell the story of physical education. The reason why the women's division had the stature it did was because Valerie Colvin spoke for physical education.¹⁶

During her years on the campus, Miss Colvin served on more than twenty different committees or boards and sat on as many as ten at one time. Her longest terms of involvement included thirty-nine years with Mortar Board, thirty-two years on the Advisory Committee for Arts and Sciences, twenty-six years as the advisor for PEMM club and thirteen years on the Teacher Education Council.¹⁷ She was remembered by Patchin

¹⁵T. Agnew, Personal Communication, March, 1978.

¹⁶Plunkett, Personal Communication, February, 1978.

¹⁷Banquet Program, April 5, 1969.

as "a committee member who was always willing to speak up for women students to improve their status on campus."¹⁸ Wesley considered Miss Colvin as "a respected leader who served on many committees and as one who responded when an important and thorough job needed to be done."¹⁹

Kamm also indicated his appreciation for Valerie's service:

I shall always remember your wonderful assistance to me when I was Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences. You were always willing to "go the last mile" on any assignment which was given you. Your work on many committees, including your long service on the Arts and Sciences Social Committee, added much to the pleasure and welfare of that college.²⁰

In the community of Stillwater, Valerie gave much of her time to the Girl Scouts. She served as a consultant in 1939; was a staff member for regional training courses for Girl Scout leaders for four years in the 1940's; served on the Girl Scout Camp Committee from 1940-1943; conducted Brownie Scout Playdays from 1962-1965; and was the Camp Inspector for the Stillwater Girl Scouts in 1965. She initiated the Children's Swim and Recreation Program on campus and encouraged the physical education majors to volunteer to help. Valerie assisted with the Community Fund Drives and lent her support for the YMCA Building Drive. She also made many financial contributions for the purpose of

¹⁸Zelma Patchin, Associate Dean of Student Affairs, Oklahoma State University, Stillwater, Oklahoma; Personal Communication, March, 1978.

¹⁹Wesley, Personal Communication, March, 1978.

²⁰Kamm, January 28, 1969.

fostering cultural programs in the community.²¹

The contributions made by Valerie Colvin in the State of Oklahoma were quite extensive. According to Vaughan, "she held almost every office in the State Association that I can recall and served as its president twice"²² (Appendix E).

Valerie had been in the state only a few months when she accepted her first statewide responsibility. She was appointed to the State Board of Women Officials in 1930 and chaired that same group for five different terms. In the 1930's and 1940's she was involved with the leadership of state officiating groups, the specific sports groups of baseball, soccer, softball and basketball and conducted sports units for the Girl Scout Regional Training Courses²³ (Appendix E). Valerie and Emma Plunkett from Central State College were credited by Herbrand as "the two women responsible for the growth and development of physical education in Oklahoma."²⁴ As a member of the Advisory Board of the Oklahoma Athletic and Recreation Federation for College Women, Valerie provided leadership for many of the college women in the state.²⁵ Bowling stated that "Valerie's strength and determination kept the state physical education and

²¹Banquet Program, April 5, 1969.

²²Vaughan, Personal Communication, March, 1978.

²³Banquet Program, April 5, 1969.

²⁴Herbrand, February 11, 1978.

²⁵Banquet Program, April 5, 1969.

women's athletics organizations going for many years."²⁶ Herbrand added:

As Valerie and Emma approached retirement in the late 1960's, they turned over the reins of leadership to the younger staff members in the state. The ones who kept the pot boiling and who helped the state progress were those who had been influenced by these two women. The gospels they preached for physical education and sports competition for women were guideposts.²⁷

In the early 1950's, Valerie assisted in the leadership training programs for the Oklahoma and Regional Camping Associations, worked with the State Department of Education on the revision of requirements for certification in physical education and conducted recreation workshops for several organizations.²⁸ In this decade, also, she was the major force behind the publication of Learning Through Play, a state guide for the instruction of physical education.²⁹

Her professional leadership in the state in the 1960's consisted of co-editing the OAHPER Newsletter, chairing the Teacher Education Committee of the Whitehouse Conference on Children and Youth, presenting elementary physical education workshops, and chairing several councils concerned with physical fitness and lifetime sports.³⁰ Noonan

²⁶Interview with Maurine Bowling, Professor Emeritus of Health, Physical Education and Recreation, University of Oklahoma, Norman, Oklahoma, February 11, 1978.

²⁷Herbrand, February 11, 1978.

²⁸Banquet Program, April 5, 1969.

²⁹Vaughan, Personal Communication, March, 1978.

³⁰Banquet Program, April 5, 1969.

stated that Valerie's work in lifetime sports in Oklahoma ranked at the top of the forty-four states involved.³¹ She also provided leadership for the Oklahoma Girls' Recreation Association workshops.

In 1967, Valerie and her staff conducted a week-long Workshop in Outdoor Recreation. She recalled:

Several members of the staff thought that we should attend one ourselves before we attempted to host one. I said I didn't feel that was necessary. They probably thought I didn't know what I was doing, but we studied and organized and it came off beautifully. It was only the second one in the state, but after we did ours, several other schools began to offer similar programs.³²

Valerie Colvin's major contribution on the state level was as an officer and a leader in the Oklahoma Association for Health, Physical Education and Recreation. When she arrived in Oklahoma in 1929, the organization, then known as the Oklahoma State Physical Education Association, was just two years old. She was an important contributor to its early stages of development in that she assisted with the formulation and revision of the constitution, policies and purposes.³³

Miss Colvin served the Association in many capacities throughout her forty years in the state. She was president during the 1939-40 school year and again in 1956-57. She served as vice-president for 1937-38 term and often chaired the specific meetings at the state

³¹Letter from William E. Noonan, Jr., Director of the Lifetime Sports Education Project, American Association for Health, Physical Education and Recreation, Washington, D.C., to Valerie Colvin, June 7, 1968 (in the files of Valerie Colvin).

³²Colvin, March 15, 1978.

³³Foster, p. 65.

convention. While she was president, she succeeded in bringing nationally recognized physical educators into the state to speak to the Association membership. Anne Schley Duggen from Texas College for Women appeared on the 1939 program and Carl Troester, Executive Secretary of AAHPER, addressed the 1956 convention with "What This Means to Us in Oklahoma."³⁴

Valerie was co-editor of the OAHPER Newsletter for one term, served as the Association Archivist for several years and served as Chairman of the Honor Awards Committee for one year³⁵ (Appendix E). As a result of holding so many offices, she was consistently on either the Executive Board or the Advisory Council of OAHPER. She was well known to the membership and respected for her abilities. Consequently, she presented many inservice training programs in physical education across the state. Soon after her retirement, an executive secretary-treasurer was needed for the State Association and Valerie volunteered for the post, one which she held for three years.

Legislation which mandated the inclusion of health and physical education in the Oklahoma public schools was enacted in 1947, due, in a large degree, to the efforts of the college women physical educators.

Peters reported:

This year Miss Katherine Culbert, University of Oklahoma; Miss Flora May Ellis and Miss Valerie Colvin, Oklahoma A&M College; Miss Emma Plunkett, Central State College; supported by State Superintendent, Dr. Oliver Hodge, succeeded in selling leaders in the Senate and House on the value of this legislation. With the assistance of students majoring in physical education at O.U., A&M, and Central State College, led by Miss Frances Wood,

³⁴Ibid., pp. 57-58.

³⁵Banquet Program, April 5, 1969.

they successfully steered this bill through the committees and got it adopted by both houses of the legislature, with slight variations. All who are interested in education in Oklahoma are grateful to these ladies and the members of the legislature for this progressive legislation. Oklahoma is the thirty-fifth state to provide for health and physical education on a state-wide basis.³⁶

In cooperation with the State Department of Education and the North Central Accrediting Agency, Valerie served on numerous committees which evaluated physical education programs in the public schools and colleges in Oklahoma. She worked very closely with the State Department in order to effect a higher quality of physical education instruction in the schools. She was responsible for the 1965 publication of Improvement of Instruction in Health and Physical Education by the State Department of Education and developed a physical fitness brochure in 1966 for the Governor's Council on Physical Fitness³⁷ (Appendix E).

Valerie was a member of the Oklahoma Education Association and the National Education Association for the major portion of her many years at Oklahoma State University. In addition to the Oklahoma Association for Health, Physical Education and Recreation, she held membership in the Southern District Association and was a Fellow of the American Association for Health, Physical Education and Recreation.

Other professional affiliations included the Southern and National Association of Physical Education for College Women, the Oklahoma and American Camping Associations, the American Association of University

³⁶Peters, p. 137.

³⁷Banquet Program, April 5, 1969.

Women and the State Board of Women Officials.³⁸ She was also a member of three honorary fraternities. These were: Tri Sigma, an honorary scholastic society; Sigma Sigma Psi, a physical education honorary society; and Mortar Board, an honorary scholastic and service society.³⁹

Valerie Colvin was a contributing member of the Southern District Association for Health, Physical Education and Recreation. Within this thirteen state district organization, she was also active in the Southern Association of Physical Education for College Women. At the Southern District conventions, Valerie served on panels dealing with women's sports and officiating and in Biloxi, Mississippi, in 1954, she spoke on "Broadening Contacts for Women's National Official's Ratings."

Miss Colvin was a member-at-large of the Executive Board of the Southern District AAHPER and served as Chairman of the District's Women's National Official's Rating Committee in 1955. She accepted the responsibility of State Membership Chairman of the Southern Association of Physical Education for College Women in 1956, served as Chairman of Educational Exhibits at the Southern District convention in Tulsa in 1955 and was a member of the Honor Awards Committee in 1965.

At the Houston convention of the Southern District Association in 1959, Valerie was presented the Honor Award of that organization. In a congratulatory letter to Miss Colvin, President Martus stated,

I know that it is gratifying to you to know that your accomplishments have been recognized and that you are to receive this honor in our District. Your many friends

³⁸Ibid.

³⁹Ibid.

and professional colleagues will join me in honoring you at the opening session of the Houston Convention.⁴⁰

On the national level of the physical education profession, Miss Colvin was a member of the Legislative Council of the American Association for Health, Physical Education and Recreation in 1939 and 1940; chaired the Soccer Rules Committee for the National Section on Women's Athletics in 1933-34 and repeated in 1949; and for three years, from 1935-38, served on the Speedball Rules Committee for the National Section on Women's Athletics.

Recognition at this level resulted from her written contributions. She published a Speedball Chart for the Spaulding Athletic Library in 1934; "Achievement Tests in Speedball" in the 1936 Spaulding Official Guide by American Sports Publishing Company; "Interchange in Speedball" in the 1938-39 Official Soccer and Speedball Guide by American Sports Publishing Company; and "Studies in Measuring Basketball Playing Ability of College Women" in the AAHPER publication, Research Quarterly in October of 1938 with Glassow and Schwartz. She also compiled and published a reference book, Camp Directory, Region VI, American Camping Association by the Brotherhood Mutual Life Insurance Company in 1953.⁴¹

Described by Abercrombie as a "master teacher,"⁴² and by Wofford as "The Teacher,"⁴³ Valerie was respected and admired for her many

⁴⁰Letter from Ethel Martus, President, Southern District Association of Health, Physical Education and Recreation, to Valerie Colvin, February 12, 1959 (in the files of Valerie Colvin).

