

# Wet and dry

BY WALTER EMERY

A debate team and I left Norman, February 28, on the longest debate trip ever undertaken by the University of Oklahoma. You should have seen us at the train the morning of our departure. Not having travelled extensively, and not being very familiar with the inconvenience of carrying excessive luggage, we took practically all of our belongings, and everything that we could borrow. One of our suit cases was packed with all sorts of debate material. We had gathered it from many different sources. We had searched the library and extension department for every bit of material available. We were to discuss the subject of alcohol and we sensed the need to carry with us plenty of evidence. Whether the material had been thoroughly digested I will not say, but at least we did give the appearance of knowledge when we opened the case and exposed its contents.

The other suitcases were bulging with miscellaneous articles of clothing and equipment. George Copeland, '31 law, included two extra pair of shoes in his paraphernalia. When quizzed as to the reason for his taking the extras, he replied that since the debate funds were rather low, he might have to hitchhike part of the way back and that the additional shoe leather might serve a good purpose. Not such a bad idea after all! Perhaps he did wisely but before we finished the trip we were all convinced that walking back bare-foot would not be much worse than carrying heavy grips all over the country.

You can imagine how thrilled we were that morning we got on the train bound for distant points in the east. Our first stop was at Topeka, Kansas. We had scheduled a debate with Kansas Agricultural College and it was to be held in a Unitarian church in Topeka. The Oklahoma debaters did not feel so happy when they learned that they would have to condemn prohibition before a church group in the dry state of Kansas on Sunday evening! But they did not worry much about it. Fortunately for them, it turned out that the members of the church were very liberal-minded on the subject of prohibition and quite willing to listen to both sides of the question.

Hicks Epton, '31 law, opened the debate by suggesting that the subject under

consideration was one on the lips of multitudes of people today, namely, the subject of "beer." Though you wouldn't think it would happen in a church, Mr Epton received a big round of applause. From then on there was not a "dry" moment during the whole debate. One of the most interesting parts of the program was an open forum which followed the debate proper. Members of the audience were allowed to make short speeches, and to ask questions of the debaters. You may be assured that several of the listeners took advantage of the opportunity to clear up inconsistencies and unconscious prevarications made by the speakers on both sides. They were highly pleased with the open forum discussion. I found this type of debating to be quite popular in the east. It has a two-fold advantage. In the first place, it encourages thoroughness and exactness of preparation on the part of debaters, and also stimulates and sustains interest of the audience by making it possible for all present to take an active part in the discussion. Because of this added feature the Kansas debate proved to be one of the most enjoyable debates on the trip.

Our next forensic encounter was with Washington university at St. Louis. Before the debate, we did a little sight seeing. Not having been used to such congested traffic back in Oklahoma, we had some difficulty getting around. On one occasion we rushed into the street, and barely avoided getting run over by a street car. Mr Epton, with that famous Sooner smile, looked up at the motorman and said: "Pardon me, Mister." The motorman curtly replied: "That's all right, just so you don't do it again." From then on we carefully avoided street cars, for certainly we did not want to antagonize motormen and hold up traffic.

It was lucky for us that we were not run over, because Washington university certainly did treat us royally while we were there. The debate was held before the executives and the employees of one of the largest department stores in St. Louis. Again, the boys discussed the subject of prohibition, but this time they defended the eighteenth amendment. It was too bad for the boys again. You recall that the Wickersham committee reported that St. Louis was wringing wet, and we soon

found that people working in this store were proud of the report. The chairman of the debate, who was one of the executives of the firm, remarked in the beginning that really there was only one side to the prohibition question, but that it was kind of the Oklahoma team to take the dry side. Well, this was not so encouraging, but it could not stop Mr Copeland. He opened the debate by suggesting that he was glad the chairman had such an open mind on the subject, and that he hoped he would be able to supply that mind with information that would prove that the eighteenth amendment should not be repealed, and that neither he nor this country was all "wet."

The debate was made even interesting by the fact that a stenographic report of the discussion was taken, and this report is to be published in the 1931 *Debater's Annual* edited by H. W. Wilson and Co. and sold to debaters all over the United States. It is a distinct honor for the University of Oklahoma to be represented in this annual publication.

From St. Louis we went to Washington, D. C. and there had a radio debate with George Washington university. Again the Sooners upheld the cause of temperance. They had been talking temperance so much that Mr Epton cut down his coffee to one cup a meal. They were beginning to believe in prohibition and did not mind telling you that they believed in it. The radio debate was one of the most interesting to which I ever listened. Both teams did excellent debating. Mr Copeland and Mr Epton had had quite a lot experience speaking over the radio, and were not disturbed in the least by their appearance before the microphone, and since they had debated on the same subject several times before, they were well prepared to give the congressmen in Washington and the Wickersham committee some new points on the liquor problem. Some of the legislators actually congratulated them, and, by the way, some of the wet senators commended their debating.

