

This is the first of a series of articles by William H. Witt, '32, assistant director of the department of publications of the extension division, about people on the campus of the University of Oklahoma who do not come under the spotlight very often. These people are decidedly interesting. Their achievements have been unsung, yet they are constantly making places for themselves in their respective fields, by adding to their stores of knowledge and their interest in their fellow men. The first of this series of articles is an interview with Major Harry J. Maloney, commandant of the university R. O. T. C. unit

Major Harry J. Malony

BY WILLIAM H. WITT, '32

HE extended the glad hand of fellowship—there was a warm glow in his eyes. He smiled and I smiled as he related one of his incidents relative to his varied experience as an army man. The formality was gone, and we swung into the narrative with a great deal of interest. And during the interview of more than an hour it was interesting to note the fighting spirit of the Irish outcropping as Major Harry J. Malony reminisced of those trying days of the World war. A laugh at the humorous events in his life during that period, and a serious mien uppermost as he thought of some of his buddies who went west during those days.

The most thrilling novel I ever read now seems dull indeed after this story from the Major. During the twenty years that Major Malony has been in the service of the United States army, he has served in every branch, the infantry, the field artillery, the air corps and the ordnance branches. The Major is reticent about blowing his own horn, his achievements have been recognized, but he is not the man to talk of them. Direct questions receive direct answers.

But Major Malony has faith in youth. And therein he is willing to talk. This tour of duty as the commandant of University Reserve Officer's Training Corps unit, is his first in direct contact with the training of young college men for national defense, but the highly important work of arming airplanes during the World war was accomplished by the Major with a staff of young men, in fact he tells me that the average age of the men, some 3,200 of them, working in his ordnance section was but twenty one years. Young men are able to adapt

themselves to the changing conditions. They are willing to accept and develop the new, and that is progress, Major Malony believes.

Perhaps you would like a background for this story, the history of a man's man. A man who is popular with his men, because he is cheerful and genial, and knows his business. Accomplishments in his lines have made him an expert, efficient and well versed.

Although Major Malony spent the major part of his youth in the east, being a native of New York state, he has spent a great amount of time in the west and southwest and has the westerner's viewpoint of democracy and love of fellow man.

He was born in Lakemont, New York, and entered Yale university in 1907, intent on pursuing a course of engineering in structural steel design. His love for engineering is still apparent, and when he gets the time, he will surely develop some of his ideas for mechanical design.

The thrill of West Point, the love of adventure, probably the Irish cropping out again, led him to the national military academy in 1908, and he graduated from the army school on the Hudson in 1912 with high honors. His first assignment was the Panama Canal zone as a second lieutenant, while that great engineering feat was being accomplished. He was in the tenth infantry, and although he was anxious to get his hands into the engineering equipment, he assumed his status as a commander of troops and as a result took his share of an engineer's fun anyway. The principal work of the troops in the area was the task of mapping and surveying the



interior of the Canal zone. There were many additional moments' excitement, and among them the supervision of elections in the zone, guarding of the locks and gates of the canal, and for the officers the task of handling the ports at the canal's opening and the general work of planning a system of defense for this area. Much of this work was carried on in the interior, and the young Lieutenant Malony had his first taste of tropical life.

During this three year tour in Panama, Lieutenant Malony was assigned to a mission of buying horses on the Island of Jamaica, which was an English possession. While there he took the dreaded dengue fever and learned of the declaration of war between Germany and England and France. He wanted to get home, and the war department wanted to get him home, for he had been ordered to report to West Point to teach Spanish. The shipping to Jamaica was stopped and the ports closed; it was some time before Lieutenant Malony could get home. When he did get away the war department decided that he should report to the 26th infantry on the Texas border to assist in quelling the Mexican banditi trouble, when Villa and his cohorts were stirring things up. Lieutenant Colonel Theodore Roosevelt and Lieutenant Colonel R. L. Bullard were on duty at the border, when on New Year's day of 1915, First Lieutenant Malony joined for his second major tour of duty. Major Malony recalls now that John L. Alley, then a captain and now head of the university's department of government, was on duty at the border while he was there. Major Malony's first experience as an authority on arm-

