

The Cornerstone

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THE NEWSLETTER OF THE RICE HISTORICAL SOCIETY

VOL. 8, NO. 2

DOCUMENTING AN ADMINISTRATIVE CRISIS: RICE'S 4-DAY PRESIDENCY

*A presentation by Nancy Boothe, Rice University Archivist Emerita,
at the annual meeting of the Society of American Archivists in Birmingham, Alabama, August 2002,
on a Program "Documenting Controversy and Scandal at College and University Archives"*

In the April 1969 issue of the newsletter of the Oral History Association there appeared this notice:

RICE UNIVERSITY CRISIS TO BE DOCUMENTED. *Hard on the heels of events that stirred Rice University comes an oral history project about them, the University's first venture into the field. On February 21, William Masterson, president of the University of Chattanooga and a former dean at Rice, was named its new president in a surprise move by the trustees. Student and faculty reaction to the method of selection was such that Mr. Masterson resigned five days later. The Center for Research in Social Change and Economic Development [a university entity] provided a grant of some \$7,500 for the project in response to an application that pointed out issues comparable to those at other universities were dealt with quite differently here, rendering the experience relevant to educational problems of our time and distinctive enough to have special significance. Student demonstrations were orderly but singularly effective, and one of the project's aims will be [to] illuminate the apparent paradox, as well as to explore the roles of faculty members, trustees, and university personnel in the crisis. Richard Lytle, University Archivist, is administering the project.*

Opened in 1912 as the Rice Institute, a small and ambitious school so well endowed that no tuition was charged until the 1960s, the school had matured and grown, within its own strictly set limits. Under the leadership of its third president Kenneth S. Pitzer, it had developed a national reputation, outstanding faculty and research staff, and PhD programs in a number of fields. It had a small hand-picked student body drawn from a highly competitive admissions pool.

The Board of Trustees, appointed by the wealthy founder a decade before his death, had always considered themselves financial stewards first, and the overseers of an educational institution a remote second. They had a lingering distrust of professors and students, and even had offices and board meetings in downtown Houston, which enabled them to avoid visiting the campus.

On the other hand, Rice had an outstanding cast of professors, all highly invested in academic freedom, plus a confident bunch of undergraduates who had been the best and the brightest in their high schools and were reveling

in the freedom of the university and a new residential college system.

In the fall of 1968, President Pitzer announced his resignation to become the president of Stanford University. A troika of university administrators called the Campus Executive Committee took over day-to-day operations until a new president could be found.

A Rice University press release dated October 29 announced: "Six Rice University professors have been elected by their colleagues as faculty advisors to assist the Board of Trustees in the selection of a new University president... Three student representatives have been invited to consult with the Faculty Advisory Committee. The FAC will work with a presidential selection group the Board of Trustees have chosen from its own ranks."

The advisory committee prepared dos-

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*Rice faculty meeting,
February 21, 1969*



The Rice Historical Society

PURPOSE

*To collect and preserve for the future
the history of Rice University*

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*The Rice Historical Society welcomes letters
to The Cornerstone, its official newsletter.
Rice alumni and friends are encouraged to
contribute photographs and remembrances
of historical interest which may be used in
future issues of The Cornerstone. Items
cannot be returned and will be donated to
our archival collection.*

NEWSLETTER DESIGNED
BY TOMORROW'S KEY

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Student leaders meet during controversy of Dr. Masterson's appointment

*Photo courtesy of
Houston Chronicle, March 2, 1969*

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Dr. William H. Masterson

siers on about sixty candidates who had been suggested by students/faculty, and narrowed this number to five tentative selections, which it presented to the board.

The committee tried in December 1968 and January 1969 to meet with the board committee, but both times the board committee postponed the meetings.

