

A STUDY OF THE OKLAHOMA MILITARY ACADEMY
OF 1948-'50
ITS PAST AND PRESENT FUNCTIONS

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DOCTOR OF EDUCATION
1950



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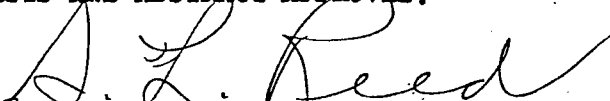
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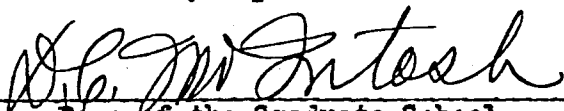
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PREFACE

In this study an effort has been made to understand the Oklahoma Military Academy as it has been and now is with the purpose of determining what changes should be made to better serve the youth of our state and nation.

Attention will first be given to the gradual development of the school from its founding till the beginning of the present administration. The opinions of its graduates as expressed through a questionnaire and the evidence of the accomplishments and limitations of the school as revealed in transcripts of its students will then be observed.

Finally, some observation will be given to the activities of the present administration, as these activities relate to three evaluations of the Academy during this period. First, is an evaluation made by the application of the Evaluative Criteria; second, one made in accordance with the North Central Association's Junior College Schedules; and third, one made according to the North Central Association's Schedules for Accrediting Procedures.

Through the use of the historical information, the follow-up study, and the application of the various evaluative devices, conclusions are derived that it is hoped will lead to definite improvements in the educational offerings of the Academy.

This study has been limited by the lack of important records. Also, the traditional American antipathy toward militarism, the limited amount of material published on military education, the uniqueness of a state supported military school of junior college and high school level, and

the political coloring of state administrations have given rise to further difficulties.

It is hoped that this study will provide some indicators of the course of development which the Oklahoma Military Academy should follow to assure for itself a future that will make possible its better serving the youth of this state and nation.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

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PART ONE

HISTORY OF THE OKLAHOMA MILITARY ACADEMY
TO THE BEGINNING OF THE PRESENT
ADMINISTRATION

CHAPTER I

THE FOUNDING YEARS

In my opinion, an institution, like a person, is subject to the impact of society and the strength and weaknesses of those individuals who go to make up that society. In turn, I believe further that an institution from its birth has a tremendous influence upon society and particularly upon those individuals with whom it is closely connected. It is the interaction between the institution and that mass of individuals who have had something to do in or with the institution that goes to make up its history and its present position in the scope of human events. "The chief findings of modern biological research all indicate that any attempted isolation of the individual from the group or consideration of the individuals composing it is impossible. Neither psychology nor sociology may be looked on as autonomous sciences. If there is a basic social science, it will be called social psychobiology."¹

Just such an institution is the Oklahoma Military Academy, located near Claremore, Oklahoma, a picturesque little city at the edge of the Ozark foothills in northeastern Oklahoma. Claremore's civic pride lies in its attractions to the rest of the state and the world. Its attractions for the outside world are the beautiful state memorial to Will Rogers, the radium water baths, the Davis Gun Collection, and the Oklahoma Military Academy. The tourist trade flows along the famous U. S. Highway 66 which passes through the city. One mile west of Claremore, the Academy shares

¹ J. F. Brown, Psychology and the Social Order, p. 67.

with the Will Rogers Memorial a picturesque setting on a beautifully landscaped plateau which rises more than a hundred feet above the valley of the winding Verdigris River.

The Oklahoma Military Academy has had a brief history, even when compared with that of other institutions in so young a state as Oklahoma. The brevity of its past is more than compensated by its uniqueness, the turbulent conditions surrounding it, and the effect of the various political upheavals on the growth of the school.

The Oklahoma Military Academy was established at Claremore in 1919,² replacing the Eastern University Preparatory School, founded in that city in 1909.³ The purposes back of these two rather unusual schools can best be understood with a knowledge of the educational developments in Oklahoma.

The Oklahoma system of education has grown without any long-range program or effective correlating agencies.⁴ Before statehood there seemed to be a growth of feeling between Oklahoma Territory and Indian Territory as to the number of institutions each should have, if and when statehood came. An agreement was finally reached to locate an equal number of state institutions in the eastern half of the state to appease the people in Indian Territory.⁵

In 1909 schools were created in the eastern half of the state as agreed, and thus a political compromise added more schools to the already overburdened state educational system. In 1909, the predecessor of the

² Oklahoma Session Laws, 1919, p. 220.

³ Oklahoma State Regents for Higher Education, A System of Higher Education for Oklahoma (Oklahoma City, Oklahoma, 1943), p. 71.

⁴ Ibid., p. 69.

⁵ Ibid., p. 71.

Oklahoma Military Academy, the Eastern University Preparatory School at Claremore, was created. Thus, by 1909, only two years after statehood, Oklahoma had nineteen state supported institutions governed by seven distinct boards. In that year a State Board of Public Affairs, which to a great extent controlled the financial administration of all state schools, was superimposed upon this system. The following list illustrates the effort to give an equal number of institutions to the east and the west:

TABLE I

A LIST OF OKLAHOMA INSTITUTIONS
INCLUDING TIME AND PLACE OF ESTABLISHMENT

Oklahoma Territory	Indian Territory
University of Oklahoma at Norman (1890)	Oklahoma School of Mines and Metallurgy at Wilburton (1908)
Oklahoma A. & M. College at Stillwater (1890)	Industrial Institute and College for Girls at Chickasha (1908)
Three Normal Schools:	Three Normal Schools:
Central at Edmond (1890)	East Central at Ada (1909)
Northwestern at Alva (1897)	Southeastern at Durant (1909)
Southwestern at Weatherford (1901)	Northeastern at Tahlequah (1909)
Three Agricultural Schools:	Three Agricultural Schools:
Helena (1908)	Broken Arrow (1908)
Lawton (1908)	Tishomingo (1908)
Goodwell (1908)	Warner (1908)
One University Preparatory:	One University Preparatory:
School at Tonkawa (1901)	School at Claremore (1909)
Colored A. & M. University at Langston (1897)	Miami School of Mines at Miami (1919)

All of these schools in a state of seventy thousand population created a tremendous problem of control and financial support. The forces that

opposed centralization and unity included sectionalism, institutional rivalry, the political spoils system, personal ambitions, and special interest groups. The lack of any continuity of policy from one administration to another and the ability of the legislature to control and limit the various educational boards and commissions further impeded all efforts to improve the situation.⁶

Previous to the establishing of a preparatory school at Claremore, the northeastern section of the state provided very meager means of education for the young people of that area. There were no high schools or preparatory schools in Claremore or Rogers County and probably not more than three in all of northeastern Oklahoma at that time. It is important to note here that the agitation for a preparatory school at Claremore has had a great deal to do with the subsequent purposes of the Oklahoma Military Academy which was to come later. Early in 1908, the town paper claimed that such an institution would make Claremore the educational center of the northeastern corner of the state.⁷

Representative C. S. Wortman of Rogers County must be given a great deal of credit for locating the institution at Claremore. The original idea was to establish the school at Holdenville, but Wortman succeeded in getting the site changed. The first draft of the bill, known as House Bill number 392, was introduced on February 3, 1909, by Amil F. Harrison, representing Pittsburg and Hughes Counties. An amendment offered by Wortman changing the school to Claremore carried and the amended bill

⁶ A System of Higher Education, pp. 74 and 136.

⁷ The Claremore Progress and Rogers County Democrat, December 5 and December 28, 1908, hereafter referred to in the body of this study as The Progress.

passed the House on February 26, 1909.⁸ The Senate approved the bill in this form on March 8, 1909, by a vote of thirty-two to eight, and it was signed by Governor C. N. Haskell on March 25, 1909.⁹ Subsequently, \$67,000 was appropriated for the biennium, 1909-1911. Of this, \$35,000 was to be spent for buildings and equipment and \$32,000 for salaries and operating expenses. This was the beginning of the reality of a school at Claremore. Here was born the Eastern University Preparatory School which at a later date would become the Oklahoma Military Academy. It was with this start that the philosophy of our present institution had its birth.

The citizens of Claremore were happy to receive the institution and more than met the specifications of the state legislature, which required a tract of land consisting of thirty-five acres. The Kates family, Albert L., William, and Herbert, gave the original ten acres where the administration building now stands. Other civic minded citizens donated another thirty acres, thus totaling forty acres.¹⁰ Albert L. Kates had been owner and publisher of the Claremore Progress since 1893 and was one of the early promoters of the school.

In the fall of 1909, the first session of school at Eastern University Preparatory School began in the old Claremont Building in Claremore. The following year the students moved into the new building, although it was not completed until 1912.¹¹ Dr. Edmund Dandridge Murdaugh, the first

⁸ Journal of the House of Representatives, Regular Session, Second Legislature, convened January 5, 1909, adjourned March 12, 1909, Day of February 26, 1909.

⁹ Oklahoma Session Laws, 1909, p. 66.

¹⁰ Interview Notes, Mr. Harry Kates, Claremore, Oklahoma, taken June 7, 1948; Second interview, July 10, 1949.

¹¹ Interview Notes, Mr. Charles Alton, Claremore, Oklahoma, June 19, 1947, and August 12, 1949.

president, served until 1911, when he was succeeded by Dr. J. H. Bayes. The third and last president of Eastern University Preparatory School was Stephen M. Barrett, who served from 1913 until the school was closed in the spring of 1917.

The attendance at the institution apparently increased from year to year. The first date for which a record of the graduating class was found is 1912, when a total of fourteen students were graduated. By the last year of the school, the number had increased to twenty-two.¹² This number is identical to the number of junior college graduates for 1948-49.

The school was co-educational and had as its objective the preparation of the youth of northeastern Oklahoma for admission to the freshman class in the state university or the other institutions of higher learning. It is pertinent here that we note that one of the two primary objectives of the Oklahoma Military Academy today is that of sound academic preparation for further schooling. Students at the school boarded in private homes in the city of Claremore and the two-mile round trip from the city to the school was not without its difficulties. The Claremore Progress reported on April 10, 1913, that "school was dismissed forty-five minutes early Tuesday on account of the rapid rising of Cat Creek." The dirt road and wooden bridge connected the two. Thanks were expressed to those gallant gentlemen who carried the young ladies across the bridge and also to those who notified the school.

The curriculum was in keeping with the standards of the times, and was divided into ten departments as follows: Music, Art, Domestic Science,

¹² Progress, May 31, 1917. Among the graduates were the famous playwright, Lynn Riggs, and Jess Larson, the present head of War Assets Administration for the United States.

Expression, Public Speaking, Business, Language (English, Latin, French, and German), Mathematics (Algebra, Arithmetic, Geometry, and Trigonometry), Science (Physics, Chemistry, Botany, Geology, Zoology, Agriculture, and Physiology), and Manual Training.¹³

Much of the school's extra-curricular activities centered around the two societies, the Haynes and the Websters. These two organizations competed in all types of events including both scholastic and athletic contests. Competition was especially keen in debating, the activity for which the societies were most noted.¹⁴

The first summer session was held at the Eastern University Preparatory School in the summer of 1914. Approximately 150 students, many of whom were teachers, attended the ten-week term, the usual length of a normal session. Regular credit was given and examinations for state and county certificates were held.¹⁵

From time to time the school was disturbed by threats that its life would be suddenly ended. This seems to be the fate of the majority of such institutions during their formative years. The first of these occurred in 1913, a stormy year in the history of Eastern University Preparatory School. The first attack on the school was in the form of a charge that Eastern University Preparatory School was only a city high school for Claremore and not representative of the surrounding area as it should be. Mr. Joseph Hamilton wrote an article in the Progress refuting

¹³ Progress, August 30, 1912. From an ad in the Progress, giving the work of the school offered in the coming term.

¹⁴ Two outstanding members of these societies were Judge Wayne Bayless of the State Supreme Court, and Judge N. B. Johnson of the State District Court.

¹⁵ Progress, January 30, 1914.

this charge. He explained that the school was brought to Claremore because of the beauty and healthfulness of that city and that the demands made by the state were more than met when the citizens gave forty acres of land and made a road and walk to the school. Proof of the fact that the school was not merely a city high school was seen in the attendance report. A total of 214 students were in school at that time and of this number, one hundred came from the city of Claremore. The location of the institution was in keeping with the idea of de-centralization of the various state educational institutions. This allowed more students to get an education near home and was more in line with the ideas of democracy.¹⁶ Today, it should be noted that, of the 252 students, only 16 of them are from Rogers County.

The second attack against the school and the whole educational system for the state came from Governor Lee Cruce. The governor reflected the ideas of many persons in the state when he gave his message to the fourth legislature. In the interest of the youth, he urged that a cut be made in the number of institutions to improve the educational quality in the remaining ones. Leading educators in the nation had recommended that in a state the size of Oklahoma the normal schools be limited to two, the preparatory schools be abolished, and the School of Mines be made a part of the state university. Governor Cruce then made the recommendation that three Normal, both Preparatory, and at least five agricultural schools be taken from the list of state schools.¹⁷ Here it should be noted that such an action would have abolished educational opportunity at a subsequent date in many areas of our state.

¹⁶ Ibid., February 21, 1913.

¹⁷ A System of Higher Education for Oklahoma, pp. 85, 86.

Following the speech by the governor, a measure was drafted by Representative Woodward to initiate a school abolition bill. This bill, which would have abolished eleven state schools, required 20,000 names supporting the measure before it could be initiated. This brought about counter measures by various representatives who met in Oklahoma City to draft a bill in opposition to the Woodward measure.¹⁸ The abolition bill was not successful, and so the second threat to the school subsided.

In the spring of 1917, the biennial appropriations for Eastern University Preparatory School were vetoed by Governor R. L. Williams. This was in line with his general policy of efficiency in administration and a reduction of state expenditures. He pointed out that now there were many high schools to serve as preparatory schools for the state university and as the two preparatory schools were not located near the University, it seemed to be a duplication of expenses.¹⁹

With the close of the school term in 1917, the Eastern University Preparatory School came to an end. The one building and surrounding grounds served as the high school for the city of Claremore from the fall of 1917 until the spring of 1919. Thus, by an indirect method--that of no appropriations--the school was closed.

The short existence of Eastern University Preparatory School contributed a great deal to the founding and pattern of its successor, The Oklahoma Military Academy. Precedents established then were continued in the new school. This was true of the emphasis placed on extra-curricular activities and especially true of athletics. Football was the major sport

¹⁸ Progress, May 30, 1913.

¹⁹ Oklahoma Session Laws, 1917, p. 133.

at the old school. A motivation for a strong team was the desire to defeat Tonkawa, the other state preparatory school. The advantages of having a good sports program were recognized and the coach, F. D. J. Kaesaman, stated that although students did not come to a school solely to participate in athletics, a good sports program aroused interest, attracted attention, and built morale.²⁰ Several of our state presidents of state colleges during the year 1949-50 have been heard to say the same. The athletic events were limited to football and baseball, and a picture of the football team in the 1910-11 catalogue shows the gridsters assembled in the current "new" fad of the gridiron, the "T" formation.²¹

An important phase of the life of Eastern University Preparatory School, and the one which made the transition from one school to the other possible, was the relationship between the town and the school. The pride of the city of Claremore in the school and the support of northeastern Oklahoma political factions had both grown out of this relationship. It might be said here that such relationship had within it the elements of both good and evil.

The editor of the Progress frequently reminded the people of the town of their responsibility in supporting the school. Urgent appeals were made to the people to fight the school abolition bill in 1913. The influence of the school in the growth of the city and the importance of the school's trade to the merchants of the city were recognized.²²

²⁰ Progress, August 1, 1913.

²¹ "Catalogue and Announcements," State University School, 1910-1911, p. 30.

²² Progress, September 13, 1912; May 16, 1913; June 11, 1914.

The reopening of a school in Claremore came as no great surprise to the citizens of that city. At the last graduation ceremonies of the Eastern University Preparatory School, the principal speaker, Mr. Paul Nesbitt, expressed the belief that the school had not been abolished, but merely suspended because of insufficient funds. Nesbitt should have been in a position to understand the situation, for he had been the Speaker of the last session of the House of Representatives.²³

The physical plant of the abandoned Eastern University Preparatory School served as a constant reminder to the citizens of Claremore of their "stake" in this enterprise, and soon agitation to reopen the school began.²⁴ This movement increased, and the first mention of establishing a military school was in a campaign speech by the Democratic nominee for governor in 1918, Mr. William Durant. He told an audience of Claremore citizens that he advocated changing Eastern University Preparatory School to a state supported military school. Continuing in the same vein, he said, "Taxpayers have their money invested in this equipment, in this plant of the Eastern University Preparatory School, and it should be utilized."²⁵

Approaching nearer to the actual establishment of the Oklahoma Military Academy, the Guymon Herald on January 23, 1919, stated that H. Tom Kight, Sr. would introduce a bill in the house to create a general state military school. Kight introduced the measure creating and locating the Oklahoma Military Academy at Claremore on January 16, 1919.²⁶ The bill

²³ Progress, June 31, 1917.

²⁴ A System of Higher Education for Oklahoma, p. 84.

²⁵ Progress, July 11, 1918.

²⁶ "Journal of the House of Representatives," Regular Session, Seventh Legislature, Convened January 6, 1919, Adjourned March 29, 1919. p. 375.

was referred to the House committee on military affairs, of which Kight was chairman. After a favorable report by the committee, the House passed the bill with an emergency clause attached on January 24, 1919, sixty-three to seventeen.²⁷

The Senate received the bill on January 27, 1919. Passage through the higher chamber was a little more difficult than in the House. In the Senate, the bill was referred to both the committees on military affairs and on appropriations. Receiving recommendations for passage from both committees, the bill was read section by section on February 25, 1919.²⁸ Several minor amendments changing the phrasing were made to the bill at this time. The amended form of the bill was passed by the Senate on February 28, 1919, by a count of thirty to ten and transmitted to the House on the same day.²⁹

Final passage of the amended form of the bill occurred on March 3, 1919; Governor J. A. B. Robertson signed the bill on March 10, 1919.³⁰

The establishment of a military school in Claremore was in contrast to the time-honored American tradition of anti-militarism. Educators were especially opposed to the ideas of regimentation and military discipline. Several factors offset this attitude, perhaps the most important of which was the popularity of the armed services after World War I. This was followed by an exaggerated growth in the spirit of nationalism because of the

²⁷ Ibid., p. 504.

²⁸ "Journal of the Senate," Regular Session, Seventh Legislature, Convened January 6, 1919, Adjourned March 29, 1919. p. 905.

²⁹ Ibid., p. 962.

³⁰ Oklahoma Sessions Laws, 1919, p. 220.

success of the American troops and the American production of war goods. This spirit increased until the phrase "One Hundred per cent Americanism" became a popular by-word to the American citizen and reflected his pride in things American.³¹ It should be kept in mind that the Oklahoma Military Academy was created only four months after the Armistice in 1918. It was in this atmosphere of enthusiasm over the value of military training and the general public demand for a school that The Oklahoma Military Academy was created. A powerful factor locally was the influence of H. Tom Kight, Sr., Colonel S. M. Barrett, and the people of Claremore. The military school was established at Claremore mainly because of the efforts of Tom Kight and Colonel Barrett, both of whom contributed a great deal to the beginning of the institution. The history of the Oklahoma Military Academy reveals that the person with the greatest influence upon the school was H. Tom Kight, Sr.; Colonel Barrett was a school man and a capable administrator, while Kight supplied the necessary political backing. A school in its beginning is usually no stronger than those men who are working with and for its development. In fact, it has been said that an institution is the result of the efforts of the man or men who make its policies.

Colonel Barrett³² was no stranger to Claremore or Oklahoma, as he had been the last president of the Eastern University Preparatory School and from 1917 to 1919, was the state director of vocational education. Nor was the idea of a military school new to Colonel Barrett. Even as a young man, Barrett had been interested in the military side of life and at one

³¹ Preston William Slosson, The Great Crusade and After, 1914-28, p. 67.

³² Colonel S. M. Barrett, the first president of the Oklahoma Military Academy, passed away on December 15, 1948, in Independence, Missouri.

time received an appointment to West Point. Shortly afterward, he was injured seriously enough to keep him from passing the physical examination. His family had included many professional soldiers. During the Spanish-American War, Barrett had formed a military unit similar to a high school R.O.T.C. unit at Rich Hill, Missouri, where he was teaching. It had always been the desire of the Colonel to organize a military school, and he combined this idea with his interest in vocational education to help build the Oklahoma Military Academy.³³ Military training and vocational education were both popular at that time.³⁴ This and his knowledge of the citizens of Claremore made Barrett a valuable partner for Kight.

At that time, Kight was a member of the House of Representatives from Rogers County, and something of a political power in the state. It was his desire to establish a military school with a low tuition so the boy from the average home could attend. He also wished to favor his constituency by having a school maintained at Claremore.

Those favoring the establishment of the Oklahoma Military Academy presented quite a formidable array and left little doubt as to the future success of the venture. Kight gave generously of his time and money to aid the starting of the school. Evidence of this fact was to be seen in the Claremore Progress of May 15, 1919. He was reimbursed to the extent of \$300 by the Claremore Commercial Club. This was the balance left in a fund raised for publicity purposes in connection with securing the academy at Claremore.

³³ Interview notes, Colonel S. M. Barrett, Independence, Missouri, June 24, 1947. The Colonel expressed great pride in the history of his forefathers, as they had fought in the Battle of Hastings in 1066.

³⁴ One of the two purposes of the school at present is military training.

Colonel Barrett has related that the committee drafted the bill in his office in Oklahoma City and that they worked there to form the original copy of the bill.³⁵ The law creating the Oklahoma Military Academy declared that the school should be of secondary grade. Vocational education, limited to auto mechanics and the building trades, and military training were included in the curriculum and were required of all students. A minimum age of 14 years was required for admission. A Board of Regents, consisting of the governor and two members appointed by the governor for terms of four years and not to serve longer than the appointing governor was set up to govern the school. The act appropriated \$75,000 for the construction of a barracks and \$80,000 for general operating expenses for the biennium.³⁶

When the school opened in the fall of 1919, there was little of the institution as it is today. Only one building stood on the campus. The basement of the building was divided into a mess hall and heating plant, while the upper stories served as classrooms and offices for the school officials.

The forty students who officially opened the school were indeed a hardy lot. They slept and lived in tents all through the fall and winter of 1919-1920 until the new barracks were finished in the spring of that year. They drilled with wooden rifles. No auditorium or military building was available for their use.^{37, 38} This was a far cry from the conditions fourteen years later when the school was to become, in 1932, the

³⁵ Interview notes, Colonel S. M. Barrett, Independence, Missouri, June 24, 1947.

³⁶ Oklahoma Session Laws, 1919, p. 219.

^{37, 38} Interview notes, Mr. Murl Cline, Claremore, Oklahoma, June 14, 1947; Interview notes, Mr. Eltinge Streeter, Claremore, Oklahoma, November 12, 1949; Clipping Collection from the Library of the Daily Oklahoman, Oklahoma City, Oklahoma, (no date).

youngest military school ever to be made an Honor School on the War Department's honor list.

As Colonel Barrett had been instrumental in getting the school started, it was quite natural that he would be the first president. He had a broad and lengthy background in this area, as he was born in Platte Valley, Nebraska, on March 3, 1865. He graduated from Drury College, Springfield, Missouri, in 1904, and received his Master of Arts degree from the same institution in 1909. Colonel Barrett served as superintendent of schools at Lawton, Oklahoma, in 1904-07. Following this, he was the professor of pedagogy at Central State Normal, Edmond, from 1909-10; and while doing graduate work at the University of Oklahoma from 1910-13, he taught in the education department. From 1913 until 1917, Colonel Barrett served as president of Eastern University Preparatory School; and from 1917 until the opening of the Oklahoma Military Academy, he was state director of vocational education.³⁹

Barrett and the citizens of Claremore exerted every effort to build the school and increase its facilities. In keeping with this policy, Colonel Barrett went to Washington, D. C., where he met C. D. Davis of Claremore, secretary of the Board of Regents, who was working to obtain federal aid for the school. They were successful in their efforts; and in May, it was announced that the government had recognized the Oklahoma Military Academy as a Junior R.O.T.C. training unit and that tents, equipment, and regular army officers would be provided. Other steps allegedly by the government but that never developed, were the paving of the road

³⁹ Bulletin of Oklahoma Military Academy, Vol. 6, No. 1., June 1, 1925, p. 7. Barrett majored in Sociology and did a research for the Doctor's dissertation in the field of Indian Sociology, but never completed the writing.

to the school and the erection of a second barracks.⁴⁰

The important event of the first year was the completion of the new barracks. Named in honor of Maurice Meyer, reportedly the first Oklahoman to die in World War I, the building was finished in March of 1920 and the cadets hurriedly moved into their rooms.⁴¹

The organization of the Oklahoma Military Academy was not influenced to any great extent by other and better known military schools. Events of the first year give insight into the matter and point to the fact that the school was the culmination of a life-long desire of Barrett and instead of being patterned after any other school, it was based on his ideas.⁴²

The first rules and regulations were drawn up by the Colonel and a distinguished visitor, William Howard Taft. On the afternoon of February 21, 1920, the former President and Secretary of War of the United States, visited the academy. He had come to Claremore to speak in behalf of the League of Nations. A pleasant chat with Barrett was followed by a short speech to the cadet corps by Taft. The ex-President declared that he was in favor of military training for the young men of the country. Barrett stated that most of the afternoon was spent in drawing up rules and regulations with Taft's assistance.⁴³

⁴⁰ Progress, May 24, 1919.

⁴¹ Interview notes, Mr. Eltinge Streeter, Claremore, Oklahoma, July 17, 1949. Mr. Streeter and Wayne Redding were the first cadets to move into the building.

⁴² The military titles given to the members of the Oklahoma Military Academy faculty were the result of being given an honorary commission in the Oklahoma National Guard and being placed on the Staff of the Governor of Oklahoma. This rating did not carry any actual military duties except for those faculty members who were bona fide members of the reserve corps, guard, or regular army.

⁴³ Interview notes, Colonel S. M. Barrett, Independence, Missouri, June 24, 1947.

In the preparation of the Cadet code, two time-honored characteristics of military schools were not introduced. These were the "Merit" system and the "New Man" system, both of which were added to the school later. Under the "Merit" system, merits and demerits are given on a predetermined basis for acts varying from personal neatness to infractions of the code of honor. The "New Man" system is a method of indoctrination and instilling in the new cadet the proper respect for authority, usually through menial tasks, but often through use of force. In most schools the cadet remains a new man until the end of his first year. It is my personal belief that it is within this system that a great deal of what is good and bad in a military school's program lies.

As the conditions that prevailed when the academy was created were rather unusual, forces were soon to be felt that made the functions for the school out of the ordinary. Support of the school was so entwined with Oklahoma politics that very early its existence came to be justified on the basis of spectacular achievements rather than the development of high academic standards. The most readily accessible means of doing this was through the exploitation of the military department, the band, athletics, and various other activities.⁴⁴

The life of the academy was threatened for the third time in the year 1921, when a plan was suggested in the state legislature to convert the military school into a government hospital. This caused the citizens of Claremore a great deal of anxiety. They protested that if they could not have the school, no other form of state or federal institution was desired. A hospital located near a town that was dependent to a great measure upon

⁴⁴ Ibid.

the tourist trade would be a very bad business and result in a loss to the city.⁴⁵ Senator E. E. Woods notified the people of Claremore a short while later that the danger of a hospital replacing the school was gone, but that the expected appropriation for the school would fall short of what had been asked.⁴⁶

The rumors of the school's being killed were so strong and persistent that when the legislature was in session mischievous cadets frequently would arise when reveille was sounded and shout that the school had just been killed by the legislature and go back to bed. The students would then remain in their quarters until Colonel Barrett came to see why the cadets were not in their classes.⁴⁷

In 1921, Colonel Barrett set a precedent that was to be the cause of bitter feelings in later years. He allowed local boys residing in their own homes to attend the academy. The school took only a limited number of these students under specified conditions pertaining to the wearing of the uniform when at home and other off-duty regulations. This was the first time that day students, or "day dogs" as they were known by the cadets, were allowed to enter the Oklahoma Military Academy. This policy was temporarily discontinued in 1925.⁴⁸

There was a notable increase in the enrollment to 125 when the school opened in the fall of 1922. However, the most important event during that year was the addition of the first year of junior college work. Thus the

⁴⁵ Progress, January 20, 1921.

⁴⁶ Ibid., February 3, 1921.

⁴⁷ Interview notes, Mr. Murl Cline, Claremore, Oklahoma, May 18, 1948.

⁴⁸ Progress, September 24, 1921.

institution became a five-year school with the four years of high school work and the one year of college. In 1923 the second year of junior college work was added, making the school both a complete high school and junior college. This was made possible by an act of the legislature which also set up a system of appointing students to the Oklahoma Military Academy. Each senator was allowed to appoint two cadets and two alternates to the school. Representatives were allowed to appoint one cadet and one alternate.⁴⁹ This did not restrict the student body to appointed cadets or students from Oklahoma only, as other cadets were allowed to enter if there was available room for them. Tuition was reduced \$100 for the appointed cadets. This custom continued until 1941, when the new Board of Regents for Higher Education ended this manner of lowering the tuition through political appointment of the cadets.⁵⁰

The year 1924 brought changes in the administration of the academy. Colonel Barrett resigned as president for personal reasons, and Colonel W. S. Bryan, the dean, was named acting president, effective November 20, 1924. Barrett had served effectively as president, commandant, and business manager during his tenure in office.

The enrollment had grown from forty during the first year to one hundred fifty in 1924-25.⁵¹ Colonel Bryan served as acting president until June of 1925, when he was relieved of these duties.

In keeping with the belief of Colonel Barrett that the school could best justify its existence by the spectacular, various activities were

⁴⁹ Oklahoma Session Laws, 1923, p. 148.

⁵⁰ Ibid., 1941, p. 437.

⁵¹ The Vedette, 1925. (The Vedette is the Oklahoma Military Academy Yearbook.)

exploited to achieve this end. In these early years of growth, the academy band was perhaps to receive more publicity than any other activity.

The first band of thirty men was organized in 1920, under Captain C. O. Brown. For a few months in the year 1921-1922, Captain Harris was bandmaster, and in 1922, Captain R. E. Flynn became the head of this organization.

