

Bizzell Grandson Applauds Cross Article on Brandt

I think Dr. Cross' article about the Brandt presidency (*Sooner Magazine*, Summer 1983), must be accepted as absolute fact. To paraphrase the Talmud, "When a man who is under no obligation to speak, nevertheless does speak, and in such a way as to diminish the glory which would otherwise have been his own, had he kept his peace, then what he says is to be believed." Cross, scholar, gentleman and friend, might be suspected of excessive modesty; Cross, scientist, would not be guilty of imprecision. Some of us must rethink the events of 1941-43. I am among these.

Actually, I was not entirely unprepared for Dr. Cross' disclosures. In the years since I was on campus, first in OUHS and then as a freshman awaiting the age to enlist in the Navy for WWII, I have observed that it is always open season on university presidents. No license is required; the uninformed and the semi-informed (especially those involved in politics) are encouraged to fire from ambush with weapons of all calibers. All a president's acts and omissions are invitations to fire, and mortal wounds may be inflicted on any part of the personal, academic, administrative or political anatomy. Most vulnerable is the solitary genius who sees a generation ahead of his time and disdains self-defense. And few of them are fortunate enough to be followed in office by a George Lynn Cross, to set the record straight at last.

Yet our now-disclosed debt to Joseph Brandt does not, I think, include any apology. Those who have thought ill, or little, of him and his efforts were only being human. We don't feel the same toward a surgeon who performs major surgery, without preparation and without anesthesia, as we do toward a gentle and benevolent physician who prescribes our diet, exercise and mild medication, even though our health requires both treatments at different times. Our debt is to ourselves; our debt to Joseph Brandt is to confirm his confidence that we would eventually recognize the truth he saw before us.

Thumbnail descriptions are inherently unfair, especially when one is

talking about people who hold office at different times in as fluid an institution as a university. My grandfather Bizzell has been thus called a "scholar"; does this make Dr. Cross less a scholar? If President Brooks possessed "energy and administrative ability," does President Banowsky lack them? A university must "lead" a moving target, i.e. produce the sorts of graduates which will soon be needed by a dynamic society. A university — and its president — will be called successful by their measure against this elusive goal.

Let us then be thankful that, by a combination of Providence and the Board of Regents, OU has always managed to come up with the right president for the times. And let us leave thumbnail comparisons, like time-travel, where both belong: on Saturday morning television!

William B. Bizzell II
Richmond, Virginia

Someone Reads Prologue

Just a note to let you know how very much I enjoyed your editorial in the Fall 1983 issue of the *Sooner Magazine*. It is by far the most revealing and relevant article I have read and am hopeful that our legislators might have an opportunity to read this article. In fact, I wish everyone in our state could read it. You did an excellent job! Congratulations.

In my opinion, this is one of the finest publications in our state.

Carol Garrison
Norman, Oklahoma

Stubby's Good, Not First

I am more than a little late in reading and responding to the article on "The Union" in the Fall issue of '83. The writer, Jack Copeland, brought back *many* special memories of my days at OU, since I spent so much of my time in the student Union.

I would like to correct the statements about the beginning of the office of Director of Union Activities for any future records. I, Betty Abbott, served on the Union Activities Board my first year at OU, 1942-43, as a Junior, along with Mary Lou Stubbeman. Also serving on the Board was Howard Kauffmann, who is now President of Exxon Corp! (Note pp 172 of the *Sooner* annual.) The fol-

lowing year I served as Chairman of the Union Activities Board (pp 262 of the *Sooner* annual), and following my graduation from the School of Business Administration June 1944, I was hired as the first Director of Union Activities on a full-time basis. Salary: \$125.00 per month. Roscoe Cate was the acting manager of the Union in the absence of Ted Beaird, who was serving in the Air Force, and Virginia Reinecke, Counselor of Women, was the sponsor. They were my "bosses." I only served in the capacity for six months for I was needed more in my father's business in Durant . . . During this time I even *lived* in the Union in one of the rooms on the fourth floor, across the hall from Virginia Reinecke and Sue Starr, who was on the Alumni staff. Frontier Days were already an established tradition and I have some marvelous pictures of President Joseph Brandt suitably attired. Annabel Escoc was a favorite singer for the afternoon shows in the Union Cafeteria. The V-12's and the NRO's took the place of the fraternity and dormitory fellows, but Capt. Donaldson was not as easy to deal with as the Inter-Fraternity Council and the Dean of Men. But we managed to have lots of good times and made good use of the Union during those war years.

I understand that the Director's position was not filled until Mary Lou Stubbeman graduated in June of 1945, when Ted Beaird had returned to the campus and chose her for the position. I do know that she did an outstanding job. But I was *first*.

My husband and I are both graduates of OU, as are our two sons, and we all enjoy "catching up," in the *Sooner Magazine*.

Betty Abbott Mahone, '44 BS
Oklahoma City, Oklahoma

Shirley's O.K., too

To Shirley Dodson Cobb:

Your article about my old friend, Alan Hirschfield, was quite well done and also accurate reporting, something we need more of today.

Alan and I were in school together at OU and studied together in a number of courses. He is alright and so are you.

John Brett, '58 BBA
Oklahoma City, Oklahoma