

# Old Annual Shows Forty Years Have Not Changed College Life

## PRANKS OF 1887 ARE LAID BARE IN MUSTY BOOK

Dr. Harrison Was Wise Soph When First "Mercerian" Was Published

By Veasey Howell

On an obscure shelf of the Library lies a small thin volume, thumbworn and with binding loose, so thin that one would think at a casual glance that it was a bulletin. Pick it up and examine the cover closely and you see the blurred, time-worn letters "MERCERIAN" engraved diagonally across the middle. It is the first annual ever published by the student body of Mercer University.

It was in the days when only two buildings, Main Building and Penfield Hall, graced Mercer's campus; when the student body numbered ninety-six and the faculty sixteen; when Tattnell Square was a pasture; when Dr. John G. Harrison was a worldly wise sophomore. To be exact, it was in the year 1887 that the student body first conceived and carried out the idea of publishing a record of college life.

### "Feelings of Triumph"

The purpose of this first attempt is set out on the first page of the Salutation, Mercer is still following the principles set in this Mercerian, printed thirty-seven years ago, in publishing the Cauldron. The pioneers in publishing the Annual at Mercer set out their aim in the following words:

"Feelings of triumph thrill us as we herein present to Mercer's friends and the public the first 'annual' ever published by Mercer University. While we are proud of the achievement we have not undergone the labor merely for vain glory. We have worked with a view of honoring and benefitting our beloved institution. If our efforts accomplished this, THE MERCERIAN is a success and our work is not lost."

Because of limited means the first annual was pictureless and had only thirty pages. The steady growth of Mercer has also marked a steady growth of its Annual, which this year will have two hundred and fifty-six pages and will be adorned with approximately two thousand photographs of students.

A perusal of the pages of the first annual shows us that in many respects college life is unchanged by time. In the list of the needs of Mercer in 1887 we find prominently mentioned the need of knives that will cut and forks that will penetrate the "Bull" served in Mess Hall.

### Rats Nervous

An excerpt from "My First Two Nights at College," shows us that the Sophomore class, even at that early date, had assumed the responsibility of bringing up the Freshmen in the way that they should go:

"We walked into the 'Initiation' room. I was so nervous that I could hardly walk. Here the boys laughed at me, kicked and suffed me, pushed me about, and brought up all sorts of charges against me. The first thing I knew I had eight hundred straps against me. The judges then gave me the opportunity for reducing the number. I had to sing, dance, declaim, crow-hop, whistle, bray, hop, and stand on my head. Then I was blind-folded, smutted, wallowed, and laid across a trunk and strapped. I was then taken before the judge, who gave me a grip, welcomed me into "The Know Nothing Club," and told me that I might have the opportunity of strapping the next freshman."

Greater Mercer's Greatest Glee Club was beginning at that time. It consisted of eight songbirds and carried with it an orchestra of nine pieces. The orchestra was composed of one violinist, two guitarists, three blowers of the harmonica, one cellist, and two pianists. The leader of the harmonica blowers was J. H. Drewry, who is now represented in Mercer's band by the drummer, J. H. Drewry, Jr.

Baseball was then the only sport, though football was beginning

small scale. The baseball squad was composed of only nine men and a substitute. The pitcher had to be an iron man, as the records show that he was sometimes called on to pitch as many as four games in one week.

### Studies in 'Hoosgow'

We are told of the seriousness of college life in the old days, that college was a place of hard work and no play. But we read of students getting put in jail for trying to slip into the "Peanut" at the Opera House, of the difficulty of seeing your girl if she attended Wesleyan and of the many ways the students had of fooling the matrons.

In a cartoon of the students library we find the following books the prominent shelves: Hoyle's "Poker Guide," "Easy Road to Knowledge," "Easy Road to Fortune," "Translation to Caesar," and Beadle's Dime Library, as well as the Holy Bible and the Science of Life. College humor had also progressed to an appreciable extent—a Freshman is spoken of who mistook a mailcarrier for a cadet and asked him what milltray school he attended.

Hours of pleasure can be spent in going through this treasure chest of Mercer memories, The Mercerian of 1887. Mercer, and its units: the student body, the alumni, and other supporters are deeply indebted to the Class of '87 for the forward step taken by them in publishing Mercer's First Annual.

