



A Retrospective on President Joseph A. Brandt

THE TEST OF TIME

By GEORGE LYNN CROSS

*Photographs from Western History Collections
University of Oklahoma Library*

On the 40th anniversary of his resignation, his successor takes stock of the legacy which the University's controversial sixth president left his alma mater.

While on a trip to southern California last spring, my wife Cleo and I were able to do what we had wanted to do for a long time — visit Joe and Sallye Brandt, who had retired to a home in Laguna Hills, south of Los Angeles. Brandt, as many readers will recall, started the *Sooner Magazine*, established the University Press and, after a three-year absence, returned to serve as OU's sixth president from 1941 through 1943.

The latter were turbulent years at OU, made so by events following Pearl Harbor and Brandt's whirlwind methods of accomplishing his administrative objectives. Although the Brandt presidential tenure commonly was regarded in Oklahoma as being markedly controversial, I always had thought that his critics tended to overlook the truly significant contributions that he made to the University during his short stay here.

I felt competent to pass judgment on his performance, since I had served as acting dean of the Graduate College and acting director of the Research Institute during his administration. When I succeeded him as OU's seventh president, I was reminded constantly of the many

changes he had made that made my job easier. As the years passed, my respect for him changed to admiration. After our recent visit with the Brandts, it seemed to me that a re-evaluation of the man's overall contributions to the University of Oklahoma might be in order. Hence the following account.

Brandt was a product of the University of Oklahoma, a member of the class of 1921 with a major in journalism. After graduation he pursued his profession with marked success and, within a few years, was serving as city editor of the *Tulsa Tribune*.

During the spring of 1928, Brandt met William Bennett Bizzell, president of the University of Oklahoma, while the two were in a Tulsa elevator. That chance meeting would have a far-reaching impact on the future development of the University.

Earlier, in his inaugural address in the autumn of 1925, Bizzell had served notice that he intended to develop a university press at OU, but he had taken no action to bring this about. Apparently he saw in Brandt an individual with the potential to achieve what he had in mind. In any event, he later invited Brandt to come to Norman and assume management

of the University's "print shop."

In addition to the routine printing of university bulletins, Brandt would be expected to develop a university magazine designed to keep alumni and others informed of what was going on at the University. In this connection, he would work with Frank Cleckler, newly appointed director of the Alumni Association. But his ultimate responsibility would be to establish a university press which would publish scholarly books that were not financially attractive to commercial publishers. Brandt accepted Bizzell's offer, and with his wife, the former Sallye Little, he arrived in Norman in July 1928.

Swift moving and creative, Brandt lost no time in getting under way with his new responsibilities. His first project was the alumni publication, which with the concurrence of Cleckler and Bizzell, he named the *Sooner Magazine*.

Housed in the old printing plant building, with a part-time secretary, Brandt searched through state newspapers, clipping items concerning activities of OU alumni, especially alumni notables of whom he might do profiles.

The first issue of the *Sooner*

“Ideas flew from him like sparks from a fast-spinning emery wheel. He was seen to best advantage . . . at a typewriter, which he hammered furiously, like a city editor two minutes before deadline.”



As director of the OU Press, Brandt, right, inspects a newly arrived press with two members of his staff, P. J. Conkwright, left, and Harold Weinert.

Magazine, for which he wrote all the copy except by-lined articles, was published in September 1928. Among the former students he profiled were Huey Long, of Louisiana political fame, and Shelley Tracy, who years later, after Brandt had become president of the University, would be involved with the creation of the University of Oklahoma Foundation.

With the magazine successfully launched, Brandt turned his attention to the primary reason he had accepted Bizzell's invitation to come to the University — the publication of a book which would establish the University Press. His ambition, announced privately to Savoie Lottinville, who later would be employed by the press, was to bring out the first book during the spring of 1929. This prospect somewhat startled Bizzell, who was aware that publishing a book took money, and money was not in plentiful supply. Bizzell later confessed to Brandt that he had not expected such rapid progress — and had hoped that a publishing program might be developed over a 10-year period.

Brandt did not succeed in publishing his first book in 1929, but he missed his goal by only a slight margin. The first University Press book appeared in January 1930 — *Folk*

Say by Benjamin Albert Botkin of the department of English. The book was the first of a four-volume set which Botkin ultimately would edit, making him America's most distinguished folklorist.

Brandt laid careful plans for future publishing activities. University Press books would feature primarily the history of the Southwest — an analysis of the agricultural, commercial, and industrial civilization that was developing in this part of the country through the interaction of the original Indian inhabitants, the early Spanish explorers and the white settlers who came later. A great store of rich materials were available for future researchers and writers.

Available also were competent authors from whom the persuasive Brandt was able to extract manuscripts. One of these was Edward Everett Dale, professor of history, who produced *The Range Cattle Industry*, published by the press later in 1930. This significant treatise on the Southwest's earliest industry established the scholarly nature of the press.

Another who would become a very successful author was John Joseph Matthews of Pawhuska, a part-blood Osage, whom Brandt had known much earlier when the pair were stu-

dents at Oxford. Matthew's first manuscript, *Wah'Kon'Tah: The Osage and the White Man's Road*, was published by the press in the spring of 1932 and became a Book-of-the-Month Club selection in November of that year. It was the first book published by a university press to be chosen by a major book club, a distinction which it held for at least the next 10 years. Its quick sale of 50,000 copies immediately placed the publishing division of the University in the national spotlight.

Still another able author was Paul B. Sears, professor of botany, whose *Deserts on the March*, published in 1935, won wide acclaim throughout the country and further enhanced the reputation of the University's fledgling publishing project.

These works and others, published at an accelerating rate, brought the total number of titles on the press list to 85 during the 10 years of Brandt's directorship — an amazing accomplishment.

