

Princeton, One of Nation's Oldest, High Academically

By BILL AIKENS
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Several miles from the busy main line of the railroad connecting New York and Philadelphia and about an hour's train ride from either city is the quiet residential town of Princeton, New Jersey, home of Princeton University. Founded in 1746 as the College of New Jersey by several ministers and a handful of students, the original purpose of the college was to educate, in the liberal arts and humanities, young men in preparation for the ministry or private life.

Today, as a university, Princeton boasts of an undergraduate enrollment of 2,800 men with 400 full time faculty members, one for every seven students. The graduate school enrollment raises the total number of students by 500 to around 3,300. In spite of the time which has passed and the changes which have occurred since Princeton was founded, the school's educational philosophy is still based on a firm belief in liberal and humanistic education. Today the University offers two degrees on the undergraduate level—the A.B. or Bachelor of Arts and the B.S.E. or Bachelor of Science in Engineering.

There exists in the conception of most people a school for sons of wealthy families. It is true that the residential nature of the school attracts students, even if their homes are in the town of Princeton, must live on the campus) and the expenses are higher than those of a university with extremely broad economic and geographical distribution. At one time 80% or more of the students came from private schools, most of these from a small group of Eastern Prep schools. Today the figure is close to a 50-50 division between private and public schools.

Several factors are responsible for this change. Accumulation of scholarship funds during the war, and the G. I. Bill made it possible for Princeton to adopt a very liberal policy of student aid. A boy's application was kept separate from his application for aid, and if he was accepted, his budget was balanced through a job or scholarship of his. This policy has attracted boys to Princeton from all over the country. The competition for admission to the "freshman class has stayed at a high level since the war. For every available place in the country there are also been an important factor in the broadened geographical representation.

INDEPENDENT WORK is an important feature of a Princeton education. In the last two years four courses are required, and the fifth course is replaced, for all A.B.'s, by a program of independent study. In the junior year seven or eight papers of 5,000 to 10,000 words may be assigned, while every senior candidate for the A.B. degree must submit a thesis from 20,000 to 30,000 words. Each year at least one thesis is usually published by some nationally known publishing house. This year an 80,000 word novel submitted by an English major was accepted by Random House. The emphasis on independent work is reflected in the undergraduate program near deadline-time brief questions—"How many thou hast thou?" and by excessive burning of the midnight oil. In the spring, since the deadline dates vary for different departments, it is usually easy to spot those who just turned in the last chapter.

EXTRA-CURRICULAR activities of a non-social nature are available to all. One rather unusual activity is the Triangle show—the Princeton musical comedy. This show, written and produced by

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