So it came as a major shock to the faculty members of the advisory committee to be called to a meeting at 4 p.m. on Thursday, February 20, 1969, by the chairman of the board, to tell them what was no longer news to the board: that a new president had been selected: William H. Masterson, President of the University of Chattanooga, and a former Rice professor and dean. Masterson, incidentally, had been one of the candidates considered and rejected by the faculty advisory council.

The next day, Friday, February 21, at 4 p.m., the faculty and students met, in two different venues. Many of the faculty members who had been colleagues of Masterson and then served under him as dean, had great misgivings about his becoming president of Rice. They felt he was authoritarian, close-minded, and retrogressive in his philosophy of

higher education, as well as not being a first-class scholar. A few students remembered his reputation as a stern and punitive master of one of Rice's residential colleges. Both groups aired their respective resolutions on the morning of Saturday, February 22. They were remarkably similar, protesting the method by which Masterson had been selected, in spite of the framework which seemingly had been prepared for meaningful collaboration of the faculty and students in the selection of the new president.

The faculty called for reconsideration of Masterson's appointment; the students requested that Masterson refuse the offer at this time, "until his qualifications can be compared to other potential candidates" by the process established by the board. The board did not respond. From this point forward, it would have taken a sophisticated flowchart to document the movement of information (and disinformation) among all the players.

The student and faculty members of the advisory committee met for hours throughout the next three days at each others' homes and apartments. Telephone calls flew back and forth. Meetings were called, scenarios planned. The only major player NOT

in communication was Masterson; he as yet had no idea of the foment over his appointment on the Rice campus (this was a serious omission on the part of the board).

The student association, led by charismatic undergraduate Warren Skaaren, was determined not to let their cause deteriorate to the level of other student demonstrations in the 1960s, whereas the board was terribly afraid that the students would rise up, barricade buildings, destroy property, even close down the campus.

The faculty members were by and large stalwart in their reaction to the Masterson appointment, temperate in large public meetings, but absolutely candid in their meetings with each other and the students. One professor warned that if Masterson came, at least a dozen full professors would resign.

One of Houston's two newspapers covered the controversy with front page stories every day beginning on February 21 when Masterson's appointment was announced. In fact, the reporter became a regular campus fixture, talking with students and faculty and showing up at meetings. On the evening of Friday, February 21, one of the university's deans flew to Chattanooga to fetch Masterson back

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Photo by Herbert Taylor, Chronicle Staff

STUDENT LEADERS MEET DURING CONTROVERSY OF DR. MASTERSON'S APPOINTMENT
They Are, Left to Right, Bill Blanton, Mrs. Bari Kaplan, George Forristall and Warren Skaaren

to Houston. By this time a few sympathetic faculty members had made phone calls to Masterson about the situation, at least in broad strokes.

On the plane ride back to Houston, Dean McEnany still apparently did not give Masterson the complete picture either, so that Masterson was predictably stunned by the sever-

ity of the reaction against him when he attended a press conference and met students the next day, Saturday, February 22.

At 10:30 that morning, the students held a "teach-in" at the gym, a session at which both faculty and students spoke, outlining in non-inflammatory terms the reasons for their

protest. By plan the students wore their best clothes: suits and ties for the men, dresses and heels for the women. From there they marched sedately to the nearby administration building, where the press conference was held.

After the press conference, Masterson met spontaneously with several students nearby. Although reports are that the meeting started with restraint and civility, it later deteriorated into a "confrontation" which included booing and hissing. Masterson gave up on this large group, saying he was meeting later with a smaller student group where they might accomplish something.

That afternoon, Masterson, Dean McEnany, student leaders, and the university's public relations director, met from 2:30 until almost 6 p.m., then again from 8 p.m. until well after midnight. Masterson reported that student leaders had told him "the only way out is for him to resign."

Rice Incident Unique in Era of Campus Violence

BY DAVID BECKWITH
Chronicle Reporter

The events at Rice University last week appear to be unique in the nationwide student protest of the 1960s.

Discussions were quiet, rational and orderly, and the participants were instructed by their leaders to wear coats and ties.