As a member of the faculty at the time, I often wondered how Brandt was able to compile such a record of publication. I once raised the question with Savoie Lottinville, who was Brandt's assistant editor and business manager from 1933 to 1938, and who succeeded him as director on

July 1, 1938. Lottinville characterized him as follows:

"Brandt always had remarkable ability to get things done. Nothing seemed to fall outside his field of interest. As an undergraduate, between 1917 and 1921, he organized the University's first Young Republicans Club, established a local fraternity along literary lines, which later became a chapter of Delta Tau Delta, drilled with the ROTC during the war years, edited the *Oklahoma Daily*, gained membership in Phi Beta Kappa, and won a Rhodes scholarship.

"At Oxford, he took three degrees and made a study of the political and constitutional history of modern Spain from which he later developed the book, *Toward the New Spain*, published in 1932 by the University of Chicago Press.

"He was always ceaselessly active. Ideas flew from him like sparks from a fast-spinning emery wheel. He was seen to best advantage as he worked at a typewriter, which he hammered furiously, like a city editor two minutes before deadline. He was inseparable from his pipes, of which he had several dozen."

In explaining how Brandt was able to recruit authors who would produce 85 titles over a 10-year period, Lottinville stated:

"Brandt's success emerged from a peculiar blend of wide interests, a creative mind, and the wide-ranging humanistic education which he experienced at Oxford. He had a contagious enthusiasm which had a way of projecting people into work they had never before considered, not infrequently raising them above their usual capabilities.

"He was interested in all kinds of problems, which he solved in clouds of pipe smoke. It is curious but true that he was never able to recognize an obstacle—which is another way of saying that he was an idealist. He was able to transmit these characteristics to others."

Lottinville explained Brandt's ability to publish books of such exceptional quality as follows:

"Publishers are not simply born; they have to acquire certain almost elusive skills. In scholarly publishing particularly, the ability of a publisher



*Brandt's publishing success stemmed from his ability to recruit authors such as Botanist Paul Sears, whose *Desert on the March* is an OU Press classic.*

to apply copy-editing techniques to any given work that needs it is of the essence. In fact, I say that no one can be a publisher, in the real sense of the word, who doesn't know how to edit well. Brandt was a fine copy editor, one who discerned very early that the man or woman with the blue pencil must not impose his or her style upon the authors. This gift was something new in 1928 in an Oklahoma setting — any setting, for that matter."

It was inevitable, of course, that such conspicuous success should attract the attention of a more prestigious university — in Brandt's case, Princeton. Princeton offered him the directorship of its press, and he accepted the appointment effective July 1, 1938. Lottinville succeeded him at Oklahoma and continued the quality publishing that his predecessor had established.

Brandt was at Princeton for only three years before he was called back to the presidency of his alma mater. But they were three very important years, a period when he would have an opportunity to observe a great university in action and compare its operations with what he had observed at the University of Oklahoma from 1928 until 1938. Doubtless during his three years at Princeton, he developed many of the ideas that he



Joseph Blickensderfer was a very surprised English professor in January 1942 to learn that the regents had approved a Brandt plan for University College, and without any consultation, he had been appointed its dean.



The Brandts had just three years to get comfortable at Princeton before they were summoned home to occupy the OU President's house on Boyd Street.

brought with him when he returned to Oklahoma.

President Bizzell, who had reached the age of 64, announced early in 1940 that he would end his 15-year presidency by retiring at the end of the 1940-41 school year. Almost immediately, the regents launched a search for Bizzell's successor, and there were early rumors that some members of the board considered Brandt a likely prospect for the position. The rumors were confirmed on November 4, 1940, when the president of the board announced that Brandt had been offered the presidency at an annual salary of \$10,000.

The announcement brought a collective sigh of relief from the members of the OU faculty, who had been greatly concerned that the right person be chosen to follow the scholarly Bizzell. Known to be energetic, imaginative, and innovative, Brandt appeared to be an ideal choice.

There was a bit of concern, however, when he did not immediately announce acceptance of the offer. Apparently he pondered the situation for several days, because notice of his acceptance did not appear in the newspapers until the middle of the month.

Brandt's appointment was effective August 1, but he kept the campus in some suspense by failing to arrive for several days following that date. When he finally appeared, in mid-August, he began what, in the long run, would be the most significant administration supplied by any president from the beginning to the present. I say this because, in my opinion, he abruptly changed the course of the institution — headed it toward *university* status.

Despite the best efforts of President Bizzell, probably OU's most scholarly president, and his predecessors, the institution lacked most of the characteristics of a true university.

Academic freedom had not been adopted as a policy at the University of Oklahoma. Although the word "tenure" appeared in connection with the appointment of certain members of the faculty, no one knew exactly what the word meant.

There was little, if any, participation of the faculty in the formulation of university policy except, of course, in the development of curricula. Governance of the institution was vested in a hierarchy consisting of a president, deans, directors and

heads of departments, all of whom had authority to make decisions without consulting the faculty. Important decisions were made by a council of deans — actually by a few very powerful deans who were able to dominate the rest and, to a large extent, control the president. This managerial system, as well as the absence of academic freedom and tenure, was more characteristic of a four-year college than a university. Joe Brandt would take the first steps to change all of this.

Brandt made his first major contribution toward establishment of academic freedom and tenure six days before his appointment to the presidency became effective. Precipitating the action was a long distance call from Maurice Halperin, an assistant professor of Spanish at the University, reporting that he had been dismissed from the faculty without being told why. Halperin wanted Brandt to do something about it.

Brandt immediately called Lloyd Noble, then president of the board of regents. Noble corroborated Halperin's report; there had indeed been a recommendation that Halperin be fired, but no reasons had accompanied the recommendation. Brandt thereupon told Noble that he shortly would receive a telegram saying that the University did not have a president.

