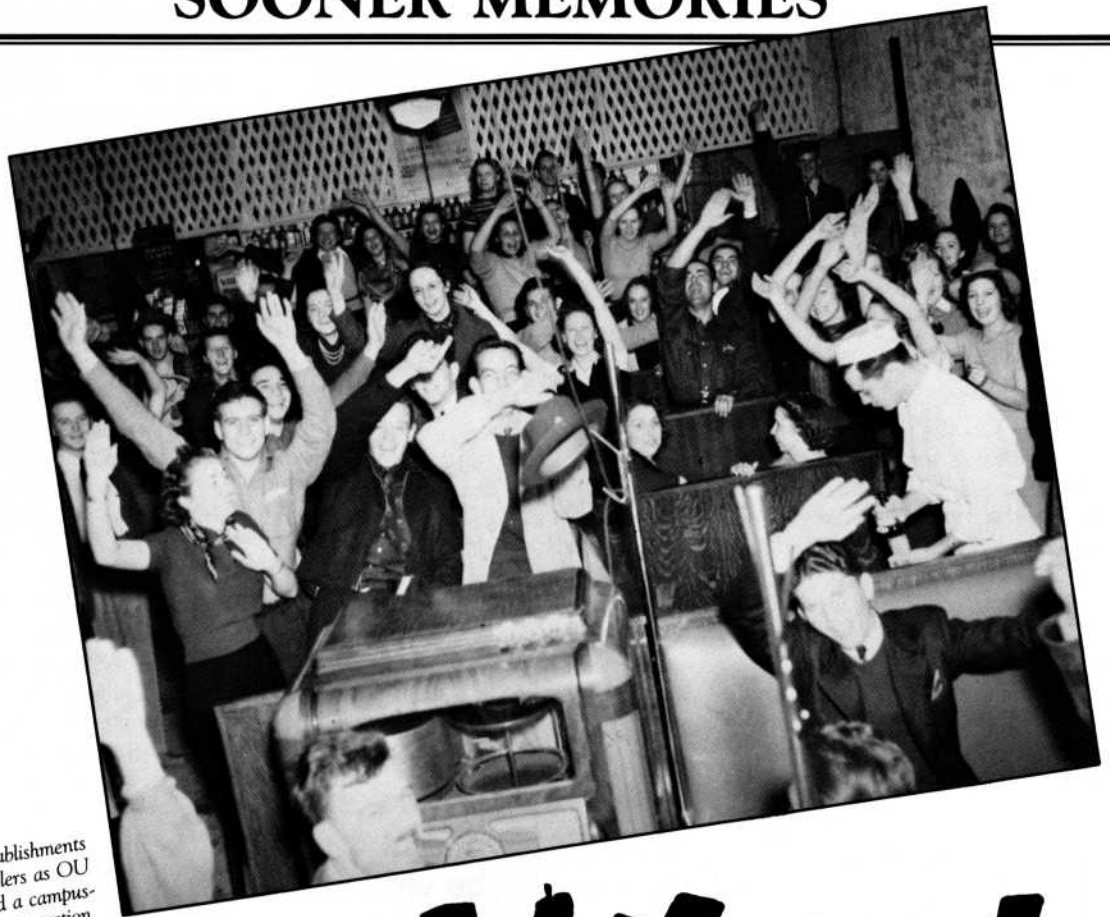


SOONER MEMORIES



Campus Corner establishments rocked with revelers as OU students staged a campus-wide demonstration.

Holiday!

Holiday!

The year was 1938, but the cry was familiar enough throughout Sooner history—if you win the big game, you take a day off—with or without official sanction.

Photos courtesy of OU Western History Collections

The Oklahoma Daily
Tuesday, November 22, 1938

Norman's biggest mass demonstration in a decade roared to a climax Monday night as rioting university students ended their celebration of the Sooner Big Six football championship with a giant street dance in defiance of authorities.

President Bizzell entered Rickner's Student Shop earlier in the evening and ordered all dancing halted.

The couples responded by marching to the campus corner, moving a nickelodeon out of the Town Tavern, and beginning the Big Apple in the middle of the street.

Traffic was soon blocked at the corner of Boyd street and Asp avenue by the several hundred swinging couples.

The cold wave sent less hardy "rug-cutters" to the Union, the Campus Drug, the Varsity Shop and other corner establishments to continue their dancing.

For 18 hours, students turned into mobs of howling hoodlums to storm classrooms, shoot off firecrackers in buildings and upset professors' dignity.

Efforts to hold classes during the day proved futile. Only in the school of law did students and teachers succeed in withstanding the rising surge of enthusiasm.

These events stood out at the close of what veteran professors described as "the stormiest day in OU history."

ONE—A student fan tweaked, then patted the cheek of Julien C. Monnet, venerable dean of the school of law, in an attempt to persuade him to dismiss his class in contracts.

TWO—Dr. John B. Cheadle, professor of law, struck at Robert Davie, Healdton, when the student erased his taxation assignment from the blackboard.

