

Riding the Sooner Range

By Ted Beard

DID you ever see an "Ide" go walking—or dancing—or prancing? Well, on this night of March 15, it may be the true hour for "The Ides of March," but that word, "Ide," has no relation to *idle* (either night or day) for the past month while galloping up and down the Sooner Range. Some of the spots, some of the gang, some of the things they *are* doing, some of the things they *have been* doing the past thirty days? Well—let's take a peek back stage and find out!

Forty-eight years is a long period of time for the University to carry forward its functions without a joint board meeting of all agencies concerned in its development ever being held! S-o-o-o—the big idea of the Alumni Association was to stage an official joint board meeting to consider "the state of the nation," or should I say, "the state of the Sooner Commonwealth," in an intensive study of the financial structure of the State of Oklahoma, more especially, from the standpoint of the future of higher education in the state.

February 20—high noon—167 strong, official members of boards and representatives of boards, including Regents, Dads, Mothers, and Alumni Association, stacked into the Oklahoma Memorial Union, representing sixty-two of the counties of the State of Oklahoma. And what an intensive study of the state financial structure was to follow! Names of hot-shots, big-shots, and call-shots" appearing on this particular "Joint Boards" program of statewide interest—men and women giving of their time plus considerable effort—could fill a book! In this splendid business session were such outstanding alumni as SENATOR CHARLES B. DUFFY, '22law, Ponca City; SENATOR JAMES RINEHART, '23law, El Reno; REPRESENTATIVE HERBERT BRANAN, '32, '38law, Muskogee; plus our good Aggie friend and associate, L. D. MELLTON, the tax specialist and head of the Statistical Bureau of the Oklahoma Tax Commission. And did those four boys bring out the ghost from the closet before the assembled board members of Oklahoma? They did—and how! Others in attendance at this very important function included: JUDGE EARL FOSTER, '12, '13law, Oklahoma City, one of the old time efficient war horses and past president of the Alumni Association; C. ROSS HUME, '98, 1900ma, another past president of the Association, over from Anadarko and present for the day's deliberation; DEAN ROY GITTINGER, '02, present as a past president of the Association; DR. JOHN B. MILES, '26, '27med, the Anadarko surgeon, representing the present Executive Board of the Alumni Association; the deep southeast wheel horse, NORMAN W. BRILLHART, '17, under the immediate supervision of MRS. BRILLHART (MILDRED COLBY BRILLHART, '22fa) spent the entire day with us in checking quite closely the discussions of the hour and later in the evening to enjoy the breath-taking basketball game between the Sooners and Aggies on the O.U. court. Legislators? Why, yes, they were stacked in there from "all over." More especially, the eleven members of the House of Representatives in the last session who are regularly enrolled students of the University of Oklahoma. They were there to add to the discussion. NEIL R. JOHNSON, '15, '17law, Norman "cowman" and president of the Stadium-Union Board of Trustees, participated in the day's deliberation, listening attentively to the discussions on the general state finance. JOHN R. PEARSON, '29, '29law, the Pawhuska attorney, along with "his personal O. U. doctor," DR. ROSCOE WALKER, '09, added a great deal to the afternoon's deliberation by participating in the important work. CLYDE BOGLE, '02, Norman, drew away from "gas and oil peddling" for the day and represented the alumni as a past president of the Association and was much in evidence. Yes, we could go on enumerating

outstanding board members (representing the Regents, the Dads' Association, the Mothers' Association, and the Alumni Association) far into the night, because at your University on this February 20, offering their contributions and giving detailed study to a state-wide problem, were these men and women, scattered from the four corners of Oklahoma.