Faced with this crisis, Noble ar-

“Despite the best efforts of President Bizzell . . . the institution lacked most of the characteristics of a true university.”

ranged for a special meeting of the board to be held in Chicago to discuss the situation with Brandt. Following a day of what Brandt described as “wrangling,” a compromise was reached. Halperin would be rehired, without prejudice, for one year.

Later, Brandt learned that a state senate committee which investigated the University for communism in



The huge horseshoe-shaped desk which President Brandt had built for his office bore a striking resemblance to the city desk he once occupied at the Tulsa Tribune. The regents presented the desk to him when he left the presidency.

1941, had recommended Halperin's dismissal. Halperin had been suspected of having leftist tendencies, and some banker revealed that the professor had held a Soviet gold bond which he sold through the bank at the time the Hitler-Stalin alliance was announced. Brandt regarded this as scant evidence to be used in a firing situation. There had been no allegation that Halperin had tried to indoctrinate his students with communistic ideas, and Brandt considered the Soviet bond, which paid seven percent interest, to be a good investment — or so he was quoted as saying in the *Sooner Magazine* of September 1965. At Brandt's first meeting with his board after arriving in Norman, a request from Halperin for a one-year leave of absence at half pay was recommended and approved — \$1,165.50 for fiscal year 1941-42.

Brandt accordingly was the first president of the University of Oklahoma to face squarely the issue of proper procedures in dismissing members of the faculty. While adoption by the board of the principles of the American Association of University Professors (1940 statement) would not be forthcoming until sev-

eral years later, after Brandt's departure, he had forced the regents to take a positive step in the right direction six days before the effective date of his appointment. It was 1947, in the fourth year of my presidency, before I was able to persuade the board to take the remaining step.

While the adoption of a firm policy concerning academic freedom and tenure at the University of Oklahoma was, in my opinion, a desirable development, admittedly the subject has been a source of controversy in recent years — both within the academic profession and without. Perhaps some readers of this account may question why those in the academic profession should have protection not afforded those in other professions or in business and industry. A brief discussion of this question may be in order.

With respect to academic freedom, it should be remembered that the academic profession has a unique responsibility for the mores — culture, customs, conventions and pervading attitudes — of society. Such responsibility involves a constant study of ideas from the past — the preserving of some and the discarding of others

— which easily can develop into a paradoxical situation. What to retain and what to discard frequently produces intense controversy, but the decisions finally made provide the basis for human progress.

Progress should be based on the best thinking available in the social structure, much of which (but of course not all) must come, directly or indirectly, from university faculties. For as Alexander Pope put it in the early 1700s, "Tis education forms the common mind; just as the twig is bent the tree's inclined."

It is of the utmost importance that the thinking of faculty members and the free discussion of ideas not be restricted in any way through threat of administrative or political reprisal. As I quoted Fritz Machlup of Johns Hopkins University, in *Professors, Presidents and Politicians*, a book that I dedicated to Joe Brandt:

Not all great teachers are like Christ and Galileo, "courteous and self-denying, prepared to sacrifice their lives to their ideals. Some — perhaps many — are inclined to be timid or 'practical,' unwilling to express strong opinions or dissent from

popular opinions in an unprotected situation.”

The input of the timid great thinkers is needed in world development. It can be obtained only if we provide them with as much immunity as possible against the adverse consequences of unpopular statements. Of course there will be occasional abuses of academic freedom. But such abuses, fancied or real, provide the only proof that the freedom actually exists. A timid genius occasionally may need this reassurance. Academic freedom is of first importance in the development of a good university.

However, a case can be made against present tenure policies — virtual assurance of lifetime employment — as I am sure Brandt would agree. Tenure can have a stifling effect on the initiative and productivity of a professor, resulting in mediocrity and the preservation of “deadwood.” Recipients of tenure have been known to alter their activities in various ways. I have known some who reduced their office hours and devoted their energy to contract research or to other activities more closely related to personal advancement than what

they were employed to do. Others simply reduced the time they spent on the campus — using the afternoons on the golf course or attending to family shopping. Some elderly tenured professors have been known to drop anchor in their safe academic harbors, and live quietly in semi-retirement. Fortunately, such abuse of job protection is not commonplace, but when it does occur, it spotlights unfavorably the whole concept of tenure.

The solution to this problem may involve a revision of the meaning of tenure. Tenure has come to be regarded as a guarantee of continuity of employment. Perhaps the concept should be revised to stress more the careful use of due process in discontinuing employment. This, of course, was Brandt’s objective when he interceded in the Halperin case and laid the groundwork for the University’s future policy concerning academic freedom and tenure.

Brandt did not take the position that the granting of tenure implied a lifetime contract, but only that dismissal should be based on specific reasons, reasons given to an accused

teacher in advance and following a hearing during which the accused would have an opportunity to refute the charges.

As a step toward the solution, or prevention, of such problems in the future, Brandt utilized a portion of the 1940 statement of principles of academic freedom and tenure put forth by the AAUP. He appointed a faculty committee on grievances and tenure. The committee was given the

Brandt did not contend that granting tenure implied a lifetime contract.

responsibility of assembling the facts concerning any charges made against members of the faculty or other grievances a faculty member might have, and preparing a report concerning its findings. The committee did not make decisions concerning charges; it merely reported the facts for the use of the administration and regents in arriving at decisions.

