

Martin Heflin, editor of "The Bandwagon," sparkling prosateur, radio book reviewer, and challenger of the depression. He hitched his Surrey to a star, and it still gleams after nine months of economic fog, political earthquake and financial moratoria

The New Yorker of Oklahoma

WHILE Oklahoma City was vainly trying to "turn the corner" in the warm summer of 1932, and Hooverism was making a last valliant stand for the "fundamental institutions of the country," Martin Heflin, ex '28, challenged the depression and sired a literary infant that by now has established itself as one of the more fundamental institutions of the capital city.

To continue the metaphor, *The Bandwagon*, that inimitable journal of wit and satire of Oklahoma City, sprang fully armed from the jovial brow of Mr Heflin and found a place in the laps, so to speak of polite folks anxious for tidbits of local flavor that the press and platform had so far been unable to furnish delectably.

There were many retired rancheros with a taste for the *bon ton*, and business men of substance and taste, who shouted "bravo!" and said within themselves "good things, alas, are born to die young: hail and farewell to *The Bandwagon*." The enterprise was too civilized, it was believed. Besides, who could afford tasties when the clipping of coupons had almost ceased and business had entrenched itself for the long wait until the return of cash in the forties?

Mr Heflin and his *Bandwagon* have proved so far the ancient wag of confounding prophets confounded. In short, *The Bandwagon* has gone through nine issues, and April will doubtless see a tenth. On the principle of laughter among friends, it has spread mid-depression cheer through a highly civilized but sorely tried community, giving to a now sizeable list of subscribers the benefit of a hearty guffaw as institutions less necessary than laughter have withered and waned.

For such is *The Bandwagon*. It is entertaining, but its entertainment is designed for the smart set and for the Junior League. The ideals of *The New Yorker* were the guiding lines of conduct when the magazine was conceived and while the magazines are cousins in purpose and content, Mr Heflin has given the magazine an original flavor which is his own. He felt that there was much in the intimate life of Oklahoma City and the state which was not told in the newspapers but which was deserving of more extended and closer treatment.

The Bandwagon is always stimulating; it arouses either ire or amusement. The "Man About Town" is sometimes rather merciless with foibles, always on the *qui vive*.

And so this clever "New Yorker of Oklahoma" has established itself in the face of what the financial journals call "general declines" in commodity values, and despite heat, cold, tempest and the moratorium. The editor himself would doubtless explain it in terms of "long-felt need finally satisfied, etc." But the explanation hides the retiring quality of genius.

The truth of the matter is that Mr Heflin is a Sooner. Perhaps he has imbibed more of the quality of tenacity than he imagines from a community that has had to win its place in a western sun through efforts thrice repeated. This is not to deny his efforts thrice repeated in other communities. These, too, have had something to do with the zest with which he has entered into the pioneering field of the western magazine of class. And thereby hangs a bit of biography.

Mr Heflin, in the quaint phraseology of the west, pulled up his stakes and left



WATTON STUDIO

the University of Oklahoma in 1927. Manhattan claimed him almost at once, and in that forest of spires and towers he devoted his energies to magazines that, in his own words, were worthy but lacking in the quality of permanence. Real-estate in those halcyon days held a lucrative position in the east, and Mr Heflin in time became engaged in it. As assistant to the president of the particular real-estate company in question, he learned, as all assistants do learn, much about his chief's business. He discovered, in short, that the land his employer was promoting was eleven feet under a lake somewhere in Alabama.

Discouraged a trifle by this experience, he transferred his services and became special representative for the general sales manager of the New York Telephone company. He served in this capacity for two years, and again the urge of the plumed pen claimed him: he left his position to write free-lance stories and publicity in New York and Washington. Then a jump to the literary staff of the *New York Herald Tribune*, where he worked under Irita Van Doren, editor of "Books," until he came back to Oklahoma to start *The Bandwagon*.

Such was the varied training in business and writing that Mr Heflin had immediately before he embarked upon the sea of Oklahoma publishing for the *haut mond*. There are anecdotes that point a moral and might very well adorn this tale. During the great manhunt in the Lindbergh kidnapping case, for example, Mr Heflin was the only newspaper reporter finally to contact the "mystery man," Morris Rosner, who acted for Colonel Lindbergh as a go-between with the underworld. Heflin, who had known Rosner slightly in Washington, D.C., nearly a year before,

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PRAISE



NEW YORK TIMES — "One thinks of Miss Cather's Archbishop, although her book had more conscious literary quality and less intimate acquaintance with the subject."

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WAH'KON-TAH

by JOHN JOSEPH MATHEWS, '20

University of Oklahoma Press, Norman

THE KENTUCKY MINE WAR

(CONTINUED FROM PAGE 205)

type of men work for them. They want the union stamped out and are not scrupulous in their methods as long as their end is accomplished. It would be impossible for them to hire respectable and honorable men to starve miners and their families by blowing up soup kitchens and destroying food. Undoubtedly many of the bullies in their pay commit outrages for which the operators are not directly responsible. But men have always been careless of the rights of their natural enemies no matter how civilized they may have become. It is to the interest of the operators that the strike be broken; so any crime committed that contributes to this end is winked at or is only casually investigated. The furtherance of a crime which makes a man's job more secure or on which his job depends is usually condoned or approved by him. A man is always interested in justice for himself but seldom for his natural enemy. Self interest clouds the vision and impairs the judgment of the operators and their friends. This characteristic of human nature is what makes it possible for the Harlan county cutthroats and ordinarily law abiding exponents of the sacredness of property to work hand in hand.

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THE NEW YORKER OF OKLAHOMA

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persuaded Rosner to let him snap pictures, which were released exclusively by one large newspaper syndicate at the climax of the case.

Travel? Very much, admits Mr Heflin. Like Conrad, he went to sea and to see the world very early in life (without his parents' permission). His many trips to Honolulu as a young sailor almost entitle him to wear the leis. He discovered, much to his chagrin, on signing on a vessel once that its destination was Alaska. Since then his caution in buying travel passage has been remarkable.

Mr Heflin, who is a Phi Delta Theta, is assisted by Wayland Boles, '31 journalism, associate editor, and George W. Knox, jr., Wisconsin and Oklahoma (1926), business manager. George H. Willis, jr., ex'26, has contributed many of the notable pictures and drawings in *The Bandwagon*.

The editor of *The Bandwagon* makes his home in Oklahoma City, is married (Eugenia Gable Heflin), and has one son, Martin Ganier Heflin.

In addition to his solid work in the editorial chair of *The Bandwagon*, Mr Heflin also finds time to review current books over radio station KOMA each week. His training in New York and elsewhere for this work has given him particular fitness in it, and his listening public may safely be said to run into the thousands.

by

Joseph A. Brandt

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