⁴¹Banquet Program, April 5, 1969.

⁴²Abercrombie, February 17, 1978.

⁴³Wofford, Personal Communication, March, 19781

contributions to her students and faculty colleagues. Her ability to teach by example and motivation, according to Plunkett, transcended the mundane concept of teaching and entered the realm of inspiration.⁴⁴

She added:

Valerie's teaching has been not to supply information, but to raise a thirst. Education to her means drawing forth from the mind latent powers and developing them, so that in mature years one may apply these powers not merely to success in one's occupation, but to success in the greatest of all arts--living.⁴⁵

Her specific contributions to the campus, to the community, and to the state, district and nation were enumerated by her former students and professional colleagues, but many indicated that her major contribution was her unswerving loyalty and dedication to her favorite people--the students. Kumery cited Valerie's major contribution as "her continued interest in each individual student in physical education at Oklahoma State."⁴⁶ Rheinberger saw it as "her influence on the many successful teachers/coaches who are spread out all over the country."⁴⁷ Patchin noted her major contribution as "her leadership in producing excellent graduates who could assume responsible positions in the field of health, physical education and recreation."⁴⁸ Black wrote that "it was just being an excellent example of what a

⁴⁴Plunkett, Personal Communication, February, 1978.

⁴⁵Ibid.

⁴⁶Kumery, Personal Communication, March, 1978.

⁴⁷Rheinberger, Personal Communication, March, 1978.

⁴⁸Patchin, Personal Communication, March, 1978.

professional teacher of physical education should be."⁴⁹ Beck added that:

It was her sincere interest in her field and her eagerness to upgrade the profession by encouraging everyone she "touched" to do his best. It seemed to be "I'll see you at the state meeting" approach. It was a "little" nudge, yet a "big" push in the right direction.⁵⁰

Sims said, "her major professional contribution was being a teacher above all else and wanting to see people trained to be good teachers. Students were the number one thing in her life."⁵¹ Mason commented, "her ability to motivate people was outstanding."⁵² Harrison listed as Valerie's major contribution, "the respect and enthusiasm that she instilled in her students for physical education."⁵³

Professional colleagues did not hesitate to comment on Miss Colvin's qualities and contributions. Weber called her "one of the best with whom I had contact in the eighteen years I was a member of the Student Health Service on the campus."⁵⁴ Sorenson stated that

⁴⁹Black, Personal Communication, March, 1978.

⁵⁰Beck, Personal Communication, March, 1978.

⁵¹Erma Oldham Riggs Sims, former student of Valerie Colvin, Joplin, Missouri; Personal Communication, April, 1978.

⁵²Willa Faye Mason, Coordinator, Women's Sports and Physical Education, Northeastern State University, Tahlequah, Oklahoma; Personal Communication, March, 1978.

⁵³A. B. Harrison, Professor of Health, Physical Education and Leisure Sciences, Oklahoma State University, Stillwater, Oklahoma; Personal Communication, March, 1978.

⁵⁴Letter from Roxie Weber, M.D., Former physician at the University Hospital, Oklahoma State University, Stillwater, Oklahoma to Robert Kamm, President of Oklahoma State University, Stillwater, Oklahoma, January 11, 1969 (in the files of Valerie Colvin).

she "was indeed a teacher of teachers,"⁵⁵ and according to Cash, "Valerie Colvin has had a larger influence on more students than any other teacher on OSU's faculty."⁵⁶ Thomas related that "personal integrity, professional excellence and zest for future development are but a few of the contributions which Miss Valerie Colvin has made to the field of education."⁵⁷

Agnew respected her advocacy of equal attention for men and women in a balanced life style which included exercise of the mind and body.⁵⁸ He, in addition to a multitude of other faculty members, administrators and former students, was influenced by Valerie Colvin.

She encouraged me by her example to be a vigorous advocate for my field, even though it was seldom one of the most favored at OSU; her enthusiasm was contagious. If HPER could call forth that kind of commitment from her, so could history from me."⁵⁹

Gries commented that "hopefully, knowing V. C. made me a wiser administrator and a better human. If I followed her example, I would be."⁶⁰

⁵⁵Letter from H. E. Sorenson, Dean of the College of Education, Oklahoma State University, Stillwater, Oklahoma, to Robert Kamm, President of Oklahoma State University, Stillwater, Oklahoma, January 7, 1969 (in the files of Valerie Colvin).

⁵⁶Letter from Idress Cash, Emeritus Assistant Professor, Oklahoma State University, Stillwater, Oklahoma, to Robert Kamm, President of Oklahoma State University, Stillwater, Oklahoma, December 2, 1968 (in the files of Valerie Colvin).

⁵⁷Virginia H. Thomas, former student of Valerie Colvin, Stillwater, Oklahoma; Personal Communication, March, 1978.

⁵⁸T. Agnew, Personal Communication, March, 1978.

⁵⁹Ibid.

⁶⁰Gries, Personal Communication, March, 1978.

Miss Colvin was as proud of the accomplishments of her students as she was humble about her own. She took pride in the fact that several of those whom she had guided furthered their education in the fields of medicine, health and physical therapy as well as those who had achieved master and doctoral degrees in the instruction and administration of physical education.

Members of her own staff at Oklahoma State credited her as a major influence in their personal and professional lives. A. B. Harrison, recently appointed Coordinator of Research in the School of Health, Physical Education and Leisure Services, indicated that "Miss Colvin was responsible for encouraging me to pursue my interest in research."⁶¹ Bayless said, "she taught me that every issue has at least two sides to it and that I shouldn't react until all of the facts were in from all sides."⁶² Abercrombie related that "it was Miss Colvin who really made me decide to go into physical education for keeps and to finish my doctorate."⁶³ Lester added:

I credit my experience under her as an undergraduate and as a member of her faculty to my success in teaching today. It was her knowledge and the sharing of her capabilities which have strengthened my areas of competency. I find myself working with my students as she worked with me--listening, advising, helping and understanding, yet expecting respect."⁶⁴

Wood commented:

She instilled in me a desire to keep growing and learning. She was willing to do every job from the most

⁶¹Harrison, Personal Communication, March, 1978.

⁶²Bayless, Personal Communication, March, 1978.

⁶³Abercrombie, February 17, 1978.

⁶⁴Lester, Personal Communication, March, 1978.

menial to the most significant. When I was a student in the 1940's and on staff there in the early 1950's, she did it all--taught professional courses, activity classes, supervised student teachers, repaired equipment, advised majors, conducted intramurals, coached all sports and took teams to play days and sports days. So, early in my professional career, when I was asked to take on additional duties--I followed the model she had set for me and looked on each new responsibility as an opportunity.⁶⁵

Rollins said, "She helped me develop a confidence in myself and pride in my profession. She also instilled in me the desire to do a conscientious job, spending time above and beyond the expected,"⁶⁶ and Mason added, "She made me want to work with people and challenged me to give my best to teaching and to the profession."⁶⁷ Speaking for "the thousands of people whose lives she touched,"⁶⁸ Hartshorn stated that "Miss Colvin spoke for 'bringing fun to keeping well.'"⁶⁹

The breadth of Valerie's influence on people and the profession was addressed by Wolverton. She said:

Valerie Colvin's contribution to the development of young people has extended far beyond the campus of Oklahoma State University. I have personally had the pleasure of encountering her influence beyond Oklahoma. In recent visits to the west coast, I met many professional people who had studied her methods and had incorporated them into their teaching. Also, while visiting high over the Pacific with a young woman on

⁶⁵Frances Wood, former student and faculty member of Valerie Colvin, currently Professor of Physical Education at the University of Arkansas, Fayetteville, Arkansas; Personal Communication, March, 1978.

⁶⁶Rollins, Personal Communication, March, 1978.

⁶⁷Mason, Personal Communication, March, 1978.

⁶⁸Hartshorn, Personal Communication, March, 1978.

her way to a new teaching position in physical education, she said that she had gone to school at O.S.U., and I thought to myself, "here goes another Colvin product."⁷⁰

Wofford wrote:

Those of us who yearned to be better teachers, learned to be better people; whatever they did, wherever they went, because of Colvin. She is adored and respected and revered by all who were privileged to learn from "The Teacher."⁷¹

When Miss Colvin retired, Peters summarized the feelings of many when she wrote:

I remember a lot of things about you, Valerie Colvin. I remember you as a coach, a sponsor, an official, a fighter, an encourager, a critical observer, a leader and inspiring force to students and staff, a blazer of trails and a professional colleague and friend. And I'm glad for all those memories and for the effect you had on me and hundreds like me throughout the state. Your professional footprints will take many shoes to fill, but there are quite a number of us "professional toddlers" who will attempt it because of the desire and motivation you planted in us through the years. Thank you for all of us and for our students who, if we do our jobs right, will also receive the heritage you leave us.⁷²

As a result of her many years of dedicated service to children, college students and professional colleagues and because of her contributions to health, physical education on the local, state, regional and national levels, Valerie Colvin has received many honors and awards.

⁷⁰Letter from Mary Wolverton, former student of Valerie Colvin, Lawton, Oklahoma, to Robert B. Kamm, President of Oklahoma State University, Stillwater, Oklahoma, January 7, 1969.

⁷¹Wofford, Personal Communication, March, 1978.

⁷²Peters, April 5, 1969.

Although she was often known to believe that material awards were unnecessary, she was deeply appreciative of the thoughts behind them. She cared about people and one of her favorite mementos was a small replica of a totem pole carved in one of her camp craft classes by a young woman who died soon after the project had been completed.

Following her retirement in May of 1969, Valerie placed in her home two objects which meant a great deal to her. The first, a roll-top desk, had been hers since her arrival on campus in 1929 and was given to her by the faculty of the Department of Health, Physical Education and Recreation. The second item, an antique, silver-backed mirror, was "rescued" by her when Gardiner Hall was being considered for demolition.

For her many efforts on behalf of the Girl Scouts in Stillwater and in the region, she received a bronze sculpture in the form of a Girl Scout. Throughout her career, Valerie had been involved with the American Red Cross and had been the recipient of many pins and certificates of appreciation for her services. She was also recognized by the Lifetime Sports Education Project and the Special Olympics.

In 1959, Valerie was one of four professional physical educators who received the Honor Award from the thirteen state Southern District Association of Health, Physical Education and Recreation. She was cited for her distinguished service to the field of physical education and for her influence on teacher preparation education.⁷³ The Oklahoma Association of Health, Physical Education and Recreation initiated its

⁷³Citation for Valerie Colvin from the Southern District Association of Health, Physical Education and Recreation, 1959 (in the files of Valerie Colvin).

Honor Awards Program in 1960 and Valerie Colvin was one of four outstanding leaders to be recognized that first year.