The earliest achievement of note for the band occurred in the year 1922.⁵² On this occasion, the group of Oklahoma Military Academy musicians was the official band of the Oklahoma delegation to the Confederate reunion at Richmond, Virginia, on June 21 and 22, 1922.⁵³ Flynn had been at the Oklahoma Military Academy since June 1, 1922; long and previous to this time, he had been connected with the State 177th Infantry Band. Immediately after coming to the academy, he started getting the boys ready for their trip East. While in the East, the band made a trip to Washington, D. C., where it attracted additional attention by serenading the members of Congress and President Harding.⁵⁴

The same year, 1922, the first drum corps was organized, even though it was composed of only four members.⁵⁵ The band and entire student body was invited to lead the Armistice Day celebration in Tulsa the same year.

The outstanding event for the band in 1923 was the leading of the parade in the position of honor for the International Petroleum Exposition in Tulsa, Wednesday, October 10. The band received many compliments and

⁵² Ibid., 1922.

⁵³ Progress, October 12, 1923.

⁵⁴ The Vedette, 1925.

⁵⁵ Progress, October 12, 1923.

the Claremore Chamber of Commerce, expressing the opinion of the business interests of the city, publicly commended Colonel Barrett "for his generous cooperative spirit."⁵⁶ Another event during the year 1923 was participation of the band in Governor Jack Walton's inaugural ball, where it was quite popular.

Bugles were added to the drum corps in the school year 1924-25, thus making the first drum and bugle corps at the academy consist of twelve men.⁵⁷ Both the band and drum and bugle corps were to expand and improve in the future, bringing added recognition to the academy.

The athletic activities of the school during this era were limited by lack of facilities, but the interest in them was intense and the measure of success attained was noteworthy. The major sport during this period was football, and in no year before 1939 did a "cadet eleven" lose more games than it won. The sporting activities undertaken at the Oklahoma Military Academy during this period were football, baseball, boxing, track, and basketball. These different sports were not all conducted every year, and most of the time football, boxing, and baseball were the only sports in which there was participation.

The football teams of both 1920 and 1921 lost only one game in each year. The lone defeat in 1921 came at the hands of the four-year teachers college in Tahlequah when the academy was still a high school. This cadet team of 1921 was referred to as a "miracle team" by the Claremore paper, and a great deal was made of the fact that every member of the team was a "born and bred" Sooner. A large number of the team were boys who lived in

⁵⁶ Ibid., October 11, 1923.

⁵⁷ The Vedette, 1925.

Claremore. Although light in weight, only about 145 pounds to the man, they were very fast.⁵⁸

In the 1922 Vedette, the school yearbook, first mention was made of the academy basketball team. As there was no gym available, the squad had to practice out of doors and then play its games inside. This was also the first year when a full seasonal sports program of football, boxing, and baseball was played and for the first time basketball, track, and tennis were introduced.⁵⁹

Coach Bradley, who had been with the school since its opening, left in 1923 to take a position in the East. He had played football at Boston College in 1914 and at Holy Cross in 1916-17. Mr. Crossley, a Dartmouth man, had been his assistant. Bradley had been successful, and it was with regret that the school watched him leave. Coach A. D. S. A. Blacer and Theodore (Ted) Kurtz became the coaches in 1924. Blacer did not remain with the school long, and Kurtz became the head coach and athletic director.⁶⁰

The football schedule in 1925 indicates that the success of the cadet teams in their athletic contests was not because of choosing weak competition. This was the first full year of junior college work, and for such a young school the schedule was a strong one. The team in that year won ten out of eleven games, winning all the conference games and amassing 130 points to 7 for the opponents. Some of the better teams played that year were the freshmen teams from Tulsa University, Oklahoma A. & M. College,

⁵⁸ Progress, December 24, 1921.

⁵⁹ The Vedette, 1922.

⁶⁰ Progress, September 9, 1923.

and the University of Arkansas. The Arkansas University freshmen were defeated by the Cadets ten to six for their first loss in two years. Other outstanding teams played were Tahlequah, Owasso, Miami, Bacone, and Tonkawa.⁶¹

One of the earliest achievements of the military department was the winning of the junior rifle competition of the Southwest Department in 1920.⁶² The important accomplishment of the military department during these years was the establishment of the junior R. O. T. C. infantry unit in 1920. The Vedette, in 1920, printed a letter from the Secretary of War granting the school authority to establish the desired unit.⁶³ This was not long after the trip made to Washington, D. C., by Colonel Barrett and C. D. Davis of Claremore. The academy was regraded by the War Department in 1924, and the junior rating was lost to the school until it was re-classified in 1926.

Colonel Walter E. Downs said that at the time of his arrival at the Oklahoma Military Academy in 1925 the school was classified as fifty-five C, which was comparable to the same rating as that given the small high school units in various cities.⁶⁴

The school did not legally have a large enough enrollment to warrant either a junior or senior R. O. T. C. rating at the time it received the permission to start a junior unit. To receive the approval of an inspecting

⁶¹ Ibid., December 12, 1923.

⁶² Progress, June 10, 1920. (This organization was for the Eighth Corps Area of the War Department and included Texas, New Mexico, Arizona, and Oklahoma.)

⁶³ The Vedette, 1920.

⁶⁴ Interview notes, Colonel W. E. Downs, Helena, Oklahoma, June 27, 1947; Okmulgee, Oklahoma, August 26, 1949.

officer, the first year the school authorities asked World War I veterans to stand the inspection in their old uniforms in order to have the required number of students.⁶⁵ This is the way in which the first unit was obtained, and it may have been a factor in the loss of the rating later on when the enrollment did not increase fast enough. The reason for striving to achieve as high a rating as possible was that government aid to the institution in the form of equipment, uniforms, and financial aid for buildings and other developments was granted on that basis.

The Reserve Officers Training Corps was created in 1916, by section four of the National Defense Act of June, 1916. The objectives of the R. O. T. C. were to establish a system of military training at civil educational institutions for the purpose of qualifying selected students as second lieutenants of the corps, and to create in all students receiving the training qualities that would make them successful citizens. The courses of instruction were divided into two divisions, the elementary and the advanced. These divisions were to be known as basic and advanced at a later date.

The first two years were the elementary and were set up to provide proper courses of instruction to qualify students as non-commissioned officers. Basic, or general, military training was emphasized in this training with infantry drill being taught to all students. This first two-year period of training was also called the junior division of the R. O. T. C.⁶⁶

The senior, or advanced, training had as a pre-requisite the completing of the junior units and required that certain physical and mental

⁶⁵ Interview notes, Colonel S. M. Barrett, June 24, 1947; Mr. Murl Cline, June 19, 1947; and Mr. Charles Alton, July 30, 1948.

⁶⁶ The Vedette, 1920.

tests be passed. The student also had to sign a contract with the government calling for a certain number of hours per week of drill and classroom work and attendance at a summer training camp. Specialization was also allowed in the advanced program. The student could choose a branch of the corps, although this was restricted by the training offered in the school. Remuneration to each student is allowed by the government, but this has varied with the years. At the present time, the basic student receives no remuneration, and the advanced, ninety cents a day.⁶⁷

As the constant struggle for recognition of the military department by the federal government went on through the years, other developments at the academy were taking place. The first of these events occurred in the year 1921, when the first group of cadets from the school went to the annual R. O. T. C. summer camp at Fort Sill, Oklahoma.⁶⁸

In the following year, 1922, the academy held its annual R. O. T. C. meeting at the junction of the Grand and Spavinaw Rivers. This was the regular camp held to meet the requirements of the War Department. The entire faculty and student body left Claremore Monday at 8:00 p.m. on the Iron Mountain Railroad. They were to arrive Monday and then to break camp and return late Thursday.⁶⁹

The first R. O. T. C. inspection for which a record was found was in the year 1923. This was the first Eighth Corps Area inspection held by

⁶⁷ Oklahoma Military Academy Catalogue, 1949, p. 45.

⁶⁸ Progress, September 24, 1921.

⁶⁹ Ibid., October 12, 1922.

Colonel Mayo of the staff of General Lewis, Commanding General of the Eighth Corps Area.⁷⁰

Improvement and expansion were to be noted in the following years, and the work of the school was to be rewarded. Colonel Mayo made the inspections for the next three years and after his inspection in 1925 expressed pleasure over the improvements shown by the institution. At this time the Colonel was the inspecting officer for the Eighth Corps Area and made a short speech to the cadet corps after he had finished this work.

Publicity was given to the report of Colonel Mayo, and he told the cadets that upon his first inspection in 1923, the school looked like a mob, but since then the improvement had been very rapid and that he hoped his present recommendation would warrant the school again receiving the junior R. O. T. C. rating. In his opinion the school warranted the support of the people of Oklahoma and they should be proud of it.⁷¹

Following Colonel Mayo's recommendation, Captain G. T. Fleet, Professor of Military Science and Tactics, also wrote the Commanding General of the Eighth Corps Area and asked that the academy be given a junior unit and be classified as an "Essential Military School." This would have included free uniforms and other valuable government aid.⁷² This letter brought no immediate results, but the next year the academy received the junior rating.

The uniform worn by the cadets went through a process of evolution covering several years. The first uniform consisted of grey trousers and

⁷⁰ Progress, May 3, 1923.

⁷¹ Ibid., April 9, 1925. (This also helps to explain the loss of the junior rating in 1924, as the showing in 1923 was so poor.)

⁷² Progress, April 9, 1925.

blouse, trimmed in blue with a high stiff collar similar to that worn by the cadets at West Point.⁷³

The corps was organized into a battalion and as in all military schools it was under the discipline of the cadet and faculty officers at all times. A large percentage of the cadets in the early years was Claremore boys. Some have said that they constituted as much as half of the student body.⁷⁴ Although no official "New Man" system was recognized by the school during this period, the cadets had one of their own. This was started by the football team and was more or less a matter of the survival of the fittest. The idea was introduced by a student who had been at another military school, and the football team forced those whom they could into acting as the new man. This was the start of the "New Man" system, and it continued until 1925 when an official system was established.⁷⁵

An alumni association was organized in 1921. The class of 1920 entertained the graduating class of 1921 with a banquet and initiation ceremony. A decision was made to hold the annual meeting in the last week of each school year. The first officers were A. E. Streeter, President, Ernest Mayberry, Vice-president, Hubert Robinson, Secretary and Treasurer, and Robert Sutton, Corresponding Secretary.⁷⁶

The playfulness of the Cadets was demonstrated by a report in the Progress on May 7, 1925. The favorite sport of the boys at that time was a form of the "hot foot." This variation of the game required that lumps

⁷³ The Vedette, 1920.

⁷⁴ Interview notes, Mr. Murl Cline, Claremore, Oklahoma, July, 1948.

⁷⁵ Ibid.

⁷⁶ The Vedette, 1922.

of shoe polish be placed on the shoes of the victim and then lighted, causing quite a blaze and subsequent action on the part of the victim. The results to anyone caught in the act of giving the hot foot were revealed when Colonel Bryan caught two young cadets, Yellowbull and Meredity, and "boxed their ears."⁷⁷

The religious life of the cadets was also provided for, as they were required to attend Sunday School and Church regularly either in town or at the school. A chapel service was held each Wednesday; a minister from the city attended.⁷⁸

That this period, in its over-all perspective, was one of growth there can be no doubt. The enrollment had increased from a beginning of 50 to 150. A new barracks added to the physical plant, the grounds beautified, and five acres added to the original forty.⁷⁹

Certain characteristics and policies were initiated that were to be carried on in future years--the exploiting of the various extra-curricular activities to publicize the school; the attempt made to keep the school as one for the middle class; the importance of the support of the school by the political powers in this area.

The position of the school still was not secure, as will be seen, and the term "precarious" is appropriate for the conditions that existed. Although there had been an increase in the enrollment and physical plant

⁷⁷ Interview notes, Colonel W. S. Bryan, Claremore, Oklahoma, on August 16, 1949.

⁷⁸ Bulletin of the Oklahoma Military Academy, June 1, 1925, p. 13.

⁷⁹ Interview notes, Colonel S. M. Barrett, Independence, Missouri, June 24, 1924. Barrett had written Will Rogers in Hollywood, California, who then deeded the five acres at the bottom of the hill where the school stands. This is the place where Lake Douglas is now located.

at the academy, it was not looked upon with pride by other sections of the state or by many state officials. The people of Claremore were proud of their investment in the school and wanted to keep the institution and expand it as much as possible. H. Tom Kight and Colonel Barrett both were largely responsible for the position of the school. It was mainly because of Kight's political power that the school had continued to exist and had grown. He was responsible for the majority of the appropriations and the addition of the barracks to the school. Barrett did considerable lobbying when the legislature was in session and reportedly spent four days per week at the legislature and three days per week at the school.⁸⁰

In 1925, the academy was not yet established securely enough that its future was assured. This remained a problem throughout the years. In spite of this, the first six precarious years were important ones, for principles and practices begun under the leadership of Colonel Barrett were to influence the school's subsequent growth. The feeling and relationship between the city of Claremore and the academy which existed throughout Barrett's presidency was ever to be an emotional factor in the growth of The Oklahoma Military Academy.

The purpose of training for leadership through the military experiences was to remain as one of the primary objectives for the school's existence as an educational institution. Many of Colonel Barrett's ideas were to be modified and changed, but some of them were to set the pattern for the continued existence of the school.

⁸⁰ Interview notes, Mr. Charles Alton, Claremore, Oklahoma, July 19, 1948.

CHAPTER II

DEVELOPMENT OF POLICY

From June 1, 1925, until June 30, 1940, Colonel Walter E. Downs was President of the Oklahoma Military Academy. These were indeed the "golden years" for the school. The zenith in nearly all of the many activities was reached during this period. The administration of Colonel Downs, the longest of any President, brought many honors to the institution.

Colonel Downs had a background as both a soldier and an educator. He had served in World War I, participating in the battles of St. Mihiel and Meuse-Argonne and receiving his commission in the field. At the time he accepted the presidency, he was superintendent of schools at Poteau, Oklahoma. Downs was born at Sardis, Arkansas, of parents of moderate circumstances, and after graduating from Ouichita College at Arkadelphia, he enlisted in the Army. In August of 1925, Downs was given his commission as a Colonel in the Oklahoma National Guard Infantry.¹

The Academy was fortunate in obtaining the services of a man who believed in the purposes and philosophy of the institution. Downs approved the idea of a military school for the middle class and supported the program to develop well-rounded citizens, with the emphasis upon the physical, mental, and moral aspects of life.

The Colonel felt that the school was established to give the youths of Oklahoma who so desired an opportunity to get military training along with their higher education. Downs was against hazing and felt that both the "New Man" system and discipline should have their limitations and that

¹ Progress, August 10, 1925. (This appointment was of an honorary nature and did not carry federal recognition.)

the student should be allowed to make some decisions of his own. Believing that the proper balance between the military discipline and regimentation on the one hand and freedom on the other would develop to the highest degree in a military school and foster the democratic principles of life, Colonel Downs worked toward this goal and organized the school along these lines. His principles were sometimes modified with changing conditions which caused undue emphasis on certain activities, but for the most part, they continually contributed to the growth and development of the academy.

Throughout the administration of Downs, the public emphasis on the various activities persisted and he had little choice but to exploit them. While the band continued to receive notice, it became relatively less important. The athletic department rose in position and became the most popular of the activities. The military department made history and the rating of the school rose with each succeeding year. The addition of an aviation department represented something of a pioneering venture. There was also a drive in the direction of raising academic standards.

If any single word can characterize this era in the history of the school, it is "growth." A constant pressure was maintained to expand and build. The whole staff was busily engaged in this building process; and, although there were periods of quiet when no progress was visible, the work was continued at all times.²

Colonel Downs assumed the presidency at a time when the relations between the school and the citizens of Claremore were on a high level of accord. His administration was anticipated with enthusiasm and interest.³

² Progress, June 12, 1925.

³ Ibid., June 4 and June 11, 1925. Ex-Mayor H. Jennings of Claremore gave machine guns valued at \$1,300 to the school. Captain G. T. Fleet, who was Professor of Military Science and Tactics, was leaving the school and wrote a letter which was published, exhorting the people to aid Downs and for all to work together.

While this goodwill was encouraging, there can be no doubt that the very existence of the institution depended on Downs. Governor M. E. Trapp and General Baird H. Markham, members of the Board of Regents, were reported to have told the Colonel, "Make good or the state will abandon the idea of a military school." Colonel Downs was allegedly given one year in which to make good at the school, for it was looked upon by some as a "white elephant."⁴

Regardless of whether he received so blunt an ultimatum, Downs surely recognized that he had to develop a program that would require less time and be more easily evaluated than one of academic distinction. With this in mind, he set out to publicize the school through use of the military, athletics, and band. After a few years had passed and the future of the school became more secure, an increasing emphasis was placed on the academic phase of the school.

In his first year at the academy, Colonel Downs introduced several changes within the cadet corps, added to the physical plant, improved the academic standing, and reorganized the personnel and its methods. The fall of 1925 brought a much needed addition to the academy building program. This was the \$15,000 mess hall completed late in November, the first of several buildings to be added to the school.⁵ Perhaps more important than the new building was the accrediting of the high school department by the North Central Association of Colleges and Secondary

⁴ T. P. Tripp, "Given One Year to Make Good; Colonel Downs' Record," Harlow's Weekly, Vol. 47 (October 17, 1926), pp. 6, 7.

⁵ Progress, June 15, 1925.

Schools on December 3, 1925.⁶

The first year brought many changes in the life of the cadet corps itself. The old uniform which included the high stiff blouse was replaced with an English cut blouse and full peg trousers of serge material. In addition to this, the merit system was established and the "New Man" system recognized by the school. With the recognition of the "New Man" system came a change in the name of the "New Man" from that of "rat" to "rabbit," as the Colonel thought that this name sounded better. A cadet honor system was established, completing the changes, and the life of the cadet became similar to that in other institutions.⁷

The 1925 football team traveled as much as possible with the idea of spreading information about the school and advertising the academy. Games were scheduled in Ohio, Missouri, Arizona, Texas, and Tennessee. This clearly demonstrated the use of athletics to publicize the school.⁸

The year 1926 registered three important developments. A new brick and concrete guard house was completed.⁹ The new Junior College Conference was formed, of which Oklahoma Military Academy was a member. The officials of the academy met with representatives from other junior colleges in Oklahoma City to organize the conference, which was to consist of

⁶ Letter, Mr. Standifer Keas, Chairman of the Oklahoma North Central Association, July 10, 1947. The Junior College work has never been accredited by the association, although the State University Accrediting Board accepts work from the academy, and the majority of the other institutions follow suit.

⁷ Interview notes, Colonel W. E. Downs, Helena, Oklahoma, June 27, 1948.

⁸ Progress, October 1, 1925.

⁹ Ibid., September 16, 1926.

eight Oklahoma junior colleges. The officers were elected, eligibility was agreed upon, and a new conference was officially activated.¹⁰

The first official financial report of the academy was made public January 28, 1926. It revealed the difficulties under which the school operated. The report covered the terms of Colonels Barrett and Bryan and the first four months of the Downs administration. Lax, wasteful handling of funds was charged against the Barrett and Bryan administration. A deficiency of approximately \$16,000 was disclosed by the state examiner, Mr. George Meching. This was a common condition in state educational institutions. Colonel Downs was given credit for doing a fine job and putting the academy on a cash basis in the time he had been president. The close margin on which the school operated is revealed by the fact that the cash balance on December 31, 1925, was \$22.37. The mess hall and the post exchange were operating at a profit, and it was hoped that the school would soon be out of debt. A new system of bookkeeping and the employing of a paid financial secretary were recommended.¹¹

The happenings in 1926 had their more humorous aspects. One of these was the inauguration of a custom of firing a cannon, the gift of General Baird H. Markham, at 7:00 a.m. and 5:30 p.m. The explosion served as a very efficient alarm clock for the community, awakening as many of the townspeople as cadets. Several of the citizens of Claremore expressed the belief that they could easily get along without the noise.¹²

¹⁰ Ibid., September 23, 1926.

¹¹ Progress, July 8, 1947.

¹² Ibid., January 14, 1926.

The coming year was one of comparative quiet except for a political flurry in the spring of 1927. This trouble was brought about by the hiring of Lee F. Gilstrap as adjutant at the academy. General Baird H. Markham and Colonel J. B. Sledge, members of the Board of Regents, tendered their resignations to Governor Henry S. Johnston because of what they termed the political meddling of H. Tom Kight, Sr. The governor persuaded both men to remain on the board and the affair gradually quieted down. Kight opposed the hiring of Gilstrap on the ground that funds had been set aside for a vocational instructor by the Legislature and not an adjutant, which he claimed the school did not need. The board members claimed that Kight was taking his spite out on Gilstrap because of his dislike of Governor Johnston and also because Gilstrap came from a prominent Republican family.¹³

As the administration of Colonel Downs progressed, popular support grew. The 1927 Guidon could reprint articles from Oklahoma's two leading newspapers expressing a friendly attitude toward the school and an optimistic outlook for the future. The Tulsa Daily World announced that the academy merited state support and suggested that it "should become one of the three major educational institutions" in the state. The Daily Oklahoman offered an appropriate justification of the academy. It pointed out that a number of boys annually leave the state for some type of military school and usually at a considerable expense to their parents. It urged that the state support should make the institution a good enough school that the state would not lose these students and the amount they spend

¹³ Oklahoma City Times, June 30, 1927, in clipping collection of the Daily Oklahoman library.

each year to other states.¹⁴

The period ending in 1928 left additions to the building program that were of much importance in that year. The most important was the new Markham barracks which was completed in the spring of 1928 at a cost of \$140,000 with a gym and drill hall in the north wing basement of the building, the first in the history of the school. A new central heating plant which had been built at a cost of \$30,000 was also finished that spring. A sixty by forty modern fireproof building connected to the heating plant was built for use by the 120th Ordnance Company of the State National Guard in the summer of 1926. Two concrete tennis courts, costing \$2,500, were also completed that summer.¹⁵

The early years of the Downs era were optimistic ones. When Dudley C. Monk, Speaker of the Oklahoma House of Representatives, gave the commencement address at Claremore on May 24, 1926, he called attention to the sign he had noticed at the railway station where he arrived. The sign pointed toward the school and read, "Oklahoma Military Academy, the West Point of the Southwest." By implication, he suggested that this might come true, thus recognizing the progress and sound foundation of the academy and the probability that these conditions would remain permanent characteristics of the school.¹⁶

Of no small importance in the life of the school was the fact that Representative H. Tom Kight had become chairman of the appropriations

¹⁴ The Guidon, 1927, pp. 104-105. (With this issue the name of the yearbook was changed.)

¹⁵ Ibid., 1929.

¹⁶ Progress, May 24, 1928.

committee in the House of Representatives. It was well known that Kight would do all that he could for the state educational institutions and especially the military school. This contributed greatly to the financial stability of the school.¹⁷

The academy received a boost from another source in an article in Harlow's Weekly by Dr. Charles Evans, prominent Oklahoma educator. Dr. Evans left little doubt as to his opinion of the school and the value of military training to the state and its citizens. He declared that thanks should be expressed to our leaders for their intelligence in establishing such an institution and that it fitted into our scheme of democratic education by providing trained leaders. Colonel Downs was complimented for his efficient handling of the academy and its finances, and the school was described as moving on a high military, literary, and moral plane. The importance of the school was best illustrated as Dr. Evans described the sacrifices made by the youth of Oklahoma and other states during 1917 and, although hoping that this would not again happen, he felt that the people of Oklahoma should "give tribute to and gratitude for the Oklahoma Military Academy at Claremore."¹⁸

To guarantee an increasing enrollment from year to year, two distinct approaches to the problem were made. One method put in practice for the first time was advertising the school to prospective patrons by letters mailed to parents and by faculty members touring the state making personal contacts with interested persons. The other plan bore fruit and perhaps

¹⁷ Ibid., January 10, 1929.

¹⁸ Charles Evans, "A Military Academy and Junior College," Harlow's Weekly, Vol. 34 (January 11, 1924), 11-12.

the most important step in the history of the school resulted from this development. The purpose was to obtain an R. O. T. C. cavalry unit for the academy. The idea was originated primarily to increase enrollment, but there were other reasons. Application was made to the Adjutant General of the United States Army at Washington, D. C. The school planned to provide for the necessary stables and upkeep of the horses and any other equipment that would be required for such a unit. The report was circulated that the history of other military schools had shown that by obtaining a cavalry unit their enrollment had doubled and even tripled.¹⁹ The request by the academy was not successful at this time, but experience gained from this attempt proved valuable and in the following year, 1930, the desired unit was established.

Recognition of the academic improvements under the Downs administration came late in 1929, when the state committee for the North Central Association of Colleges and Secondary Schools inspected the academy. The committee was composed of George C. Wells, Secretary of the State Board of Education, Dr. Herbert Patterson, Dean of Education at Oklahoma Agricultural and Mechanical College, Dr. Roy Gittinger, Dean of Administration at Oklahoma University, and Dr. L. E. Swearinson, Professor in the Chemistry Department at Oklahoma University. Its spokesman declared that the library at Oklahoma Military Academy was one of the best of any of the schools visited.²⁰ The results of the inspection were not made public at that time, but later it was revealed the academy passed the inspection and retained the rating established in 1925.

¹⁹ Progress, January 21, 1929.

²⁰ Progress, December 19, 1929.

In 1930 one of the most important events in the history of the school took place. This was the establishing of a senior R. O. T. C. cavalry unit. The infantry unit was raised to senior grade before the end of school in 1931.²¹ The addition of the senior cavalry unit would not be possible if it had not been for the unceasing efforts of friends of the academy. The requirements for a school to receive the senior rating were that it be at least a junior college and have had the junior R. O. T. C. rating. As these minimum requirements were fulfilled in the early history, all that had to be accomplished was to convince the authorities in the War Department that the school warranted such a move.

The reasons for the great importance attached to the gaining of the senior unit are twofold. First, a senior unit allowed a student graduating from the academy to receive a commission in the reserve; other students who did not attend school long enough to qualify for a commission were well trained non-commissioned officers, and the military proficiency of the whole school was raised. Second, federal aid to the school was increased, making the state and private support of the institution consist of a smaller percent of the total cost. The benefits to the people of the state and nation should easily be seen, especially in time of war. A well trained reserve of both commissioned and non-commissioned officers would be a saving of time and lives. The financial aid and lessening of state and private support should please all members of supporting agencies. The increased prestige and equipment from the government should induce many more students who had left Oklahoma to attend military schools to remain in the state.

²¹ The Guidon, 1933, p. 16.

One of the early actions toward this goal was the offering of an amendment by Senator Elmer Thomas to an army war appropriations bill to add the cavalry unit at the academy and build a million dollar veterans' hospital for Oklahoma.²² H. Tom Kight was also in Washington at this time, and through the efforts of both men the much desired cavalry unit was obtained at the academy.

An interesting, but unverified, story on how the unit was given the approval of the authorities in Washington has been told. At the time the unit was granted to the academy, Patrick J. Hurley, famous Oklahoman, was Secretary of War. H. Tom Kight made a trip to Washington to put pressure on Hurley to help the school in this matter as Kight had known Hurley in the early history of Oklahoma. The Secretary of War sent a regular army Colonel to inspect Oklahoma Military Academy and ascertain how such a unit could be established. Returning to Washington, the Colonel told Hurley there were about a dozen reasons why such a unit should not be established at the academy. The Secretary of War then told the Colonel that he did not want a dozen reasons why such a step should not be taken but to go out and find one reason why or how it could be done. Leaving the office to return in a few minutes, the Colonel told Hurley that there was a small cavalry unit being discontinued in Oregon that could be moved to the Oklahoma Military Academy, but many other suitable schools had asked for the unit.²³ Authenticity is lent the story when one considers that the unit did come

²² Progress, May 8, 1930.

²³ Interview notes, Mr. Thomas G. Sexton, former instructor at Oklahoma Military Academy, and present administrative assistant to the Oklahoma State Regents for Higher Education, Oklahoma City, Oklahoma, July 8, 1948.

Oregon. The 1931 Guidon was dedicated to Hurley for "his espousal of our interests in matters so vitally concerning the institution."²⁴

In keeping the program moving, two new buildings were finished for the military department in 1930. A building for the new horses in the cavalry unit had to be completed by the start of school, and as the legislature was not in session, Governor William Holloway signed a \$26,000 deficiency bill which met this necessity.²⁵ The other new building was the academy hospital finished on May 1, at a cost of \$35,000.²⁶

With the increase in the curriculum and physical plant settled, the plan called for continued efforts at increasing the enrollment. The summer of 1930 found the faculty and especially Captain Virgil E. Caldwell, instructor and public relations officer, showing pictures of the academy and its life among the various towns and cities in Oklahoma.²⁷ In addition to this, the Tulsa Daily World had a feature story about the school which told of the past and mentioned the work now offered by the institution.²⁸ All these aids were used in the first drive for more students, and the efforts bore fruit.

The following summer, 1931, found the school officials again working to enlarge the school. Letters were mailed, parents and students contacted, and even a broadcast over station WFAA in Dallas was made as an aid in this work. Another department was added to the school at this time, and

²⁴ The Guidon, 1931.

²⁵ Progress, October 1, 1936.

²⁶ The Guidon, 1930.

²⁷ Progress, July 3, 1930.

²⁸ Tulsa Daily World, August, 1930, in the Claremore Progress, August 21, 1930.

it was hoped that this would induce more students to attend the academy. This was the opening of the aviation department, which was to be affiliated with the Spartan School of Aeronautics at Tulsa. This made the academy the first junior college in the nation with an aviation department and flight instruction included in the curriculum.²⁹

In the fall of 1931, Oklahoma's favorite son, Will Rogers, visited his home town and the academy. Will Rogers' homecoming day was held on September 26, at which time Will Rogers presented the school with new colors. A football game, parade, and polo game were part of the day's ceremonies. The football game was advertised between teams as Will Rogers' school and Pat Hurley's school. In the polo game, Will Rogers played on the academy team and made six of the nine goals scored by the team.³⁰

The growing popularity and appreciation of the Oklahoma Military Academy by the citizens of Claremore was revealed by an article in the Progress on the history of the school. Both Kight and Downs were recognized and praised for their efforts to build the institution. Kight was justly given credit for his part in the founding of the school, the building of both barracks, and the obtaining of the cavalry unit. Colonel Downs was referred to as "the director most responsible for the established growth toward the apex of perfection."³¹

In 1932, wide recognition was given the aviation department of the academy when the November issue of the Aero Digest contained three pages

²⁹ Interview notes, Colonel Walter B. Downs, Helena, Oklahoma, June 27, 1947.