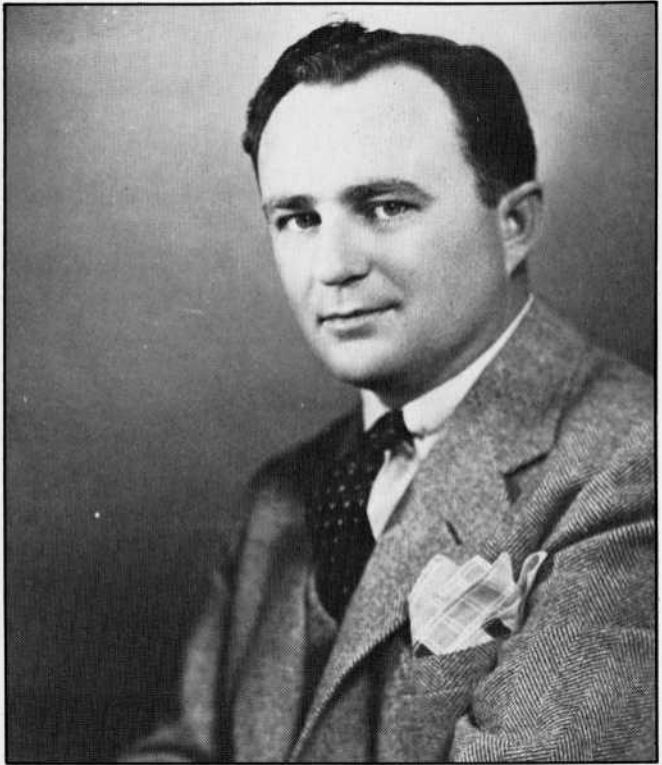
Brandt’s second major contribution in turning OU in the direction of university status was to remodel its hierarchal administrative system and give the faculty a voice in university planning and management. To achieve this, he started at the lower administrative levels and worked upward.

Prior to his arrival on the campus, each department of the University had been administered by a head, who had virtual control of departmental affairs, responsible only to the dean of the school or college. At his first meeting with his board in September 1941, Brandt recommended that the title of the chief administrative officer of each department be changed from “head” to “chairman.” He recommended also that current heads of department be relieved of their positions and titles at the end of the current fiscal year — June 30, 1942 — to be replaced by chairmen, who would serve for terms of three years, preferably without eligibility for reappointment.

At the same meeting, he rec-



President Brandt pours tea for faculty wives Enola Barnes (Mrs. D. L.), left, from accounting, and Lucille Schriever (Mrs. William M.) from physics.



Graduate Dean Homer Dodge, left, and his colleagues woke one morning in 1941 to discover that their "life-time" terms

had been reduced to one year. Only new law dean John Hervey, right, received an immediate five-year appointment.

ommended that all deans, with the exception of the newly appointed dean of the School of Law, be appointed for one-year terms, following which their reappointments for five-year terms would be considered. He recommended that the law dean be appointed immediately to a five-year term. This recommendation was designed to curtail the power of the deans and provide a mechanism for bringing about changes that might be needed in the future.

When the regents approved his recommendations to eliminate headships of departments and appoint deans for specific terms, the administrative hierarchy of the University began to crumble. It would end at a meeting of the regents in January 1942.

For several months, a faculty committee organized by Dean Homer Dodge of the Graduate School had been working on a plan designed to give the faculty some voice in the development of university policy through a legislative body to be known as the University Senate. The committee reported to the general

faculty during the fall of 1941. The general faculty approved the recommendation, and passed it on to President Brandt.

When he met with his board in January of 1942, Brandt recommended approval of the plan for a faculty senate, and told his board that if the recommendation was approved, the senate would assume the functions of the Council of Deans, and that council would be abolished. After a brief discussion, members of the board voted the new senate into existence, and the institution thereby took a substantial step toward university status.

I should mention that Brandt was not the first OU president to use a faculty senate as a mechanism for developing university policy. Arthur Grant Evans, when he took office in 1908 after the firing of David Ross Boyd, presented to his board in April 1909, a plan for restructuring the University into an assortment of departments, schools, and colleges administered by heads, directors, and deans. After his reorganization was approved by the board, he developed a

new body called the senate. The senate would replace the general faculty, which during Boyd's tenure had served the president in an advisory capacity.

The membership of Evans' senate, however, was fixed — not elected by the faculty. It consisted of the president and vice president of the University, the deans of the schools and colleges, with additional representation from the departments in the College of Arts and Sciences. In contrast, Brandt's senate consisted of representatives elected by the faculties of the several schools and colleges, with the president as an ex officio member.

Under the Evans plan, separate faculties were organized to deal with the problems of the schools and colleges while the senate had the responsibility for considering matters of general university concern, or problems involving two or more schools or colleges. The Brandt plan gave the senate broader legislative responsibility, although its actions were subject to the approval of the administration and the regents.

Evans' senate was short lived; it



President Brandt, shown here wearing his Phi Beta Kappa key at a student broadcast over OU radio station WNAD, was concerned that underclassmen were being required to declare their majors too early in their academic careers.

functioned only until 1912, when Stratton D. Brooks took over the presidency of the University on May 1. Brooks was a proponent of strong central administration. Extremely capable and aggressive, he apparently saw little need for advice from the faculty, or possibly from any other source. He did not dissolve the senate; he ignored it.

The minutes of the first meeting of the senate after Brooks became president read as follows: "The minutes of meeting number 32 were read and approved. There being no further business, the meeting adjourned." No business was referred to the senate during the following months, and the body quietly ceased operations during the summer of 1913.

Brooks, however, seemingly found some need for faculty participation in university affairs, and he used what was known as the "Committee of Deans," which was given the responsibility for "harmonizing the schools

and colleges." The "Committee of Deans" became the "Council of Deans" during the Bizzell administration. All of this, of course, represented a retrogression in university management — a retreat from university status. Brandt, by accepting his faculty's recommendation to reestablish a faculty senate, abruptly changed the direction the University had been taking.

Midway in his first year, Brandt presented to his board one of the better ideas for improving higher education that had emerged since professional schools and colleges had become a part of higher education in this country. He reasoned, rightly, that university freshmen, or even sophomores, were not sufficiently mature to make rational decisions about their futures — what business or profession they should prepare to enter, what fields of study they should choose for major effort during their university years.

