

To the right is Joseph A. Callaway, '34ex, who appeared all summer and is continuing during the winter season with the Globe Theatre group of Chicago. Below is E. Van Heflin, '32as, who is back on Broadway this winter. On the opposite page is a scene from *The Gay Divorcee* in which Erik Rhodes (Ernest Sharpe, '27as) has a feature part. Rhodes, cast as an Italian professional co-respondent, is delivering an oration that Fred Astaire and Ginger Rogers fail to appreciate.



Behind the Footlights

ONE of the University's youngest schools—dramatic art—is establishing itself among the leading schools in the country both for its productions and for the actors it is contributing to the legitimate stage.

A half dozen young men who have been active in dramatic art presentations at the University in recent years are winning fame for themselves and establishing a reputation for Oklahoma's school of acting and production.

The Playhouse, theater group within the school, continues to improve the quality of its productions and to select a more im-

pressive group of plays for presentation each year.

The introduction of Erik Rhodes, '27as, to the movie loving populace of the country was a singular success this season with the filming of the stage hit, "The Gay Divorcee." Rhodes, whose name was Ernest Sharpe during his student days, signed a five-year contract after his first film and has been given popular approval of the movie critics.

Fred Astaire, popular dancer and singer who played with Rhodes when "The Gay Divorcee" was staged on Broadway and in London, also was in the movie, while Ginger Rogers was selected to play the part Claire Luce played on the stage. Rhodes—or Sharpe—is a member of Phi Beta Kappa, national scholastic fraternity, and also Phi Delta Theta, social organization, at the University.

The youngest of Oklahoma's actors is Joe Callaway, formerly of Ardmore, who left school last May to accept a position with the Globe Theatre in the English Village at the World's fair in Chicago.

Early in October, the Globe Theatre Shakespearean group had played before three hundred twenty-five thousand persons, appearing in more than one thousand performances. Seven or eight plays were presented each day and young Callaway had parts in each of them. The Globe Theatre has been called the sensation of the 1934 dramatic season by many critics who have found the Thomas Wood Stevens plays authentic reproductions of the Elizabethan drama as it was played three hundred years ago.

Among the dramas in which Callaway has parts are "The Taming of the Shrew,"

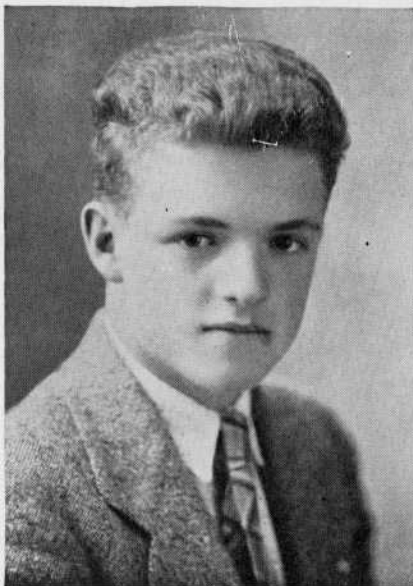
"Comedy of Errors," "Mid - Summer Night's Dream," "Julius Caesar," "Macbeth," "All's Well That Ends Well" and "As You Like It," all Shakespearean plays, and "Dr. Faustus" by Christopher Marlowe.

This fall the Globe Theatre players made a short tour through the north and are to return to Chicago where "Macbeth" will be filmed. Hollywood directors and technicians will go to Chicago to "shoot" the picture. Later in the winter, the company will open a westward tour and make a final stand on the west coast in the spring.

Callaway has played in numerous Playhouse shows on the campus and was playing the part of Absolon in Weir-Jensen's "The Witch" when Director Stevens saw him work. He was immediately impressed with Callaway's voice and stage technique. Stevens, who was in Norman, to address the seventh regional meeting of the National Theatre conference, offered the student a position.

Stevens also was impressed with the type of productions the Playhouse was presenting. He complimented Rupel J. Jones, director of the University school of dramatic art, on the excellence of the Playhouse shows. Jones, who is seventh regional chairman of the Theatre conference, was in charge of the campus meeting during the time Stevens was in Norman.

Another Sooner who is playing behind the footlights this season is E. Van Heflin, '32as, who came back to school three years ago to complete his work toward a degree after he had played in several Broad-



way shows including the popular "Mr. Money Penny."

This year Heflin opened at the Henry Miller with a part in the play, "The Bride of Torozki." Jean Arthur, the popular Broadway actress, was playing opposite Heflin.