Students made no demands, but only one "emphatic request."

Only a Plea

When the request was received with the resignation of president-elect Dr. William H. Masterson, instead of further requests or demands from the students, there was only a plea for closer communication among Rice trustees, faculty, and students.

"It was refreshing to see the mature, dignified response of the student body," commented Dr. W. E. Gordon, chief executive officer of Rice. "We were tested, and our mettle was revealed."

The trouble stemmed from the resignation of Dr. Kenneth S. Pitzer as president of Rice. When Dr. Pitzer made known his decision to accept the presidency of Stanford University in California, a committee of faculty members was created by the trustees to help select a successor. The committee, in turn, invited students to help in the task.

Faculty Dissayed

When the board of governors, without having consulted the faculty committee, announced the appointment of Dr. Masterson, most of the Rice faculty was dismayed.

both were heard attentively and applauded politely.

Then the students voted 51-7 (with several abstentions) to endorse the faculty resolution urging reconsideration of the appointment.

At noon Saturday on the campus, Dr. Masterson and about 18 members of the Rice administration emerged from Allen Center headed for Cohen Hall and Dr. Masterson's press conference. He was greeted by 1200 well-dressed students, silently marching in protest, carrying only one large sign: "Faculty and Students United."

Tried to Talk

Following the strained press conference, Dr. Masterson made a valiant attempt to establish rapport with the demonstrating students. He obtained a bullhorn and strode outside to address them.

It was a futile effort. The bullhorn did not work properly, and his words were lost to many of the students.

His answers to questions did not satisfy the uneasy crowd. One youth shouted an obscenity, but he was silenced by disapproving stares.

"I have heard of no organized opposition (to the appointment)," Dr. Masterson said weakly. It was apparent he was making no headway, that he was winning no friends.

Issue Statement

On Sunday, Dr. Masterson returned to Chattanooga. The student leaders issued a statement calling him unacceptable.

That afternoon, about a

dozen faculty members and student leader Skaaren gathered in Dean Gordon's office for a three-hour meeting. At least two of the faculty had originally favored Dr. Masterson, but now felt he should not assume the presidency.

Various suggestions for resolving the impasse were discussed. After two hours, a plan for a campus-wide secret ballot by students and faculty was approved.

More than 85 percent of both students and faculty voted disapproval of the trustees' procedure on the first part of the ballot. This concerned the trustees' failure to consult the faculty committee on Masterson's appointment.

On the second part, indicating approval or disapproval of Dr. Masterson, more than 90 percent of students and 85 percent of faculty opposed the new president.

Decided to Resign

Until then, neither Dr. Masterson nor the trustees had intended to back down. When the results of the vote were relayed to him in Tennessee, Dr. Masterson immediately decided to resign.

The protest had started with disgruntlement over the trustees' failure to consult with students and faculty. But George Forristall, a graduate student and a campus leader, said, "The dimmy would not have been so loud or long had Dr. Masterson been a universally popular man."

The former dean of humanities had accumulated some enemies during 22 years at Rice. More importantly however, was the widely held be-

lieve that the four-day experience, which began Feb. 22 when Dr. Masterson's appointment was revealed and ended Tuesday afternoon with his resignation, a step forward or a step backward for Rice? "That's the central question we're all thinking about," said Herbert C. Allen, vice-chairman of the trustees. Most students and faculty members believe that Rice will benefit greatly from the four days.

'Never as Close'

"The ties between students and faculty have never been as close as they were this week," said Warren Skaaren, president of the student association.

"In addition, we all realized we have failed to express ourselves adequately to the trustees—that communication between us did not exist."

"Now that we are impressed with the need for communication, it will be established. This will help the university."

When Wiley College students were demonstrating, causing their institution to close its doors, the Rice protest action was limited to handicapping, cheering, an occasional hissing and only one public obscenity.