This annual O.E.A. session—well, usually it's just another huge gathering of thousands of Sooner school marms from over the state, but the school marms this year (and 'school marms' is used in the masculine as well as the feminine sense) preferred for some reason to report a light attendance at their annual meeting in Oklahoma City. Many told us confidentially that they preferred to spend the weekend of their annual conventions at home in hard, hard labor. The fact is that a vast majority of the thousands upon thousands stayed at home, but at that they missed the sloppy, dreary weather experienced in Oklahoma City on this occasion. However, many of the more "venturous" marms and sirs did brave the storms and swim the puddles to attend the annual dinner at the O.E.A., sponsored by the Alumni Association. Here they were privileged to hear the "boy orator" (or should I say the chap from the short grass), ELMER L. FRAKER, '20, '38ma, superintendent of schools at Mangum, deliver a wonderful address which was indeed quite challenging to the educators of this state. Among the many O.U.-ites breaking bread at the annual dinner, or registering at the alumni headquarters at the Biltmore Hotel during the convention were MRS. HAMPTON TUCKER (ELAINE JOHNSON TUCKER, '26ex), Classen High, Oklahoma City teacher; DR. JAMES H. HODGES, '29ms, '31ed.d, Tulsa; J. T. MURPHY, '39ed.m, Sapulpa; HEDWIG SCHAEFER, '18, of the O.U. staff; ALMA LOIS RODGERS, '27ms, Alva; SUZANNE ARNOTE, '36, "the *Oklahoma City Oklahoman and Times* Susie," flashing her best smiles over the entire convention; JOHN T. HEFLEY, '01, '35ed.d, of the O.U. staff; the promising C.P.A. in the making, namely, ERVYL BROSS, '39ex, Oklahoma City, paid us the compliment of a call at headquarters; F. C. SNOW, '30ma, now completing his doctor's work in the College of Education at O.U., was with us for the program; JIM ROBINSON, '32, '32law, of the State College, Tahlequah, took time out and during the convention had a lot of fancy visiting, as well as reporting to the various school marm sessions, on schedule; D. D. KIRKLAND, '33ed.m, the newly elected superintendent of schools at Coalgate, was "in and out" during the entire convention. (In passing, we challenge you to watch that school system at Coalgate pick up momentum.) Then there was ROSALIND BURNS, '34fa, who took the day off from her duties as public school music teacher in Oklahoma City to come down and "strut with the other school marms." J. O. VERNON, '36ed.m, along with Mrs. Vernon, motored over from Vanoss School to meet and greet a lot of fellows on this—the big education day. DR. WALTER B. EMERY, '34law, dropped his orating for the hour and sped up from his University headquarters in Norman to Oklahoma City to swap yarns with the boys. E. E. BRADLEY, '39 ed.m, breezed in from the "dust bowl," having dropped his official duties in Panhandle A. and M. College for the day, and was the one man in a great "spew"—but incidentally he shifted around among the delegates enough to be elected state president of his special education section of the O.E.A. and you watch that "fire-cracker" get the job done! JESSIE D. NEWBY, '10, of the Central State College at Edmond, was very much in evidence. TEX KASSEN, '38, the mathematician-coach of the McAlester school system, was over greeting old friends. Superintendent GEORGE

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D. HANN, "director" of the Ardmore public school system, was there still explaining the theory under which he received his O.U. Master of Education Degree in 1936 (and believe you me that boy puts into practice the theory that he preaches—just look at the results exemplified in his school system at Ardmore for a concrete example!) CAPTAIN LANSON D. MITCHELL, still the "big G-man," dropped by long enough to sign a registration card and report on his A.B. received at O.U. in 1919. This year, as in many many former years, superintendent J. R. STAIB, '29ms, the efficient head of the Hominy Public Schools, had dinner with the O.U. group. Fairfax, Oklahoma was represented by the charming personality of MARGARET HALLEY, the charming daughter of a fine "ole dad"—(E. E. HALLEY, '35ed.m, chief of the state high school inspectors of the State Department of Education), an efficient educator we have been privileged to know for many many years. And Margaret received her walking papers from O.U. in the form of a home ec degree in 1939. And last but not least, in glancing over the hundreds who filed by alumni headquarters, we recall the pleasant visit with the social studies chairman of Tulsa Public