Brandt thought it a mistake for students to embark on professional programs such as journalism, engineering or business immediately upon entering the University. He felt that the first two years should be spent pursuing general studies that would be useful to them regardless of their later field of specialization. Perhaps influenced by his Oxford background, he thought that all students should have a broad and somewhat similar academic experience before going into special fields or professional curricula.

To achieve this objective, Brandt recommended to his board in January 1942, that all students entering the University be enrolled in the "University College," where they would remain during their freshman and sophomore years. During their first two years, they would pursue a balanced curriculum in the physical sciences, the biological sciences, the social sciences and the humanities.

After two years, each student would apply for admission to one of the degree-recommending schools or colleges, such as the College of Arts and Sciences, the College of Fine Arts, the College of Business Administration or the College of Engineering.

The regents approved Brandt's recommendation, and the new plan went into effect in the fall of 1942. This brought intense opposition from the deans, who wanted control of their students from the beginning of their enrollment. While in later years the plan would be changed to involve only the freshman year, the development represented a major step toward university status.

Brandt realized that his institution could not attain any semblance of greatness, or even superior quality, with financial support from legislative appropriations alone. Public institutions in other states, such as the University of California at Berkeley, Michigan, Wisconsin, and Illinois, to mention a few, had developed their reputations because they were able to attract funds from private sources — a variety of gifts and grants from corporations and individuals. He foresaw the need for private fund raising at OU which would meet some of the immediate needs of the University as well as provide an endowment for long-range use.

He reasoned that private money could be obtained more readily if prospective donors were assured that it would be managed for the benefit of the University by some agency independent of political control, perhaps a foundation consisting of representatives selected by the donors. President Bizzell had recognized this need back in the 1930s and, with the cooperation of the Alumni Association and the Dad's Association, had made plans for a University of Oklahoma Foundation which would involve a drive for private giving in relation to the University's 50th anniversary. The plan, although publicized in the local newspapers and the *Sooner Magazine*, did not get beyond the announcement stage.

Brandt had been involved in some of this planning with Alumni Secretary Cleckler before he left for Princeton in 1938. As a matter of fact, the



Alumnus Shelley Tracy, a prominent advertising executive, became Joe Brandt's consultant on the establishment of the University Foundation.

idea of a University of Oklahoma Foundation may have originated during the Bizzell administration as a result of Cleckler-Brandt conversations.

In any event, Brandt resurrected the idea immediately after he assumed the presidency. In the fall of 1941, he brought a consultant to the campus, Shelley Tracy, an alumnus

To Brandt must go credit for establishing a program of private support which has brought the University approximately \$160 million in the last four decades.

who had become prominent in the advertising world, who worked with Brandt on plans for a University of Oklahoma Foundation. Even after the Pearl Harbor disaster, when Brandt's energies necessarily were devoted largely to the University's participation in the World War II effort, they continued their planning by correspondence.

Articles of incorporation and by-laws for the foundation were prepared and submitted to the regents, then turned over to Regent Lloyd Noble who wanted to study them carefully and have his attorney study them. Unfortunately, Noble found little time for foundation planning. The war had accelerated his oil drilling operations, and his company was soon active throughout the country and even abroad.

In 1943 Tracy returned to the campus to finalize the planning. Brandt had been pressing the regents for a decision on the foundation during the latter part of 1942, and almost monthly in 1943, but he was unable to get action until September 1943.

At the regents' meeting that month, Noble and his attorney, Sullivan Ashby, discussed Brandt's proposal for the foundation in detail, and a committee, consisting of Regents Noble, William R. Wallace, Don Emery and Erastus C. Hopper, was named to study the proposal and bring in a recommendation later. Wallace was named chairman, and President Brandt was added as an ex officio member.

The committee was not active during the next few weeks, and Brandt's sudden resignation on October 2, 1943, caused additional delay. The committee did not report until my first meeting with the board in January 1944. At that meeting a "Declaration of Trust for the establishment of the University of Oklahoma Foundation of the University of Oklahoma" was recommended and approved. Later, with slight changes, it became the founding document of the foundation.

To Brandt, then, must go the credit for establishing a program of private support which brought the University approximately \$160 million during the four decades following his resignation. The assets of the foundation as this is written, total approximately \$52 million, with nearly this amount having been spent in support of University programs.

Brandt was ever on the alert for ideas that would make the University more useful to the state and the Southwest. Prior to leaving for Princeton, he had discussed with Graduate Dean Dodge and perhaps



The University's first "Research Professors" were announced on November 12, 1943, after Brandt had announced his resignation. They were, from left, Jens Rud Nielsen, Edward Everett Dale, Charles E. Decker and Oscar B. Jacobson.

with President Bizzell, the need for making campus research resources available to industry, business and agriculture. (At that time contractual relationships between members of the faculty and outside research clients were not thought proper.)

During Brandt's absence, Dodge, with the aid of an ad hoc committee, worked on plans for a research institute, a non-profit corporation which could enter into outside contracts using the University's personnel and facilities for which the client would pay a cover charge. Dodge submitted his committee's report, based on a plan in effect at Ohio State University, to President Bizzell, and the regents gave their approval in June 1940.

The institute was incorporated under the laws of the state of Oklahoma in March 1941, prior to Brandt's assuming the presidency; he was, nevertheless, one of the incorporators. After his arrival, he gave

enthusiastic support to the institute. The first building constructed on the campus after World War II was the Research Institute building, although it also housed the department of physics.

The Research Institute was a total success. Although many of the University's best scientists were lost to the war effort, several of those who remained carried on important contract research in various fields, notably the manufacture of synthetic rubber, purification of natural gas, the advancement of spectroscopic research, and even plant breeding.