In 1966, she was honored by the many students whom she had assisted, taught and advised in the College of Arts and Sciences at Oklahoma State University. The Student Council of the College presented to Miss Colvin their Distinguished Service Award. At the beginning of her last year of teaching at Oklahoma State University, hundreds of letters from her associates poured into the office of Professor G. P. Collins, Chairman of the Oklahoma State University Committee for the Oklahoma Teacher of the Year Award. She was selected as the nominee for this award from the Oklahoma State University Chapter of the Oklahoma Education Association. Also in the fall of 1968, Miss Colvin received the Outstanding Teacher Award from the College of Arts and Sciences at Oklahoma State University, which was sponsored by the Blue Key Honorary Fraternity and the Alumni Association. Another award sponsored by these two organizations also was received by Valerie Colvin. She was chosen as the 1968 Outstanding Teacher at Oklahoma State University.⁷⁴ In addition to her acceptance of these honors with great humility, she was pleased that the plaques would have the words, "Physical Education," under her name.⁷⁵

Perhaps the most gratifying award was bestowed upon Miss Colvin on April 5, 1969, when she was honored by the presence of her "people." Over four hundred students, former students, faculty, professional

⁷⁴Banquet Program, April 5, 1969.

⁷⁵Ibid.

colleagues and personal friends gathered at her retirement dinner to give testimony to their love, appreciation and admiration for her. On this same day, there was an open house in the new physical education building, and throughout the retirement dinner, comments were made regarding the possibility that this new physical education facility could be named for Miss Colvin. The policy had been that no building on campus could be named after someone who was still alive, but many of the hundreds of letters to President Kamm and to the Board of Regents requested that this policy be changed so that Miss Colvin could "still smell the flowers which existed because she planted the seeds."⁷⁶ The dream became a reality, and in the summer of 1969, the physical education facility, which had been wished for for forty years became known as the Colvin Center. "This," Miss Colvin said, "was literally my 'biggest' honor."⁷⁷ Although she was, again, humbly proud of the Colvin Center bearing her name, she was more pleased that the students of Oklahoma State University decided to begin the project and see it through to completion. "Their determination bears witness to the fact that modern youth can work constructively and purposefully to better conditions for those who will follow them."⁷⁸

At her retirement dinner, Miss Colvin was the subject of much praise and the recipient of numerous monetary and material gifts, but Wood expressed the thoughts and feelings of the entire body when she said:

⁷⁶Wofford, Personal Communication, March, 1978.

⁷⁷Colvin, February 8, 1978.

⁷⁸Ibid.

It is probably a habit of every professional educator to evaluate the result of each day's attempt at beneficially influencing one's students. Occasionally one looks back and attempts a long range evaluation. At best, most teachers can feel that they have reached a few students and made a lasting difference. Some educators measure their success more in terms of personal gains which they have received or honors attained than in what they were able to give others. It is virtually impossible for an individual to be absolutely objective in evaluating himself. And so it would be much more beneficial and objective if she would have enough trust in her colleagues and students to believe their assessments.

First of all, let me say that I am aware of the many honors, offices, and awards which you have earned--can frame, hang, collect dust with, and hide in drawers. These are certainly concrete evidences given by the profession in recognition of your contributions. But as I said when you received the Southern District Honor Award, you were not honored so much as the award was enhanced. This may just as surely be said of any other honor "given" you.

The most lasting and most meaningful evidence of the impact you as an individual have had on others is the living of your example and ideas by human beings who have been influenced through personal interaction with you. It isn't through reading what you've written; listening to addresses you've delivered; it's through having a vibrant, ethical, dedicated example of physical education epitomized. You have set standards others attempt to live up to but never quite reach. You have always set standards so high that even the most diligent striver can still have something at which to aim. You have done this by deeds, not words alone.

I could say that you are a continual inspiration to everyone who has known you.

I could say that you are interested in students and individuals with many strengths and slight weaknesses--and they sense this.

I could say you are dedicated to the profession and to the human race and have expended immeasurable energy in their behalf.

I could say that you are idealistic and fight for your high standards regardless of the odds.

I could say all these things plus many more and they would all be true, but not half as significant or half as complimentary as saying you are -- you. There is no higher honor, no greater compliment.⁷⁹

The most recent honor bestowed on Miss Colvin was presented in the spring of 1977 when she was recognized as a Fellow of the Academy of Arts and Sciences, the highest honor of the College. Dean Gries made the presentation with these words:

Can a human being become an institution? The thousands of former students who called her teacher would say yes; so would colleagues who served with her on state and regional professional association boards during her forty years as an educator; so would students at OSU right now who have never met her, but who find her influence continuing on campus. Her name is well known to them.

For her lifelong contribution to the field of physical education, for her forty years of dedicated teaching at OSU, for her reputation at the state, regional and national level as an educator, and for services too lengthy to enumerate, this college gratefully names as a 1977 Fellow of the Academy of Arts and Sciences

Valerie Colvin⁸⁰

⁷⁹Letter from Frances Wood, former student and former faculty member of Valerie Colvin, currently Professor of Physical Education at the University of Arkansas, Fayetteville, Arkansas, April 1, 1969 (read at the Valerie Colvin retirement dinner; in the files of Valerie Colvin).

⁸⁰Excerpt from speech given by George Gries, Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences, Oklahoma State University, Stillwater, Oklahoma at the 1977 Awards Banquet of the College of Arts and Sciences, Spring, 1977 (in the files of the School of Health, Physical Education and Leisure Services, Oklahoma State University, Stillwater, Oklahoma).

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- Duckwall, Carol. Stillwater, Oklahoma, March, 1978.
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- Hamilton, Mary L. Durant, Oklahoma, March, 1978.
- Harrison, A. B. Stillwater, Oklahoma, March, 1978.
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- Lindsey, Ruth. Long Beach, California, March, 1978.
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- Marsden, Ware. Stillwater, Oklahoma, March, 1978.
- Mason, Willa Faye. Tahlequah, Oklahoma, March, 1978.
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- Plunkett, Emma W. Edmond, Oklahoma, March, 1978.
- Powell, Cheryl Hicks. Little Rock, Arkansas, March, 1978.
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- Rollins, Myr Lou. Stillwater, Oklahoma, March, 1978.
- Sims, Erma Oldham Riggs. Joplin, Missouri, March, 1978.
- Spencer, Willa Belle Carter. Conway, Arkansas, March, 1978.
- Vaughan, Henry. Oklahoma City, Oklahoma, March, 1978.
- Washinka, Marville. Stillwater, Oklahoma, March, 1978.
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APPENDIX A

PHOTOGRAPHS



FRESHMAN SWIMMERS

SUE MALONE BARNETT	EMILY BLACKSHEAR
RUTH WHATLINGTON	MARY LUCIA CLOUD
AILEEN SPEAR	VALERIE COLVIN
	EDITH COLE

VALERIE COLVIN AS A FRESHMAN
AT WOMAN'S COLLEGE OF ALABAMA
1922-23



FRESHMAN TENNIS

VALERIE COLVIN RUTH WHATLINGTON

Pages 108 through 114 reprinted by permission of The Publications Union Board of Huntingdon College (formerly Woman's College of Alabama), Montgomery, Alabama



FRESHMAN BASKETBALL

Valerie Colvin, Forward; Julia Mitcham, Forward; Mary Lucia Cloud, Guard; Mary Belle Quinn, Guard; Ruth Whatlington, Center; Marion Finklea, Center.



FRESHMAN FIELD BALL

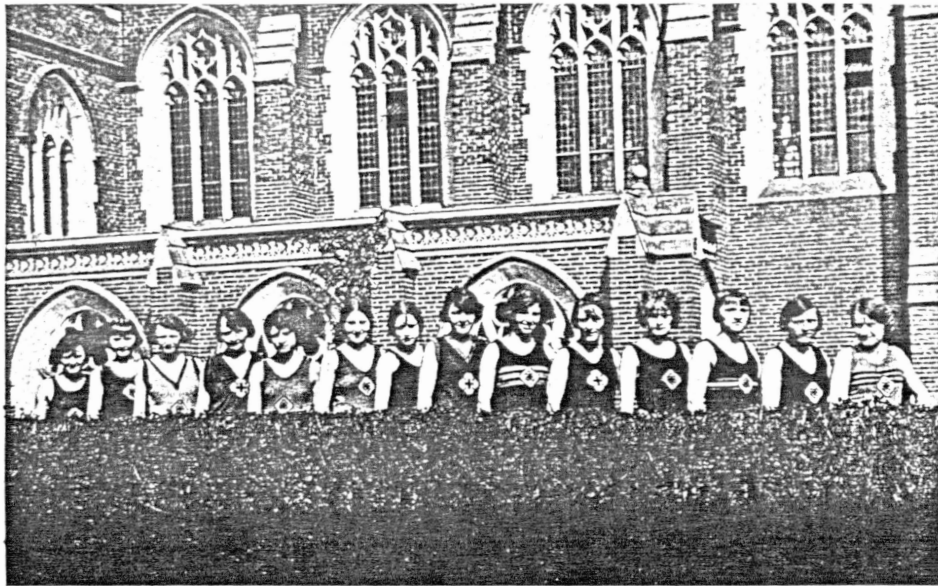
Theus Cassell, Annie Pearl Lasseter, Fay Garret, Louise Sparenburger, Marion Finklea, Ruth Whatlington, Laura C. Garret, Edith Cole, Mary Bell Quinn, Valerie Colvin, Julia Mitcham.

Sophomore Tennis Team



Colvin, Watlington.

VALERIE COLVIN AS A SOPHOMORE AT WOMAN'S
COLLEGE OF ALABAMA - 1923-24



LIFE SAVERS

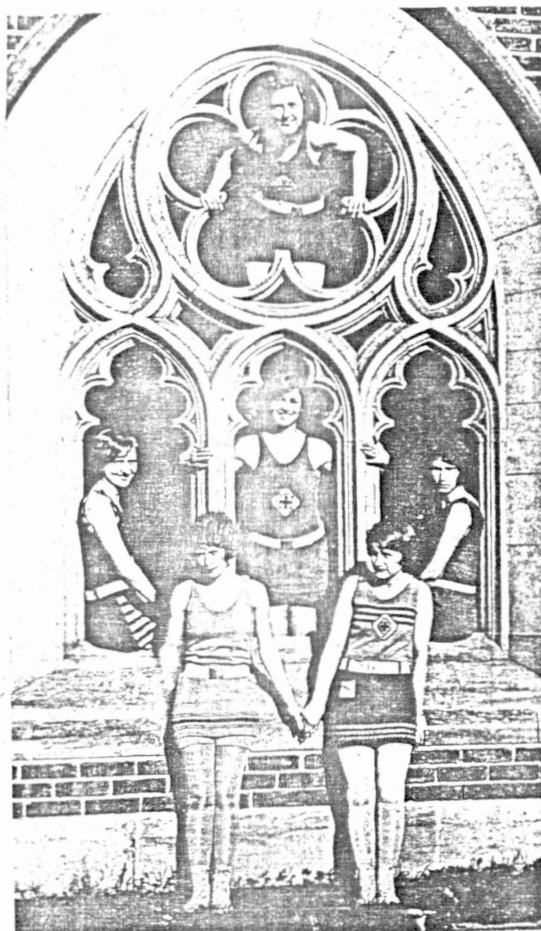
Sophomore Swimming Team



Colvin, Barnet, Watlington, Cloud, Etter, Mitchem, Finklea,
Quinn, Lane, White, Brooks, Bibb.