ament came when he was detached to duty with the Fourth Texas infantry where he organized the national guard machine gun companies. During this period Lieutenant Malony was on the go practically all the time, rushing from Brownsville to Eagle Pass and back again. Shortly after his success in the organization of machine gun outfits, he was ordered to Harlingen, Texas, where he established a machine gun center of instruction. He stayed on this job until 1916 when he was transferred to the Third field artillery at Fort Sam Houston, Texas, marking his change into the third branch of the army service. He was in Fort Sam Houston until the United States declared war in 1917, and was then ordered to Springfield, Massachusetts to again engage in the problem of armaments at the United States armory. At the Massachusetts armory, he was distinguished by being made a member of a board which selected the machine guns which would be manufactured for American troops in the World war service. The board selected the Browning types of light and heavy machine gun, which is now standard in army equipment.

Following this duty he was assigned to the Springfield experimental station and started a school for machine gun repair men and mechanics. In this work Malony was associated with Major Willis who was working on the problem of air armament. Here the Major halts in his interesting narrative. Major Willis was a good friend of Malony's and in spite of his brilliant work, Willis went west in France through an unfortunate accident with a pistol, when an accidental shot put a cleaner through his heart. In Springfield Major Malony was also associated with Captain Leon P. Cole, who was working on machine gun armament for the marine corps. When the marines were ordered overseas Cole became a colonel and was killed in the Bellieu Woods encounter in France.

When Major Malony had laid the ground work for machine gun armament and had established his school at Springfield he applied for permission to rejoin the Seventh field artillery, his own outfit, which had been ordered to France. His request for transfer to France was granted, but on order from General John J. Pershing, Major Malony was told to report to the chief of ordnance in Paris, who in turn assigned Malony to service with the chief of the air service.

The chief of the air service assigned Captain Malony to one of the most stupendous tasks he had yet been confronted with in all the years of his brilliant service, that of supervising the design, installation, supply and maintenance of all articles of aircraft armament used in aircraft combat service on American planes. This position he held through-

out the duration of the war, except for a short time when he made a trip back to the United States in the interest of the Waldon mission, which had as its purpose the co-ordination in the manufacture of aircraft to meet the requirements of the American expeditionary forces. Malony was also detached for short periods of training with both the French and English air service, in order that a more nearly uniform system of armament might be employed for the allied forces.

Malony received rapid advancement during the war, being appointed as a captain on May 15, 1917, a major on January 12, 1918, and a lieutenant colonel on August 13, 1918.

Major Malony's work in France was as thrilling as any you may imagine. When news of a drive was received, Malony took to his plane and flew over the front line to make practical tests of his apparatus in actual fighting areas, and through an ability to make rapid time into front area, he was able to observe at first hand the majority of the important engagements.

He tells of one very amusing incident, an aftermath of his participation in the battle of Cambri. He had been forward to make some observations, and had landed, letting his plane return back of the lines. In a retreat that followed, Malony moved back with the English forces. With a cold rain pouring down, Major Malony was forced to borrow a marine's raincoat. Arriving in Paris the following day he went immediately to the Crillion hotel, where he was accosted by a quartermaster captain who reprimanded him severely for failing to salute. Although members of Malony's staff were present, they merely laughed at his predicament and refused to come to his rescue. In desperation, Malony finally told the captain that he was a lieutenant colonel, well the captain's face was really red.

When Malony arrived in France in 1917, and set about looking up his field artillery outfit, and was finally placed in the armament work, he came in contact with the English and French officers who were in charge of the same type of work for their respective forces. The English air armament officer was Lieutenant Garrett, who later was commissioned as a major, and the French officer was a Lieutenant Rene Lete. The French officer could speak no English and the English officer could speak no French, but Malony fortunately was able to come to the rescue and serve as an interpreter. Through a plan of co-operative endeavor, these officers interchanged ideas, supplies and guns for the general improvement of all allied planes.

