

Giant Strides Since 1945

World War II took its toll. The bronze memorial in New Main lists 1,358 names, including 17 women and 35 gold stars. The war sent men and women to far places and to unfamiliar tasks. In great numbers they returned to the campus with new ideas and serious purposes. Luther, like other schools, faced the postwar problems created by the influx; it found its enrollment soaring to new levels and, to care for its students, had to resort to many expedients.

Four large residences, some lots adjoining the campus, and a 25-acre tract were purchased. A veterans' village of seventeen army barracks was erected; two large classroom units were also obtained from the government. Lights were installed on the athletic field, and four hard-surfaced tennis courts were constructed. Rollaway bleachers in the gymnasium almost doubled seating capacity. Additional facilities were made available in the library. Larsen Hall, a dormitory, was modernized, as was also the gymnasium. In 1946-47, as the first step in the college's post-war building program, the Korsrud heating plant with extensive campus tunnels was constructed.

O. J. H. Preus, because of a heart ailment, retired

from the presidency in 1948. His successor, J. W. Ylvisaker, bore nearly all the burden of carrying through the large-scale postwar program that was needed. During his administration the following buildings were erected: the center and west wing of Diderikke Brandt Hall, a \$675,000 dormitory for 225 women, ready in 1950; New Main Building, providing office and classroom space at a cost of \$670,000, in 1952; Oscar L. Olson Hall, a \$590,000 dormitory for 233 men, in 1955; the east wing of Brandt Hall, a \$550,000 dormitory for 167 women, in 1958; and Valders Memorial Hall of Science, a \$1,500,000 structure, ready in 1961. A \$1,250,000 College Union will be completed in 1962. In addition, the four remaining major buildings have been extensively remodeled and repaired. A set of carillonic bells, the gift of Dr. A. R. Sorenson, an alumnus, was installed and dedicated May 21, 1961. A total of about \$5,500,000 has been spent in new construction since the Korsrud Heating Plant was begun in 1946.

Despite this extensive building program, the college has not yet caught up with the increase in attendance. Enrollments more than doubled immediately after World War II; they increased almost year by year thereafter. The unduplicated total enrollment stood at 1,517 in 1959-60 and is headed higher. With more students on campus, there are still important building needs to be met. Foremost among these is an expansion of library

facilities, for although Koren Library was admirable forty years ago, it is inadequate today.

Not so easily seen as the step-up in the physical plant is the raising of academic standards. In 1948, as the result of a program of self-examination growing out of North Central Association workshops and extending over several years, the faculty adopted a new statement of objectives — the most comprehensive and far-reaching in the college's history. In subsequent years the curriculum was revised and expanded. Gradually, new goals were set for both faculty and students, requiring higher standards of preparation for teachers and more exacting entrance requirements for students. More overseas students were brought to the campus. More women were admitted to get a better balance between men and women in the student body. In 1960-61 there were 727 men and 559 women full-time students during the regular school year. More women were also engaged for teaching, and equal salary scales for men and women were established.

New provisions were made to encourage greater professional competence within the faculty and to stimulate productive scholarship. The college sought to make faculty positions more attractive by improving the scale of salaries, by explicit provisions for tenure, and by assuming the full cost of a liberal retirement program as well as medical and hospital care.

Since 1915 the college has been accredited by the North Central Association of College and Secondary Schools. In 1958 the college was added to the approved list of the American Association of University Women. In 1960 it was granted recognition by the National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education.

Luther College students continue to rank well in academic circles. They have received their share of Woodrow Wilson fellowships, Danforth Foundation awards, and National Defense graduate fellowships. In the past decade two of its men received Rhodes Scholarships, three others having previously been so selected. Although coeducation began officially in 1936 with a modest enrollment of 103 women, the number of women in attendance is now approaching 600. In 1959 the first Ph.D. was awarded to a Luther woman graduate. In 1960 the first two women graduates to enter the medical profession received their M.D. degrees, one at the University of Wisconsin, the other at the State University of Iowa. The first woman to serve on the Board of Regents of the college was elected in 1956.