³⁰ Progress, October 1, 1931.

³¹ Ibid., October 1, 1939.

about the academy and the Spartan School of Aeronautics at Tulsa. The connection between the two and the type of work offered was explained. This valuable publicity resulted in the receipt of many letters of inquiry about the school. The Progress expressed its opinion of the event by saying only one conclusion can be drawn: it is growing faster than those of us here can see. The Oklahoma Military Academy's growth means a larger, stronger growth for Claremore.³²

Meanwhile, a policy that had been introduced by Colonel Barrett and suspended in 1925 was renewed at the "hill."³³ This was permitting the Claremore and Rogers County boys to enroll at the academy and live at home. These day students did not have to pay board, room, laundry, and hospital fees. Certain uniform regulations were changed for them when at home, but they had to attend all classes and formations from the start of school to the end, as well as the regular Saturday morning inspections.³⁴

The enrollment had increased since 1925, and in 1931 there had been a thirty-four per cent increase over the previous year.³⁵ However, the year 1932 saw a drop in the enrollment, and the Guidon for that year gave the list of students as numbering 270, while in 1931 it was 330. The conditions were common to other schools, as in the year 1932-33 the number of new cadets at Virginia Military Institute fell below the total number that could be accommodated for the first time in its history.³⁶ Maximum

³² Ibid., November 17, 1932.

³³ The term, the "hill," was a slight change from the term "prep hill" used to describe the Eastern University Preparatory School.

³⁴ Progress, August 18, 1932.

³⁵ The Guidon, 1931, p. 44.

³⁶ One Hundred Years at Virginia Military Institute, Colonel William Couper, 4 Volumes (Richmond, 1939), Vol. 4, p. 271.

enrollment was not again reached at this famous school until 1937. The loss in enrollment probably influenced the acceptance of day students. This step also served to solidify the relations between the school and the town.

As these were the lean years throughout the nation, a move was made to point out the economy of schooling at the military academy. The average monthly cost was only \$43, and the total cost for the appointed cadet was \$412. This included a \$40 breakage fee that was refundable.³⁷

One of the outstanding events of 1933 was the winning of the coveted "Honor Rating" from the War Department, which the school has held ever since. This distinction was won by the academy on the first attempt, and it became the youngest military school ever to win this award.³⁸

As the school was receiving such noteworthy recognition of its progress from the War Board, its very existence was being threatened for the fourth time from another source. A bill was introduced by Senator Dave Logan for the abolition of nine state schools. This action was a result of the conditions of the times and in line with moves for economy in government. All state junior colleges were to be abolished, and separate bills were to be introduced to do away with Central and East Central Teachers Colleges.³⁹ These bills never passed, even though they may have been justifiable from a financial and educational viewpoint.

The year 1934 brought great praise from one of the most distinguished visitors to the school. The occasion was an ostentatious one as General

³⁷ Progress, June 15, 1933.

³⁸ Tulsa Daily World, October 7, 1934, in clipping collection from the files of the World Library.

³⁹ Progress, January 13, 1933.

Johnson Hagood and General Robert Bullard made an inspection of the academy. Hagood was Commanding General of the Third Army of the United States and the Eighth Corps Area, which includes Texas, New Mexico, Arizona, Colorado, and Oklahoma. The importance of the visitors may be gathered from the reception they received. A mounted escort accompanied the party from the town to the "hill." From the bottom of the hill to the Administration Building they passed between rows of cadets standing at "Present Arms." A parade and review was held, followed by a sham battle, silent drill, and equestrian maneuvers consisting of jumping and saber course. Following the ceremonies, General Hagood made a speech to the cadets, commending them on their performances.

I've visited many military schools in my capacity as an Army commander. I have visited the expensive schools where there is no lack of equipment; I have seen academies where there were more cadets, more money to spend, and finer buildings; but I have never visited one where as much is being done on as little as at the Oklahoma Military Academy. You have many reasons for being proud of it, and supporting it right down the line.⁴⁰

As the school in general was to receive such high praise, more specific efforts were made to improve the flight training. The aviation department was being expanded and its facilities were increased. Twenty-two students were now taking the courses, which included ground school and flight training. The hangar held six standard planes as well as classrooms. The field was designated as an intermediate landing field by the government and maintained by the Civil Aeronautics Authority.⁴¹

The high esteem in which the academy was held by the governor was indicated by the invitation for a troop of cavalry from the Oklahoma

⁴⁰ Progress, January 15, 1934.

⁴¹ Oklahoma Military Academy General Catalog, 1934-35, p. 9.

Military Academy to act as an escort at the inauguration of Governor E. W. Marland. The band was to take part in the parade. This was the first time either unit had participated in an inauguration ceremony.⁴²

After the death of Will Rogers, a move was started to change the name of the academy from Oklahoma Military Academy to Will Rogers Military Academy. This idea was supported by several persons, but the foremost proponent of the idea was Frank Stuart of Oklahoma City. Stuart began circulation of a petition in the capitol. He said it would be a fitting tribute to Will Rogers and would mean much valuable publicity for the school.⁴³ This venture would probably have been more successful if less mention of the publicity for the school had been made and more emphasis placed upon the idea of honoring the memory of Rogers.

As the plan for changing the name subsided, one of the most beautiful changes in the campus was completed. This was the construction of Lake Douglas at the foot of the hill where a small lake was formed facing the barracks and Administration Building.⁴⁴ This addition to the campus was named in honor of Colonel Clarence B. Douglas.

The biggest achievement in the year 1936 was the large building program completed in the fall of that year. This was the result of the passage of a bill in 1935 setting up a building fund for the school and issuing \$150,000 in bonds. The largest of the buildings completed was the Will Rogers Auditorium, which seated 800 and contained a recreation room for the cadets, a post exchange, barber shop, projection booth, music and

⁴² Progress, January 10, 1935.

⁴³ Progress, December 26, 1935.

⁴⁴ The Guidon, 1935, p. 12.

dressing rooms. The second largest building was the Jesse Bushyhead Field House, which had a gym, swimming pool, R. O. T. C. classrooms and store rooms, as well as offices for the athletic and military departments. The cost of these two buildings was \$272,000. In addition to this, five new brick homes for members of the faculty were completed.⁴⁵ Formal ceremonies for the opening of the auditorium and fieldhouse were held on October 29, 1936, with Senator James Nance of Purcell as the principal speaker. More than 1,200 people were at the ceremonies and heard the Senator declare that the academy was a "favorite with the members of the State Legislature because of the high type of students it turned out."⁴⁶

An innovation of 1936 was an eight-week summer session of both high school and junior college divisions. No military training was conducted in the summer program.⁴⁷

The tempo of growth and development increased during the next two years. In 1937 the aviation department received added impetus as a committee of Claremore business men went to Washington to seek an R. O. T. C. aviation unit for the school.⁴⁸ Approval of this action was given, but a bill for this purpose, introduced into the House, failed to pass. The Department of Commerce later approved of the academy conducting a flight school of its own, and the affiliation with the Spartan School of Aeronautics was ended. The institution was recognized as a preliminary flight school by the government. These steps were in keeping with the long range

⁴⁵ The Guidon, 1936.

⁴⁶ Daily Oklahoman, October 30, 1936.

⁴⁷ Oklahoma Military Academy General Catalog, 1935-36, p. 49.

⁴⁸ Progress, January 14, 1937.

plan to make Oklahoma Military Academy the "West Point of the Southwest."⁴⁹

The faculty and student body took part in two ceremonies of importance that year. One was the dedication of the new hangar at the Will Rogers Airport in Claremore in May, 1937. The other affair was the program connected with the beginning of the Will Rogers Memorial. This was held on November 4, 1937, the 58th anniversary of the birth of Rogers, and many notables and friends of the humorist attended the ceremony. Another civic activity which was assisted by the members of the cadet corps was the Indian Exposition at Tulsa on October 21. Over 150 officers and men from the cadet corps attended the ceremonies. This included the band, polo team, and fifty horses, all of which participated in the school's part of the program.⁵⁰

While the cadet corps was busily engaged in these various activities, the Board of Regents made plans for a summer camp for the school. The proposed site for this camp was the 460-acre Canyon Lake property, seven miles southeast of Claremore. A contract was made for the purchase of the property at \$40,000. A \$5,000 down payment was made from the school mess fund after Mac Q. Williamson, State Attorney General, had approved the legality of the action. A federal W. P. A. grant was received to build two native stone barracks and a mess hall and to beautify the grounds. The total cost of this project was \$38,624.60. Of this, the Federal Government contributed \$28,805 through the W. P. A. grant.⁵¹ This project proved to be the cause of bitterness and charges of graft later.

⁴⁹ Ibid., January 21, 1937.

⁵⁰ Progress, September 16, 1937.

⁵¹ Ibid., December 16, 1937.

The year 1938 is best described as the lull before the storm, as again the work was carried on quietly. Needed improvements were finished this year when all roads around the school were paved. This program had its start in 1937, when the road from the bottom of the hill to the front of the barracks was paved. In the summer late in 1938, the others were finished and the new stadium was completed.

The school year 1938-39 was the most outstanding one in the history of the institution. In all branches of its work and activities, the academy was to reach its zenith. The enrollment was the highest ever known; the band was the largest and best; the athletic department set records not equaled since; and the military department rated the highest in its history by the War Board.⁵²

The high standing of the Board of Regents with the state legislature is indicated by the passage of a bill in March, 1939, authorizing the Board of Regents to issue up to the \$500,000 in bonds for a self liquidation building program. The project included a new mess hall, barracks, laundry, and other structures that could be paid for out of student fees. The bill was vetoed by Governor Phillips along with the expansion programs in other schools.⁵³

The academy was chosen in September of 1939, out of the ten state educational institutions, for a government flight school. This was the eighth year of flying at the Oklahoma Military Academy and there had been no accidents to that date.⁵⁴

⁵² Progress, June 15, 1939.

⁵³ Ibid., May 25, 1939.

⁵⁴ Ibid., September 21, 1939.

As this period saw increased expansion for the school in general, the Oklahoma Military Academy Band proved to be no exception to the rule. It was natural for the group to become well known, for the military training required for all students gave them a solid foundation on which to build and become an exceptional marching band. Improvement and growth was steady, and in 1939 the band was the largest and best in the history of the school. Many appearances at important events were made by these cadets during the Downs administration.^{55. 56}

The band participated in the National American Legion Convention at San Antonio, Texas, and the International Petroleum Exposition at Tulsa in 1938. In 1939, it went to Ponca City twice, the first time to the State Rotary Convention and the second time as the official band for the unveiling of the "Pioneer Woman" statue on April 22. In the 1934 tri-state band festival at Enid, it was given the position of honor in the parade and was the only band to receive special mention in the Enid papers. This was the second year for the new music director at the academy, Captain P. H. Kelly.⁵⁷

The year 1936 brought recognition to the cadets from the Lone Star State as the result of the band's participating in the Texas Centennial General Exposition at Dallas, Texas. The special events director of the Exposition stated that the academy band was the best they had ever had on the grounds.⁵⁸ The 1939 band totaled sixty-seven members.⁵⁹

⁵⁵ Interview notes, Colonel Walter E. Downs, Helena, Oklahoma, June 27, 1947.

⁵⁶ Progress, November 18, 1928; April 25, 1929.

⁵⁷ Ibid., May 1, 1930.

⁵⁸ Progress, November 12, 1936.

⁵⁹ The Guidon, 1939, p. 28.

As in the other departments, the military aspect of the academy made its most important strides forward in the history of the school during this period. The raising of academic standards did not detract from the progress and importance of the military. The many fine officers and men which the academy contributed to World War II was the result of the progress made during this period.

The recovery of the Junior R. O. T. C. rating in 1926 brought increased prestige and aid in the form of uniforms and equipment from the Federal Government. The gaining of the senior R. O. T. C. cavalry unit in 1930 further enhanced the military program of the school.

The school frequently gained publicity through use of the eye appeal of the military department. An example was the formal retreat parade held on March 7, 1930. It was estimated that between four and five thousand people witnessed the parade and the value of the event in terms of advertising was great.

Another addition to the military department in 1930 was the Field Artillery Unit from the Oklahoma National Guard. This brought the total of military units at the academy to four--the infantry, cavalry, ordnance, and field artillery. While the last two mentioned were branches of the Oklahoma National Guard, they were composed of the cadets at the academy and a few Claremore men.⁶⁰

A new form of advertising developed in the following year, and this was the use of the new branch of the school, the cavalry unit, for a horse show. The first show was held on November 22, 1931.⁶¹

⁶⁰ Progress, May 1, 1930.

⁶¹ Ibid., November 19, 1931. (There were only eleven schools in the United States which had both senior cavalry and infantry units.)

From 1933 to 1950 the outstanding happening for the military department each year was the annual War Board inspection and the work from the whole school to raise the rating of the academy. The War Board inspection was the culmination of each year's work. When the school was first offered a chance in 1933 to become an "honor school," the test was passed with flying colors. Few schools had received the rating on their first attempt, and the Oklahoma Military Academy became the youngest ever to hold such a rating.⁶² The honor rating did not bring any additional aid from the government, but as the term suggests, the important returns were the added recognition from the War Department and other schools. With the winning of this honor went a sense of achievement. It also permitted the appointment of one graduate and an alternate from Oklahoma Military Academy to both the Military Academy at West Point and the Naval Academy at Annapolis. In 1936, the graduate appointed to West Point was allowed to enter without any examination.⁶³

In 1934, the Oklahoma Military Academy was declared to have shown more improvement than any other school visited, and it was ranked as the fifth R. O. T. C. military school in the nation. For cooperation between the military and administrative departments, the school received a one-hundred per cent rating.⁶⁴ From 1936 to 1941, the Eighth Corps Area and the War Board inspections were made simultaneously. In 1936 the infantry unit was dropped from the school as more of the students entered the cavalry.⁶⁵

⁶² Tulsa Daily World, October 7, 1936.

⁶³ Progress, June 18, 1936.

⁶⁴ Ibid., June 21, 1934.

⁶⁵ Ibid., June 17, 1937.

As in other fields of endeavor, the year 1939 saw the military department receive the highest rating ever held on the War Board inspection. The work of the school was so outstanding as to merit the attention of the Chief of the United States Cavalry, General J. K. Kerr. The General sent his congratulations to Major Finley and informed him of the fact that the school ranked third in the nation.⁶⁶

As with the military, these were the "Golden Years" for athletics at the academy, and records were established that will probably stand the onslaughts of future teams. Two new sports were added to the list of cadet activities. These were swimming and polo. Swimming teams were first formed after the new gym was finished in 1936 and polo was started in 1931. Other sports included track, tennis, wrestling, and baseball, but football, boxing, basketball, and polo were the major sporting events at the academy.

In 1925, at the beginning of this period, the coaching job at the school was no "plum." The turnover of coaches indicates this. The first coach in 1925, Howard "Tarzan" March, did not even report to the school, and his position was filled by "Swede" Jamerson.⁶⁷ Jamerson and his successor, Coach J. C. Bradley, each remained only one year. It was not until 1927, with the coming with Murl "Tuffy" Cline, former star halfback at the academy and the University of Tulsa, that the athletic department was to remain in the hands of one administrator for any length of time. Coach Cline proved to be a capable athletic director and was responsible for the improved standing of this phase of the academy. He was a staunch

⁶⁶ Progress, June 15, 1939.

⁶⁷ Interview notes, Colonel Walter E. Downs, Helena, Oklahoma, June 27, 1947; Claremore Progress, July 2, 1925.

supporter of Colonel Downs and greatly aided the Colonel in handling the boys.⁶⁸

The football teams of the first two years gave little indication of the success that would come in future years. As mentioned previously, the team of 1925 travelled a great deal to advertise the school. The following year, contrary to expectations, was one of the poorest seasons on record, with four victories and four defeats.⁶⁹

Coach Cline's first year was also the first year for an undefeated and untied football team at the academy. Other outstanding teams were the ones of 1930, 1935, 1937, and 1938. The last two years the football team was again undefeated and untied and set a record of eighteen wins before losing a game. The 1938 team was rated as the number two junior college team in the nation by Paul B. Williamson and his rating system.⁷⁰

There were many good boxing teams at the academy, but perhaps the best ones were the teams of 1930 and 1935. The 1930 team was composed mostly of boys from the 1929 squad, and the school was referred to in some quarters as the "Notre Dame of Boxing."⁷¹ The most important tournaments attended that year were the Ozark tournament at Springfield, Missouri, and the Southwestern A. A. U. at Wichita, Kansas. Three championships were won by the cadet boxers at each tournament. Ernest Hollopeter was perhaps the most colorful fighter the academy had and was called a "bow-legged combination of Kangaroo and Caveman" by sports writer Bus Ham at

⁶⁸ Interview notes, Colonel W. E. Downs, Helena, Oklahoma, June 27, 1947.

⁶⁹ Progress, November 18, 1926.

⁷⁰ Ibid., August 15, 1945.

⁷¹ The Guidon, 1930, p. 71.

the State A. A. U. tournament.⁷² The 1935 boxing team took part in eight meets and was not defeated in a tournament. There were three state and one Missouri Valley champions on the squad.⁷³

The basketball team of the season 1936-37 was the best in the history of the school and compiled a record of fifteen victories against two losses. Team members were Donovan Ridgeway, Maze Moton, James Hewitt, Frank Strom, and Bill Barrett. The following seasons were again good years for the basketball team. Its record for 1937-38 was nineteen victories and six defeats. This included a winning streak that lasted seventeen straight games.⁷⁴

Polo, the newest of the major sports at the academy, was also successful. With the first call for practice it must have looked as though half of the students on the "hill" considered themselves cowboys or horsemen, as 105 cadets were on hand. This posed quite a problem for Coach Sam Houston, III, as he had to pick out the four best men for the few games the team played that year.⁷⁵ The following year, 1932, the polo team won ten games and lost none, defeating the highly rated New Mexico Military Institute.⁷⁶ The game was played in Roswell, New Mexico. As a result of the continued success, the polo team was invited to the west coast to play in a tournament which was conducted and sponsored by the Uplifter's Polo Club of Santa Monica, California. This was mainly because of the fact

⁷² Progress, April 24, 1930.

⁷³ The Guidon, 1935, p. 78.

⁷⁴ Ibid., 1938, p. 76.

⁷⁵ Ibid., 1931, p. 78.

⁷⁶ Ibid., 1932, p. 63.

that Will Rogers had been kidding the people of the west coast about their polo playing ability. He told them that he had a small school in Oklahoma that could defeat the best they had. The high opinion in which the team was held by Rogers was justified in the previous year when Oklahoma Military Academy's four defeated the University of Chicago polo team nine to three in the first indoor polo game ever played by the cadets.⁷⁷ The academy team was the guest of Rogers and used his polo ponies. Stanford University, the west coast champion, was chosen for the Oklahoma Military Academy opponents, and a "two best out of three" series was played for the championship and cup that Rogers donated. The cadets won the first two games in a decisive manner, thus eliminating the necessity of a third game. The academy received nation-wide publicity as Rogers advertised the event through his good natured kidding of the opposition.⁷⁸

The spring of 1938 saw the polo club finish an amazing record. It won twenty-three straight games before being defeated. This record was not against inferior opposition, as it included six victories over the University of Oklahoma, two over Texas Agricultural and Mechanical College, and three defeats of the highly rated New Mexico Military Institute team, which was the team that ended the winning streak.⁷⁹

A policy that had been initiated by Colonel Downs and became increasingly popular with the students and friends of the "hill" was the Oklahoma Military Academy minstrel. The minstrel, started in 1926 and thereafter presented annually, was a big success in its first year. The citizens of

⁷⁷ The Guidon, 1933, p. 66.

⁷⁸ Progress, January 3, 1935.

⁷⁹ The Guidon, 1938, p. 105.

Claremore liked the show and two town men, Charley Alton and Bob Lee, helped Captain Lee Gilstrap produce the minstrel.⁸⁰ The name was later changed to Cadet Capers and is still known by that name today.

There were two cadet organizations which were quite similar to one another started in this period. The first was the Saber Society initiated on November 8, 1927, which was a secret society for the cadet officers only.⁸¹ The other society was the one for the non-commissioned officer counterpart of the Saber Society and was known as the Chevron Society. This group was organized during the school year of 1932-33.⁸²

The year 1939-40 marked the beginning of the decline of the school's various activities, including athletics; in 1939, the first time since 1927, a Cline-coached football team lost its opening game and also lost more games than it won. The season ended with only one victory for the cadets. A similar record followed each year until all sports were dropped during the war.

This evident decline in all sports was the result of a policy of Governor Leon C. Phillips which stopped any form of aid for athletics. There had been no established standard of help for athletes at the academy. The Board of Regents and Colonel Downs decided how many school jobs would be given, and Coach Cline was allowed to assign them to athletes. The amount of tuition and other expenses deducted from the individual cadet's total expense again depended upon the coach. This varied from \$100 up to all costs for a very few students. Many boys played on the varsity teams and did not receive any help from the school, and those who did have jobs

⁸⁰ Progress, December 20, 1938; May 8, 1930.

⁸¹ The Guidon, 1928, p. 96.

⁸² Ibid., 1933, p. 78.

had to do actual work such as waiting on tables in the mess and cleaning the gym, latrines, or various other school buildings.⁸³

The Oklahoma Military Academy athletes were taught more than how to win, and they were constantly reminded of their conduct which must be exemplary of the entire cadet corps. Strict training rules and a high moral code were demanded of all athletic teams.

The Phillips administration did more than stop aid to athletes. Bandmen and political favorites, who were given help on their expenses, were included, too. The cause of this and the many other changes brought about by the Phillips administration go back to an old political fight between H. Tom Kight, Sr., and Phillips. In 1935, Phillips aspired to become Speaker of the Oklahoma House of Representatives. Governor E. W. Marland favored another candidate. While all the facts were not clear, it is evident Kight's vote and influence contributed to Phillips' defeat. A feeling of bitterness began with this incident.⁸⁴ The appointment of H. Tom Kight, Jr., to the Board of Regents of the academy in 1936 was supposedly the outcome of the political friendship between Marland and the elder Kight.⁸⁵ In 1938, Phillips was elected governor of Oklahoma. Not many weeks passed after his inauguration, in January, 1939, until it appeared that stormy days were ahead for the school.

The first indication of impending trouble was Phillips' announcement that the business affairs of the military school were under investigation. Thus, under the guise of a financial inquiry, the attempt to settle this

⁸³ Interview notes, Mr. Murl Cline, Claremore, Oklahoma, June 9, 1948.

⁸⁴ Tulsa Daily World, September 11, 1936.

⁸⁵ Tulsa Daily World, September 13, 1936, February 6, 1939, February 13, 1939.

old score was first started. The Governor had ordered a private audit of the financial records of the school. Mr. Ted Adams, financial secretary and friend of H. Tom Kight, Jr., was the target of the inquiry. At this time Phillips exonerated Colonel Downs of any responsibility for what he termed bad management at the school.⁸⁶

The Claremore Progress and the majority of the citizens of the city remained quiet during this period of strife and would not support either the school or the governor. Instead, they tried to remain neutral and maintain their business contacts with the winner of this fight, no matter which one it might be.

A few days later, Phillips made another statement criticizing the influence of the Kights at the school. He cast reflections upon their integrity by mentioning the settlement of an industrial claim against the school in which both sides were represented by the Kights. This was typical of the governor's attack upon his political enemies. In the meantime, the interest in the school's affairs had spread to the legislature where the Senate passed a resolution, introduced by Senator H. C. Timmons of Tulsa, calling for an investigation of the academy finances.⁸⁷

As the Senate investigation got under way, Timmons charged that the school was short \$25,000 and that Mr. Robert McCracken, son of a former state tax commissioner, had drawn money from the school when he had no connection with the academy in any form. Timmons claimed that the board, and not Colonel Downs, controlled the school funds. He also remarked that he knew of one prominent Tulsan who withdrew his son from the school because

⁸⁶ Ibid.

⁸⁷ Ibid.

of Kight's presence on the board.⁸⁸

Senator Jesse Taylor of Woodward attacked the school by saying that the only youngsters sent to Oklahoma Military Academy were ones who were problems to their parents and peace officers. He also thought that the cost of the institution was too high and said that it had been created only as a "pay-off" to H. Tom Kight "for his work in the impeachment of two governors."⁸⁹ Kight replied by charging that the attacks on the academy were malicious and that Governor Phillips was using several persons and the Tulsa Daily World to belittle the school and his family.⁹⁰

The investigation was at this time transferred from a special committee to the Senate General Investigation Committee. The financial secretary, Adams, was again the target. It was also announced that the minutes of the Board of Regents were missing for the last two years.⁹¹ The various charges were denied by the members of the board and they claimed no irregularities or deficit.⁹²

The general opinion was that the investigation committee would recommend the removal of the financial secretary and chief clerk at the academy and the installation of a new system of bookkeeping for the school. There was a possibility that action might be taken to recover an industrial

⁸⁸ Oklahoma City Times, February 11, 1939, clipping in the Daily Oklahoman Library.

⁸⁹ Daily Oklahoman, February 19, 1939. (Clipping service)

⁹⁰ Tulsa Daily World, February 14, 1939.

⁹¹ Oklahoma City Times, March 2, 1939. (Clipping service)

⁹² Progress, February 23, 1939.

claim of \$1,200 paid to Mr. Morgan Dowall and \$1,170 paid to Robert McCracken.⁹³ The committee evidently found nothing startlingly wrong, as its only recommendation was that Adams be released from his duties. Colonel Downs was to take over these duties until a replacement could be found. The work of the Colonel was upheld and it was generally felt that any criticism of his work was caused by politics.⁹⁴

On March 15, 1939, with the investigation in full swing, Phillips appointed a new Board of Regents. The board was now composed of the governor, Mr. Joe Chambers, Tulsa attorney and former member of the legislature, and D. E. (Bill) Martin, also of Tulsa. In a statement that revealed his plans to segregate the forces of the school and the city of Claremore, Phillips said that the new board should be removed from the commercial interests of Claremore.⁹⁵

⁹³ Robert McCracken was the son of former state tax commissioner, H. L. McCracken, who had died in office. Following the death of the elder McCracken, the Board of Regents had ordered ninety dollars a month paid to the son from the academy funds. These payments were made for thirteen months and there is no evidence that McCracken rendered any service for the payments. Mrs. H. L. McCracken wrote the members of the Senate Investigation Committee and the Governor offering to work for thirteen months without pay for the state. She was a competent secretary and she felt this would more than repay the state for the money spent. She explained that her husband had contracted cold while engaged in official duties. His refusal to take time off for rest eventually led to his death. She believed that he had already earned much of the \$13,000 compensation he would have received during the remainder of his term had he lived and that the state owed a large part of it to his heirs. Mrs. McCracken felt that the Board of Regents at the academy should not be punished for "having a heart" and feeling as she did that her husband's heirs were due part of his salary. After this appeal the matter was dropped. (Oklahoma City Times, March 3, 1947, clipping collection in Daily Oklahoman library.)

⁹⁴ Progress, March 30, 1939.

⁹⁵ Tulsa Daily World, in the Progress, March 16, 1939.

This change in the Board of Regents caused the affair to break out on a new front and more clearly indicated the development into a "war" between the rival political factions of the Kights and Governor Phillips and his followers. Several members of the House rebelled against the appointing of Chambers to the Board of Regents. This was followed by a resolution calling for the investigation of Chambers' wife who was working for the Oklahoma Tax Commission. Chambers broke his silence and claimed that Kight had instigated these actions and that he was ready to stand on his record and that it would prove better than that of Kight.⁹⁶ Tempers were getting short, and H. Tom Kight, Sr., reportedly threatened a Tulsa World reporter who was at the time questioning him. Kight told the reporter to get away from him and, gesturing toward his hip pocket, said that he did not want to have to kill him.⁹⁷

The furor had apparently abated by the end of March, 1939, following the recommendation of the Senate Committee, and it was hoped that the school would not suffer too much from this adverse publicity. After five months of comparative quiet and peace, while the school officials went steadily on with their work, Governor Phillips let loose a tirade on the school. Phillips was determined to wreck the power of the Kights, the school, or both. He termed the management of the finances at the school shocking, and charged the Senate with "white washing" the school in the investigation of the previous March. No direct attack was made on Colonel Downs, and the governor said he would be retained if he could cooperate

⁹⁶ Ibid., March 18, 1939, in the Progress, March 23, 1939.

⁹⁷ Ibid.

with the administration.⁹⁸ Phillips planned to raise the academic standards. In a move which evidenced the rift between the school and city, he pointed out that the new board was not dealing with the local merchants very much.⁹⁹ In a later statement the governor said the Rogers County prosecuting attorney was to get all the evidence from the probe and could take any action he saw fit. The previous board charged with gross misappropriation of funds and Phillips pointed out that the feed for the school was supposedly being used for the hogs and cattle of Kight.¹⁰⁰

An audit of the school finances from June, 1935, to June, 1939, by the state authorities, was made and given to the governor. At the end of this period the academy had a deficit of \$16,558.23. The auditor's report pointed out that football talent had been costly, that minutes of the board were missing, and that accounting records for the four years were so brief as to be almost useless. The football talent was declared costly because some of the athletes had failed to pay what they had promised. This was true of the other cadets, but the football team was highlighted because it had been one of the outstanding activities of the school and had been supported by the previous board.¹⁰¹

On April 2 the inevitable occurred and Colonel Downs was relieved of his duties by the Board of Regents. This was done, the governor said, to

⁹⁸ Oklahoma City Times, August 7, 1939, clipping collection in the Daily Oklahoman library.

⁹⁹ Progress, August 10, 1939.

¹⁰⁰ Ibid., August 17, 1939.

¹⁰¹ Tulsa Daily World, November 9, 1939, in the Claremore Progress, November 16, 1939.

improve the situation. Phillips declared that Colonel Downs had worked under difficult conditions with the previous board. When he asked if the Downs administration had been held responsible for existing conditions he replied, "We have tried to take the school out of local factionalism and petty misunderstandings."¹⁰² The main reason given for the removal of Downs was that the board wanted to obtain a West Point graduate for the presidency.¹⁰³

Thus the year 1940 brought to a close the term of Colonel Downs who had for fifteen years so ably guided the destinies of the academy. His term, which had brought the greatest growth known to Oklahoma Military Academy, ended with the bitter political fight in which he was an innocent bystander. The Colonel, like any other human, made his mistakes but he was at all times working for a better school and was sincere in his dealings with the students and faculty. He was kind and generous to a fault and believed in giving any student who broke the rules another chance if at all possible.