We visited the capitol. We were taken through the different parts of the building by a guide, and as we went through he explained to us its history. He demonstrated most effectively the folly of giving memorized speeches. His explanation appeared to be more mechanical than spontaneous, and when Mr Copeland asked him a question not covered by his excellent discourse, he was quite disturbed and almost forgot his speech.

He took us around to the supreme court chamber, where the supreme court was in session. The distinguished jurists were hearing arguments on a case involving the adjudication of over \$500,000,000. No, I didn't stretch the figures one bit. To debaters from Oklahoma, who were working their way through college at thirty cents an hour, this was a huge sum, and the thought of it almost staggered us, but not

so with the supreme court. It was just another case to the veteran judges.

There was Justice Holmes, ninety years old, sitting on the bench, and may I say he appeared to be physically active, and mentally alert. The lawyers who argued before the court were quite convinced of the fact, especially when the old gentleman saw fit to interrogate them upon some fine point of the law. Judge Brandeis seemed to be asleep most of the time until he would ask a very pertinent question on some point, and show the attorneys that he was more awake than they were. Chief Justice Hughes added much to the dignity of the body. He kept his eyes constantly on the lawyer who was speaking to the court, and every now and then he would pop a question that would confound the most able spokesman. We left the court with the feeling that if any tribunal could administer justice this tribunal could.

We could not leave Washington without seeing Lincoln memorial at close range. We had contemplated it at a distance, so we approached it for a closer inspection. The government made no mistake when it built that monument to the memory of Lincoln. Thousands of peoples pass in and out of it each year and are inspired by its grandeur. We stood within its high walls and beheld the huge statue of the great Emancipator. Then we read his famous addresses incised around the walls. We read them slowly with greater feeling and with more interest than ever before.

As we started to leave one of the debaters remarked that he would like to have a picture of himself standing in front of the statue of Lincoln, and the guard replied that we would have to move the statue first, so needless to say, we didn't take the picture.

We stayed in Washington as long as we could, and then headed for New York. We had heard a lot of stories about that big city. We didn't know what might happen to us when we got there. We had heard a lot about pick-pockets so when we got off the train we tried to keep away from everybody. I never saw so many people in one area in all my life. They were running in all directions, and a man had to be careful to keep from getting run over and tramped to death. Upon our arrival, a bunch of men rushed at us as if to over-power us and take possession of our suit cases. Having heard stories about thieves, gangsters, and thugs, in New York, we held on to those grips, and carried them to the hotel ourselves. We weren't taking any chances so far away from home!

When we got settled in the hotel the boys began to sort out their material for the next debate. By this time they had debated the prohibition question enough to be full of the subject. We had not been around the hotel very long until we discovered that most of the people in New York were full of beer, instead. We talked

with several persons about the eighteenth amendment, and some of them had nearly forgotten that we had such a thing. Those that could remember, thought that it was a farce, and that the sooner we repealed it the better it would be, and the higher the grade liquor would be. We were "reliably" informed by taxi-drivers that there were thousands of places in New York where whiskey was sold over the bar for fifty cent a glass.

These reports did not excite the Oklahoma debaters very much, and in the radio debate with New York university they staunchly defended the eighteenth amendment. They decried the efforts to repeal it, and informed the people of New York that there were still a few sober citizens in Oklahoma and other places. I don't know what the reaction of the radio audience was, but the announcer of the station seemed to think Oklahoma won the debate, principally because as he said that Mr Epton had "sex repeal" in his voice.

The next evening we went out to Fordham university to plead the cause of temperance again. There were at least six hundred students present for the debate. We had learned that most of them were opposed to the dry side of Prohibition, and in fact we were told that ordinarily they hissed debaters who argued for temperance. But we were pleasingly surprised at the very cordial reception received. They seemed to be quite fair-minded on the subject and seemed to enjoy the discussion of both sides. The debate was a formal affair, and the debaters came out on the platform in long dark gowns. Mr Copeland had never worn this particular kind of gown before and he felt that his style was somewhat cramped. Once he got started though, he made an excellent showing, and convinced one of three "wet" judges that this country ought to be dry. He could not persuade the other two judges, since one of them was an ousted prohibition officer, and the other was a congressman who had been elected on a ticket advocating the repeal of the eighteenth amendment. The Fordham debate was one of the most interesting ones on the trip.

