

The MICHIGAN ALUMNUS

The Alumni—"In a very just sense and in a very large degree the fortunes of the University are committed to your hands."—Dr. James B. Angell.

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Student Life in Ann Arbor in 1857

Old Diary Kept by George Beck, '60, Reveals the University of Seventy Years Ago

TWO interesting old books have recently come into the hands of the editor of the ALUMNUS. They contain the diary of a student in the University of seventy years ago. In these yellow pages he tells not only of his own personal fortunes, his religious experiences, the state of the weather, but so gives many graphic pictures, some of them only as it is true, of the daily life of the student of three-quarters of a century ago in Ann Arbor.

The author of the diary, George Beck, a graduate with the class of 1860, was born in England, January 22, 1835, at Wisbeach, but came to New York with his parents at a very early age. He came to the University as a sophomore in 1857, receiving a degree of B. S. in 1860, and A. S. in 1863. He entered upon his career as a teacher in the Union School of Lockport, N. Y., from which he had come to the University, later becoming principal of one of the public schools in Cleveland. Then for twenty-three years he was Professor of Natural Science at the State Normal School at Platteville, Wis. In 1902, he was appointed United States School Supervisor for the Chickasaw Nation in Indian territory. He returned in 1907 to Platteville, where he died December 19, 1913.

The diaries have been loaned to the ALUMNUS by his son, Charlton T. Beck (University of Chicago), who is now with the Federal Electric Co., Detroit.

The First Installment of a Series of Excerpts from a Very Human Record of what Students of the "Fiftys" were Doing and Thinking



PRESIDENT (or Chancellor) HENRY P. TAPPAN
From the Bronze Bas Relief in Alumni Memorial Hall

Wednesday, September 16 (1857).
Yesterday I did some little running around and made several calls. I spent 2 hours with Mr. White* talking about Michigan University and its connections. I have at length concluded to go there. After taking all things into consideration I think it the best thing I can do. The next term commences October 1st and I wish to be on hand at that time. My intention now is to attend there a short time and then teach in the winter. Mr. White promises to find me a school. He is a graduate of the Institution and is very anxious to have me go. He engages to see me though in 3 years. The full course is 4 years. I shall take the scientific course. I spent Monday afternoon and evening at Mr. Ransom's and had a very pleasant time with the girls, who were full of sport. In my carelessness I broke a globe to an astral lamp.

Ann Arbor, Mich., Wednesday, September 30.

Yesterday I made several calls and bid my friends in Lockport "good bye." It was hard to part after so pleasant an acquaintance but I hope I am acting for the best and that we shall meet again if not here in a better & happier place. About 7 1/2 P. M., I took the cars at Lockport for Suspension Bridge where I changed for Detroit and there again for Ann Arbor, taking about 14 hours. I was furnished by Mr. White with letters of introduction to several of his friends in the place & also to some of the Profs at the Uni-

*Samuel H. White, '56, who taught in Lockport, N. Y., for two years after his graduation from the University. He was principal of the Normal School at Peoria, Ill., from 1868-1878, editor of *Illinois Teacher*, 1859-1868, President Illinois State Teachers' Association, 1866, President National Teachers' Association, 1874, State Superintendent of Public Instruction, Illinois, 1878. He died at Peoria, Ill., March 9, 1882.



GEORGE BECK, '60

The Author of the Diary, who "Forswore the Razor"

versity. I delivered one of them soon after my arrival and found a room immediately which I engaged. After dinner my chum and myself went up to the University to be examined. I presented my letter to Professor Tappan the Chancellor who gave me my credentials. I then went to Prof Clark with another letter. He put me through a course of sprouts in mathematics much gentler however on account of the letter of Mr. White. The examinations, generally are not a mere farce but a sober reality as some have ascertained not to their pleasure.

Thursday, Oct. 1.

After a sound night's rest I awoke at 6 1/2 o'clock this morning and found it raining beautifully. . . . I am now already for a start. I like my chum very well. He is quiet and I believe a young man of good habits & character. To day he took Bible from his trunk and read a portion of it which raised my opinion of him not a little. I hope to be able to resist the temptations which will assail on every side and to come off conqueror at last.