Due to the fact that American planes had not been built to stand high alti-

tudes, a great amount of Major Malony's testing was done with English ships. On several occasions he had the pleasure of demonstrating armament before the king and the British general staff. He was associated in this work with Captain Wheeler, a specialist in the synchronization of aircraft machine guns through the propellers. Captain Wheeler was killed in the bombing of an English vessel which had started on a trip to the United States with Wheeler aboard. During these periods of testing, Major Malony was aboard an English airplane which dropped a bomb weighing 1,760 pounds over the German lines. There were only eight of these missiles dropped during the war.

Major Malony wears four decorations; the Mexican service medal awarded for distinguished service on the border; the distinguished service medal, which was awarded by former secretary of war, Newton D. Baker, on recommendation of General John J. Pershing; a French decoration, the order of the Black Star, which is a foreign branch of the French Legion of Honor; and the Victory medal, awarded by Congress for service in France. On the Victory medal are four stars representing his four major campaigns, the Noyon-Montdidier offense, the battle of San Mihiel, the Meuse-Argonne and the First Marne offensive.

With the termination of the world's greatest armed conflict, Major Malony was returned to Washington as head of the aircraft armament and small arms manufacturing divisions of the army and a member of the war department technical staff. When his Washington tour expired, Major Malony went to the Savannah, Illinois proving ground, an overhaul point for divisional artillery, where about ten divisions of field artillery armament used in the war were stored. In 1921 Major Malony was sent to the battery officers school at Fort Sill, his first trip back into the southwest after his Texas service. He remained five years as secretary of the field artillery school here and in 1925 and 1926 attended the command and general staff school at Fort Leavenworth, Kansas. In '26 he assumed command of the second battalion of the Seventh field artillery at Madison barracks, New York and found that the Seventh was made up of the old Third field artillery which he had left back in 1916.

In 1927 he was made a member of the general staff corp of the Fourth corp area with headquarters at Atlanta, Georgia, where he was an assistant chief of staff, G-1, or personnel and assistant chief of staff, G-4, supply section.

His first contact with the student cadet training came during this tour, when the Major served as R. O. T. C. officer of the area, and with the corp area com-

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another and she would drop the first pencil to the floor. Soon the whole pile would be on the floor and I would have to stop and put them back on the table and let the rotation of pencils begin again.

"A good deal of the first draft of 'Birth' was written in this manner. But when I got to the polishing details I learned that I must concentrate and I changed my method.

"Now I write four hours a day. During that time the baby is taken for a walk to the park with her nurse or is napping. I can devote myself entirely to the writing for those four hours. Then when I am through I can devote myself entirely to the baby. This system is better for both me and for Mary Ivonne."

So much has been said about the play "Birth" that it is not necessary to go into detail describing it. Its success both on Broadway and in the movie has been acclaimed by critics everywhere.

The scenes for the entire play are laid in the maternity ward of a large hospital where one finds the mother who wanted a baby, the mother who did not want a baby, the mother who died giving birth to a baby, the night club hostess who gave birth to twins, the mother who had had so many the event was not too exciting for her; in other words the high, the low, the rich, the poor, the sad and the gay aspects of the great human drama, birth.

A few of the interesting "quotes"

from criticism of the play have been selected from the vast pile of reviews Mrs Axelson loaned *The Sooner Magazine* for perusal.

Birth is an unusual, beautiful play, a brave play—fascinating to any audience. The author is to be commended for treating so sensitively, so poetically—I almost said "sacredly"—so delicate a subject.

GUSTAV BLUM, Broadway Producer.

All my congratulations on your fine moving play. You have taken a great human experience and translated it into sure terms of the theater... and I do not see how the play, just as it is, with a professional production, could fail to interest and excite every sort of American audience. I was on the edge of my chair from the minute the curtain rang up...

