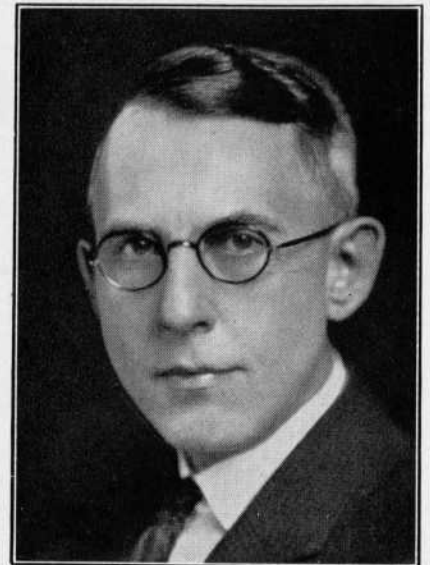


"He'd rather edit an Oklahoma paper than any paper you could give him in the east and he'd rather sit down in an easy chair and talk about great stories that have broken in Oklahoma and about the colorful characters of the southwest, than the exciting days of the Democratic convention in Chicago"

George B. Parker, '08

BY MAUREEN McKERNAN

In the "Standard-Star" New Rochelle, New York



GEORGE B. PARKER, of Mount Kisco, is proof of how styles in editors have changed. Imagine a Horace Greeley or a Joseph Medill without whiskers!

A generation ago, no reader would have placed the faintest trust in a newspaper whose editor was a smooth faced, boyish looking individual with the drawl of the southwest still clinging to his speech.

George B. Parker is boyish looking, and he's editor-in-chief of the twenty-five newspapers of the Scripps-Howard organization which stretches across the continent.

When a new editor-in-chief was needed, the powers that be reached out to Texas for George B. Parker, an Oklahoman, thereby giving some weight to the statement which native New Yorkers do not like—that the east gets its brains from the middle west.

Though he spends much of his time in the east, he thinks middle western journalism is the most exciting and most satisfying. Talk to him half an hour and an ambitious reporter might want to turn his back on New York and the big cities and hie to some booming western town to become a local James Gordon Bennett.

BORN IN MICHIGAN

Mr Parker was born in Utica, Michigan, and spent his boyhood there. The summer after his graduation from high school he started out to see the world by going to visit his sister, the wife of the head of the Latin department of the University of Oklahoma, at Norman.

Oklahoma, still a territory, so fascinated the boy from Michigan that he would not go home. It was nearly twenty years before he left the state and still,

he says, Oklahoma is the place he loves the most. He'd like to have a home on its sun drenched prairies, perhaps rather than the lovely, old colonial mansion that is now his home on the Pleasantville Road, outside Mount Kisco. He'd rather edit an Oklahoma paper than any paper you could give him in the east and he'd rather sit down in an easy chair and talk about great stories that have broken in Oklahoma and about the colorful characters of the southwest, than the exciting days of the Democratic convention in Chicago. And he was behind the scenes throughout that whole convention in his professional capacity.

CALLED HIM DEACON

He entered the University of Oklahoma and was graduated in the class of 1908. He was a Kappa Alpha, Southern, and his fellow students called him Deacon. He made a friendship in college that is partly responsible for his love of the southwest and is entirely responsible for his being a newspaper man. The friendship was with Walter Ferguson, jr., son of the last territorial governor of Oklahoma, Walter Ferguson.

Governor Ferguson, in addition to being a politician was a newspaper editor and his son, when he left college, ran a little paper in Guthrie, the territorial capital.

STIRRING TIMES

George Parker visited young Ferguson while the convention was in session in Guthrie, which drafted the Oklahoma state constitution. Fists flew and names were called during that convention when a wordy civil war waged over the question of removing the capital to Oklahoma City. Young Ferguson, as editor of the leading Guthrie newspaper, was in the midst of it, and the excitement of

those stirring times made a newspaper reporter out of George Parker.

Walter Ferguson, jr., has since deserted his traditional profession to be a banker, and in his home in Tulsa he has the best collection of historical Oklahoma documents, mementos and keepsakes to be found anywhere. The college friendship between George Parker and Walter Ferguson continues unabated to the present.

HIS CUB DAYS

Mr Parker got his first job as a reporter on the *News*, in Oklahoma City, a paper founded by Scripps-Howard in 1906. He married a girl he had known in college, Adelaide Loomis, of Norman who was a member of the faculty of the university at the time of her marriage. In the beginning he covered all sorts of assignments, as all young reporters do, and in the end he was editor of the paper. The most fun he's ever had in his newspaper life was when he was a reporter for the *Oklahoma News*.

