

Frank N. Watson, '13as, a loyal Sooner alumnus, is promotion director for the Texas Centennial Exposition at Dallas. A prominent Texan as well as an outstanding graduate of Oklahoma, Mr. Watson has swung into the tremendous task of building up Texas' great show that will be held this year.

## Sooner Directs Centennial

By CARL MANN, '35

A blue-eyed three-year-old youngster rode over the unbroken prairies of north Oklahoma Territory in 1893 with his mother, aunt and uncle sharing the uncomfortable jolts of a covered wagon's rough journey to what became Pond Creek. It was the historic pace to the Cherokee Strip.

The youngster was Frank N. Watson, not important enough in the territory's early struggle to carry a middle initial, but today he is promotion director of the Texas Centennial Exposition, a \$15,000,000 organization that will soon begin presentation of a panorama depicting the progress Texas has made since she battled her independence from Mexico a century ago.

Putting together the story of Mr. Watson's career is like working a Chinese cross-puzzle substituting Greek letters for oriental symbols. When he graduated from the University of Oklahoma at Norman in 1913 he had ambitions to become a lawyer, but the fact that he is not an average individual accounts for Mr. Watson not being wrapped in law books today.

He is just past 45 years of age with a shock of hair prematurely white. This chunky, mild-mannered promotion chief directs an army of newspaper, magazine and radio writers, businessmen and promoters from an office overlooking the 200-acre Exposition Grounds at Dallas, a park torn up like a battlefield by steamshovels and 5,000 laborers banging away in a mad rush to complete more than a half hundred giant exhibition buildings before the opening of the Exposition on June 6.

He was born on April Fool's Day, 1890, at Andale, Sedgwick County, Kansas, where his father Charles Watson operated a hardware store for many years. When the Cherokee Strip of Oklahoma Territory was opened for settlement the elder Watson decided to cast his fortune in Soonerland. He bought a race horse to carry him to his homestead site and a week

before he made the run with thousands of other settlers he sent Mrs. Watson and Baby Frank on ahead to the home of an aunt and uncle. Later they joined him at Pond Creek where he staked a claim and established a hardware store that he continued to operate until his retirement a few years ago. Mr. and Mrs. Charles Watson still make their home at Pond Creek.

When Frank completed his high school course at Pond Creek he was sent to William Jewell College in Missouri and after a year's study there was called home by the ill health of his father. He remained at Pond Creek two years managing his father's affairs and in 1909 entered the University of Oklahoma's law school as a member of the first law class.

His father's ill health again interrupted his schooling and in 1911-12 Frank stayed at Pond Creek in charge of the family affairs. He returned to O. U. in 1913, was elected president of his class and was one of the highest ranking students at graduation. Meanwhile he assisted the class of 1912 of which he was originally a member in the campaign that brought favorable legislative action providing the university with a law school building.

The Oklahoma campus will readily recall the Tobasco Club, an inter-fraternity social organization he helped to organize among students straining at the conventions of earlier day educational methods and who hankered for a livelier entertainment than was provided for in the usual round of formal affairs. It was an organization that caused the stern faculty many a headache.

Mr. Watson became a charter member of Phi Delta Phi, honorary legal fraternity, when it was organized at O. U. and became a member of the Order of Coif, another honorary legal organization composed of high ranking students in the O. U. law school.

Upon leaving the University, Mr. Wat-



son began the practice of law at Oklahoma City, remaining there from 1913 to 1917. In 1915 he was made assistant city attorney under Mayor Ed Overholser.

When the United States became involved in the World War he closed his law career and entered the second officers' training camp at Leon Springs, Texas, where he was commissioned first lieutenant of infantry. Soon after he was transferred to the aviation signal corps at Love Field, Dallas, a primary air training school and supply depot.

Two years at Love Field sent him through the posts of adjutant and aero supply and disbursing officer. He was commanding officer of the 465th Aero Squadron when the war closed.

Becoming a private citizen he was made secretary-treasurer of the Hedrick Construction Company of Dallas. In 1924 he organized the General Contractors' Association of Texas, a branch of the Associated General Contractors of America. He was general manager and executive-secretary of the association until 1929.

His next business venture was vice-president and general manager of the L. E. Meyers Company, a subsidiary construction company of the Insull public utility interests of Chicago.

Meanwhile, in 1925, Watson married Miss Kirtley Adams, daughter of Nathan Adams, president of the First National Bank of Dallas. Mr. Watson became associated with President Hoover's nationwide economic group, the banking and industrial committee. He was executive secretary of the organization in the Eleventh Federal Reserve Bank District in 1932 and in 1933 he became fiscal agent for a New York contractor on a large construction project in New York City.

He left that position in 1934 to become secretary of the Texas Centennial Central Exposition, Inc., a Dallas corporation that

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## SOONER DIRECTS CENTENNIAL

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is spending \$3,000,000 as its share for participation in the Exposition. He became promotion director in 1935.

Watson retains a lively interest in the University of Oklahoma and things Oklahoman, and assisted in organizing the O. U. Club of Texas and served as its first president.