A few minutes later the same professor's chair was jerked from under him by a student who was interviewed later in the day for the president's honor class.

THREE—More than 3,500 cheering Sooners crowded into the Fieldhouse



After clinching the 1938 Big Six football championship with a victory over Iowa State on Saturday, students braved the cold and marched en masse to the steps of President Bizzell's home Sunday night, chanting, "We want a holiday!"

for a giant pep rally during the morning to hear Tom Stidham, football coach, say, "We're just as happy as you are. I know we'll have a better inspired team Saturday after this demonstration."

FOUR—Firecrackers were shot off in the 2 o'clock class of white-haired Dr. Victor H. Kulp, professor of law, when he shouted at the invaders, "The taxpayers won't like this."

The move for a school holiday was started Sunday night when representatives of all campus men's organizations were called to the Varsity Shop by Clyde Patrick, president of the Interfraternity council, and Theatus Greeson, executive secretary of the Independent Men's association.

Students and professors who showed up for their morning classes Monday were soon "dismissed" by student pickets.

Even pupils in the university elementary school participated enthusiastically in the victory strike. They took advantage of their holiday to swarm the law barn, squealing, "Down with the law school. Down with the law school."

Lawyers Heckled

When student lawyers assembled on the steps between classes, the youngsters danced up and down shrieking, "You'll be no good lawyers. You won't make lawyers."

Norman high school wanted to share in the fun too, but teachers there barricaded the doors.

Monnet's attempt to lock the excited Sooner fans out of his 8 o'clock class were in vain. After the dean barred the door, the mob unscrewed the hinges and stomped over the door.

Dean Is Exhorted

One student jumped to the platform and gave Monnet a playful pinch on the cheek saying, "Deanie, be a good boy and let them out."

Students reluctantly left the law school to attend the pep rally. As soon as the pep meeting ended, more than 500 rushed back for a second visit.

This time they swarmed Cheadle's taxation class.

Witnesses said Davie was in the van of a group of students which burst thru the door as Cheadle was writing on the blackboard.

The students thought winning the Big Six football championship was ample justification for a holiday. President William Bennett Bizzell thought otherwise.

Student Defends Professor

They said Davie started to pick up an eraser when Cheadle turned on him. Orville Kline, Oklahoma City, jumped up to defend his professor.

Cheadle, who refused to dismiss his class even after he was sent sprawling to the floor when his chair was pulled from under him, declared that "the law school is glad to see an intensive school spirit.

"The law school is interested in the university but the effect of mob movements here is to set blocs of the legislature against the school . . ."

Students finally left the law class to go to the campus corner where they flaunted the school's ban on jitterbugging. At the Campus Drug, couples danced on tables to the tune of the "Lambeth Walk."

Class Disturbed

Kulp had time to call the roll before nearly 200 students broke into his afternoon class in real property. As they marched around the room singing, "No class today. No class today," B. P. "Jiggs" Walker, Camden, Ark., law student, jumped to his feet.

"With your permission, sir," he said, "we'll get these undesirables out." A cannon firecracker was set off in the back of the room.

"Let's show a little reason instead of blind mob psychology," Kulp reasoned with his visitors.

Hats Ordered Off

They entered the French class of Dr. Lucile Dora. The former dean of women ordered the men invaders to

remove their hats and be quiet until she assigned the next lesson. They obeyed. Miss Dora said a train conductor wouldn't desert his passengers and therefore she wouldn't desert her class.

Attempts of Dr. William A. Schaper, head of the department of finance, to keep the marching students out of his classroom were unsuccessful. When they knocked at the door, he said, "Don't disrupt the peaceful procedure of this classroom."

Professor Warns

Schaper locked the front door only to discover the students streaming into the room from a door at the back. He lectured them on the dangers of mobs. "Those football victories were not gained by mob violence," he declared. The students booed.

When teachers in the Biological Sciences building refused to open their classrooms, students climbed thru the windows.

Early in the afternoon, Stidham was cornered by the students as he was leaving the Administration building.

