

When I went to Illinois in the fall of 1908, the university had this great, outstanding song, "Illinois Loyalty". There also was a great band under Austin Harding. Of all things! They marched in formation and swung into a block "I" in front of the stands between the halves to play that grand old stand-up song. And they played it so that it brought lumps in a thousand throats. Austin Harding was the first to train a marching band, and the first to train a singing band.

Hill and I started out to write a musical comedy to enter in the first contest of that sort held on our campus. Hill, of Indianapolis, was inspired by the knowledge that Purdue, with her George Ade, George Ade Davis, John McCutcheon and other had produced a masterpiece. We were enthused, but we never finished the job. We did manage to place one song "Tommy Arkle Clark", in the book, but out of the dozen or so songs that we had worked up, we salvaged five or six and got them down on paper. They included "Oskee-Wow-Wow", "Hail to the Orange", "Cheer Illini", and the Sig Alph "Violets". At that time we had what we admitted was a pretty good quartet at the SAE house. Reading from tenor to bass, it ran: Dan Patch, Dung Hill, Hod Green and Frank Ward. With total lack of support of the part of our brethren, we entered ourselves in what was then known as the post-exam Jubilee contest. We were permitted to present two numbers and they were "Oskee-Wow-Wow" and "Hail to the Orange". That was their first public appearance. I don't recall that we won any prize.

But the next week I induced Charlie Graham, who was a partner in the Co-Op store, to come to our house for what, today, might be called, charitably, an audition. He wasn't too interested. He said he didn't know much about music and knew nothing at all about publishing. But he added that he had been betting on the Illini teams from time to time and that perhaps this would not be any greater speculation than he was used to. So he offered us our choice: \$100 cash or one half the gross receipts from the sale of the song. Obviously, being two 20-year-old kids, in the usual state of finances, we took the cash. I wonder how many thousand copies that Oskee-Wow-Wow song sold before the 28-year copyright expired and the ownership returned to me and to Harold's estate.

We could not interest Charlie, in "Hail to the Orange". He said it sounded all right but was too short. So we tried to give it to him and got him to print it on the inside cover of "Oskee-Wow-Wow", but he said the plate would cost \$15 extra and it wasn't worth it. So we changed the words to "Hail to the Purple, Hail to the Gold"

Hill was graduated in 1911 and went to work as an architectural engineer in Salt Lake City. So in the fall of that year while still a student, I sent him the words and a suggested melody for "Cheer Illini". Hill sent back what I thought was a wonderful arrangement. Charlie Graham bought this one too, but for \$200. I don't believe he did as well on that one as he did on "Oskee-Wow-Wow". My own opinion is that "Cheer Illini" is still one of the better marching songs played at Illinois. One interesting thing: Harold worked out a remarkable continuity of descending chords in the chorus of "Cheer Illini", where the words go, "Fight, fight, for its victory or die". Several years later, the same outstanding series of chords appeared in "Over There", where the words go, "And we won't come back till it's over over there". Just a coincidence.