RECORDS

of the

GENERAL FACULTY

of the

OHIO STATE UNIVERSITY

from

September, 1901,

to

June, 1902,

with

Appendices and Index.
VI.

October 29, 1901.

The Faculty met in special session at 9 o'clock A.M., on the call of the President, to adopt resolutions on the death of John Larkum Sigrist of the Senior Class, who died of an injury received on the foot-ball field on Saturday afternoon, the 26th inst., in a game with the Western Reserve team.

Present:


Professor Bleile presented the following memorial:

"John Larkum Sigrist was born in 1873 one of a family of eleven children. His training preparatory to college was received in the district schools and in the Oberlin Academy. In the Fall of 1897 he entered the College of Agriculture of the Ohio State University, and had been in college continuously until his death on October 28th, 1901, which resulted from an accident received while playing foot-ball.

As a student he was conscientious and faithful, cheerfully performing any duty assigned him. He would have graduated from the College of Agriculture next June, and had selected as the subject of his graduating thesis "The Influence of Rainfall and Temperature on the Production of Oats and Hay in the United States". He was an active member of the University Y.M.C.A. He enjoyed robust health and delighted in College Athletics.

He was compelled to rely on his own resources to meet his University expenses. Two summers ago he canvassed in
Wisconsin, and last summer in Oregon thereby deriving sufficient funds to defray his college expenses during the past two years.

Personally he possessed a sunny disposition, was even tempered, modest, with a pleasant word for everyone. These qualities made him a favorite with the students, and no one has ever been heard to say an unkind word concerning him. In contests on the athletic field he always preserved a cool head, a good temper, and a kindly manner. He stood for clean, square, upright conduct in the classroom, on the athletic field, and in contact with his fellow students.

The shock of his untimely death has stricken with poignant sorrow the hearts of all who knew him and cast a pall of sadness over the entire University family. We join in expressions of grief over his loss, and tender to his bereaved father and mother, brothers and sisters our heartfelt sympathy."

It was moved and seconded that the memorial be adopted, that it be spread upon the minutes, and that copies be sent to the family, and to the daily press for publication. The motion was carried.

On motion, the following resolution offered by Professor Siebert, was also adopted:

Resolved:

That the Athletic Board be authorized to receive contributions from the Trustees, Faculty, alumni, students and friends of the University for a suitable mural tablet to be placed in the Gymnasium in memory of John L. Sigrist.

On motion, the Faculty adjourned at 9.10 A.M.

W.J. Thompson
President.

W.H. Siebert
Secretary
Only State Athlete To Lose His Life In Line of Sport

When the name of John Segrist is mentioned among old friends, each remembers the real man who played a clean game for the love of the sport.

John Segrist, star center rush on the 1921 Ohio State eleven, is a name that will be perpetuated from generation to generation of Ohio State alumni, students and friends.

Segrist was injured in the game with Western Reserve that year and later died. He's the only man on record to pay the supreme sacrifice.

Source and Date Unknown
HISTORY OF
THE OHIO STATE UNIVERSITY

EDITED BY THOMAS C. MENDENHALL

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The article attached to this title page can also be found in Pollard's, Ohio State Athletics: 1879-1959.
pleted. The University year had opened with unusual activity in athletics, and especially in football. The Board of Trustees at its meeting the preceding year, had appropriated $1,000 for the erection of bleachers in the athletic field, and the Athletic Board had borrowed money on their personal credit to provide a tier of boxes as an addition to the grandstand. These improvements were completed and an ambitious schedule of football games had been arranged. It was expected to be a banner year in athletics, and especially in football.