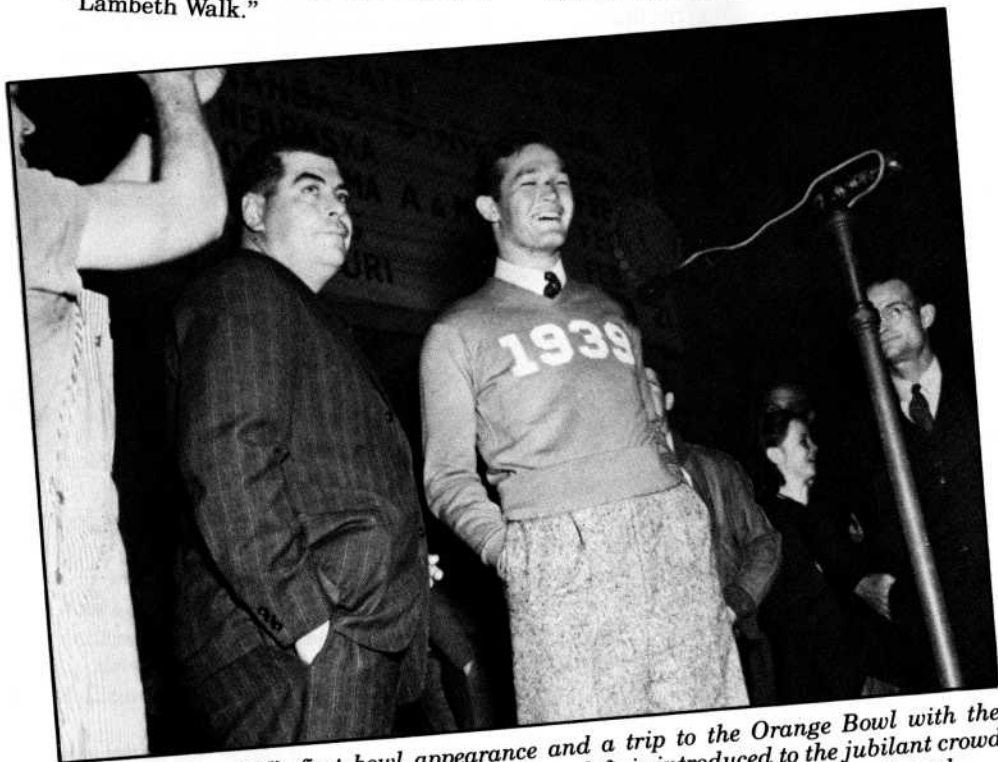
"You kids, whoop and holler all you want to, but don't go in the building and destroy property," he warned. "You are all good kids and I want to see you have fun, but remember don't destroy property."

Bizzell Out of City

Bizzell, out of the city during most of the day's activities, declined to say whether any action would be taken against the boisterous students. He called attention, however, to a list of 1,500 students who made failing grades in one or more subjects at the end of the eight weeks. "They don't need a holiday," he commented.

The university president said that Monday was an "unfortunate time" to stop classes as the Thanksgiving holidays are only a few days away.

The demonstration got underway shortly after 11 o'clock Sunday night when more than 1,500 students quickly gathered at the campus corner, then marched to the university power plant where they pulled the whistle lever down until all the steam was exhausted.



Upon securing OU's first bowl appearance and a trip to the Orange Bowl with the conference championship, Coach Tom Stidham, left, is introduced to the jubilant crowd by All-American Roland "Waddy" Young, as the 18-hour demonstration continued.

**How do you explain the headlines to sometimes-critical alumni?
Oklahoma Daily editor Jim Flinchum tackled that job with
these comments in the January 1939 issue of Sooner Magazine:**

School spirit revived

This is written for the "old grads." Perennially you return for a visit to the campus and just as often you soulfully wag your heads about the sad state of affairs school spirit has come to.

"No pep," you say. "Now, back in 1913, when we beat Kingfisher, we held a shirt-tail parade, we—"

Well, here is one for the books.

What was probably the biggest mass demonstration in the University's history turned the entire campus into a huge holiday arena for 18 hours following Oklahoma's victory over Iowa State, and capture of the Big Six football crown, on November 20.

Defying official disapproval, thousands of students joined in a victory strike on the Monday following the weekend football game, totally disrupting class schedules for an entire day, while the grid triumph was celebrated.

The celebration started Sunday night after the game when an estimated 3,000 students gathered on varsity corner, and amid firecracker explosions and chants of "We want a holiday," marched to the home of President Bizzell to ask for a holiday.

When the president appeared on the steps of his residence, he attempted to persuade the students to call off their plans for a celebration.

Failing to gain official recognition of their celebration, the students proceeded to the home of the Sooners' coach, Tom Stidham, who was routed out of bed for a brief talk.

Late hours and a cold wind dispersed the night demonstration, but early the next morning students were on hand at the entrances to University buildings to convince their fellows that a holiday was needed.

Sooner Magazine thanks Alumnus Leland Calvert, San Antonio, Texas, for contributing the clipping on the "Riot of '38" to the Centennial Collection in the OU Archives.



ABOVE: Partying students lead President Bizzell onto the lawn by flashlight while the throng awaits official permission for the holiday.

BELOW: Despite his vain attempt at thwarting the raucous festivities, Bizzell and a student are hoisted above the boisterous crowd.

As quickly as a class convened, mobs of students marched into the room shouting and laughing and calling for its dismissal. With a few exceptions, professors smilingly dismissed. By 10 o'clock Monday morning, practically all classes on the campus were dismissed, and the students marched to the Fieldhouse to hold a pep rally and honor the team.

The procedure was repeated in afternoon classes, with a repetition of morning results, except in the School of Law, where a serious attempt was made to stop the rioters.

The celebration continued until late Monday night, when failing enthusiasm gradually ended the holiday. Next morning, classes met regularly as usual.