Perhaps the most significant contribution of all was made by Jens Rud Nielsen, professor of physics, who had developed an international reputation in spectroscopy. Nielsen was invited to construct an infrared spectrograph for the Naval Research Laboratory. At that time, he was one of two men in the country capable of handling the project. The other, a pro-

"I discussed the matter with Brandt, who suggested without hesitation that we should be willing to take a chance in a situation of such importance to the war effort."

fessor of physics at the University of Michigan, was busy with other war-related research.

The contract offered by the Navy called for a fee of \$10,000, plus \$4,000 for accessories to produce the instrument.

As acting director of the Research Institute at the time, I had the responsibility for accepting the Navy's proposal. Nielsen indicated an immediate willingness to undertake the project, but the chairman of the department of physics opposed the project on the grounds that it probably would end in failure after a substantial amount of university money had been spent on it.

Stymied momentarily, I discussed the matter with Brandt, who without hesitation suggested that we should be willing to take a chance in a situation of such importance to the war effort. A contract was signed, and Nielsen got under way with the project despite the fact that he was supervising a great deal of other war-related research.

A few months later, when the instrument was delivered to the Naval Research Laboratory, it was found to be so accurate in the quantitative measurement of hydrocarbons that the U.S. Bureau of Standards took steps to revise its standards of purity for short chain hydrocarbons.

Today, of course, such instruments are commonplace — commercially produced and found in every research laboratory of consequence, usually linked to batteries of computers. Nielsen's feat of designing and manufacturing the Navy instrument, using only the services of an instrument maker whom he had trained himself, demonstrated what could be accomplished at the University of Okla-



Cooperation with the Navy kept the University going during World War II and also provided for the institution's future development. Here President Brandt and Engineering Dean W. H. Carson pose with a Navy inspection team in 1943.

homa with a favorable combination of personnel and financing.

Despite the success of the Research Institute, its activities were discontinued in 1973 when the administration and regents decided that a corporation to handle contract research was no longer needed; contract research is now administered at the University by the Office of Research Administration, under the supervision of the graduate dean.

One of Brandt's most significant contributions came as the result of an effort by Oklahoma A&M College to lure Edward Everett Dale, OU's distinguished professor of history, to Stillwater with a tempting increase in salary as bait. To simply raise Dale's salary in an effort to meet the competition would not have been wise. But Brandt reasoned that if a different category of professorship could be created — a professorship to which others might aspire — paying Dale an increased amount might be

acceptable to the rest of the faculty.

Brandt first proposed that the new category be designated "Distinguished Professorships" and offered the first one to Dale at an annual salary of \$5,000, an amount approximately 25 percent higher than the salary of any other member of the teaching faculty. Dale, however, was not receptive to becoming a "Distinguished Professor of History," with the comment that it would spotlight him unfavorably on the campus. Brandt then came up with the idea of a "Graduate Professorship" for Dale, which the latter found acceptable.

But Brandt was not entirely satisfied with the designation "Graduate Professorship," and he decided that a better designation would be "Research Professorship." His plan was approved by the regents on November 12, 1943, after he had announced his resignation from the presidency to become director of the University of Chicago Press.

At that meeting, the board not only approved the research professorships, but named the first four recipients — Edward Everett Dale, graduate professor of history and director of the Frank Phillips Collection; Charles E. Decker, professor of paleontology; Oscar B. Jacobson, director of the School of Art and the Museum of Art; and Jens Rud Nielsen, professor of theoretical physics.

During the years following, these special professorships would prove invaluable in retaining outstanding members of the faculty. In fact, the plan was so successful that, in later years, two other categories of special professorships were created — the David Ross Boyd professorships to recognize marked excellence in teaching, and the Regents professorships to recognize exceptional service to the University in areas other than teaching and research.

Often overlooked, or misunderstood, was Brandt's role in bringing

the two Navy bases to Norman following Pearl Harbor. Confusion was injected into this situation by the Norman Chamber of Commerce's inclination to take credit for attracting the Navy. While the chamber cooperated with Brandt in making the effort, the real factor in determining the location of the two bases was Brandt's reaction to a phone call in early January 1942 from Savoie Lottinville, who was in New York on University Press business.

While traveling in a Pullman from Chicago to New York, Lottinville had met Captain K. B. Salisbury of the U.S. Navy, who was returning to the Bureau of Aeronautics in Washington to participate in the locating of naval flying schools throughout the country. He and Salisbury had discussed flying conditions in Oklahoma, and Lottinville had told Salisbury about OU's Westheimer Field. Salisbury had asked if the University would be willing to lend the field to the Navy for the duration of the war. Lottinville offered to query the president of the University immediately upon his arrival in New York. Salisbury suggested that if Brandt were interested, Lottinville should continue on to Washington to visit with the personnel of the Bureau of Aeronautics.

Brandt assured Lottinville that the University would be interested and authorized a stopover in Washington for as long as might be necessary. Lottinville spent two weeks in the capital city, visiting several offices. When he returned to Norman, matters had been pretty well settled. If certain problems could be resolved, the Navy would take over the University's flying field for the duration of the war.

As word spread throughout the campus that Norman might become the site of a naval installation, considerable faculty opposition developed, much of it based on the problems associated with having a military installation close to a co-educational institution. But Brandt, Lottinville, and some other members of the University's family saw the long-range possibilities. The Navy would need to acquire a great deal of land adjacent to Westheimer Field and would construct buildings on the land. The war would not last forever;



Like the rest of the country, the University was in uniform in 1942.

naval activities ultimately would cease at a location so far inland, and the University would have an excellent opportunity to acquire the property sometime in the future.

Navy officials visited Norman in February 1942 and were favorably impressed with Westheimer Field. Brandt and Lottinville then made a followup visit to Washington, and final arrangements were made for the Navy to take over Westheimer — arrangements which were approved by the board of regents in March.

