



Jim Flinchum, who sings this swan song for '39, edited the Daily this year

Goodbye to '39

By Jim Flinchum

THAT universal thesis of the graduate, entitled, "Now, When I Was in College," is about to be written at the University of Oklahoma again this June.

Because this is commencement month and a new class—the class of 1939—is about to be launched. And, like those that have gone before them, the members of this class will be talking about their college days until they get so old that families, debts and other problems overwhelm them.

Fundamentally, the subject matter that the men and women of '39 will have to reminisce over won't differ from that bandied about by the forty-odd other graduating classes, and yet there are going to be some differences. For 1939 has been a dynamic, dramatic, swift-moving year, crowded with headlines about football, basketball and legislatures, about sports and politics, about gridirons and governors.

The '39-man's chest can be expected to expand more around homecoming and alumni conclaves because this was the great year in football at the University of Oklahoma. Boudreau's kicks.... Rice, Nebraska, Kansas.... the revival of sports spirit.... the band trips—all this will be re-lived and re-told a thousand times by these graduates of '39.

This was the year of Stidham and Drake, of a Big Six championship in football and a championship in basketball, and—yes—let the oranges fall where they may, it still won't be hard to remember.

And who of 1939 will forget the student strike for the football victory holiday.... or the trip of the Boy Scouts to San Francisco? A banner year for the brawny-armed boys of the sports world.

In other fields as well, it has been eventful for this senior class. Not since Strat-

ton D. Brooks lost his fight with Governor Walton, or William H. Murray was inaugurated governor, or the D. D. M. C. has there been such a parade of events packed into two semesters as these, and there are those who say that this record is unequalled.

A marked precariousness of the balance between the governor's office and the Administration building was almost as notable this year as football or basketball. It provided almost as many, if not more, headlines; it brought the school much limelight over the state.

And while all this hurly-burly and bustle was going on, actual student activities have been perhaps less apparent than in past years. This year's crop has been more of the spectator and less of the participant. It might be fairer to say that the average student activities have been crowded out of prominence by the other events.

STRANGELY for Oklahoma—a state that loves the great game of politics—this year has been a year of decline of student politics at the University. Perhaps never before has the influence of organized political groups on the campus been at such a low pitch. In other days student elections have furnished the gossip of the day, but not so this year. Party activity was near nil; there was little or no enthusiasm in the elections.

A desire of the University administration to keep things running smoothly on the home grounds while it presented its arguments for appropriations is partly responsible for this. But probably the principal reason was that no one could talk about anything but football during the first semester, and state politics during the second.

In the height of the budget negotiations, there were not a few remarks cast at the passive attitude of the student body, which stood back and refrained from actively taking part in the issues.

I heard one man say, "It wouldn't have been like this ten years ago. Students

then would have made known their ideas, one way or the other." Were they shell-shocked, indifferent or what? I believe it was not any of these. The answer is to be found in the student of 1939, a student schooled in the depression years who is less flamboyant, less reckless, less likely to carry a chip on his shoulder than the students of, say, the "flaming twenties." He has been less prone to express his ideas because he has been less quick to jump at conclusions. He has a different temperament and a different attitude.

The student of 1939 has been more prone to express his ideas through individual organizations rather than collectively, as in a mass meeting or through an election. These organizations came into a greater part of student representation this year than perhaps ever before. They furnished, for example, the initiative behind the drive for better housing conditions—the only significant student-sponsored project of the year.

Groups such as the Independent Men's Association, the Associated Women Students (formerly Women's Self Governing Association), the Interfraternity Council and the Graduate Student's Council were active in the dormitory drive. Not only did they wangle the administration into taking this step, but they also made their representations to the legislature on the project.

The year—and the class—were remarkable for a conspicuous absence of notable student leaders. In the past, a few persons have dominated much of everything, but either the day of the campus "big-shot" who had his name in the paper every day and who was referred to as the main guy behind everything going on, is past, or else we just don't have the perspective yet to recognize the leaders of '39.

But even so, 1939 will be a banner year for those who are quitting this June. And in a few more years they'll be coming back—balding, paunchier—but coming just the same.

"Now, when I was in college..."