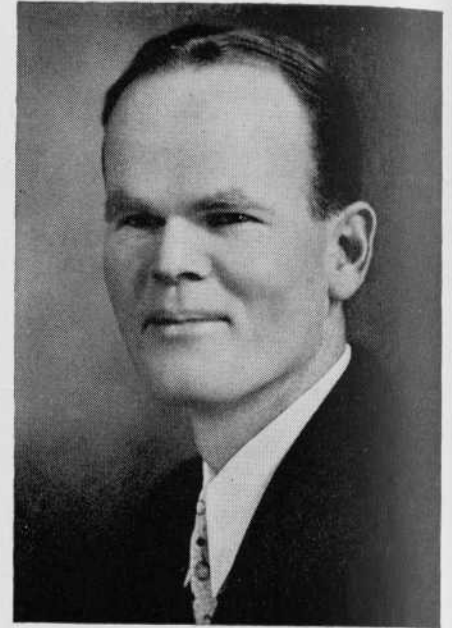


George McElroy (left) and Barney Burns, both middler lawyers, represented Oklahoma in the debates which are to be used in the Wilson Handbooks this year. This is the second time that Oklahoma in recent years has been selected for inclusion in the blue book of debate

## Debate laurels

BY WILLIAM H. WITT, '32



**I**N spite of a reduced budget which would ordinarily have clipped activities fifty per cent, the university debate team has enjoyed one of its most successful seasons during the school year 1932-33, which will soon be written off the books as a "has-been."

As concrete evidence of the successful completion of one of the best seasons of debate work in the university, Oklahoma will be signally honored by having two briefs and two arguments of two different debate questions printed in *The Debater's Annual*, an H. W. Wilson Company handbook of debate. This is the second year that this honor has been bestowed upon Oklahoma, the first coming as a result of work done during the season of 1930-31.

At the beginning of each school year the publishers of this annual select leading universities throughout the country, and in some instances, foreign universities, where it is known that special emphasis is placed on a unified program of debate activity, to prepare special debates for the annual. Although the company selects the teams, both affirmative and negative as a general rule, they do not select the question, but stipulate that it must be one of timely interest.

Since the debates are published and distributed throughout the English speaking world, every college team entered makes a special effort to produce worthwhile material. It is obviously of worth to other debaters, but the value is of more importance to the individuals who search through volumes of lore, and timely periodicals to secure the material for their arguments.

It is somewhat unusual that Oklaho-

ma should be accorded the privilege of recording two more debates in the annual, in that this company strives to increase interest in college debate programs in various sections of the country through the selection of new teams each season.

During the season of 1930-31, the university had as its topics for the annual the two questions of great importance, namely; Resolved: "That the Eighteenth amendment should be repealed," and Resolved: "That the federal government should purchase and reforest sufficient farm lands to eliminate crop surpluses."

The university debaters, Hicks Epton and George Copeland, took the negative argument of the Eighteenth amendment question in a debate with Washington university of St. Louis. During the same season Epton and James Robinson debated the negative side of the federal reforestation question opposed by the University of Kansas debaters.

Following in the footsteps of their predecessors, who have passed to pursuits beyond the campus, two new debaters on the Oklahoma squad, George McElroy of Stillwater and Barney Burns of Carlsbad, New Mexico, were assigned the task of preparing the first debater's annual debate on this season's schedule.

On March 31, these two talented speakers stood on the stage in the administration building auditorium of the University of Arkansas at Fayetteville, and declared against the question, Resolved: "That Congress should enact legislation for the federal regulation of the electric power utilities." The Arkansas team upholding the affirmative of the question was W. D. Murphy, jr.,

and Eli Paul Leflar, effective speakers, and worthy opponents for Oklahoma's seasoned speakers.

The purpose of the handbook debates is to provide for the use of debaters, seven or eight model debates annually, and for this reason the majority of the debates are non-decision.

Later in the month of May the university will have its second recorded handbook debate with Baylor university of Waco, Texas, the teams to debate the question, Resolved: "That the Stimson doctrine of non-recognition of the territories acquired through violation of treaties should be condemned." The Oklahoma boys will take the negative phase of the question. Officials in charge of the preparation of model debates this year permitted Walter Emery, university debate coach to select his own opponents for this second debate.

It will be seen from a perusal of the list of colleges and universities in the last two debate annuals, how Oklahoma ranks in the field of organized debate programs. Among the universities preparing and publishing model debates were University of Kansas, University of Oxford, University of California, University of Georgia, University of Porto Rico, Washington and Lee university, University of Tennessee, Vanderbilt university, University of Arizona, University of North Dakota, University of Missouri, American Institute of Banking, University of Wisconsin, Purdue university and last, but not least, Oklahoma.

During the season just closed, the university has prepared material and debated nine major questions, among them:

(TURN TO PAGE 256, PLEASE)

fluence of the court, which will bring you success in many a close and hard fought legal battle. Remember that law is the savior of society, that without it we have anarchy, each man fighting his neighbor. With it we have peace and peaceful adjustment of misunderstandings and dispute.

▲ ▲ ▲

## DEBATE LAURELS

(CONTINUED FROM PAGE 246)

the Stimson doctrine, public utilities, war debts, Monroe doctrine, taxation, recognition of Soviet Russia, limitation of the number of students in colleges, and the soldier's bonus. Opposing schools have included Universities of Mexico, Arkansas, Kansas, Missouri, Baylor, Iowa, Nebraska, and Washington. The Oklahomans attended the Delta Sigma Rho tournament in Iowa City early this spring where they met and debated teams from fifteen mid-western schools.