Faculty Boos

Most of the booing came from the lips of Rice faculty. When trustee Allen first announced Dr. Masterson's appointment to the faculty in a tense meeting, boos were heard on two occasions, directed not at Allen but at other faculty members.

The displeasure was quickly muted, however, after Rice Chancellor Carey Crossin gently admonished the faculty: "The boos do not argue well for the University."

When the faculty emerged from the meeting, after voting 49-57 to urge reconsideration of the appointment, they were greeted by 300 cheering, applauding students.

This was the emotional high water mark of the protest. On the following morning, 1200 students and faculty gathered quietly in the gym for a one-hour presentation on the question. About 20 students had stayed up all night planning the meeting.

Ten persons spoke — five faculty and five students. Only one student and one teacher favored Dr. Masterson but not that Dr. Masterson's academic reputation was not sufficient for the presidency of a university with Rice's standing.

"He's a fine man, a first class administrator," said one faculty member. "But Rice deserves a great man."

Need Magnet

"We need a man whose name is a magnet to distinguished lecturers and bright new faculty, a man who is nationally known among academicians, a man whose pres-

ence commands respect in Washington, where the big research grants are handed out.

"True, Rice depends heavily on local support from the Houston community, and it's important that the president be able to travel in the non-elite circles here."

"I'm afraid, though, that we tend to take the Houston money for granted. It's the national grants, the major foundations, and the government work, that we are concerned with. That's what is

bothering us now."

As for the students, who telegraphed Dr. Masterson praising his decision to renounce the presidency of the university, perhaps the supreme compliment came only this weekend from Dr. Masterson himself.

Noting what he termed "the justifiable interest (of the students) in procedural affairs," Dr. Masterson said:

"I have the highest regard for the student leadership in Rice."

On Sunday morning there were meetings in the residential colleges, all of which ultimately voted to reject the Masterson appointment. Later student leaders met and drafted a statement authored by the college presidents, student association officers, and student members of the Student-Faculty on Presidential Selection Committee, saying that Masterson had refused further dialogue with them and that they could only interpret his action as "a refusal to consider the issue of due process and his consistent rejection of possible alternatives, and in view of the overwhelming faculty rejection of Dr. Masterson, this student group has concluded that Dr. Masterson is unacceptable as president of Rice University. We can only hope that the Board of Trustees recognizes the impossible situation created by Dr. Masterson's remaining president of Rice University."

At 2:30 p.m., the development office and the alumni director tried unsuccessfully to get the Alumni Executive Board to approve an alumni telegram campaign to support the Masterson appointment.

At 4 p.m. (still Sunday, February 23), Chief Executive Officer William Gordon, who had been a stabilizing force throughout the crisis, met with selected students and faculty members, who decided to hold a referendum on the appointment. By 10 p.m., meetings in all the colleges were underway.

On Monday, February 24, balloting began at 8 a.m. Students (undergraduate and graduate), staff and faculty voted. By 6 p.m., all votes were counted and results delivered to the board, thence reported to Masterson by phone. Although board members and certain administrators knew the results, they were never made public.

On the morning of Tuesday, February 25, Masterson resigned.

Within two weeks of the Masterson controversy, a committee was formed to sponsor an undertaking called

Protest a Victory for Both Sides?

Rice Prof Says Liberals, Conservatives Can Claim Victory

Liberals and conservatives claim a victory of sorts in the results of last week's protest at Rice University, a university economist-historian says.

David Nissen, assistant professor of economics, says:

"It is clear that the struggle of the U.S. university is being debated across the country. In many places, such as the University of California, the debate is less civilized than it is at Rice."

He quoted a student, Jeff Lawson, on the uniqueness of a four-day Rice drama: "It is the only time in the history of recent student conflict at the students were led by

their duly elected leader (Student Assn. President Warren Skaaren) and the faculty was led by its duly appointed leader (Chief Executive Officer Dr. W. K. Gordon).