The life of the cadets had remained remarkably similar during these years under Colonel Downs. A change had been made from a predominantly high school age student body to one of the more mature junior college age level. As in most military schools where the students are together for twenty-four hours of the day, they developed a closeness uncommon to the student body of most schools. The school officials made an effort to improve the type of students all the time, and the cadets, because of their

^{102, 103} Ibid., April 2, 1940; Interview notes, Colonel Downs, Helena, Oklahoma, June 27, 1947.

proximity with each other, were quick to detect any undesirables. The different organizations were quite jealous of one another, or seemingly so, as they tried hard to outdo one another and to receive more publicity than the other. This apparent disunity did not last when the cadets were away from the hill and they told with pride of the achievements of all branches of endeavor. These factors and the rapid growth and recognition received marked the character of the cadet corps during this period. This developed a rather cocksure, boastful, and aggressive attitude among the cadets. The sense of a job well done and the achievements of the school make this feeling seem more justified than ordinarily would be true.¹⁰⁴

The academic side of the school was less colorful than some of the activities. The subjects offered to the students were those of the traditional high school and junior college and were established to give a broad general background for the first two years of college work. Courses offered were English, psychology, Latin, algebra, mathematics, analytics, calculus, descriptive geometry, elementary surveying, engineering, mechanical drawing, trigonometry, manual training, physics, chemistry, geology, biology, geography, general science, history, speech, economics, typing, accounting, bookkeeping, business law, German, Spanish, and military science and tactics, music, aviation, auto mechanics and athletics were also offered to the cadet corps. In certain broad fields, such as history, English, and others, there were several different specialized courses offered.¹⁰⁵

¹⁰⁴ Interview notes, Mr. Murl Cline, Claremore, Oklahoma, July 27, 1948.

¹⁰⁵ Oklahoma Military Class Schedule, First Semester, 1936-37. From the files of the business manager, Oklahoma Military Academy, June 17, 1949.

Certain difficulties arose at the end of Downs' administration which made it harder for him to perform the duties of his office as efficiently as he might.¹⁰⁶ The school did show a deficit at the time the audit was made, but plans were drawn up by which this would have been eradicated. Little, if any, of this deficit was to be placed upon the shoulders of the Colonel, as the majority of this was caused merely by expansion, by football scholarships, and the dealings of the board. To meet the requirements of the presidency of the Oklahoma Military Academy, its unique standards and strong political backers who demanded a share in its operation, the Colonel more than lived up to expectations. True, there may have been better schools in some respects, but it is doubtful that more could have been accomplished under the conditions that existed.

When the Colonel left the academy, there were very few of the people of Claremore who were courageous enough to express their appreciation for the work that he had done. The Progress and the rest of the community were at this time still trying to remain in the good graces of the state administration. This feeling of fear of financial repercussions was the reason the people of Claremore failed to express their real feelings and opinions about the changes made at this time.

A look at the growth and achievements under the Downs administration tells the story of his work much better than mere words. He came to the school when it consisted of only two buildings, 150 students, and not even a junior R. O. T. C. rating. In 1941 the Oklahoma State Regents for Higher Education estimated the value of the buildings and land at \$825,924.19.

¹⁰⁶ Interview notes, Mr. Murl Cline, Claremore, Oklahoma, July 19, 1948.

There had been no additions to the school since Downs left, and this was the highest value of any of the state junior colleges. This value was made up of fifteen buildings and 640 acres of land. In addition to this, the school had started the purchase of the Canyon Lake property, which consisted of 420 acres. The growth in the physical plant was not the only area of expansion, as the enrollment had increased to over 386, the school had both a junior and senior R. O. T. C. unit, and it held the Honor Rating. The academy was the youngest school ever to receive this rating and also was the first school in the nation to introduce flying courses into its curriculum. The success of the various athletics and the goodwill of the people of Claremore before the affair of 1939 need no further emphasis. The high school department had been accredited by the North Central Association in 1925, the school became a member of the Essential Military Schools in 1934, and of the American Association of Junior Colleges in 1935. The cost of tuition had been kept as low as possible and had risen from \$408 in 1925 to only \$585 in 1940.¹⁰⁷ This record in the fifteen years under the Colonel is undeniable proof of the accomplishments of "The Downs Era."

Certainly, this period of development has been the lengthy one when compared with all other administrations of the school. All evidence would point to the need of stability in the policy and administration of any school.

¹⁰⁷ Interview notes, Colonel Walter E. Downs, Okmulgee, Oklahoma, June 27, 1947; Bulletin of the Oklahoma Military Academy, 1925-26, p. 17, and the Oklahoma Military Academy General Catalog, 1939-40, p. 7.

CHAPTER III

THE MILITARY ERA

The course of events at the Oklahoma Military Academy during the years following the dismissal of Colonel Downs continued to be influenced by the efforts of Oklahoma politicians. In addition, the entrance of the United States into World War II caused changes in the life of the academy and, to some extent, in the educational philosophy of the school.

In keeping with the stated intention of replacing Downs with a man of military background and training, preferably a West Point graduate, Colonel R. E. Anderson was named president. Anderson had a fine background of training and experience as an administrator and military figure. He was graduated from West Point in 1912, and had returned there twice as an instructor. In addition, he had served as an administrative officer with the R. O. T. C. units at Cornell University and Pennsylvania Military College. Immediately preceding his coming to the Oklahoma Military Academy he had been executive officer and a member of the commandant's department at the Citadel in Charleston, South Carolina.¹

At the time Colonel Anderson assumed his duties, the aviation department was in the process of expansion and had become affiliated with the Civil Aeronautical Authority's training program. A total of forty-five pilots were trained in the summer of 1940.² All students finishing the course at the academy after August 1, 1940, were sent directly to Randolph

¹ Progress, April 23, 1940.

² Ibid., May 31, 1940.

Field, Texas, to complete the army flight training.³

Before the opening of school in 1940, Governor Phillips announced that all student jobs at the school had been discontinued. Cadets who then held jobs were permitted to retain them until graduation but no more were to be offered. Phillips felt that by working, the student missed some of the military formations and also some of the objectives of the school.⁴ This policy was quietly rescinded in part, some months later, when it was apparent that adults would not work nearly as hard and for as little pay as the students had in the mess hall.⁵

That many of the cadets were unhappy about changes in policy at the academy is indicated by the fact that pre-enrollments revealed many of the cadets were not returning to the school in the fall of 1940.⁶

By September, R. R. Owen, state budget officer during the Phillips administration, announced triumphantly that, in contrast to previous years, the financial affairs of the school were being ably handled. He complimented and gave credit to the new Board of Regents, which included Governor Phillips. W. C. Steger was appointed financial secretary of the school by the new board.⁷

³ Progress, July 1, 1940.

⁴ Ibid., August 10, 1940. The only formations these students missed were reveille, noon mess, and retreat. The students were excused early to set the tables and prepare for the meals.

⁵ Interview notes, H. C. Riggs, Oklahoma Military Academy, Claremore, Oklahoma, June 19, 1947.

⁶ Progress, August 20, 1940; Interview notes, Mr. Murl Cline, Claremore, Oklahoma, July 29, 1948.

⁷ Progress, September 8, 1940.

The changed attitude toward financial assistance to athletes was soon reflected in the quality of the football team. From 1940 until 1943, when athletics were abandoned, the football team won only one game each year. The 1940 football team was referred to as the "Love of the Game Football Team." This was a rather pointed reminder that players were no longer receiving financial assistance. The absence of this aid was undoubtedly responsible for the fact that in the first football game in 1940 only three lettermen were in the starting lineup.⁸ The unsubsidized squad proved to be no match for competitors.

Two changes affecting the cadet corps were initiated in 1940. The first was a change in the dress uniform. The olive tan uniform patterned after that of army officers was replaced with a combination of blue and grey. The blouse was blue, trimmed in white, and the trousers were grey with a blue stripe.⁹

The second change was the termination of the policy of admitting day students. This followed the withdrawal of the school's business from Claremore merchants by the Phillips dominated board in 1939. This looked like an outgrowth of the political disturbance and an attempt to further alienate the school from the city of Claremore.¹⁰ The reason given by the governor for this action was that the inspecting officers in 1939 had expressed their disapproval of the crowded conditions and the allowing of

⁸ Progress, September 27, 1940.

⁹ The Guidon, 1941. (Later, in 1943, white trousers and cap covers were added to the uniform.)

¹⁰ Progress, August 10, 1939; Interview notes, Mr. Murl Cline and Mr. H. Tom Kight, Jr., Claremore, Oklahoma, June 19, 1948.

the day students to attend the school. The governor allegedly received an official notice from the War Department that unless these conditions were changed, the federal support would be withdrawn. No such recommendation from the War Department has been found in the archives of the academy.¹¹ Day students were allowed to enter the school in 1932, the year before winning the "Honor Rating," and there is no evidence of complaints against this move. The day students continued during the rise in the standing of the military department until 1940. Other military schools of a similar classification as the Oklahoma Military Academy have allowed day students and there is no knowledge of their receiving such word from the War Department.

It is true that in the government requirements for an M-1 rating, or essential military school, there is a statement that all students are to be in uniform and under the complete supervision of the school officials for a twenty-four hour period each day. A literal interpretation of this wording would warrant such a move, but this was not the reason given for the action taken. The Perkins administration justified the refusal to admit day students on the basis of this statement.¹²

The year 1940-41 brought a large turnover in the personnel of the faculty, the first significant one since 1923. Major Finley and Captain

¹¹ Interview notes, Mr. Murl Cline, Colonel Kenneth S. Perkins, and Miss Dorothea Majors, Business Manager at the academy, Claremore, Oklahoma, July 29, 1947. The Colonel said that he had never seen such a paper, nor had he any information about it other than hearsay.

¹² Interview notes, Colonel Kenneth S. Perkins; Official War Department bulletins from the files of the President's office at the Oklahoma Military Academy, July 29, 1947.

Lee Gilstrap reported to the army for active duty. Leslie Brooking, Thomas Sexton, Tillman Cline, and Fred Talbert resigned from the faculty.¹³ In the years following, many other teachers left the school. The war and selective service accounted for some of the resignations, but dissatisfaction with conditions undoubtedly contributed to this exodus.

In January of 1941 there were further signs of discontent and repercussions of the political "war" started in 1932. On January 3, Colonel Anderson made public the fact that he had asked to be placed on active duty and would request the Board of Regents to relieve him of his duties as president in a few weeks.¹⁴ Later it became apparent that the real reason for this action was his inability to get W. C. Steger, the business manager, to work with him. Steger was an appointee of the Phillips board, and the governor upheld him by announcing that "all Steger knows is to be honest and make other people stay in line."¹⁵ Colonel Anderson was granted a leave of absence, effective January 9, 1941, and Captain John C. Hamilton, former commandant of cadets, was made acting president until a new man could be found to fill the vacancy.¹⁶

As interest in this action was subsiding, the people of northeastern Oklahoma were disturbed with the rumors that Governor Phillips planned to open negotiations with the federal government to sell the academy to the army as a training school. He thought the school would be of value to the army and that getting rid of it would help curtail state expenditures.¹⁷

¹³ Progress, September 23, 1940.

¹⁴ Ibid., January 3, 1941.

¹⁵ Tulsa Daily World, January 13, 1941, in the Progress, January 14, 1941.

¹⁶ Progress, January 10, 1941.

¹⁷ Tulsa Daily World, January 7, 1941, in the Progress, January 8, 1941.

Some believed this was a part of Phillips' plan to even his old score with the Kights and their supporters. Anderson said that the board had not informed him of the scheme. The general consensus of opinion of Claremore business men was that this was a step to kill the school and in line with the policies of the governor. They were against this move and argued that the school was worthy of state support and should be continued.¹⁸ News of this plan caused considerable excitement at the school and resulted in the interruption of some classes and work. This became so marked that the governor sent word to the faculty and students to quiet down and get back to work. Early in February it was revealed that the army was not interested in the proposal. Phillips then announced an effort would be made to improve the school.¹⁹

While the plan to sell the school was pending, Joe Chambers announced his resignation from the board.²⁰ Rumors prevailed that W. C. Steger would be replaced. Phillips attempted to scotch the rumors by praising Steger highly and expressing regret that any thought of his leaving existed.²¹ A successor to Chambers was not appointed immediately, pending the outcome of a bill in the legislature, proposed by Representative Charles A. Whitford of Nowata, providing for the removal of the governor from the board and the appointment of three members whose terms were to expire with that of the appointing governor.²² The bill passed in the middle of March and the new

¹⁸ Ibid., January 9, 1941.

¹⁹ Progress, February 4, 1941.

²⁰ Ibid., January 9, 1941.

²¹ Tulsa Daily World, January 13, 1941, in the Progress, January 14, 1941.

²² Tulsa Daily World, March 13, 1941, in the Claremore Progress, March 14, 1941.

board was organized by the governor later that summer.²³

With the establishment of this new board in the summer of 1941, Captain John C. Hamilton was appointed president. He had been the commandant of cadets under Anderson and had served as acting president since January. Hamilton was a retired regular army man, having graduated from West Point in 1918 as a second lieutenant in the cavalry. He had served in many capacities while in the army, including four years as an instructor at West Point.

Captain Hamilton began to put into effect some of his plans for the institution with the opening of school in the fall of 1941. As far as possible the school and the cadet corps were organized along the lines of the military academy at West Point. The new cadets registered and were organized under the supervision of selected old cadets into a special "rabbit detail." This treatment of the cadets differed from the custom previously practiced in that they were segregated from the older cadets and subjected to more rigid discipline.²⁴ A Rabbit Manual was published and cadet officers were placed in charge of the cadet corps twenty-four hours a day.²⁵ These changes and a statement in a more recent issue of the Rabbit Manual show the power of the "old man" over the new cadet. Number six of the regulations governing the relations of the old cadets to the new cadets says "when civilians are present, old cadets will show the proper courtesy toward the new cadets."²⁶ Hamilton also declared that more emphasis would

²³ Progress, July 7, 1941.

²⁴ Ibid., August 23, 1941.

²⁵ The Vedette, 1943, p. 67. (The name of the yearbook had been changed again to the Vedette in 1942.)

²⁶ Rabbit Manual, 1945-46, Vol. 4, p. 66.

be placed upon the academic side of the school and an attempt made to broaden the program of intra-mural athletics.²⁷

The stated objectives of the institution were gradually modified as World War II made its imprint on the educational institutions of the nation. The 1941-42 academy catalog emphasized as an objective of the school the development of qualities that made good citizens. The function of the school was to furnish the state with civic leaders in times of peace and with military commanders in times of war, and to develop character that would be a source of pride to the state.²⁸ A statement of the aims of the academy made in January, 1942, neglected these purposes, and declared that the basic aim of the school was the training of officer personnel in military science and tactics.²⁹

In the spring of 1942, by action of the Board of Regents, the first two years of high school were dropped from the curriculum. The following year, the sophomore year of high school had to be returned to the schedule. This was done because the war and other factors brought a drop in the junior college enrollment and it became necessary to keep up the high school enrollment.³⁰

In May of 1942, the annual Eighth Corps Area inspection resulted in the highest rating the academy ever received. Colonel E. A. Keys, the inspecting officer, was a close friend of Captain Hamilton. This may have influenced his high opinion of the school, for in the War Board inspection

²⁷ Progress, October 10, 1941.

²⁸ Catalog of the Oklahoma Military Academy, 1941-42, p. 27.

²⁹ Progress, January 28, 1942.

³⁰ Progress, January 28, 1942; Interview notes, H. C. Riggs at the academy, Claremore, Oklahoma, June 17, 1947.

of that year the inspecting officers who were unknown to the school officials did not rate the academy as highly as did Keys.³¹

With the increased tempo of the war and the awareness that it might last for quite some time, a bill was introduced in Congress by Representative Wesley Disney to make the Oklahoma Military Academy into a second United States Military Academy. Several convincing arguments for this move were forwarded, but the bill did not pass.³²

The most important happening in 1942 was the adoption of an accelerated program. On November 9, a plan was approved which placed the school on a twelve month school year of three 17-week periods. This was done to allow more students to receive military training and also to turn out more officers for the armed forces.³³

The year 1943 brought considerable notoriety to the academy. It was of a type that the school could easily have done without. The background is again to be found in Oklahoma politics.

With the expiration of the term of Governor Phillips and the inauguration of Governor Robert S. Kerr in January, 1943, the terms of the members of the Board of Regents also expired. The school was without a governing board for a short time pending the passage of a law which again made the governor a member of a three-man Board of Regents. The new arrangement was expected to return H. Tom Kight, Sr., to a position of influence in the affairs of the academy.³⁴

³¹ Progress, June 10, 1942.

³² Ibid., May 27, 1942.

³³ Ibid., November 11, 1942.

³⁴ Tulsa Daily World, January 30, 1947, from clipping collection in the World library.

The trouble in 1943 was a continuation of the disturbance in 1939 when Colonel Downs was relieved of his duties as president. When the next president, Colonel Anderson, left the academy because of internal dissension and was followed by Captain Hamilton, there were rumors that Hamilton had abetted this discord and planned to become the next president.³⁵ He was appointed by the board that Governor Phillips had established. With the end of Phillips' term of office and the return to influence of the Kight faction, a move was started to oust Hamilton. Many of the citizens of Claremore were dissatisfied with existing conditions, as the changes made by Phillips were not popular. The day students had been dropped by his administration, the business of the school taken away from the city of Claremore, and an attempt was made to sell the academy to the federal government. It was rumored that Hamilton had told a member of the academy staff not to associate with the people of Claremore. The townspeople at least believed this of the Captain and placed some of the blame for conditions on his actions.³⁶

Although Captain Hamilton was not popular in Claremore, he had gained the support of many of the parents of students through his ability to impress them in personal contacts. This served him well in his attempt to

³⁵ Interview notes, Mr. Murl Cline, Claremore, Oklahoma, July 29, 1947. Much of the evidence which bears on the events of 1943 is contradictory and difficult to evaluate. Conclusions are not easily formed. The bitterness of the charges adds to the difficulty of precise deductions. Most of the sources of information are influenced by personal prejudices and biases. The observers of the events were frequently too close to them for objective judgment. While the academy had always been the victim of politics, it had never been faced with a problem of such rabid factionalism until the affairs of 1939 and 1943. The present account is as near to the truth as can be determined at this time.

³⁶ Interview notes, Mr. Murl Cline, Claremore, Oklahoma, July 29, 1947.

prevent dismissal. Many of the parents re-enrolled their sons in 1943 with the provision that they would be withdrawn if Hamilton was not re-appointed president. This had an important bearing on the support of the school, for the tuition, the fees, and the purchases paid for by students now contributed more than half of the budget of the school.³⁷

Those who backed Hamilton pointed to the increasingly strict military discipline he had initiated and hinted that in the previous administration some of the cadets had paid their way through school by operating bars in the barracks and that attempts were made to smuggle girls into the rooms. To prevent acts of this type, Hamilton had issued iron-clad orders that no persons other than cadets were to be allowed in the barracks. This included the parents of the cadets themselves and the faculty of the academy.³⁸ Hamilton's friends claimed that this policy, which is hardly in agreement with current educational philosophy, was responsible for placing the school on a high moral plane.³⁹

In view of the demands that Hamilton be dismissed and the protests which this demand precipitated, the Board of Regents announced that a hearing to determine his fitness to continue in office would be held in May at Oklahoma City. Plans were made by many of the parents who had already enrolled their sons to send a delegation to the Capitol to inform the regents they wished the Captain to be retained.⁴⁰

³⁷ Tulsa Daily World, April 11, 1943, clipping collection in the World library.

³⁸ Ibid., April 11, 1943.

³⁹ Ibid.

⁴⁰ Tulsa Daily World, clipping service, May 1, 1943.

The hearing, on the retention of Captain Hamilton, was held in the Blue Room of the Capitol on May 14 and 15. H. Tom Kight, Sr., was the leader of the forces opposing Hamilton and charged that the Captain was an habitual drunkard, a user of narcotics, unscrupulous, untruthful, unfitted temperamentally for the position, and his conduct before the cadets at times unbecoming a man in his position.⁴¹ Joe G. Creager, Ponca City attorney, aided Hamilton in his defense. Witnesses were called by both sides and testimony given to aid the cause of each faction. The majority of the witnesses for Hamilton were students and their parents, while Kight had several persons who had worked, or were working, at the school and other citizens of Claremore testify against the Captain. The witnesses for the Captain upheld his character and pointed to improvements at the school. Kight's witnesses, including Mrs. B. L. Steinmetz, testified that they had seen the Captain intoxicated and that he was a barbiturtic addict. Lieut. Colonel V. E. Caldwell, former academy instructor, sent a telegram to the board testifying against the Captain.⁴² Both factions claimed a victory but Hamilton was retained for another year. Twelve months later, after tempers had cooled for this period, the Captain was dismissed.⁴³

The effort to oust Hamilton resulted in the formation of a parents association in July, 1943, by 120 militant parents who met in the Hotel Will Rogers at Claremore. One of the avowed purposes of this group was to see that employment and dismissal of personnel at the school was on the basis of merit alone. The chief aim was to drive out the politics then in

⁴¹ Ibid., May 1, 1943.

⁴² Ibid., May 14, 15, and 16, 1943; Interview notes, Mr. Murl Cline, Claremore, Oklahoma, June 27, 1947.

⁴³ The Daily Oklahoman clipping service, August 11, 1944.

the school and to see that it never returned.⁴⁴ The real purpose was to keep Hamilton as president and it failed in that. After his dismissal in 1944, the association lost its impetus.

While the controversy over Hamilton was being waged, another political "coal" was withdrawn from the ashes and handed to the state administration. This was the Canyon Lake deal which had its beginning under the Downs administration in 1938. The original plan was to use the site as a boy's summer camp, but the Phillips-appointed board had failed to finish the transaction and the contract was put in escrow. The total cost was about \$96,000, of which \$40,000 had been the original purchase price. The rest of the amount came from the W. P. A. building program.⁴⁵ The school officials had made a down payment on the property to the owners and \$34,000 was still due on the property. The Phillips administration had attempted to recover the money already paid on the property.⁴⁶

The furor was started in 1942, when Governor Phillips made an inspection of the property with the idea of turning it into an alien prison camp. The following year, while the Hamilton investigation was in progress, a resolution was introduced into the House calling for an inquiry into the events connected with the purchase of this property. This was introduced by Representative Charles A. Whitford, of Nowata. H. Tom Kight, Sr., immediately demanded that the resolution be passed and the investigation be started as soon as possible. He charged that Phillips and Joe Chambers had rented the property for the last four years to Mr. Bill Flippin for

⁴⁴ Progress, July 7, 1943.

⁴⁵ Tulsa Tribune, Tulsa World clipping service, May 16, 1943.

⁴⁶ Ibid.

about \$100 a year. Flippin had pastured his stock on the land and the state had employed a watchman to look after the property and the stock of Flippin. Kight also said that if there were any irregularities in the purchase of this property, he wanted to see that they were properly settled when the report was finished. He also charged that Flippin was one of the important bootleggers of northeastern Oklahoma.⁴⁷ Phillips replied that there was no truth to any of these charges, but Chambers announced that there was no secret about the contract with Flippin, as it was approved by the board and that the land had been rented for \$100 a year.⁴⁸

As the inquiry progressed, after the passage of the bill, Representative Whitford declared that his purpose was to prevent the consummation of a deal which was nothing more or less than political graft. He felt there was every reason to believe that a conspiracy existed to defraud the federal government.⁴⁹ It seems that other sentiments besides these claimed by Whitford entered into this move, as he had also been the one to introduce the bill to change the Board of Regents in 1941. Both of these bills were approved by Phillips.

The House investigating committee made a trip to the lake site to inspect the property. It reported in favor of finishing the purchase of the Canyon Lake and appropriating the necessary amount to terminate the transaction. One member of the committee, Representative Streeter Speakman,

⁴⁷ Tulsa Tribune, Tulsa World clipping service, February 26, 1943.

⁴⁸ Tulsa World clipping service, February 27, 1943. An investigator for the Nation Insurance Association of St. Louis was searching for some cattle allegedly stolen from the state penitentiary. A tip from someone in Oklahoma City that the cattle were in the area around Claremore led him to Canyon Lake. There, 188 head of cattle were found, 32 of which had the penitentiary brand, and were supposedly sent there on the order of Phillips. The ex-governor denied this and the charges were dropped.

⁴⁹ Tulsa Daily World, clipping service, March 21, 1943.

thought that the lake and surrounding buildings were very beautiful and well worth the money. The end of this bitter fight came in March, 1943, as the Senate passed a bill making the final payment for the lake site.⁵⁰

The spring of this year also brought news that varsity athletics were to be suspended. Sports were placed on an intra-mural basis, and this action was to last until the war ended.⁵¹

The most important event in the following year, 1944, came as a result of the investigation in the preceding year over the retention of Captain Hamilton. The Board of Regents at this time made public its plans to relieve Hamilton of his duties as president. This brought members of the Oklahoma Military Academy parents association to the Capitol for a parley with the members of the board, including Governor Kerr. Again tempers and personalities were injected into the conference, and it was not conducted with proper decorum. Governor Kerr charged J. L. Burke, president of the parents association, with uttering falsehoods and Burke retaliated by demanding that George Ade Davis, board member and Adjutant General of the state, retract statements that he had made.⁵² Joe C. Creager, another member of the parents association, told Governor Kerr that dismissal of Hamilton would be interpreted to mean that H. Tom Kight, Sr., was dictating to the board.⁵³ Both Kerr and Davis heatedly denied this and pointed

⁵⁰ Ibid., April 1, 1943. At the present time this property with its buildings is being rented to Mr. John Ward for \$300 a year. The buildings are in poor condition and the hardwood floor in the mess hall had to be taken up. Ward uses the buildings for barns.

⁵¹ The Vedette, 1943, p. 92.

⁵² Oklahoma City Times, Daily Oklahoman clipping service, August 10, 1944.

⁵³ Ibid., August 11, 1944.

out that Kight was no longer a member of the legislature and the political power that he had been.⁵⁴

The board had asked Captain Hamilton to resign on June 14, and had offered to pay his salary until September 17, 1944. Three days later the Captain informed the board that he would resign only on written orders of the board issued by unanimous vote. It was this action in June that had started the furor and brought the supporters of Hamilton to the Capitol. During the conference Davis told members of the parents association that "if Captain Hamilton is all you parents say he is, he is so many other things that I think he should be removed....He is capable and efficient but with his persecution and political hatred complex, I can't work with him. He is a clever man and he has fooled you into thinking he is being persecuted by politicians."⁵⁵ Burke made the statement that under guidance of Hamilton the enrollment at the academy had become the largest in the history of the school. Governor Kerr then forced Burke to admit that this was not true. Davis said that he did not think that the Captain was anything more than a symbol, as people who had opposed the governor in his primary race were using the school to try to embarrass him.⁵⁶

A compromise was reached by the members of the board and the parents association when it was agreed that it would be for the best interests of the school to discharge Hamilton effective August 15. The board related how Hamilton was constantly calling on them about petty details, pointing out the many difficulties of his administration. Most of the parents

⁵⁴ Ibid.

⁵⁵ Oklahoma City Times, Daily Oklahoman clipping service, August 10, 1944.

⁵⁶ Tulsa Tribune, Tulsa World clipping service, August 11, 1944.

acquiesced in the dismissal. A notable exception was Burke, the president of the association.⁵⁷

Captain Hamilton wired his resignation to the board to be effective at its discretion. He urged all cadets and personnel to remain at their work and expressed the hope that this would terminate any movement in his behalf and would settle the unrest. In a plea to the cadet corps he asked the cadets to be loyal to the school and go back to work. He had said, "I know how you cadets feel about me, and God knows this corps means more to me than anything else in life." A petition by the cadets to the governor was supposedly stopped when Hamilton contacted the cadet bearing the message before he reached the governor.⁵⁸

With the end of the Hamilton administration, Colonel W. S. Bryan was made acting president, and he held this position until the appointment of Colonel Kenneth S. Perkins effective November 1, 1944.

Colonel Perkins was born at Norfolk, Virginia, on February 10, 1885. Following his graduation from the Virginia Military Institute in June, 1903, he was engaged in civil engineering with the Pennsylvania Railroad and other railroads until he was appointed a second lieutenant in the field artillery of the army in 1908. After a varied career in service, he returned to his alma mater to help organize the first R. O. T. C. unit at the Virginia Military Institute in 1920. The last position that Colonel Perkins held before becoming president of the Oklahoma Military Academy

⁵⁷ Daily Oklahoman clipping service, August 11, 1944.

⁵⁸ Tulsa Daily World, clipping service, August 13, 1944. A move, headed by cadet Gerald Johnson, was begun at this time to present a series of broadcasts over a Tulsa station on the behalf of Hamilton. The promised "blowing off the lid" never developed, as it became apparent that the cause was a hopeless one.

was that of post commander at Fort Sill, Oklahoma.⁵⁹

The first year of Colonel Perkins' administration, 1945, was quiet. The time was spent in consolidating the gains made by previous administrations. The new head of the academy moved cautiously and made an effort to become acquainted with the situation before making any sweeping changes. Most of the policies of Hamilton were retained, along with some of the ideas of the Downs administration. A few minor changes by Perkins himself were put into practice.

With the cessation of hostilities in 1945, the academy did not immediately return to its schedule of interscholastic athletics. In August of 1945 a very important change occurred in the athletic department when Murl Cline, director of athletics since 1927 resigned from the staff. Coach Cline had developed the various athletic teams until they were well known and respected for colorful performances, skill, and sportsmanship. A strict disciplinarian and hard worker, he had been a great influence upon the cadet corps. In spite of its success during these years, the athletic department came in for its share of criticism. Because of the support of the Kight-dominated Board of Regents, the Phillips administration was very critical of the amount spent for athletic talent. As Cline and Kight were friends, the former was bitterly assailed by Captain Hamilton in 1943, but had weathered the attack. He left the school with the best wishes and regrets of Colonel Perkins. Cline's best record during his stay at the academy was made by his football teams. In his thirteen years at the school, when some form of financial aid to the athletic department had been allowed, the academy was junior college conference champion seven years.

