

Riding the Sooner Range

By Ted Beaird

FISCAL years? Yes, we all have 'em! And—here in this August (and on the dot of the 31st) nineteen-hundred-forty, we of the University of Oklahoma Association will reach another goal post, another abrupt end—of another fiscal year.

Naturally, *impressions* are made along the way. Some events, some few "people," some outstanding hours or days or nights have left their marks—and their lasting impressions, as we choose to Ride the Sooner Range!

In retrospect, let's check a limited number of these passin'-by moments since the 8 a. m. hour of September 1, 1939!

Labor day, nine o'clock in the morning (September 2, 1939), conference room on the twenty-third floor, Edgewater Beach Hotel, Chicago. The world is mad this morning with the first serious sting of the European conflict. It's the topic (along with other business), and a few Sooners are wondering—what will be the reaction of the United States?—what will business be sixty days from today?—what will the various agencies of America do?—and what attitudes will be displayed in deciding upon such policies as the investment of endowment funds? All these—and similar questions of policy arose in that day (and night) long discussion!

Still (even at that early hour) in the seriousness of the international situation, WES NUNN, '17ex, Chicago, LES SALTER, '21, '22law, Chicago; JOE HICKS, '23, Winnetka, Illinois—plus many more of our gang, were ready and going forward with plans for the O. U. Northwestern game to follow in a few short weeks!

That "secret" Sooner birthday breakfast for the gentleman and scholar, "Prexie" Bizzell, in the Adolphus Hotel, Dallas, on Saturday morning, October 14—well, that too stands out. CARL McWADE, '34eng, Dallas; JUDGE OREL BUSBY, '14law, Ada; HICKS EPTON, '32law, and THELMA EPTON, '32ed, Wewoka; the O. U. band 200 strong, along with Sooner Alumni from all over, made the day one long to be remembered!

Seventy Sooners (again from all over) guests in the home of JOE, '23, and LOIS MARSHALL HICKS, '23ex, Winnetka, Illinois, two hours after O. U. had "taken" Northwestern against all odds—then the long distance greetings of Joe, Wes Nunn, and others to President and Mrs. Bizzell in Norman—plus the hurry-up train ride on the O. U. Special, back to Oklahoma—the loss of baggage of some of the sleeping fans (apologies to JUDGE BOB AUBREY, '28law, Wewoka, and others)—the one-way (but wrong) ride others took—the thousands at the Santa Fe station in Norman to hail the great footballers as the train rolled in from Northwestern—well, all in all it surpassed the ole days when the "cow was skinned and barbecued" following Benny Owen's defeat of Texas way back when! That series of events in a series of just so many hours *does* linger on!

That freak snow storm on Christmas night that brought Sooners HAROLD TACKER, '40, BOYD GUNNING, '37, '37law, HERB SCOTT, '26, '26ma, all of the O. U. staff, out for all night picture making of the campus—the Sooner assembly in Ardmore the next day at noon (December 26, 1939) with "FISH" MULDRON, '22ex, Ardmore; PAUL REED, '16ex, Sulphur; M. L. WARDELL, '19, Norman; and others making it a success—then to hurry on for a Fort Worth Sooner meeting the same evening—to begin the next morning the long trek for a series of Sooner sessions in Dallas, Shreveport, Baton Rouge, Mobile, St. Petersburg and Gainesville, Florida—to drive (a few days later heading toward home) in America's worst snow and

sleet storm to see Sooners in Atlanta, Birmingham, Memphis, Little Rock, and Fort Smith—well, it *was* a fortnight, and how!

The Tuesday evening, January 30, sendoff of Counsellor MARGARET ANN GESSNER TWYMAN by Sooners ROSCOE CATE, '26, and FRANCES CATE, '30; HOMER, '35ex, and MILDRED HECK, '30ex; Counsellor of Women MARGARET STEPHENSON; HILLYER FREELAND, '38fa; and others, was an enjoyable Sooner assembly! The Classen Hi Speech Tournament, with some sixty Sooner grads in charge, on February 2 and 3, was well worth while, and thanks to such grads as JOE JACKSON, '34ed, Bristow; LES THOMASON, '36, '39ma, Bristol, Virginia; C. E. "POP" GRADY, '30ex, Oklahoma City, that annual Classen affair is always truly Sooner.

The mob of Sooners (not soon to be forgotten) attending the Rotary function, Mayo Hotel, Tulsa, with Eddie Guest as speaker, on Tuesday, February 6—well, it was another enjoyable Sooner convention! The O. E. A., all over Oklahoma City, February 14 to 17, inclusive, with ELMER FRAKER, '20, '38ma, Mangum, doing a swell job as substitute orator at the annual alumni dinner, will not be soon forgotten. The pleasure of the annual Muskogee Alumni meeting, February 27, to be followed by the sorrow due to the untimely accidental death of JUSTIN BOWER, '40ex, while returning home next morning, will always stick!

That fine group known as the Junior Honors Class of O. U., being honored at luncheon Thursday, March 14, by a Sooner crew—that's always worth while. The Thursday, April 4, 1940, Sooner dinner, Hotel Artesian, Sulphur—thanks again to Sulphur's Reed and Ardmore's Muldrow for a great success—that "sticks" in memory! The excellent Sooner sessions, Muchlebach Hotel, Kansas City, April 26, and Hotel Jefferson, St. Louis, April 27, with DR. TOM LOWRY, '14, '16med, Oklahoma City; JOHN WILKINSON, '23, St. Louis; BETTY COE ARMSTRONG, '39 Sulphur; KING PRICE, '25ex, Norman, plus some 100 others from various other states, and the awarding of the honorary alumni plaque to "BIG BOY" RHYNES of Mattoon, Illinois—*was* an event!

The swift ride from St. Louis to Terre Haute, Indiana, Sunday, April 28—only to be made swifter by American Air Lines back to Oklahoma City, due to emergencies arising—well, *that* won't be forgotten ever!

So—tonight as this "end of the fiscal year" squib is being written in my room at the Hotel Muchlebach, Kansas City, (where we arrived some three hours ago by Braniff to pay our last respect on the morrow to a departed friend), we thing of *the one* outstanding event that flashed in this fiscal year—an event that will go with us down through the years! *The Time*—9:20 o'clock on the evening of Monday, May 13, 1940. *The Place*—on the Commencement platform of the Mangum Junior College. A long distance call from Norman! "Prexie" has resigned! Twenty-five thousand alumni of O. U. are concerned! But—with Sooner Regents like LLOYD NOBLE, '21ex, Ardmore; JOE McBRIDE, '28bus, Anadarko; HARRINGTON WIMBERLY, '24, Altus; JOHN ROGERS, '14 law, Tulsa; and JOE LOONEY, '20, '22law, Wewoka—and with W. B. Bizzell being kept as President Emeritus, June 30, 1941—we are positive in our belief that the future of the University is assured! So—into another fiscal year we go—the Regents to select a permanent head of the ever growing O. U. and to continue in their work of developing a greater University of Oklahoma—as together we all Ride the Sooner Range!

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