

Perhaps the most brilliant show in Oklahoma is that written by those two clever Sooners, Dave Shackelford, '23 journ., left, and Mike Monroney, '24 journ., right. The Oklahoma City Gridiron dinner has become an annual institution and this year drew capacity houses in both Tulsa and Oklahoma City

## Gridironers

BY BETTY KIRK, '29



OKLAHOMA'S best show is home talent. It is written, directed, produced and staged in Oklahoma by those two local boys who for their fifth year have made good. If you've ever seen a Gridiron banquet staged for members of the Oklahoma Press association in Oklahoma City—if you've ever even heard of it or read of it—you must know that I speak of Mike Monroney, '24 arts-sc., and Dave Shackelford, '23 journ.

These successful playwright-producers had their first training in their university days when they co-operated in the writing and acting of the Sigma Delta Chi Gridiron which has since vanished from the campus scene. The cast of the state Gridiron now reads like a Sigma Delta Chi roll call and a cross section of the university school of journalism graduates.

The first of these annual affairs was held in Oklahoma City in 1927 for about 300 editors and guests. The 1932 Gridiron played in Oklahoma City to 700 guests on January 22 and in Tulsa to 600 guests on February 6. Oklahoma's home talent show went on the road and played to capacity houses in the two largest cities in the state!

"But what is it all about?" you may ask.

Briefly, it is this. Several years after graduation Monroney and Shackelford decided that there was just too much happening in state politics to be missed by the old Gridiron spirit and they sug-

gested to W. R. "Bill" Martineau, editor of the *Oklahoma Livestock News*, that a stunt be presented at the annual meeting of the State Press association in Oklahoma City. Martineau thought it would be good entertainment. He consented. Monroney and Shackelford got to work and the result was the first State Gridiron banquet, held in 1927 just after the "Ewe Lamb Rebellion," and titled "Desire Under the Helm." It was a wow.

These two, and their newspaper associates (Monroney was then reporting on the *Oklahoma News* and Shackelford on the *Daily Oklahoman*), put on such a burlesque as had never been seen in Oklahoma before. Everyone who saw it raved about it, they wrote in early for tickets the next year, and all their friends tried to get in too. The crowds increased, tickets were at a premium, and when the second one was staged many who couldn't buy seats clamored for standing room.

These stunts have become so famous for wit and satire that admission to them now is considered the greatest privilege, and the lucky people getting bids are glad to pay through the nose for them. Why? Because the show is worth it!

The second show was titled, "Like Al You Did;" the third, "Detours of 1929;" the fourth, "Depressions of 1930" and the fifth and last one, "The Bells of St. Murray's."

No dignities are respected, no weaknesses spared when the Monroney-Shack-

elford team gets into operation. Though both have since left newspaper work they are still in position to keep behind the scenes of our political times and their "noses for news," developed over a good many years, are always on the scent for good Gridiron copy.

It would be difficult to analyze all of the elements which go to make their shows so successful. The first, perhaps, is burlesque, always effective as a method of satire. The second is the timeliness of their exposures. The third is the complete fearlessness with which they thwack any famous neck which may be even the least bit out. The fourth is the keenness with which they are able to detect motives which actuate organizations, departments, or individuals, no matter how clouded they may be by guile and diplomacy.

Not the least, however, of the elements contributing to their success is the use of doggerel for their script. Verses which fairly rock along, which turn many a deft rhyme, and which are completely surprising in their irreverent jibbing. Samples are the lines from "The Bells of St. Murray's," apropos of the toll bridge war:

*The war's to start promptly at eight.  
Bring thousands of kodaks—don't be late.  
We'll charge like soldiers—our fair state  
to save.*

*There'll be plenty of shooting (for photographers brave)!*

Though it is inevitable that each show

(TURN TO PAGE 187, PLEASE)

Plenty of fresh air, sunshine and an indoor swimming pool for exercise are considered basic ingredients for happy childhood, at the same time their use as curative measures has been utilized at the Crippled Childrens' hospital. The large carefully equipped swimming pool is shown here.

Under the Oklahoma crippled children's law of 1927, the school of medicine is given the responsibility in conjunction with the state health department of conducting free general clinics each year for the purpose of examining crippled children.

The rehabilitation work among crippled children in the state has grown with such rapidity that it was necessary to build the hospital several years ago. It stands on the school of medicine campus, an imposing tribute toward the earnest work the state and the Crippled Childrens' Society are doing. For the calendar year 1931 to 1932 there was a total turnover of 2,674 patients in the hospital. Patients committed under the crippled childrens' law numbered 1926.

Despite the fact that the Crippled Childrens' hospital has a monthly turnover of more than two hundred children, there are usually on the waiting list approximately 250 children. There are about twenty colored youngsters awaiting admission to the colored ward of University hospital. Rotary and Lions clubs throughout the state give their whole-hearted support toward the work of the society. The Hospitality club of Oklahoma City, as well as many other organizations, has done much toward making hospitalization of youngsters pleasant at the hospital.

A large swimming tank has been completed at the hospital, and according to Miss Ella Smith, curative play teacher, the medical staff is availing itself of the water tank as an adjunct to other kinds of curative measures. "The greatest factor in bringing about improvement in the case of a small child is the pleasure he derives from the various play stunts. Many infantile paralysis cases, with weakened muscles in arms, legs, and backs, have, while with us, learned to swim without assistance, and are continually trying to perform feats of unusual swimmers," explains Miss Smith.

