FRESHMAN EXPERIENCE

Past & Present
From the first group of freshmen in 1871 to the present, the arrival of new students is Northern’s oldest tradition.
1890’S
1920’S
1970's
Today
“On nearing the town that Saturday Forenoon of August, 1871, just outside the corporation, almost out in the country, I first saw the imposing, awe-inspiring building destined to play so great a part in the events of ensuing years...”

Mollie Schoonover, *University Herald*, 1896
CAMPUS AND BUILDINGS OF THE OHIO NORMAL UNIVERSITY
Normal School Building – Present Location of Lehr Mem.
“.... sitting among bed-ticks, cooking utensils, and what not as her patient father drove his heavily loaded wagon up South Main Street.”

Mollie Schoonover, *University Herald*, 1896
Today – computers, no bed ticks and cooking utensils
Pennsylvania Railroad

Although many early students lived close enough to Ada to travel by wagon or carriage, a growing number came to rely on the railroad.
Depot today
New students faced strong recruiting competition from Northern’s three literary societies each of which gathered at the depot to sign up incoming students before the others.
Freshmen were urged to travel thru downtown Ada to campus
South Main St. Near Depot
S. Main St. just north of campus
Once on campus, students met with Pres. Henry Solomon Lehr who arranged for housing with local landladies.
Until 1912, these boarding houses might be co-ed
Until 1949 Northern housed female students in several houses purchased as Dorms. Turner, in 1930, was the first of these.
The interior of Turner Hall was posh, but the house had one drawback....
COMBUSTABILITY – Destroyed by fire in Feb. 1949 with no injuries
Clark Hall, the first purpose-built dorm, opened in late 1949
Yes, I need every one.

Issues with moving in
Did they really rent my room?
Early “Good News Bears”
No “Good News Bears” in sight? There’s always Mom
It will all fit (I hope).
What to Study?

- Normal school – teacher training (1871)
- Engineering established 1882
- Pharmacy established 1884
- Law established 1885
Military Department – 1882 - 1922
Artillery practice on campus – between Normal and Pharmacy buildings
After 1908, the department conducted week-long camps near campus.
Still guarding campus
Between 1912 and 1925, Northern had a College of Agriculture
ONU’s “aggies” hard at work
When the Ag. College closed, Northern kept the 90 acre farm which is roughly where the Tundra is today. After WWII – site of chapel
Early students also played sports – baseball club of 1888
Football team of 1897. Lehr and many early faculty members were skeptical about athletics. Varsity athletics emerged after 1900.
Early 1950’s – West Campus as a Farm
Former Freshman Customs

Up through the 1970’s, freshman students were required to wear a distinctive cap through Homecoming and to recite various bits of campus trivia when requested by upperclassmen.
After WWII, Northern used war-surplus trailers to deal with the many veterans on campus under the GI Bill.
Husbands returning from Indian Lake
Why don’t you do something to help me?!
BEST WISHES ON YOUR START AT NORTHERN