"On announcements, their names appeared together, parallel, on the same level."

In one sense, this is a victory for the new left, with students having an equal voice with faculty and administration on policy matters.

"In a more important sense, however, it was a victory for those who believe in conservative principles. It completely refuted the blanket condemnation of the left-wing Students for Democratic Society, which

preaches that the institution is inherently rotten and must be destroyed.

"Rice showed that change can be accomplished through existing channels; that grievances can be corrected through orderly protest."

Nissen said that the old concept of a university hierarchy—with the trustees on top, followed by the administration, faculty and students—may be outmoded today.

"When the total body of knowledge was smaller, students came to the university to learn facts. Teachers taught facts and students learned.

"Now, with the information explosion, students come to college to learn how to learn.

"Teaching students how to learn may be more efficient in an atmosphere of less authoritarianism and more joint effort among the components of a university."

The 30-year-old economics professor, said that news of Dr. William H. Masterson's "magnificent gesture" (of resignation) was not greeted on campus as a victory of one faction over another.

"Nobody said, 'We beat the trustees.' Rather, it was a victory for ideals dear to the university. There was a feeling that we had inched out of a difficult situation in a creative, nondestructive way.

"I think we all realized for

the first time that the trustees have special problems and that they deal with special values. They have done an excellent job for the university and Rice has progressed greatly under their leadership.

"Their job is especially hard because the academic style found on good college campuses is alien to the business ethic of the Southwest, which they generally represent.

"In the Southwest business community, there is more emphasis on briskness, effectiveness, courage, intuitive judgment and quick, correct, profit-making decisions.

"In the academic world, deliberation, manners, discourse, due process and procedure are considered more important. It is not strange that trustees and academicians are often apart."

Nissen said the future of Rice depends greatly on how well faculty, students, alumni and trustees come to understand each other. If the groups can obtain agreement on goals for the university, then Rice will become truly great, he said.

"In any case, the civilized and responsible fashion in which this problem was resolved will be beneficial to Rice," Nissen said.

the *Oral History Project on the Presidential Crisis of February 1969 at Rice University*. The sponsors were two professors in history and political science, and the administrator was Richard Lytle, then the University Archivist. An outside consultant and an interviewer were also appointed. The purpose of the project was "to collect data for scholars doing research in social and economic change in the university," and funding was provided by a grant awarded by Rice's Center for Research in Social Change and Economic Development.

Each interviewee signed an agreement allowing for a variety of restrictions (from "none" until "only after I'm dead"). The interviewer was familiar with the conflict and was able to ask pertinent questions and guide the interviews, although many of those interviewed had no problem with talking unprompted. Because of budget restrictions, only some of the interviews were transcribed in toto; others have only abstracts. All the interviews were sealed for five years, then opened according to individual restrictions.

The collection itself occupies about four cubic feet. It is arranged in two series. Series I consists of background materials including news releases, photos and slides, publications, student papers, and pertinent university

documents. Series II contains material from the *Oral History Project*, including material on interviewee selection.

Most of the Masterson interviews were on reel-to-reel tape and cassette tape. Reel-to-reel tapes are now obsolete, and cassette film does not offer optimum reproduction. So during 2002 the Woodson Research Center had a small sample of the audio tapes restored and reformatted into CDs, with excellent results. The staff has also begun scanning images from textual and photographic records related to the Masterson Controversy.

Author's note: The Rice Historical Society Board voted in April 2003 to fund reformatting costs for additional Masterson material as well as for other significant Rice University historical holdings. This effort will breathe new life into the old records documenting significant events in the university's history.

Excerpts from

ALMOST EIGHT DECADES, THE MEMOIRS OF J. RAYMOND PETERSON

The following pages present excerpts from the memoirs of J. Raymond Peterson (1901-2002), who returned to Houston for his 70th reunion in 1990. In response to RHS archivist Joyce Nagle's inquiry if he had recorded his memories of Rice, Peterson sent her an account entitled "Almost Eight Decades," completed in 1978. He came to Rice Institute from a senior class in Rosenberg, Texas, that had dwindled to five members and he felt apprehensive about being admitted.

