HOW LANDSCAPING HELPS ENHANCE THE BEAUTY OF UNIVERSITY BUILDINGS

The fine arts building and the grouping of shrubbery around it is only one of the many instances in which nature's charms have been utilized to make man-made structures more beautiful.

Making the Campus Beautiful
That Is James H. Craven's Job as a Landscape Artist

By Zona Moore '30

The transformation, in an almost magical fashion, of duck ponds, wild prairie and cornfields into the beautifully planned campus of the University of Oklahoma, has been the inspiring work of J. H. Craven, director of landscape gardening.

A depressing outlook confronted Mr. Craven when he came to the university fifteen years ago. At the time of his arrival, the administration, science and education buildings were the only ones completed and work was being done on the law building. At the rear of the administration building stretched a cornfield—today that space is occupied by a new $500,000 library building and tall, beautiful trees. The southern part of the campus was a duck pond—now the ground is covered with groups of large hackberry trees. The oval of beautiful trees and flowers of the present day was then a jumble of broken trees and tangled prairie grass.

The problem of transformation was left entirely in the hands of Mr. Craven. Besides facing one of the hardest of landscape projects possible, he was hindered by a lack of money and experienced workmen. It has been necessary to sponsor the placing of each plant and at present Mr. Craven always goes about with his helpers to supervise every bit of planting.

Especially perplexing was the planning of the northern end of the oval, so they began there first. The locust and elm trees planted by President David R. Boyd were a great help and as many as possible of these trees were left in their places, and new ones added. Depressions and mud puddles were filled in and good soil added to the old. A road which ran through the center of the oval was removed and bermuda replaced the prairie grass.

Until the present, during fourteen years of removal and transplanting, only one large tree has been lost and that one through disease many years after being moved.

Today the campus presents a collection of trees of surprising completeness in that it includes almost every tree that can be grown here. The elms are represented by the American, English, Chinese, cork-barked and other numerous varieties, the pin-oak, red oak, chestnut, and bur oak are among the better known oaks, and English walnut, linden, maples, sycamores, birches and willows are represented. The length and complexity of the entire list portrays the skill in selection of the landscape gardener.

Last year it became necessary to change the trees on the oval from locusts to American elms, for many of the older trees had been killed by borers and others were undesirable because of their tendency to sprout so widely and rapidly. Trees on the back of the campus, which are dying because of the thickness of the groves, are being

JAMES H. CRAVEN
Who is responsible for the beautiful appearance of the University of Oklahoma campus. Not only is he an expert landscape artist, but he is one of the foremost leaders in the southwest in conserving trees. Many an old yet beautiful tree has been moved by him to prevent its destruction.
thinned out, and the more desirable ones taken to places of vantage. In the spring, the oval, which of course receives most of the gardener’s attention, will bloom into eight vast beds of tulips and narcissi. This is to be quite a treat since it is the first time and likely the last time that they will appear, because of the care demanded by the bulbs, and their expense. Men are at work now, changing the beds. The bulbs are planted on a layer of sand five inches below the surface and are covered with a handful of sand to each bulb to keep them from rotting should the winter be a wet one.

Following the early flowers will come a diversity of all the early flowering shrubs including forsythia, bridal wreath, honey suckle, red bud and hawthorne which abounds on the campus. Next appear the lilacs, elder, golden glow flowers, mock orange and snow halls.

During this time the annuals are set out. Zinnias, marigolds, cockscobs, gaillardia, straw flowers, sweet William, vinas, cornflowers, cosmos and dahlias are some of the colorful summer flowers on the campus. While they are getting their start, the hardy perennials begin to bloom. These include the iris, larkspur, brown-eyed Susan, peonies, columbine, golden glow, phlox and poppy. Other widely used flowers are the canna, salvia, petunias, snap-dragon, geraniums and oleander.

One of the newest beauty spots on the campus is the front of the administration building, where numerous varieties of juniper, evergreen and spruce were planted last year.