While he was on the campus, he did fine pieces of work in "The Bill of Divorcement" and "The Swan."

Bill Miley, after three seasons on Broadway, has returned to the University this fall to enter the law school. His father is a prominent Oklahoma City attorney and young Miley decided that he would finish law school before selecting a lifetime profession.

Bressem Holtzschue, '34bus, is with the Pasadena Community Playhouse this fall and has been touring the west coast in a number of dramatic productions. He played in Ibsen's "Hedda Gabler" last year on the campus and also has had important parts in "Candida" and "Hell-Bent Fer Heaven."

This year, the University Playhouse has selected an impressive group of plays for presentation.

Molière's comedy, "The School for Husbands," was the first offering of the year under the direction of Larry Haydon. Haydon, who has been on the staff for four years, has produced O'Neill's "Marco Millions," Vega's "The Gardener's Dog," Rice's "The Adding Machine."

The popular Broadway show of last season, "The Double Door," will be presented November 23 and 24 by Director Rupel J. Jones. Jones, who came to the University three years ago, has produced "Children of the Moon," "Hell-Bent Fer Heaven" and several other shows.

John Dunn, a third member of the staff, has selected Sidney Howard's 1934 play,

"Yellow Jack," for presentation after the Christmas holidays. He directed "As Husbands Go" last season.

Miss Ida Z. Kirk, the veteran of the department, will produce Molnar's "Liliom" in late winter. Miss Kirk has a long string of successes during her many years on the Playhouse staff. Included in the group are "The Guardsman" in which

Bill Miley played, "The Bill of Divorcement" which was played by Van Heflin, "The Swan," Molnar's "Olympia" played by Josephine Landsittel, the best of the actresses in recent years and also "The Witch" in which Joe Callaway played.

A fifth Playhouse show will be produced in the spring by one of the four members of the staff.

Erik Rhodes

Known to Sooners as Ernest Sharpe, '27

THE screen has a new funny man, Erik Rhodes He makes his American film debut in RKO-Radio's musical comedy, "The Gay Divorcee".... His career is as funny as his character interpretations.... One of those careers where everything goes wrong but turns out just right.... He was born in El Reno of pure Anglo-Saxon parentage and educated at the University of Oklahoma where he became a Phi Beta Kappa and a Phi Delta Theta.... His name then was Ernest Sharpe.... Naturally, with all that occidental background and all that American culture he aspired to become a great leading man, a famous singer.... He made his plans and he worked accordingly.... What happened?.... You should hear Erik tell it.... Producers failed to take him seriously and the upshot of it was that he has interpreted practically every nationality in the world, from Chinese to Italian to German and has never had a chance to be his own American self.... In "The Gay Divorcee"

he's a comical, singing professional flirt.... He did the rôle so well that the studio gave him a five-year contract.... a clause of which says that at some time during that period the studio guarantees to let him interpret his own nationality at least once.... Erik is very proud of the fact that he accomplished his ambition by the force of his own labor.... At the University he won the Marion Talley Scholarship which took him to New York for a year of dramatics.... made his professional stage debut in a character rôle opposite Alice Brady.... the play was called "A Most Immoral Lady".... Rhodes is something of a linguist, speaking French, German, Spanish and Italian, and because of that accomplishment, he rapidly went from one fine character rôle into another to his greatest stage success.... the stage version of "The Gay Divorcee" in which he interpreted the same rôle he portrays in the picture.... The play ran for one year in New York and for six months in London and it was Erik's work in it that caused RKO-Radio to contract for his services at the time the screen rights were purchased.... Off the set Erik is a handsome, appealing, athletic sort of a man, not at all like the characters he portrays.... he is 5 feet, 10 inches tall, has brown hair and eyes and sings like a crooner or like an operatic star as the mood strikes him.... His hobbies are esthetic and athletic.... singing, piano and sculpture.... boxing, swimming, tennis and riding.... He is a truly masculine type because he hates getting up in the morning, dislikes brussels sprouts and goes for spaghetti by the yard.

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Miss Schenck New President

Birdina Schenck, '23as, bacteriologist for the United States Veterans' Administration in Oklahoma, is president this year of the Business and Professional Women's club in Oklahoma City.

The group, under Miss Schenck's guidance, will study the economic security of the country during this year's program. Sound education, the right to work and social justice are advocated by the business women, according to Miss Schenck.