VARSIY BASKETBALL TEAM AT WOMAN'S COLLEGE
OF ALABAMA - 1923-24

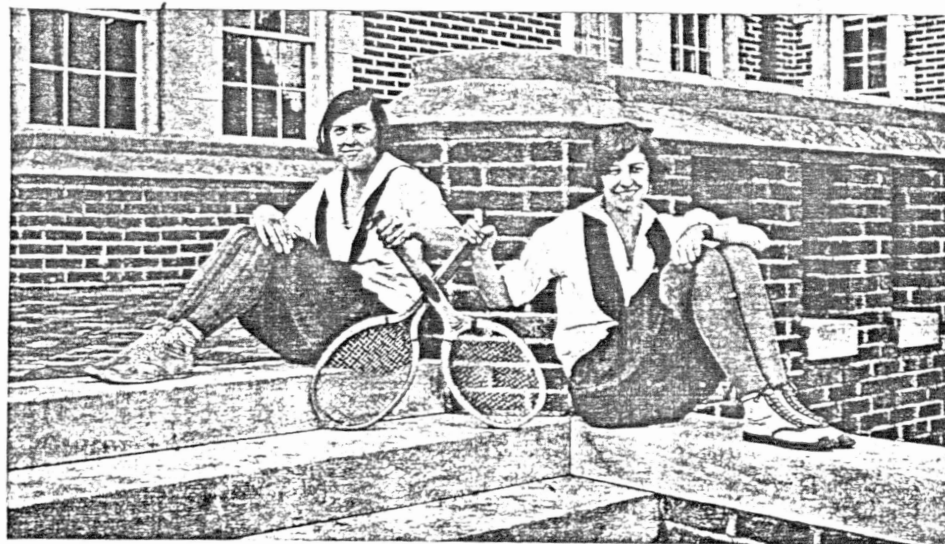


VALERIE COLVIN AS A JUNIOR
AT WOMAN'S COLLEGE OF
ALABAMA - 1924-25





Junior Tennis



Colvin, Valerie

Watlington, Ruth

VALERIE COLVIN AS A SENIOR
AT WOMAN'S COLLEGE OF
ALABAMA - 1925-26



COLVON, VALERIE A.B.
Currer Bell

Home Economics

Mobile, Ala.
ΠΕΦ

S.S.S.; Education Club; Home Economics Club; Varsity Basketball 2-3-4; Class Tennis 1-2-3-4; Class Basket Ball 1; Class Swimming 1-2-4; Life Saving Examiner; Athletic Manager of Class 1-2; President of Class 3; Y. W. C. A. Cabinet 2-3; President Y. W. C. A.; Pan-Hellenic Council 2-3; President Pan-Hellenic 4; Grand Council 3-4.

Sophomore Sister Betty Bayer

As President of Y. W. C. A., a student and an athlete, Valerie has proved herself a true Womens College girl and has brought honor to her Alma Mater.