Saturday, 3rd.

. . . . This morning before breakfast I took a walk out of the city and back. During the forenoon chum & I walked over to the observatory which is situated upon the hill about 1/2 mile from the University. We did not go in but returned & went over to the Medical College & heard one of the Profs read an hours lecture to 70 or 80 incipient M. D.s. I could not help thinking what a vast amount of poison it would be their lot to cram into their patients. After the lecture we went into the Museum & saw some curious things.

Sunday, 4th Oct.

. . . . As we had not heard a bell toll and it was more than half after 10 o'clock we decided to start out in search of meeting. We soon found ourselves in the Congregational Church. Just as the choir was singing the first hymn I was a little surprised to see Prof Brooks in the pulpit. . . . This afternoon I attended an anti-slavery convention held here by Parker Pillsbury, Chas. L. E. Redmond & others. I was not much edified by their proceedings. . . .

Monday, Oct. 5

We were assembled in the chapel this morning for prayers & from there proceeded to the various recitation rooms. The most that was done was to prepare to start tomorrow. We have for our lesson in grammar the most of what is contained in 34 pages of Brown's "Grammar of English Grammar." In "Analytical Geometry" we are to learn about 8 pages. Both of these recitations come in the morning so that for the present I have no afternoon recitations. I have this afternoon been trying to study but cannot fix my mind upon it as steadily as I hope to do after I have been longer at it. I have been down in the village & up at the college since dinner.

Tuesday 6th.

Very fine & pleasant day. Exercises in chapel this morning conducted by Prof Tappan. . . . The County Agricultural Fair commenced here today. I was at the grounds but did not go on as they were merely receiving stock.

Wednesday 7th.

Andrew J. Davis was advertized to speak at the Court House this evening. I went down but did not stay long. He started to show that it was not only natural that we should look for a new dispensation but that of necessity we might have one. He started by assuming the well known LaMarckian theory is true.

Thursday 8th.

Classes this morning as usual. This afternoon there was nothing going on at the college on account of the fair which closes to day. I have this week again given up the use of tea & coffee & have also forsworn the razor for the present.

Friday 9th.

The time for my class in English Language & Literature was changed to day from 9 o'clock A. M. to 3 P. M. After recitation I took a hasty look at the statuary room (Museum of Natural History &c. I did not upon this occasion take time for a minute examination. This evening I attended a meeting of the Literary Adelphi, a literary society connected with the University. After the reading of the "inaugural" by the president, the following question was debated: "Resolved: that females should be admitted to this University upon the same conditions as males." After a debate it was adopted by the society.



THE CAMPUS AS IT WAS IN THE DAYS OF GEORGE BECK '60
The two old wings of University Hall fifteen years before the central portion was added

Saturday 10th.

. . . . I have not done much to day but run round.

Sunday 11th.

This has been a very pleasant day to me. This morning at the breakfast table some of the students remarked there were to be prayers at the college chapel at 9 o'clock. It was the first that I had heard of it so I went over. After the service was over Dr. Tappan announced that the students held a prayer meeting there afterwards & they would be glad to have any join them. I stayed with about 30 others & took part & had a very good one. A good number just entering the college took part in the meeting. After this was over I went to the Congregational church & heard a good sermon from Jer. 8:20. This afternoon I attended a Sabbath school concert at the Presbyterian church. Though late I heard some very interesting remarks from several gentlemen present. In the evening heard a good sermon, Cor. 10:12. I begin now to feel quite at home.

Monday 12th.

In the chapel this morning Dr Tappan announced that he would introduce to us Edward Everett of Massachusetts. We were to meet in the chapel at 12 M. At the hour the room was filled & soon after came the faculty with Mr. Everett, who after being introduced by the president made a few remarks. In the evening he delivered his oration on "The Life and Character of Washington." It was a very fine production delivered without manu-

script & in a most elegant manner. The proceeds from this oration are to go to the purchase of the Mount Vernon estate as a national monument to "The Father of This Country." They already exceed thirty thousand dollars.

Wednesday 14th.