On Saturday, October 26, 1901, there was a game of football on the State University field between the teams of Western Reserve and Ohio State Universities. It was a fiercely contested game, and was won by Ohio State, but only by a score of 6 to 5. John Larkum Sigrist, one of the Ohio State team, was hurt in a hard scrimmage and was carried off the field. Later he was taken to Grant Hospital and it was found that his neck was dislocated and that he was partially paralyzed. He said that he had recklessly tried to buck the line with his head. There was talk of an operation to relieve him, and for a time there was hope of his recovery. Such hope, however, was short lived. He died on the next Monday at 1:30 p.m. Sigrist was a favorite student and his death shocked and saddened the University circle, and the entire community. Among athletic circles there was almost universal dismay. Professor Bownocker and another member of the Athletic Board at once had an interview with the President, and it was decided to call off a game with the Ohio Wesleyan University which was scheduled for the following Saturday. In the evening the President met with the Athletic Board and arrangements were made for the funeral. Next morning the body was escorted to the University Chapel by a detachment of cadets. After short and impressive services, the body of the dead athlete was escorted to the Union Station by the entire student body whence it was taken for burial to his home at Congress, Ohio. On the evening of November 1, memorial services in honor of Sigrist were held in the chapel and were largely attended. Some of the speakers did not forbear attacking the
game of football, and denouncing the sport as inhuman and brutal and declaiming against it. One of the speakers, however, defended the game and was authorized to state on authority of Sigrist's brother, Charles F., who was a fellow student, that it was his wish that the game go on. The attitude of Charles F. Sigrist had much to do with the decision of the Athletic Board to go on with the schedule. Two of Sigrist's brothers were afterwards members of the football team and continued their interest in the sport. The general sorrow over Sigrist's death caused a revulsion of feeling in regard to athletics, and especially against the game of football. Some were in favor of abandoning the games for the season, while others were in favor of prohibiting the game altogether. The Athletic Board were in a trying position; they had gone to considerable expense in preparing for and advertising the games yet to take place, but did not wish to offend those who were so shocked by the death of Sigrist by going on with them. They decided to submit the matter to a vote of the members of the Athletic Association and the football players at a meeting uninfluenced by the Athletic Board. A meeting was held at the Armory, the members of the Athletic Board being absent, and the football men and members of the Athletic Association voted to go on with the programme. Some of the members of the faculty were very pronounced against going on with the games, and at a faculty meeting held on Monday, November 4, Professor N. W. Lord offered a resolution canceling the schedule, which was warmly discussed, but was finally defeated by a vote of 18 to 8. After this action the Athletic Board continued preparations for the game with the University of Michigan which was scheduled to take place November 9, and the game was played on that day. The score was 21 to 0 in favor of Michigan, but, under the circumstances, was considered almost a victory. It was encouraging to those who had taken the responsibility of continuing the schedule that Governor Nash attended the game and was conspicuous in one of the boxes.
WILLIAM OXLEY THOMPSON

"Evangel of Education"

by

JAMES E. POLLARD

THE OHIO STATE UNIVERSITY
COLUMBUS, OHIO
1955
He and Mrs. Thompson entertained considerably at necessary official functions and for the great and near great who came to Columbus or to the campus. There was universal testimony to the graciousness of the president's lady whether for the great or the small. She had an unusual facility for remembering the names of newcomers whom she immediately made to feel at home on the campus. But the president himself had no capacity for ordinary small talk with company.

When he was in Columbus he usually attended Ohio State's home football games. But the death in 1901 of John Segrist, who died from a broken neck sustained in a varsity game on Ohio Field, was said to have destroyed Dr. Thompson's enjoyment of the games. He officiated at the dead youth's funeral which was held in the campus chapel.

In physical appearance Dr. Thompson was tall, rugged, muscular but on the homely side. His voice had none of the niceties affected by the trained speaker. His delivery was rapid and forceful in his sermons and addresses, yet he was neither stiff nor given to the stilted phrase. As one of his associates put it, "He depended upon what he said, not his voice." In the field of music he liked the good old Presbyterian hymns and it was said that his taste did not rise much above that level.

In his dealings with members of the Ohio State faculty, Dr. Thompson was most patient, tolerant and understanding and in any controversy he was invariably on their side. There were a few on the teaching staff, however, who had some doubts whether, as one of them put it, "he was always a good judge of the scholarly qualities of men, but he always took advice." Yet this same man, ironically, was the beneficiary of the president's generosity in respect to some scholarly writing he was trying to complete, and himself testified that, while Dr. Thompson was "not himself a great scholar, he always encouraged men to engage in productive work."

"I went in to see him one day shortly before Christmas," he said, "and after I had discussed my business he said, 'Well, how are you getting on?' I said, 'Well, I am in a pickle. I have been