

The Three-Year Factor

They talk about the Zero Factor regarding U.S. Presidents. For the longevity of OU presidents, it must be the Three-Year Factor. (Summer 1988 "Prologue: If History Repeats, OU's Next President Should Pack for a Long Stay") An uncanny occurrence.

Thanks for presenting a rather routine story in such an interestingly written way.

Ronald E. Keener, '67 M.A.
Westchester, Illinois

Sooner Rhodes Scholars

In skimming the *Sooner* this weekend, preparatory to a more complete reading, I noted that OU's first Rhodes Scholar was elected in 1938; I seem to recall hearing when I was an undergraduate there in the mid-'50s and later in graduate school that OU had produced an unusually large number of Rhodes folk—though memory is notoriously selective even when not plain wrong.

Anyway, though you may in the past have done this (I'd be mighty surprised if you haven't), might it be appropriate to do a "Where Are They Now" sort of article on these exceptional people?

Just a suggestion. I enjoy the magazine very much and appreciate your efforts to keep it a quality publication.

Charles T. DeShong, '62 M.A.
Associate Professor of English
Northeastern State University
Tahlequah, Oklahoma

Editor's Note: From 1904 to 1975, the University of Oklahoma produced 25 Rhodes Scholars (U.S. Senator David L. Boren was selected while an undergraduate at Yale University, although he subsequently received his law degree from OU.) At that time, only four other public universities had produced as many recipients. Among state-supported institutions, the University still ranks fifth.

The Last Lectures

I always am very much interested in your "Last Lecture . . ." articles. I think such articles are one of the more notable assets of your magazine. Have you ever given thought to collecting such articles, say in groups of the first six, the next six, etc., and offering the same in a series of publications spon-

sored by the *Sooner Magazine*? I would think your readers would be very much interested in having such a series. I know I would.

Thank you for your consideration of this thought.

Richard A. Koehler, '64 B.S.
Geneva, Nebraska

Editor's Note: The "Last Lectures" seem to have a small but loyal following. We hope to add to this series in future issues but currently have no plans to compile the lectures into a separate publication.

The First Short Course

Your article, "The Hopeful, The Helpful—and Sometimes the Hilarious," in the Fall/Winter issue evoked a flood of memories, along with a question.

First the article. It brought back still-vivid mental pictures of July 1938, when my wife (the former Georgiana Aspley of Denison, Texas, also a member of the Class of '38, but now deceased) and I piggy-backed portions of that first short course. Having been married in our final semester and as yet still without a job, we were living in a walk-up apartment, on Asp as I remember, and so were "available" in mid-July.

Our interest was piqued by the fact that Burton Rascoe, the featured lecturer, had been a schoolmate at Shawnee of my father, who spoke of him often and with affection and pride that a hometown boy had risen to national prominence in the publishing world.

When we learned there was to be a reception for Rascoe at the Student Union on Sunday afternoon, we decided to crash the event, not being registered as short course students. As expected, there was a line waiting to greet the great man. When our turn came to introduce ourselves, Rascoe immediately asked, "Are you Buck Lale's son?" This I acknowledged. The next question was, "Where is he now?" I told him my parents had moved to Norman from the farm near Shawnee when my next brother (Homer Lale, '42) also entered the University.

The upshot was that Rascoe spent a happy few hours at our rented home across the street from Dr. Maurice Halperin, my freshman French profes-

sor, whose name later turned up in Congressional investigations of communism after World War II.

Only because I knew his name and background, I earlier had bought Rascoe's autobiography, *Before I Forget*, a Book-of-the-Month selection. Of course I wanted an autograph. The only problem developed because there had been a bottle which Rascoe was not reluctant to share over memories of the old days in Shawnee. The autograph read: "For Max Lale, a friend of his from Shawnee." Rascoe had lost a word in writing what he intended: "a friend of his father's . . ."

Incidentally, I still have the volume and prize it more especially.

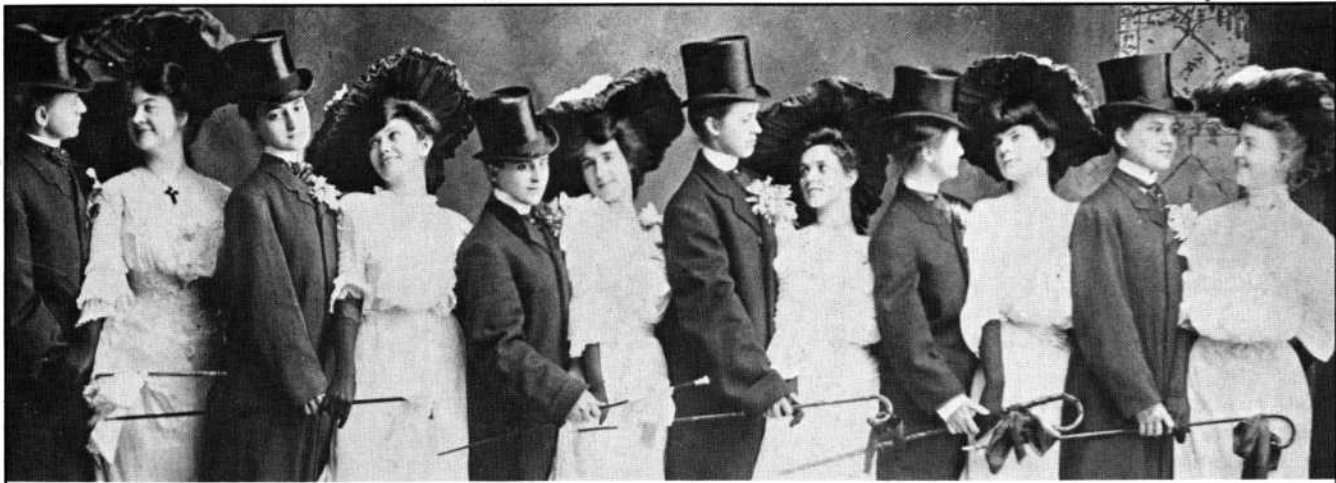
Rascoe at the time was writing a monthly column for *Esquire* magazine, and (as I gathered usually was the case) was up against if not actually past his deadline. My wife and I offered our apartment as a safe refuge from would-be authors intent on learning the craft in one easy lesson.