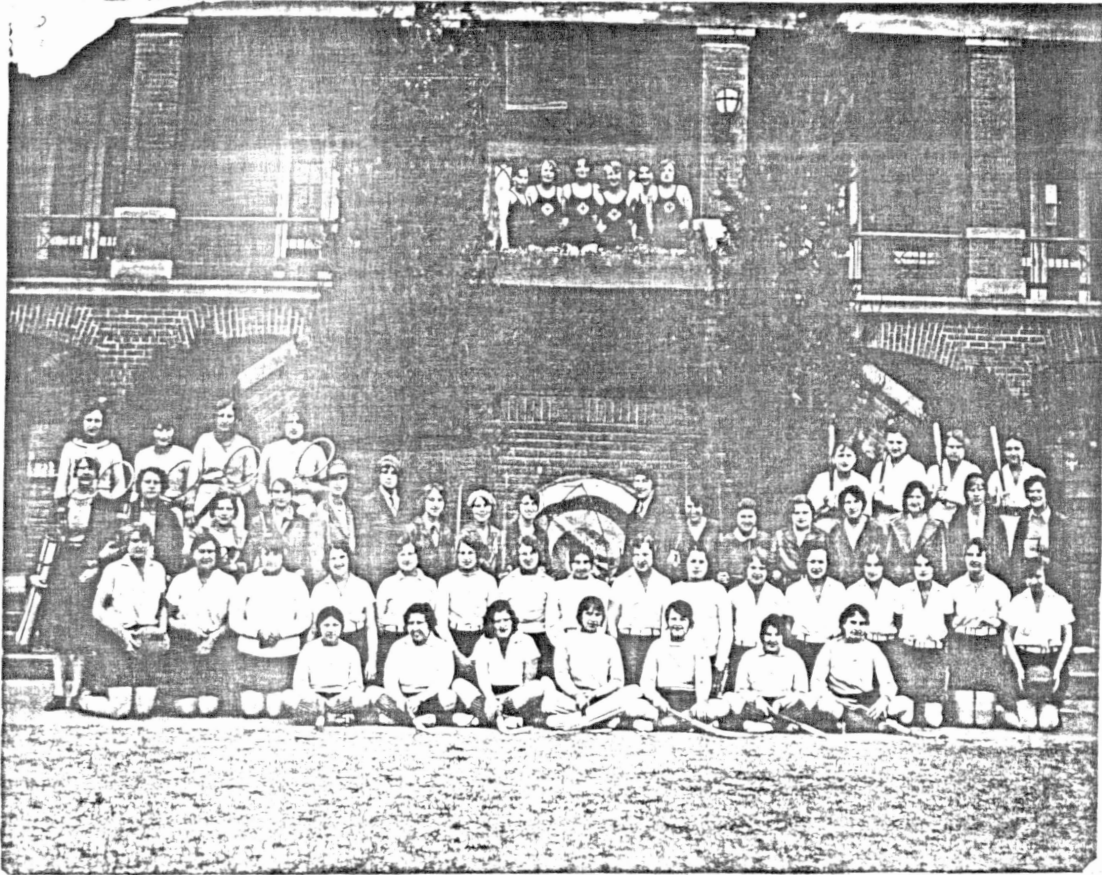


Best Athlete
Valerie Colvin

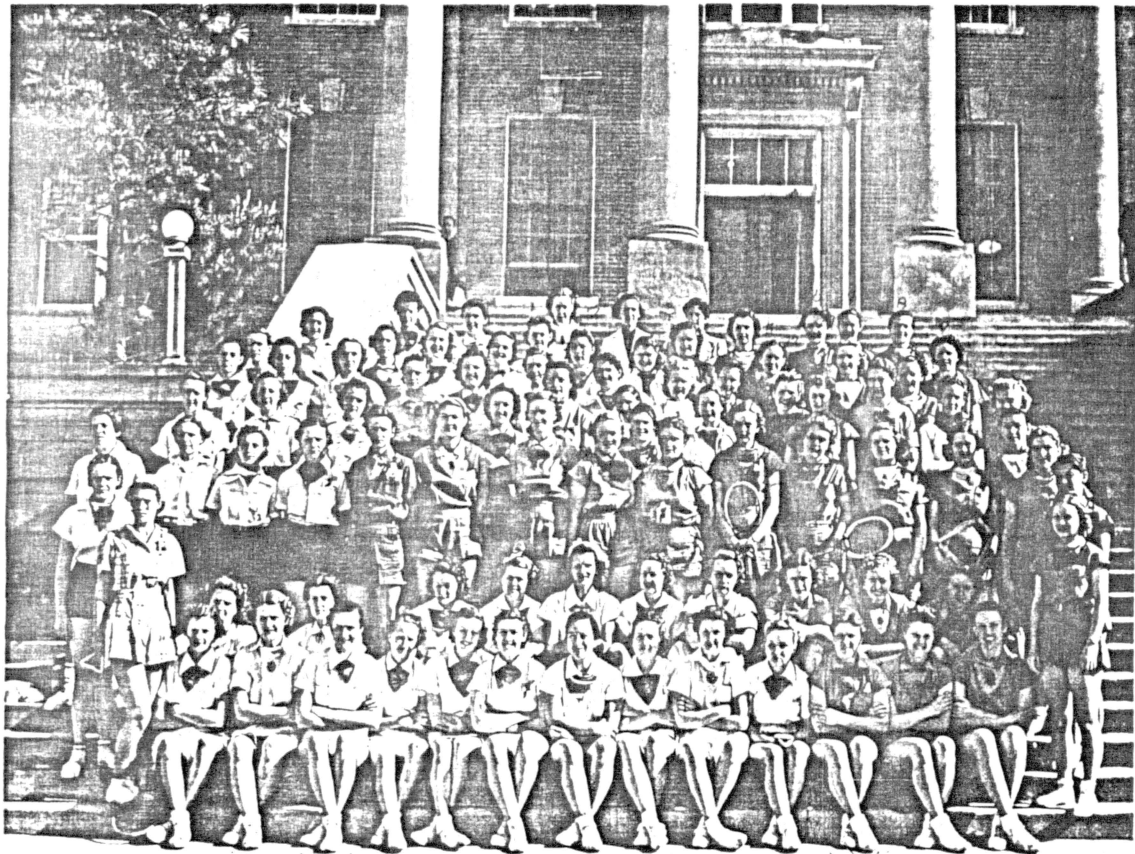




MARGARET KIRKENDALL, FLORA MAY ELLIS AND VALERIE COLVIN
WITH WOMEN PHYSICAL EDUCATION MAJORS - 1929



OKLAHOMA STATE UNIVERSITY WOMEN'S ATHLETIC ASSOCIATION - 1930



College Play Day - Stillwater - 1938

STATE COLLEGE PLAY DAY AT OSU - 1938



OKLAHOMA COLLEGE WOMEN PHYSICAL EDUCATORS - c. 1960



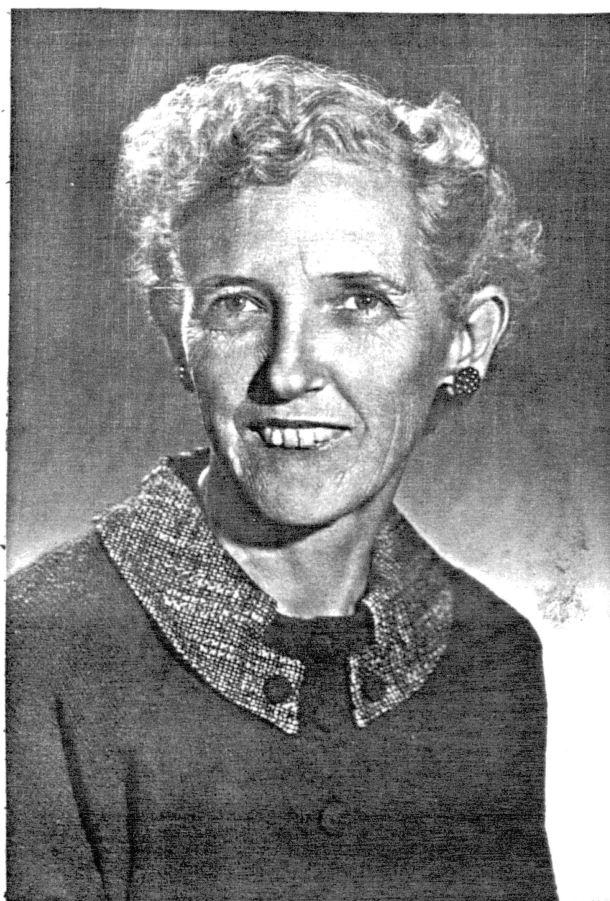
VALERIE COLVIN - c. 1930



VALERIE COLVIN - 1926



VALERIE COLVIN - 1929



VALERIE COLVIN - 1959



OSU PHYSICAL EDUCATION INSTRUCTORS - 1943



GIRL SCOUT CAMP - 1940



VALERIE COLVIN
ON HER WAY TO CLASS - 1947



VALERIE COLVIN AND WOMEN PHYSICAL EDUCATION MAJORS - 1952-53



VALERIE COLVIN, FLORA MAY ELLIS AND WOMEN'S ATHLETIC ASSOCIATION - 1946-47



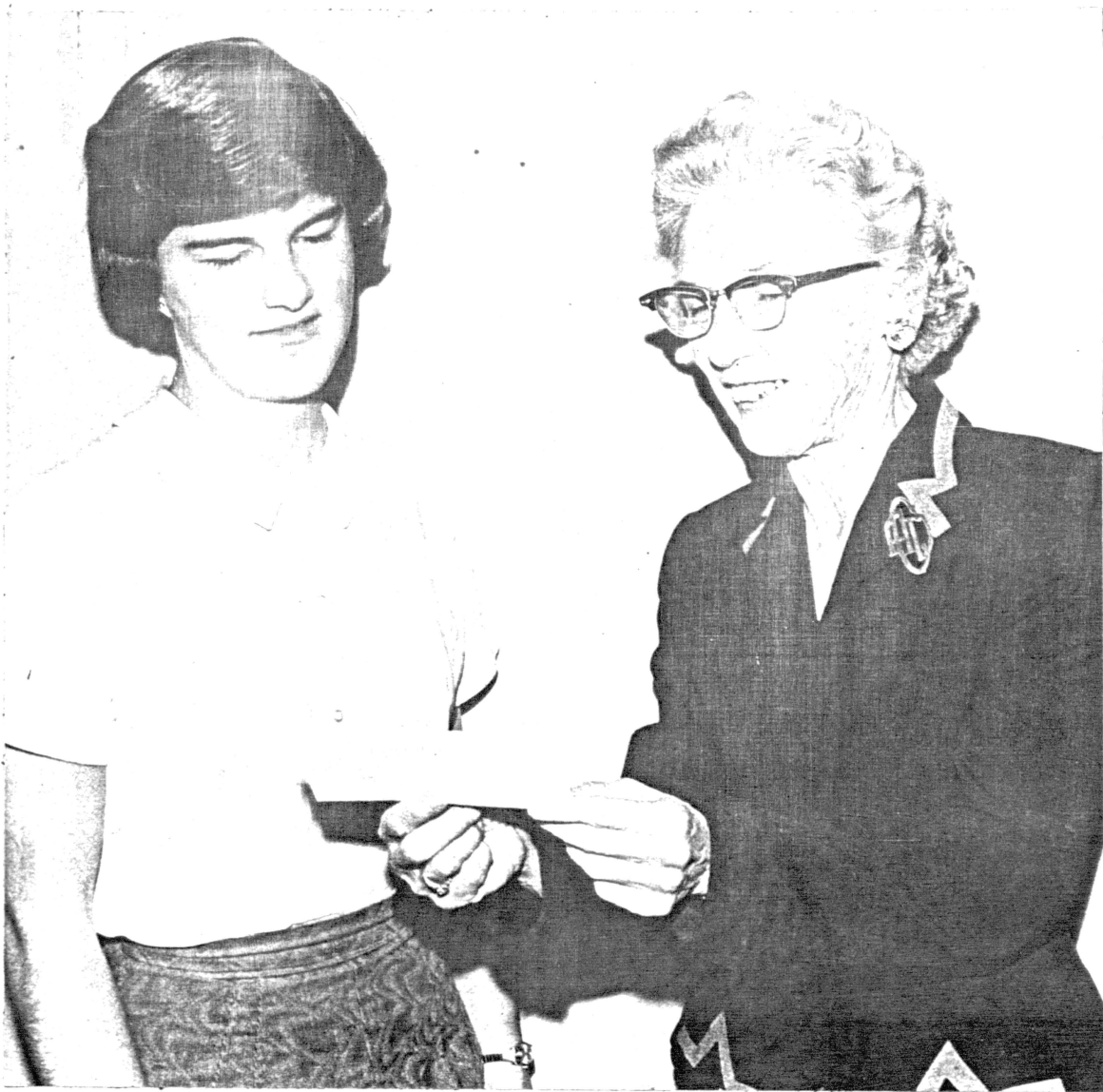
VALERIE COLVIN AND STUDENTS AT BASKETBALL SPORTS DAY - 1953



FLORA MAY ELLIS, VALERIE COLVIN AND LIFESAVING GROUP - 1929-30



VALERIE COLVIN AND EMMA PLUNKETT ON SUMMER CRUISE - 1960's



VALERIE COLVIN PRESENTING THE FIRST VALERIE
COLVIN SCHOLARSHIP TO CATHERINE DUNN IN 1965



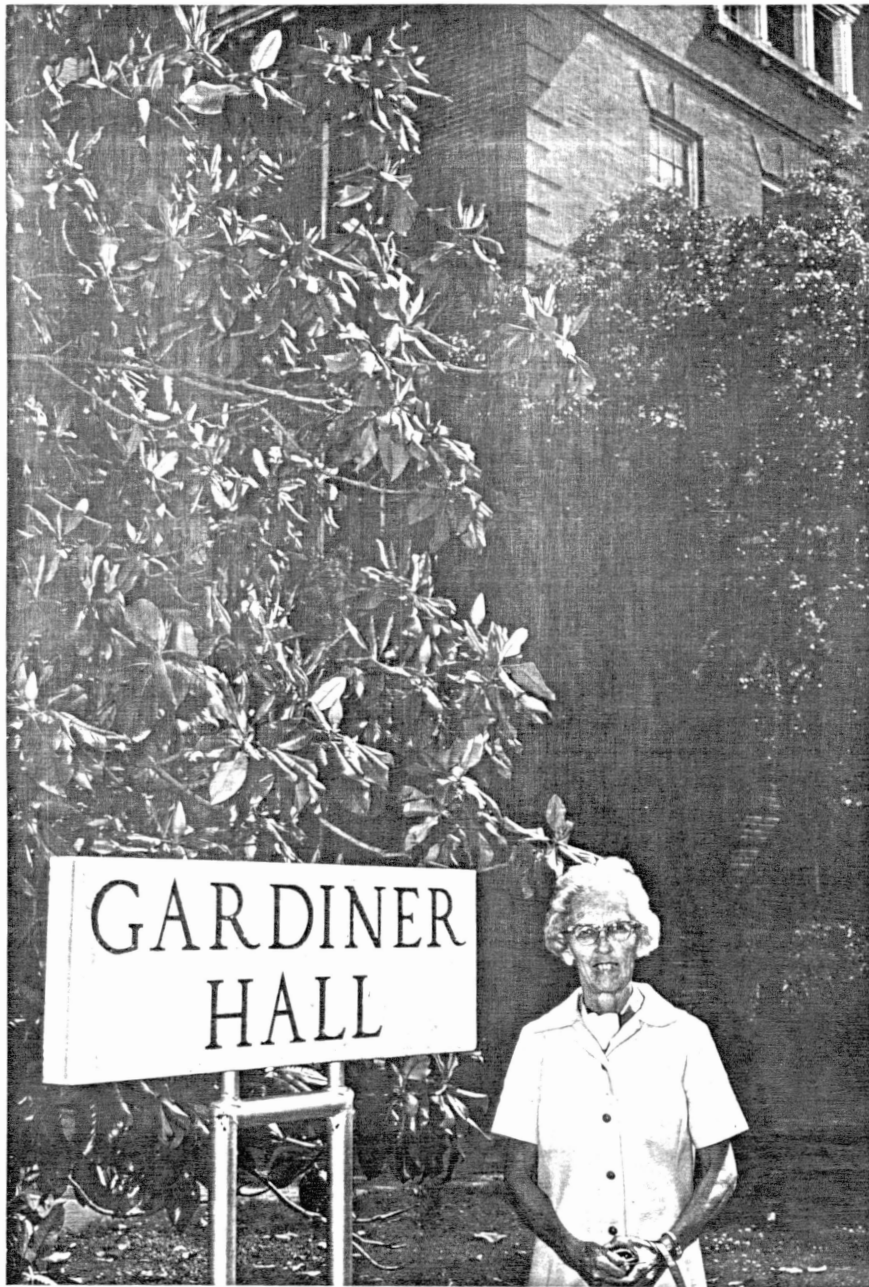
VALERIE COLVIN RECEIVING THE OUTSTANDING TEACHER AWARD - 1968



Oklahoma State University President Robert B. Kamm and Miss Valerie Colvin, OSU's Outstanding Teacher for 1968.



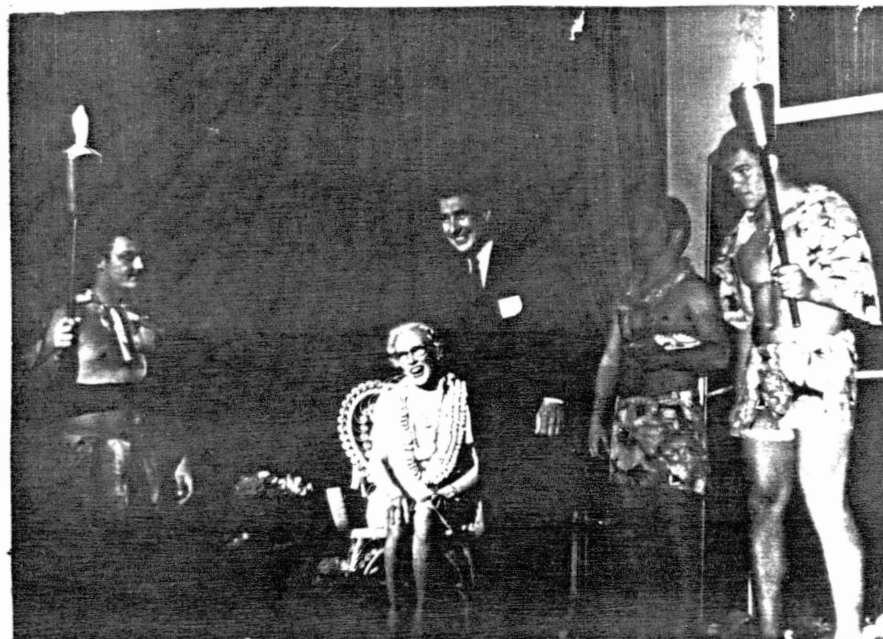
VALERIE COLVIN AND PEMM CLUB AWARD WINNERS - 1969



VALERIE COLVIN IN FRONT OF HER OFFICE OF FORTY YEARS



DR. AL WARNER AND VALERIE COLVIN AT
HER RETIREMENT DINNER - APRIL, 1969



PRESIDENT ROBERT KAMM, VALERIE COLVIN AND HAWAIIAN
HOSTS AT RETIREMENT DINNER - APRIL, 1969



PRESIDENT ROBERT KAMM WELCOMES VALERIE COLVIN
TO HER RETIREMENT DINNER - APRIL, 1969

APPENDIX B

LETTERS AND OTHER MATERIALS PERTAINING
TO VALERIE COLVIN

ACTION VERBS TO LIVE BY

By

Valerie Colvin
March, 1970

You may not change the nation
You may not change the pace
But you can help someone
Who's about to start the race

We know not of the future
Or the challenges it will have in store
But of this we may be certain
We have faced them all before

Man is equal to any problem
Man is equal to any test
He only has to face them
And try to do his best

There are verbs that we must master
Verbs that we must understand
And pass their meaning on to others
If this world we would command

They really are no secret
You really know them well
But each of us must use them
If doubts we would dispell

I am - The power of self knowledge
Starts us from first base
We have to reach there
If we would win the race
We must each look within us
And see what we can share
We each must have the courage
To speak, to do, to dare

I think - The power to investigate
Means turning every rock
To see what is hidden there
And so the future unlock
To build upon our heritage
Blending old with new
Sharing with the many
Rather than with just a few
Listening to the voices
Some agreeing, some dissenting loud
Choosing from the best of these
Paths that will keep us proud

I feel - The power to appreciate, to value, to love
 To see in every human
 Something that is rare
 And to let that person know
 That you really care

I know - The power to master facts
 And take your stand for right
 Wherever it may lead us
 We can't avoid the fight

But we can keep our hearts and heads
 As we arbitrate our plight
 Ask - Do you really need to do this
 Is it really right?