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Schools, namely, NELLE MAE BRIGHT, '23ms, now MRS. L. R. WEATHERFORD. Indeed, we were privileged to exchange a lot of news and notes with Mrs. Weatherford, more especially about our old cronic of "pitch-playing" days," ROY BRADSHAW, '23, '35ed.m, one of the outstanding principals of the Tulsa City System. And in "viewing and re-viewing" this O.E.A. convention, we must of necessity report that this "ride on the range" would have been quite bumpy indeed and the duties of the "hired hand" and all others concerned would have ben considerably more difficult had not our efficient HELEN HADLEY, '38, stayed with us and worked through registration at headquarters. Helen—the former "key-puncher" in the alumni offices at Norman, is now a convention and court reporter with headquarters in Oklahoma City. Ho—Hum— We wonder, will the dads of the O.E.A. organization take us back to Tulsa in 1941 or leave us in Oklahoma City? At any rate, we'll look forward to the '41 convention with thousands of O.U. alumni "participatin', educatin'—and buying new spring bonnets!"

In covering thousands of miles, establishing hundreds and hundreds of alumni contacts, consuming "mashed potatoes and peas" at O.U. parties in the form of dinners, nation-wide, mulching through numerous and sundry luncheons, orating at conventions and acting as the Assistant to the Assistant Records-Keeper at business sessions—all classified under the work of "the hired hand" of your Association, we indeed enjoy many pleasant and profitable days and nights in the run of a year!

Rough spots appear on the Range some months! In trying to write up the excellent alumni meeting in Muskogee late in February—the Range is more than rough. The untimely death of an outstanding, fine young gentleman (Justin Bowers), star football player of the O.U. squad, returning from that fine assembly, indeed dampens the spirit of all alumni. Headed by former Regent member, MALCOLM ROSSER, '21ex, JEWELL RISINGER DITMARS, '19, FRANK S. CLECKLER, '21, GRANVILLE NORRIS, '29, CAMP BONDS, '29law, HAROLD LANDRAM, '32, '34law, BILL WOLFE, '26eng, '38prof.eng, and dozens and dozens of other leading alumni of the City of Muskogee, this Sooner group really put on a nice party. And we do look forward to the day when we can return and spend a pleasant evening with them again. Indeed, the Municipal Auditorium, where they held their film program and alumni program in general, on this February evening in Muskogee, proved to us that Muskogee is truly an O.U. city and the surrounding territory is well saturated with its followers.

A hasty call to the front! Down Chickasha way, then on to Duncan for rapid fire alumni work. And thanks to C. O. HUNT, senior lawyer of O. U., REPRESENTATIVE OWEN TOWNSEND, senior lawyer of O.U., and UNCLE CHARLIE MILES, '22, who took time off to assist the "hired hand" on this March 5 and 6 jaunt, the trail on the Range was made much smoother.

The "boy scats"? Yes, and they really "scatted"! What a wonderful basketball team that kid coach, BRUCE DRAKE, '29, developed for the O.U. followers this season. Indeed, it was a pleasant trip to Wichita, Kansas for the March 11, 12 "play-off" between the outstanding Universities of Missouri, Kansas, and Oklahoma. Yes, we'll admit there was a little too much "fog" from the Jayhawk institution on that fatal night, but it certainly did not dampen the spirits of dozens and dozens of O.U. alumni who made the pilgrimage to Wichita, Kansas to join the hundreds of O.U. alumni in that thriving city, in paying a tribute to a fine group of young men. It was a swell luncheon that the Wichita, Kansas gang framed up in a hurry and held at high noon on March 12.

We would that we could comment on the many many alumni present, but space will allow only a "how-do-you-do" to the leaders in this work. Headed by the Advisory Council Chairman, JOHN PAYNTER, '26, plus the very efficient work of our old time friend, FROMA JOHNSON, '21fa, and husband, ROY JOHNSON, '10ex, the prexy of the Federal Land Bank in Wichita, and JOHN I. GILBERT, '30, of the Federal Land Bank, the

O.U. alumni of Wichita really strutted their stuff. Others in attendance at the luncheon, as well as eager rooters at the game, were HAROLD KEITH, '29, '39ma, O.U. sports writer; VIRGIL S. BROWNE, JR., '27bus, Wichita; GEORGE F. TITUS, '27, of Tulsa; W. G. TIERNEY, '24, "Petroleum Granny," Wichita; MARION FERGUSON HILL, '31, and husband, R. PORTER HILL, '29law, present and accounting for their share of O.U. enthusiasm. So again, may the "boy scats" scat into the finals, and again may we go Wichita, Kansas way to see this fine group of Sooners en masse.