School is conducted at the hospital, too, in order that the little patients will not be lacking in mental poise, on their release from the hospital.

A complete program for crippled children has been outlined as follows:

Locate crippled children continuously. Get expert diagnoses to them in all parts of the state promptly. Secure a proper distribution of beds for acute, convales-

cent, and custodial cases. Furnish adequate social welfare and follow-up service, and parent co-operation. Provide specialized medical and surgical care. Make proper use of special therapies and appliances. Safeguard the quality of all types of service rendered. Educate all at home, in school, in special classes, in convalescent institutions, or wherever they may be. Make available vocational guidance and training as well as placement service which will secure and safeguard remunerative employment. Provide the funds to pay the costs of all services. Keep the general public interested through the human touch which enlightens and enlivens everybody to the importance of the rights of crippled children and the economy represented in fitting them into normal life.

▲ ▲ ▲

## GRIDIRONERS

(CONTINUED FROM PAGE 178)

seems better than the last one when a survey is made of the five successive performances "The Bells of St. Murray's" totals the best entertainment of all. This can be accounted for by the elaborate use of music—theme songs, quartets, ditties, choruses, and even a *grand finale*. Music furnished by Bonnie Spencer's orchestra, familiar to many Sooners, and especially adapted to skits. Music which added to the revue quality of the performance and which revealed quite surprisingly good vocalizing on the part of the newspapermen, trained to write rather than sing.

That it was too good for Oklahoma City to enjoy alone was the decision of the Tulsa Press club and after hearing their scouts' reports on the opus they sent such an invitation to hospitality as could not be refused. A whole floor of the Mayo hotel was reserved for the newspaper men and their bus was escorted in and out of town by a police escort.

Newspaper comment on their performances tells best how they were received:

If 600 weary Oklahomans are chuckling over their breakfast coffee this morning there's ample excuse. "The Bells of St. Murray's" are still ringing in their ears. It was the Tulsa Press club's first gridiron dinner and it was a howling success—ask any of those 600 howlers who jammed the Mayo hotel's Crystal ballroom last night! They fought for seats and then they fought to stay on them as the banquet wise-chucked its way through three uproarious hours of a convulsive program. *Tulsa World*.

Our best bow to the working newspaper men in the cast who presented the most delightful evening of comedy that will be experienced in Oklahoma City until the same gang gets together next year to deflate some of the as yet uncertain happenings of the young year 1932. . . . Back of the night's show was a month of hard work on the part of the cast. Beyond that was the genius of the authors, Mike Monroney and Dave Shackelford, whose hard labor and clever results ought to produce them something more than love and affection. It was grand entertainment, a long evening packed with laughter. . . ."

Walter Harrison in *Oklahoma City Times*.

It was a swell party, from canape to curtain call, and it was hard to tell which had the best time, the cast or audience. The oft-thronged chamber of commerce dining hall bulged to encompass something like 800 people, and there were about 200 others who didn't get there quite on time, seated in an "overflow" room. Those amazing young men, Dave Shackelford and Mike Monroney, the authors, had a cinch in writing the 1932 show. The year which they passed in review has been of such almost-comic opera quality that it was only necessary to put the entire business in rhyme and there was your perfect program. *Oklahoma News*.

They enacted the show which was a sensational success in Oklahoma City last month. A Tulsa act or two was added, putting a top to the clever main show that delighted the biggest banquet hall of guests in the city's history. *Tulsa Tribune*.

Alumni who were members of the cast were: Merwin Eberle, Merle Blakeley, Dick Pearce, Paul Kennedy, Frank Wilkins, Ed Mills, Dan Delaney and Larry Sisk.

▲ ▲ ▲

## MEDICAL ADVANCES AND MODERN TRENDS

(CONTINUED FROM PAGE 182)

intimate and most responsible of relationships which by nature exists between the faithful physician, and his trusting patient.

In summarization, then, it may be said that amplification of medical education, with emphasis on clinical training, standardization of schools, hospitals, nursing, and medical organization, together with development of medical centers and research, and the establishment of bureaus for detection and prosecution of frauds, the analysis and approval of drugs, the suppression of unethical advertising in first class journals, together with the decline of quackery, and waning of the cults, and self-medication, marks the status of the parent body of medicine today in its turn from empirics to scientific research and preventive methods of the Twentieth century, well begun.

In the compilation of this brief medical survey, the essayist is wholly obligated to his colleagues for the better part of the facts and phraseology, among whom is to mention: Dr Leroy Long, Dr L. J. Moorman, Dr A. L. Blesh, Dr Lea A. Riley, Dr W. W. Rucks, Dr Everett S. Lain, Dr Gayfree Ellison, Dr Wann Langston, Dr Ray M. Balyeat, Dr Rex Bolend, Dr John A. Hatchett, Dr John E. Heatley, and Dr N. Price Eley.

▲ ▲ ▲

"The Paradox of Russell" an article written by Dr Charles M. Perry, head of the department of philosophy, appears in the March issue of *Standard*, publication of the American Ethical union. It is based on the lectures and discussions of Bertrand Russell, British philosopher, who visited the university in November.