"Because Rice Institute was nearby, and because no tuition was required there, my Dad decided I should make an effort to get accepted there. There was a bit of a problem, as my high school was not accredited which meant I had to take and pass entrance exams before Rice would accept me... When I went to Houston early in September to take the exams, I was most apprehensive about passing the tests. After I took them, I was sure that I had failed. To this day, I am rather positive that the registrar, Red McCann, decided to let me enter and must have disregarded the test results. Rice was very new then, having opened its doors only 4 years previously. At any rate, I was always grateful that somehow, Rice decided to take a chance on me.

"My cousin, Melvin Peterson, had also graduated in 1916 from Kingsville, Texas high school and he decided also to enter Rice. We were fortunate enough to obtain a room in the brand-new South Hall dormitory. Like all the Rice buildings, it was a very nice building and we had a very comfortable room.

"Mr. McCants, the Bursar at Rice, and in charge of student employment



J. Raymond Peterson, 1978

on the campus, got me job in the Chemistry lab. My duties were largely janitorial, for which I was paid (or rather allowed as a credit on my dormitory bill) 20 c an hour...

"The room in South Hall that Melvin and I occupied was next door to one occupied by George Brown and a boy named Pollard. George was hardly the best student in the college, and he got in the habit of coming to our room rather regularly to seek help with some of the 'homework' assignments. Melvin used to charge a few cents for helping George to prepare for exams...

"One of our other neighbors was a sort of 'odd ball...one weekend when

Melvin and I both went home, we came back to find our room

'stacked,' i.e., all drawers emptied and the contents dumped on the floor, with books, papers, etc. all scattered everywhere... After some inquiries, we tabbed Joe as the 'room staker,' but we couldn't prove it immediately, though later someone 'squealed,' and we went in and really 'stacked' Joe's room.

"Back in 1916, hazing of Freshmen was very much in vogue. At Rice, the hazing, for the most part, took the form of rather harmless and humorous tricks on the Frosh. However, one big bruiser, Tiny Kalb, organized a gang of sophomores and came thru South Hall one night armed with flat paddles. When they came in our room, Melvin and I refused to 'assume Angle Theta,' which meant that we should bend over, touching our ankles, so that Tiny could get in his licks with the paddle. After we refused to cooperate, several held each of us down for the paddling. However, our defiance got 'noised around,' and Tiny and Co. decided to desist from completing their visits to all Freshman rooms.

"Two of my many instructors at Rice left a strong impression on me. One, Radoslav Tsanoff, was the

Freshman class, 1916 yearbook



Philosophy professor. Strange, of course, that a Chemistry major should be taking a Philosophy course – the reason for taking it was also strange.

When I entered Rice I was deficient



*J. Raymond Peterson,
1916 yearbook*

in having not had a very good background of high school courses, so Rice required that I take some ‘extra’ courses to make up for this deficiency...

My counselor, Red McCann, suggested that I take Tsanoff’s elementary Logic course as one of my extras. I thoroughly enjoyed the interesting exposition by Dr. Tsanoff into the realm of thinking. He was a Russian – with a heavy accent that made it a bit difficult to understand at times, but with as brilliant a mind as I have every encountered. Except for the fact that I had to keep up with Chemistry in order to hold on to the job I had as a Chemistry Student Assistant, I think I should have stayed with Philosophy as a major – and probably ended up as an instructor at some obscure college.