Those first years of Oklahoma's statehood were grand, exciting days for young newspaper men. The cattle thieves and the bad men of the old territory were still plentiful and active and bad men of those days were more colorful characters in their horseback riding, two-gun shooting ways than the dope choked, machine gun experts of today.

One big story of those years George Parker still remembers with keen relish and pride and pleasure. That was the story of Henry Starr, the most colorful and famous bandit of the southwest since Billy the Kid.

A COLORFUL FIGURE

Henry Starr was a bandit with a beguiling personality. He once was grant-

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saved the Osages from cultural extinction and which Henry Seidel Canby, editor of the *Saturday Review of Literature* said that "One aspect of life as it was actually lived on this continent... will have its best memorial in *Wah'Kon-Tah*. It is a book about the good earth of America."

In New York Mr Mathews was well received. Lewis Titterton, who broadcasts for the National Broadcasting company on "Characters and Books" interviewed the author November 6 over the N. B. C. station WJZ. There were other honors for him before he returned to Norman November 17.

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GEORGE B. PARKER, '08

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ed a pardon by President Theodore Roosevelt and at another time was pardoned from the Colorado state penitentiary. Each time Starr would turn over a new leaf—but always, after a little while, an epidemic of bank robberies would break out in his vicinity and the hunt for Henry Starr would be on again. About 1909 or '10 when Oklahoma was in the throes of a Henry Starr hunt, the governor offered \$1,500 for him, dead or alive. Banks were being robbed all over the state, and though no one had seen Henry Starr, the papers of the state gave him credit for being on a new rampage.

The editor of the *Oklahoma News* had a theory that the newspapers were all wrong and that Henry Starr was not in Oklahoma. George Parker was sitting at his desk pounding out a dope story along that line one afternoon when his phone rang. The call was from a former classmate who was then starting his business career carrying ice water up and down stairs in his uncle's hotel in Stroud.

A "LITTLE" EXCITEMENT

"Say, Deac," said this classmate's voice over the phone, "we had a little ex-

Norman is rapidly expanding eastward on Main street. This is a view of newer downtown Norman as you turn onto Main street from the Oklahoma City-Ardmore highway

citement here just now and I happened to think about you being on a paper and I thought you might be interested. Henry Starr's just been shot out in the street. He robbed our bank."

Just like that—a story to make a young reporter famous, all his own, hot off the plate, within a few minutes after it happened.

The famous bandit had been brought down by a single shot fired by an excited clerk in a hardware store who had fired at random through a show window, at the group of galloping horsemen who were then storming down the street in a getaway—and that one shot brought down the prize bandit of the gang.

HIS EDITORIAL RISE

From reporter Mr Parker was advanced to city editor, and finally to managing editor of the *Oklahoma News*, in 1914. In 1920 he was sent to Cleveland to run the *Cleveland Press*. From Cleveland he was sent to Houston, Texas, as editor in charge of the Scripps-Howard papers of the southwest, which include those published in El Paso, Houston, Fort Worth, Oklahoma City, Albuquerque and Memphis. Since 1927 he has been editor-in-chief of the entire Scripps-Howard organization.

Last year Mr and Mrs Parker moved to Mount Kisco. They have bought land in Lawrence Farms and will build there.

Meantime they occupy the old Daly home—the big colonial mansion in front of which the stuffed elk used to stand—on the Pleasantville Road, next to Mount Kisco golf club. Their 18-year-old son, George B. Parker, jr., and their 16-year-old daughter, Mary, attend Scarborough school on the Vanderlip estate and both are going to be newspaper reporters when they finish college.

Mrs Parker's present interest is Westchester history and she already knows more about the county than a lot of our natives. Mr Parker plays a little golf, not so well, and doesn't care.

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NEW UNIVERSITY DEBATE FORUM

(CONTINUED FROM PAGE 83)

forty-four entries were listed of which twenty-five new men were selected making the university debate forum, containing the senior and junior divisions, comprise a squad of thirty-two members. On October 20, try-outs for the women's debating teams were held to select ten members. Their program will be conducted along the same lines as the men's.

Informal and formal discussion of various subjects will be held within two groups. Leading men on the campus will be invited to lead the forum on timely topics of the day. As the plans for the forum take place the department intends to publish a university forum magazine in the form of a monthly bulletin. In this magazine analysis of various timely questions will be prepared and will also include articles by leading professors on the campus, members of the public speaking department, and others.

It is interesting to note that last year the members of the university debating squad maintained an A- average in all scholastic work.