Our general impression of New York was that it is the busiest place in the world. We came away with the feeling that life in Oklahoma, even with its "probes and immorality," was much more spacious and pleasanter, than life in the highly commercialized city of New York. Maybe H. L. Mencken was right when he said: "Colonial Planters on the banks of the Potomac were housed in a fashion fit for gentlemen. When men begin to live in houses as coldly structural as step-ladders then they will cease to be men, and become mere rats in cages." This is a warning to New York.

We escaped from the bustle and confusion of New York, and headed further north. We stopped at the little town of

Rumford, Maine. There the Oklahoma debaters met Bates college in a debate on chain stores. It was a very good setting for an argument on this subject, since the town was just full of chain stores. The night of the debate, the town hall was jammed full of people. It seemed that the whole population had turned out for the discussion. The community band was there and played some music to start off the program. The chairman of the evening took charge and he certainly did perform his part in an excellent manner. When he got through introducing the Oklahoma debaters with his flowery oratory, I hardly recognized them. They hardly recognized themselves, in fact. When the boys got through with their arguments, then the real debate started. The citizens of the town began to make speeches for and against the chain stores. They began to ask questions, and the debaters tried to answer some of them. Suffice to say it was nearly eleven o'clock before we got through, but we thoroughly enjoyed the whole affair, and it was an inspiration to us to see so much interest taken in a debate.

Our debate with Bates college was over. Our next engagement was with the University of Maine. There the Sooners spoke to a crowd of three hundred students and professors. We were so cordially received that we will never forget our visit to that fine educational institution.

On our way back to Oklahoma we stopped at Harvard university for a debate. Albert Kulp, '30 arts-sc., a former debater for Oklahoma, and now on the coaching staff at Harvard, met us and took us around the campus and entertained us in a way that made us feel perfectly at home. Albert is certainly making a name for himself at Harvard, and we soon discovered that he was the main coach around there. We talked to several professors and students and they were greatly pleased with the work he was doing. It made us feel good to know one of our own Oklahoma men was doing so well. Mr Epton and Mr Copeland were determined to make a good showing to hold high the standards of Soonerland. They did some of the best debating that I heard them do on the trip. Albert's team was well trained and prepared, both teams demonstrated that they knew the subject of Chain stores pretty thoroughly.

From Boston we came through Virginia, and stopped at Lexington, for a debate with Washington and Lee university. I have never received such fine hospitality in all my life as we received there. The students were really glad to see us. They took us out to the Natural Bridge, just a short distance from Lexington. There was one of the most thrilling sights I have ever seen. We were amazed at the magnitude of that bridge, and when we got down under it, we heard beautiful strains of pipe organ music and it seemed to be coming

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Now the score was Kansas 30, Oklahoma 29 and Doctor Allen was taking long draughts from the Jayhawk water bottle as the crowd bellowed insanelly.

Two minutes of time remained. Kansas had the ball. Its players tried to stall but were hemmed in beneath their basket by the Sooners, in whose blood the virus of victory now flowed strongly. A Sooner slapped the ball from a Jayhawker's hands and first one team then the other carried it up and down the floor. Then the indefatigable Graalman passed perfectly to Anderson who took one dribble and scored. Oklahoma led by a point!

Now Oklahoma retreated to its back court to stall and it was the turn of the Kansas players to charge down the court and get the ball. Only a few seconds were left to play. Kansas shots were striking all around the Sooner goal but they were thrown too hurriedly. Then little Grady swooped down upon a loose ball, swept it up with one hand and dribbled up the floor.

A path seemed to open for him as he sprinted past the center circle, bouncing the ball fast in front of him. Now his way was clear. Another player in white was hot on his heels. It was Anderson. Grady drove straight for the basket and laid the ball squarely in the ring but is refused to be tamed and leaped out like something wild. But the roar of disappointment from the crowd became a scream of joy when Anderson, closely pursuing Grady, lifted himself into the air and flipped the descending ball back into the meshes. Then the gun and with it the hilarious realization that Oklahoma had broken its long losing streak and won, 33 to 30.

It was a game not to be forgotten overnight. Details of it doubtless still linger in the minds of those who saw it. Grady's pugnacious yet clean curbing of O'Leary that second half, holding him scoreless. Meyer's stern guarding of Bishop. The cold ferocity with which Graalman threw himself into every play. Anderson's quick breaking and his deadliness on short shots. Beck making those four long goals as easily as a fellow cutting himself a piece of pie.

And three weeks later this same Kansas team won the championship of the Big Six conference.

McDermott's men had slain another giant.