The library has continued to expand its collections, which now include more than 115,000 volumes, about 1,000 volumes of Norwegian-American newspapers now in process of being microfilmed, more than 20,000 manuscripts, and a sizeable collection of Herbjørn Gausta paintings.

More than 290 periodicals are received regularly.

The Norwegian-American Historical Museum, under the direction of the late Inga Bredesen Norstog after the war, continued to add to its already valuable collections. Among recent acquisitions are articles of clothing, china, and silver from Norway and this country; pieces of Norwegian-American sculpture; and a collection of more than twenty tapestries given by Georg Unger Vetlesen, founder of the Scandinavian Airlines System. A collection of twenty paintings and etchings, including a Whistler and a Zorn, was presented to the college earlier by the family of Dr. Nils E. Remmen, who attended Luther in the eighties.

Since 1957 a fine arts festival, sponsored by faculty and students, has been an annual event. There are also special lectures provided through the generosity of benefactors. In 1958 the Knute Preus Stalland Memorial Fund lectures were begun. In 1959 the Adolf Gundersen Medical Foundation, La Crosse, Wisconsin, established the Adolf Gundersen Lecture Fund at the college. Another series is the Martin Luther Lectures, 1956-60, made possible by a grant from Lutheran Brotherhood Life Insurance Society of Minneapolis. Lecturers from leading universities and seminaries at home and abroad dealt with the relevance of Luther for today's world. The lectures were published in five volumes; they play their part in the "Luther renaissance" of late years.

The college has not been exempt from the pressures arising from the sweeping inflation which followed World War II. Higher costs of all kinds are reflected in higher tuition fees, room rentals, and subsistence costs. These impose greater and greater burdens on those seeking an education, whether at public or private institutions. The illusion of well-being created by deficit financing and inflation appears still to create a mirage in many minds.

There has been an increase in the funds appropriated annually by the supporting synod. At present these are more than two and a half times as large as in 1948. Even so, in view of the increase in attendance and the nearly 60% decrease in the value of the dollar, these appropriations today form a smaller part of the college's income than at any earlier period.

In part this has been compensated for by greater support from the alumni, by gifts from foundations, and by gifts and bequests from friends. New efforts have been made to mobilize the alumni for systematic support of the college's program. In the campaign for a centennial fund to mark the college's hundredth birthday, alumni contributed more than three quarters of a million dollars. The college was awarded a \$1000 prize for "distinguished achievement in the development of alumni support" in 1959-60, ranking first among large private coeducational colleges in the nation entered

in the "Alumni Giving Incentives Award," administered by the American Alumni Council. Substantial gifts came from foundations, notably the Ford Foundation, whose beneficence extended to nearly all colleges and universities in the nation. Bequests of \$48,000, \$72,000 and \$50,000 were received in the last decade; in this period also came gifts and bequests totalling more than \$900,000 from Mr. and Mrs. Louis W. Olson.

A development that is of continuing benefit is the Iowa College Foundation, through which many individuals and corporations make contributions to the state's private educational institutions. Several corporations have inaugurated their own programs of annual gifts to the colleges of the state. Scholarship and loan funds have grown. The federal program of loans to students expanded rapidly. At present total loan funds available to Luther students exceed \$300,000. All these measures help to counteract the eroding effects of inflation. Perhaps it is still too early to determine whether the opposing forces have counterbalanced each other. Meanwhile, college administrators struggle with what seems to be a never-ending problem.

A primary concern of all college faculties is the maintenance of sound academic standards and the fostering of scholarly activities. Although no one would deny that there have been ups and downs in the level of scholarship at Luther, nevertheless,

the standards established by the thoroughly trained University of Oslo men who largely made up the early faculties have been felt throughout the school's history. The number of men and, during the past twenty-five years, of women who have gone on to graduate study and have entered the professions is high.

Part of the emphasis on the serious aspects of getting an education may be attributed to the influence of chapel exercises, which are held five days a week. Here there is a daily fifteen-minute pause for renewed dedication to spiritual values. A more formal spiritual organization is the Luther College Student Congregation, founded in 1959; through this, students call their own pastor, elect their own deacons and trustees, set up their own financial budget, and provide for their own Sunday services on campus. Through their religious organizations, students raise sizeable sums to provide scholarships for overseas students. A "Men for the Ministry" conference each year brings more than a hundred young men to the campus to discuss the challenges for youth in the Christian ministry.