While in Washington, Brandt and Lottinville learned that the Navy also was interested in training mechanics in Oklahoma. Lottinville was assigned the responsibility of developing a plan for using the facilities of the University — facilities which would be available because of the decreased enrollment of civilian students. Later, however, the Navy decided to build its own school for mechanics, and a representative was sent to Norman to look for a site.

The representative, who at the time was the world's champion balloon ascensionist, became convinced that the new facility should be located in an

area southeast of Lexington or Purcell, nearly 12 miles from Norman. This did not fit in with Brandt and Lottinville's plans; they wanted the installation located immediately adjacent to the campus where it would be available for acquisition by the University after the war had ended.

Fortunately, the University's influence in Washington, with the vigorous help of the Norman Chamber of Commerce, led by T. Jack Foster, was sufficient to convince the naval authorities that the mechanics school should be located immediately adjacent to the University's southern boundary. Within weeks, 2,200 acres of land were purchased by the Navy in that area.

Again rather severe criticism was directed at Brandt by several members of the University family, who thought it inappropriate to have a large facility for military technical training so close to a university, the civilian enrollment of which consisted predominantly of young women. But Brandt and Lottinville were concerned with the future, when the University might acquire the property. The Norman Chamber of Commerce was looking to the future also, but with the thought that the naval installation might be retained after the war had ended.

Brandt has never received sufficient credit for another contribution to the war effort, which also preserved the university's faculty by developing a substantial number of contracts for special training of military personnel. In this connection, certain arrangements with the Navy turned out to be extremely advantageous.

There were two types of such campus training programs — the V5 and the V12. The V5 programs involved highly specialized technical training courses for various categories of personnel, but the V12 programs were of a more general nature and led to a baccalaureate degree. Participants in the V12 programs were regarded as regular university students, eligible to participate in campus activities, hence they provided most of the personnel for intercollegiate athletics.

These were exceptionally trying times for the University of Oklahoma, and through it all, Brandt



George Cross, right, had just been announced as the regents' surprise choice as acting president when this photograph was taken in 1943 at a farewell reception for the departing Joe Brandt and his wife Sallye, at left with Cleo Cross.

proved to be an exceptionally versatile president. Not only did he change the course of the institution toward true university status, but he also coped effectively with wartime problems — handling the situation in such fashion that his institution made a maximum contribution to the war effort and, in so doing, made it possible for OU to acquire large real estate holdings, housing facilities, and vast quantities of naval equipment after the war ended. Some of the rolling stock inherited from the Navy, and other equipment, was still in use by the University at the time I retired from the presidency in 1968.

Despite these exceptional contributions, Brandt has received only modest recognition for his accomplishments. While he was awarded the Distinguished Service Citation by the University and the Alumni Association in 1965, there is nothing on the University of Oklahoma campus

that bears his name, nothing to mark his presence there, except a portrait that hangs in the presidential office with those of other past presidents.

This is a grave injustice. An individual who had done so much for the University surely should have received proper recognition. Recognition, however, often is more likely to be given to those who have become popular rather than to those who have achieved. In no sense of the word could Brandt be considered a popular president. At the time he left the University, he did not have the majority approval of any segment of the University family — students, faculty, regents, or alumni — and he was at odds with certain influential political figures and, to some extent, with the news media of the state.

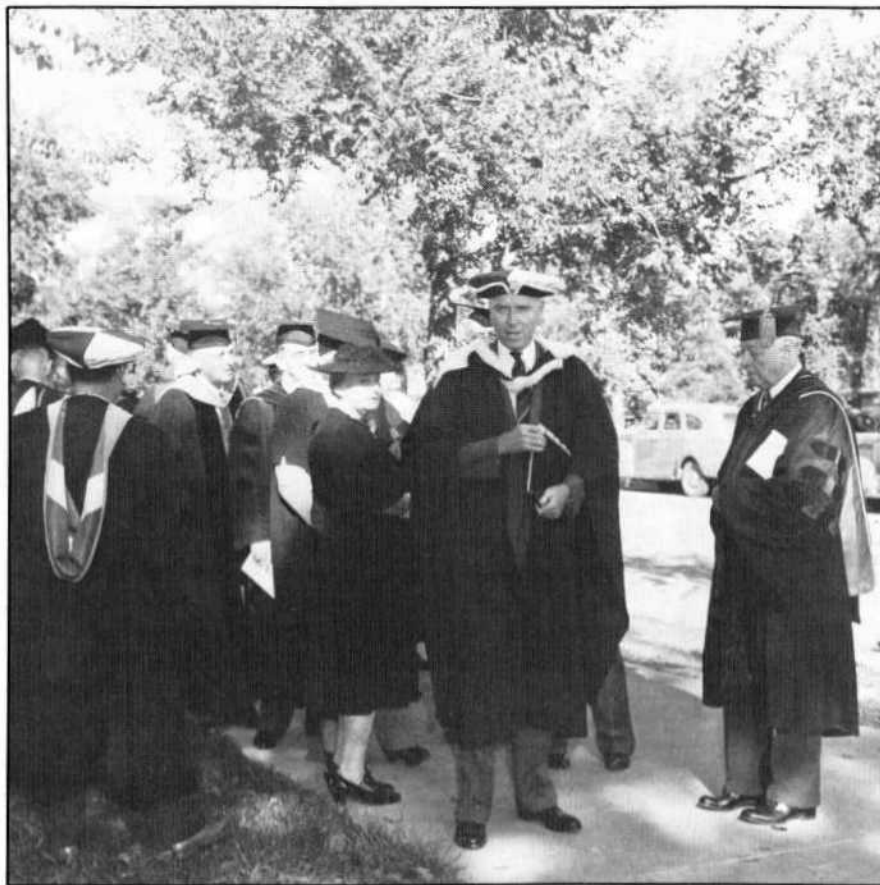
Paramount in his lack of popularity was the procedure he followed in obtaining his objectives for the University. He did not follow what the fac-

ulty, and many others, considered approved procedures in getting things done. Most of his major recommendations to the regents were based on his own thinking without consulting or informing the faculty.