That boy, HICKS EPTON, '32law, this year's prexy of the Alumni Executive Board, can get you in a hotel room in his home town, Wewoka, and literally work a "hired hand" more in a five-hour session on a balmy March evening, than any man in America. But out of it, as president of the Association, he did name his nominating committee for 1940. And without comment on their very outstanding records, we announce them to you, after Riding the Range to his own fireside to let the prexy name his group. They are (or were until last Sunday afternoon when they made their nominations): JAMES L. ROBINSON, '32, '32 law, Tablequah; W. W. PORTS, '21eng, Wichita Falls, Texas; WILLIAM R. WOLFE, '26eng, '38 prof.eng, Muskogee; W. HARRINGTON WIMBERLY, '24, Altus; DR. ROSCOE WALKER, '09, Pawhuska; DR. NED BURLESON, '26, '29, '31med, Prague; JAMES H. VAN ZANT, '23, '26ms, Enid; MRS. EFFIE BATTENBURG RALLS, '26ma, Coalgate; DENNIS H. PETTY, '32law, Wewoka. Yes, this "nominatin'" gang enjoyed very little Sunday afternoon sunshine last Sunday when it was their task to nominate eighteen outstanding alumni to be voted on by the entire membership for six Board places to be filled in June, 1940. They met—they nominated—they requested that the names be submitted, and you will hear a lot more about these eighteen nominees in the eight weeks to follow.

Two hundred and one "B or better" graded juniors—representing one out of every eight who started as freshmen—is indeed a hand-picked and hand-selected group! But they were there, two hundred and one strong, representing those juniors at the juniors' honor luncheon at which the faculty men and women are hosts and hostesses each year at the University to those who have won their spurs. That, indeed, is a new tradition that is growing up over the years at O.U., and indeed, it is a nice compliment for the faculty to honor these "B or better" juniors annually at a luncheon in the Oklahoma Memorial Union. And who are some of the faculty members that devoted time and energy to scholarship? Well, here is a "mere handful." (I would that we could name them all.) DR. DIXIE YOUNG, '21, '22ma; MISS IMA JAMES; MRS. PERRILL MUNCH BROWN, '14, '38ma; DR. M. L. WARDELL, '19; MRS. FRANCES EVANS PENDLETON; J. C. MAYFIELD, '28; MISS HELEN HAMILL, '24, '24ms; MISS GRACE RAY, '20, '23ma; MISS ROSE LESKE, '21; MISS PAULINE THROWER, '28; DR. ED MEACHAM, '14, (the dignified Dean to most of you birds); and last but not least, DR. JEWELL WURTZBAUGH, (and may Allah have mercy on the "hired hand's" sparsely settled hair, if, as a participant in this junior honor "shin-dig," I fail to pay proper tribute to a lot of hard workers—Jewell is going to make the hair (if any) ever more sparse. But at that, she is a good "check" in the system of checks and balances, but most of the while I am weighed in the balances when these dinners are over and "found lacking.")

Well, enough's enough. I would that I could tell you about the pleasant evening on the Aggie grounds in Stillwater last Friday with a lot of O. U.-ites. I would that I could tell you about another gang of a hundred or so in the Skirvin Tower in Oklahoma City a few nights ago. But with the dear old "Phi-Beter-Kappers" assembling for their annual selection of "victims" in the board meeting room next door, I must report in and protect "alumni interests," and before they finish with me on this late afternoon of March 20, they'll probably give me a passport to Ride a New Sooner Range.