Shortly before this planting, Mr. Craven visited Dundee, Illinois, where the largest evergreen nursery in the world is located. He brought back two carloads of many varieties of the northern evergreens. Although some nurserymen said the experiment was impossible since the young trees could not grow in this climate, nevertheless the plants lived and are now common in Oklahoma.

Those placed in front of the administration building are the dwarf northern evergreens and blue and black hill spruce. They are grouped so as not to obstruct the light from the classrooms. Some of the junipers will never grow more than twelve inches high, and some of the pines will not reach the height of eighteen inches.

"Ever since my arrival here, I have been considering how to cheer up the dreary aspect of the front of the administration building, and at last I believe I have solved the problem," Mr. Craven said. "These northern plants need just such a location and the building needs the bright and dark greens of these plants. From now on, every winter, the students will have a treat in snow covered spruce and pine, underlaid by a carpet of blue grass."

The evergreens around the entrance arches will grow quite tall. Their interesting groupings and attractive shapes — some of them spread out like vines across the ground — show the thoroughness of Mr. Craven’s study of his hobby, evergreen grouping. He intends from time to time, to add new groups to the campus. Two of the next will probably be around the new union and library buildings.

Mr. Craven has introduced other rare plants, too, and probably does more initiating of new species than any other person in Oklahoma. He explains that he weighs what he can save the plants in soil, water and climate against what they use naturally and if the odds are not too great with the proper care, the new plants usually live. Some years ago he made a trip through the north and through southern Texas in an effort to procure new types and as a result, with careful selection, he has caused plants to flourish here which have been designated as those which could not possibly live in this part of the country.

Mr. Craven places the northern plants in the shady, cool places, and the southern varieties on the south sides of buildings where they will receive the most warmth and sunshine and the least cold wind. The native shrubs are placed where needed in the open, because of their hardiness.

Mr. Craven has had an interesting background of apprenticeship to well-known gardeners on large eastern estates. He was born in England and after coming to America, began...
his career as a landscape gardener thirty-three years ago. In those days there were no landscape gardening schools so he worked under experts on large estates. Mr. Craven explains his choice of his life work by saying that he has always admired the beautiful, and felt this the best way to be closest to beauty.

The new greenhouse built last year is interesting in its complexity and diversity. The main building, or conservatory, is of brick and behind it are the glass houses where the plants are kept. Each of the several large compartments has its own peculiar use—one is used for the cutting of plants (buds ready to grow into new plants when transplanted into the warm moist sand in the greenhouse), another room is for the growing of these cuttings or slips, another for large plants which are kept in the open in summer and protected in winter, and another for the mixing of the soil. Another of the departments is given over to experimentation by the university botany department.

The new building has been a great help to the landscape department and has excited admiration by its beautiful conservatory filled with hibiscus, palms, ferns, oleanders and chrysanthemums.

ONE of Mr. Craven's problems here has been the presence of sodium water. The water, although healthful, is injurious to plants, and as a result the method known as dry farming is employed.

(Turn to page 119, please)
Hazing Abolished

Hazing in all its forms at the University of Oklahoma was ordered abolished by the board of regents at its meeting in Norman, November 9.

This order makes mandatory and completes the progressive work begun a year ago by Dr. W. B. Bizzell, president of the university, to eliminate what Edith Johnson of the Daily Oklahoman calls the "cow town" days.

The text of the board's resolution follows:

"Whereas, the practice of hazing in universities and colleges has in many instances resulted in serious physical injury, and frequently fatalities, and; "Whereas, it does not serve in any form the purposes of such institutions, and; "Whereas, it has been condemned by school authorities, parents of students, and the public;

"Now therefore, be it resolved by the board of regents of the University of Oklahoma, that all forms of hazing at said institution, on or off the campus, including the practices of fraternities during so-called 'hell week,' public initiations of various organizations, the enforcements of rules and regulations by vigilance committees, or individuals, are hereby abolished.

"The president of the University of Oklahoma is hereby instructed to transmit this action by the board of regents to the student body, and to the national officers of fraternities having chapters at this institution.

"Passed by the board of regents of the University of Oklahoma on November 9, 1928."

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First Drama Tournament

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