

Riding the Sooner Range

By Ted Beaird

IS it permissible for a ramblin' ranger to list "notes" and record "observations" during the late April and early May? Well, here goes for a cross section of WHAT we've seen, WHY we were there, WHEN we were there, and WHERE these Sooners are appearing on the scene in 1940.

What a practice game on the O. U. gridiron on this late afternoon of April 25. Yes, and how those Sooner boys show up in this the culminating game of spring practice for the thousands of state citizens arranged in this arena. There goes the final whistle, and thousands of visitors are shuffling back to their homes in various sections of the 77 counties. But *not all* of these thousands go home immediately because some 250 Sooner grads by special invitation from Coach Tom Stüdham, his staff, and the Athletic Council are staging the parade to the east wing of the stadium for a big barbecue and "chatting session." Yes, here it is, 6:05. In two hours I must be on my way to the Santa Fe in Oklahoma City, but what a visiting session we can get in in that two hours! My "stall-mates" (yes, this east wing of the stadium is even used for the livestock show of the Cleveland County Fair as well as a spot for entertaining dignitaries) are Regent LLOYD NOBLE, '21ex, Ardmore; Regent JOE W. McBRIDE, '28bus, Anadarko; Regent E. C. HOPPER, Eufaula; the red-headed hot-shot, LEE B. THOMPSON, '25, '27law, Oklahoma City; PAUL "FORDIN'-ALONG" REED, '16ex, Sulphur, the Alumni Executive Board's efficient representative to the Athletic Council; O. F. "FISH" MULDROW, '22ex, Ardmore's O. G. & E. public relation man and the Executive Board's high tension worker; KING G. PRICE, '25ex, Norman, the O. U. athletic insurance broker; SENATOR JIM NANCE, Purcell; NEIL R. JOHNSON, '15, '17law, Norman, O. U.'s Stadium-Union Prexy; NORMAN W. BRILLHART, '17, the Madill "hard-hitter"; and dozens and dozens of others mill by as we tackle the tenderized barbecue steaks, and in our own manner design the new tackles for Chief Tom and his O. U. coaching crew to present to the boys next season. Well, so long—nice evening—sorry to leave, but I must be Oklahoma City-ward and push out to Kansas City for the big O. U. alumni rally tomorrow night.

It is always interesting to note the enthusiasm in Kansas City, Missouri, of the Sooner gang now well established in their homes, professions, and businesses, but who, at the same time, always have that yearning and feeling "how we'd like to be back in Soonerland." This particular session is quite outstanding and interesting to the hired hand because my dinner partner in this alumni rally is former President STRATTON D. BROOKS. How many interesting hours as a kid beginning in the field of University work was I privileged to spend around this gentleman's "throne," and that span of years may have dimmed the eyes slightly, may have whitened the hair more, but the same keen wit and foresight is exemplified by this eminent gentleman twenty-five years after! They are all enthusiastic in this Kansas City. They all have a message to send back to Soonerland to some friend or relative. And through the long years of work on the part of AL DRAKE, resigning Advisory Council Chairman, plus the efficient work of the newly elected council chairman, E. H. SKINNER, '23, and dozens and dozens of others in the Kansas City area, the spirit of O. U. has become a tradition in this mid-western city. HARRY

MORELAND, '20ex, vice-president of his company, has never experienced any dimming of his enthusiasm and admiration for his Sooner state. School-marm HELEN MORRIS, '36ed, is very much in evidence for the evening assembly—even has with her JUANITA MORRIS, the kid sister. ARTHUR WALKLEY, '33ex, steps up and asks for information on O. U. WEBSTER L. BENHAM, JR., '39ex, plus the charming wife, KATHERINE COLLIER BENHAM, '40ex, are present and accounted for. Even WAYNE GLOVER, now in the Kansas City Dental College after receiving his Business Administration Degree in '32 is out meeting and greeting. DR. JAMES M. NELSON, '32, '34med, has cancelled calls of the evening; and then "Our Boy" REX CHANEY, '35, the big-shot staff writer of the United Press bureau, has cancelled the punching of keys for the evening and comes up to swap yarns with us about 'way back when we made a trip to Ripon, Wisconsin together and to present to the hired hand a very very charming young lady.

It was a pleasure in this assembly to have a '27 law Sooner with headquarters in Washington, D. C., drop in for an hour's visit—WALTER R. TAYLOR, of the I. C. C., was very much in evidence, enjoying this occasion. CLAUDE A. FERGUSON, '24law, was there to represent the barristers; while Kansas City, Kansas, was well represented by PAUL N. CAMPBELL, '21, '25ma, and the very charming MRS. CAMPBELL (ALMA DOUGHIT, '20). Oh yes, we could go on for lines and lines and discuss other O. U.-ites in this assembly, but it is 11:20, and at 11:59 that train pulls toward St. Louis and a shindig there tomorrow night. So with the assistance of DEAN HAROLD INGHAM, of the Extension Division of the University of Kansas, my very special friend and guest of the evening, we are on our way to the Union Station for a hurried goodnight and the rolling of wheels toward St. Louis.