The Missouri defeat at Norman, the arithmetic of which has already been described, resulted in Captain Meyer twisting his ankle so severely that he was held out of the Iowa State game. Those Iowa State players came to Norman fresh from conquests over Kansas State by 46-31, over Missouri by 29-19 and over the league-leading Nebraskans, 42-28. They were cocky and straining at the leash. With Meyer out it looked bad for the Sooners.

Oklahoma was leading, 18 to 17 late in the second half when Coach McDer-

mott made ready to replace Roberts with Hatman. In fact Hatman had peeled off his sweat clothes and was crouching at McDermott's side for instructions when Roberts began an exhibition of driving and shooting that resulted in McDermott's leaving him in the contest and culminated in a Sooner victory, 26 to 21, and six field goals for the tall Deer Creek boy. Grady Jackson did an excellent job of guarding that night.

A trip into the north brought a victory over Washburn college, of Topeka, 30 to 27, and a defeat by Nebraska, 30 to 41, after which the team returned home to face the Kansas Aggies in the last contest of the season. The Wildcats needed a victory to tie Nebraska for second place. They had overwhelmed the Sooners 35 to 15 at Manhattan five weeks earlier.

They didn't do so well in the Fieldhouse. The Sooners were capturing Cronkite's tip-off so regularly that they ran up a 20-to-8 lead at one point of the contest and held a 33-to-18 advantage in the second half. Kansas State had lost Alex Nigro, its captain, in the first two minutes of play through an ankle injury yet when George Wiggins, a substitute guard, went in late in the second period he led a Purple rally that saw the courageous visitors pull up to within four points of Oklahoma at the gun.

Graalman's seven baskets set the scoring pace with Beck, Grady and Meyer feeding nicely and Roberts restricting Cronkite to three goals.

Practice for the 1932 season has already begun. Each afternoon at the Fieldhouse Coach McDermott and the outstanding freshmen performers, who will be varsity squad members next year, toil two hours daily. Few spectators watch as the black-shirted yearlings sprint up and down the court, trying to master the intricacies of the block and pivot, for the fans are naturally fed up on basketball and want to see the outdoor sports.

Perhaps the freshmen basketekers, too, are fed up on basketball and would much rather pound a tennis ball or stroll shirt-sleeved down a locust lane with a co-ed on one arm. It's almost a cinch that McDermott would welcome a temporary divorce from the sport. However he isn't satisfied with the team's showing this past season so the long spring practices go on.

There are easier ways of spending an April afternoon.

## WET AND DRY

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right out of those huge rocks. Mr Copeland looked for a pipe organ, but there was no place for one out there. So we began to ask questions, and found out that the Western Electric Co. had installed a musi-

cal apparatus near the top of the bridge and that that was responsible for the pipe organ music we had been hearing.

We went back to the college, and that night we debated on our favorite subject of prohibition. The debaters from Washington and Lee let it be known in no uncertain manner that they were opposed to the eighteenth amendment, and that if a man wanted to drink a little that it was his own business, and it was apparent that he was expressing the sentiments of most of the student body. Mr Epton rejoined by saying that it would not be so bad if they would drink just a little, but the fact was that before prohibition most people who drank didn't know when to stop. They replied "that some people ate too much, and didn't know when to stop, but that we didn't hear anyone suggesting that we ought to pass a law against eating." So back and forth the arguments went, and when the debate closed the Oklahoma debaters were convinced that prohibition was a good thing, and the Washington and Lee debaters were convinced that prohibition was a bad thing, and the audience was convinced that hard chairs and seats were not suitable for a person to sleep in.

In spite of all the arguments in favor of drinking we left Lexington completely sober. We were in a hurry to get back to Soonerland. We had been away practically a month, and were getting kind of tired of travelling all over the country. We were glad to get back to the University of Oklahoma, and we arrived here with the feeling that in spite of the excellence of eastern schools, and in spite of the charges of immorality that this school was the best after all.

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## FROM THE OSAGE HILLS

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the reflection of trees and cattle crazily animated.

Then as the sun slides down the hazy blue bowl of the sky, the pastel colors of summer come forth to paint pictures never seen on canvas. The haze of heat softens the colors and outlines of the trees and the hills, until the former appear as indistinct clumps on the distant ridges and the latter seem intangible in mauve and lilac. They become more evanescent and unreal as the sun approaches the horizon and changes to orange, adding to the dream picture a touch of pink. The foreground is dotted with cattle, grazing with that detachment that is peculiarly bovine.

The heat of the day is over. Soon the great red moon appears on the eastern horizon, as material and distinct as a plaque of brass; brick-red as though scorched; climbing out of the prairie to liberate itself from the earthly heat.

It climbs higher and soon becomes a