Music, since the school began, has been actively cultivated. Today music has a larger staff than any other department of the college. Almost half the students take part in organizations such as the Luther College Concert Band, Varsity Band, Pep Band, Luther College Choir, Chapel Choir, and

Choral Union. Recitals, both by students and faculty members, attract good audiences. Usually each year a light opera is produced. A college orchestra has been warmly received in concert numbers. The Dorian Society sponsors music festivals which attract hundreds of high school musicians to the campus. Recordings have been made by the concert band, choir, and chapel choir.

In 1961 the Luther College Concert Band of 64 pieces made its third international tour. Leaving the campus by bus on May 29, it proceeded to New York to board the MS *Bergensfjord* for Oslo, Norway. In Norway the band gave more than thirty concerts in and about the capital city and during a two and one-half weeks' coastal tour of the famous fjords of the Norwegian west coast. It then took a three-weeks' sightseeing tour through Denmark and Germany, up the Rhine by river steamer to Switzerland, thence across the Alps to Italy, by way of the Italian and French Riviera to France and Paris, and then via Belgium and the Netherlands to Copenhagen for the return ocean voyage. After landing in New York August 14, the organization proceeded by chartered buses to Miami Beach, Florida. There it was featured at the first International Luther League convention of the newly-formed American Lutheran Church before 14,000 Luther Leaguers. It returned to Decorah August 22.

Speech and journalistic activities are also vig-

orously pursued. In 1959 and 1960 a speech group won debate and sweepstake trophies in the Iowa Forensic Association Tournament. Eleven years earlier a Luther student was the first representative of an Iowa college or university to win the Interstate Oratorical Contest at Northwestern University. Two to three plays a year are presented by Campus Players. At least two original plays by students have been given; likewise a student translation of Sophocles' "Oedipus Rex."

College Chips continues its excellent newspaper coverage of college activities. In 1926 it abandoned its magazine format and became a weekly newspaper. As such, it has won more than twenty-three All-American awards from the Associated College Press. *New Impressions*, a magazine of student writing, has afforded an outlet for other student literary endeavors since its first issue in 1949. *The Pioneer*, college annual, makes its strongest appeal through pictures.

Each year a winter carnival features ice sculpture, skating, skiing, and tobogganing whenever it can find the weather man sufficiently cooperative. Autumn and spring lure hundreds to the tree-clad bluffs, cool, sparkling springs, and lush river valleys about Decorah for picnics and steak fries. Throughout the year society programs, carnivals, formal parties, Valentine parties, Sadie Hawkins weekends, fashion shows, and beard contests, to name only a few of the activities which ingenious

students devise, offer more than enough diversion from the serious business of studying.

Athletics also provide many opportunities for student enthusiasm. College policy toward intercollegiate sports, as formulated in 1954, states: "We believe that athletic competition under proper administration is a constructive and satisfying part of student life for both participants and non-participants. We strongly resist both the tendency to abandon so desirable an element in the development of a well-rounded student and also the tendency to engage in any practice which we recognize as educationally unsound." The college has no athletic scholarships; its coaches all have faculty status, and all teach academic courses.

Nustad Field provides excellent facilities for football and track; it has a quarter-mile track and a 220-yard straightaway. The baseball diamond, scene of many stirring games, is now, with the erection of Valders Memorial Science Hall, destined to be abandoned. These fields, and the college gymnasium, have witnessed many triumphs. Luther has won its share of championships in baseball, basketball, football, track, tennis, wrestling, and golf. It is one of the few Iowa colleges to have maintained a turning squad for three quarters of a century — since December 1886. Cross-country running was introduced in 1955. Intramural sports are popular, the large number of participants taxing the facilities available.

It would be tedious to list athletic triumphs in detail. Yet one may call attention to the long and impressive record in baseball under S. S. Reque, whose overall record of 244 games won, 139 lost, and 9 tied in 21 seasons, made him known throughout the baseball world. In 1960 he was one of the first four named to the Hall of Fame, baseball section, of the National Association of Intercollegiate Athletics.

