

LEADERSHIP AND CONCEPTION OF BUILDING AND FINANCING
THE STADIUM AT THE UNIVERSITY OF KANSAS

September 15, 1919 Forrest C. Allen was elected Manager of Athletics at the University of Kansas with no coaching duties.

He had long had a desire to build a Tommy Johnson Memorial Stadium in memory of Kansas' greatest athlete who died two years from the date he was injured in a football game in Kansas City, Missouri between the Missouri Tigers and the Kansas Jayhawkers at Old Association Park.

LaForce Bailey, a graduate of the University of Illinois, who came to the University of Kansas in the Department of Architecture and Design, greatly aided Allen in his work and enthusiasm of projecting a campaign to interest the citizens of the state in building a great Memorial Stadium.

Allen and Bailey raised \$600.00 by public subscription to print a prospectus of the future stadium. Sketches and drawings together with opinions of the prominent men of the state were printed and distributed to enable the Jayhawker followers to envision the possibility of a great stadium on Mt. Oread.

The site of a new stadium on old McCook Field was frowned upon severely by those in power at the university. As the formal entrance of the university was to be north of the Administration Building the opponents of the stadium location, where it is now located, were vigorous in their stand that the stadium be located south of the hill where the students' intramural field is now located.

Borings were made and it was found that it would take \$60,000 to drain the hills adjacent to location properly so that a durable stadium could be built there.

By working with the members of the Board of Administration, composed at that time of Mr. Harve Penny of Lawrence, deceased, Mr. Bert Berrier of Eureka and Mr. Wilbur N. Mason, Ex-president of Baker University, Baldwin, Kansas, Director Allen obtained the consent of these men to place the stadium at its present location.

Old McCook Field ran east and west and large willow trees obscured the university from the spectators at McCook. An ugly, winding slough wended its way from Potter's Lake down past the old McCook Field to Illinois Street. It was Allen's contention that a beautiful horseshoe stadium nestling in the valley there with the open end looking into nature's giant horseshoe to the south where the university buildings are arranged in a concentric arc would hook up definitely the University of Kansas with her athletic patrons.