One of Mr. Watson's favorite classmates at the University was J. M. (Bud) Gentry, chairman of the Oklahoma State Highway Commission. Both endured the growing pains of youth at Pond Creek. Mr. Gentry was also a member and co-organizer of the famed Tobasco Club when Mr. Watson was one of its leaders.

Recently Mr. Watson assisted in the initiation of his son, Louis A. Watson, student in the School of Commerce at Southern Methodist University, Dallas, into Kappa Sigma, the social fraternity that the father joined while a student at Oklahoma.



## WHAT 1935 SAW

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University and was replaced by Major Reese M. Howell as commandant.

Captain Lawrence "Biff" Jones—soon to become a major—was assigned to the University R.O.T.C. department as a faculty member. He was appointed football coach and director of all University athletics.

Although his Oklahoma team did not win a conference championship, it managed to win six and lose three games for the best record in nine seasons.

Other Sooner teams, however, dominated the Big Six conference and won six championships. In the spring, Coach John Jacobs' track team won the outdoor track championship. Coach John Moseley's tennis team won a championship. Coach Bruce Drake's golf team won the state title, the Big Six championship and tied for second in national collegiate team-play. Coach Paul Keen's wrestling team won the Big Six championship and took second in the national collegiate wrestling tournament, losing to the Oklahoma A. and M. college team. Coach Lawrence "Jap" Haskell's baseball team won a co-championship, sharing honors with Iowa State.

In the fall, Coach Jacobs' two-mile team won the conference championship at Manhattan, Kansas. The only sports in which Oklahoma did not win Big Six titles were football, swimming, indoor track and basketball. Coach Jacobs' indoor track team lost the title to Kansas State by one and one-half points.

A number of faculty changes have been made during the year. Several faculty members are on leave of absence, having taken temporary positions in national relief setups.

Following is the record of Sooner sports teams during the year:

Sport	Won	Lost	Big Six Standing
Football	6	3	2
Two-mile	3	1	1
Baseball	14	3	1
Tennis	4	2	1
Outdoor Track	2	0	1
Golf	0	0	1
Indoor Track	0	0	2
Wrestling	4	4	1
Basketball	9	9	3
Swimming	0	0	4
Polo	14	5	
TOTALS	56	27	.667

## Heflin in New Play

Van Heflin, '32as, who was christened Evan Heflin, did University stage work as E. Van Heflin and then finally lost the "E" on Broadway, has a lead in the New York production of *Mid-West* by James Hagan. In the play, Heflin is the communist son of a mid-western farm couple. The drama has a fine chance for an extended Broadway stay. Its author wrote *One Sunday Afternoon* several years ago and it was adjudged one of the ten best plays of the 1932-33 season. *Mid-West* is showing at the Booth theatre.

## Page the Marx Brothers

(SOONERLAND TOPICS)

**F**AYETTE COPELAND, '19as, associate professor of journalism, visited Washington, D.C., New York City and points north and east during the Christmas holidays.

While he was in New York City, he met Todd Downing, '24as, '28M.A., former instructor in Spanish, now an author of murder-mysteries and resident of New York City.

Among other things, they planned to visit the stock exchange. After considerable difficulty, they managed to get the required number of cards and letters necessary to get past all doors and finally emerged into the stock exchange itself.

A scene of turmoil, bedlam and unholy confusion greeted them. It was a normal day in the exchange but it looked like a madhouse to the visitors.

Mr. Downing surveyed the scene with some amazement and interest before drawing his conclusions.

"I say," he cried above the din of tickers, "couldn't the Marx brothers go to town in this place!"



A jittery, harassed Norman chief of police has probably quit looking for Alex Welcher by now so it probably won't hurt to tell this one on the aforesaid student from Tulsa.

Alex had things stirred up shortly before the Christmas holidays with a little practical joke that seemed rather serious at the time.

It was in the middle of the meningitis scare in Cleveland county. Schools in Noble, less than ten miles south of Nor-

man, were closed and it appeared as if the quarantine might be extended into Norman at any time.

Students, in fact, were beginning to pack up and get ready to go if a quarantine was drawn around Norman. It was just three days before the Christmas holidays started and no one wanted to miss that big Christmas dinner at home.

It was on a Tuesday night and the entire south end of Norman was alive with rumors about cases that had been, or might have been, discovered in Norman. An air of extreme tenseness hung over varsity corner, the Union and the popular congregating centers. The telephone in the home of President Bizzell was ringing itself hoarse.

The *Daily* office telephones jangled interminably as students called to learn if school had been let out early on account of the epidemic.

It was early evening on varsity corner and the only topic of conversation was: "Did they let school out yet? I heard there was a case over ——. I think I'll go home. I don't want to be stranded for the holidays. Once it hits you ——."

Into this scene of anxious waiting and intensity came the clear long cry of a newshawk.

"Extra! Extra! Norman meningitis case discovered. School dismissed. Extra! Extra!"

The hawk eluded varsity corner, but scores of students sought the back streets where the voice came from. So did the police.

But Alex is a half-miler: no one was ever certain who did throw the varsity corner scene into turmoil.