Freshmen Take Final Bow
To Time-Honored Tradition

By MIMI MUNSON

Last Saturday night saw, among other things, the end of another Freshman class's bowing low to Sammy, Rice's graven image of the football field. A custom which has become time-honored, bowing to Sammy while our gallant team plays, apparently had obscure beginnings. J. T. McCants, retired Bursar of the University, claims that it "simply appeared to the distress of some of the administration," and was in existence as far back as he can remember, which is pretty far.

AROUND 1940, says Mr. Hud-

speth, Rice Alumnus and present lecturer in political science, owl-bowing was "voluntary by force" as part of a hazing many times more rigorous than today's version.

As the college system came into existence, the individual men's colleges began to regulate this expression of loyalty and faith as part of their Freshman Orientation.

HOWEVER, IN the fall of 1957, the colleges were denied this supervision, and the fresh-

men continued to bow on their own. In 1961, the tradition broke down, and Sammy received no sacrifices of strained backs and stained knees.

This fall saw the re-instate-

ment of owl-bowing as part of the Freshmen programs of Wiess, Hanszen, and Baker, at least.

In case anyone looked in vain for Will Rice beanies surrounding the mascot, a reminder of that college's position on such participating might be instruc-

tive: "encouragement, but de-

finitely without coercion."

IF WILL RICE men do not have dates, they are encouraged to bow to Sammy in the same way that other freshmen are expected to.

A loyal Hanszenite, speaking up in favor of obligatory owl-

bowing, said, "To say, 'You are obliged to do this,' is simply another way of saying, 'Every-

one in this college is going to stand together on this issue.'

"After all, the majority rules, and if the majority is for owl-

bowing, or for anything else the minority should be willing to choose compliance over anarchy."

DEFINITELY backing his president's stand, a Will Rice freshman said, "Some things matter more than others. Any-

one who wants to desert his date to bow to an inanimate object is welcome to. I do not feel that anyone should be forced into

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what is for some of us ungentlemanly conduct."

In spite of differing opinions on the subject, owl-bowling seems well-established as part of the Rice football season, and will probably continue, with or without the dissenters.