Realizing the importance of debating for every student, both from the standpoint of acquiring a knowledge of important questions of the day and being able to make a successful delivery of knowledge gained, Coach Emery during the current season has expanded his squad to greater numbers than ever before. At the present time there are twenty-five students on the squad. In order that his inexperienced men might have an opportunity to gain valuable practice, Coach Emery instituted the plan of conducting extension debates before various civic clubs over the state utilizing two teams from his squad at each debate. Business men over the state have responded to this plan most favorably as a means of gaining the fine points of timely topics for their own enlightenment. This additional touch to the debate program has paid its own way in that the clubs entertaining the speakers have provided funds for the expenses of the trips.

In line with his plan of broadcasting programs so that it will be of benefit to a great number of students, Coach Emery is considering plans for the establishment next season of a debate union on the university campus patterned after the Oxford Union, where students and faculty members will meet at regular intervals for debates on important questions of the day.

Demonstrating the value of intensive research and the presentation of important questions of the day, Mr Burns and Mr McElroy in their key debate with the University of Arkansas based their conclusions and arguments on three major points of the electric utilities question. First, "that additional federal regulation is unnecessary," second, "that additional regulation would be contrary to the public good," and third, "that such regula-

tion would be politically and economically unsound."

In opening his argument as the first speaker for the negative, Mr McElroy stated that the rapid expansion of the power industry to the point where it is able to serve the farmer and the small community as effectively as it does the larger community was not due "to any action similar to the rubbing of Alladin's magic lantern, but to years of tireless and painstaking efforts on the part of the holding companies. In his definition of a holding company Mr McElroy stated: "a holding or a management company comprises a group of individuals familiar with the industry, highly trained technicians, who have the supervision of not only one, but ordinarily, of a dozen or more utilities. They make possible the efficient and economical operation of utilities through buying the requirements of a number of utilities, whenever purchases are made, thus providing a greater purchasing power and lower prices; by giving the small companies the managerial advice and experience which would otherwise be available only to the larger utilities; by ability to obtain money cheaper through the credit rating of a number of utilities; and by being able to render expert engineering and construction services at a minimum cost, which might otherwise be cost prohibitive to the smaller units." Mr McElroy pointed out that the utilities were already sufficiently regulated through various state and federal boards, and cited as an example, the state corporation commissions, called in some states, the utilities commissions.

Continuing the argument for the negative Mr Burns stated that although there was no provision in the Constitution authorizing the government to engage in business, that the federal government was engaged in operating some 232 various businesses and services. He pointed to federal regulation of the railroads, which had cured some of the evils of railroading and added "that the railroads of today are very weak sisters."

Mr Burns said: "It is wholly within reason to say that the utilities having passed the boom stages may find themselves slowly improved and regulated to death just as most of the common carriers have. Some of the leading writers even go so far as to predict that the next few years will find the federal government taking over ownership and control of the railways in order that it may be repaid the vast loans given by the Reconstruction Finance Corporation.

"My next point is that such regulation would be politically unwise. We are all aware of the already overburdened system of government. A recent magazine article states that if the present trend in government is continued one out of

every two citizens will be employed by Uncle Sam in 1960."

Mr Burns showed that the additional regulation would be paid for ultimately by the consumer, and that a federal commission for the regulation of utilities would be less satisfactory than the state commissions in that the federal group would not understand local problems.

Both speakers indicated that the matter of inter-state regulation could be handled very easily, and was being done, in as much as the state regulation of power lines began at each state boundary, and that any company would be subject to the regulations of the state in which it was operating.

These points merely illustrate the depth of the research and comprehension of difficult questions of the day, as presented by university students who have taken their spare time from regular class work and preparation to work out debate topics.

Debating is an extremely important extra-curricula activity and perhaps in the near future it may become a vital part of the regular curricula of colleges and universities throughout the land.

Certainly with the proposed expansion of the program on Oklahoma's campus and its availability for a greater number of students assisted by the seasoned knowledge of faculty members, debating is destined to become a very vital item in the lives and activities of those at the university.

▲ ▲ ▲

## THE NEXT BIENNIUM

(CONTINUED FROM PAGE 233)

best form of scholastic rivalry—a race of the colleges themselves for distinction, by the day, would prove a good rival for competitive college athletics.

And I would suggest in this connection that such a system would at once do away with such foolish tests as attendance and endowment in determining the right of schools to recognition. From all past experience we know that it is the product that tells the tale of education as in all other activities of life.

Another advantage would lie in giving the independent colleges that are under religious control additional freedom to enforce their own tested ideas of discipline. Far from discouraging them from giving their students moral training and instruction, I would encourage them in both; always keeping in mind the rights of the personal conscience. As a matter of fact, too little attention is now paid to character-forming influence in state education.

Such a plan of co-ordination would have another advantage, one now fully recognized by the Universities of Harvard and Chicago, that of permitting exceptionally brilliant students to graduate as soon as they are able to pass the academic tests.

It has always seemed strange to me that such students are forced to the expense of a fixed number of years of college residence, during which they are held back to await the slower progress of others, and thus, kept from their work in life. By such a plan, too, even if the tax-supported colleges lose students to the independent group which I think might be the case yet the enrollment of the Greater Uni-