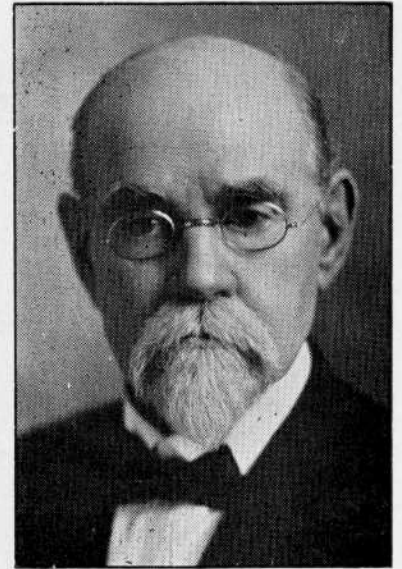


This is an article by William H. Witt, assistant director of the department of publications of the extension division of the University of Oklahoma, in commemoration of the eightieth birthday of Doctor Scroggs, who has had nineteen active years with the university extension division and a great many more in Oklahoma education at other institutions

## Dr. J. W. Scroggs

SOONER'S GRAND OLD MAN

BY WILLIAM WITT, '32



**T**HERE are a great many people in this old world of ours who begin at an early age to wonder just what they will do with the declining years of their lives. Peculiar as it may seem these thoughts present themselves more forcibly to the individual in the prime of life, sometimes as early as thirty-five years on the turn of the wheel of life.

Joseph Whitefield Scroggs, "the grand old man of Oklahoma education," has turned 80, eight decades of active living, and yet he is not an old man, still young at eighty. Being only "as young as you feel," is a very appropriate axiom to use in the illustration of this man's attitude toward life.

Ever new day means another ten hours of activity for Dr. Scroggs, who spends a major portion of his time in his workshop at his home in Norman. Many younger men who look in their mirrors daily for the discovery of new wrinkles or mayhap an outcropping of grey hair brought on by half imagined super-sensitive cares of business and family life, should take a tip on life from Dr. Scroggs.

A good many of us believe, with the greatest sincerity, that when a man has reached the dark side of 60 years in life, it is time he retired and devoted his time to toasting his shins before the fire in a comfortable old arm chair. But not so with Dr. Scroggs, who believes that a man, "should learn all he can and do all he can" all of the time. That's why he's young at eighty.

Few men have lived as active and varied a life as this "grand old man," who has been such an influence in Oklahoma education for so many moons. Although he finds more consolation in his workshop puttering now, it has only been a few years since he was showing

the younger "upstarts" a thing or two about golf, pool, and motoring.

When he was 60, Dr. Scroggs had his bicycle well broken in, and through any kind of weather, he pedalled his way to his office in the old science hall at the university where he held the whip and reins as the director of the extension division.

Dr. Scroggs was born October 26, 1852 near Greenfield, Missouri, where as a lad he learned a genuine appreciation of nature. With his varied tasks as the handyman about the farm, Dr. Scroggs learned several arts, among them carpentry. Today he has fallen back on one of his earliest accomplishments for his chief amusement.

He received his A. B. degree from Lafayette college, Pennsylvania in 1875 and during the two years following taught in the public schools of Greenfield. His ability as a musician was brought out when he was called on to conduct the old time musical conventions for the surrounding country. He also conducted orchestras in every school in which he taught. His ability as a composer through many years of service in the field of education will be perpetuated in his piano compositions, among which are: "River of Life," "Love and Death," "Forever With the Lord," all sacred anthems and "Honey-moon polka," a lighter piece. His interest in promoting community singing in the small communities of Missouri served as a background for his work with the extension division in building community spirit in Oklahoma.

Following his tenure in Greenfield, Dr. Scroggs served as superintendent of schools at Pierce City, Missouri in 1878 and '79.