In football, Oscar M. (Ossie) Solem, well known to Iowa fans, had his first successful season as a coach at Luther. Franklin C. Cappon, former Michigan star and now basketball coach at Princeton University, likewise got his coaching start at Luther. Hamlet E. (Pete) Peterson, after thirty-six years of teaching and coaching at Luther, is widely known and respected in college circles. His 1926 football team had seven Olsons in the lineup. One newswriter was moved to say, "Football is apparently taking the place of other things done best by the Olsons, such as ski jumping, herring scaling, and lutefisk eating." Another scribe wrote: "An unconfirmed rumor has it that Luther's coach almost lost a game once through penalties for stalling when a quarterback lost his head and began to call fake plays with the signal 'Olson back.' There followed an exodus from the line that resembled Napoleon's famous retreat from Moscow."

Pete, as he is known to all friends, is tremen-

dously proud of his "stalwarts" in football, basketball, and track (he coached in all three areas for many years). He also has a keen eye for the spectacular and picturesque in sport, and he loves to recount the exploits of the men who developed under his direction. His record, like that of Reque, is outstanding.

Faculty-student relations are cordial — the democratic heritage of pioneer days has not been lost. Perhaps at times they seem almost a bit too informal, as when a freshman some years back halted a professor on campus by addressing him by his first name. Or as when a green student still earlier gained entrance to the president's office and, when asked what the president might do for him, blurted out: "You haven't seen my cap, have you?" Once every four years the faculty lets its hair down and puts on "Faculty Follies," a full evening's entertainment which always draws a packed house. Each spring considerable wit, good humor, and oratory are expended in the appeal by the senior class for exemption from final examinations and the reply by the faculty representative crushing such ill-founded hopes.

Luther College has taken long strides in the past decade. It comes to its centennial observance on October 14, 1961, in a new setting, but firmly rooted in its past. The church under whose auspices it was founded did not remove the word Norwegian from its official name until 1946. Then in

1961 it merged with two other synods, one of German and one of Danish origin, to become the American Lutheran Church. The merger of these churches with different national origins is an outgrowth of the gradual Americanization which has been going on for many years on many fronts, and which is destined to continue for some time to come. The three major Lutheran church bodies in the United States today are the United Lutheran Church (destined next year through a merger to be a part of The Lutheran Church in America), the American Lutheran Church, and the Missouri Synod and affiliates. The eventual union of these three is not beyond the realm of possibilities.

Luther College in its new setting is one of nine colleges affiliated with the American Lutheran Church. The other eight are: Augustana, Sioux Falls, South Dakota; Capital University, Columbus, Ohio; Concordia, Moorhead, Minnesota; Dana, Blair, Nebraska; Pacific Lutheran University, Tacoma, Washington; St. Olaf, Northfield, Minnesota; Texas Lutheran, Seguin, Texas; and Wartburg, Waverly, Iowa. A tenth college, California Lutheran, at Thousand Oaks, California, opened this fall.

Throughout its one hundred years Luther College has maintained close ties with the synod with which it is affiliated. Although it can no longer be called the "preacher school" of its pioneer days, many of its ablest graduates still take up theolog-

ical studies and enter the service of the church. Many who do not feel a call to the ministry serve the church in other areas. An even greater number enter a wide variety of callings, taking them into every sector of society. They bear, with rare exceptions, the Luther College stamp of loyalty, democracy, humility — a willingness to let the motto of the college, *Soli Deo Gloria* (To God alone the glory), speak through their lives and actions.

President Ylvisaker, who was in Europe with the Luther College Concert Band in the summer of 1961, pointed the way to the future in a message from Oslo, Norway, in July:

As we round the corner of the first century of service at Luther and head into the second, the efforts of all of us — past and present students, faculty and staff, alumni, parents and friends — have brought our beloved college to a high position of excellence. Yet it must serve only as the point of departure for greater excellence in the century ahead in faculty, students, and facilities, and in service to God and man.