I wonder - The power to reverence, curiosity, worship
 Choose well the things you worship
 Curiosity should ask you why
 As reverently you answer
 I'm guided from on high

I see - The power of insight, imagination, vision
 To see youth as they grow to man's estate
 To see age as the patiently wait
 To see beauty about you that is so free
 To see slums and poverty that shouldn't be
 To see however if just part of the plan
 It's what we do that's important and
 where we take a stand

I believe - The power of adventurous faith
 I believe in youth as the hope of the future
 I believe in youth as it starts on its quest
 I believe in youth tho it falters and stumbles
 I believe in youth and will give them my best

I can - The power to act and skill to accomplish
 You may not become an astronaut
 You may not garner fame
 But where you lead will be remembered
 Tho they may forget your name!

I ought - The power of conscious
 I ought to share my talents
 I ought to share my time
 I ought to face the sunshine
 So the shadows fall behind
 I ought to be a good example
 For this is the only way
 To teach others the meaning
 of a well spent day

I will - Loyalty to duty - consecration
 There's a two letter word that says no
 There's a three letter word that says yes
 And by adding one letter
 The world may be better
 Yours is the choice
 Each word plays their part
 In chosing your answer
 Look well in your heart

I serve - Power to be useful, devotion to a cause
 Tis sweet to hear "I love you"
 Beneath the shining moon
 Tis fun to hear "You dance well"
 To a lilting, swinging tune
 Tis great to be proposed to
 And whisper low "I do"
 But the sweetest words in all the world are
 "I've got a job for you"

So your job is to teach physical education
 Prepare your classes with skills for the leisure
 That lies ahead
 Help them to be creative and understanding
 This will stand them in good stead
 Ours is a profession that has man at its heart
 We have a real contribution - So get ready -
 Start -
 As I look into the future I see afar a star
 It's labelled Physical Education
 That's where you are
 I leave you with this challenge
 I know you will be true
 To the heritage that is yours
 The future is up to you.

OKLAHOMA STATE UNIVERSITY
Office of the President
STILLWATER

March 12, 1959


Miss Valerie Colvin
Department of Health, Physical
Education, & Recreation
C a m p u s

Dear Miss Colvin:

Congratulations upon being the recipient of an honor award from the southern district of the Health, Physical Education, and Recreation Association. This is indeed an honor, and one of which you may well be proud.

I understand that the award was made to only four persons from the 13 states that were represented in the district. We rejoice with you in your achievement. Not only are we happy at the personal recognition which has been given you but also for the prestige that will come to Oklahoma State University as a result of this award. Your many years of valuable service are greatly appreciated by all of us.

Sincerely yours,


Oliver S. Willham

A

PROGRAM

R

SOUTH CENTRAL REGIONAL
ATHLETIC AND RECREATION FEDERATION
OF COLLEGE WOMEN

F

C

W

April 5, 6 and 7, 1964

Oklahoma State University, Stillwater

(STUDENT COUNCIL LETTERHEAD)

Miss Valerie Colvin
Health and Physical Education
Gardiner Hall
Campus

Dear Miss Colvin:

It is my honor to inform you that you have been chosen as the recipient of a Distinguished Service Award for 1966 by the Student Council of the College of Arts and Sciences. These awards are given annually to instructors who have made outstanding contributions to the College and the University through their teaching, research, publications, and service to students. Your colleague Dr. Margaret H. Brooks has also been selected. Congratulations on your winning this honor.

You are to be recognized at the annual Honors and Awards Banquet on Thursday, April 14, 1966, at 6:00 p.m. in the Student Union Ballroom. Also to be honored at this event are the winner of the Kenny Gallagher Award, the new members of the Arts and Sciences Honor Society, and the sophomore scholarship recipients. The speaker for the evening will be Mrs. Lawana Trout, national "Teacher of the Year" in 1964.

Your selection for this award is one of the highest honors that we as students can bestow upon a faculty member. We sincerely hope that you can be present on April 14 to receive the recognition that you deserve, and we are looking forward to hearing from you in the near future.

Respectfully yours,

Beth Harris
Distinguished Service Awards
Committee

Tim Jurgensen
Distinguished Service Awards
Committee

bh:DH



OHIO STATE UNIVERSITY • COLUMBUS, OHIO

Office of the President
 FACULTY 2-211, Ext. 201

74074

June 10, 1968

Professor C. P. Collins, Chairman
 OEA Teacher of the Year Committee
 Agricultural Economics Department
 Campus

Dear Jeff:

I am pleased to recommend Professor Valerie Colvin as a candidate for OEA "Teacher of the Year."

Miss Colvin has been on the faculty of our Department of Health, Physical Education, and Recreation since 1929 and has performed very valuable service through the years.

She has touched the lives of thousands of young women through her work in the department, as well as through her association with them in extra-curricular activities. Valerie has a great philosophy of life and a sense of values that is rare in these modern times. Both students and faculty members who have associated with her are better for having had this relationship.

She is charming, willing to go the "last mile" on any assignment given her, and is thoroughly pleasant to work with. When I was Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences, she gave many hours of time and effort as Social Chairman for the College. She has also been on a host of other committees and has been of great service in this capacity.

Miss Colvin has a host of friends and will continue to recruit new ones throughout her remaining years. She is "Miss Congeniality" personified, as well as being extremely competent in the classroom.

It is indeed a pleasure to recommend her very highly to your committee for consideration as OEA "Teacher of the Year."

Sincerely yours,

Robert B. Kamm
 President

RBK/js



OKLAHOMA STATE UNIVERSITY • STILLWATER

Division of Home Economics
372-6211, Ext. 243

74074

September 9, 1968

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN:

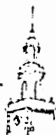
This letter is to give strong support for naming the new Health and Physical Education Building on the campus for Valerie Colvin since she has given a long period of distinguished service to the program which the building will house. Her service, faithful and effective contribution, dedication to duty, long years of work with small financial compensation, marvelous example, and professional spirit merit this recognition.

Cordially yours,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Lela O'Toole".

Lela O'Toole, Dean
Division of Home Economics

LOT:DMM



OKLAHOMA STATE UNIVERSITY • STILLWATER

Office of the Dean of Women
Frontier 2-0211, Ext. 014

74075

January 14, 1969

Dr. Robert B. Kamm
President
Campus

Dear Dr. Kamm:

It gives me great pleasure to recommend that the new recreational building be named in honor of Miss Valerie Colvin. I can think of no one who is more deserving of receiving this tribute. Miss Colvin is a woman of high ideals who is truly dedicated to the teaching profession. She has had a tremendous influence on many students, always urging them to strive for the highest and to be the finest type of womanhood or manhood.

Miss Colvin has been associated with Mortar Board (the women's senior leadership honorary) since it was organized in 1940. She has served as adviser, and later was made an honorary member of this national group. She has been a constructive influence through the years on this group of young women, and she has always been willing to help in any way she could.

Staff and students alike have the greatest respect for Miss Colvin. She has devoted many years of service to OSU, particularly to the Physical Education Department, and it is very fitting that her name be considered for the new Physical Education Building.

Yours sincerely,

Zelma Patchin

Zelma Patchin
Dean of Women

ZP:k

VALERIE COLVIN

1929

Oklahoma State University

1969

RETIREMENT DINNER

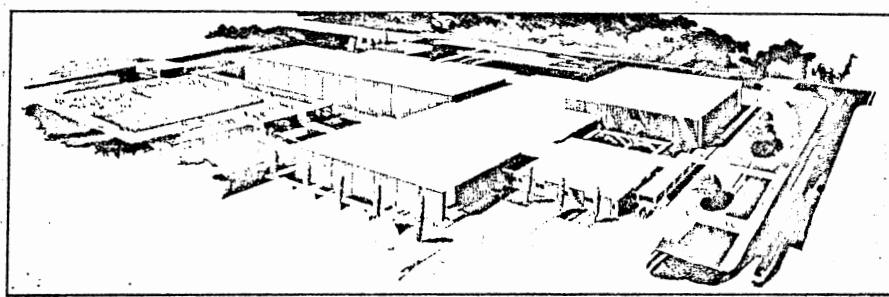
**STUDENT UNION
BALLROOM**

April 5, 1969

OPENING SEPTEMBER 1968...

OKLAHOMA STATE UNIVERSITY'S

PHYSICAL EDUCATION CENTER



Regents Name HPER Building

Oklahoma State's new physical education and recreation center will be named Valerie Colvin Center in honor of the 40-year veteran of the physical education department who is retiring this year.

The naming of the three-million dollar facility which opened Jan. 27 was approved by the Board of Regents in a regular meeting on campus Saturday.

Miss Colvin, head of the women's staff of the physical education department, came to OSU in 1929. She received a degree in home economics from Alabama Women's College, later became interested in physical education and received her M.A. from Columbia University.

Miss Colvin's name was recommended for the center by a student committee appointed by the Student Senate.

Oklahoma State University's new Physical Education Center will open with the beginning of the fall semester of 1968. Constructed at a cost of \$3,300,000 it will provide excellent facilities for instruction, intramural sports and recreation for all men and women of the university community. Features of the Center include

Audio Visual Room	Weight Lifting and Physical Development Room
Seminar and Study Room	Twelve Handball Courts
Study and Recreation Area	Two Squash Courts
Administrative Complex	25-yard, 6-lane Indoor Pool
Ten Staff Offices	50-meter, 10-lane, Outdoor Olympic Pool
Physiology of Exercise Room	Gymnastics Room.
Modern Dance Studio	Body Mechanics Room
Seven Basketball Courts	Six-thousand Lockers
Golf and Fencing Room	Staff Locker Area
Wrestling and Judo Room	

For more information about the Center or Oklahoma State University's physical education program, please write

Dr. Albin P. Warner, Head
Department of Health, Physical Education and Recreation
Oklahoma State University
Stillwater, Okla. 74074

AWARDS TO 1977 FELLOWS OF THE ACADEMY

Conceived as the highest honor this College can bestow, the Academy of Arts and Sciences was established in 1975 "to honor and pay tribute to (1) those alumni of the college who have achieved acclaim and recognition in their professions and (2) those friends and supporters who should be recognized for extraordinary service and outstanding contribution to the College. Those persons selected for such distinguished recognition shall be named Fellows of the Academy, an honorary life-long designation."