## CLUB ANNOUNCES NEW PRODUCTION

Players Will Give First Southern Performance of Mystery Play

"Seven Keys to Baldpate," a mystery play in two acts, with a prologue, by George M. Cohan, has been announced as the forthcoming production of the Mercer Players. Tryouts have already begun with the intention of early production, and the cast of the thirteen characters will be named at an early date.

According to present plans, the club will take the play on a short road trip before playing to a Macon audience. This probable itinerary will include Forsyth, Barnesville, Carrollton, Newnan, Cedartown and Rome.

## LEADERS ELECT CLUB OFFICERS

Presidents' Club in First Meeting Plans to Entertain Alumni

The Mercer Presidents' Club held its initial meeting of the year at the Mercer dining hall on Monday night, a special luncheon being served to the Club by the University. J. H. P. Thomas, who served as President of the Club during the summer, called the meeting to order at the close of the luncheon period.

The new officers elected to serve for the term were: Howard J. Bivins, President; Martin C. Burghard, Vice-President; Alfred Pullen, Secretary-Treasurer.

The method of election was that fostered only by pure democracies. Without any nominations, the secret ballot was used, and balloting continued until some member of the club received a majority vote. It required four ballots to elect the president, two to elect the vice-president, and two to elect the secretary-treasurer.

A review of the purposes of the club was given by Dr. Weaver, who was asked by President Bivins to do this. Alfred Pullen was called on also, and he told briefly what were the things that led up to the organization of the club.

Dr. Weaver requested that the Presidents' Club members act as a committee to give a warm and hearty welcome to the Mercer Alumni when they come to the campus today.

The road trip is planned for the first week in January, and the first local performance will probably be staged at the Wesleyan Auditorium late in January.

It is thought that this will be the first Southern production of the play, which has enjoyed a long run on Broadway and a successful tour of the East.

Senior (showing pledge about town): "We are now passing Wesleyan."

Pledge: "What for?"

"Upon my word!" said the dictionary as the ink dripped through the leaves.

## Gamblers' Nemesis Is Last Portrayal Of Rusty Lawrence

Finale Presents Fear of Crap Artists for King of Deputies

"Crook" Smith, star performer in football, basketball and baseball, has made his debut into the field of journalism with the following article on the experiences of "Rusty" Lawrence in the wilds of Florida, where the latter served as deputy sheriff last summer. Smith was persuaded to interview Lawrence on this subject, and the result is the final chapter of Lawrence's life up to the present time. The story has been running in serial form in The Cluster for the past two weeks. "Crook" takes up the threads and proceeds with the conclusion.—The Editor.

By Crook Smith

It was one of those dark, dreary and murky nights, so common in the ever-glade section of South Florida.

Deputy Sheriff Lawrence, former Mercer athletic star, crept stealthily through the underbrush with his trusty automatic in his hand, cocked and ready to shoot at the first sign of danger.

His task was no easy one, for he was now on his way to surprise a gang of bootlegging negroes who, it was rumored, were having a big crap game with plenty to drink to keep their spirits high.

"Red," as he was best known in

his football days at Mercer, was tuned to the pitch. His nerves were as steady as when he used to face the best teams on the gridiron. He was out for game, and big game, too, because if he made this scoop, it would be the beginning of a great career, and sensing this possibility, he glided along, moving with the agility of an Indian huntsman.

Suddenly through the brush "Red" saw the faint glimmer of a lantern, and with lightning like strides he was within easy hearing distance of the gang.

Flattening himself on the ground he crept nearer and nearer, every now and then he could hear the familiar pleadings of the African golfers, "Seven, come eleven," "Baby needs new shoes," "Dice be nice," when into the faint light under the pine trees, "Red" sprang like a tiger on his prey.

With his pistol levelled breast high, moving slowly around the band of negroes, he held them speechless with their hands above their heads. A long pause, then one broke loose and ran.

"Crack! went the automatic and the negro fell."

This was too much for the rest of the gang. This was a Deputy and no mistake, and murmurs were heard such as, "Don't shoot, Cap, I'll walk."

With his heart bounding with his great success, Rusty marched his captives in to jail. Five husky negroes and one with a bullet wound in the right shoulder was the toll of "Red's" famous raid.

Now he reigns as King of Deputies, the terror of crap-artists and the hero of South Florida.

THE END.

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