STEPHEN VINCENT BENET,
Poet, Pulitzer Prize Winner.

And of the movie:

Life Begins is the kind of picture which ought to make Hollywood sit up and respect itself.

THORNTON DELEHANTY in the *New York Evening Post*.

...A searching human document that will stir the heart and mind and soul of every man and woman that views it... and send them away with renewed faith and interest in the Motion Pictures...

PHIL M. DALY, *The Film Daily*.

These quotes were picked at random from a pile of others, each as encouraging to Mrs Axelson who wants to write more plays.

Mrs Axelson is the daughter of Mr and Mrs D. M. MacDougal of Sapulpa and the sister of Violet MacDougal, who has also made a name for herself as a poetess.

spending several years with the North Cheyenne tribe at Lame Deer, Montana, at the Tongue Ruler agency, she has developed an understanding and a love for the Indian.

One of the interesting things Miss Buntin has uncovered in her search is the census of the Sac and Fox Indians over a period of years. In 1846 they numbered well over 2000 and in 1868 there were but 693. As these censuses were compiled for the payment of money to the Indians it is thought they are authentic. This summer she visited the Cheyenne-Arapaho settlement at Concho, seven miles from El Reno. Here was found the outgoing mail files of that agency from 1870.

Letters from government authorities and famous Indians to station agents are being photographed and material collected by Miss Buntin is being used by historians of the state.

Mr Grant Foreman, director of research of the Oklahoma historical society says of Miss Buntin's work: "I have been surprised and gratified by her grasp of the historical significance of the material coming under her observation. She has shown a rare degree of initiative and a comprehension of the papers with which she is dealing that would be a credit to one long engaged in such work. I feel that the Oklahoma historical society will profit by the work being done by Miss Buntin."

Miss Buntin received the B. A. degree from Oklahoma College for Women at Chickasha and received the M. A. degree from the University of Oklahoma where she was pledged to Alpha Omicron Pi social fraternity.

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State history research student

BY SULA SALTSMAN

"GRIMY at times, but fascinating" is what Martha Buntin, '31M.A., says of her work as she takes down pack after pack of time-stained papers collected at various Indian stations throughout the state, sorting them on the floor of her basement-den and bringing to light a wealth of material on the history of Oklahoma.

Miss Buntin, employed as a research worker for the state historical society, is at the present time, working on Sac and Fox papers found in a barrel in the attic of the Sac-and-Fox fort, six miles from Stroud. Braving encounters with mice and digging down through debris, nests of mud-daubers and cobwebs, she found all the papers of the fort back to 1837, and a continuous record of correspondence since 1840.

In deep concentration while deciphering the queer and very small hand-writings of the various Indian agents and their correspondents, Miss Buntin often looks up with a bright, animated light in her eyes for these documents are such tangible records of the exciting days of Indian Territory that she sometimes forgets it is now past history. Her den in the basement of her father's home in Norman, furnished appropriately as a background for a collection of Indian relics, is conducive to such imaginative wanderings.

Her father, Mr J. A. Buntin, had been for thirty-nine years in the Indian service at the Kiowa agency, until his retirement last year. Playing with Indian children in Anadarko as a child and later

mander conducted inspections of the fifty-one R. O. T. C. units in the area.

In 1931, Major Malony was relieved and ordered to duty with the University of Oklahoma. He has had one successful year. He has practically leaped the hurdles of the second year and looks forward with a great deal of pleasure to a period of two more years here when 1931-33 has clicked off the calander.

Any one of the periods of service of the Major would make a complete story within itself, but the roamer is settled for awhile and you may hear of him later. But a busy man, with 1,084 basic students, 160 cadet officers, seven regular army officers and twenty one enlisted men to manage, has little time to talk, especially when the man doesn't like to talk about his own accomplishments.

MAJOR HARRY J. MALONY

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