⁵⁹ Progress, November 11, 1944; letter from Colonel Wm. Couper, Executive Officer, Virginia Military Institute, to the writer, June 24, 1948.

Never had a cadet football team lost more games than it had won during this time. Three years his teams were undefeated and untied, and during the thirteen years the teams won 77 games, lost 23, and were tied three times.⁶⁰ The successor to Cline was Lt. Colonel Lee F. Gilstrap, former assistant coach and faculty member who had only recently returned from service in the United States Army.

Several new activities were carried on by the cadet corps during the next years beginning in 1943. These included the dramatic, camera, and glee clubs, and the reinstallation of the Saber and Chevron societies which had been disbanded in 1942.⁶¹

In 1956 several notable changes were made at the academy. One of the most important was the removal of the cavalry unit in the summer of 1946.⁶²

In the summer of 1946 the school was notified that it had been selected to conduct a full senior R. O. T. C. program. Only three other junior colleges, Valley Forge, Culver, and New Mexico Military Institute, were thus recognized.⁶³

Changes in the physical plant occurred when the mess hall was completely remodeled and changed into a cafeteria. In addition to this, work was started on the new \$59,000 indoor rifle range which it was hoped would be ready for use sometime in 1947.⁶⁴

⁶⁰ Progress, August 15, 1945.

⁶¹ Interview notes, G. L. Paine, Oklahoma Military Academy, Claremore, Oklahoma, June 19, 1947.

⁶² Interview notes, Colonel Kenneth S. Perkins, Oklahoma Military Academy, Claremore, Oklahoma, June 19, 1947.

⁶³ Progress, July 11, 1946.

⁶⁴ Ibid., February 14, 1946.

Colonel Perkins made no changes in the stated objectives of the school. They remained the same as in the 1942 catalog. The organization of the corps and its functions were nearly the same as in the previous administration, and the methods of West Point were followed as closely as possible.⁶⁵

The return of interscholastic athletics in 1946 at the "hill" saw a varied and widely diversified program put into effect, but the standard of the teams and caliber of competition was below that of previous years. In general, class "B" high schools were to furnish the competition for the cadets.⁶⁶

The year 1946 was notable in one other respect. It marked the passing, August 9, 1946, of H. Tom Kight, Sr., the staunchest friend the academy ever had. The loss to the community was a serious one. Ex-governor W. J. Holloway spoke at the funeral services and told the people of Claremore that they need build no monument to Kight as they already had one in the military academy.⁶⁷ The senior Kight had been a longtime member of the House of Representatives and a power in Oklahoma politics. All the buildings at the academy were started under his terms of office except the mess hall, gym, auditorium, and houses for the faculty. He had been a dominant man with a strong will and aggressive personality. Kight had no fears, nor was he hesitant about making enemies when he thought he was in the right. To his friends and supporters, Kight was ever loyal, but violently vindictive to his enemies. A man of such a strong personality

⁶⁵ Interview notes, Colonel Kenneth S. Perkins, Oklahoma Military Academy, Claremore, Oklahoma, July 29, 1947.

⁶⁶ Observations of the writer from an examination of the schedules of the academy athletic events.

⁶⁷ Interview notes, H. Tom Kight, Jr., and Mr. Murl Cline, Claremore, Oklahoma, June 19, 1947.

would quite naturally be a controversial figure. Even Kight's enemies admit that he was the most important figure in the growth of the Claremore school. At times his actions may have hurt the school and his following, but this was not intentional for he worked and fought for a better Oklahoma Military Academy through all the years of its existence.

In contrast to other military academies, the enrollment at the academy had declined in post-war years. No provision was made to entice the veterans to the school, and in 1946 none were enrolled. This, coupled with the fact that less than one per cent of the enrollment at the Oklahoma Military Academy came from Rogers County,⁶⁸ had caused bitter feelings on the part of many of the people of Claremore. The graduating class in 1946 was composed of six members of the junior college department and nineteen in the high school division. The explanation of this drop and decrease in enrollment was the draft and war.⁶⁹ Other outstanding military schools in this area, Kemper Military School and New Mexico Military Institute, used for a comparison with the Claremore School, did not indicate this trend, as is shown by the list below. The period covered in this list is from the peak enrollment at the academy in 1939 to the present. It is interesting to note that the peak for all schools other than the Oklahoma Military Academy was reached in 1943 and that this was the largest wartime enrollment.

⁶⁸ First Biennial Report of the Oklahoma State Regents for Higher Education (Oklahoma City, 1942), p. 69.

⁶⁹ Interview notes, G. L. Paine, Oklahoma Military Academy, Claremore, Oklahoma, June 19, 1947.

TABLE II
ENROLLMENT FROM 1939 TO 1947⁷⁰

Year	O.M.A.	Kemper	N.M.M.I.
1939	402	451	578
1940	354	431	596
1941	279	508	599
1942	256	558	622
1943	304	592	681
1944	224	576	574
1945	234	556	584
1946	224	544	586
1947	202	584	601

The number at all schools dropped off in the junior college department but increased enrollment in the high schools kept the attendance higher at all schools except the Claremore school. By 1947 an upward trend was noticeable at both Kemper and New Mexico but not at the Oklahoma Military Academy. The figures clearly show that the other schools did not suffer from the war and draft as was claimed at the Claremore school.

Several events that occurred in the first half of 1947 indicated future trends at the institution. One of the most important steps was the formation of a new Board of Regents for the academy. Senate Bill number 39, introduced by Senator W. A. Waller, of Nowata, established a board of five members. This new group of regents did not include the governor, and the terms of office of the members did not expire at the same time. The first term of office would expire on June 30, 1948, others at intervals of

⁷⁰ Information from the records of the registrar at the Academy; Letters from E. W. Tucker, Executive Officer, Kemper Military School, July 14, 1947, and C. J. Rohor, Adjutant, New Mexico Military Institute, July 10, 1947.

one year, until the last term ends on June 30, 1951. The board members were not to hold office, either elective or appointive of any kind, at any level of government in the state. No two members at any given time were to be from the same county or of the same profession. This bill became a law on February 13, 1946.⁷¹ Colonel Perkins stated that this law would aid in taking the school out of politics and would create a new era of stability for the academy.⁷²

The chronic undercurrent of political intrigue affecting the Oklahoma Military Academy caused more publicity in the spring of 1947. At this time Colonel Perkins dismissed Lt. Colonel Lee F. Gilstrap and two other members of the faculty. Gilstrap was a very popular person over the state, as he came from a well known family and had a fine record in both wars. The reason given for his release was lack of qualifications, as he did not yet have a Master's Degree.⁷³ Many protests were received as evidence of the following that Gilstrap had among the people in Oklahoma.⁷⁴

It was even hinted that Perkins would be removed and Gilstrap placed in his position. A group of Tulsa parents, who had sons in the school, sent the governor a letter requesting that Gilstrap be retained. This was only one of the many letters, wires, and telephone calls that flooded the governor's office. Northeastern Oklahoma Senators and Representatives were asking that Colonel Perkins be removed.⁷⁵

⁷¹ Copy of the Bill from the records of the governor's office, Oklahoma City, Oklahoma.

⁷² Interview notes, Colonel Kenneth S. Perkins, Oklahoma Military Academy, Claremore, Oklahoma, June 19, 1947.

⁷³ ⁷⁴ Tulsa Daily World clipping service, May 29 and 30, 1947.

⁷⁵ Ibid., May 31, 1947.

The matter was further complicated by the revelation of differences of opinion among members of the board. Mr. T. Murray Robinson, chairman of the board from Oklahoma City, declared that Gilstrap did not have the necessary qualifications. Mr. Roy J. Wilkinson, Nowata, attributed the dismissal to a clash of personalities and charged that Colonel Perkins was tearing the school down instead of building it up. There was some thought of giving the parties a hearing, but this was abandoned as it was decided that this might lead only to a name calling session.⁷⁶

Gilstrap advocated special concessions for the veterans, especially those of Claremore, which would enable them to attend the academy. This and rumors of movements to make him president were said by some to be the real causes of his dismissal. As to the matter of qualifications, the policy of the school was for the teachers to have the advanced degree or to be working toward it. Besides the three men released with this expressed excuse, there were eight others retained at the school who did not have a Master's Degree.⁷⁷ However, these eight did comply with the rules of the school and were attending summer school for the purpose of obtaining their Master's Degree.

The controversy over Gilstrap's dismissal gradually died out. It left no visible effects or changes in the conditions surrounding the school except, perhaps, a slight increase in the coldness of the relationship between the city and academy.

In the summer of 1947, an effort on the part of the school was made to increase the enrollment through an appealing advertising campaign.

⁷⁶ Tulsa Daily World clipping service, May 31, 1947.

⁷⁷ Ibid.

This was the filming and showing of movies of school activities to prospective patrons of the academy throughout Oklahoma. A sixteen millimeter technicolor sound film, which was produced by the Oling W. Dalton Company, of Dallas, Texas, at a cost of \$5,000 had been shown sixty-eight times in forty-two cities and towns throughout Oklahoma by July 17, 1947.⁷⁸

For the past year there had been ominous rumblings from some sections about the tuition and appropriations at the academy. These broke into the open in July of 1947. In an attack on a bill attempting to get an increase in the building program at the school, Senator Phil Lowery declared that the academy was a "rich man's school." He stated that the cost of tuition had almost doubled in the last two or three years.⁷⁹ These charges were the result of tuition increases begun in 1941. Colonel Perkins denied that this increase was more than could be expected under the existing circumstances. He pointed out that the cost of the first year man in 1946 was \$1,047.15. It was claimed that a four year total would average \$732.00, for after the initial expense, there would be no cost for uniforms.⁸⁰

The school year 1947-48 saw the enrollment at the academy dropping with each succeeding semester. The school had 202 cadets enrolled on September 5, 1947; 174 on October 15, 1947; 141 at the opening of the second semester on January 20, 1948.⁸¹ There were several reasons given for this condition. Among these reasons were the lack of interest in the

⁷⁸ Interview notes, Miss Dorothea Majors, Business Manager at the Oklahoma Military Academy, Claremore, Oklahoma, July 29, 1948.

⁷⁹ Tulsa Daily World clipping service, July 16, 1947.

⁸⁰ Ibid., April 1, 1947.

⁸¹ Information from the records of the registrar at the Academy; Information from the daily morning reports of the Commandant at the Academy.

military academy by the returning young men who had been in the armed services; the natural tendency to turn away from the military school at the end of a great war; the lack of proper advertising; and the poor public relations that had developed through the past decade as a result of political embroilment of the school with several colorful figures in the political arena of the state. There were those who said the age of the president prevented his possessing the dynamic leadership so necessary at this particular time to the promotion of the school's welfare.

It is the writer's opinion from his own observation that a combination of the reasons given above with others to be mentioned were the contributions to the poor interest in the academy at this time. Factional strife among members of the faculty; a complacent lethargy on the part of the faculty and the administration; a spirit of defeat within the student body; and a determined desire to react to the stern military routine developed during the war years--all of these provided the background for the decline of enrollment. The lack of a staunch political friend was also felt at this time.

At any rate, the Board of Regents, realizing the situation, met in March of 1948 to determine what should be done. It was decided that Colonel Perkins would be asked to resign.⁸² It was decided by the board at this time that its chairman, T. Murray Robinson of Oklahoma City, and its secretary, F. E. Stanley, of Tulsa, would contact various educational leaders of the state and attempt to find a man for the position of president, with three qualifications. This man was to be young; he was to have an educational background; and he was to have had military experience.⁸³

⁸² Board of Regents minutes, 10 March 1948.

⁸³ Board of Regents Minutes, 10 March 1948.

In April, Mr. F. E. Stanley contacted M. M. Black, Principal of Central High School of Tulsa, Oklahoma, and asked him to name men whom he knew that had the desired qualifications. Mr. Black recommended two men. One of these was Captain Homer M. Ledbetter who was a teacher at the time in the Tulsa Public School system. Captain Ledbetter had been a teacher at Central High School in Tulsa since 1938.

Mr. Stanley interviewed Captain Ledbetter and decided that the Captain had the qualifications desired by the Board of Regents. He asked Ledbetter to visit with him and Mr. Robinson. The result of this meeting was the resignation of Colonel Perkins to take effect on June 1, 1948, and the appointment of Captain Ledbetter to the presidency of the Oklahoma Military Academy effective June 1, 1948.⁸⁴

The new president was young, for he had accepted his appointment when he was 34 years of age. He possessed a varied background of educational experiences. Captain Ledbetter was an Oklahoman throughout, having been born, reared, and educated in Oklahoma. He had received his Bachelor of Science Degree from East Central State Teachers College, at Ada, Oklahoma, in 1935. He had received the Honor Award for that year as the most outstanding student. Captain Ledbetter attended the University of Oklahoma and Oklahoma Agricultural and Mechanical College and received his Master's Degree in 1937 from Oklahoma Agricultural and Mechanical College at Stillwater, Oklahoma. Captain Ledbetter had attended the Basic R. O. T. C. Ordnance School in Camp Perry, Ohio; the Tank Arsenal School in Detroit, Michigan; and the United States Army (I. & E.) Information and Education School in Paris, France, during his tour in the Army. Captain Ledbetter

⁸⁴ Ibid., 24 March 1948.

completed all the course requirements for his Doctor's Degree before his appointment as president of the Academy.⁸⁵

The new president had taught one year as teaching principal of the Byars High School at Byars, Oklahoma. He had taught three years as the Dean and Head of the English Department in Drumright Junior College at Drumright, Oklahoma. He had taught speech and English at Central High School in Tulsa, Oklahoma, from 1938 until he took a leave of absence to serve in the United States Army from 1941 to September of 1945. He returned to his teaching position and remained in the Central High School from 1945 to June 1, 1948.

Captain Ledbetter's army experience had included three years with the Oklahoma National Guard in the 45th Division and some four years with the 13th Armored Division of General George S. Patton's famous Third Army. Captain Ledbetter served in the European Theater and saw service in England, France, Germany, and Austria. He still claims his toughest duty was performed in the state of Texas, U. S. A.

Captain Ledbetter became president of the Academy at a time when the total enrollment figure was 72 men. He knew that his board of regents expected the school enrollment to go up and that they expected him to strengthen the school. He believed that it would take good public relations, plenty of hard work, and a great deal of improvement of the educational program, before he could hope for any lasting results.

The end of the war had brought increased enrollment to the great majority of Oklahoma institutions and with this appropriations were proportionately increased. This was true at all schools except the Oklahoma

⁸⁵ At the present time the writer is completing the dissertation requirements for this degree.

Military Academy, where the enrollment had dropped and the appropriations had increased.

This dissatisfaction with the school in certain circles, combined with various other factors, made it indeed difficult to foretell, in 1948, what the future held for the Oklahoma Military Academy. The school was now on the threshold of either greater growth and achievement or extinction. The most important of those factors determining the future of the academy were the enrollment, financial support, policies of the State Regents for Higher Education, relations between the community and the school, and the political stability of the academy. These factors were dependent upon other different and related conditions, but in the main they were the most important elements in the future of the school.

One of the most important conditions bearing on the future of the institution was the disagreement in educational circles of the importance and position of military schools in our system of democratic free public education. American educators have traditionally been against militarism in any form. The rigid discipline and regimentation of military training is opposed by modern educational philosophy. However, there have also been many supporters of military training. Recent changes in the philosophy of military training allow more freedom and guidance of the individual. These changes would lessen the differences of the two opposing forces, and this trend was seen in the last war when techniques that were similar were used in training programs by both the army and educators.⁸⁶

⁸⁶ Arthur J. Jones, Principles of Guidance, p. 540. For other supporting statements of the value of military training, see: Charles W. Larned and Dr. J. Franklin Messenger, in Captain Ira L. Reeves, Military Education in the United States (Burlington, 1914), pp. 9 and 321, and Franklin D. Roosevelt, in Colonel Wm. Couper, One Hundred Years at the Virginia Military Institute, 4 Vols., (Richmond, 1939), 4, 378. For the opposite viewpoint, see: E. P. Cubberly, State School Administration, (Cambridge, 1927), 546 and 547; Stanford University, School of Education Faculty, Education in Wartime and After, (New York, 1943), 134.

This training, especially in time of war, is very important to the individual, the state, and the nation. Surely the importance of the academy's contribution to the armed services of approximately 940 young men cannot be denied. This is even more true when one considers that the great majority of these students became officers. The time in training and lives lost saved from this experience at the academy is great indeed. If, then, as Thomas H. Briggs says, "the state supports free public schools to promote its own interests,"⁸⁷ and it is "a long term investment that the state may be a better place to live and a better place in which to make a living," there must be a place for military schools in our educational system. This appears to be more true than previously when the present world situation, changed American policy, and need for preparedness is taken into consideration. A strong organized reserve supplemented by the R. O. T. C. would aid in solving the problem. Apparently the crux of the present controversy over universal military training is not the necessity of the military training but how much and what kind.

This introduces the question as to who receives the greatest benefit from such a military school, the state or the nation. When this question is answered, the problem of financial support by the benefiting organization, either local, state, or nation, can be solved more suitably. This is an important issue but no attempt can be made to answer it here.

The size of the contributions of the various agencies supporting the academy will clarify the question. The exact amount of federal aid is

⁸⁷ Thomas H. Briggs, The Great Investment, (Cambridge, 1930). The "state" referred to does not necessarily mean a political unit such as Oklahoma, but any supporting social organization such as the local community, state, nation, or any combination of these.

hard to determine, as it consists of equipment, loans, and salaries of the military personnel. However, an estimate is given by George A. Davis, former Adjutant General of the state and member of the Board of Regents. Davis said that since 1930 the federal government had invested approximately \$70,000 a year in the development of the school.⁸⁸ The state appropriation for operating expense alone in 1945-46 was \$75,588.84. The total operating expense for the school during that school year was \$274,111.85. Thus the state appropriation was only 30.4 per cent of the total cost. As the federal aid to the school was about the same as that of the state, the support of the school by its patrons was approximately 40 per cent. The amount raised in this manner, from tuition, fees, and other auxiliary enterprises, was \$128,523.00.⁸⁹ This increased cost in the operation of the school has resulted in the raising of the tuition and other fees. This, in turn, has contributed to the decline in the number of students and the trend to make the school more exclusive.

As Oklahoma Military Academy faces the future, its position is again precarious. The factors which have brought about this condition at the present are different than those causing similar fear when the school was first started. The early struggle for existence, the rapid growth and achievement under Downs, and the effect of the war and political upheavals all have left their mark on the school. Oklahoma Military Academy has been characterized by policies which were initiated and followed that are not found at other well known military schools. In the majority of

⁸⁸ Letter, George A. Davis to Mr. Frank Buttram, July 23, 1944. From records of the Oklahoma Military Academy business office, Claremore, Okla.

⁸⁹ Records in the Oklahoma Military Academy business office, Claremore, Oklahoma, July 29, 1947.

instances these policies were carried out because of existing pressure and conditions. The most notable were the over emphasis of the military department, athletics, band and a lack of high academic standards. These conditions prevailed until 1939, when less stress was placed upon athletics and the band. A more rigid system of military discipline was inaugurated at this time and the administration announced a policy of increasing academic proficiency. Although there have been claims of raising the academic standards from the time of Downs, there is little evidence to support these statements and the military aspect is still predominant.

The Virginia Military Institute, Texas Agricultural and Mechanical College, Kemper Military School, and the New Mexico Military Institute, four outstanding military schools which may be taken for comparison, differ greatly from the Claremore school. In spite of their fame as military institutions, all these schools recognize the academic phase of any school as its most important and primary reason for existence.⁹⁰ As well as realizing this primary function of the school, recognition of the value of guidance is also acknowledged. The greater stability of these schools is indicated by the longer tenure of presidents at all of the institutions except Texas Agricultural and Mechanical College. However, like the Oklahoma School, the Texas institution made its greatest progress under long terms of office of one or more presidents. In these other schools, the replacements for the presidency have in most instances come from the school staff. This has assured and developed a continuity of policy and educational

⁹⁰ Colonel Wm. Couper, One Hundred Years at the Virginia Military Institute, 4 Vols. (Richmond, 1939), 1 and 4; Clarence Cusley, History of the Agricultural and Mechanical College of Texas, (College Station, 1936), Kemper Military School Catalog, 1946-47, New Mexico Military Institute Announcements for 1946-47.

philosophy.⁹¹ Kemper Military School in its one hundred and three years of existence has had only three presidents.⁹² In the thirty years of its history, the Oklahoma Military Academy has had eight presidents.

It was easily seen that the policies at the Oklahoma school differ from those of other leading military schools. The recent policy of adhering to and modeling the school after the policies of the military academy at West Point had increased this trend. Also, the strict military discipline was not in keeping with the present policies of military training. This allowed little personal contact between the student and the members of the faculty. If any school is to be chosen as a model, it would be well for the academy officials to look more closely at the New Mexico school. It is the only other state supported military school of the high school and junior college level.⁹³

As the necessity for preparedness and military training is more important now, with present conditions as they are, it is hoped that the people of the state and its officials will see fit to support the school with certain modifications. The military should be placed in its proper position, the academic standards raised, and a long range policy adopted which would assure the academy a permanent function in our state educational

⁹¹ Colonel Wm. Couper, One Hundred Years at the Virginia Military Institute, 4 Vols. (Richmond, 1939), 1 and 4; Clarence Cusley, History of the Agricultural and Mechanical College of Texas, (College Station, 1936), Kemper Military School Catalog, 1946-47, New Mexico Military Institute Announcements for 1946-47.

⁹² Kemper Military School Catalog, 1946-47, 77.

⁹³ There are other well known military schools which are state supported, but they are not of high school and junior college level. Two of the more famous of these are the Pennsylvania Military College and the Citadel.

system. An increase in the enrollment is necessary. Concessions might be made for veterans who do not wish more military training. The strict military discipline should be relaxed. The purpose of the school should be primarily to train the youth of the community for life by providing a solid general education with which they could take their place in the community and continue their education. An effort should be made to correlate the activities of the military academy with those of other state schools to provide for continuity of educational aims and philosophy. The military training should become a secondary function. The support of the State Regents for Higher Education is necessary, and to a great degree theirs is the responsibility for the future of the academy. Any such stabilizing of the school would be a benefit to the citizens of the state and they would reap the rewards. Such a future would again enable the visitor to note the scenes of activity, the friendliness of the cadet corps, the sense of achievement, and the pardonable pride in a job well done.

The use of the follow-up study-of the application of the Evaluative Criteria to the school--and of the examination for accreditation on the part of the North Central Association of Colleges and Secondary Schools--will be discussed and analyzed in subsequent pages. It is the hope of the new president that these methods will prove to be a part of the answer for the problems to be found at the Oklahoma Military Academy.

PART TWO

ALUMNI OPINION OF THE OKLAHOMA MILITARY ACADEMY

CHAPTER IV

GETTING THE VIEWPOINTS OF OMA'S ALUMNI

In the pages of the last three chapters, the history of O. M. A. has been written. With this narration as a basis, a further development is made possible. In developing the story of the Oklahoma Military Academy's past, it becomes evident that a narrative account is somewhat subjective in nature. Even though the historical technique provides evidence of actions to be taken for the improvement of the school, some objective material should be added to the study in order to determine in a better manner some of the concepts of the institution's past.

To see that the student gets the best out of the curricula to which he is exposed is a matter of prime importance to all school personnel. Certainly, the study of results that are attained by an institution over a period of years should reveal weaknesses and strengths in that institution's curricula. Such a study should give us evidence as to the means the school uses to realize its two specific objectives--that of academic preparation and that of leadership training. If a check of the graduates of the Oklahoma Military Academy and of those who attended the school for at least one year should indicate that the institution's purposes and philosophies are being consummated in the reality of useful citizenship activities, then indeed would there be objective information to couple with the historical analysis of the school's "precarious past" which would provide the clues to the institution's present "needs" for better service to the youth of our land. With such a diagnosis of the past and a proper measurement of the school's present activities, some direction should be given toward the

future corrective measures to be taken for the general betterment of the school.

In a follow-up study of the alumni¹ of the Oklahoma Military Academy, the writer found that he was faced with three major difficulties. These were the lack of correct addresses for former students, the large number of alumni to be contacted, and the obtaining of the information needed for a proper study of results. It became necessary that certain techniques be followed in order to approach the answers to the major problems involved in the study.

Since finding of the correct addresses was a primary necessity, not only for the follow-up study but also for the correction of school alumni files, the first technique developed was a dual postal card which was sent to the last address and, in some cases, to the first address which the school had for the alumnus. Here it was necessary to use the out-of-date alumni files, the school transcripts, the old business office files, and the old catalogs and yearbooks that dated back to 1919. Frequent reference to the latest telephone directories, particularly of Tulsa and Oklahoma City, helped a great deal in this work.

The second problem that was to be faced in this phase of the study dealt with the numbers involved. It was found that the total alumni for the school as of July 1, 1949 was 3,397.² Because of the time element and the chance that a total return could never be realized, the writer, as a supporting technique for this study, decided to use all of the corrected

¹The word "alumni" is used in this study to mean the total number of students who either graduated from O. M. A. or who attended for at least one semester.

²This was tabulated by a personal count of all of the transcript files of the school since 1919.

FIGURE 1

COPY OF POSTAL CARD

O. M. A. Alumni Association
Oklahoma Military Academy
Claremore, Oklahoma

O. M. A. ALUMNI ASSOCIATION

Will you help us bring our record of former students of Oklahoma Military Academy up to date by giving the information requested on the attached card and dropping it in the mail?

If you do not have this information, please give us the name and address in the space provided on the card of someone who may be able to give it. Your assistance will be greatly appreciated.

A. N. Loshbaugh, Corresponding Secretary

FIGURE 2

REVERSE SIDE OF POSTAL CARD

Address of Alumnus			
<u>PLEASE SEND INFORMATION</u>			
For Oklahoma Military Academy Alumni Records			
Name _____		Attended OMA _____	
Address _____		_____	
street		city	state
Occupation-Bus. Firm _____			
Married to: _____ of _____			
Please tell us below who might furnish the information requested if you do not have it.			
Name: _____		Address: _____	
Your Name _____			

addresses that were obtained by September 15, 1949, for a cross-section study of the alumni. In other words, the follow-up study was to be tried upon a certain number of subjects.

The major purpose of this part of the study was to obtain up-to-date information on the success of the school's objectives as reflected through the opinions and actual success of a random selection of a cross-section of its alumni. To accomplish this aim, a letter and a questionnaire were sent out to each of the corrected addresses. See pages 110 and 111 for a copy of the letter and questionnaire.

From this program there were evolved twelve hundred and sixty-nine corrected addresses. These locations represented that number of alumni for whom we now have correct home or business addresses.³ Of the total number of persons who have attended the Oklahoma Military Academy since the school's founding in 1919, 132 are deceased and 339 are persons who did not remain long enough to receive any grades on their transcripts. As a result, the Alumni of the Academy could be said to number 2,926. It is apparent that with a total of 1,269 corrected addresses, the school is not certain of the locations of the remaining 1,657 ex-cadets. The locator system that was used has determined the addresses of 43 per cent of the total alumni group.⁴

The questionnaire was sent to each address of the 1,269 corrected locations. At this date, October 1, 1949, 325 have been received. This group of answers represents a return from 11 per cent of the total alumni

³ These addresses were all affirmed as a part of the authentic alumni files as of September 1, 1949.

⁴ It is to be noted that the alumni secretary is receiving more addresses each month.

FIGURE 3
COPY OF LETTER

To Alumni and Former Students of
Oklahoma Military Academy

Oklahoma Military Academy has been in operation since 1919. To be successful any institution must continuously endeavor to improve its services.

We are conducting a follow-up study of Alumni and former students of O. M. A. The purpose of this study is to evaluate the effectiveness of our program. We hope to get suggestions and criticisms from you that will help us to build for you a bigger and more effective O. M. A.

Will you cooperate by taking a few minutes to fill in the enclosed questionnaire and mail it to us in the enclosed envelope? We are anxious to get your personal criticisms and suggestions. Please be frank.

Yours very truly,

A. N. Loshbaugh
Director of Follow-Up
Study

FIGURE 4

OKLAHOMA MILITARY ACADEMY FOLLOW-UP STUDY QUESTIONNAIRE

Name _____

Present address _____

Years you attended O. M. A. 19__ to 19__.

Schools attended and extent of education since attending O. M. A. _____

Degrees received _____

Average grade made in other schools. Check one: A __, B __, C __, D __.

Brief summary of employment since leaving O. M. A. _____

Present vocation _____

Approximate present annual income _____

What do you consider the most valuable part of your training at O. M. A.?

Do you feel that the above mentioned benefits could have been as well obtained in the conventional type of school? Yes __ No __ Comment _____

What weaknesses did you find in our program at O. M. A.? What change would you suggest? _____

Experience in armed forces _____

What was the effect of your training at O. M. A. on your success in the armed forces? Check one:

- (a) _____ Had little effect.
- (b) _____ Helped considerably.
- (c) _____ Helped in gaining immediate advancement, but little long range effect.

Will you help us bring our files up to date by listing the names of any other alumni whose addresses you know?

and a return of 25 per cent of those alumni who had correct addresses. An analysis of the answers to the questionnaire should provide objective evidence as to the school's fulfilling its objectives as a military and educational institution.

In addition to the objective evidence that was collected through the questionnaire method, it was found that much information could be obtained by a close examination of the school's transcripts. Since all of the institution's former students have a transcript on file, the writer spent several months tabulating statistical data from them. The method used was analytical and most of the results were placed in a table form for later use. A study of this nature certainly revealed the imprints made upon school enrollment and finance by events of a political nature in the history of the school. Such a study releases to the thinking person many indicators for proper direction in the future improvement of the school. Information of this type does indicate the manner in which the school prepares its cadets for further training and leadership.

With an analysis of the follow-up questionnaire of alumni opinion and the study of all student transcripts, some worthwhile information may be obtained as to the Oklahoma Military Academy's contribution to the past and present societies of man. Certainly, the concepts to be obtained through such an approach should provide additional information of an objective nature for our observations from the past. This material coupled with the account of past events should picture, in part, at least, the Oklahoma Military Academy as it was.

CHAPTER V

INTERPRETATIONS AND EVALUATIONS OF O. M. A.
ON THE BASIS OF ALUMNI OPINION AND EXPERIENCE

The opinions and experiences of the institution's alumni as reflected in their answers to the questionnaire and in the examination of their transcripts would seem to add some objective information for an evaluation of the school's "precarious past."