A petition was circulated to day in our sophomore class asking for the full complement of our recitations and also for a division of the class which numbers about 40. I was called upon to day in the class for the second time this term & this time it happened to be for a proposition which I did not comprehend & consequently I was not prepared to answer. Quite a number of others were in the same way which brought from Prof Clark rather a cutting remark. I do not think I was to be blamed.

Thursday Oct 15th.

We were informed to day that Prof Wood* had been engaged & that our class would be divided & also that we should immediately commence the study of surveying. I received this morning a hasty note informing me that he was to start from St. Louis to New Orleans on the 12th inst.

Friday 16th.

There is nothing of importance to chronicle to day. This evening I attended a meeting of the Alpha Nu, one of the literary societies of the University. I heard part of a poem read by Mr. — which I think was very good. There was then a debate upon the question "Resolved: That ladies should be admitted to this University." On coming before the house for adoption the resolution was lost.

*De Volson Wood, who came to the University as Assistant Professor of Civil Engineering. This was the first appointment to a separate chair of engineering in the University.



ANDREW D. WHITE

Who came to Ann Arbor in 1857 at the age of 25, as the first Professor of History alone in any American University

Monday 19th.

To day had our first lesson in surveying. We are now getting fairly started. We, however, have history yet to take when our prof comes. Prof Clark spoke to the sophomore class this morning respecting a rumor that is afloat touching his connection with the class. The report was false and the affair satisfactorily explained.

Thursday 22nd.

I have to day changed my boarding place. I am now with a man who is married & keeping house & attending the University.

Friday 23rd.

.... This morning on opening the college it was found that during the last night some persons had entered the building & had taken a mule up to Prof Williams room in the fourth story where from the appearance of the place this morning he must have spent most of the night.

Saturday 24th.

This morning went over to chapel to prayers stayed for a while & listened to the declamations of the Junior & the Senior classes after which assisted Prof Wood in adjusting transit. In the afternoon I went down street bought a load of wood & sawed several sticks. After which I studied a little.

Monday Oct 26th.

.... Since I came here I have not felt in the least homesick but I sometimes feel as though I would be glad to have a good social chat with some of those whom I love. Every person whom I met here were strangers not one familiar face. Though

I have made several very pleasant acquaintances yet with none of them can I converse as with an old friend.

Tuesday 27th.

Another day has passed away and its record is fast locked up in the tomes of the past there to remain to the last great day. We met our new Prof of history* this afternoon but have not decided what book to use.

Saturday Oct 31st.

This morning I arose with strong intentions of doing considerable study but I have not done much. I wrote two letters this morning and worked some at surveying. In the afternoon I went over to the medical college and saw an operation performed upon a boy's leg. His leg was opened below the knee for near a foot & with hammer & chisel the surgeon went to work to extract a piece of dead bone. It looked barbarous and the patient was under the influence of chloroform and the operation lasted for more than half an hour. This evening sat and talked with Mr. Wood & two other students who called.

Monday Nov 2nd.

Yesterday at 4 o'clock went over to the college to hear Dr. Tappan lecture. His subject was the same as he spoke upon 2 weeks ago, "He who saveth his life shall lose it," &c. His remarks were very good. Today our class in history met but many of the students were not prepared for recitation so we had none. Prof White occupied the time with some general remarks which were very interesting.

Saturday 7th.

.... The Alpha Nu had a public discussion last evening which I attended. Their room was well filled and there were a good number of ladies present. The question debated was: "Resolved, that a Monarchical form of government is more favorable to Literature than a Republican." The discussion showed much knowledge & research.

Saturday 14th.

My thoughts this evening are strangely wandering. I cannot collect them enough to study to any advantage. My chum, Mr. Kilpatrick† has gone to Detroit to day. On Thursday evening heard W. H. C. Hosmer, the American "Bard of Avon" read his satire "A Tilt at Humbug." This morning the ground is white with snow.

Thursday 19th.

.... The daily routine of duty does not present great variety. It is Analytics, Surveying, History & Grammar one day after another.

Friday Nov 20th.

.... This evening I joined the Alpha Nu Literary society.

Thursday 26th.

Thanksgiving. Weather clear though cold. . . .

*This was Andrew D. White, who came to Michigan in 1857 to occupy the first chair of history to be created in any American University. He was later President of Cornell University and United States Ambassador to Germany.