There was no air conditioning in 1938, some may be surprised to learn. Portable typewriter and his own gin bottle in hand, Rascoe arrived, took off his shirt and immediately went to work as my wife and I prepared to vacate the apartment in the interest of literature. On our way out (destination the library to study, I hope), she picked up his shirt to hang it, somewhat startled and intrigued to learn that its label read J. C. Penney.

Kenneth Kaufman was much in evidence during the short course, naturally. I don't remember if Dr. Walter Campbell was on the campus that summer. Better known to his readers as Stanley Vestal, Dr. Campbell had taught my freshman English section in the fall of 1934, and so I knew him as well as any freshman ever got to know a full professor. (Only many years later was I startled to learn that full professors no longer teach freshmen, but then this was at a time when the University, in order to boast of a 5,000 student body had to include the School of Medicine and the School of Nursing, both in Oklahoma City.)

For reasons still unknown to me, Dr. Kaufman, who in addition to editing *Books Abroad* also was book editor of *The Daily Oklahoman*, whom I never had had as a teacher, had invited me

Your Memories: Part of OU History



The Floradora Sextet—1906

Need a new audience for your old collegiate war stories? Yearn for unglazed eyes to appraise those faded yearbook photos and party pics with a sincere appreciation for days gone by? Do we have a deal for you!

The University of Oklahoma Centennial Commission, through *Sooner Magazine*, is soliciting your personal reminiscences and campus photographs to be used in conjunction with the 100th anniversary celebration. Eventually all these materials will be enshrined in the OU Archives as a permanent part of institutional history.

These alumni anecdotes and historic photographs are targeted for inclusion in a number of publications, including *Sooner Magazine*. At the conclusion of the Centennial on December 19, 1990, all the written contributions will be assembled and deposited in the archives, housed in Monnet Hall under the supervision of the Western History Collections.

Photographs you cannot bear to part with can be returned when the year-long birthday party comes to an end. All others, with your permission, will form a new University Centennial Collection in the photographic archives, where they will be available to *Sooner* historians and for use in future OU publications. We promise to provide the ultimate TLC for your photo memories, carefully labeling each print, storing them in individual envelopes and giving a donor credit line whenever a contributed photo is used in *Sooner Magazine*, com-

memorative publications or Centennial publicity.

The only technical criterion for photographs is that they be in focus. Of course, if there is a choice between a good shot and a bad one, send us the good one. Old yearbook photographs are wonderful—party pics, campus scenes, sports events, beauty contests, student activities, favorite faculty, Campus Corner hangouts. You name it; if you are proud of it, we want to see it.

Contributions from all eras are needed, from the flappers to the preppies, from the WWII veterans to the peace activists. If it happened at OU, we're interested. Keep the anecdotes as brief as possible, but if in doubt, leave in that extra paragraph, and we'll make the editorial decision. Naturally, we will not be able to publish everything everyone sends, memories or photos, but all will become part of the Centennial collection. What simpler or more meaningful way to be part of the ongoing story?

Centennial preparations are well under way, so send your anecdotes and photographs to: **Carol J. Burr, Editor, Sooner Magazine, University of Oklahoma, 100 Timberdell Road, Norman, OK 73019.** A piece of cardboard in the envelope will help protect your photographs on their journey through the mails. You will receive an acknowledgement that your material has been received.

Make history. Join the Centennial of the University of Oklahoma.

during my final semester to write reviews for the *Oklahoman*, so I knew him too.

The result of all this was that Dr. Kaufman, who I suppose was program chairman for the day, invited my father and me to attend the campus Rotary Club luncheon at the Union building, attended, as I remember, by only twenty or so of the faculty and staff. We were introduced as friends of "our speaker," the eminent book man from New York. It was my first service

club luncheon (of many since), and I feel certain it was my father's first. A memorable occasion, indeed.

All this and more came to mind when I read Jane Beckman's piece in *Sooner*. Perhaps Bob Hope won't mind if I say "thanks for the memories."

I mentioned a question. My current wife and I—she recently retired after 38 years as a writer for the *Fort Worth Star-Telegram*—would like to attend the 1989 short course, but the *Sooner* story did not give the dates. If we can

do so, it will be my first after 51 years and Cissy Stewart Lale's first ever. But then UT grads tend to be a little on the slow side.

Max S. Lale, '38 B.A.
Fort Worth, Texas

Editor's Note: The 1989 Short Course on Professional Writing will be held May 31, June 1 and 2. To receive further information, write Robbie Lamle, Program Development Services, 1700 Asp Avenue, Norman, Oklahoma 73037.