Dedication program

Canby among brilliant group to speak

WITH Henry Seidel Canby, Dr. Edwin Mims, and three of the nation’s leading librarians heading the list of speakers, the two-day dedication program of the university’s $500,000 library February 21 and 22 will be the most pretentious literary event ever attempted in the state. Marking the culmination of years of aspiration and effort on the part of President W. B. Bizzell and J. L. Rader, librarian, the formal opening of the new building will give Oklahoma the finest library in the west and one of the best examples of college architecture in the United States.

In an effort to arrange a dedication program hitting to mark an epoch in Oklahoma’s cultural history, university officials have secured a group of the most eminent literary figures in America. Canby, editor of the Saturday Review of Literature, chairman of the Book of the Month club, former professor of English at Yale, and the outstanding literary critic of the country, is making a special trip from New York.

Two University of Oklahoma graduates who have carved high places for themselves in the world of books, Milton J. Ferguson, ‘01 arts-sc. (M. A., ’06), head of the California state library, and Carl H. Milam, ‘07 arts-sc., secretary of the American Library Association, and John McClure, Louisiana editor and poet, have attained fame in the world of books.

A laboriously built up library containing more than 15,000 volumes was wiped out by the 1903 fire which destroyed the administration building, and university officials re-established the department with 1,000 ill-assorted books in a single cramped room in the new Administration building. The first book purchased for the new collection, a copy of Tuckerman’s History of English Prose Fiction is still in use on the library’s shelves.

Completed in December, 1904, the Carnegie library, now called the Education building, is the oldest structure on the campus. It housed the university’s books until the library just vacated was occupied in 1920. Mr. Rader blames the move of 1920, made in mid-winter with a few pushcarts for transportation, for the few silver hairs over his temples. “Moving 30,000 volumes in a week with almost no mechanical facilities was one of the most trying jobs I ever attempted,” he declared.

Constant crowding has been the lot of the library ever since its establishment. For the first time officials have space for the proper storing and use of important historical documents and rare books.
Lavishing the work of the best woodcarvers, sculptors and masons in America on the new building, the architects, Layton, Hicks and Forsythe, spared no effort in making the structure a finished piece of art from foundation to the last hand-forged nail. Grill-work fountain screens; linen-fold paneling, wall moldings and elaborately carved roof-trusses account for a large share of the $115,000 spent on woodwork alone. Karl Ve Korne, master workman of a community of Danish woodcarvers in Grand Rapids, Mich., worked in Norman six months chiselling out preliminary designs in white pine, which were later duplicated in white oak at his Michigan shops.

"Only after considerable difficulty could Charles M. Dunning, the contractor, find men able to do the woodcarving competently," Walter W. Kraft, superintendent of university utilities, said. "The Ve Korne carvers are perhaps the best in the United States, and their work compares favorably with that done anywhere."

Finished more like a medieval chapel than a university classroom, the huge reading room, accommodating more than 250 students, is flooded with light from great arched windows at both ends and along the south side. It is stocked with hundreds of reference books and will be the chief work-room of the library. A "browsing room" furnished with fireplace, carpets, and easy-chairs and with its walls lined with bookshelves is expected to be the most popular quarters in the building. Seminar rooms, offices, document depositories, a vault for rare books, museums, and the seven-storied book stacks complete the structure.

Its furnishings are no less elaborate than the architecture. Leather-upholstered chairs and oak tables inlaid with ebony and carved to match the general Gothic design have been supplied by the Svaboda Church Furnishing company, one of the foremost cabinetmakers of the country. More than 105,000 are ready for use in the bookstacks, which will ultimately accommodate 350,000 volumes. Approximately $62,000 has been expended on furnishings and stacks, bringing the total cost of the new library close to $600,000.

"The completion of this building means more to me than anything in my career," declared President Bizzell. "It will be the nucleus for a truly great university. I feel that a library is the real heart of a school, the foundation for all learning.

"Moreover, its dedication is the most important cultural event that ever happened in Oklahoma. Its meaning and value to the people of the state cannot be overestimated."

The tentative dedication program as released by Mr. Rader is as follows:

**FEBRUARY 21**
10 a.m. Presentation of the library building by Governor W. J. Holloway. Acceptance by Frank Buttram, president of the board of regents. Dedication address "The Body and Soul of the Library," Frank K. Walter, librarian of the University of Minnesota.
4 p.m. Inspection of the library.
7 p.m. Dinner at the McFarlin church.

**FEBRUARY 22**
8:15 p.m. One act play in the university auditorium.

Mr. Rader is this year serving for the American Library association as regional director of the committee on education. This is for the southwestern states. There are eight divisions in North America in which the committee functions. Miss Clara E. Howard of the New Jersey College for women, is chairman of the committee on education.

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