

From *Student Life*, May 2, 1919:

Winifred Casey Spear Winner in Dandelion Day Contest

FEROCIOUS HALF HOUR'S BATTLING STAGED BY FRESHMEN IN EFFORT TO SELECT MOST FAVORED WOMAN IN THE FIRST YEAR CLASS.

After a thirty-five minute ferocious fracas, which would have made the most murderous melee of the Marines appear polite, shamed the most chaotic contest for football supremacy, belittled the most turbulent tournament of the bold knights of old, and minimized the most atrocious attacks of the Kaiser's select Prussian guards, Miss Winifred Casey Spear was crowned on Wednesday, April 23, Dandelion Queen for 1919. Miss Mildred Petring, who was one of the four contenders for Hatchet popularity contest honors, the only other candidate, was defeated by a vote of 2720 to 2180. About 150 Freshmen participated in the dandelion plucking struggle.

Miss Spear's faction, the leaders of which were for the most part football men, had organized several days before and formulated plans for their drive, while the campaign of the opposing party appeared to be unpremeditated. A few minutes before the start of the fight, which was set as 12:30 o'clock, the first group gathered on the north side of the Quadrangle before the voting booth shouting their battlecry of "A. T. H.," standing, as they claimed, for "Anti-tea Hounds," and completed their schemes. The opponents gathered in small groups elsewhere. At the zero hour "Toddy" Kamp, president of Student Council, mounted the vote box and cried out the rules of the competition—each dandelion turned in was to be accompanied by its root, and the votes were to be counted by the handful, each bunch counting for ten, and they were to be cast in a respectful manner with due veneration to the judges.

Sliced Hands No Hindrance

With a shouted announcement, the Freshmen set industriously to work with knives, trowels, drawing compasses, and finger nails on various parts of the quadrangle. For a moment all was quiet as the turf was dissected and vivisected. Grass and weeds flew indiscriminately into gunny sacks. One Freshman quietly muttered "damn," as he carelessly sliced his finger.

Then from the south arose the familiar "A.T.H.! A.T.H.!" and a hurtling phalanx of students flew in massed formation across the Quad, one of their number carrying the vital votes in a tightly clutched sack—onward, hurling a few desultory opponents to the side, onward to the booth, where, with a mighty shout of "Spear, yea—Spear," the votes were thrust into the hands of Max Muench, who chalked down the name followed by the numbers 250. The men rushed back to their hunting grounds.

Frosh Eleven to Rescue

The forces had never been evenly matched, and several Petring adherents, seeing the marvelous system of the enemy, turned traitors and deserted to the other side. The A.T.H.'s increased to 100, and then to 125, but the few ardent Petring voters only redoubled their efforts and handful after handful of dandelions were cast until the 250 votes were almost equaled.

Gil Whitley, who appeared to be field manager for Miss Spear, then called on his resources. Many Freshmen he recalled from their digging activities to form interference against the Petring faction. Lippert, Sauls, Siehert, Krache, Potthoff, all football men, formed a line before the stand and a group of racing enemies, who had mimicked the system of the A.T.H.'s, were set upon. The sack of votes was concealed beneath a struggling mass of students, and arms, legs and heads were hopelessly entangled, while individuals were turning in votes in handfuls for both candidates, when Krache, spotting the "plum" in the very center of the mass, leaped over the top of the fighters and head first dived for the bag. He got it, passed it to his compatriots, and the votes were diverted to the Spear side.

Seething, Writhing Mass

Time after time, sacks of dandelions were rushed to the booth in a manner which would do credit to the best football team in the country. Time after time, the carrier of the sack was tackled and thrown, only to pass the precious flowers to someone, sometimes friend, sometimes foe. Time after time, Freshmen, carrying dandelions hidden in pockets or shirt, sauntered indifferently to the booth, only to be discovered in time to become the center of a seething, writhing, fighting mob. Time after time the holder of the sack was rushed, only to be found that the sack was an empty decoy, while the flower carriers had passed unmolested. Time after time, hands, clutching for the "melon," closed upon flying shirt tails and party [sic] disrobed the victim. Fists, reaching for votes, collided "accidentally" with the face of an opponent. Votes were literally cast at the booth.

Petring Men Fight Hard

One o'clock eventually arrived. The votes stood 2600 for Miss Spear and 2140 for Miss Petring. The Petring men were occupied at some distant point of the Quad desperately uprooting the ground. A Spear leader glanced at the board and saw that his candidate led by a safe margin with only five more minutes to fight. He called in the men and formed them before the booth in "company front." The front rank locked arms and the rear rank pressed close to them. Only about 25 of the Petring adherents remained and they continued to busy themselves in plucking the golden votes regardless of the Gibraltar they would have to pass before casting the fruit of their labors. Altogether they arose, each man carrying as many dandelions as he could, and at a signal ran, head downward at the impeding line. Shouting, grabbing, fighting, blood--,

The orgy closed with the vote 2720 to 2180.