Prior inductees into the academy include: Dean Schiller Scroggs, Dean/President Robert B. Kamm, Astronaut Bill Pogue, Scientist/Administrator Otto Smith, Publisher/Journalist Paul Miller.

Tonight we add two names, equally illustrious in terms of service to OSU and the College of Arts and Sciences.

Can a human being become an institution? The thousands of former students who called her teacher would say yes; so would colleagues who served with her on state and regional professional association boards during her 40 years as an educator; so would students at OSU right now who have never met her but who find her influence continuing on campus. Her name is well known to them.

For her lifelong contribution to the field of physical education, for her 40 years of dedicated teaching at OSU, for her reputation at the state region and national level as an educator, and for services too lengthy to enumerate, this college gratefully names as a 1977 Fellow of the Academy of Arts and Sciences

VALERIE COLVIN



Oklahoma State University

School of Health, Physical Education and Leisure Services

STILLWATER, OKLAHOMA, 74074
COLVIN PHYSICAL EDUCATION CENTER
(405) 624-5493

April 21, 1977

Dean George Gries
College of Arts and Sciences
Oklahoma State University
Stillwater, OK 74074

Dear Dean Gries:

It's not often that I'm lost for words, but when I returned to Stillwater and learned that I had been honored by being selected as "A Fellow of the Academy of Arts and Sciences," I truly felt humble. In my books there are so many that have made greater contributions than I. (This is no criticism of the selection committee, but my evaluation).

I appreciate the honor and am especially proud that a person in my profession was able to make some contribution to the total program of the College of Arts and Sciences. It's nice to know these things while one is still alive.

It takes a child to make one wonder why....A small boy moved into my neighborhood, came over to talk to me and said, "Were you named for that building?" I answered, "We have the same name." He studied me a while and then said, "You're older than that building; how could they name you for it?" I explained that, yes, I was older than the building and that it was named for me. His next question was, "Why?" I find both these honors hard to explain both to the young boy and to myself. So I won't ask you why, but simply say, "Thanks."

Gratefully,

Valerie Colvin

Valerie Colvin
Professor Emeritus

pkb

APPENDIX C

**LETTERS AND QUESTIONNAIRES USED
TO COLLECT DATA**

Dear

In 1969 Valerie Colvin retired after forty years of teaching at Oklahoma State University. Those years were dedicated to the education of young people and her role as a pioneer in physical education in Oklahoma should not be forgotten! In an attempt to record this historical information for the future and to pay tribute to her many years of dedication and service, I am writing my doctoral dissertation at Oklahoma State University on "Valerie Colvin: Pioneer Physical Educator in Oklahoma."

As a student, professional colleague or personal friend of Miss Colvin, you have both professional information and personal impressions which will enhance this study and make it an accurate account of her philosophy, personality and contributions throughout her career. Would you please take the time to respond to the enclosed questionnaire and to add any additional comments which you feel are relevant? Any information you can supply will be greatly appreciated.

I am attempting to complete the dissertation by May and I am hopeful that you will return the completed questionnaire as soon as possible. A stamped, self-addressed envelope is enclosed for your convenience. Thank you for your cooperation in assisting me with my study and in preserving, for history, an account of the career and professional contributions of Valerie Colvin.

Sincerely,

Sharon Holmberg

SMH:cdi

QUESTIONNAIRE FOR STUDENTS, PROFESSIONAL COLLEAGUES,
AND PERSONAL FRIENDS OF VALERIE COLVIN

Name _____ Date _____

Address _____

When, where and in what capacity did you know Valerie Colvin?

I. What words would you use to describe Valerie Colvin in each of the following situations?

A. As a Teacher: _____

B. As an Advisor: _____

C. As an Administrator: _____

D. As a Personality: _____

II. How would you describe Valerie Colvin's philosophy?

A. Of Education: _____

B. Of Physical Education: _____

C. Of Competitive Sports for Women and Coaching: _____

D. Of Life: _____

III. What were Valerie Colvin's Contributions to Oklahoma State University?

A. In the area of health, physical education and recreation:

B. On the Campus and in the College of Arts and Sciences:

IV. What were Valerie Colvin's community interests and activities in Stillwater?

V. What was your reaction concerning Valerie Colvin's retirement from Oklahoma State University?

VI. Please relate any anecdotes or recollections you have of Valerie Colvin which would give insight into her personality and philosophy.

VII. What influences did Valerie Colvin have on you?

A. Professionally: _____

B. Personally: _____

VIII. What professional contributions has Valerie Colvin made?

A. In the state of Oklahoma: _____

B. In the Southern District of AAHPER: _____

C. Nationally: _____

IX. In your opinion, what was Valerie Colvin's major professional contribution?

X. How would you describe Valerie Colvin's feelings toward her career and toward Oklahoma State University?

Additional Comments:

Do you have any objections to being directly quoted? _____

Signature _____ Position _____

APPENDIX D

LIST OF RESPONDENTS TO QUESTIONNAIRE

SURVEY

Theodore Agnew
 Department of History
 Oklahoma State University
 Stillwater, Oklahoma

Frances Albitz
 Former Student of Valerie Colvin
 School of Health, Physical Education
 and Leisure Services
 Oklahoma State University
 Stillwater, Oklahoma

John Bayless
 School of Health, Physical Education
 and Leisure Services
 Oklahoma State University
 Stillwater, Oklahoma

Peggy Beck
 Department of Physical Education
 Oral Roberts University
 Tulsa, Oklahoma

Art Bieri
 Former Student and Former Faculty
 Member of Valerie Colvin
 Principal, Highland Park Elementary
 School
 Stillwater, Oklahoma

Kathleen Black
 Department of Physical Education
 and Recreation
 Central State University
 Edmond, Oklahoma

Sharon Cairns
 Former Student of Valerie Colvin
 Tulsa, Oklahoma

Jane Carney
 Former Student of Valerie Colvin
 Stillwater, Oklahoma

Mary Beth Carter, Chairman Emeritus
 Department of Home Economics
 Oklahoma State University
 Stillwater, Oklahoma

Donald Cooper, M.D.
 Student Health Center
 Oklahoma State University
 Stillwater, Oklahoma

Max Dobson
 Athletic Department
 Oklahoma Christian College
 Oklahoma City, Oklahoma

John Dratz, Chairman
 Department of Health, Physical
 Education and Recreation
 Tulsa University
 Tulsa, Oklahoma

Carol Duckwall
 Former Student of Valerie Colvin
 Stillwater, Oklahoma

Marguerite Little Duvall
 Former Student of Valerie Colvin
 State College, Pennsylvania

Vesta Etchison
 Muskogee, Oklahoma

Mary Frye
 School of Health, Physical Educa-
 tion and Leisure Services
 Oklahoma State University
 Stillwater, Oklahoma

M. W. "Wally" Funk, II
 Former Student of Valerie Colvin
 Hermosa Beach, California

Cartherine Dunn Godfrey
 Former Student of Valerie Colvin
 Wheaton, Illinois

George Gries, Dean
 College of Arts and Sciences
 Oklahoma State University
 Stillwater, Oklahoma

Mary L. Hamilton
 Former Student of Valerie Colvin
 Durant, Oklahoma

A. B. Harrison
 School of Health, Physical Educa-
 tion and Leisure Services
 Oklahoma State University
 Stillwater, Oklahoma

Charles Hartshorn, Director
Safety Services
American Red Cross
Oklahoma City, Oklahoma

Carole Hass
Department of Physical Education
New York State University College
Plattsburg, New York

Margaret Hawk
Former Student of Valerie Colvin
Wichita, Kansas

La Rue Heath
Former Student and Former Faculty
Member of Valerie Colvin
Yuma, Arizona

Mildred Hibbert
Professional Colleague and Former
Student of Valerie Colvin
Ponca City Public Schools
Ponca City, Oklahoma

Kay Warner Howland
Community Associate of Valerie
Colvin
Stillwater, Oklahoma

Gerald Hudder
Former Graduate Assistant of
Valerie Colvin
Saline, Kansas

Cecile Hudson
Professional Colleague and Former
Student of Valerie Colvin
Little Rock, Arkansas

Ellen Kelly
Former Chairman of Women's Physical
Education
University of Oklahoma
Norman, Oklahoma

Toni Miller Kumery
Former Student and Former Faculty
Member of Valerie Colvin
Tulsa, Oklahoma

Dave Laurie
Department of Health, Physical
Education and Recreation
Kansas State University
Manhattan, Kansas

Mignon Lester
Former Student and Former Faculty
Member of Valerie Colvin
Reston, Virginia

Betty Binyon Lewis
Former Student of Valerie Colvin
Blanchard, Oklahoma

Ruth Lindsey
Former Student and Former Faculty
Member
Department of Physical Education
California State University
Long Beach, California

Val Maples
Professional Colleague and Former
Student of Valerie Colvin
Department of Health, Physical
Education and Recreation
Cameron University
Lawton, Oklahoma

Ware Marsden, Director Emeritus
Teacher Education
Oklahoma State University
Stillwater, Oklahoma

Willa Faye Mason
Professional Colleague and Former
Student of Valerie Colvin
Department of Health, Physical
Education and Recreation
Northeastern State University
Tahlequah, Oklahoma

Muriel McGlamery
Former Student of Valerie Colvin
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

Julia McHale
Department of Psychology
Oklahoma State University
Stillwater, Oklahoma

Verna Kelle McKenzie
Former Student of Valerie Colvin
Braman, Oklahoma

Lela O'Toole, Dean Emeritus
Department of Home Economics
Oklahoma State University
Stillwater, Oklahoma

Donella Palmer
Former Student of Valerie Colvin
Aheley, Minnesota

Zelma Patchin
Associate Dean of Student Affairs
Oklahoma State University
Stillwater, Oklahoma

Emma W. Plunkett, Chairman Emeritus
Department of Health, Physical
Education and Recreation
Central State University
Edmond, Oklahoma

Cheryl Hicks Powell
Former Student of Valerie Colvin
Little Rock, Arkansas

Mary Ann "Andy" Ritchie Rheinberger
Former Student and Former Faculty
Member of Valerie Colvin
Oklahoma City, Oklahoma

Myr Lou Rollins
School of Health, Physical Education
and Leisure Services
Oklahoma State University
Stillwater, Oklahoma

Mrs. Leonard Sheerar
Community Associate of Valerie
Colvin
Stillwater, Oklahoma

Erma Oldham Riggs Sims
Former Student of Valerie Colvin
Joplin, Missouri

Willa Belle Carter Spencer
Professional Colleague and Former
Student of Valerie Colvin
Conway, Arkansas