Well, this is the night of nights in St. Louis. And look at 'em stacking in. The boys had to make a hurried change to a larger place in St. Louis to accommodate this outstanding crowd. And this honorary plaque to be presented to IRL "BIG BOY" RHYNES, of Mattoon, Illinois, is causing a sensation among the large assembly of Sooners as it is placed on display prior to the meeting. And the inscription on the plaque says: "To Irl 'Big Boy' Rhynes because—of his keen and continued interest in behalf of young Sooner men; of his loyalty in the development of a greater University of Oklahoma; of his efforts in carrying forward many alumni programs—this alumni plaque is awarded and an honorary membership in the Alumni Associated hereby granted on this the 27th day of April, 1940, in the City of St. Louis, Missouri."

There is another very distinguished group of guests in this assembly tonight in St. Louis, good-will ambassadors from the state of Oklahoma, representing some eleven senior high schools of Oklahoma enroute to Terre Haute, Indiana, for the purpose of representing the state of Oklahoma in the big educational assembly to be held there beginning Monday, and there are many dads and mothers with these kids who are graduates of O. U. Also, there are many teachers of the senior high schools of Oklahoma accompanying these youngsters who are graduates of O. U. And are these alumni of St. Louis enjoying this fine group of youngsters! Among some of the fathers,

mothers, and teachers in this assembly in St. Louis tonight are LEAH SANGER of the Senior High School at Yukon; MRS. WILLIAM J. HOLLOWAY, mother of Bill, Jr., of Oklahoma City, and a wire has just arrived that Governor Bill cannot make it into St. Louis but will meet us in Terre Haute tomorrow. DR. TOM LOWRY, '14, '16med, prominent Oklahoma physician, has dropped the worries of the day and is here with his gracious little daughter, Jean, who will represent Oklahoma in the national assembly. And from down Mattoon, Illinois way, PAUL A. DUFFIELD, '30, along with wife RUTH JOHNSON DUFFIELD, '30 h.ec, are here representing the Mattoon Council and to enjoy the awarding of the special plaque to "Big Boy" Rhynes. BETTY COE ARMSTRONG, '39, head of the speech department of the Sulphur, Oklahoma, High School is here with her proteges. And here is an original Oklahoma Aggie in an O. U. assembly in St. Louis—our good friend, B. L. WERTZ, of the Muskogee Senior High School, with a half dozen of his good will ambassadors. Welcome, Aggie, we are glad to have you!

And over there in a corner among a group of admiring kids is seated C. E. "POP" GRADY, a former student at the University of Oklahoma in '30, now of the Classen High School, Oklahoma City, and the proud dad of two fine sons who are graduates of O. U. MRS. ELAINE J. TUCKER, '28ex, head of the speech department of Classen High School is, along with MRS. HOLLOWAY, officially chaperoning the Classen "Chickadees."

The WOLTERING family is here en masse, and we think, thoroughly enjoying every minute among their friends. AL GILLES, '34, '37law, recently of Tulsa, now a St. Louis-ite, comes in to report his connection with Shell Oil Company in the St. Louis area. And "Rags" and his wife—the Honorable W. E. RAGSDALE to his associates in St. Louis and surrounding territory, who received his electrical engineering degree from O. U. in 1935, are here to swap yarns about the old days at the radio station WNAD, more especially, midnight test programs. DR. J. B. BARGER, '31med, is not only an outstanding doctor in the city of St. Louis, but is an amateur motion picture enthusiast and the president of his state association. Tonight in St. Louis he has been of untold service to the alumni by operating and using his motion picture equipment in this assembly.

H. J. DAMM, '30ma, pastor and social worker, along with MRS. DAMM, comes out early and meets a lot of friends; while dietician LOUISE WILKONSON, '24h.ec, along with DR. JOSEPH F. TRIGG, '28; MRS. E. J. MERRITT (ROSA OSMOND MERRITT, '33ex); JOHN F. WILKONSON, '23; D. W. EADES, '28, '30med; Council Chairman BOB SAYRE, '20; JOE T. DICKERSON, '21law; WILLIAM L. WARDELL, '28eng; BESS WEAVER WAY, '29; EDWARD J. MERRITT, '33law—well, all these are a mere handful of the faces we recognize in this assembly as we look out over the crowd.

What's this, and who's this rolling in from Norman, Oklahoma, for this special alumni meeting? Yes, they are our neighbors down Norman way. And what are they doing in St. Louis tonight? Well, merely to attend an outstanding O. U. session. Headed by KING G. PRICE, '25ex, and Assistant Coach DALE ARBUCKLE, '27law, '36ed, they are presenting to this assembly two very outstanding young men—footballer BOB SEYMOUR, of O. U. football fame, especially last season, and the cagey, cunning little football firecracker of the O. U. football squad, J. S. MUNSEY. Well, welcome fellows, to an assembly that has cost you some 1,300 miles of hard driving. That really is the Sooner spirit.

All good things must come to a close. The St. Louis rally is over. We are Riding the Sooner Range to Terre Haute, Indiana, and more of the Oklahoma gang.