In tabulating the answers of the three hundred twenty-five questionnaires that were returned, it is to be understood that the pressure of a selective factor in the answer process is recognized. It is probably true that two types of people tend to answer such questions--those who are extremely bitter or resentful about some real or imagined wrong, and those who have enough interest and pride to help their alma mater along in its effort toward improvement. In spite of this, the answers herein discussed are somewhat representative both in time, in scope, and in the individual differences of former students. This is true of all administrations other than the Barrett administration. Questionnaires were returned by former students from each year of the school's existence with the exceptions to be noted in the table on the following page.

It is evident from the table that the ten-year period from 1939 to 1949 gave this investigation the largest number of reports. The ten-year period from the founding of the school, 1919 to 1929, had only ten questionnaires turned in for its total representation. This would indicate that those ex-cadets who were most recent in attendance at the Academy were the ones most likely to answer the questionnaire. However, increase in enrollment during the latter period has some bearing upon the number of answers received from the later period.

TABLE III
THIRTY YEARS AT O. M. A.

<u>Year of Leaving the Institution</u>	<u>Ten-Year Period</u>	<u>Col. Barrett Administration</u>	<u>Col. Downs</u>	<u>Capt. Hamilton</u>	<u>Col. Perkins</u>	<u>Col. Ledbetter</u>	<u>Number for Each</u>
1919-1920	Ten Reports	One Report	One Hundred and Eleven Reports				1
1920-1921							
1921-1922							
1922-1923							
1923-1924							
1924-1925							
1925-1926							1
1926-1927							
1927-1928							3
1928-1929							3
1929-1930	Ninety-Nine Reports						2
1930-1931							2
1931-1932							7
1932-1933							9
1933-1934							5
1934-1935							3
1935-1936							7
1936-1937							19
1937-1938							17
1938-1939							15
1939-1940	Two Hundred and Two Reports	(Col. Anderson up to Jan.)		One Hundred and Nine Reports			15
1940-1941							22
1941-1942							19
1942-1943							22
1943-1944							36
1944-1945							23
1945-1946							20
1946-1947							23
1947-1948							23
1948-1949							14
					Eighty-nine Reports	Fourteen Reports	

Greater weight is given to the answers of questionnaires received representing attendance from 1919 to 1939, since these opinions are more mature and come from men who have determined their course in life and are settled enough to determine results obtained from their earlier training. Reports received from 1919, 1929, and 1939, respectively, would be from average age groups of 46, 36, and 26, respectively. This would be true if one takes the average age for entrance at Oklahoma Military Academy at age 16.

The number of reports received from each ten-year period indicates that the questionnaire method herein used is representative of the years during which O. M. A. has been in existence. Furthermore, the small number reporting during the earlier years may be offset by the maturity of the judgment of those who did report.

Another interesting point is indicated by the fact that during Capt. John Hamilton's administration more reports were sent in than from any other period. This was true in spite of the fact that he had the school for only three years. However, his administration was during World War II when there was a tremendous emphasis upon the military program. The answers that were sent in are representative of the geographic area that is served by the school. A breakdown of the geographic locations of those ex-cadets reporting follows:

TABLE IV

FOREIGN COUNTRIES

Philippines	1
Venezuela	1
Hawaii	1

TABLE V
STATES OF THE UNITED STATES

Alabama	1	Missouri	11
Arizona	2	Nebraska	1
Arkansas	2	New Mexico	7
California	17	New York	15
Colorado	5	North Carolina	2
Illinois	4	Ohio	1
Indiana	1	Oklahoma	191
Kansas	10	Pennsylvania	1
Kentucky	4	Texas	28
Louisiana	5	Virginia	5
Maryland	1	Washington	1
Washington, D. C.		1	

TABLE VI
COUNTIES IN OKLAHOMA

Adair	1	Garvin	1	Okmulgee	1
Atoka	1	Grady	1	Okfuskee	2
Beaver	1	Greer	1	Ottawa	2
Beckham	1	Hughes	1	Osage	3
Bryan	1	Jackson	2	Payne	8
Caddo	1	Jefferson	1	Pawnee	1
Canadian	1	Kay	5	Pittsburg	4
Carter	4	Kiowa	3	Pottawatomie	4
Cherokee	1	Leflore	4	Pushmataha	1
Cleveland	7	Lincoln	2	Rogers	5
Commanche	2	McClain	1	Seminole	2
Craig	2	Muskogee	6	Stephens	1
Creek	7	Noble	1	Tulsa	47
Ellis	2	Nowata	2	Wagoner	1
Garfield	3	Oklahoma	44	Washington	3
				Woodward	2

A glance at any map of the United States and of the State of Oklahoma will establish good evidence that the questionnaires do represent the area that is served by the institution. The replies are representative of not

only Oklahoma but of other states as well. Ex-cadets with established state residence numbered one hundred ninety-one and those from out of the state numbered one hundred thirty-six.

One of the stated objectives of the Oklahoma Military Academy since its founding has ever been that of sound academic preparation for further schooling. As a result, one of the first questions asked of the ex-cadet on the questionnaire was to name the schools attended and the extent of education after leaving O. M. A. An analysis of the replies reveals the following:

Of those reporting, 176 had further education in state schools and 67 had further education in out of state schools. Thus, 243 had further education beyond O. M. A. while 82 terminated their education after leaving O. M. A. Of the total of 243 who had further schooling, 121 obtained their bachelor's degrees and thirteen obtained their master's degrees. It would seem that the objective is being partially realized when one notes that of those ex-students reporting, 74 per cent did go on for further education and that of those reporting, 41 per cent did receive a bachelor's degree. Of those who chose to take additional schooling, 55 per cent did obtain a degree from a school of higher education.

The next question to be answered gives additional evidence to support one of the school's basic objectives. Each reply was to indicate the average grade received in schools that were attended after leaving the Academy. Of those ex-cadets who replied, ten would not indicate grades that had been received. The balance of those reporting is indicated by the following table:

TABLE VII
GRADE AVERAGES MADE IN OTHER SCHOOLS

<u>Number Reporting</u>	<u>Grade Average</u>
17	A
129	B
85	C
2	D

These averages do indicate that bad records have not been numerous.

To determine the success or failure of ex-cadets, each of them was requested to indicate his present vocation. He was to make a brief summary of his employment since leaving the school. An analysis of this type should determine the success status of graduates and alumni. It will, at least, provide some evidence that those ex-cadets who answered the questionnaire are employed in gainful occupations. Each person who answered this question was asked to give his yearly income. The following tables reveal interesting data:

TABLE VIII
VOCATIONS

<u>Vocations</u>	<u>Number in Vocations</u>
Military Service	58
Business	131
Engineering	54
Students	52
Agriculture	4
Government Service	3
Dentist	2
Medicine	5
Law	6
Education	4
Aviation	5
Psychologist	1
Acting	1

TABLE IX

INCOME¹

Yearly Income	Number Receiving Income
\$ 1,000- 2,000	71 ²
2,000- 3,000	26
3,000- 4,000	34
4,000- 5,000	62
5,000- 6,000	48
6,000- 7,000	9
7,000- 8,000	8
8,000- 9,000	5
9,000-10,000	11
10,000-11,000	17
11,000-12,000	4
12,000-13,000	6
13,000-14,000	1
14,000-15,000	0
15,000-16,000	1
16,000-17,000	2
17,000-18,000	1
18,000-19,000	1
19,000-20,000	0
20,000-25,000	2
25,000-30,000	0
30,000-40,000	1
40,000-50,000	2

A close examination of these tables seems to indicate that the selective factor works somewhat in the choice of an occupation. Since the majority of the students come from homes where their parents own their own businesses, it is quickly evident that the students would go to work in these businesses after leaving school. The fact that the business world has used 40 per cent of those ex-cadets answering the questionnaire would indicate this. All of the vocations that are reported are those that

¹ Two of the reports stated that it was none of the school's business.

² Of this number, 52 are students enrolled in school at this time.

result from a pursuit of the curricula as established at the Oklahoma Military Academy.

One specific goal for the institution has been that of military training for leadership. Sixty of the 325 cadets who answered have commissions in the army or navy at the present time. This number represents 18 per cent of the total group in this study.

It is rather difficult to determine that the specific objectives of the school's philosophy have been reached. There are many factors and an equal number of subjects for analysis. Even so, some evidence can be found in the answers given by those ex-cadets in reply to the statement, "What do you consider the most valuable part of your training at O. M. A.?" The table on the next page gives the opinions of evaluation on the part of the 325 ex-cadets in this analysis.

Since each of these evaluations represents an opinion of the value an ex-cadet puts on his training while at O. M. A., it would seem that the objective of leadership training has been reached. The greatest number of good opinions seem to pertain to the military phase of the training. This is natural and right, as the school is essentially a military institution by design and practice. It is the writer's belief that a tenet sometimes expressed by the educator to the effect that the educand must learn to live in the American society as well as learn how to make a living is being realized at the Oklahoma Military Academy. It is apparent that this group of ex-students has realized the importance in attitudes and habits of self-discipline, leadership, barracks life, work with others, and a sound academic program.

TABLE X
EVALUATION TABLE

Number of Cadets Replying	Most Valuable Training While at O. M. A.
155	Military Training
71	Barracks Life
29	The Study Program
30	The Social Program
132	The Discipline
21	The Sports Program
72	Leadership Training
65	The Academic Program
47	Opportunities for Friendship
79	Good Habit Formation
10	Inspiration
23	Close Supervision

Again the answers determine an indication of the opinion of the worth of O. M. A. to its former students in the replies given to the question, "Do you feel that the above mentioned benefits could have been as well obtained in the conventional type school?" The replies were as follows:

TABLE XI
OPINIONS OF WORTH OF O. M. A.

YES	(Training would have been as valuable and as good in the conventional type school)	18
NO	(Training would not have been as valuable and as good in the conventional type as it was at O. M. A.)	289
NO COMMENT		18

When it is noted that 74 per cent of those former students reporting in this questionnaire had schooling beyond O. M. A. and that 289 of them felt that no better training could be obtained, it is rather evident that the school has emphasized its value upon the minds of those who have attended in the past.

One of the first questions to be asked in order to determine the relative value of the Oklahoma Military Academy's past program is that of the value of the institution as a school for military training. As a result, two questions were asked in the questionnaire, "What was your experience in the Armed forces?" and "What was the effect of your training at O. M. A. on your success in the Armed forces?" The following tables should reveal some interesting facts about this phase of the training at the Academy:

TABLE XII
WORLD WAR II SERVICE

Number of Cadets who were members of Armed Forces in World War II	Number of Cadets who were not members of the Armed Forces in World War II
267 or 82%	58
Number who were officers in the Armed Forces	Number who were enlisted men in the Armed Forces
211 or 79%	56

Of those who were members of the Armed Forces in World War II,

- 36 reported that training at O. M. A. had little effect upon their success.
- 192 reported that the training at O. M. A. had considerable effect upon their success.
- 39 reported that training at O. M. A. had effect in gaining immediate advancement but had little long range effect.

When these ex-cadets were asked to state what they felt were the weaknesses that they encountered at O. M. A. during their attendance, some very interesting observations were made. An analysis of these answers certainly gives indicators of future needs for the school.

TABLE XIII
STATED WEAKNESSES OF O. M. A.

1. The cost at O. M. A. is too high - 13
2. The academic program was very weak - 75
3. The teachers at O. M. A. were not fully trained - 15
4. There was not enough supervision of the study program and of the barracks life - 26

TABLE XIII (Continued)

-
5. The facilities at O. M. A. were not adequate - 6
 6. The school did not have enough publicity - 16
 7. The military program was too strict - 10
 8. There was too much discipline - 5
 9. There was too much interference through politics - 42
 10. There was too much cadet favoritism - 13
 11. The athletic program was inferior - 10
 12. The social activities were weak - 6
 13. The administration was not too strong - 3
 14. There were too many passes given - 1
 15. The school had a poor guidance program - 12
 16. The school should not have taken day students - 3
 17. The school did not have its junior college program accredited - 5
 18. The students should be given more liberty - 3
 19. The school needs a stronger rabbit system - 26
 20. The school has poor food - 1
 21. The school does not sponsor enough spiritual training - 2
 22. The school is weak in character training - 2
 23. The school's morale is too low - 1
 24. There needs to be more emphasis upon the physical qualifications of the entering students - 1
-

It is interesting to note that 117 ex-cadets reported that O. M. A. was fine and had no weaknesses if it were the same type of school as the one that they attended.

In addition to those tabulations made of the 325 questionnaires collected by the date indicated, a recent tabulation³ of all questionnaires gives further information of a comparative nature. This comparative table gives an indication of the strength of the various administrations of the school in the opinion of its alumni.

TABLE XIV

NUMBER OF QUESTIONNAIRES RECEIVED FROM EACH ADMINISTRATION

President	Years	Number of Questionnaires Received
Colonel Barrett	1919-1925	2
Colonel Downs	1925-1940	156
Captain Hamilton	1940-1944	81
Colonel Perkins	1944-1948	67

TABLE XV

QUESTIONNAIRES FROM ALUMNI WHO ATTENDED DURING TWO ADMINISTRATIONS

Administration	Number of Questionnaires
Downs and Hamilton	27
Hamilton and Perkins	29

In comparing the answers given in the questionnaires obtained from those who attended the school during differing administrations, those answers listed in Table XV were not used.

³ This tabulation includes a total of 361 questionnaires and was made 25 June 1950.

The following table indicates that the various administrations have ever held to one of the stated objectives of the school--that of preparation for further education:

TABLE XVI

NUMBER OF ALUMNI RECEIVING FURTHER EDUCATION
WITH AVERAGE SCHOLASTIC MARK

	Administrations			
	Barrett (5 years)	Downs (15 years)	Hamilton (3 years)	Perkins (4 years)
Number receiving schooling in higher education	2	148	71	53
Number terminating schooling	0	8	10	14
Number achieving an A average	1	9	4	5
Number achieving a B average	1	83	31	28
Number achieving a C average	0	56	36	20

It is evident that there is little difference between one administration and another in respect to the items checked, particularly when it is realized that the Downs period covers fifteen years.

Some differences of opinion were found when the answers to the statement, "What weaknesses did you find in our program at O. M. A.?" were arranged in a comparative table.

TABLE XVII
OPINIONS OF O. M. A.'s WEAKNESSES

	Barrett	Downs	Hamilton	Perkins
Weak control of first year man	0	2	15	51
Weak academic program	2	83	28	8
Weak instructional staff	0	26	11	6
Weak athletic program	0	18	14	11
Weak military program	0	2	3	1
Too much politics	0	24	12	2
Too much favoritism	0	1	6	3
Not enough social life	0	3	1	4
Too much control	0	1	8	0
Not enough freedom	0	3	1	0
Not enough adult supervision	0	16	2	4
Not enough food	0	1	0	0
Not enough strong discipline	0	2	0	18

There is some variety of opinion here. The Downs period reveals the great need for academic improvement in the school. There is little indication of a desire for a strong discipline for the first year man. The Perkins administration, on the other hand, provides evidence of student opinion in respect to weakness in the handling of the first year man. Some of this seems to appear during Hamilton's administration.

There is greater criticism of the school's political activity during the Downs and Hamilton administrations. This is in line with the information obtained from the history of the school, as it was during the Downs

period and the subsequent Hamilton period that state politics had its inning with the school.

The great emphasis placed upon strong discipline during Captain John Hamilton's tenure as president of the Academy gave rise to the treatment of the first year man. This emphasis upon strong discipline was the natural outgrowth of the war years. Further, the criticism of the Perkins administration was caused largely by the reactions of the post-war period.

Thus it is evident that a study of the opinions of former students does reveal objective material which should give some indication of the value of the Oklahoma Military Academy's training during past years. These findings coupled with information gained through an analysis of the school's transcripts should determine to some extent the worth of O. M. A.'s past.

An examination of the total number of the school's transcripts from 1920 to the close of the school year in 1948 reveals several clear indicators of the school's past worth in the educational field of the state. It was found by a personal count and check on the part of the writer that 1,972 transcripts had notations indicating that they had been sent to other institutions of higher learning either in the state of Oklahoma or elsewhere.

The distribution of these transcripts to other institutions of higher learning indicates that the cadet in training at O. M. A. did seek further training after leaving the Academy. A survey of the schools to which the transcripts were sent establishes that the choice of schools was predominantly for the Oklahoma institutions. The distribution was as follows:

TABLE XVIII

ATTENDANCE AT SCHOOLS OF HIGHER LEARNING

University of Oklahoma	564
Oklahoma Agricultural and Mechanical College	472
Tulsa University	204
Other state schools	230
Total	1,470
Out of state schools	502
Total	1,972

This distribution was to be expected, as the vast majority of the student body at O. M. A. comes from Oklahoma. Of the total number of students who have entered the Academy between the years 1920 and 1948 (some 3,397), only 361 have enrolled from a state other than Oklahoma. It was established by a close check of the records that approximately 10 per cent of the total enrollment was from out of the state. The following table gives a tabulation of these enrollments:

TABLE XIX

OUT OF STATE ENROLLMENTS

State	Graduate from the Junior College	Attending but not a graduate from the Junior College
Arizona		5
Arkansas	12	25
California	2	7
Colorado		3
Connecticut		1
Florida	1	1
Illinois	3	13
Iowa	2	6
Indiana	2	1

TABLE XIX (Continued)

State	Graduate from the Junior College	Attending but not a graduate from the Junior College
Kentucky	2	6
Kansas	14	89
Louisiana		4
Massachusetts		1
Michigan	2	2
Montana		2
Missouri	8	39
Nebraska	1	2
New Mexico	3	5
New York		1
Ohio	1	2
Pennsylvania		4
South Carolina	1	
Tennessee		4
Texas	14	59
Vermont		1
Washington		3
Wyoming		1
Canada		1
Porto Rico		1
Hawaii		2
Washington, D. C.	1	1
		Total 361

In addition, a careful check of all college students for the school years 1946-1949 as to their continuing beyond their schooling at the Academy indicates further evidence to support the school's objective as a preparatory institution. The following tabulation of evidence found through an examination of junior college records for the years 1946-1949 supports this contention: 90 per cent of all years averaged attended a school of higher learning.

TABLE XX

GRADUATES OF JUNIOR COLLEGE SEEKING FURTHER
EDUCATION FROM 1946-1949

	1946-47	1947-48	1948-49
Junior College Graduates	26	32	24
Those graduating and going on to further schooling	22	30	23
Those graduating who did not go on to school	4	2	1

To determine the present opinion of the cadet corps, a questionnaire was designed and given to all attending cadets in April of 1948-49 school year:

FIGURE 5

COPY OF QUESTIONNAIRE

NAME _____ Birthdate _____ Age _____

1. (a) Grade Classification: HS Sophomore _____ College Freshman _____
 HS Junior _____ College Sophomore _____
 HS Senior _____

(b) How long have you attended O. M. A.? _____

(c) If high school senior or college sophomore, do you plan to continue your education? _____. If so, what college or university do you plan to enter? _____. Do you plan to continue your education but undecided as to the school you wish to attend? _____

2. What profession or occupation do you plan to enter? First Choice _____
 Second Choice _____ Third Choice _____

3. (a) What is the profession or occupation of your parent? _____

(b) Indicate below the educational status of your parents:

	Father	Mother
Attended but did not complete elementary school	_____	_____

FIGURE 5 (Continued)

	Father	Mother
Completed elementary school		
Attended but did not complete high school		
Graduated from high school		
Attended but did not graduate from College, University, Normal School, Teachers' College, or Junior College		
Graduated from Normal School or Junior College only		
Graduated from 4 year college, University, or Teachers' College		

4. What is the approximate salary per year for your parent? _____

5. All things considered what is the total financial worth of your parent?

6. What are the racial backgrounds of your parents? _____

7. Are any languages spoken in the home other than English? _____
What are those languages - if any? _____

Your Plan for the Future

Educational Plans:
School or Schools _____

Courses _____

Toward what vocation? _____

Do these plans correlate with the results of tests taken by student?

Yes _____ No _____ Kuder _____ PMA _____ Otis _____

Future outlook:

A study of results from this questionnaire revealed that from a total of two hundred fifteen who answered the questions and who were interviewed, one hundred sixty-nine planned to return to O. M. A. This was very high, as twenty-eight were graduating from the junior college and could not return. Only twenty-six of those questioned did not have a definite desire and plan to obtain further education. At this time the writer knows that of the 169 who did plan to return to O. M. A., 132 did return for the school year 1949-50.

It would seem from this record and from the evidence thus far brought to light that some of the school's weakness must lie in its academic program. This is indicated by the opinions of the alumni and by the observations to be found in the history. Much that has happened speaks for improvement in that area. Certainly, the political coloring and "yellow sheet" journalism of the past events do not help the school to establish and maintain a stability of purpose. It would seem that to bring about a balance between the military training and the academic training of the school, more emphasis in institutional study and experiment must be obtained for the academic side of the program.

With this in mind, studies that were designed to develop a better program--a stable program--at the academy were begun. These studies were to be the application of the Evaluative Criteria to the school by the school staff and the application for accreditation to the North Central Association of Colleges and Secondary Schools. It was believed that the study, the evaluation, and the techniques involved therein would result in a better program at O. M. A. This program was begun early in 1948-1949 and was to continue up to the end of the school year 1949-1950.

The remainder of this analysis of the Oklahoma Military Academy will center around these techniques and their application to the school. The use of these techniques of evaluation should provide a map of action for the present administration. From these studies there should evolve a better educational program for the youth of this state at his Oklahoma Military Academy.

PART THREE

THE PRESENT ADMINISTRATION

CHAPTER VI

THE APPLICATION OF THE EVALUATIVE CRITERIA
AS A MEASUREMENT OF THE ACADEMY
DURING THE SCHOOL YEAR, 1948-49

Parts One and Two have been concerned with the achievements of past administrations. Now, attention will be given to the work that has been carried on by the present administration during the school terms of 1948-1949 and 1949-1950.

In September of 1948 the staff of the Oklahoma Military Academy determined that it would make a study of the school as a whole, and from such a study attempt to arrive at a basis for improvement. It was hoped by all that such a study would have three major results: (1) the accreditation by the North Central Association of Colleges and Universities of the school's junior college division; (2) the overall improvement of the school; and (3) a growth in the in-service training of the total school staff. It was believed that such a study on the part of the total school staff would consummate the purpose of the experience in that the school would be better able to define its needed improvements.

Two techniques were used to make the preliminary study. These were, first, the use of the Evaluative Criteria as a basis for faculty measurement of the school, and second, the completion of the schedules for the Junior College Study Committee of the North Central Association of Colleges and Secondary Schools.¹

¹ This last technique was provided through the cooperation of the Junior College Study Committee composed of Horace T. Morse, Chairman; Loren N. Brown; B. Lamar Johnson; Edgar G. Johnston; Leland L. Medsker; Earl E. Mosier; D. L. Pyle; and Norman Burns.

The faculty, along with representatives from the student body, the hospital staff, the military department, and the business office, were organized into study committees for the study of various evaluative criteria and for subsequent reports to the total staff in open forum meetings.² This assembled group was given a series of orientation lectures on the use of the cooperative study of Secondary School Standards and the application of the Evaluative Criteria as an incentive for the growth of school effectiveness. Packets of the evaluative criteria from A through X were passed to each member of the group.

After the orientation period,³ assignments were made to each committee. There was a committee assigned to each of the criteria. It was decided that the first report and general forum would be made the Criterion B, Philosophy and Objectives. When the first forum was held by the committee chairman, a statement of philosophy was presented to the group which was to furnish the basis for study and for the evolvement of the school's present philosophy and objectives. This statement was presented as follows:

This statement is presented as a beginning of a philosophy for this school. It is hoped that our philosophy may be evolved through the democratic process of "give and take."

Democracy emphasizes the worth and dignity of the individual. It recognizes the rights of every individual to life, to liberty and to the pursuit of happiness within the limits circumscribed

² This program was begun on September 8, 1948. The president of the school acted as chairman of the organizational meeting.

³ This period of orientation was begun on September 8, 1948, and lasted until December 12, 1948.

by the rights of others. Thus democracy in its effort to secure optimum benefits for each individual, concerns itself primarily with those problems which are common to all in happy group living.

The method of democracy places responsibility on the individual, working with other individuals, for the solution of problems which are common to all and to the general welfare. It is assumed that through a process of interaction of ideas of the people whose welfare is sought that the most satisfactory rules of happy group living may be evolved. It is moreover assumed that each individual has a contribution to the attainment of the general welfare within the limit of his capacities. Thus, the state supports its public schools on the theory that a competent, educated citizenry working through the democratic process is the best means of achieving its purposes.

PURPOSES OF EDUCATION

From the concepts of democracy as a way of life which is concerned with the common interests and welfare of man, and of the method of democracy which places the burden on the individual as a means of achievement of this welfare, the purposes of education emerge.

Believing that the democratic way of life in its concern for the promotion of the common interests and common purposes of man is the best way which man has evolved for successful and happy group living and believing in the dignity and worth of the individual, we recognize that it is the obligation of the school:

1. To develop an effective personality, so that the individual may live a well-adjusted life.

2. To develop a fundamental faith in the American ideal of democracy and to develop those attitudes, skills, and understandings which will enable the individual, as a member of the social group concerned, to become a positive force in the process of achieving this ideal.

The acceptance of these purposes would obligate the school to provide experiences for the development of certain interests, knowledges, understandings, skills, and attitudes which are basic to the achievement of those purposes.

The experiences should be provided in order to best answer these questions:

1. What are the needs of the individual to be met that he may live a healthy, well-adjusted life?
2. What are the needs of the individual that should be met in order that he be effective in promoting the general welfare in a democratic society?
3. What are the problems involved in securing the general welfare of the group?

It is understood that the ten imperative needs as set up for secondary schools would be the behavior patterns and the "needs" that we would try to settle as the experiences needed in our school. These are listed as follows:

Evaluating the curriculum for provision
for meeting the imperative needs of youth

There are ten of these needs and each need carries a questionnaire with a rating blank of twenty questions. The rankings of opinion for each question in the group of twenty are five in number and are as follows:

- 5 - Very superior in this characteristic (Meets the condition of provision almost always.)

- 4 - Superior in this characteristic. (Condition of provision receives such emphasis.)
- 3 - Average in this characteristic. (Condition of provision receives some emphasis.)
- 2 - Inferior in this characteristic. (Condition of provision receives little emphasis.)
- 1 - Very inferior in this characteristic. (Meets the condition of provision almost never.)
- N - This condition does not apply in this situation.

THE IMPERATIVE NEEDS:

1. All youth need to develop salable skills and those understandings and attitudes that make the worker an intelligent and productive participant in economic life. To this end, most youth need supervised work experience as well as education in the skills and knowledge of their occupations.
2. All youth need to develop and maintain good health and physical fitness.
3. All youth need to understand the rights and duties of a citizen of a democratic society, and to be diligent and competent in the performance of their obligations as members of the community and a citizen of the state and nation, and the world.
4. All youth need to understand the significance of the family for the individual and society and the conditions conducive to successful family life.
5. All youth need to know how to purchase and use goods and services intelligently, understanding both the values received by the consumer and the economic consequences of their acts.
6. All youth need to understand the methods of science, the influence of science on human life, and the main scientific facts concerning the nature of the world and of man.
7. All youth need opportunities to develop their capacities to appreciate beauty in literature, art, music, and nature.
8. All youth need to be able to use their leisure time well and to budget it wisely, balancing activities that yield satisfactions to the individual with those that are socially useful.
9. All youth need to develop respect for the other persons, to grow in their insight into ethical values and principles, and to be able to live and work co-operatively with others.

10. All youth need to grow in their ability to think rationally, to express their thoughts clearly, and to read and listen with understanding.

Each of the eighteen members of the study group checked the Ten Imperative Needs as they reflected in their opinions of the Oklahoma Military Academy. The results were as follows:

TABLE XXI
FACULTY RATINGS OF THE SCHOOL

Number of the Imperative Needs	Average	Rankings from 1 - 5				
		1	2	3	4	5
One	3	0	1	9	4	0
Two	4	0	0	0	11	1
Three	3	0	0	9	5	0
Four	3	0	6	8	0	0
Five	2	7	7	0	0	0
Six	3.5	0	1	6	7	0
Seven	3	0	2	10	2	0
Eight	3	0	0	12	2	0
Nine	2	0	12	2	0	0
Ten	3	0	1	13	0	0

The examining group believed that the Academy answers the imperative needs for youth with an average rating of 3. The school was weak in numbers five and nine.

With this beginning, each committee made its study of its assigned criterion and then made its report. This work was done after the total

membership had made a study of the basic philosophy and objectives of the school. All reports were completed and the required number of open forum meetings for various criteria were held. The total group filled out and checked each of the evaluative criteria as measurements of the school. There were eighteen completed by May 24, 1949.

During the summer of 1949, a careful analysis of each individual packet of the completed check sheets was made. This was done by the administration with the aid of two instructors. It was the hope of all that the study and the subsequent analysis would reveal areas where the staff could strengthen the institution and by so doing enable the school to obtain the proper accreditation for its junior college with the regional accrediting agency.

The use of the Evaluative Criteria provides judgments and quantitative data for the measurement of the school in nine specific areas. There are three scales by which results obtained by this method may be analyzed. They are the Alpha Scale, graphically represented by means of 110 summaries (or educational thermometers); the Beta Scale with 50 measurement summaries; and the Gamma Scale with 25 of these same summaries.

The Gamma Scale consists of only 25 thermometers, but they are the ones which have the highest discriminative value in distinguishing good schools from those that are not so good. There are at least two summaries from each of the nine main areas to be evaluated.