Gerald Stockton
Former Student of Valerie Colvin
Wichita Falls, Texas

Harvey Tedford, Director
Health, Physical Education, and
Recreation
State Department of Education
Oklahoma City, Oklahoma

Virginia Harris Thomas
Former Student of Valerie Colvin
Stillwater, Oklahoma

L. J. Van Horn, Chairman
Department of Health, Physical
Education and Recreation
Southwestern State University
Weatherford, Oklahoma

Henry Vaughan, Former Director
Health, Physical Education and
Safety
State Department of Education
Oklahoma City, Oklahoma

Marville Washinka
Former Neighbor of Valerie Colvin
Stillwater, Oklahoma

Roberta Wescott
Department of Health, Physical
Education and Recreation
Southeastern State University
Durant, Oklahoma

Dan Wesley, Director
Student Services
College of Arts and Sciences
Oklahoma State University
Stillwater, Oklahoma

Ada Van Whitley
School of Health, Physical Educa-
tion and Leisure Services
Oklahoma State University
Stillwater, Oklahoma

Eva Gere Wofford
Former Student of Valerie Colvin
Lapata, Texas

Frances Wood
Former Student and Former Faculty
Member of Valerie Colvin
Fayetteville, Arkansas

APPENDIX E

CHRONOLOGICAL RECORD OF SERVICE,
CONTRIBUTIONS AND HONORS

National and Regional Service

Chairman of Soccer Rules Committee, National Section on Women's Athletics, 1933-34;

Member of Speedball Committee of National Section on Women's Athletics, 1935-38;

Member of Legislative Council of American Association of Health, Physical Education, and Recreation, 1939-40;

Chairman of Soccer Committee, National Section on Women's Athletics, 1949;

Chairman of Southern District Women's National Officials Rating Committee, 1954-55;

State Membership Chairman of National Association of Physical Education for College Women and Southern Association of Physical Education for College Women, 1956-57;

Member of Honors Awards Committee, Southern Association of Health, Physical Education and Recreation, 1965;

Member-at-Large of the Executive Board of Southern Association of Health, Physical Education and Recreation, 1965;

Consultant for Private Schools of Southwest Region, 1966;

Chairman of Educational Exhibits, Southern Association of Health, Physical Education and Recreation.

State Service

Member of State Board of Women Officials, 1930;

Chairman of State Board of Women Officials, 1931-32; 1932-33; 1948-49; 1952-53; 1954-55;

Vice-President of Oklahoma Association of Health, Physical Education and Recreation, 1937-38;

State Chairman of Baseball, 1938-40;

State Chairman of Softball and Soccer of Women's Athletic Section of American Association of Health, Physical Education and Recreation, 1938-39;

President of Oklahoma Association of Health, Physical Education and Recreation, 1939-40 and 1955-56.

State Chairman of Softball and Soccer of Women's Athletic Section of American Association of Health, Physical Education and Recreation Journal, 1940-41;

Conducted Sports Unit for Girl Scout Regional Training Course, 1945-46;

Advisory Board of State Athletic Federation for College Women, 1945-47;

Basketball Chairman of Oklahoma Board of Women Officials, 1949;

Chairman of Leadership Training, Oklahoma Camping Association, 1952;

Revised State Certification Requirements, 1953;

Conducted Recreation Short Course for Foreign Home Demonstration Leaders, 1953;

Co-editor of Oklahoma Association of Health, Physical Education and Recreation Newsletter, 1961-62;

Chairman of Teacher Education Committee of White House Conference on Children and Youth, 1961-62;

Consultant for State Girls' Recreation Association Workshop, 1962;

Instructor at Girls' Recreation Association Workshop, 1963;

Director of Elementary Classroom Teacher's Workshops, 1964-65;

Chairman of State College Workshop for Classroom Teachers Committee of Governor's Physical Fitness Council, 1965-66;

Chairman of Demonstration Schools of Governor's Physical Fitness Council, 1965-66;

Member of Honor Awards Committee of Oklahoma Association of Health, Physical Education and Recreation, 1965-66.

State Coordinator of Oklahoma Lifetime Sports Project, 1967-68;

Chairman of Advisory Board of Oklahoma League, Girls' High School Athletic Association.

Community Service

Member, Community Fund Drive, 1938-39;

Consultant to Stillwater Girl Scouts, 1939--;

Staff member for Regional Training Courses for Scout Leaders, 1939, 1941, 1942, and 1943;

Camp Committee for Girl Scouts, 1940-43;
 Conducted Stillwater Brownie Scouts Playday, 1962-65;
 Camp Inspector for Stillwater Girl Scouts, 1965-66.

University Service

Sponsor and Founder of Mortar Board Acofoa (O.S.U.) Chapter, 1930-69;
 Hospitality Committee of Arts and Sciences, 1937-41;
 Advisory Committee of Arts and Sciences, 1937-69;
 Advisor of PEMM Club, 1938-64;
 Committee on Faculty Rating and Teacher Evaluation, Arts and Sciences,
 1938-39;
 Committee on Committees, Arts and Sciences, 1940-41.
 Scholastic Standards and Curriculum Organization Committee, Arts and
 Sciences, 1941-42; 1947-48; 1951-52; and 1954-55;
 Student Personnel Committee, Arts and Sciences, 1951-52; 1954-55;
 Student Welfare Committee, All College, 1954-55;
 Teacher Education Advisement Council, All College, 1954-55;
 Conducted Junior High School Playday, 1954-55;
 Advisory Council for Mortar Board, 1954-55;
 Board of Faculty Representatives, College of Arts and Sciences, 1956-57;
 Teacher Education Council, 1956-69;
 Sponsor of Women's Recreation Association, 1958-59;
 University Student Conduct Committee, 1963-69;
 Chairman of Social Committee of Arts and Sciences, 1962-69;
 Faculty Club Social Committee, 1963-64;
 Chairman of Production Committee for Health, Physical Education and
 Recreation of Teacher Education, 1963-69;
 Director of High School Interscholastic and Invitational Tournaments,
 1964-69;

Supervisor of Children's Swimming Program, 1964-69;
 Faculty Advisor to Kappa Alpha Theta, 1966-67;
 Director of Outdoor Education Workshop, 1966-67;
 Director of Women's Intramurals;
 Member of Dean's Committee on the Role of Arts and Sciences;

Publications

Speedball Chart, Spaulding Athletic Library, 1934-35;
 "Achievement Tests in Speedball," Spaulding Official Guide, #116R,
 American Sports Publishing Company, 1936;
 "Interchange in Speedball," Official Soccer and Speedball Guide,
 American Sports Publishing Company, 1938-39;
 "Studies in Measuring Basketball Playing Ability of College Women,"
Research Quarterly, October, 1938 with Glassow and Schwartz.
Camp Directory, Region VI, American Camping Association, Brotherhood
 Mutual Life Insurance Company, 1953;
Learning Through Play, Oklahoma State Department of Public Instruction,
 Editorial and Revision Committees, 1956, 1962, and 1966;
Improvement of Instruction in Health and Physical Education, State
 Department of Public Instruction, 1965; Chairman of Editorial
 Committee;
 Physical Fitness Brochure, Oklahoma Governor's Council on Physical
 Fitness, 1966;
 Career Bulletins for Health, Physical Education, and Recreation,
 Oklahoma State University;
 Articles in Parent-Teachers Association Magazine and Oklahoma Educa-
 tion Association Magazine.

Papers and Speeches Presented

"Broadening Contacts for Women's National Official's Ratings,"
 Southern Association of Health, Physical Education and Recreation,
 Biloxi, Mississippi, 1954;

"A Basic Philosophy as Applied to Counselor Training for Camp Leadership," Oklahoma Section of American Camping Association, Norman, Oklahoma, 1954;

"Introducing National Officiating to the High School Girls' Recreation Association Program," Oklahoma Education Association Convention, 1954-55;

Panel member for Girls' Recreation Association, Oklahoma Association of Health, Physical Education and Recreation, 1956-57;

Career Day Speaker in High Schools, 1961-63;

"Elementary Physical Education," Private Schools of Southwest Region of the United States Conference, 1966;

"Team Sports for Women," District Oklahoma Education Association;

Annual talks to Girls Scout Leaders' Conference.

Professional Organizations

Oklahoma Association of Health, Physical Education and Recreation;

Southern Association of Health, Physical Education and Recreation;

American Association of Health, Physical Education and Recreation;
(Fellow)

Southern Association of Physical Education for College Women;

National Association of Physical Education for College Women;

Oklahoma Education Association;

National Education Association;

American Camping Association;

Oklahoma Camping Association;

American Association of University Women;

State Board of Women Officials.

Honors and Awards

1959 Honor Award from Southern Association of H.P.E.&R. (Thirteen State District);

- 1960 Honor Award from Oklahoma Association of H.P.E.&R.
- 1966 Distinguished Service Award from College of Arts and Sciences,
Student Council, Oklahoma State University;
- 1968 Outstanding Teacher Award from the College of Arts and Sciences
(Oklahoma State University) from Blue Key Honorary Fraternity and the
Alumni Association sponsored contest;
- 1968 Outstanding Teacher Award for Oklahoma State University sponsored
by Blue Key and Alumni Association;
- 1968 Classroom Teacher of the Year nominee from the Oklahoma State
University Chapter of the Oklahoma Education Association.

VITA²

Sharon Mae Holmberg

Candidate for the Degree of

Doctor of Education

Thesis: VALERIE COLVIN: PIONEER PHYSICAL EDUCATOR IN OKLAHOMA

Major Field: Higher Education

Minor Field: Health, Physical Education and Recreation

Biographical:

Personal Data: Born February 6, 1940, in Emmetsburg, Iowa, the daughter of Mr. and Mrs. E. N. Holmberg.

Education: Graduated from Twin Rivers Community Schools, Bode, Iowa, in May, 1958; received the Bachelor of Science in Education degree from Central State University with a major in Health and Physical Education in 1962; received the Master of Science degree from Oklahoma State University in 1964; completed the requirements for the Doctor of Education degree from Oklahoma State University in July, 1978.

Professional Experience: Taught physical education at Shields-Heights Elementary School in Oklahoma City, Oklahoma, during the 1962-63 school year; accepted a graduate assistantship in the Department of Health, Physical Education and Recreation at Oklahoma State University, Stillwater, Oklahoma, for 1963-64, and taught physical education and coached at the following institutions: Edmond High School, Edmond, Oklahoma, 1964-65, Central State University, Edmond, Oklahoma, 1965-67; Helena High School, Helena, Montana, 1967-68; John Marshall High School, Oklahoma City, Oklahoma, 1968-72; and Southwestern Oklahoma State University, Weatherford, Oklahoma, 1972-75; accepted a graduate associate position in the Department of Health, Physical Education and Recreation at Oklahoma State University in 1975; coached women's intercollegiate field hockey team from 1975-1977; and served as Acting Coordinator of Women's Intercollegiate Athletics for academic year 1976-77.

Professional Organizations: Oklahoma Association for Health, Physical Education and Recreation, The Oklahoma Association of Intercollegiate Athletics for Women, The Southern District Alliance for Health, Physical Education and Recreation, and National Alliances for Health, Physical Education and Recreation.