His entrance for the first time into the field of Oklahoma education was

marked by his work as a missionary educator to the Cherokee nation in 1879, where he founded the Worchester Indian academy, located at Vinita, which was then in the old Indian Territory. During his time spent in Indian education, which was until 1884, he built a church for the academy and edited the *Indian Chieftan*, a newspaper which he founded. Here is merely another evidence of his versatility. His experience as a newspaper man prior to his work in Vinita had been that of a youthful reporter for a Carthage, Missouri newspaper, where he gained valuable lessons in setting type by hand, which served him well with the Indian Territory paper when he wrote, set up and printed his own paper.

Dr. Scroggs' work as an educator was recognized by the Congregational church organization in 1880 when he was ordained as a minister. Since he was the whole show in Vinita, he was called on to serve as the minister of the Union church.

From Vinita he was sent to Rogers, Arkansas, as the principal of the Congregational academy, serving there until 1898, when he assumed a similar position with the Southern Kansas academy at Eureka. He was with this institution until 1904, but found time to take work in the Washburn college, at Topeka, where he was granted his honorary D. D. in 1902. In 1904 he came to Oklahoma educational fields as a professor of philosophy and education for that famous old Oklahoma school, Kingfisher college. Dr. Scroggs, an independent Democrat, was an influential man in the fight for statehood and his influence in securing a broad program of education for Oklahoma was felt on many occasions in those early days.

Dr. Scroggs was a loyal alumnus of

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Miss Martha Watson, Pi Phi, Tulsa, band queen for Homecoming day and Hugo Goetz, band major, who rode in the band car together during the parade

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### 1929

Spencer Barefoot, '29as, '31M.A., who taught English last year in a junior college in Lyons, France, is teaching French in the junior college at Seminole.

### 1930

Victor M. Marsh, '30eng, of Sayre, has been appointed assistant coach at Phillips university at Enid.

Victor Waters, '30as, '32law, is engaged in the practice of law in Mangum, with temporary offices with H. M. Thacker.

### 1931

Key Wolf, '10as, '31M.A., former head of the Cheyenne River agency in South Dakota, has assumed the position as principal of the Fort Sill Indian school at Lawton.

This is Charles Durham Bird, five months old son of Dr. and Mrs Ralph Durham Bird, 215 South Webster, Norman, born July 7. He had his eyes open and perhaps he is contemplating future work in zoology with his professor father

### 1932

William A. Rigg, '32pharm, has recently moved from Taloga to Dacoma, where he and Loyd Copeland have opened a drug store.

Judson Leeman, '32as, is attending the Episcopal Church Seminary this year under a scholarship. He was awarded the scholarship by the seminary on the basis of his college work. He is studying for the ministry and plans to attend the seminary three years. His address is 175 Ninth avenue, New York City.



### DR. J. W. SCROGGS

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his old college, Lafayette, of Easton, Pennsylvania, and in 1910 returned there to be presented with his M. A. degree, granted after the presentation of his thesis, "Religion and Reality," an attempt to identify the spiritual world with the Noumenon of Kant, the great German philosopher.

In 1913 he came to the University of Oklahoma as the director of the extension division, and then began the work of laying a firm foundation for one of the most extensive plans of spreading education throughout the state to all citizens, and more particularly to those who are not permitted to take up work in residence at a college or university. Since 1927 the scope of extension work in Oklahoma has grown by leaps and bounds, showing an increase of more than 50 per cent in the number of per-



sons and communities served. Dr. Scroggs served in this position until he was 73 in 1925, which was three years past the normal age a man is expected to continue with active work in an institution of higher learning. Even when Dr. Paul L. Vogt, took the position as director of the extension division in 1926, Dr. Scroggs was active enough to take the job as director of the department of publications for the extension division.

During his early days after college, Dr. Scroggs had as a part of his work connections as an instructor in music in Springfield and Carthage, and has taught piano, organ, violin, clarinet and trombone. Further than that he is an author of some ability, having written in addition to a host of educational articles, debate bulletins and religious treatises, a book, one of his best known, called, "Complete Living," a volume which deals with all phases of life. In this Dr. Scroggs presents valuable suggestions for those desiring well rounded lives.