The summaries are records of the evaluations made by the staff committees from each of the nine areas. These records were obtained by applying a rating to each statement and an evaluation of the total section checked. The evaluation of each section was made up of staff judgment. The ratings were from 1 to 5 for each judgment. A rating of 1 was the

FIGURE 6

SUMMARY FORM FOR II CURRICULUM AND COURSES OF STUDY

Section	Title of Measurement	Computation of primary scores					Computation of summary score						
		Evaluations					Total	Divisor	Score	Per-centile	Weights Gamma	Weighted per-centiles	
II	Curriculum development	A-y 3	A-z 2	B-z 4	B-y 2	B-z 2	13	5	2.6	34	30	12	
<u>A</u>	Mathematics	w ₄	x ₄	y ₄	z ₄		16	4	4	80	30	24	
III B	Health and physical education: boys	w ₄	x ₅	y ₃	z ₄		16	4	4	80	40	32	
										Totals..	100	68	
										Summary score (Divide by 100, unless there are "N"'s in the Percentile column).....			68
										Equivalent percentile			76
										(From summary conversion table)			

lowest to be given. A rating of 5 was the highest to be given. For the sake of brevity, the Gamma Scale is used here. These summaries follow:

From this analysis, it was determined that the school needed to give more attention to the general education program. The mathematics area of the curriculum, in the opinion of the group, met that criterion well above the average. From other areas that were checked, it has been realized that the school should give attention to the development of its fine arts program. The rating in this area of 76 for the school placed the school in the average bracket for the nation.

FIGURE 7

SUMMARY FORM FOR PUPIL ACTIVITY PROGRAM

Section	Title of measure	Computation of primary score						Computation of summary score		
		Evaluations			Total	Divisor	Score	Per-centile	Gamma	Weighted percentile
II	School Government	x 5	y 5	z 5	15	3	5	100	50	50
IX	Physical Activities: boys	x 5	y 4	z 5	14	3	4.66	92	50	46
Totals									100	96
Equivalent percentile (From summary conversion table)										98

This rating is the highest given and may be of a prejudiced nature; however, the military school does allow a great amount of control to be given to the officers of the cadet corps. Certainly, there is no other place that gives a greater outlet for physical activity.

FIGURE 8

SUMMARY FORM LIBRARY SERVICE

Section	Title of Measure	Computation of primary score				Computation of summary score		
		Evaluations	Total	Divisor	Score	Per-centile	Weight Gamma	Weighted Percentile
A III H	Book collection: general adequacy				3.36	66	30	19.8
					3.54	96	30	28.8
B	Periodicals							
V	Teachers and the library	A-y	A-z	B-z	2.66	38	40	15.2
		2	3	3				
					Totals.....	100	63.8	
Equivalent percentile (From summary conversion table)								72

In this area, the committee found an adequacy of book collection and periodicals. Still, there was a need of new books and a greater variety of periodicals. There was a definite need for a trained librarian. The greatest need was found in poor use made of the library by the staff. All of the members indicated a desire for more space.

FIGURE 9

SUMMARY FORM GUIDANCE SERVICE

Section	Title of Measure	Computation of primary scores					Computation of summary score					
		Evaluations					Total	Div- isor	Score	Per- centile	Gamma	Weighted percentile
		A-y	A-z	B-y	B-z	C-y						
III	Information about pupil	3	2	5	5	3	34	10	3.4	66	60	39.6
		C-z	D-y	D-z	E-y	E-z						
		3	3	4	3	3						
V	Phases of guidance	A-1	A-2	A-3	B-y		24	8	3	50	40	20
		-z	-z	-z								
		3	3	2	4							
		B-z	C-z	D-z	E-z							
		1	4	4	3							
Totals										100	59.6	
Equivalent percentile												
(From summary conversion table)										60		

Here the staff found a weakness in that the school did not provide enough tests for a good program. It was believed that much more time should be devoted to the guidance problems. There was not enough staff for this work. A better program of records should be maintained.

FIGURE 10
SUMMARY FORM INSTRUCTION

Section	Title of measure	Computation of primary score	Computation of summary score		
		Score	Per- centile	Weights Gamma	Weighted percentile
I	Classroom activities	3.7	74	35	25.9
V	Special committee judgment	4	80	65	52
			Totals	100	77.9
			Equivalent percentile (From summary conversion table)		83

The faculty felt that its instruction was above average. The writer feels that they were prejudiced in a very human way in this respect.

FIGURE 11

SUMMARY FORM OUTCOMES OF THE EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM

Section	Title of measure	Computation of primary scores						Computation of summary score		
		Evaluation				Total	Divisor	Per-centile	Weights Gamma	Weighted percentile
		1-z 3	1-y 2	1-z 3	2-y 2	2-z 3				
I	A	English								
						13	5	26	34	15.3
III	Attitudes and appreciations	A-z 3	B-z 3	C-z 3		9	3	3	50	27.5
		Totals						100	42.8	41
		Equivalent percentile						(From summary conversion table)		

The outcomes realized by the school were below average. In the English field, the students did not realize the goals the staff felt they should realize. The change of attitude and the development of correct appreciations were, in the opinion of the staff, not fully realized.

FIGURE 12

SUMMARY FORM SCHOOL STAFF

Section	Title of measure	Computation of primary scores						Computation of summary score		
		Evaluation			Total	Divisor	Score	Per-centile	Weights Gamma	Weighted percentile
I	A	x ₅	y ₄	z ₅	14	3	4.7	94	15	14.1
B II	2						3.7	74	15	11.1
	3						4.1	82	15	12.3
C	1	x ₃	y ₄	z ₃	10	3	3.3	62	20	12.4
	2						3.8	76	25	19.
D	1	x ₃	y ₅	z ₃	11	3	3.6	72	10	7.2
Totals									100	76.1
Equivalent percentile										92
(From summary conversion table)										

The evaluations in this section placed the school in the superior bracket. The major criticism lay in the lack of adequate salary. There was some indication that the staff could use more in-service training. Several of the committee checked that there was need for individual improvement.

The school plant received much favorable comment. However, it was believed that the classrooms could be more attractive. There was some criticism of the custodians' efforts to maintain the plant.

FIGURE 13
SUMMARY FORM SCHOOL PLANT

Section	Title of measure	Computation of primary scores								Computation of summary score			
		Evaluations						Total	Div-isor	Score	Per-centile	<u>Weights Gamma</u>	Weighted Percentile
I A	Site:health and safety	1-y ₅	1-z ₄	2-y ₅	2-z ₄			18	4	4.5	90	5	4.5
II B	Building: educational program	1-x ₃	1-y ₃	1-z ₃	2-x ₄	2-y ₄	2-z ₄	43	12	3.5	70	20	14.
		3-x ₄	3-y ₄	3-z ₃	4-x ₄	4-y ₄	4-z ₃						
III B	Equipment: economy and efficiency	w ₄	x ₄	y ₄	z ₄			16	4	4	80	75	60
Totals											100	78.5	
Equivalent percentile (From summary conversion table)											80		

In this area, the staff were very critical of the administration as to its policy for the supervision of instruction. It was believed that more democracy should be practiced. Certainly, it was indicated that a

FIGURE 14

SUMMARY FORM SCHOOL ADMINISTRATION

Section	Title of measure	Computation of primary scores						Computation of summary score		
		Evaluations				Total	Divisor	Score	Per-centile	Weighted percentile
		A-z	B-z	C-1-x	C-1-y	C-1-z				
III	Supervision of instruction	4	2	4	3	4	39	10	2.9	46
		C-2-y	C-2-z	C-3-z	D-y	D-z				
		2	2	4	2	2				20.7
V	Business management	A-x	A-y	A-z	B-x	B-y	56	12	4.6	92
		5	5	5	5	5				
		C-y	C-z	D-w	D-x	D-y				50.6
		5	5	4	4	4				
Totals									100	71.3
Equivalent percentile (From summary conversion table)										77

greater amount of supervision of classroom teaching was needed. The business management of the school received a very high rating.

When the summaries of the Gamma Scale were applied to the educational thermometer, it was found that, in the opinion of the staff, the Academy was average or better than average in the 25 sections checked. Even so, from these evaluations and others not indicated in the Gamma scale, the staff reached the following understandings of the weaknesses of the school:

- (1) It was felt that the school library should have more space and beauty.
- (2) It was felt that the school should have a trained librarian on its staff.
- (3) It was emphasized by all that the staff members were underpaid.
- (4) There was strong evidence that the school needed to practice more democracy in its control of the student body, particularly the beginning student.
- (5) There was evidence that the staff felt that the administration should use more supervisory techniques in its dealings with the faculty.
- (6) All members of the group indicated the need for a balanced program between the military and the academic divisions of the school.

The faculty had clearly indicated by their opinion that the school was average or better when compared with the scales of schools that had been measured by the use of the Evaluative Criteria throughout the nation. The use of this program was found to be very valuable as a means of in-service training at the Academy. The work done in connection with the application of the criteria furnishes the basis for further efforts toward accreditation of the junior college of the school.

CHAPTER VII

THE NORTH CENTRAL ASSOCIATION
EXAMINATIONS DURING THE
SCHOOL TERM, 1949-1950

With the beginning of school in 1949-50, the entire program of the Oklahoma Military Academy was geared to prepare the institution for an examination by the North Central Association of Colleges and Secondary Schools. It was the desire of all that the junior college division of the Academy be accredited by the end of the school year.¹

It was with this action in mind that Col. Homer M. Ledbetter, the President of the Academy, accepted the commission of the North Central Association of Colleges and Secondary Schools to cooperate with that Association's Junior College Study Committee during the fall of 1949. As a result of this decision the total staff of the Academy completely checked the schedules of that study. It was felt that this was another measure of the school which would result in growth on the part of all.

A copy of the letter which stated the mission and the purpose of the study coupled with an index of the schedules that were checked should indicate the value of this program:

COPY OF LETTER

To the Chief Administrative Officers
of the Junior Colleges:

The Junior College Study Committee wishes to express its appreciation of your willingness to participate in the Junior College Study. You will recall from our letter of August 18, 1948, that the purpose of this study

¹ The Oklahoma Military Academy High School has been accredited by the North Central Association since 1925.

is to explore the nature and functions of junior colleges with a view to developing appropriate criteria for their accreditation.

Enclosed are two copies of the Inquiry Form to which reference was made in our earlier letter. One copy should be returned to the Office of the Secretary of the Committee; the duplicate is intended for your files. We are also sending you in a separate package a supply of faculty report forms, one to be filled out by each administrative officer and each person who teaches in the junior college. The supply should be sufficient to provide duplicate copies for your files. If it is not sufficient, we shall be glad to send you additional copies. The Committee realizes that the filling out of this extensive Inquiry Form will be a large task. However, we are sure you will agree that a complete and detailed picture of the status of junior college education in the North Central Association territory is essential to the attainment of the objectives of the Junior College Study. We believe, as we indicated in our earlier letter, that the findings of a comprehensive study will be of value not only in enabling the North Central Association to play a constructive role in the progress of the junior college movement, but will also be of direct value to junior college administrators and faculties in the planning and development of their programs. The findings will be published.

The Inquiry Form is divided into sections covering various aspects of the work of your institution. It would expedite the work of analyzing the forms if you could return the individual sections as you complete them. We hope very much that it will be possible to have all the sections returned by March 31, 1949. You may find that some of the items are not applicable in your particular situation. In such cases the notations "not applicable" should be made. In cases where sufficient space for your answer has not been provided, please feel free to use additional sheets.

Two areas of institutional activities, physical plant and finances, are not included in the enclosed information blanks. These aspects of the study will be covered at a later date.

It was pointed out in our earlier letter that all information provided by cooperating institutions will be held in strict confidence by the Committee, and that the findings will be reported in such a way as to preclude the possibility of identifying particular institutions. We should also like to emphasize again that the activities of the Junior College Study Committee are being carried on entirely apart from the accrediting activities of the North Central Association, and that in participating in this study an institution will in no way prejudice its case so far as accreditation is concerned.

If you have any questions about the filling out of the forms or other matter, I shall be glad to have you write me.

Norman Burns
Secretary of the Committee

END OF LETTER

Enclosure 1

SCHEDULES

NORTH CENTRAL ASSOCIATION OF COLLEGES AND SECONDARY SCHOOLS
JUNIOR COLLEGE STUDY COMMITTEE

Norman Burns, Secretary
5835 Kimbark Avenue
Chicago 37, Illinois

The following schedules are to be completed by the institutions participating in the Junior College study. Individual sections should be returned as completed and all sections should be returned by March 31, 1949. Please send with the first returns a copy of the institution's most recent catalog.

I. PURPOSES Schedule A. Institutional Purposes Schedule B. Clientele	IV. CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION (continued) Schedule G. Summer Session Schedule H. Cooperative Programs Schedule I. Articulation Schedule J. Administrative Concern for the Improvement of Instruction Schedule K. Stimulating Student Achievement
II. GENERAL ADMINISTRATION Schedule A. Control Schedule B. Board of Control Schedule C. Administrative Organization Schedule D. Relationships with other Educational Units Schedule E. Salaries	V. THE LIBRARY Schedule A. Personnel Schedule B. Expenditures Schedule C. Use of Library by Other Educational Unit Schedule D. Library Collection Schedule E. Housing and Facilities Schedule F. Use of Library by Students Schedule G. Community Use of Library
III. FACULTY Schedule A. General Schedule B. Salary Policy Schedule C. Faculty Participation in Institutional Affairs Schedule D. Recruitment and Appointment Schedule E. Conditions of Faculty Service Schedule F. Leaves of Absence Schedule G. Retirement Plan	VI. STUDENT PERSONNEL SERVICES Schedule A. Recruitment Schedule B. Admission Requirements Schedule C. Orientation Schedule D. Counseling Program Schedule E. Placement Schedule F. Extra-Classroom Activities Schedule G. Financial Aids Schedule H. Health Service
IV. CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION Schedule A. Curriculum Organization Schedule B. Course Offerings Schedule C. Curriculums Schedule D. Degrees, Certificates, and Titles Schedule E. Curriculum Planning and Revision Schedule F. Evening and Extension Programs	

On October 2, 1949, an application for admission to the North Central Association as an accredited junior college was forwarded to Dr. Norman Burns, Secretary of the association. With this application the school sent its check for \$400 and a brief history of the school's founding.

The application was accepted and two complete sets of schedules were sent to the school to be completed and returned by November 15, 1949.

Again, the school staff was divided into committees, and after concentrated study, held open forum discussions upon each schedule. After each schedule was completed, it was assembled and checked by the administration in the persons of the president of the school, the academic dean of the college, and the commandant of cadets for the school.

The schedules were completed and sent to Dr. Burns' office on November 10, 1949. After the examining committee of the North Central Association had reviewed the schedules, it concluded that the Oklahoma Military Academy was worthy of further study. The summary sheet of this committee's findings follows:

SUMMARY SHEET, 1949-50

<u>Oklahoma Military Academy, Claremore, Oklahoma</u>		Group <u>1</u>
Enrolment for last fiscal year <u>93</u>	Enrolment for current year <u>94</u>	
Total faculty <u>23</u>	Teaching faculty <u>21</u>	

Group Percentile Rank

I. Purposes

A. Clearness of conception.....	50
B. Scope.....	50
C. Acceptance by faculty.....	50
D. Relation to activity.....	90
E. Clientele.....	90

SUMMARY SHEET CONTINUED:

Group
Percentile Rank

II. Faculty

A. Doctor's degrees.....	20
B. Master's degrees.....	65
C. Graduate study.....	28
D. Graduate training.....	10
E. Educational experience.....	2
F. Publications - articles.....	50
G. Publications - books.....	32
H. Learned societies - memberships....	49
I. Learned societies - meetings.....	10
J. Learned societies - programs.....	35
K. Student-faculty ratio.....	77
L. Form of organization.....	50
M. Faculty meetings.....	50
N. Faculty committees.....	50
O. Salaries - Single combined.....	19
- Median instructional....	52
- Maximum instructional...	12
- Median administrative...	26
P. Tenure.....	50
Q. Teaching load.....	55
R. Recruitment and appointment.....	70
S. Aids to growth.....	100
T. Leaves of absence.....	10
U. Retirement.....	50
V. Insurance.....	50
W. Housing.....	90
X. Recreation.....	90

III. Curriculum

A. General education.....	37
B. Advanced education.....	--
C. Professional and technical education--	
D. Organization.....	17

IV. Instruction

A. Administrative concern.....	65
B. Student scholarship.....	99
C. Adjustment of instruction and curriculum.....	65
D. Marks and examinations.....	50
E. Alertness of faculty.....	50

V. The Library

A. Expenditures for books.....	12
B. Expenditures for salaries.....	22
C. Student use.....	26

SUMMARY SHEET CONTINUED:

	Group Percentile Rank
D. Faculty use.....	22
E. Distribution of holdings and expenditures	26
VI. <u>Student Personnel Service</u>	
A. Admission.....	50
B. Orientation.....	60
C. Student records.....	45
D. Counseling program.....	50
E. Counseling procedures.....	60
F. Extra-curriculum activities.....	23
G. Financial aids.....	8
H. Health service.....	78
I. Housing and boarding.....	78
J. Placement.....	6
K. Student discipline.....	78
VII. <u>Administration</u>	
A. General control.....	100
B. Personnel, academic administration.....	50
C. Personnel, business administration.....	50
D. Personnel, financial administration.....	50
E. Personnel, student personnel admin.	50
F. Personnel, special activities.....	50
G. Academic administration.....	33
H. Business administration.....	67
I. Financial administration.....	--
J. Student Personnel administration.....	50
K. Administration of records and reports....	32
L. Administration of special activities.....	--
VIII. <u>Finances</u>	
A. Educational expenditure per student.....	79
B. Stable income per student.....	42
C. Dept per student.....	67
IX. <u>Physical plant</u>	
A. Facilities.....	64
B. Operation and care.....	57
X. <u>Institutional Study</u>	
A. Number and value of studies.....	50
B. Areas covered.....	10
C. Personnel and methods.....	10
D. Publicity and use.....	50
E. Attitudes and financial support.....	50

SUMMARY SHEET CONTINUED:

Group
Percentile Rank

XI. Athletics

A. Administration.....	50
B. Staff.....	50
C. Financial aid.....	50
D. Eligibility.....	50
E. Health.....	50
F. Control of finances.....	90

In a letter from Manning M. Patello, Jr., Assistant Secretary to the association, the president of the Oklahoma Military Academy was informed that a formal examination of the institution would be made by the association's examiners on January 11 and 12, 1950. The examiners were to be Dr. B. Lamar Johnson and Dr. William H. Conley.² Upon arriving, they presented the schedule of examination which they wished to follow during their two-day visit. They informed the school officials that they would check all schedules and would spend a portion of each night at the hotel recording the scores and writing their report.

The examiners were very thorough in their work. They spent time with each administrative officer, with individual staff members, and with many groups of the student body. They ate their meals with the students and discussed many phases of the school program with them. At the end of their stay, they held a critique with the president and his staff. Many excellent suggestions were made. The president was informed that he would have to appear before the Reviewing Board in Chicago on March 19, 1950. On January 31, 1950, the school received the following letter and report

² Dr. B. Lamar Johnson was at that time Librarian and Dean of Stephens College, Columbia, Missouri; and Dr. William H. Conley was Dean of Loyola University, Chicago, Illinois.

of the examinations:

NORTH CENTRAL ASSOCIATION OF COLLEGES
AND SECONDARY SCHOOLS

- - - - -

COMMISSION ON COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES

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5835 Kimbark Ave.
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Univ. of Illinois
Urbana, Illinois

January 31, 1950

President H. M. Ledbetter
Oklahoma Military Academy
Claremore, Oklahoma

Dear President Ledbetter:

Enclosed is a copy of the report
of the survey recently made of your institution.
We hope that this will be helpful to you.

Sincerely,

/s/

Manning M. Patillo, Jr.,
Assistant Secretary

MMP:LK

REPORT TO THE BOARD OF REVIEW
OF
THE COMMISSION ON COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES
NORTH CENTRAL ASSOCIATION OF COLLEGES AND SECONDARY SCHOOLS

OKLAHOMA MILITARY ACADEMY
Claremore, Oklahoma

In accordance with instructions from the Secretary of the Commission on Colleges and Universities of the North Central Association, Oklahoma Military Academy, Claremore, Oklahoma, was examined on January 11 and 12, 1950, by William H. Conley and B. Lamar Johnson. The examiners submit herewith their report.

INTRODUCTION

Oklahoma Military Academy developed from a state school originally founded in 1909 as Eastern Preparatory School. This school continued until 1917, when (during the First World War) it was closed. During the period from 1917 to 1919 the campus was used by Claremore High School. In 1919 the Oklahoma legislature established Oklahoma Military Academy and in 1923 the addition of the two junior college years was authorized.

Oklahoma Military Academy is accredited as a high school by the North Central Association of Colleges and Secondary Schools. The present application is the first application for accrediting of the junior college.

More than three-fourths of the junior college students are from Oklahoma; approximately one-third of the students live within fifty miles of Claremore.

Because of the relatively high cost (as compared with most state junior colleges) of attending Oklahoma Military Academy (first year fees of \$1079 for residents of Oklahoma and \$1179 for non-residents--both fees including uniforms), the student body comes from homes with above-average economic resources.

PURPOSES

The academic purpose of the junior college is: "To give the student of junior college status sound and thorough education, corresponding to the first two years of a four year college course." (Catalog p. 12)

The military objectives of the program are stated as follows: "To give to its students a sound education and the habits of order, precision and teamwork that military training develops; and to insure character and honor that will be an unending source of pride to its graduates and to the State of Oklahoma." (Catalog p. 11)

These objectives are apparently kept in mind in planning and developing the program. In general, courses are planned to meet the requirements of the colleges and universities to which students transfer. The validity of this college preparatory objective is suggested by the fact that ninety per cent of the entering junior college students transfer to some other college or university at the end of either their first year (39 per cent) or at the end of their second year (51.5 per cent). Despite the validity of this college preparatory objective, the examiners believe the faculty may be permitting this objective to limit curriculum development more than is necessary. More emphasis might, for example, be given to general education objectives, apart from college preparation.

Certainly the military training objective of the program is stressed sufficiently. The success of achieving this goal is suggested by the fact that a recent survey indicates that 82 per cent of the graduates studied, served in the armed forces during World War II. Seventy-eight per cent of this group were officers.

FACULTY

The faculty rates above average on the item of Master's degrees. On Doctor's degrees, educational experience, and salaries, the ratings are low. Interviews with staff members reveal an apparent competence and interest in their work. The morale of the staff seems high.

It will be observed that the examiners corrected the score on student-faculty ratio assigned in the Secretary's Office. The reason for the error is occasioned by the fact that the original score was assigned on the basis of junior college enrolment, whereas the faculty teaches the total student body, both high school and junior college. Even with this correction, however, the college rates at the 77th percentile on this item.

Undoubtedly the low rating on salaries accounts for the difficulty encountered by the College in attracting a faculty with greater experience. It would be highly desirable to have a higher and more flexible salary structure.

The fall faculty conference, regular faculty meetings, and committee work are apparently helpful to faculty members in personal and professional growth. The examiners feel, however, that the rating of 100 percentile on the item of aids to growth (as assigned by the Secretary's Office on the basis of data provided by the faculty record forms) gives a more favorable impression than is warranted by the facts of the situation. Perhaps a rating at the 50th or 60th percentile would represent a more accurate appraisal of the effective aids to faculty growth provided by the institution.

The faculty meets regularly. Adequate minutes are kept. In general, there seems to be a less-than-usual faculty participation in actual policy formation and educational planning, this despite the existence of fourteen committees (probably more than necessary). The military school philosophy influences faculty organization and activity. A majority of decisions appear to come from "above" (from the President or the Executive Committee) rather than from the faculty. This is, of course, consistent with the military point-of-view; yet the examiners felt that greater vitality might be given to the program by placing increased responsibility on the faculty for developing new ideas and procedures.

CURRICULUM

Within the framework of "college preparatory" and "military training" objectives the curriculum appears to be adequate as to range and thoroughness. Much more might well be done, however, to recognize significant general education objectives (citizenship, communication, mental health,

for example), without conflicting with the objectives listed above. A faculty-wide study of general education should prove most helpful.

Greater attention should be given to integration between fields and departments. Some recognition is being given to the value of courses to meet the life needs of laymen. In a Zoology course offered by the Academy, students study individual problems (related to personal and community health and to agriculture, for example) that are of concern to them. In general, however, increased emphasis needs to be given to the application of learning to life situations.

INSTRUCTION

Some of the ratings on "instruction" are among the highest given to the college by the examiners. "Attitude toward student indifference" and "Stimuli and rewards for high scholarship" are rated particularly high. "Knowledge about students" and the adjustment of instruction to "Differential abilities" are also assigned high ratings.

The examiners were very favorably impressed with the individual attention given each cadet, the care taken to inform students about what is expected of them, the care with which students are checked on what they are doing. Not only are classes small, but instructors are available for individual help in their offices, as well as during evening supervision in barracks.

The so-called "contract plan" of making weekly assignments is the most notable single instructional development in the college. Under this plan students elect to work for "Maximum," "Average," or "Minimum" credit each week. Students comment on the following values in the plan: Specificity of assignments, flexibility of work, incentive for instructors to plan more carefully. In general, the plan (suggested from "above," rather

than developed by the staff) seems to be favorably, though not enthusiastically, accepted by the staff.

If the faculty, students, and the President were cooperatively to work on evaluation and improvement of the "contract plan," much progress would probably be made in increasing the value of a plan which is this year being used for the first time.

The examiners believe that much can and should be done to vitalize and enliven classroom instruction. Some steps are being taken in this direction (forums, debates, individual projects, use of some audio-visual materials) but much remains to be done. The textbook type of teaching apparently predominates. The faculty does not yet fully realize the potential value of the library in contributing to student learning.

The college is to be commended for its plans to give a battery of standard achievement tests at the close of the present school year.

At present the following test results are available:

1. The median I. Q. of entering junior college students as measured by the Otis Intelligence Test is 104.
2. The median percentile (based on national norms) of entering junior college students on the Cross English Test is 28.6.
3. The median percentile (based on national norms) of entering junior college students on 100 problem arithmetic test is 52.6.

LIBRARY

The library is one of the weakest, if not the weakest, units in the entire educational program. Among the elements of weakness are the following:

1. The amount of money spent for books is very, almost alarmingly, low. In this connection, the examiners noted an error in the

reports sent to the Secretary's office. Instead of spending, as was reported, more than \$1000 for books in 1946-47, the Academy spent \$480 of which it is estimated that \$360 was spent for books which are useful to the junior college. In 1947-48, even less was spent for books. Apparently (though the examiners do not have complete corrected figures) significantly more was spent for books during the period immediately prior to 1947. This decline in expenditures for books during the past two years should be corrected.

2. The Librarian devotes only half-time to library work. In addition to her library work, Mrs. Jarrett serves as secretary to the Dean and does most of the work ordinarily done by the registrar--preparing transcripts and keeping academic records. The only other assistance in the library is a part-time student worker.
3. The Librarian is not trained for the position she holds. She has not attended a library school. Her major library background comes from experience in a scientific library in Tulsa. She has not had training or experience in relating the library to teaching. It should be noted that the Librarian's annual salary is only \$2160.
4. The collection of bound periodicals is notably weak. Only fifteen magazines are bound for more than two years. This situation makes it impossible for students effectively to use the Reader's Guide to Periodical Literature.
5. Library materials are used but little. On January 11 only twelve books were charged out of the library to college students and not a single book was on reserve. During two different periods on

January 12 the use of the library was checked. During one period 10 cadets were in the library; during the other, 12. Of these 22 students, 20 were reading newspapers and magazines, one was reading a book of cartoons, and one a paper covered mystery story. A check of book cards indicated that a high percentage of the books in the library have not circulated since their purchase. This small use of library materials is, of course, the result of inadequate facilities and staff, plus the dominance of the textbook method of teaching.

6. Teachers do not seem to be particularly concerned over the lack of library facilities. As indicated above, the textbook method of teaching is used extensively.
7. Library records and reports are inadequate. The librarian should prepare for the President an annual report. This report should include statistical data (including comparisons with preceding years), an account of achievements for the year. Statistical records of use should be expanded.

Although the library situation is notably weak, there were several hopeful signs:

1. Despite her lack of training the Librarian is a very competent person. She is industrious and apparently gets along well with faculty and students. She obviously has high native ability. She is planning to attend library school during the summers, beginning this year.
2. The President is planning to reassign duties so that the Librarian can give full time to library work.
3. Several instructors, notably in science, have classroom libraries.

Though these are used little, the location of books near the students and teachers should have some value.

4. The library has open shelves.
5. The Librarian is beginning to take some initiative in providing and encouraging the use of audio-visual materials. This is only a beginning, but it is encouraging.
6. The President is aware of the weakness of the library and is apparently eager to improve the situation. This attitude of the President and the innate ability, devotion and industry of the Librarian are the most hopeful elements in the library situation.

The examiners wish to make it clear that nothing in this report is in any sense to be construed as a criticism of the Librarian. It is amazing that she has been able to do as well as she has, considering her impossible load. With more time for library work and with training for her position, she should become a really outstanding librarian.

STUDENT PERSONNEL SERVICE

The student personnel service of Oklahoma Military Academy contributes effectively to the school's objective of individualizing education. The procedures for admission, including the guidance of prospective students and the estimates of future success, are satisfactory. The program of orientation is somewhat above average and shows an element of strength in the individual attention given to the new cadets. Test data, school records, and personal histories are used by the counsellors in the induction of the students. A fairly large number of the college Freshmen have been students in the Academy during their last two years of high school. They assist in the "indoctrination" of the new men into the life and customs of a military school. There is a continuation of orientation through group

meetings every Saturday and through close personal contact between each student and the Commandant's Office, involving frequent personal interviews.

Adequate student records are maintained. The academic records of current students are in order and are filed in locked, fire-proof filing cabinets. The records of the students are microfilmed and placed in a bank vault, when the students graduate. Original records are transferred to ordinary files for reference.

The non-academic records are decentralized. Some are kept by the Army Office, some by the Commandant, some by the Health Office, and some by the Dean. In actual practice there is informal coordination of the information through personal contacts of the staff members. Again, because of the close contact between students and members of the faculty and staff the counselling is well conducted. If the procedures for coordination were more carefully worked out, so that all records on a student could be available to each counselor, the personnel service would be materially strengthened.

In a military school, time for extra-curricular activities is somewhat at a premium. An effort is made to present a program fairly wide in scope. It is apparent that the present administration is aware of the importance of activities other than technical military and athletic and is making progress toward a better program.

The activities demanded of first-semester students in connection with their "rabbit" semester (corresponding to a "plebe" year) may be open to question. It is the opinion of the examiners that, in spite of drastic reforms already initiated and of a wholesome attitude on the part of the administration, there are still excesses which interfere with studies during

the boy's first semester. Further modification may be in order along the lines of thinking of some far-seeing military educators who question the military importance of some phases of "indoctrination" programs.

