

60 Years of Quiet at Kent State Are Shattered in Era of Protest

By ANDREW H. MALCOLM

Political demonstrations, such as the one that resulted in the deaths of four students yesterday, are a relatively new phenomenon on Kent State University's attractive 790-acre campus.

On the tree-lined grounds—on Main Street in Kent, Ohio, about 10 miles northeast of Akron—such protests gained strength only in the late 1960's. Students began denouncing the Vietnam war, police recruiting and, more recently, the Air Force and Army units of the Reserve Officers Training Corps.

Previously, such large student gatherings were confined to Memorial Stadium—where crowds watched the school's Golden Flashes lose most of their football games—and to The Cove, JB's and other nearby bars that served as student haunts, particularly on Friday nights.

Until recently the school's most serious demonstration was a 1958 panty raid on two women's dormitories the last day of the school year. The Administration promptly dismissed 29 students who were involved.

Since then, except for some rowdy Friday nights, the students, mostly middle class and about 85 per cent of them from Ohio, maintained peace with local residents and, in fact, had a distinct reputation for apathy.

Just last week, for instance, an all-university dance was canceled when only seven tickets

were sold. And until Thursday night, when President Nixon announced the use of American troops in Cambodia, antiwar rallies had been drawing only 200 or 300 students.

The school was founded in 1910 as Kent Normal. In 1914 it became Kent State Normal College and in 1935, after some rough Depression years, became Kent State University.

Since World War II enrollment has climbed steadily and the administration has placed great emphasis on long-range building programs. In addition to the 21,000-student Kent campus, the school serves 8,000 students at nine branch campuses in northeastern Ohio.

The town of Kent, like other area villages, was founded in 1807 by New England settlers. Once a rural farming town, Kent (population 29,000) has attracted some manufacturers of air compressors, electric motors, automotive parts and locks.

The school employs several hundred townspeople, including 905 full-time faculty members. Its diverse activities include the operation of an airport and an 18-hole golf course.

As part of the eight-member state university system, the school gets state financing and is under the jurisdiction of a board of nine trustees appointed by the Governor and confirmed by the State Senate. Tuition is \$642 a year.