“The other instructor was Dr. Whittemore in the Chemistry school. As a Freshman, I had gotten a job as a sort of janitor in the Chemistry department. While working there I met Dr. Whittemore, and he gave me quite a bit of added employment (at 20c an hour) helping him on weekends in setting up, taking down, and cleaning apparatus he was using in some research in electro-chemistry. Near the end of my Freshman year he asked me if I had ever considered a career in Chemistry. I replied that I had not and did not think that I had much ability in scientific pursuits. He then explained that if I would make Chemistry my major that he would try to get me an Assistant job, which involved assisting him and other Chemistry instructors by supervising

Freshman Labs, grading test papers, etc. Such a job paid for one’s room and board, and I certainly could use that help. So –I did become a Chemistry Assistant for my last three years at Rice and did select Chemistry as my major. Obviously the good Dr. Whittemore had a very important influence on my life.

“The first President of Rice was also a very outstanding person. Edgar Odell Lovett had been Professor of Mathematics at Princeton, and was chosen by Rice’s Trustees to start the University. He was a rather lofty and aloof character – I doubt if he knew the names of more than a dozen students – but he certainly did a job in starting Rice off on the right track to become an outstanding university. Looking back, I think it was his devotion to excellence that brought about his success. He was determined that Rice would not become just another college – but he saw to it that they would move slowly, and within their income, always striving for the best in faculty and physical surroundings. I am sure that many of the current University administrators who seem inclined more to expediency than to excellence could not have done what Prexy Lovett did to found a fine university.

“One of the big thrills was the unexpected football victory of Rice of Texas A&M in 1916. In those days Rice barely had enough men who came for sports to field a team, and A&M was MR. BIG. However, largely through the running of a Freshman, Griff Vance, Rice soundly defeated A&M. In later years I’ve seen quite a few athletic events, including most of the big events, but none was more thrilling than this upset of A&M...

“Near the middle of my sophomore year at Rice, the boy who was the business manager of the school papers, *The Thresher*, flunked out of school. I don’t know who recommended me to take over his job, but I did so for the next two years. My job consisted primarily of trying to sell enough adver-

tising in the *Thresher* to partly offset the costs of producing the paper. In addition to neglecting his studies, my predecessor had not been to [sic] diligent in collecting for such ads as he had sold...

“There were no Greek letter fraternities at Rice, as President Lovett, having come from Princeton, believed strongly that such fraternities were not in the best interests of the students... however, when you ban something you frequently get something else that may be worse. At Rice, a men’s club had sprung up – sub rosa – called the *Idlers*. It was composed mostly of the bigger names on campus, including sports heroes and other bigwigs. One day one of my friends, who was an *Idler*, told me that he was going to put my name up for membership, but that unanimous approval was required. Later, he sadly informed me that I had been ‘black-balled.’ It was a bit of a shock to me, though it really was a blessing as I did not have the finances to participate in many of the *Idler* social affairs. Some months later a second club was secretly organized, this one called the *Samurai* which I joined.

“In my junior year, I was the class representative on the Honor Council, which council was responsible for the functioning of the Honor System to prevent cheating on examinations. The Council was a joint faculty-student group, and we took our responsibility for enforcing the Honor System quite seriously. For example, on one occasion a Senior who was detected cheating on the final examination was denied his degree...

“Although my stringent needs to conserve what little money I had prevented me from taking too much part in the social affairs on the campus, I did on a few occasions attend some of the Proms. Most of these were held in the Commons on the campus. As Rice was then ‘way out in the country,’ and as no-body (and I mean nobody) had a car, getting your date to and from the campus took some doing.,

This was solved by about three couples going together and hiring a car to pick up the dates [and] bring them to the campus, and then take us to the girls' homes after the dance. However, a few bucks could be saved if the boys didn't have the cars take them back to campus – so many a night you could see some weary boys trudging out Main St. in the early morning hours...

“Near the end of my junior year, the SATC (predecessor of ROTC) program was started. The Rice administration announced that any student who had a B or better grade average would be given full credit for the year's college, without final exams, if they wished to enter the SATC program. I jumped at this chance, and left school for the training camp at Ft. Sheridan, Ill... At the end of the training, we '90 day wonders' were given 2nd Lieutenant commissions, and for further training were assigned back to our campuses to assist in the campus SATC training of all students.