†Daniel Kilpatrick of Linton, Ia, who attended the University for just one year.

We (chum & I) have to day changed our quarters and have concluded to try the plan pursued by many of the students here, to board ourselves. We have engaged rooms furnished with a bed, 3 chairs, a stove table & wash stand. We took our first bachelor supper tonight. It consisted of bakers bread. There were no exercises at college today.

Saturday 28th.

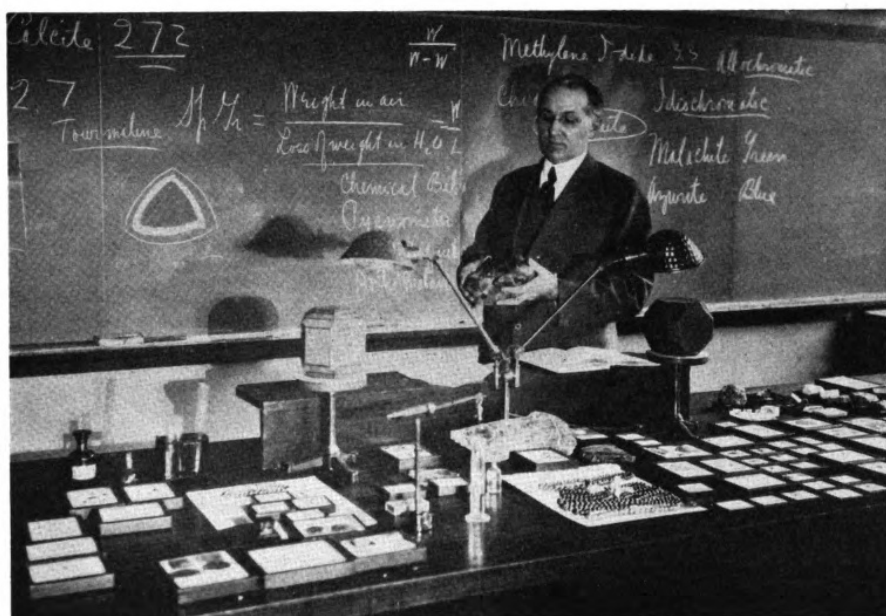
We have to day taken in another chum. A boy who has come to the place for the purpose of attending school at the Union.* He wishes to earn enough by working out of school hours to pay his way. By paying a little more for our rooms our

*By this he means the Union High School.

lessor has procured for us a small cook stove & furnishes us with dishes &c. as we shall need. We were down street & got on a stock of provisions consisting of half a bushel of potatoes 2 loaves of bread a bar of soap added to which we have a piece of meat which we got of our landlord in the morning. We anticipate a tolerably pleasant time. There are a great many students here who board themselves.

Tuesday Dec 1st.

We are living in high style on indian meal pork & beans potatoes &c. We don't spend much time in cooking nor do we wash our dishes every time.



DEAN KRAUS, "HANDY MAN"
At work in one of his classes

Introducing Dean Edward H. Kraus

Who Specializes in Gems and is Head of Two Departments

DEAN Edward H. Kraus is one of the University's all around men, but no boy with a pocketful of choice agate "mibs" was ever more proud of his possession than he is of his collection of assorted gems and gem materials. For the collecting of rare gems and the study of synthetic gem processes is one of his specialties, and he is recognized as an authority on the subject.

While he continues to teach students how to detect fake stones and distinguish the real article, as well as the history of the formation of precious stones, his interest has transcended the classroom to the extent that he has made trips abroad in search of information about precious stones; sought out secrets of methods of cutting and polishing

gems to their finished beauty, and has toured plants in Europe engaged in the production of synthetic gems. From the material which he collected, he wrote a book, "Gems and Gem Materials," universally accepted by authorities as a real contribution to the subject.

All of this seems sufficient to engage the attention of any one man, but Dean Kraus has, in addition, written several other books and articles and has a few more duties. On turning to page 50 of the Student Directory, we find the following after his name: "Professor of Crystallography and Mineralogy and Director of the Mineralogical Laboratory, Dean of the College of Pharmacy, and Dean of the Summer Session."