His work in beginning community institutes for the extension division has been a great factor in the development of community spirit. The ideas expounded by this man have been developed for the good of town dweller and farmer, and the institute has been influential in bringing a closer understanding between farmer and business man. The musical inclinations of Dr. Scroggs have brought community singing as a means of increasing this spirit of friendliness between the community factions. Dr. Scroggs has written "Songs of Lafayette" for his alma mater, and "Oklahoma Community Songs."

Leslie Salter, '21as, '22law, is making a national success with the United States department of justice. He is an assistant United States Attorney General and lives in Washington, D. C.

The list of titles and membership in organizations reads like the decorations of a French general and some of them are: member of the National University Extension Association, National Academy of Visual Education, American Academy of Political and Social Science, American Association for the Advancement of Science, Oklahoma Academy of Science, American Spelling Reform Association, Oklahoma Foundation of Public Welfare, Oklahoma Memorial Association, Oklahoma Educational Association, and last but not least, he is a Phi Beta Kappa.

Dr. Scroggs is of Scotch ancestry which accounts probably for his love of the old Scotch game of golf, or for his activity. The American progenitors of the Scroggs family settled in Pennsylvania in 1771, and General J. E. Scroggs, a great uncle of the subject of this review, went forth during the Revolution as a patriot, rising to the rank of brigadier-general.

When on October 26th of this year, the eightieth birthday of "the grand old man" rolled around, Mr T. M. Beard, program director for WNAD, the university radio station, commemorated the anniversary for the university by presenting a tribute for Dr. Scroggs to the radio audience. A special orchestra program was dedicated to him also. True to form, Dr. Scroggs traveled over to Stillwater on that day for a banquet in his honor given by the Oklahoma A. and M. college, where Schiller Scroggs, a son of this educator, "like father," is director of administrative research for the college. At this time a greeting from the university extension division, signed by Dr. W. B. Bizzell, the presi-

dent of the university, and Dr. Vogt, the dean of the extension division, was presented.

And thus the years of eight decades have been filled ladies and gentlemen, and what greater memorial could be suggested than the evidence of progressive education in Oklahoma, in which this man has played such an important part in the formative years?

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## TO SAVE THE STADIUM UNION

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their unpaid pledge is standing in their way to returning to Norman to enjoy a football game," Mr Hutto observed. "Many people pledged more than they could afford; and more than that, conditions have changed considerably now from that time when the pledges were made. If these alumni who have pledged were permitted to give only a dollar toward their pledge, it would give them a happier feeling and it would tide the project over a very critical time. I do not think that we should try to force people to pay; when an alumni obviously cannot pay anything on his pledge, we should recognize that his first obligation is to his family. But there are many alumni who can pay and who ought to be given the opportunity to do so."

Executive board members will be responsible for their districts. They can organize them as they see fit. The plan most favorably discussed is for the board member to name county chairmen.

The bond payment on the Stadium Union due April 1, 1933 is \$21,000 principal and \$9,487.50 interest. It is hoped to raise around \$7,000 on back pledges, the athletic association to pay for \$10,000 of the sum due and the rest to be supplied from pledges and fees.

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## BOOK-OF-THE-MONTH

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to brew his coffee. Breakfast ready Mr Mathews would sit down to eat. But, frequently as not, he would start writing, and many were the meals that sat cold and uneaten as the spirit moved in the writing of *Wah'Kon-Tah*.

Gradually, it became known about the reservation that Mr Mathews was writing a book about the Osages. Gradually, Indian after Indian dropped in or called for him, to add their bit to his own knowledge and the Major's notes. Out of all of these sharings came the inexpressibly beautiful *Wah'Kon-Tah*, of which Harry Emerson Wildes of the *Philadelphia Public-Ledger* declared had