

28/2/20

Athletic Association

Business Manager

Frank D. Murphy Papers, 1969

November 3, 1969

- 1-5 Identification
- 6-15 Excursion trains for football games were hired by the Athletic Association. "We would hire a train and pay \$250 for it." A full train occasionally resulted in a big profit.
- 16-19 When I was in school, after meets "Mr. Huff would take all the proceeds home and count them that night."
- 20-26 Athletic Association. Student officers and managers were elected.
- 27-30 By 1923, when I went with the Athletic Association, it had become a fairly good-sized organization. I was business manager from 1923 to 1927, when Chilly Bowen took over.
- 31-47 Storer was the first ticket sales manager and worked for me. Earlier, it had been a "hit-or-miss" operation. The Athletic Association office was in an apartment in the YMCA building at the corner of John and Wright streets. "All the tickets that weren't sold were thrown in a bath tub." Frank in Commerce manage the whole thing.
- 48-56 No athletic publicity man. Major John L. Griffith, later Big Ten Commissioner, was the first athletic publicity man. He was followed by Mike Tobin.
- 57-60 Athletics boomed in the mid 1920s.
- 61-73 Opening day at the Stadium in 1923--Chicago vs. Illinois. There were "Buckets of rain." The IC ran a spur to the Stadium. Between the spur and the stadium were many shots in the mud.
- 74-95 Robert C. Zuppke "was tough to handle." He would never quit practice at 5:30 pm. He would change travel routings. He gave a pep meeting talk, confused Cicero with Demosthenes and said the students didn't know the difference.
- 95-109 Identification of photographs.
- 110-127 Athletic Association paid for putting up stands. Layout at Illinois Field. The Press Box was on the east side. Cheap, blueprint signs were put up downtown as advertising. The Press box was built after 1910 and was open.
- 128-137 Huff and Zuppke traveled all over the country raising money for the Stadium. They did not raise sufficient funds and the Athletic Association had to borrow \$450,000 from the Continental and Commercial National Bank. The note was countersigned by wealthy alumni.
- 138-143 Mr. Huff gave the signers box seat tickets. Bert Ersker.
- 144-146 I set up this seating plan.
- 147 About 1925, Mike Tobin handled publicity.
- 148-166 Ernest Pyle was Grange's agent. Pyle was involved in the Virginia Theatre and the "Bunion Derby."
- 167-174 1923 athletics
- 175-192 Dr. Kinley gave Mr. Huff an office in the Commerce Building and handled

- University campaigns for funds through former athletes. Their loyalty was more to Mr. Huff than it was to the University. He applied pressure on legislators for university appropriations through contacts with former athletes. He kept files.
- 193-203 Dean Charles M. Thompson.
- 204-221 Mr. Huff put a lot of heat on them in their own bailiwicks through athletes. He knew athletes from 1890 on. He would write athletes for support. He had the strong loyalty of boys who participated in athletics at the University.
- 222-226 Ellen Roseberry, Mr. Huff's secretary, knows a lot about his activities.
- 227-241 George Huff weighed about 200 pounds.
- 242-251 Wore stocking caps. He kicked the ball to the quarterback. They played football every day.
- 252-266 During summers, he was a scout for the Chicago Cubs. He brought in Evers and Lundgren. Jake Stahl was a catcher here, but was moved to first base at Washington. Chicago and Boston.
- 267-275 Jake Stahl's home run rolled under the tree.
- 276-279 Football uniforms came in about 1923. They got lots of equipment.
- 280-298 I was a member of the track team. Little equipment. The University lacked money.
- 299-301 Gill was a great coach. He hardly ever talked.
- 302-327 Zuppke told stories, but philosophized and jumped around. He was a great talker. Strutted around the room. Kibitized on card game.
- 328-359 Zuppke was a great coach. Pennsylvania game. Penn used phoney plays. Zuppke rearranged his backfield and tackled the Penn backfield when the ball was snapped. Penn got one first down, on a penalty. He was a good play maker and strategist.
- 360-372 Flea flicker and flying trapeze.
- 373-395 Legislative visit. Head of the appropriations committee was a baseball fan and spent his time at Illinois Field with Mr. Huff. This was the year that the Men's Old Gymnasium was built. When the legislature asked Pres. James to take some of the "padding" out of his budget, he mentioned the gym. The appropriation chairman told him to leave it in. People would do things for Mr. Huff as a person. He had a fine memory and told stories.
- 396-406 He was absent-minded in some ways. He rode a bicycle until he was in his sixties. The police were always picking up his bicycle and bringing it home to him.
- 407-417 His office was just east of the entrance to Men's Old Gymnasium. He later moved to the west side. He later moved to 104 Huff Gym. His office was next to Lundgren's and mine.
- 418-421 Lundgren was assistant director of athletics. They worked well together, although Zuppke was very irrational and unreasonable. Mr. Huff could handle him.
- 422-435 I bought the first football field cover. DuPont quoted \$6800 and I bought it. A board member objected, but Mr. Huff backed me up.
- 436-440 When the stadium was built, Mr. Huff suggested to Dr. Kinley that we give four

- tickets for every game to each member of the legislature. They were distributed by Doc Janata.
- 441-448 Some sought more. Another representative collected them and sold them at the gate. We had a lot of fun, but they came out of the President's Office
- 449-468 Mrs. Katharine Huff Murphy mentions that the persons who contributed \$100 or \$1,000 to the Stadium building fund got first choice of ticket locations for 10 years.
- 469-477 Everything fell apart in the 1930s. The crowds were large from 1923 to 1929. They began to pick up again in the 1940s. The team's record was also a factor.
- 478-504 After 1914, Mr. Huff lived in a house on the present site of the Presbyterian Church Educational Building. Mrs. Murphy - I was born at 511 West University in Champaign. Mother lived there for a year after his death.
- 505-510 Mr. Murphy - I was away from 1912 to 1922.