Health service, housing and boarding, and student discipline are all above average. Hospital and medical service are outstanding. A modern, well-equipped hospital with sixteen beds (plus emergency expansion facilities) is operated with a full-time nursing staff and a medical director in regular attendance. Physical examinations, health conferences, and sanitary inspections are carried on by the hospital staff.

Weaknesses in student services might be found in the lack of scholarships available, the small size of the loan fund, lack of time for part-time employment, and lack of graduate placement. The examiners feel that absence of certain services is offset by the local situation. Government grants-in-aid are available to all boys over seventeen who enroll in the National Guard. Additional allowances are available to the senior R O T C unit for men who have had high school R O T C or military service. These two sources of aid actually pay most of the costs of students who qualify. It is pointed out elsewhere in this report that over 90 per cent of the students enter other colleges, after leaving Oklahoma Military Academy; graduate placement, consequently, constitutes no problem.

ADMINISTRATION

Oklahoma Military Academy operates under the general supervision of the Board of Regents for Higher Education for the State of Oklahoma. Its immediate governing body is a Board of Regents for Oklahoma Military Academy, appointed in accordance with State Law. The President of the Academy is directly responsible to the governing board for all activities of the institution.

The internal administration of the school is carried on by the President, and an executive committee composed of the Commandant, the Business Manager, the Dean, and the Head of the Department of Military Science (PMS and T). Other department chairmen and all persons concerned with instruction report to the Dean. The Commandant is responsible for the military life and the personal welfare of the boys. The Business Manager, in addition to having financial control, is in charge of auxiliary activities and maintenance.

The present administrative organization is two years old and, while it appears to work smoothly, the delineation of authority in actual operation, especially that of the Business Manager, is not yet clear cut. One gains the impression that the efficient business office has too much influence in matters that should not be of immediate concern to that office. A building up of the prestige of department chairmen and academic officials through more delegation of authority to them should help to correct this situation.

The selection of faculty members is in the hands of the President. Before making appointments, he consults with the Dean and department chairman on a candidate. There is no domination by the Board of Control. The greatest weakness in the selection and retention of outstanding faculty members is lack of flexibility in the salary schedule. Starting salaries for inexperienced teachers are satisfactory. However, the President should be free, within his salary budget, to employ faculty members with advanced training and with teaching experience at a considerably higher starting salary than that now prescribed. The maximum salary (\$3183) for the instructional staff is completely inadequate. If the Board of Control is seriously concerned with the development of an outstanding faculty, in

keeping with the physical plant they have provided, they should take immediate steps to raise the maximum instructional salary. Annual salary increases of insignificant amounts (\$60) are now automatic. The automatic increase should be discontinued and provision made for reasonable increases on recommendation of the Dean and President for professional improvements and outstanding service. Higher maximum salaries on the schedule would not necessarily mean a large increase in the instructional budget. It would mean that some outstanding teachers could be employed and retained.

The business administration is efficiently conducted. An ample staff has been provided and prescribed functions are carefully performed. While the accounting is well done, it is unfortunate that the classification of accounts prescribed by the State is not in harmony with the recommendations of the National Committee on Standard Reports for Institutions of Higher Education, as outlined in Financial Reports for Colleges and Universities. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1934). It is possible, however, to report accurately to the North Central Association the necessary data on income and expenditures from the accounts, after making working sheet adjustments.

Centralized purchasing with adequate controls is in operation, and there is supervision of all activity accounts including athletics. The collection of student fees and the maintenance of a student bank are well done. Records are clear, billing is on time, and collection is unusually good.

The preparation of a budget is complicated by directives and policies from the State Board of Regents as well as by the usual local policies. It appears that in the past the preparation of the budget has been largely left to the Business Manager. The new President is assuming leadership

in budget preparation, as he should. Faculty members and other administrative officers need to assume much greater responsibility in budgetary matters. The administration of student personnel is reasonably good, as outlined in the student personnel section of this report. The lack of coordination of the student personnel program has been pointed out.

Records and reports are satisfactory. Additional reports, such as an annual report of the President, one by the Dean, and one by the Librarian should be made. These are not only valuable summaries of the year's developments, but they assist the administration in evaluating the past and planning for the future.

FINANCE

Financial support comes from three sources: state appropriation, student fees, and profits on auxiliary enterprises. A fourth but hidden source of support is the Federal Government. The Department of the Army provides the services of a Lieutenant Colonel, two Captains, ten Sergeants, and the entire equipment and materials for the military program for the training of men for an armored division. The Army contribution does not appear in the school budget, but it should be recognized as a major source of income.

The figures reported to the Secretary's Office on current income and expenditures were in error. The amounts reported were for the entire Academy, not for the junior college alone, as they should have been. Corrected figures are reported on the scorecard, indicating that the weighted income per student is \$352, placing the institution at the 42nd percentile. The corrected weighted, educational expenditure per student is \$502, placing the institution at the 79th percentile.

In spite of the discrepancy between income and expenditure, the college operates on a balanced budget and has for years. Profits from uniforms, board, and room more than cover the difference.

The examiners feel there is adequate financial support but that more generous provision should be made for higher maximum instructional salaries and for the library.

PHYSICAL PLANT

The Academy is located on a commanding site overlooking the Will Roger's Memorial Park and the town of Claremore. The buildings, which are modern, well designed, and excellently maintained include: Two dormitories, one mess hall, an administration and classroom building, an auditorium, a field house with a swimming pool, a rifle range, three military buildings, a hospital, and five homes for administrators and faculty.

As one might expect in a well-administered military school, operation and care of the facilities are meticulous. On all the scorecard items relating to the physical plant a satisfactory or above-average rating can be given.

The allocation of space to various activities might be questioned. The inadequate space for the Dean and Registrar may be contrasted with the spacious quarters of the business office. Again, the cramped library does not compare favorably with the luxurious space provided for military activities.

INSTITUTIONAL STUDY

The administrative officers of the institution have identified a number of major problems and are studying them. The studies undertaken are satisfactory and have been effectively used.

The faculty has not yet become aware that its problems also need study. Dynamic leadership in this area will be required to stimulate a more experimental attitude on the part of a faculty that is performing well but routinely.

ATHLETICS

There is considerable emphasis on athletics at Oklahoma Military Academy, as in most military schools. Equipment is good and the staff for instruction and coaching appear to be entirely satisfactory. The school is to be commended on its scrupulous administration of the program to avoid professionalism. All varsity men have been regularly admitted, their eligibility is carefully checked, and their accounts are in order.

Athletic finances are controlled by the business office, as are the finances of other activities.

ELEMENTS OF STRENGTH

1. A significant element of strength lies in the leadership, the vision, and the enthusiasm of the President. It is obvious that significant improvements and developments have been made during the two years of his administration. Continued development can confidently be anticipated under his leadership.

2. The physical plant of the college is notably fine.

3. Provisions for student health (food, housing, infirmary, and program of physical activity) are commendable.

4. The amount of attention given to individual students is unusual: classes are small; instructors give individual help; the contract plan provides for differentiated assignments; and the guidance program is relatively adequate.

5. The military training program and associated activities are well staffed, well equipped, and apparently well executed.

ELEMENTS OF WEAKNESS

1. The library represents a notable weakness. The library needs a full-time librarian, a more adequate book budget, a more extensive collection of magazines, particularly bound magazines. Most of all, however, the college needs a library-conscious faculty.

2. The curriculum needs attention in two respects: increased integration between fields of teaching and increased attention to commonly accepted general education objectives.

3. Greater emphasis should be given to institutional studies, testing, and evaluating all parts of the program. Reports by key personnel (President, Dean, Commandant, Librarian, Registrar) might well be prepared annually. Each report should include recommendations for improvement.

4. At present motivation for learning appears to come largely from "check up" by teachers, rather than from value and interest. Much needs to be done to vitalize teaching.

5. Faculty salaries are too low. Annual increments should be larger and maximum salaries should be higher. It would be particularly helpful if salary increases could be granted on the basis of teaching effectiveness, rather than automatically.

END OF REPORT

As a result of this report the total program of the Oklahoma Military Academy was changed to fit the indicated needs of the school. Between January 31, 1950 and March 19, 1950, the following improvements and projected plans were made:

- I. The library was improved considerably and projected plans were arranged for the coming year.
 - A. Three additional student librarians were hired and were given to the librarian for assignment of duties.
 - B. Approximately \$1,299 was expended for new books and for the binding of magazines.
 1. The librarian bound 25 magazines that reached into past years upon the following scale: 4 magazines for 20 years; 6 magazines for 10 years; 10 magazines for 5 years; 5 magazines for 2 years.
 2. It was planned that 5 additional magazines would be bound during the coming summer.
 - C. It was felt that the examiners did not take into consideration the 325 new volumes that were added to the library during an extensive library drive among the parents of the OMA cadets during the past year.
 - D. The administration placed \$5,000 in the budget for library expenditures during the next year. It was hoped that this item may be included in the budget for the next five years inclusive.
 - E. The administration placed in the personnel budget for the next year the hiring of a completely qualified librarian.
 - F. The faculty had been helped through an in-service training program for the past two months to promote project teaching within all subject matter areas to an extent whereby the faculty and students would use the library more than ever before in the history of the school.

1. Faculty members of the English department and of the Social Science department visited the library during some part of each week for the purpose of learning the uses of the library.
 2. The librarian was enabled to put out weekly bulletins which gave suggestions and recommendations to each member of the faculty as to visual aids and library materials available for his teaching fields. This helped tremendously in promoting library consciousness among academy members.
 3. A check was made by the administration of library use since January 12, and it was found that on an average day the library had checked out an average of 26 books daily. It was found that individual teachers were checking sections of books from the library and were attempting to promote their uses in their individual classes.
- G. Teachers at the college were more concerned with the uses of the library through an in-service training program which attempted to promote "unit teaching" and "project instruction" with proper intergradation of the various disciplines of learning.
- H. One of the most important contributions to the strengthening of the library at OMA was made possible by the State Board of Regents for Higher Education. It has allocated to the college sufficient funds to build a completely new library-science building. This means that OMA will have a completely new library to offer to the new cadets for the coming year. There will be included in this expenditure \$10,000 for new equipment and books.
- II. The curricula at the Oklahoma Military Academy has been reorganized around three general subject matter areas or divisions. These areas

or divisions were recommended through a study on the part of the entire faculty of the General Education Volumes, written by Earl C. McGrath, United States Commissioner of Education. These general areas for the college are:

- A. The Humanities Division, to include the former English department; the Foreign Language department; the Social Science department; and the Fine Arts department.
- B. The Science Division to include the former Science and Mathematics departments.
- C. The Commercial-Technical Division to include the former Engineering and Commercial departments.

The teachers of these divisions have held numerous in-service training meetings during which they have studied the general education objectives with the end in mind to build units of instruction centered around the intergradation of their fields of teaching and the realization of experiences in the classroom that will be of life situations.

- A. A committee from the faculty has spent considerable time examining textbooks for the academic divisions with the end in mind that such a survey of texts will reveal materials for the general education program.
- B. The in-service meetings resulted in more attention on the part of the faculty to the increasing of library facilities and to the intergradation of subject matter areas.
 - 1. Several of the Science teachers have made visitations to outstanding industrial plants in the area, such as the refineries in Tulsa and the Goodyear Rubber Plant in Miami. These trips have been summarized and written about in the English depart-

ment and they have been discussed in the Social Science field or area.

2. A series of orientation lectures have been given to the entire student body by outstanding educators with the end in mind to determine the intergradation that is possible between various subject matter disciplines.
3. Orientation trips have been made by the cadets to Museums and to theater presentations.

C. Plans have been made by the administration and the faculty through in-service meetings to develop before the beginning of next school year completely integrated units of instruction for each subject matter area. These units of instruction are to create specific objectives that are directly related to life situations for the cadet and to the general education objectives.

III. The faculty as a whole has begun the study and re-evaluation of their teaching techniques.

- A. Faculty committees are working upon the integration of subject matter areas through unit instruction.
- B. A faculty committee is making a survey of all textbooks with the end in view of selecting texts that will present the general education program in a better light.
- C. A system of reports by key personnel will be set up as a regular requirement for the following personnel: The Registrar, the Librarian, the Commandant and the Dean will present their annual reports to the President of the school by May 1 of every school year. The President of the school will present his combined report to the Board of Regents of the school by June 15. The

chairman of each academic division will present a report to the academic Dean by April 1 of each year. It is planned that these reports will include recommendations for improvement of their respective areas.

- IV. A system of standardized testing correlated with unit instruction should result in the vitalization of teaching. It is hoped that an improvement of teaching technique will be made possible through a series of meetings that will center around the techniques necessary for the presentation of the objectives necessary.
- V. It is recognized that faculty salaries are too low. It is planned that for the coming school year maximum salaries will be made higher than they are at the present time. The Board of Regents has given its permission to the President to make salary increases basically upon teaching effectiveness rather than automatically. It should be pointed out that salaries compare favorably with those of the immediate area. It should also be called to the attention of the reader that the school does reward deserving teachers by giving to them extra work during the summer which provides the opportunity to earn from \$600 to \$700 in addition to their present salaries.

On March 20, 1950, at the Palmer House Hotel in Chicago, Illinois, Colonel Homer M. Ledbetter, the President of the Oklahoma Military Academy presented the case of the school to the North Central Association Reviewing Board. In subsequent action and by a vote of the assembled delegates the North Central Association of Colleges and Secondary Schools voted to accredit the Junior College of the Oklahoma Military Academy at Claremore, Oklahoma. An official letter was received by the school on April 3, 1950,

which stated that the school was fully accredited.³

Even though this process had taken two full years, it was the opinion of all that the school had obtained much good from the methods and techniques evolved. There had been a great amount of effort used and considerable growth realized as a result of this achievement. Certainly the Academy was not at a standstill during this period.

³ See a copy of the letter on the following page.

LETTERHEAD

April 3, 1950

President H. M. Ledbetter
Oklahoma Military Academy
Claremore, Oklahoma

Dear President Ledbetter:

I am glad to inform you officially that the North Central Association of Colleges and Secondary Schools, at its Annual Meeting held March 20-24, 1950, voted to accredit Oklahoma Military Academy. This action is effective immediately. The name of Oklahoma Military Academy will appear on the next published list of accredited institutions in the July, 1950, issue of the North Central Association Quarterly.

The report of the examiners and the summary sheet of the percentile ranks of the Oklahoma Military Academy on the various criteria have been sent to you. Though the general picture is one of sufficient strength to justify accreditation at this time, I am sure you will be interested in further strengthening your institution. With that in mind, I should like to call your attention particularly to the areas of relative weakness disclosed by the percentile ranks and the report of the examiners.

We are glad to welcome Oklahoma Military Academy as a member of the North Central Association. If the Secretary's office can serve you in any way, I hope you will feel free to call upon us.

Sincerely yours,

/s/

Manning M. Patillo, Jr.
Assistant Secretary

MMP:rh

CHAPTER VIII

CONCLUSIONS

Introduction

The conclusions of a study of a living institution can hardly be absolute or final. Yet, general characteristics and tendencies can be observed and used as a basis for future planning. This study has shown what the Oklahoma Military Academy has been and now is, both in respect to its philosophy and in respect to the implementation of its philosophy.

Three means have been used to answer the question as to the value of the school. First, the history of the school was examined. Second, the records and opinions of the alumni were studied. And third, two evaluative devices were employed. Through the use of these means, conclusions are derived that should lead to improvements at the Academy.

The History of the School

The examination of the institution's past provides an indication of her need for stability. The school's greatest gains were made during the Downs administration. This period of fifteen years was the most lengthy of any administration. It was during this period that the school built the major portion of its physical plant. The largest enrollment (386) was enjoyed by the Downs administration. Other administrations were severely hampered by the effect of petty politics. In fact, Captain Hamilton and Colonel Downs himself were removed from office as a result of the political pressures. It is evident that a stable administrative policy is impossible under such conditions.

The history of the Academy also gave evidence that there has been an increasing need for a better academic program. All administrations emphasized the military training to such an extent that harmful effects were developed for the academic phase of the school. These effects were aided by the continued need for band and sports excursions for advertising purposes. During the Downs era, the sports program was used in such a manner as to reflect upon the academic standards of the Academy.

The history of the Oklahoma Military Academy indicates the need for a better understanding of her purposes on the part of the public. Although these purposes were developed by Colonel Barrett at the time the school had its beginning, the facts show that the major portion of the state citizenship does not know the school's true objectives. It is commonly believed that the institution exists for a military program alone. This is not the case. The school exists to prepare young men for further academic training and for experience in leadership. The story of every period of this school's existence reveals a lethargy on the part of the general public to understand these purposes.

Some evidence is established through the narrative of O. M. A.'s past of the need for a stronger faculty. Several references were made to the lack of proper training in guidance techniques. The small number of teachers holding a Master's Degree was pointed out. The tendency to mix with the political troubles of the school was indicated.

Certainly, the history pointed out that during each period the school attempted to realize its basic objectives. These were referred to as (1) preparation for further schooling and (2) preparation for leadership in either war or peace.

It was pointed out through this historical technique that the personnel should give emphasis to a more democratic approach in all of its training methods. The strict military discipline should be relaxed. The purpose of the school is primarily to train the youth of the state for life by providing a solid basis of general education with which he can continue his education or take his place in his community as a leader in time of war or peace. This history reveals numerous instances wherein the military program was thought to be too strict and not commensurate with modern army techniques. Again, it was indicated that the public sees little of the democratic process in the school.

On the other hand, the Oklahoma Military Academy has ever held to its two stated objectives. Each period of its history reveals that attempts were made to develop strong scholarship and the capacity for leadership. The school, since its founding, has been an outstanding one for military training. It has held the honor rating since 1932.

The narrative of O. M. A. to the beginning of the present administration does give an indication of her need, (1) for stability, (2) for a better academic program, (3) for a better understanding of her purposes on the part of the public, (4) for a stronger faculty, (5) for her personnel to give emphasis to a more democratic approach in all of their techniques for the training of youth, and (6) for her philosophy to be firmly established.

Alumni Records and Opinions

In addition to the story of the past, the follow-up study of ex-cadet opinion of the school reveals evidence of certain needed improvements. The greater part of the cadet alumni who answered the questionnaire liked the

program at the school. In Table XI out of 325 answers, 289 ex-cadets stated that training would not have been as valuable in the conventional type school. The major criticism of the institution was of three types. In Table XIII, the stated weaknesses at O. M. A. were indicated to be (1) a weak academic program, with 75, (2) too much interference through politics, with 42, and (3) not enough supervision of the study program and of the barracks life, with 26. A total of 117 opinions were received to the effect that the school had no weaknesses if it were the same school that they attended.

This part of the study established evidence to the effect that the school had realized a part of its objective of leadership training. In Table XII, 82 per cent of those who answered the questionnaire were members of the armed forces in World War II, and of the total number of answers, 79 per cent were officers. In the same table, 192 reported that the training at O. M. A. had a great deal to do with their success in leadership activities. The mere fact that the answers to the questionnaire revealed that all personnel in this group had gainful employment would indicate that O. M. A. contributed somewhat to their training.

This follow-up program throws light upon the school's realization of its stated objective of academic preparation of the cadet for further schooling. In Table XVI, the greater number of answers revealed that 90 per cent of this grouping attended schools of higher education for further schooling. In Table XX, a check of three years of attendance also revealed that 90 per cent of those cadets in attendance at O. M. A. went to schools of higher education for further schooling.

The follow-up study clearly indicates that the alumni like the military training at the school. The first year system for the guidance of the

first year man was held to be of worth by the alumni opinion. Strong discipline and the formation of habits were emphasized as strong points for the school program of the past.

This evidence coupled with the record of the institution's past does bring to light that some of the school's weakness must be in its academic program. Much that has happened speaks for improvement in that area. Certainly, the political coloring of past administrations is evident. A balance between the military training and the academic training of the school should be realized. More emphasis in institutional study and experiment must be obtained for the academic side of the program. Although the follow-up study is the portion of this work that has the least strength, it is still evident that alumni opinion does throw additional light on the worth and weakness of the past history of the school.

Devices of Evaluation

The application of two devices of evaluation of a school program by the present administration warrants conclusions which will affect the future policies of the Academy. This section of the study, along with the history, had three major influences upon the school. These were (1) the evolvement of a basic philosophy for the school; (2) the development of improvements that aided the move for accreditation of the junior college program of the school by the North Central Association of Colleges and Universities; and (3) a growth in the in-service training of the total school staff.

The application of the Gamma Scale of the Criteria revealed certain weaknesses and strengths for the school. The evaluation of 76 per cent for the school's curriculum and courses of study as pictured in Figure 6

placed the school in the average column of the nation. This portion of the study indicates that the general education areas need more study and further emphasis. The library rated high as to book adequacy, but it rated low in space allocation and need of attractive surroundings. There was need for a better guidance program. Educational outcomes were rated as low for the school. Here again was evidence of the need for academic improvement. The salary scale was rated as extremely low. More in-service training was needed by all staff members. The ratings of the school plant were high. However, the classrooms should be made more attractive. The administrative policy was criticized as being non-democratic. Instruction did not receive sufficient supervision. The evaluators considered the business management of the school superior. This device for the evaluation of an institution furnished the basis for further efforts of the school toward accreditation by the North Central Association of Colleges and Universities. Certainly, the staff had experienced growth through the in-service training that had resulted.

The conclusions obtained by the examination of the Oklahoma Military Academy by the North Central Association of Colleges and Universities certainly reflect the weaknesses and strengths of the school. The fact that the school received accreditation for its junior college division as a result of this examination indicates that there is a worthy program at O. M. A. at the present time.

The examining committee from the accrediting agency found the following elements of strength and weakness in the institution's program:

ELEMENTS OF STRENGTH

1. A significant element of strength lies in the leadership, the vision, and the enthusiasm of the President. It is obvious that significant improvements and developments have been made

during the two years of his administration. Continued development can confidently be anticipated under his leadership.

2. The physical plant of the college is notably fine.
3. Provisions for student health (food, housing, infirmary, and program of physical activity) are commendable.
4. The amount of attention given to individual students is unusual: classes are small; instructors give individual help; the contract plan provides for differentiated assignments; and the guidance program is relatively adequate.
5. The military training program and associated activities are well staffed, well equipped, and apparently well executed.

ELEMENTS OF WEAKNESS

1. The library represents a notable weakness. The library needs a full-time librarian, a more adequate book budget, a more extensive collection of magazines, particularly bound magazines. Most of all, however, the college needs a library-conscious faculty.
2. The curriculum needs attention in two respects: increased integration between fields of teaching and increased attention to commonly accepted general education objectives.
3. Greater emphasis should be given to institutional studies, testing, and evaluating of all parts of the program. Reports by key personnel (President, Dean, Commandant, Librarian, Registrar) might well be prepared annually. Each report should include recommendations for improvement.
4. At present motivation for learning appears to come largely from "check up" by teachers, rather than from value and interest. Much needs to be done to vitalize teaching.
5. Faculty salaries are too low. Annual increments should be larger and maximum salaries should be higher. It would be particularly helpful if salary increases could be granted on the basis of teaching effectiveness, rather than automatically.¹

Again, the data presented in the examining committee's report throw light upon the needs of the school as well as upon those portions of the

¹ This information is from the summary of the examining committee's report in Chapter VII.

existing program which should be maintained. The devices of evaluation, coupled with the history, do help the administration and staff (1) to evolve a basic philosophy, (2) to receive accreditation from the North Central Association of Colleges and Universities, and (3) to improve the total school program.

The Philosophy of the School

As a result of the last two years' work, this institution faces its future with the following basic philosophies and objectives. This study has established them firmly in the minds of the school staff and represents growth in the in-service training of all. The following definitions furnish the basis for O. M. A.'s philosophy: Education is defined as the sum total of the individual's experiences that result in that person's appreciations, his skills, his understandings, of a general and specific nature, his attitudes and his habit patterns. All of these integrated factors result in the person's philosophy of life -- in his way of living. The school has the mission of providing a portion (the larger portion) of these experiences in such a manner as to give to our America an ideal citizen. The institution is the vehicle through which guided experiences are made possible.

To provide the experiences which it is hoped will lead to the development of the ideal cadet, the school provides four general areas. From the viewpoint of the institution, these areas could be named the four lanes of service to those who are enrolled as cadets at any one time. The four general divisions of Academy experiences are the (1) Academic, (2) Military, (3) Physical, and (4) Social.

It is hoped that integrated experiences within the total school program will result in academic advancement, military training, social under-

standings, and physical development. These general divisions of everyday living in the training process have given emphasis to the aims--the general goals of O. M. A. In the following four paragraphs it is believed that these objectives are correctly stated:²

Academic Advancement. At Oklahoma Military Academy one of the prime objectives is the achievement of sound academic information and attitudes, appreciation, skills and habits. This school has the means and provides the evidence whereby this achievement is fulfilled. The close attention to reward for development in the academic field and conversely attention to punishment for lack of advancement are evidences of the academic processes of the school. O. M. A. expects the individual to achieve the maximum of academic benefit in proportion to his capacity.

Military Training. Military training is naturally Oklahoma Military Academy's means of attaining its second objective--that of experience in leadership. Through this service, all garner experiences in problem solving. Attention is given to individual discipline. Certainly, results are experienced through the handling of the group. It is realized that the solving of problems of an individual and group nature is of primary importance in reaching the objectives of democratic living. As one of the outstanding honor schools in America, Oklahoma Military Academy is naturally proud of its Military Department and its efforts in behalf of young men.

Physical Development. Modern psychology has taught that the complete personality includes a sound mind, coupled through integrative action with

² These objectives are to be found in the opening section of the O. M. A. yearbook--THE VEDETTE--for 1950.

a sound body. To O. M. A. this means that physical development must be a part of the program. Many physical exercises, particularly during the "Rabbit" period, the hours of bracing, and the many pleasant games with fellow rivals emphasize the physical development. These were all experiences which resulted in better stature, poise, coordination, health standards, and healthier habits of and for the individual. The physical exercise at the Academy is not for the benefit of the few, but it is for the development of the individual leader and the student of today and tomorrow.

Social Understanding. One of the world's toughest problems is to learn to live together as a unit without sacrificing the individuality of the personalities of which it is made. Oklahoma Military Academy realizes that men may develop a way of learning how to live with others to the mutual profit of all. Thus one of the lanes of service that the Academy offers to young men will always be the cultivation of the social habits, of customs, of manners, and of cooperation. The many dances, the parties, the programs, the clubs, the day-by-day living--all of these are experiences which result in increased skill in cooperative living. One of O. M. A.'s outstanding beliefs is that the world and America will be lost if men cannot learn to consider others without sacrifice of self. Here, religion must have a definite position in thinking; for it is through the teachings of religious philosophies that people gain the principles of living for others as well as for themselves. This is the essence of true democracy.

Effects of the Study on the Present Academy Program

As a result of this total program of study on the part of the president and staff of the Oklahoma Military Academy, the following results or improvements have become a part of the Academy program:

1. Considerable in-service training has resulted in growth on the part of the total school staff.
2. The institution's purposes have been studied and firmly implanted in the minds of all. This should result in a greater stability for the future.
3. Curricula and techniques have been developed for the training of the individual.
4. More attention has been paid to the guidance program. This has been reflected in the plan for the 1950-51 catalog of the school program.
5. A complete revision of the curriculum has resulted in greater integration and more attention to general education objectives.
6. A more efficient administrative organization has resulted in less cost and centralization of records and work.
7. As a result of this program all instructors but one will have their Master's Degrees or better at the beginning of the 1950-51 school term.
8. The contract system of study has resulted in better study habits and a general improvement of the level of academic achievement.
9. Institutional studies have been given more attention which, in turn, has resulted in the use of standardized achievement tests and in a plan for the improvement of the school's grading system.
10. A better system of reports for year end analysis has resulted from this program.
11. More attention to extra-curricular activities has been given.
12. A better balance between the military department and the academic department has been achieved.
13. Greater study of the yearly schedule with close attention to the teacher load has resulted from this work.
14. A fully trained librarian has been hired as a part of the teaching staff for the first time in the history of the school.
15. More attention has been paid to the development of an outstanding junior college library than ever before. This has resulted in an increase in library budget and in the building of a new library building.

16. The best salary scale that has ever been possible at the institution has been put in effect for the school year 1950-51. The beginning salary for instructors with Bachelor's Degrees will be \$2820 for 9 1/2 months' work. The beginning salary for instructors with a Master's Degree will be \$3060 for 9 1/2 months' work. Salary ranges with tenure will run from \$3060 to \$3810.
17. The study has provided a better understanding of the institution's problems on the part of the Governor of the State, the Board of Regents for Higher Education, and the institution's own governing Board of Regents.
18. The general public has indicated a greater interest in the institution.
19. More attention has been paid to the attendance of school personnel at educational meetings of state, regional, and national import.
20. A ten year plan for the development of the school's physical plant has been organized and partially realized.
21. The study has certainly revealed to the administration the problems for the future.
22. The study of the past and the present functionings of the school has given clear indications of the paths to be followed in the future.

Effects of the Study on Future Plans

As to the plans for the future, this institution's road seems to be clearly indicated. It must work for a better academic program. It must work for an understanding on the part of the general public for its unique position in the state educational picture. It must work to develop new techniques for the training of the individual cadet. The program must provide the best in preparation plus the total military experience. The staff must saturate the total program with the democratic method for solving problems. The Oklahoma Military Academy must ever hold the position (considered by many to be unique) that the democratic way must represent a compromise between absolute control and licensed freedom. The administration must be ever aware of change--of the new in the continuing process

of living. All must ever plan for the total personality development of each youth. The total program must emphasize again and again that at any one time the education of any one person is represented by the sum total of that individual's experiences, be they good or bad.

In an unsettled world the American way of life is being challenged. What parents and educators do today, as they consider the youth's education, will largely determine what America's tomorrow will be.

Oklahoma Military Academy is a thoroughly American institution. Its mission is to provide wholesome experience in group living so that young men may secure not only a sound academic foundation for the future but also opportunities to make judgments and evaluate the results of those judgments. It is the institution's task to develop to the fullest extent the capacities of each cadet for leadership.

The Academy is well aware that the strength of future America depends upon the moral fiber of those individuals who will as citizens cooperate in social groups. The Academy has, therefore, dedicated its efforts toward helping the individual realize his true worth, his inherent capacities, and his ultimate responsibilities.

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