Highly meritorious was his recommendation that department heads be removed and be replaced by chairmen who would serve specified terms. Similarly meritorious was his recommendation that deans be appointed for specific terms, so that their performance could be evaluated periodically. It would be difficult to overemphasize the importance of his plan for a University College to serve freshmen and sophomores. Yet members of the faculty and administration, myself included, who were directly affected by these recommendations — all of which were approved by the regents — learned what had happened from newspaper reports after the fact.



A wide-angle view of Joe Brandt's campus (looking south) shows a University stretching from the Engineering Building on the far left to Holmberg Hall standing just beyond the ivy-covered arches at the Parrington Oval entrance.



"Matriculation Day," 1941. President Brandt and President-Emeritus Bizzell, at left, join the faculty in academic regalia for freshman convocation.

This much-needed restructuring brought intense opposition, almost overwhelming criticism, from the administrative personnel involved and their followers, opposition which made life difficult for the Brandts. The criticism had no perceptible effect on Joe, who retained his cordial mannerisms, passing about the campus with long strides in his favorite gray jacket with leather patch elbows, always willing to step and visit briefly or, on occasion, to discuss practically any subject at greater length over a cup of coffee in the Union.

On the other hand, Sallye, a strikingly attractive, talented and sensitive woman who had enjoyed an earlier successful professional career in journalism, suffered from the experience and expressed her frustration in positive fashion. Under such unfavorable circumstances, she understandably found the role of a university president's wife unrewarding. Beyond doubt she was influential in persuading her husband to accept the directorship of the University of Chicago Press when it was offered to him in 1943.

Once during my presidency, I discussed Brandt's problems with one of his very good friends, Jens Rud Nielsen. At the end of our discussion, Nielsen remarked, "He did the right things in the wrong way." But we agreed that he had done the right things.

Later, in reflecting on Nielsen's



statement, it occurred to me that Brandt had done the right things in the *only* way that they could have been done. Had he taken any of his controversial proposals to the faculty, there is no doubt that sufficient opposition would have developed to defeat what he had in mind. The powerful hierarchy which governed the University at that time — influential department heads and deans — would have stymied any hope of progress.

Brandt saw clearly what needed to be done to head his institution toward university status. Brilliant, fast moving and determined, he decided that certain changes were needed. He was fully aware of the accepted procedures in bringing about change in an established university, but he reasoned that such procedures would be unsuccessful in an institution which had not achieved university status.

He decided to move swiftly by taking his recommendations directly to the regents and pressing for immediate action. He knew that this would bring strong criticism which might even threaten his continuance in the presidency, but he was willing to take that chance in the best interests of his alma mater.

Only a few appreciated what Brandt had achieved at the time he resigned, but the number has grown with the passing of years. Some have wondered what additional good he might have accomplished had he decided to ride out the turbulence he

Joe Brandt's University

The University of Oklahoma which Joseph A. Brandt inherited from William Bennett Bizzell in the fall of 1941 was a far different place from the campus which lingers in the post-World War II memories of most of its present alumni. To understand Brandt's accomplishments, it is helpful to picture the institution as he saw it when he returned from Princeton to become its sixth president.

In physical terms, Brandt found a Norman campus still clustered around the Parrington (North) Oval. The new president could stand on the steps of Bizzell Memorial Library, facing south, and see only Hester-Robertson halls to the west and Richards Hall, the Armory and the east and west stands of the stadium to the east.

The facilities for medical education in Oklahoma City were virtually unchanged since 1928, consisting of the School of Medicine building, two large hospitals and an assortment of smaller structures.

By every other measurement as well, Brandt's OU was in startling contrast to today's modern university (figures in italics represent comparable statistics for 1982-83):

Enrollment

1941 — 5,902

(By the time Brandt left OU in 1943, the war effort had reduced the student body to 3,457 — 1,856 civilians and 1,591 military trainees. Civilian enrollment would bottom out at 1,074 in 1944.)

1982 — *21,532*

Operating budget

1941 — \$1,808,000

1982 — *\$139,000,000*

Degrees granted

1898 to 1941 — 23,465

1898 to 1982 — *134,000*

Degree granting colleges

1941 — 9

1982 — *15*

Teaching faculty

1941 — 550 (349 in Norman, 191 in Oklahoma City)

1982 — *1,539* (866 in Norman, 673 in Oklahoma City)

Faculty salaries

(average per rank)

Instructors —

1941 — \$1,800

1982 — *\$16,103*

Assistant professors —

1941 — \$2,200

1982 — *\$23,470*

Associate professors —

1941 — \$2,700

1982 — *\$29,602*

Professors —

1941 — \$3,300

1982 — *\$38,368*

Library holdings

1941 — 225,000 volumes, 120,000 pamphlets, 8,000 unclassified government documents, plus "several thousand volumes in the law library".

1982 — *1,903,996 volumes, 16,957 serial subscriptions, 30,000,000 manuscripts, 1,403,826 government documents, 1,388,339 microforms, 500,000 photographs.*

created and continued to serve in what might have been a less trying situation. We will never know, of course, but I do know what his actions meant to me when I became president in 1944.

He paved the way for my nearly 25 years of reasonably successful tenure in office by doing the things that had to be done, but which I could not have

done and survived in office. All that I needed to do was carry on, with some very slight modifications, what he had started. In my opinion, the 2½ years that he spent at OU represent the most significant episode in the history of the University.

The only alumnus to serve as president of the institution can well be proud of what he accomplished. 