“My senior year at Rice was quite enjoyable. ...Another boy and I ran the campus laundry and cleaning collection and delivery service... I also enjoyed a most comfortable living arrangement in a 4th floor room in the tower of the East Hall dormitory. This was a very spacious corner room, furnished a bit more comfortably than most... My roommate was another senior, Maynard Robinson, from Temple, Texas... One of our neighbors in East Hall tower was the son of Madero, President of Mexico. Young Madero was quite shy, and ill at ease – so Maynard and I did our best to help him get adjusted to college life in a strange land.

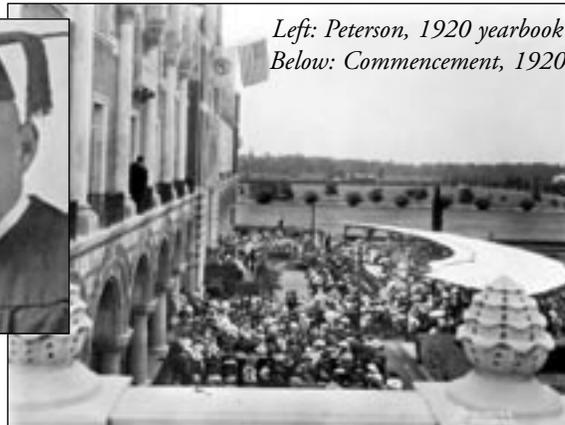
“A few words about the beauty of the Rice Campus. A definite objective of those who established Rice was to build a university that was excellent in all respects – including its physical appearance...

“Not the least of the attractive things about the Rice campus is the landscaping. While the design no doubt was worked out by some experts in landscaping, the execution of the design and the planting and care of the trees and flowers was in the hands of one “Tony”, an Italian gardener.

“On one occasion I accidentally got acquainted with Tony's family. After my family moved to east Texas, quite a distance from Houston, I was not able to afford the trip home during some of the holiday breaks. One Christmas break I didn't go home but stayed on the campus. As I was working at the Chemistry Lab a good deal of the time, I didn't get lonely until Christmas Eve – when I began to feel pretty sorry for myself being away from home. As I was leaving the Chem. Building, I ran into Tony, and he asked what I was doing all by myself on Christmas Eve. I suppose my loneliness showed a bit, as Tony asked me to go home with him (he lived in a small cottage on the campus) and have a glass of wine. After I got to his cottage, and met his buxom wife and his small children, they asked

me to stay for dinner, which I did. The next morning, Christmas Day, I found a drug store open, and got some toys for the children which I took to their cottage. I never forgot the lift that the old gardener gave me, and afterward, I visited his family many times...

“The graduation exercises and other related affairs were very enjoyable. One of the traditional affairs is a Senior Banquet held the night before the graduation exercises. It was held in a beautiful, outdoor court at the old Brazos Hotel. One amusing incident involving one of my friends, Emmett McFarland, took place. Little MC was president of our class, and was, of course, seated at the head table next to Mrs. Lovett, the Rice Prexy's wife. The entrée at the dinner was broiled squab, and as anyone knows who has tried to handle a broiled fowl, it isn't easy. MC wrestled his squabs a bit trying to get a little meat off, but then slid one of them off the plate right into Mrs. Lovett's lap. MC, who was an all-conference football center, was the most embarrassed guy I have ever seen... The graduation exercises... were held out doors in front of the Administration building.”



Left: Peterson, 1920 yearbook
Below: Commencement, 1920



Left: The Honorable Lee Duggan addressing the Rice Historical Society at the Pioneer Memorial Log House on April 15



Right: Maydelle Burkhalter, Karen Rogers, Joyce Nagle and Margo Hibler enjoy the reception following the tour of the Jones School